



Introduction: 21st February, 9.30am,
location to be announced

to edit

‘to edit’ means to modify, condense, correct or adapt something: data, numbers, texts. Our focus this semester we will be on editing existing structures – specifically, office buildings into residential buildings. This does not imply creating something new from scratch, but instead a new starting point by editing the existing system through reusing, rearranging and repurposing existing architectural elements. Editing often involves challenging existing conventions and ideas: how can we bring a domestic atmosphere into these former office structures?

The first week will commence with a hands-on task, as we edit 6 shelves in our studio to create new and unexpected objects. This practical exercise will serve as our initial foray into the larger challenge of transforming office buildings into residential spaces.

In the following weeks, we will examine various office buildings in Zurich and explore how they can be converted to meet current and future housing needs. Many of these buildings are now obsolete due to structural and societal changes in how we work. Nevertheless, their rational construction and robustness hold potential for editing without the need for demolition. Editing often also means removing what is unnecessary; trimming the fat: unconventional dimensions offer possibilities of voids in the floor plan which could house potential spaces for communal living often lacking in residential buildings. How could these office buildings be modified to address social, environmental and constructive issues without requiring demolition? The challenge this semester is to discover their existing qualities, reveal their history and continue their story.

A precondition ‘to edit’ is to understand and be able to read the existing object, its construction, its context. Observation and analysis are vital to editing. Through photography and drawings, we will approach and document our adapted objects. We will work with drawings, models and model photographs to represent the ideas in the projects, be they architectural, ecological or structural. Furthermore, we will use synthesis drawings to summarise the different ideas of the projects and tell their story. The work will take place in groups of two.