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Boosting usage and
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Library revival

The £11m refurbishment of the library facilities at the University of Stirling by architects Lewis & Hickey has inspired a revival in use of the facility with a reported 80% increase in footfall since its opening. The library consists of three public floors and on each, the interior space spans out from a large dramatic central lightwell. See how the Library manages its rooms and resources, p38.

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Managing change

TWELVE MONTHS is a long time in government when key areas of policy are dogged by confusion and conflict. As the Coalition embarks on a second year in office, not much has changed in Education in this respect. Universities face "unparalleled uncertainty" as they try to plan around the new tuition fees regime, headteachers grapple with complex school funding formulas and yet another group of councils has launched a legal challenge against budget cuts.

That's what you get when you try railroading policies through without any consultation, say Labour, who believe the Tories have an "ideological obsession" with cuts and structural change. Having just been forced to rethink its NHS reforms, the Government has taken a loftier stance of late, declaring "it's not about party politics," but nevertheless will not want its concessions seen as a major climbdown or, worse still, a sign of discord within the Coalition itself.

Capital spend for schools is, oddly perhaps, one area where the Government feels able to be unequivocal and it has underlined its intention to direct funds where they are most needed – on dilapidated buildings and areas with a shortage of school places. The millions wasted under Labour's schools programme leave no doubt that "a sharp refocusing" of priorities is necessary (p10). Consequently, there is intense interest in how standardised designs can reduce construction costs and delivery times – and, crucially, whether they can be successfully reconfigured and customised to suit differing sites, buildings and layouts (p56).



Richard Sutton

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Managing rooms and resources

The recently completed £11m refurbishment of the library facilities at the University of Stirling has inspired a revival in use of the facility with a reported 80% increase in footfall since its opening.

THE LIBRARY is located in the Andrew Miller building on the campus.

Regarded as a well designed example of '60s architecture the building is listed so the new design retains the structure's shell with a completely redesigned interior. Working with the site's existing qualities – in particular the spectacular views of the Airthrey Loch, the Ochil Hills and the campus parkland which surround it – architects Lewis & Hickey created a light, spacious and welcoming environment, which meets the hi-tech needs of students and members of the public alike.

The library consists of three public floors and on each, the interior space spans out from a large dramatic central lightwell. The entrance area is a generous space with a dedicated staff reception desk. In addition there are automated stations which assist visitors with self return and self issue of books, together with terminals which can help in the search for journals online and find the precise location of any particular book out of the half a million in stock.

The zoned study spaces include spacious work stations that support group, individual or quiet study, an

informal reading section where daily newspapers are available and circular study pods, complete with swivelling touch-screen computers, which ensure a level of privacy and comfortably seat up to eight for group work sessions.

There are ten group study rooms, which can accommodate up to 12 people each and which can be reserved via an electronic booking system located at the entrance to each room. The Enterprise Zone, furnished with armchairs and sofas, is a comfortable meeting place for young entrepreneurs to meet and exchange ideas, while an adjacent lecture space,

students can connect their laptops directly into the AV equipment

complete with movable wall, can comfortably seat up to 60 people and can be booked for entrepreneurial activities.

Given the volume of people on campus, the management of rooms and resources required an intuitive and easy to use booking system that could be accessed by staff and students. Crestron's RoomView resource was installed by systems integrator Mediascape to provide a real-time status report for each of the rooms on the system. The system has been configured to use Windows authentication, allowing each student and member of staff to access the software on any PC on the campus, simply by entering their login and password.

"RoomView works with our existing PCs which makes the students much more receptive to it as opposed to a standalone system," says Graham Miller, IT Manager at the University of Stirling. "Placing the operation in their hands frees up much of our time to centrally monitor any problems and remotely addressing those means we waste little time on having to move around the campus."



Integration

The technology used in the refurbishment is seen as a key investment by Graham Miller as it frees up valuable time for the University's AV, IT and facilities staff as well as saving on wasted resources and energy. Mediascape also installed Crestron AV2 control processors. Acting as the central hub of the system, the AV2 ensures seamless integration of all



equipment to facilitate interactive group study, multimedia lecture facilities and enhanced teaching.

The control system allows the students to connect their own laptops directly into the audio visual equipment installed in the group study rooms and the MPC-M10 wall panels provide a single button solution to operate up to ten inputs via programmable hard key buttons. As well as their own

devices, students are able to access DVD and audio players and video conferencing via the touch of a button, with RoomView allowing remote diagnostics to be sent in the event of equipment failure.

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Simon, 11 Library Designer



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