



CASE STUDY

Creating collaborative learning spaces at Loughborough University

Loughborough University and Pure AV chose Panasonic projection and display technology to create an innovative education space at the new West Park Teaching Hub.

Client: Pure AV

Location: Loughborough, UK

Product(s) supplied: **PT-DZ780**

Challenge

Take an open plan building not previously used for education and transform it in to an innovative learning space suitable for a variety of academic needs.

Solution

By using flexible, connected audio visual technology from Panasonic, Pure AV was able to create flexible learning spaces at West Park campus.

"Pure AV has enabled us to create an effective teaching environment and offer academics the added comfort of a familiar interface for room usage."

Aaron Turlington-Smith



At the end of 2015, Loughborough University took the decision to turn Ford College on West Park campus, previously an open plan office space rented by third party businesses, in to the West Park Teaching Hub, a 21st century learning space with a variety of teaching rooms and informal work areas.

Following a competitive tender, Loughborough selected Pure AV to design and install audio visual systems for deployment in the newly created Hub. The development includes four tiered lecture theatres, four flat teaching rooms, an informal learning space and digital signage throughout.

Listening to the University's needs

The first stage of the project involved consultation with academics. This allowed Pure AV to understand the needs and requirements of the University. The idea was to combine both collaborative and traditional teaching styles. A mix of flat plate teaching rooms with collaborative furniture and traditionally tiered lecture theatres provides Timetabling Services with the ability to offer lecturers a choice of room type. The academic teaching staff are now able to select the room environment best suited to their purpose and preferred style of delivery.

A core aspect of the audio visual design is the delivery of a consistent end-user experience so that regardless of the room type or location on campus, the audio

visual technology and user interface encountered by academic room users is familiar. To achieve this, the University has established a standardised approach to equipment selection and programming.

Standardised set-up

"It is important to create a familiar environment for the academic staff, they want to concentrate on lesson delivery free from anxiety about the technology they will have to use. This approach with the integration and programming completed by Pure AV has enabled us to create an effective teaching environment and offer academics the added comfort of a familiar interface," says Aaron Turlington-Smith, teaching support manager at Loughborough University.

"Pure AV has enabled us to create an effective teaching environment and offer academics the added comfort of a familiar interface for room usage"



“The West Park Teaching Hub provides everything under one roof so I can stay all day, it's really productive for my studies”

The standard room set-up includes Extron touch screens and control, Panasonic projection and displays, Wolfvision visualisers, TeamMate lecterns and lecture capture. Because of this standardisation of manufacturers, the support services function is able to hold spare parts for key equipment in case of failure.

Fulfilling students' needs

Increasing the number of informal learning spaces for students was another aim of the project. Learning environments manager, Caroline Pepper, explains, “Prior to the introduction of the West Park Teaching Hub we had students walking considerable distances between lectures to find suitable areas for informal study and group work.

Within West Park we have informal study areas adjacent to the formal teaching spaces so that when students filter out from timetabled lectures they have a comfortable area, equipped with collaborative furniture where they can continue with conversations and engage in group work activity.”

The teaching spaces were designed to allow two of the flat plate rooms to be combined to create one large exhibition space. The Panasonic projection and other AV equipment within these rooms is constructed so that the lecterns can be removed and audio managed to ensure optimum operability and performance whether in standalone teaching mode or combined exhibition mode.

“Feedback from end users has been great and the equipment has performed as envisaged”

The four Panasonic projectors in each of these combined areas are configured to show duplicated images when set up for exhibitions. The performance and reliability of the Panasonic projectors was a key factor in the University's decision to specify them across the campus estate.

The project was completed by Pure AV without any issues and ahead of schedule. “The project delivery at West Park Teaching Hub was fantastic. Communication (with Pure AV) was excellent throughout the project. Since the building opened feedback from end users has been great and the equipment has performed as envisaged, with no issues whatsoever,” says Aaron Turlington.

Feedback from students as well as academic staff was positive. A post occupancy evaluation of the building found that there's been remarkable improvements in the building ratings. According to qualitative research, the best rated result of the project was the consolidation of formal and informal spaces within one area.

Anonymised student feedback includes, “The West Park Teaching Hub provides everything under one roof so I can stay all day, it's really productive for my studies.” As well as, “It's a really valuable addition for the West park on campus.” And, “The West Park Teaching Hub has a great vibe.”