

# The UK Higher Education Learning Spaces Toolkit

Multi-organisation collaborative development

Caroline Paradise, Atkins (HEDQF representative)



learning  
environment?



# learning environment?



'personalised' experience?

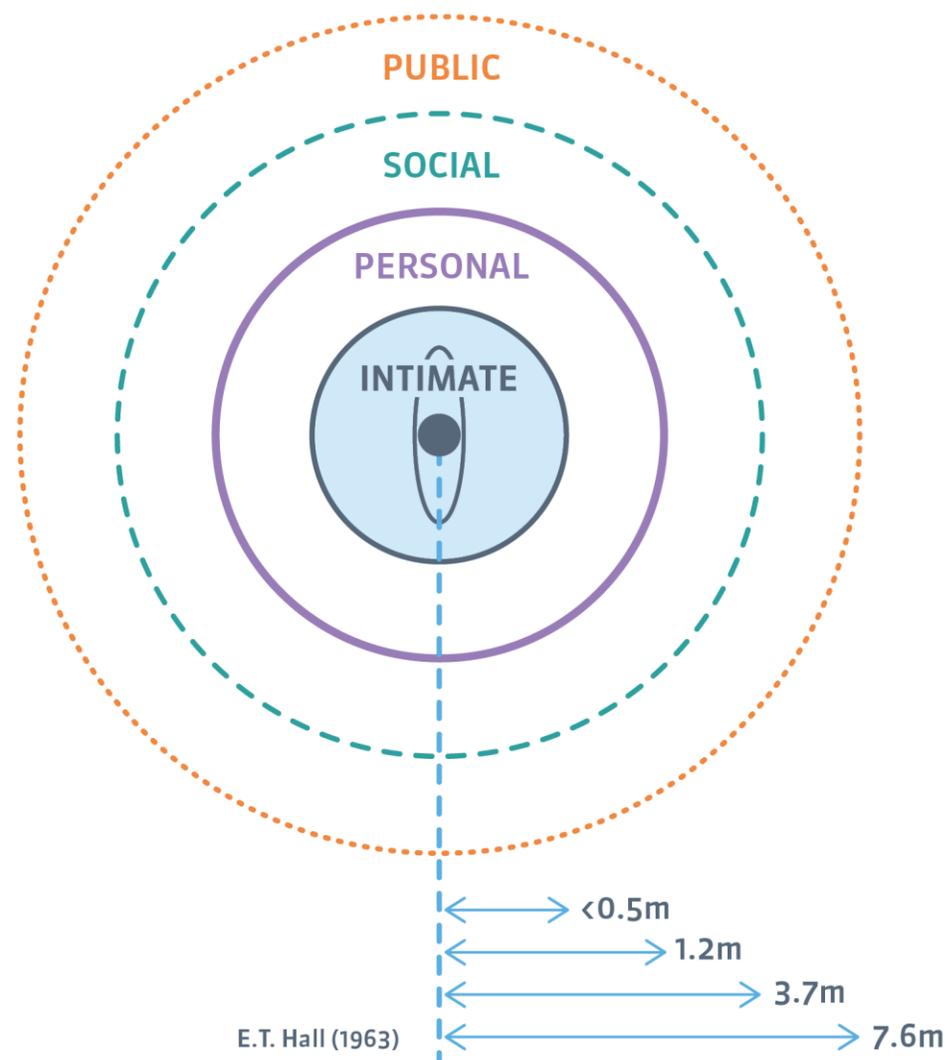


**learning**  
**not teaching**

# social interaction

Interaction is valuable for the development of social relationships responds to a human need for belonging.

Strong informal social networks can reduce stress in the workplace. Increasing opportunities for interaction lead to a 6% reduction in measured stress.  
*(Health, Wellbeing and Productivity in offices, WGBC 2014)*



# interaction

The term 'Interaction' can mean both formal and informal meetings with colleagues or students, and can happen in a variety of places.

**PRIVACY**



**AWARENESS**



**BRIEF INTERACTION**

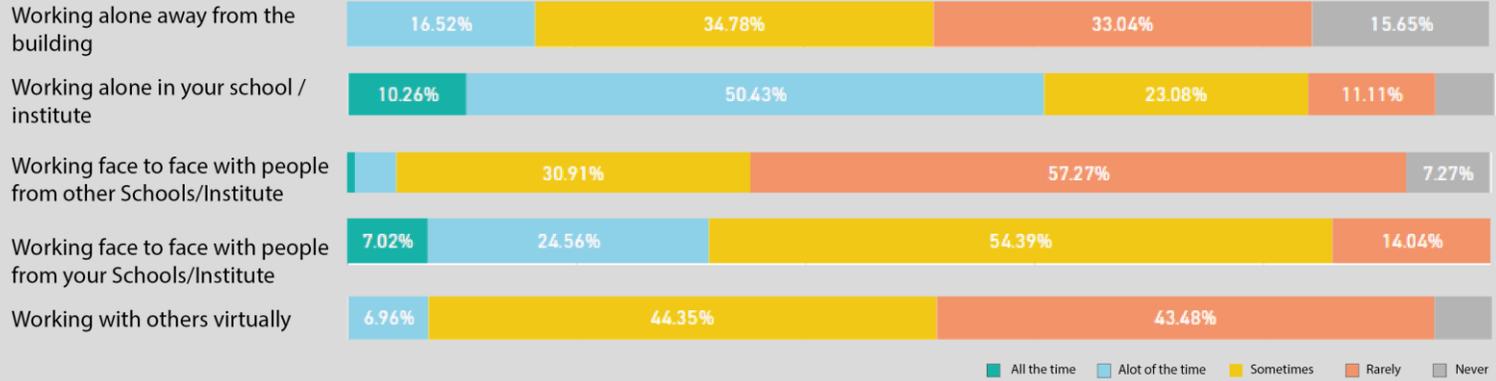


**COLLABORATION**



# User activity profiles

## PERCIEVED TIME SPENT ON ACTIVITIES

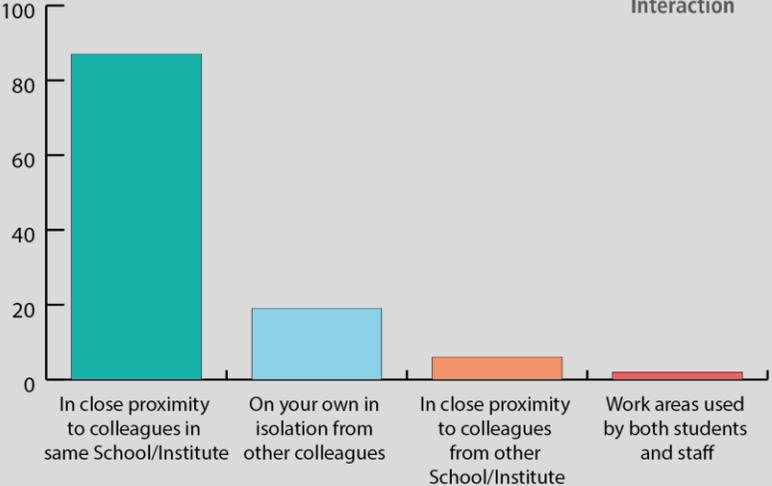


## PREFERRED ENVIRONMENTS

'Which of the following environments would you prefer to work in?'

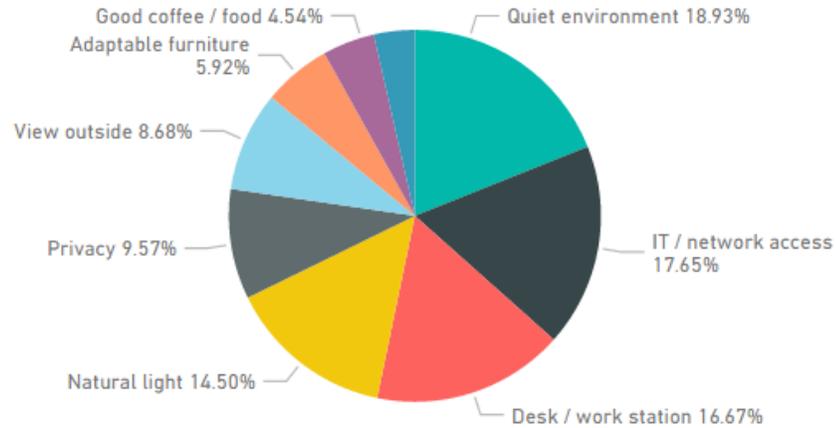


Interaction

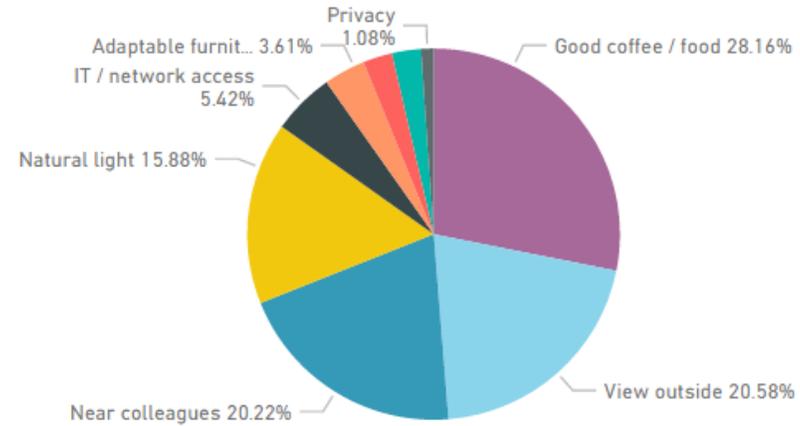


# User activity profiles and **spatial attributes**

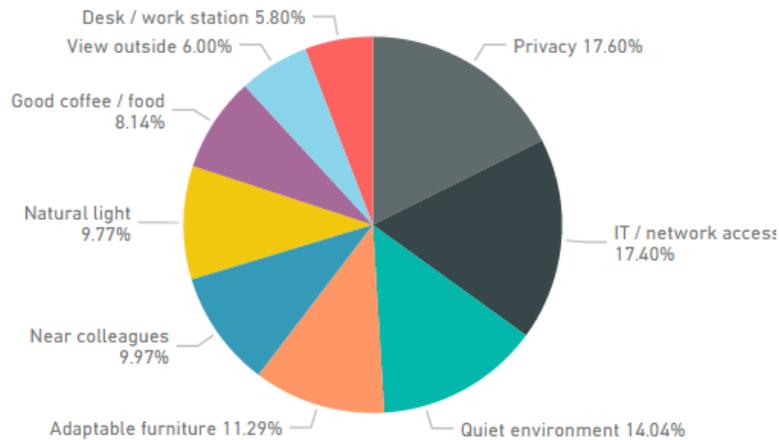
## Desk-based work



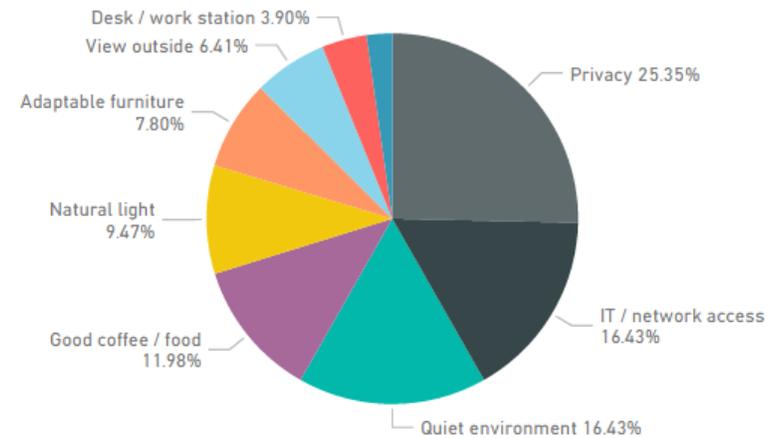
## Social activities



## Meetings with students & internal colleagues



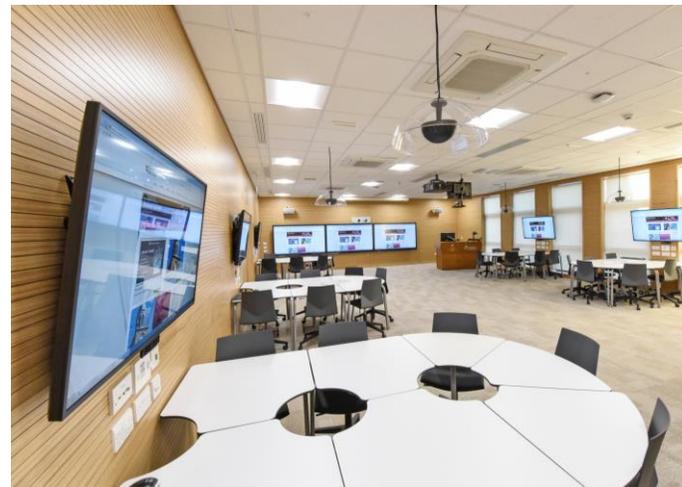
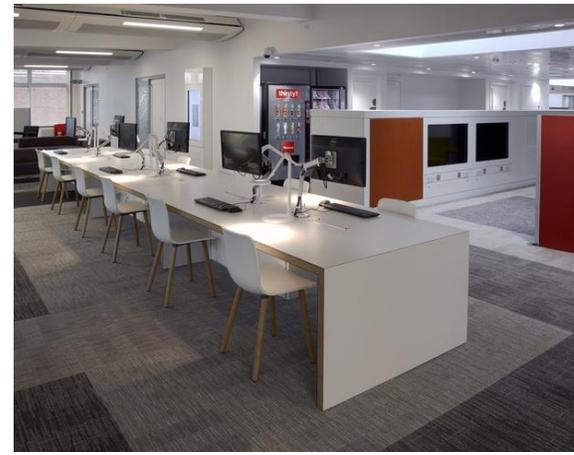
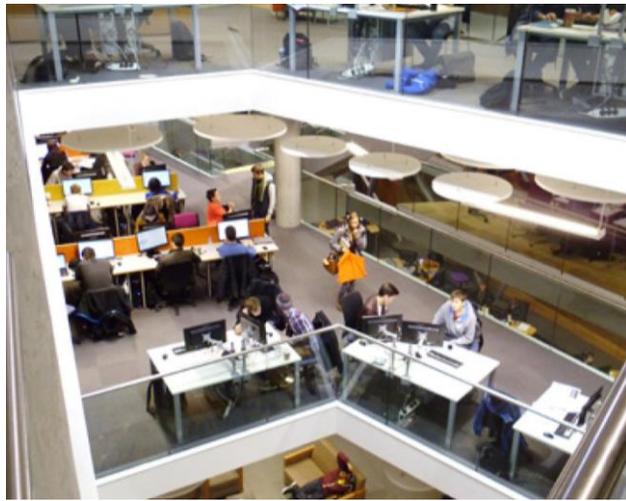
## Meetings with external colleagues



## Spatial attributes

- Good coffee / food
- View outside
- Near colleagues
- Natural light
- IT / network access
- Adaptable furniture
- Desk / work station
- Quiet environment
- Privacy

# Space Types





**“What if we don’t change at all ...  
and something magical just happens.”**

# The Original Toolkit

Learning Space Toolkit aims to:

- To share best practice and allow people to work more effectively when creating learning spaces.
- To be a practical guide and a source of inspiration in the design of spaces that delight and motivate students, as well as they meet their functional needs.

<https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/learningspace>



# The Original Toolkit

Key chapters are:

1. Building a new Pedagogy
2. Working in partnership
3. Managing a learning space project
4. Effective learning by design
5. Learning Technologies
6. Evaluation
7. Change management and transition



## 1. Building a new Pedagogy



What competencies do we want learners to develop?

## 2. Working in Partnership



“Many stakeholders hold a valuable piece of the puzzle- their input is essential.”  
*Bickford and Wright 2006*

### 3. Managing a learning space project



**TRADITIONAL TEACHING**

“Sometimes you need to slow down to speed up.. For a better set of outcomes.” James Rutherford UCISA 2016

### 4. Effective learning by design



**ACTIVE LEARNING**

‘It should be obvious on entering the space how to turn equipment on and get it running without having to read a manual.’ (Martin 2010)

## 5. Learning Technologies

## 6. Evaluation

## 7. Change management & transition



‘The danger is that we use the old measures to measure new space and thereby find it wanting.’  
(UCISA 2016)

‘Building is the easy bit; the hard bit is in developing the staff skills to use the space effectively.’ (Simon Birkett, in UCISA 2016)

**What do you think of this teaching room?**

o Room Number / Building: \_\_\_\_\_

o Please Tick: Staff  or Student

o What do you like about learning/teaching in this room? \_\_\_\_\_

o What do you not like about learning/teaching in this room? \_\_\_\_\_

o What could be done better with this space? \_\_\_\_\_

o Please leave your email address if you are willing to talk to us about your experiences of teaching spaces in the University.  
o Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave this card in the suggestion box in the room. Thank you!

 University of Glasgow **Wolfson Medical School**

**Hugh Fraser Room**

Scan the image to tell us what you think about learning in this room



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# Phase Two . . .

. . . More in-depth case studies

- List collated through suggestions from membership of partner organisations
- New build or refurbishment project

Four space types identified:

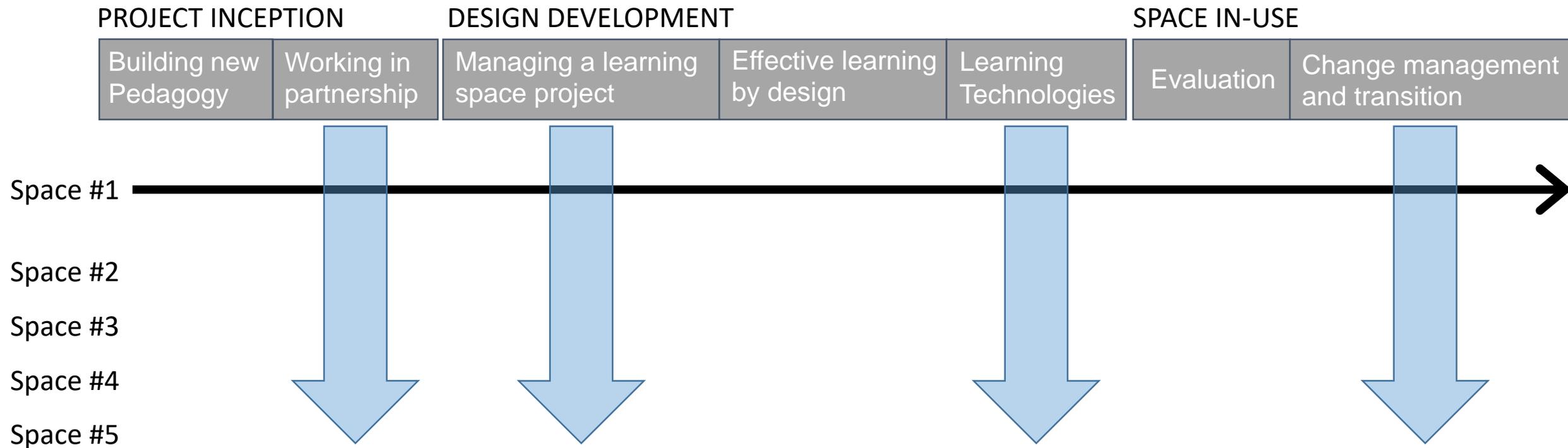
- **Didactic learning;** still forms a significant percentage of spaces with HEI estates
- **Group learning;** small to large spaces often utilising technology to support new pedagogic approaches
- **Social learning;** dedicated or assimilated spaces increasingly important as part of learning landscape
- **Specialist;** large range of spaces from STEM labs to maker spaces



# Phase Two . . .

. . . More in-depth case studies

Organised by themes from the toolkit or by project



# Development to date

## Data collection methodology

- Questionnaire to project champions, stakeholders and users (students, staff and maintenance)
- Focused interviews with key stakeholders
- Talking heads videos
- Observation of space in use
- Existing Post Occupancy information (if available)



CASS, London Metropolitan University

# Development to date

## Student Researcher appointed with SCHOMS funding.

## Selection of Case Studies through initial feedback sheet:

- Example overleaf
- 12 selected (main and supporting to show range)
- Still an opportunity to include more

## Data collection

- Questionnaire development based on the Toolkit chapters
- Disseminated in online format
- Focused interviews in workshop format at Institution
- Observation of spaces in use

### Learning Spaces Toolkit

#### Working in partnership

'We cannot design effective spaces for learning unless we recognize that many stakeholders hold a valuable piece of the puzzle - their input is essential.' (Bickford and Wright 2006)

In your opinion, were the stakeholder engagement sessions successful?

Yes

No

Not sure

Who led the engagement sessions? E.g. Design team, Estates Department, Department Heads or Academic champions.

In your opinion, were there any particular delegates/stakeholders missing from the engagement process?

Was your role in the project clearly defined to you?

Yes

No

Not sure

# Selected Case Studies

- Aberdeen University – DELS
- University of Glasgow – Wolfson Building
- Loughborough University - STEM Ideas Lab
- London School of Economics – LSE LIFE
- Bath Spa – The Learning Commons
- Newcastle University – large group learning space
- Kingston STEM
- *University of York - group learning space*
- *University of Dundee - large group learning*
- *University of Essex– commons space*
- *CASS, London Met - specialist studio*
- *University of Edinburgh - didactic space*



University of York

## Aberdeen University – DELS

- flexible furniture
- auto tracking/switching video cameras for video and web conferencing, lecture capture and the ability to wirelessly connect your device onto any of the displays in the room and share this with any or all displays
- Each bay has a 55-inch display for group work and the main teaching wall has three 84-inch touchscreen monitors)
- staff and students from all over the world can lead or be part of



## Aberdeen University – DELS

Digital learning brings GP surgery to the classroom

“The biggest appeal for students is that they see consultations that are almost live, and this adds a sense of immediacy that appeals to students who have grown up in an era where digitisation has made learning far more interactive” *Dr John McKeown*



## London School of Economics – LSE LIFE

- Refurbishment project, opened 2016
- Max. occupancy = 560 people
- Bespoke space on ground floor of library
- Academic, personal and professional development centre for undergraduate and taught master's students
- Multi-use space that can be configured by the students to suit a variety of activities.



## London School of Economics – LSE LIFE

- Promotes interactive working through its flexible, modular furniture.
- Supports ad hoc configuration for individuals and groups.
- Space can be used for large scale events like Career Fairs due to ease of clearing facilitated by furniture.
- Post Occupancy Evaluation undertaken



# Outputs

## Website

- Jisc will host
- Aim to make more interactive and navigable
- Contain case studies exemplifying Learning Spaces toolkit
- With video links of spaces (existing)

## POE template

- Created for the case studies transferable to other projects
- POE's available shared if permitted

## Presentation Summary of toolkit / case studies

- To disseminate to conferences of organisations below
- Also, suitable overview for learning spaces projects

Anything else?



Loughborough Collaborative lecture room

# Future Work

- Additional case studies
- Empirical research - Impact on learning outcomes
- International examples



James Cook University, Australia