

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

ENGINEERING BUILDINGS A & B SEMESTER 1 EVALUATION REPORT



Contents

Introduction	3
Welcoming students to their new home	4
Our new facilities	5 - 6
Hotspot analysis	7 - 8
Welcoming and support staff	9
Engaging with our communities	10
Open days	11
Social media	11
Research	12
Operations	12 - 13
Conclusion	14

Introduction

Following an eight-year design and construction phase, the decision was taken to open the doors to the new home for Engineering and Materials Science for teaching and learning in September 2021, ahead of our full opening in September 2022. The decision allowed us to cater to increased recruitment numbers across the Faculty and meet demand for additional study spaces and provide greater flexibility for our students.

The partial opening of MECD (Engineering Building A & B, York Street Building and Oddfellows Hall) for teaching and learning and student support has seen the operationalisation of a number of key spaces, including:



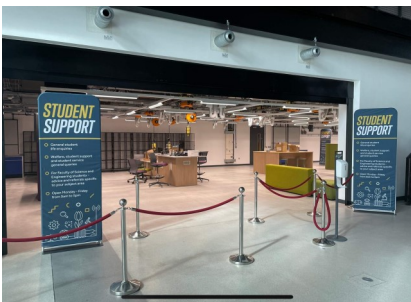
Lecture theatres



Catering outlets



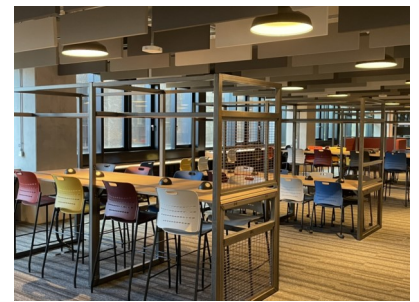
Sample workspace



Student Support Hub



Computer clusters



Informal study spaces

A walk down Engineering Building A's busy internal street at any point during your working week will attest to the way our students are embracing the new space and what our new home has to offer. Since September, we've delivered 1849 taught sessions in new facilities which allow teaching to be more interactive, agile and connected than was previously possible.

In particular, new spaces such as our Dry Lab and Blended Lecture Theatres are combining theoretical learning with practical application and placing us at the forefront of Higher Education delivery. Furthermore, events such as our Societies showcase, Student Poster Day and Welcome Week Live Scribe event are bringing together students from across all of our departments and helping to realise our ambitions of creating a more connected space for our Faculty.

Welcoming students to their new home

Recognising the scale of the building, we produced a [digital and physical map](#) which have proved popular with students, staff and visitors alike. Over 2000 copies of the map have been used and, due to the popularity of the paper version, a further print run was required. Copies were also sent to prospective EEE students in advance of offer holder visits.

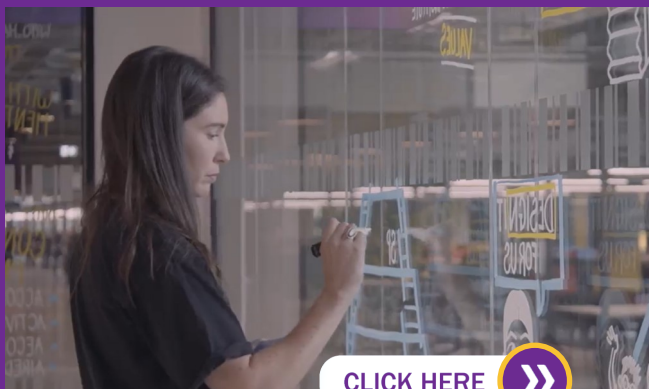
In response to feedback from staff and students, we have made the following amendments to better support wayfinding throughout the buildings:

- More visible meeting point signage
- Additional signage to navigate to Blended Lecture Theatres, on both the Ground Floor of Engineering Building A and the Second Floor of Engineering Building B

Societies showcase

During the welcome period, Engineering Building A hosted our Society showcase, bringing together over 30 societies from the School of Engineering and School of Natural Sciences .

Working closely with our School Student Experience Managers, this was a huge success and we hope to do something similar for the 22/23 academic year.



Live scribe event

To mark the opening of our new home, throughout Welcome Week 2021 a series of speakers involved in our new home's creation were invited to our Maker Space to share the ideas, stories and inspirations that brought the space to life.

Over 4 days, an illustrator turned these ideas and stories into a live 24 metre illustration you can still see across the space's window panels.

Our new facilities



The Manchester Engineering Campus Development set out an ambitious plan to radically change the way we deliver teaching learning and student experience.

Our two blended lecture theatres within the campus provide the facilities to be able to seamlessly blend theoretical and practical teaching. Mark Quinn talks more about this in his video 'the future of learning in Manchester' (left).

Our meeting spaces have also been extremely popular amongst our student community. Engineering Buildings A & B provide 36 bookable spaces for students, that are equipped with digital screens and a whiteboard.

Student study meetings accounted for 76.72% of bookings in our first semester of operation

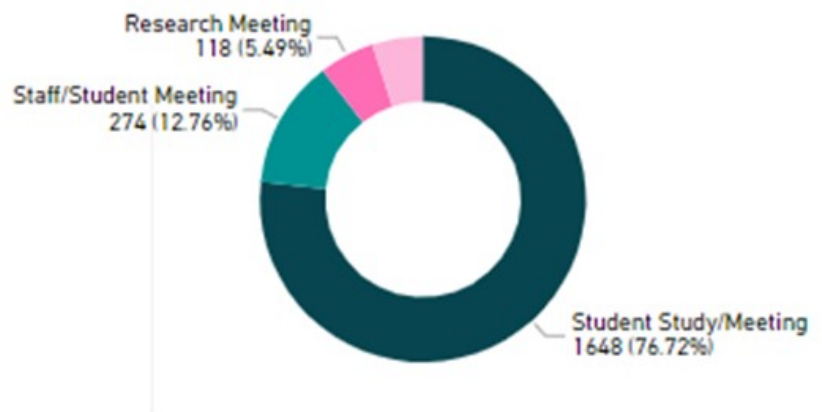


Figure 1: Student usage of bookable meeting space

Responding to student feedback, we have limited the booking slot to three hours per day and included messaging on the Resource Booker platform to ensure students are using these for group study.

Looking forward to the future, it will be important to ensure that staff are able to use these spaces for student interactions too so we may need to review this again in the future, whilst also maintaining a positive student experience.



To explore the range of teaching spaces on offer across Engineering Building A/B, take a look at our 360° views:

[Engineering Building A](#)

[Engineering Building B](#)

Our new facilities

Student Support Hub

Based adjacent to the entrance of Engineering Building A, in what will become the Maker Space, the temporary Student Hub opened in time for Welcome Week 2021. The Hub is staffed by colleagues from the School of Natural Science and two dedicated Student Services Assistants. The Hub is open to all students, with students from the school of Natural Science directed there for specific support and help.



Queries are being resolved at point of first query at the hub reception area via triage to rota staff or department staff via Microsoft Teams. The Hub is expected to move to its permanent home on the first floor of Engineering Building A (next to the main staircase), after the 2022 Easter break.

The efforts of the staff, managers and support team are noted in recognition of delivering excellent service to students.

The following data shows the types of queries being dealt with in the hub, through to the end of November 2021:

Query category	Count of ID
Course or programme query	285
Wayfinding	204
Student Services Centre	166
IT	96
Welfare / wellbeing	37
Timetable	29
Media Services / AV support	7
Assessments	4
Mitigating circumstances	4
Graduation	1
Other	320

Hotspot analysis

In order to understand how staff and students are using Engineering Buildings A and B, hotspot analysis was conducted three times daily, during w/c 6 December 2021.

This provided a comprehensive overview of the building usage during a teaching week in Semester 1. A total of 869 building users were canvassed during the week. The findings are summarised below:

- Undergraduate students use the building more than other groups. (Table 1).
- The open study spaces are the most popular spaces in the building and are chosen above other areas on campus as a study destination (Table 2)
- Our students use the building predominantly to attend lectures and classes and for study (Table 3).

To provide additional richer content to the analysis, interviews were conducted in the open study spaces to understand why students were choosing them. 40 students were interviewed, of which 26 were from the Faculty of Science and Engineering.

All students stated that they chose Engineering Buildings A & B over other areas on campus—the most cited reasons for this were the comfortable furniture and availability of quiet spaces (Table 4). The overwhelming reason cited for using the space was to complete coursework or study (Table 1).

Hotspot analysis

Cohort type	Total
Student (UG)	671
Student (PGT)	93
Student (PGR)	21
Academic staff	30
PS	54
Total	859

Table 1: Cohorts canvassed in hotspot analysis

Location	Total
Open area / social space	311
Meet and teach rooms	242
Computer cluster	138
Lecture theatre	121
Blended Lecture Theatre	37
Office	20
Café	5
Total *	874

Table 2: Locations used in the building

Reason for being in the building	Total
Study	236
Attending a lecture	200
Group study meeting	96
Research project	59
Laboratory classes practical	52
Supervision meeting	42
Passing through the building	39
Social meeting (lunch / meeting friends)	20
Using the facilities (e.g. PC, printers)	18
Academic advisor meeting	17
Student support team	14
Surgery session	2
Quick question to a lecturer	1
Confidential group meeting	1
Other	70
Total	867

Table 3: Reason for being in the building

Why MECD?	Total	Why MECD?	Total
Quiet	12	Good lighting	2
Comfortable furniture	9	Stayed after lectures / classes	2
Easy to find space to use	5	Study areas close to the toilets	2
Access to PC clusters	3	Easy access	1
Private area to study / meet	3	Availability of plugs	1

Table 4: Cohorts canvassed in hotspot analysis

Welcoming and supporting staff

In addition to the mandatory Health and Safety induction, a helpful online platform was developed and launched to support users of the building make best use of the facilities on offer. Accessed through StaffNet, [the platform](#) is updated on a regular basis and offers a single point of information for staff. This has been accessed over 100 times.

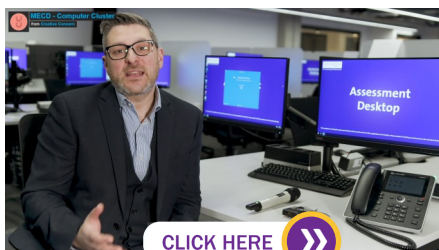
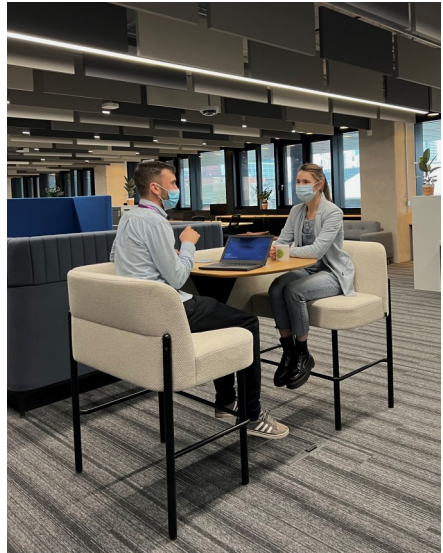
Familiarising academic colleagues with their new teaching facilities has also been a major priority for our first semester of operation.

Thus far we have delivered over 25 training sessions for staff to come and acquaint themselves with new, modern teaching equipment that will enable greater engagement and collaboration with students. These training sessions will continue to run in semester 2 and beyond.

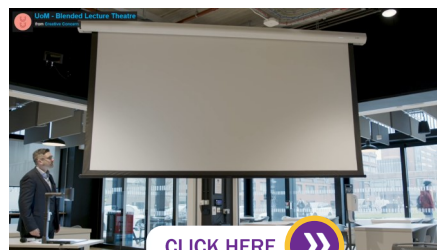
In response to feedback from colleagues, we have made the following amendments to meet the needs of the academic community:

- Visualisers installed in the Blended Lecture Theatres (Eng A and B)
- Chairs in lecture theatres with a capacity of over 50
- Clocks installed in lecture theatres

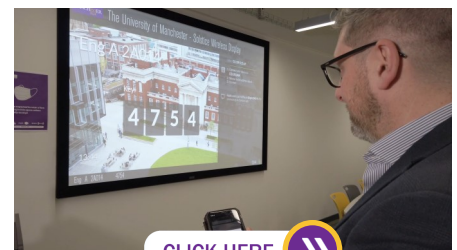
To further help teaching and learning colleagues familiarise themselves with AV in their new facilities and get the most out of their sessions, ahead of Semester 2, we've produced a series of tutorial videos highlighting new and unique spaces throughout the buildings.



Computer clusters



Blended Lecture Theatre,
Engineering Building A



Interconnected teaching
rooms,

Engaging with our communities

Unsurprisingly, our new home has attracted significant attention from internal and external stakeholders which has resulted in greater demand for tours and events than originally intended. The images below depict some of our national and international visitors.



We held a particularly special visit for Otto Diesfeldt, an Architect from Mecanoo who made a significant contribution to the project. Otto shared their thoughts on how student experience played a vital role in the building's design and how it felt seeing the building for the first time.





Following a request from the Widening Participation team, we hosted a bespoke visit for a looked-after young person, with our MECD Intern Geaner Memet and student ambassador Henrik providing a fantastic insight into life as a student at UoM.

This attracted positive feedback from the student and their chaperone (left).

Open days

We have held two visit days for prospective students which have been positively received. Feedback from both parents and students was for the labs to be open for them to see and to have more visual representation of what would be done on the courses on offer. Looking forwards to future open days, it is important to ensure that activities are scheduled within Engineering Building A and B to showcase our facilities and demonstrate why studying at Manchester is unique.

Social media

 1,076  1,476



[@uom_mecd](https://www.instagram.com/uom_mecd)

Instagram has predominantly allowed us to connect with our student population, who use the platform it to engage with updates, raise queries directly to our teams and to report issues.





568 new followers,
representing a 78% increase
over SEM1



100+ student queries
answered via DM



1,476 likes across 46 new
posts

 1,301  702



[@uom_mecd](https://twitter.com/uom_mecd)

Twitter has predominantly seen interactions from our academic community and network of external partners, who use the platform to share updates and content around our new home.



31,962 organic
impressions across our
SEM1 tweets



178 new followers since
September 2021



Over 700 likes and 300
retweets across SEM1

 245  2034



[linkedin.com/company/uom-mecd](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uom-mecd)

Our LinkedIn showcase page has provided a platform to engage with our extensive network of partners who worked on and continue to work on bringing our new home to life.



6,493 organic impressions
in 5 weeks



238 new followers in first
5 weeks



Over 2000 likes
across 17 posts

Research

Our first facility to move to their new home within York Street Building was the High Voltage lab. It has been wonderful to see research staff settle in to their new, world class facility and conduct their first experiments.

The next 12 months will see the move of 72 technical spaces into their new Engineering Building A/B. The research group's reflections on their move can be viewed in the video below.



Operations

Recognising the importance of gathering user feedback and resolving any issues swiftly, two groups have been constituted:

A Building User Group—a group of representatives from across the Departments and business areas occupying the building, who provide feedback on behalf of their communities to continually improve the experience of building users.

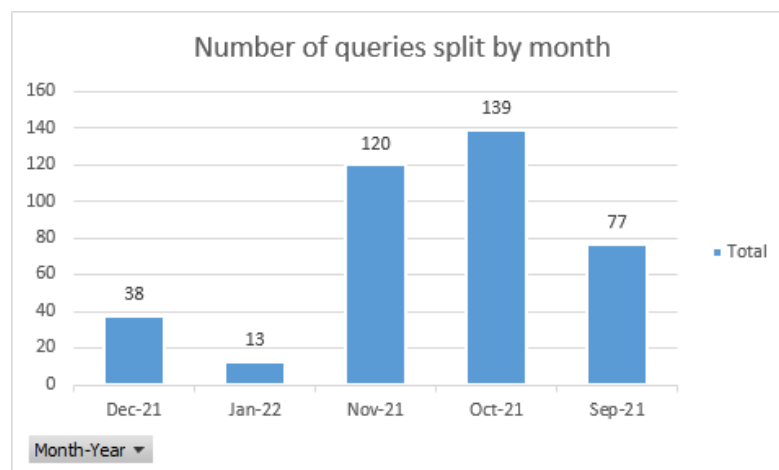
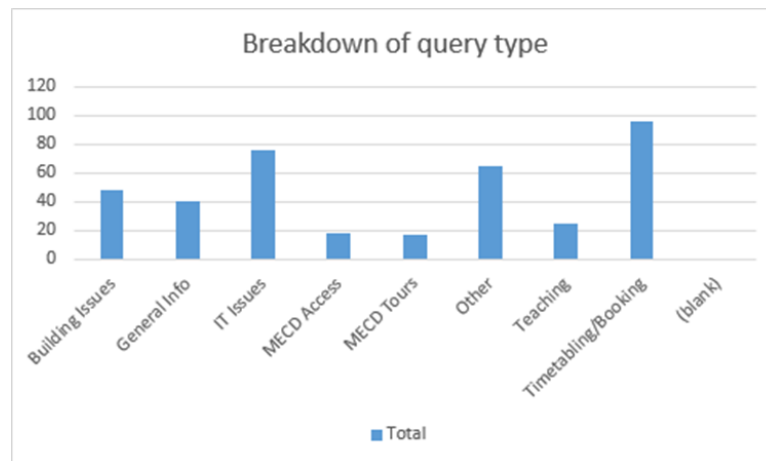
MECD Core Management Group—a small group of senior staff who can respond to urgent feedback and incidents within the building so as to ensure its continued, successful operation. Issues can be escalated to the Core Management Group from direct email correspondence, the Building User Group and the MECD Operational Group.

The Service Delivery Team has been built over the past 6 months and is designed to:

- Respond to queries in a timely manner
- Support students to access services
- Ensure the building is tidy
- Support the successful delivery of teaching and learning
- Deliver visits and tours
- Continuously improve based on feedback and evaluation

Operations

We aim to provide a responsive service to any questions users of the building may have. This has proved hugely successful. A breakdown of query type can be found below.



We have received lots of positive feedback from our customers but we feel this one encapsulates everything we sought to achieve in our first semester of operation:

"Thanks for the excellent work done by you and your team. It is very good to be able to send a message to one point and be confident that someone will action it."



Conclusion

Overall our first semester of operation has proved successful and a hugely important learning experience. The operation of Engineering Building A and B is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our users as well as realising the MECD vision.

Looking ahead, our priorities for Semester Two are:

- continued engagement and support to occupants (both staff and students);
- induction and familiarisation sessions for colleagues to acquaint themselves with their new teaching facilities;
- ensuring adequate resource is in place to deliver services, including visits, in the coming year.

Our early opening has not been without its challenges, as our teams continually adapt to meet the demands of our new home and incorporate staff and student experience into our modes of service delivery. A huge thank you to all colleagues who have been part of making the first semester as success and for their invaluable support as we navigate our move and full opening in 2022.

This next phase of operation will see five new floors of workspace open across Engineering Building A and Oddfellows Hall, our laboratories and technical spaces moved into our new home, more meet and teach spaces opened throughout the building and the launch of our Maker Space, where students can let their entrepreneurial ideas run free. So for the vast majority of our Faculty, the excitement and time to act starts now.

