# Learning Spaces – Developments and Timetables

## Teaching Space Developments

The James France teaching space and exhibition area will be closed from the beginning of June for the major refurbishment. This includes the three tiered lecture rooms, three flat-floor rooms and the exhibition space. The end result will be a very modern, vibrant look with improved audio visual capability and better seating areas for people with wheelchairs. In addition there will be a new flat floor teaching room with group seating arrangement for 60 students. This will be off the exhibition area and is an additional facility. Above this and over-looking the exhibition area will be a new informal learning space with seating for individuals and for groups. There will be some fixed computers and the availability of wireless networking. The area will be bright and modern looking. This will be a great additional facility for students.

Lecture capture is currently available in CC011 and T003. This will be rolled out to H010 and W001 in the summer and there will be an improvement in the camera in CC011. It had been hoped to include this in the other two tiered rooms in the James France but budget constraints prevented this.

## Timetabling

The University has signed a contract with Serco Learning for the purchase of the Facility CMIS system. This system is used at a number of other HEIs. A software analyst is now in place and looking at the software installation and the links which will need to be created with LUSI. An offer has been made following interviews for the Timetabling Manager post. The Project Management Board has met a number of times to discuss the specification and the selection of product. A detailed implementation and schedule is to be discussed at forthcoming meetings with both the supplier and by the project management board. The implementation will be phased with the first step being to replicate the existing room bookings processes (but probably adding in departmental rooms as well as pool rooms to enable us to provide online room booking information through the web site). The next step will be to use the software to create a more optimal timetable using constraints provided through academic departments (relating to staff and special requirements for lectures), Facilities management (relating to rooms) and LUSI (relating to students and their programmes). The first phase is currently planned for semester two 2010/11 and the second phase for semester one 2011/12.

## Looking Ahead

We have an increasing requirement for space to teach groups in excess of 300 and only two suitable rooms (T003 with a capacity of 300 and J110 with just over 400). J110 provides a very poor experience for both students and staff and the seating has had problems and will need replacing at some point in time. Options have been investigated by Facilities Management and a really good opportunity is presented by using J104 and the adjacent furniture store. This provides a high square space which could enable a two-tiered 400-seater lecture theatre to be created. Space Allocations Sub-Committee have requested that a Stage One proposal is made to Operations Committee to investigate this further. There are also options for creating further flat floor rooms off the James France Exhibition area should we wish to do this once some occupied offices become vacant and subject to somewhere being found for the furniture store – there is not sufficient depth to create a large theatre. Again this will be investigated further to see what benefits this may bring.

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