



THE STEPHENSON BUILDING - A PRESTIGIOUS HOME FOR ENGINEERING

The Stephenson Building at Newcastle University is one of the most prestigious and recognisable homes for engineering education in the UK. Following an ambitious phased redevelopment programme, the building has been transformed into a striking, contemporary environment that reflects the innovation and energy of the School of Engineering.

Phase 1 focused on delivering the new teaching and collaborative spaces, with Universal AV appointed as the technology partner to equip a range of learning environments including large lecture theatres, flexible seminar rooms, IT cluster suites and immersive 'in the round' teaching spaces designed to support group working, discussion and hands-on learning. Building on this success, Phase 2 introduced the large-format LED display within the new central atrium, further enhancing communication, engagement and the building's role as a visual showcase for engineering. The result is a space with real wow factor that showcases world-class teaching and research.

FROM HIDDEN SPACES TO A CENTRAL HEART

Before redevelopment, the building consisted of a historic front facade with two ground level wings housing laboratories. Much of the activity was hidden from view. The new design boxed in and connected the existing structure to create a dramatic central atrium that now forms the heart of the building.

SERVICES PROVIDED





LED AS A CENTRAL FOCUS POINT

At the centre of the new atrium sits a large format LED display that immediately draws the eye and reinforces the building's role as a showcase for engineering. The original brief considered a video wall, but following technical and costs assessments, a 6 x 3m 2.5mm pitch LED was chosen due to its longevity, sustainability and lower running costs, with only a small difference in overall project cost.

The display was carefully sized to fit within the glazed aperture of the original building facade, with structural considerations around height and weight forming a key part of the design process. The result is a seamless installation that complements the architecture while delivering real visual impact.

The LED display is integrated into the university's campus messaging system and runs the dedicated engineering channel, ensuring content is relevant to students and staff within the building. The system also allows bespoke content to be displayed when required, giving the School of Engineering flexibility in how they communicate and engage.

A SPACE THAT WELCOMES AND CONNECTS

The atrium plays a key role beyond day to day teaching. It is used for open days and visit days, with introductory talks delivered on the living stairs and in the social spaces overlooking the atrium. It gives prospective students a clear sense of what engineering at Newcastle is all about and where they will be based. The building is designed around the needs of the School of Engineering and is primarily used for internal activity, including internal conferences.





A PHASED APPROACH WITH UNIVERSAL AV

Universal AV worked closely with Newcastle University throughout the redevelopment, supporting the project from the early delivery of teaching and learning spaces through to the creation of the new atrium focal point. Phase 1 established a strong digital foundation across lecture theatres, collaborative teaching spaces and IT clusters, demonstrating how well-designed AV could support modern pedagogy and day-to-day teaching within the School of Engineering.

Building on the success of Phase 1, Universal AV were then appointed to deliver Phase 2, bringing high-impact digital communication into the heart of the building through the installation of the large-format LED display. This second phase extended the role of AV beyond teaching spaces and into the shared social and circulation areas of the building, reinforcing the atrium's role as a central hub for communication, events and engagement.

Colin Fahey, AV Manager at Newcastle University added, *"The atrium was always intended to be the heart of the building. We wanted to create a space that showed what engineering really is. By making the labs visible and choosing LED for the main display, we have created a focal point that is both practical and inspiring for students, staff and visitors."*



A LANDMARK FOR NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

The redevelopment of the Stephenson Building has created a landmark environment that reflects the prestige of Newcastle University and the ambition of its engineering community. The building now showcases the activity within, offering transparency, engagement and a sense of excitement that matches the world-class work taking place inside.



“ Working with Universal AV on the School of Engineering has been an absolute delight. The high-quality installation showcased our cutting-edge LED and projection technologies at their very best. They’re a safe pair of hands and a pleasure to work with ”

THE FINISH LINE

Antoni Guidi
Sharp

