

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Department	Estates
Project	Henry Wood Room (The Forsyth Room)

1. Description

The Academy's Senior Management Team (SMT) signed off funding to enable the Academy to commission a redevelopment of the Henry Wood Room as a teaching and student practice space. The redevelopment included improved acoustics to help mitigate sound leakage, energy efficient lighting, localised temperature control and new interior design including an extended stage area to create a larger performance space.

2. Timescale

Consultation phase: January 2022.

Commissioning phase: May-July 2022.

The Academy went to competitive tender with 3 companies submitting, resulting in a full tender return analysis and the award of a contract to Active Workplace Solutions.

Implementation phase: Summer recess 2022.

The Henry Wood Room (now The Forsyth Room) was refurbished during the summer recess and officially opened by the Principal on 21 September 2022.

3. Could the project have an adverse impact on equality?

Access issues for all potential users of the space, including staff, students, visiting artists, and members of the public were fully considered at all phases of the project.

Improved acoustics will specifically help individuals with a hearing related disability. Sandy Brown, Consultants in Acoustics, Noise & Vibration, were appointed to provide acoustic advice in relation to the proposed reconfiguration works.

Acoustic benchmark testing was undertaken within the room and adjacent spaces to establish the existing acoustic performance with a view to determining potential improvements. The benchmark testing was comprised of measurements of internal sound insulation, background noise levels and reverberation times. This included surveys regarding the noise leakage into the adjoining offices below, resulting in a proposal to:

- Install a false ceiling, to allow for installation of sound boards/insulation materials.
- Open the fireplaces and explore possible insulation solutions.
- Install 5 hardwood secondary, sash sliding windows with acoustic glazed panels.
- Lay acoustic underlay and a quality broadloom carpet
- LED lighting

These combined measures have made a significant improvement to noise leakage from the room and will allow students to use the space for recording and playback, which is integral for their professional development. The sound proofing insulation will also be very beneficial to students with ADHD and autistic students who find noisy environments stressful.

Additionally, teaching in the space has been improved by the installation of enhanced lighting, temperature control, furniture, fittings and interior design, providing a more comfortable and fit for purpose learning environment. The LED lighting will be particularly beneficial to students who are neurodiverse, those who suffer with migraines, as well as some visually impaired people.

As part of potential phase two activity, it may also be possible to install lowered ceilings with sound boards/insulation in the adjoining lower floor offices impacted by noise leakage. Further consideration is possible now that work on the room has been completed and the success of sound attenuation works can be evaluated.

4. What evidence has been considered? What consultation has been undertaken?

The project was led by the SMT and a consultation with Heads of Departments was undertaken to provide feedback on how the room should be developed.

Sandy Brown, Consultants in Acoustics, Noise & Vibration, were appointed to provide acoustic advice in relation to the proposed reconfiguration works.

The competitive tendering process included the use of the Academy's Equality and Diversity Procurement Questionnaire.

The Academy's Disability Advisor reviewed the project specifications as part of EIA consultation exercise.

Received by Belonging Committee: 28/10/22