

The University of Edinburgh

Space Management Group

5 November 2009

Student and Academic Services Group (SASG) Space Rationalisation Report

Brief description of the paper

The paper provides a summary of recent and proposed changes to accommodation requirements within the Student and Academic Services Group.

Action requested

For information

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? Yes. All major refurbishments have been identified in the Support Group's Planning submission.

Risk Assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and Diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No

Any other relevant information

None

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Originator of the paper

S.M. Welham
SASG Business Manager
26 October 2009

Student and Academic Services Group (SASG) Space Rationalisation Report

This paper provides a summary of recent and proposed changes to accommodation requirements within the Student and Academic Services Group.

Our continued aspiration is to co-locate as many of our services as is possible to help address our Strategic Plan enabler of delivery of quality services. Co-location of some services dealing directly with our students would be a major step forward in enhancing our existing high quality service provision whilst increasing synergy and providing greater opportunity for efficiency. In this context we are exploring the options offered us by the Main Library Redevelopment Project as a temporary solution to service co-location. We continue to aim for a Student Services Centre for the longer-term to enhance our service delivery.

Biological Services - no plans

Careers Service

The location of the Careers Service at King's Buildings is less than ideal; it is on the periphery of a campus where non-timetabled time is limited for many students making drop in access problematic. A move to the main library building for the central office, currently located in Buccleuch Place, has the potential to integrate the Service more with current student life. However there is still some concern over the location of student services within the main library building and a pressing need to ensure that the flow of traffic to the Service within the library is maximised and that the atmosphere created around the Service is conducive to a vibrant, student-centred service.

Chaplaincy

The first floor storage space was incorporated into the first floor kitchen to extend it and giving a much better and more accessible arrangement.

Communications and Marketing (CAM)

Over the summer, CAM relocated to the second floor of Forrest Hill. CAM had previously operated on three sites in addition to the University Visitor Centre in the Informatics Forum - Nicolson Street (media and web), the Pleasance (marketing) and Moray House (audio visual). The move has freed up valuable space on these sites (Nicolson Street has subsequently been let) and at the same time enabled teams that are highly dependent on each other's work to be co-located creating a more efficient and effective service. Consideration is being given to the potential of Forrest Hill to house the University's audio visual studio. This would require an additional large room in Forrest Hill to be allocated and configured; however, if this proves possible it would enable CAM to free up further space by moving the studio from its current location in Moray House. The standard of the main entrance to Forrest Hill remains poor and discussions are continuing with Estates and Buildings to carry out modest remedial works that would create a more positive visitor experience and impression.

Development and Alumni/General Council

In August 2009 Development and Alumni renovated and occupied the Mary Erskine Room and relocated their Operations team to this space. This work was funded by a Small Capital Projects grant. This move has brought the entire department together on the second floor of Charles Stewart House and has been extremely beneficial. Further modifications are planned to the layout of the main office to use the space more efficiently and to better organise desks to suit the team structure.

The General Council is content with their current space allocation.

Disability Office

Disability Office premises are extremely tight and not fit for purpose, both in terms of access and in dealing with the sheer number of students who visit the office at peak periods. A move to the main library building could help to solve these issues, providing the new accommodation is designed to be fit for purpose.

EUCLID

EUCLID has released the Reid Foyer area in Old College to Registry and is also looking at releasing two further offices to Registry as well. This will facilitate Registry's plans to relocate the student entrance to their offices and should also assist in relocating Academic Affairs.

Health Service

The Health Service accommodation is now no longer able to cope with all the activities expected from a GP practice and discussions are underway on a possible relocation of the Health Service to a purpose built but multi use unit.

Governance and Strategic Planning - no plans

International Office

The International Office accommodation at 57 George Square impinges negatively on the delivery of quality services and support to prospective and current students. This building is often the first location at the University visited by UK and international students, visiting delegations and parents/advisors and is a serious impediment to the status of the University as an internationally respected research institution. The relocation of the international student support and study abroad functions of the International Office, to a modern purpose built centrally located office, should be considered a priority. The current location has no disabled or street level access and the internal configuration of office space negatively impacts on staff communication and project activity and is inadequate to accommodate existing staff numbers.

Pharmacy

The Pharmacy is awaiting the outcome of a larger project including the Health Service. No other plans.

Principal's Office - no plans

Records Management – no plans

Registry, including Academic Affairs

Registry has been assigned a Small Project Grant for 2009/10 to refurbish the Reid Room in to a Registry Student Centre. By agreement with EUCLID instead the Reid Foyer will be now used for this purpose. A new application to the Small Projects Grant for 2010/11 will be lodged for the completion of the refurbishment of the Registry Front Office. It is planned that Academic Affairs will be co-located with Registry. Discussions are ongoing with EUCLID with reference to the mezzanine space above the Reid Foyer.

SASG Business Unit – no plans

Student Counselling Service – no plans

Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA)

We continue to adopt a shared approach across SRA and IO to the utilisation of meeting and reception areas to maximise efficiency. However the building at 57 George Square is now full to capacity and with growing numbers of students there is a significant increase in the number of visitors to the building. Consequently the accommodation does not present the optimum impression for visitors at the first point of contact. There are particular issues about the availability of space to conduct private interviews with students for counselling or visa purposes. Our most significant concern is over storage space within the building. The existing Packing Room at 56 George Square is not fit for purpose and presents significant health and safety risks. This has been raised as an issue by staff asked to undertake work in this area but it has proved impossible to find an alternative area for the storage and packing of our materials. We are currently leasing a storage space at Peffermill from Estates and Buildings but this area cannot be used for packing purposes as there is no adequate heating or toilet facilities to enable staff to work there for any length of time. There are also costs associated with ferrying staff back and forwards to this area.

S.M. Welham
SASG Business Manager - 26 October 2009