Case Study

Active Learning Studio

University of the West of Scotland

TOP-TEC

Active Learning Studio

Active Learning requires agile spaces that enable small teams of students to learn with and from each other, utilising a mixture of information sources that allows them to delve deeper into subject material.

Students can work with content distributed from the academic, or they can ,connect their own mobile computing devices so that all team members have a good view of the visual information. Students have control at each table to work with the material they choose.

In this example at the University of the West of Scotland, a simple colour-coded push button system allows the academic to show the rest of the class the material from any individual table.

Installed in the summer of 2014, Tom Duff, the senior lecturer in the university's Centre for Academic Practice and Learning Development, has already observed the positive changes this new environment has made on both staff and students, and the resulting improved learning and attainment that is taking place.

Using Synergy tables and uncomplicated technology, an inspirational 21st century space has been created that allows lecturer instruction and small group collaborative learning to co-exist.

This highly accessible technology - for both the academic and students - has already dramatically increased the room usage. You can see just when you look at the 'before' and 'after' photos below. Smart phones and tablets become enabling devices positively used for learning, and not the social distractions of students who are not fully engaged in their studies.

Initially configured with wired-connectivity at the tables, the flexibility of the Synergy tables allow for wireless receivers to be added when the correct technology has been identified.

This new Active Learning Studio at the University of the West of Scotland is an inspirational environment blending people, space and technology to foster deeper learning through developing problem solving, communication, and critical thinking skills - which students will take with them into employment.