



Case Study



## Enhancing the student experience

Flexible Learning, Built for the Future



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The University of Derby Business School has been designed as an international centre of excellence and a focal point for the surrounding business community. Created to encourage entrepreneurial growth, the building brings together students, academics, industry experts, local business leaders and entrepreneurs to foster collaboration, innovation and knowledge sharing.

The state-of-the-art facility features a range of specialist teaching spaces, including a virtual reality suite, stock market trading room, creative labs and a 'living lab' supporting both university research and industry projects. The University's ambition was to create an inspiring, modern learning environment that could support new ways of teaching, encourage greater interaction between students and staff, and provide the flexibility needed to respond to changing learning practices.

Working alongside AV integrator GVA, TOP-TEC supplied specialist furniture solutions designed to support the technology-rich environments throughout the new building.



## The Brief

A key part of the brief was the ability to support a wide variety of activities across the building. Spaces needed to work equally well for traditional lectures and seminars, collaborative group work, presentations, hybrid teaching, independent study and technology-led learning. In more specialist areas, the furniture also needed to respond to the particular requirements of the teaching activity, equipment and room layout.

The University therefore required robust, contemporary furniture solutions that combined flexibility, durability and integrated technology with a consistent overall aesthetic. Working alongside AV integrator GVAV, our furniture also needed to accommodate the technology being deployed throughout the building. Accessibility and inclusive design were important considerations, alongside the ability to incorporate bespoke elements where standard solutions could not fully meet the needs of a particular space.

## Key Project Criteria

- **Flexible learning environments:** supporting lectures, seminars, collaborative working and hybrid teaching.
- **Customisable furniture solutions:** tailored to the unique requirements of specialist teaching spaces.
- **Technology integration:** AV-ready furniture designed to accommodate GVAV's integrated audiovisual technology.
- **Inclusive, future-proof design:** incorporating Equality Act compliant accessible furniture within collaborative layouts.
- **Collaborative planning and space optimisation:** using 2D layouts and 3D visualisations to maximise functionality before construction was complete.





## Decision Process

Having successfully partnered with the University of Derby on previous projects, TOP-TEC was a trusted choice to support the development of the new Business School. Our understanding of the University's standards, teaching environments and long-term objectives enabled us to collaborate closely with the University and AV integrator GVAV from the early stages of the project.

As the building was still under construction, we worked closely with the project team to develop furniture layouts using detailed 2D plans and 3D visualisations, helping stakeholders envisage how each teaching space would function. This collaborative approach ensured our furniture could accommodate the integrated AV requirements while maximising flexibility, usability and the overall learning experience. carefully planned to maximise flexibility, usability and the overall learning experience.



## Implementation

- **Synergy Collaborative Tables**  
Supporting collaborative spaces and group work with integrated AV.
- **Gemini Audio Visual Lecterns**  
Installed across teaching rooms as dedicated hubs for GVAV's integrated AV controls and presentation technology.
- **Bespoke Nova Screen Trolleys**  
Flexible, mobile display solutions supporting GVAV's AV system across different teaching layouts.
- **Messenger / Bravo Mobile Lecterns**  
Combine mobility, height adjustment and integrated AV functionality in a compact footprint, perfect for a dynamic lecture theatre.



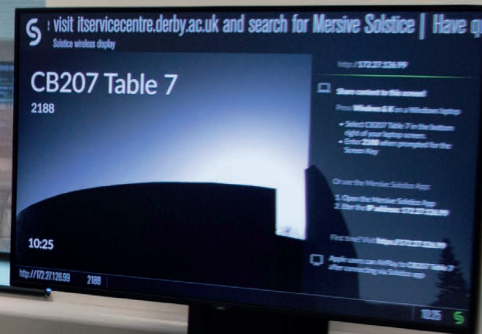


## Customisation

Where specialist spaces called for something more tailored, we adapted our existing furniture to meet the specific requirements of the project. Working alongside GVAV, this included developing a bespoke housing for the Nova trolleys, enabling students to easily connect their devices via HDMI, as well as integrating height-adjustable work surfaces and accessible seating positions into collaborative table layouts.

The result was a range of practical, inclusive teaching spaces designed around the needs of users while supporting the University's vision for a modern, future-focused Business School.





## The Result

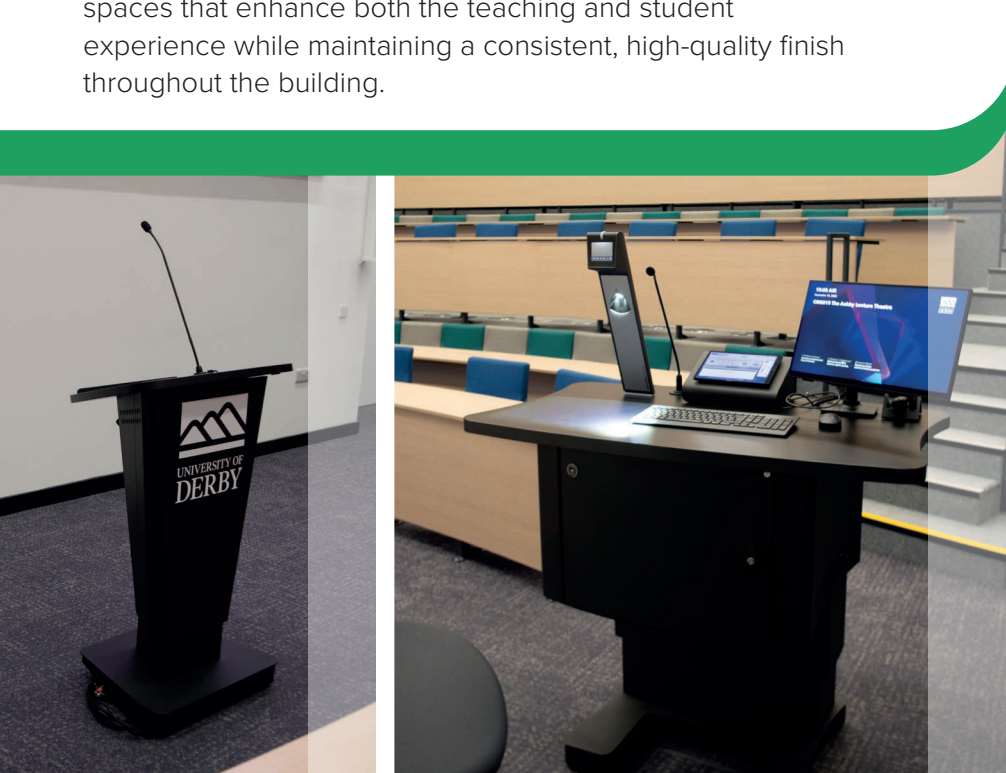
The completed project provided the University of Derby with a series of flexible, technology-enabled learning environments that support a variety of teaching styles.

The collaborative furniture encourages active learning and group engagement, while the bespoke Unity Quad tables maximise the functionality of specialist teaching spaces.

Working alongside GVAV's integrated audiovisual solution, the Gemini lecterns provide professional teaching stations and dedicated AV control hubs, while the mobile screen trolleys allow displays to be repositioned wherever required, giving staff greater flexibility when delivering teaching and collaborative sessions.

Overall, our furniture has helped create modern, adaptable spaces that enhance both the teaching and student experience while maintaining a consistent, high-quality finish throughout the building.

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**T** +44 (0)121 783 3838  
**E** sales@dalen.co.uk  
**W** www.top-tec.co.uk



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**T** +44 (0)20 8814 5950  
**E** sales@gvav.com  
**W** www.gvav.com

