



## Walls absorb the noise

**H**IGH LEVELS of noise reverberation had plagued the group study area at the Health Science Library at the University of Leeds.

Although it was designated as study space, it was a case of spot the student, says project architect Jenni Clay of Leeds-based Work Architecture. "Noise was reverberating around, but we were restricted on what we could put in. The barrel roof prevented the installation of a suspended ceiling or baffles, and the walls have high-level windows and low-level glass-fronted displays of old medical equipment."

The solution was to install acoustic wall absorbers from OWA UK, a measure which Jenni Clay estimates has reduced reverberation by around half. Now the library functions as it should – packed with students working in group discussion, individually and online in a more modern

and quieter environment. To add interest, some of the wall panels were printed with images of former medical dignitaries.

OWAcoustic mineral wool acoustic ceiling and wall products contain more than 50% of a special mineral wool made from a mixture of glass and rock wool. The white mineral wool structure is made from natural and recycled materials, and combines fire resistance with the strength and handling characteristics of glass wool. It's environmentally friendly, bio-soluble and non-hazardous. This enables ceilings to provide good sound absorption in a room as well as good sound insulation between rooms.

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Wall hung OWAcoustic Broadband absorbers on the lower level provide an efficient acoustic absorber hidden behind a work of art and, on the upper level, as a colour co-ordinated absorber providing a more subtle aesthetic effect.

## The right environment for AV presentations

**C**EILING RAFTS and acoustic wall panelling have played a major part in maximising the available space and meeting acoustic targets for the auditorium at The King's Fund in Central London, which operates as a venue for external meetings and conferences.

Completed earlier this year, the scheme involved bespoke architectural metalwork from SAS International, working with architects Panter Hudspith. The ceiling rafts – incorporating acoustic absorption material – luminaires, diffusers and service troughs for conference AV equipment helped maximise the ceiling height, particularly above the stage area.

Wall panelling, incorporating a specially made bulkhead profile surround, was also specified to provide additional acoustic treatment in the auditorium and adjoining lobby area.

### Access consideration

"There has been a lot of design consideration of the acoustic values of the room including the walls, ceiling and flooring in order to provide the best environment for audio visual presentations," conferencing manager Chris Simpson explains.

Ceiling tiles within the ceiling rafts feature a lift and tilt access system allowing easy access for service maintenance. In addition, a special circular collar to conceal the speaker casings was incorporated in the design of the rafts.

Wall panelling was also specified in other areas of the building to meet acoustic requirements. The panelling, which is made of metal, is also used as magnetic 'pinboards', providing a useful surface to display large graphics or drawings.

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