



Hub Central: Utilising co-created 'space design' to produce peer interaction across diverse student groups

Hedley Reberger

Hub Services Manager, University of Adelaide, Hub Central



Hub Central is a **student space** (10,500 sq metres, on 3 levels) and includes:

11 bookable student project rooms, 13 student projects booths, 230 fixed student computers, training rooms, Wi-Fi, lockers, a student kitchen, a Microsoft tech lounge, 3 commercial food outlets, a general store, a post office, Maths and Writing Centres, Student Information and IT Support Services, Service 'hot desks', a 'pop-up- shop, hundreds of chairs, tables, lounges that students can repurpose to meet their needs.

Or as one student put it:

"A f...ing big space, with a s..t load of furniture, technology, power and food, that lets you bunker down with your mates and do your work and think about what your learning".



Do the principals of learning space design produce peer interaction across diverse student groups @ Hub Central ?



- Souter, Riddle, Keppell, Sellers(2010) assert **Seven Principles** of learning space design which support a constructivist approach to learning; and support a learning environment that is student centred, **collaborative** and experiential.
- We now want to explore how these apply to produce peer interaction @ Hub Central.

Source: Souter, K. Riddle, M., Keppell, M./J., & Sellers, W. (2010). *Spaces for knowledge generation*. Retrieved November 19, 2011, from <http://www.skproject.com/>



1. Comfort



Hub Central is a space which creates a physical and mental sense of ease and well-being

Hub Central has well-designed learning spaces and enabling technologies encourage students to spend more time on campus, increasing engagement and improving retention

Students indicate there is a learning value from bumping into someone at the Hub and having a casual conversation.

"A sign of a great place is triangulation. This is the process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to each other as if they were not." (Whyte 1999)



2. Aesthetics



Students suggest Hub Central is pleasurable as it has a recognition of symmetry, harmony, simplicity and fitness for purpose. This transpose across cultural groups.

Hub Central is a space that enhances, motivates and promotes authentic learning interactions. Hub Central student users are exhibiting a freedom to be creative and actively engaged to continue the learning process outside the formal teaching settings

It's the lack of boundaries, which allow student creativity to flow and make their own study space, adjust their environment to suit their needs at that moment



3. Flow



- Hub Central provides a space to experience the 'flow', a state of mind felt by the learner when totally involved in the learning experience.
- As social constructivists point out, the social setting greatly influences learning. The counter question is
 - Do traditional teaching spaces support *transmission theory*? *This pedagogy* infers that one person will "transfer" information to others who will "take it in" at the same rate by focusing on the person at the front of the room.

Source: Van Note Chism, N. (2006). *Challenging Traditional Assumptions and Rethinking Learning Spaces*. Retrieved November 19, 2011, from <http://www.educause.edu/learningspacesch2>





4. Equity



Hub Central provides for the needs of cultural and physical differences.

Hub Central demonstrates the value from providing an assessable space for all students to have discussions and reflection.

Hub Central aims to breakdown organisational silos which build a lack of awareness and acceptance of the interconnectedness of students and services on campus

“I often see a variety of mixed groups working in harmony putting aside their differences to study and develop working and casual friendships”



Source: Bickford, J.D & Wright, D.J.(2006). *Community: The Hidden Context of Learning*. Retrieved November 19, 2011, from <http://www.educause.edu/learningspacesch4>



5. Blending

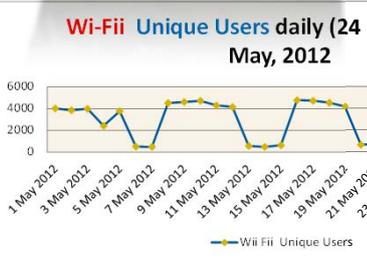


Hub Central Maths and Writing Centres Services are an example of a mixture of technological and face-to-face pedagogical resources in a learning space design that seeks to provide freedom of access and interaction with peers.

The Hub is a space that facilitates the acquisition of knowledge between the tradition and virtual learning spaces.

Hub Central has computer and networking technologies that once might have appeared exotic (pervasive wireless networking, iPods, smart phones) or transformative are now considered mainstream by our students

Wi-Fii Unique Users daily (24 May, 2012)



Date	Unique Users
1 May 2012	4000
3 May 2012	4000
5 May 2012	3000
7 May 2012	4000
9 May 2012	4500
11 May 2012	4500
13 May 2012	4000
15 May 2012	4000
17 May 2012	4500
19 May 2012	4500
21 May 2012	4000
23 May 2012	4000

Source: Milne, A.J.(2006). *Designing Blended Learning Space to the Student Experience*. Retrieved November 19, 2011, from <http://www.educause.edu/learningspacesch11>



6. Affordances





Hub Central delivers the *'action possibilities'* in the learning environment. It provides the students kitchens, dinning areas, shops, natural light, Wi-Fi, private spaces, project rooms, relaxation spots, writing surfaces, sofas, and so on.

Despite multiple design possibilities and uses of the space at Hub Central, there is an overarching desired outcome: *to enrich learning.*

"I have seen students come at 8am with packed bags of food and books. Begin their study, utilise the kitchen to prepare their lunch and have a break in recreational area and continue studying until the evening. These examples demonstrate the success of how the Hub and how it has incorporated a number a design possibilities to provide the best environment to foster learning"



7. Repurposing



Hub Central has the potential for multiple uses of most space.

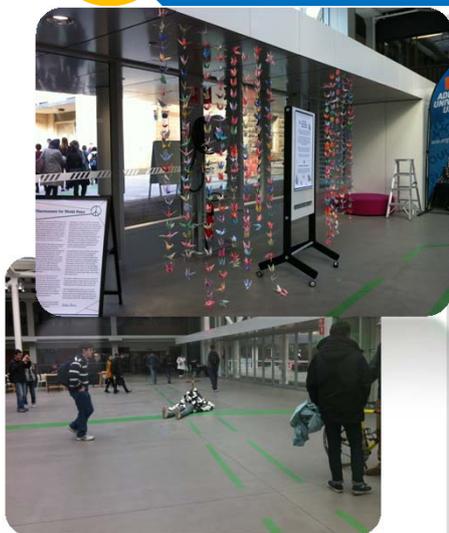
Different weeks require different space to suit the learning needs at that time – Hub Central is a space that is adaptable.

Hub Central demonstrates that there is an acknowledgement at the University that flexibility no longer is filling rooms with as many chairs as will fit.

- *The university calendar if filled with varying events throughout the year. All kinds of events from academic, informational and recreational are held. The hub can cater for these events and does this well.*



8. Ownership

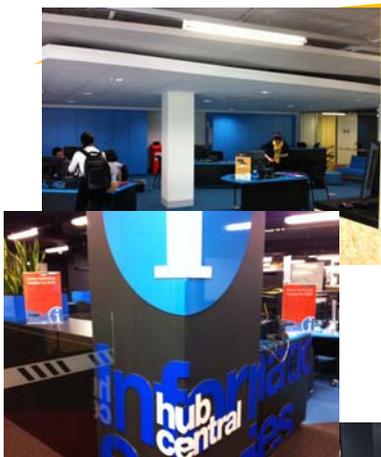


Students have taken ownership; it is their space. Barriers are broken, not an office or counter, students more comfortable so they tend to ask whatever they think.

Student ownership also allows for self regulation of the space. Self regulation is an important concept when looking at operation costs for a 24 hour centre that also provides extended face to face (8am to 10pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm on the weekends).

"Student ownership is crucial to the success of Hub Central. Student pride and ownership of the space ensures that it is self-regulated with integrity and respected for others to use, shutting out exclusivity to specific student groups and creating equal opportunity for all."

Service Delivery from the Hub



Students have taken ownership, it is their space so when delivering service it has a very different feel.

Barriers are broken, not an office or counter, students more comfortable so they tend to ask what ever they think. They are suggesting there is value in being able to receive immediate support when needed.

It is not just about traditional support services. It is about understanding what types of activities students will engage in at Hub Central and what services will be needed to support those activities.



