



Speech Privacy Assessment Manchester Metropolitan University Business School

Background

Miller Goodall Ltd (MGL) was commissioned to carry out an assessment of speech privacy between two cellular offices and atrium/ circulation spaces within Manchester Metropolitan University Business School. The acoustic assessment was commissioned by the University following complaints received from the users of the cellular offices and surrounding areas. The complaints related to low levels of speech privacy and to high levels of sound transfer between the cellular offices and the surrounding area (and vice versa).

Action Taken

A measurement survey was completed which included measurements of reverberation time, background noise levels and the airborne sound insulation of the cellular rooms in question. One of the meeting rooms had a 'lid' type construction fitted which enabled a comparison of the performance of the rooms with and without the lid construction. During the survey the construction of the meeting rooms was also inspected.

Following measurements a speech privacy assessment was completed. The level of speech privacy between adjacent rooms is principally dependent upon two factors; the Sound Level Difference between the spaces and the Background Noise Level in the receiving space

Speech privacy can be improved by either increasing the sound insulation performance of dividing partitions or by increasing the background (masking) noise level in the receiving space.



Summary of Findings

It was found that the meeting rooms without lids did not provide any acoustic or speech privacy. Whilst the meeting room with a lid installed had an improved performance, it was still not suitable for confidential speech. This supported the complaints received by the University and the subjective impression of the engineer who undertook the survey.

The report concluded that in order to provide confidential speech privacy the wall constructions would need substantial modification, including replacing large areas of glazed partitions with plasterboard cavity walls and providing a well fitted solid door. The wall between the offices would need to extend from slab to soffit. Works would also need to be undertaken to the building services systems and under the raised access floor.

For more information about us, visit our website at www.millergoodall.co.uk. If you would like to discuss how we can help your project, please contact Miller Goodall on 01204 596166 or email info@millergoodall.co.uk.