



Investigation

We inspected the construction of the offices and completed an acoustic survey that included measurements of reverberation time, background noise levels and airborne sound insulation. One of the offices included a 'lid' type construction, which enabled a comparison of the performance of the rooms with and without a lid. A speech privacy assessment was also completed. It was found that the office without a lid did not provide any acoustic or speech privacy. The office with a lid installed had an improved performance, but it was still not suitable for confidential speech as required.

Action and Outcome

We advised that in order to provide confidential speech privacy, the wall constructions would need substantial modification, including replacing large areas of glazed partitions and providing a well-fitted solid door. The separating wall between the offices also needed to be extended above the ceiling to the underside of the floor slab above, and the void closed off at the partition in the raised access floor beneath. Works to the building service system were also required in order to provide a suitable level of sound masking for speech privacy.

Background

Manchester Metropolitan Business School is part of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), linked to the Faculty of Business and Law. The impressive building has a glass exterior and a spacious and light interior. It pivots around two open plan atria and spans seven floors.

Proposition

Miller Goodall was commissioned to carry out an assessment of speech privacy between two cellular offices and atrium/circulation spaces within the business school following complaints from users. The complaints related to low levels of speech privacy and high levels of sound transfer between the offices and surrounding areas.

MMU Business
School

Acoustic testing and
design for
compliance with
BB93