



**Award Category:** Design Excellence sponsored by Salus

**Project:** Prince Edward Hall, Hatfield

**Client:** University of Hertfordshire

**Project Team:** Vincent & Gorbing, Turner Townsend, Aecom, Morgan Sindall, Couch Perry and Wilkins



As part of the University of Hertfordshire's £17.5m redevelopment programme, it was identified that a new main reception and learning zone was required to create a better visitor experience and improve accessibility.

Prince Edward Hall is a 2 storey brick-clad concrete frame building constructed in 1951-1952. The redevelopment of the existing

building comprises the demolition of various single storey elements and the creation of a new main reception and learning zone at ground level, whilst retaining the original Prince Edward Hall above.

Some of the new facilities are housed in a 'granite box' which appears to be inserted into the existing building structure on a juxtaposing plane. Each side of the building is 'opened up' with glazing to maximise the influx of natural light. The design includes extensive landscaping works that emphasise the frontage and main entrance of the College Lane Campus.

The new reception creates a focal point for visitors, and provides facilities for students and staff to use between lectures and seminars. Overall, the learning zone includes approx. 900m<sup>2</sup> of refurbished and new-build floor space. Students and staff were involved in designing a modern space to enhance the learning environment and create a range of different spaces to enhance opportunities for open discussions and individual research.

Inside, the existing structural fabric is exposed giving a tactile aesthetic, in contrast, contemporary materials and bold forms and colours offer a stimulating environment for a young audience.

**Judges comments:**

“This is an excellent addition to the increasingly important campus. We really liked the way the new reception area was slipped into the original post war building to form a new face to the University. It immediately felt like a welcoming and interactive hub for students and visitors. Clever design, working around the existing structure, together with bright colours made this memorable.”