



**CASE STUDY:  
ABINGDON AND WITNEY COLLEGE  
ADVANCED SKILLS CENTRE**

## A STATE-OF-THE-ART TEACHING LABORATORY

Dura have a fine reputation for delivering aspirational, flexible, technical teaching spaces. It was based on this strength that Abingdon and Witney College selected our team to provide the furniture for their new Technology Laboratory in Oxfordshire.



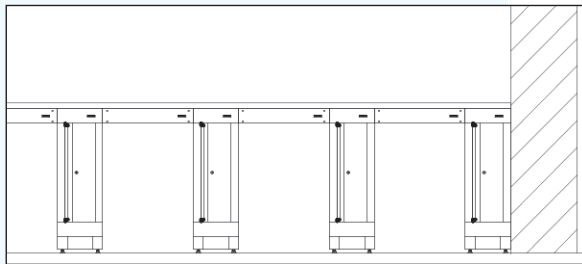
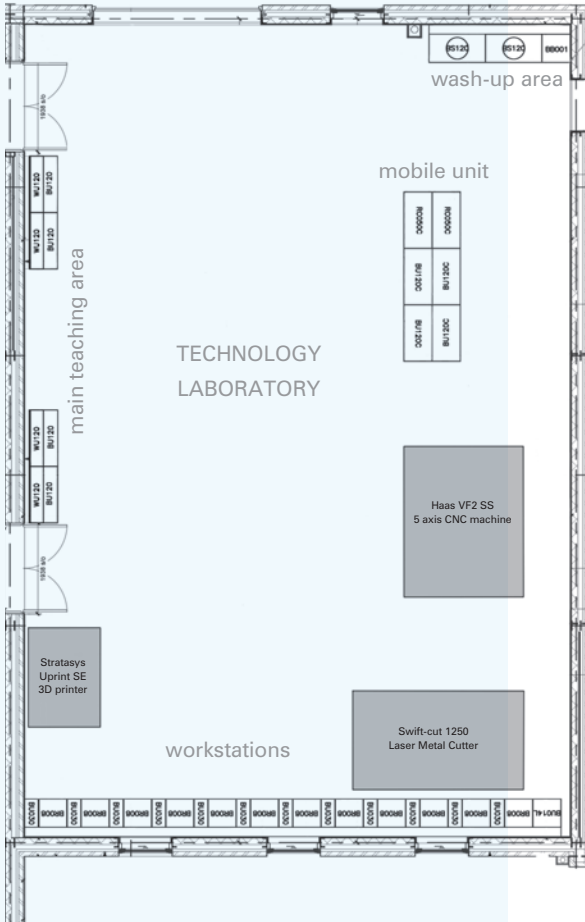
*The new multi-million pound Advanced Skills Centre*

### THE BACKGROUND

Opened in January 2018, the brand new multi-million-pound Advanced Skills Centre was built on the Abingdon campus and funded by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership as part of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. The aim was to address the current skills gap in the local area, targeting key STEM sectors including electronics, engineering, telecoms and IT.

Abingdon and Witney College's modern design and state-of-the-art engineering workshops, equipped with the latest technology, aimed to provide an inspirational environment, whilst the spacious breakout areas and lounges give students a university campus experience.

## THE PLAN



*Thanks to the expertise and advice of Dura, we feel confident that our unique Advanced Skills Centre will inspire future generations to choose Abingdon and Witney College*

**Mark Byerley**

Head of Faculty for Technology



## THE DESIGN

Michael Chiyasa: Head of Estates and Capital Development at the College said: “When planning the building, our attentions were drawn to the Advanced Manufacturing Centre that Dura had created for Coventry University at Unipart. We knew immediately that we had found our solution! Our aim was to simulate as closely as possible an authentic industry environment, but tailored to our specific teaching needs. We also wanted a facility that would stand the test of time and would complement the building. The Dura workplace furniture afforded fantastic choice and their consultation, design and installation service was outstanding.”

Head of Faculty for Technology – Mark Byerley added: “Our facility boasts the latest in 5 Axis CNC, robotics, automation and 3D printer technology and our aim was to furnish the lab to an equally high benchmark-setting standard. Dura were sensitive to our budget and provided a solution which not only looks fantastic, but offers multiple layout options.”

The open-plan Lab has specific teaching zones. The workspace installation includes six mobile tool drawers and cupboard units which not only provide secure storage space for components and project work, but can be configured in several different ways for group collaboration, presentation and individual project tasks. A fixed installation of 12 learning stations flanks one wall, where banks of 3D printers are situated. The main teaching area encompasses an interactive screen, additional storage and worktop space.



*Mobile cabinets provide a flexible teaching facility*





*The open plan Technology Laboratory*

## THE RESULTS

“We now have a state-of-the-art, truly flexible and future-proofed teaching space, unlike any other locally,” continues Mark. “Thanks to the expertise and advice of Dura, who are clearly very knowledgeable in education technical furniture fit-out, we feel confident that our unique Advanced Skills Centre will inspire future generations to choose Abingdon and Witney College for their Engineering and Digital courses, and ultimately, provide employers with a highly-skilled workforce that is ready to contribute to the local, national and global economies.”



*Workstations with 3D printing*



## PROJECT NOTES

This project included the following key features

- Open plan laboratory with specific teaching zones
- Fixed installation of 12 learning stations flanking one wall
- Six mobile tool cabinets which can be configured in a number of different ways to aid group collaboration
- Main teaching area encompasses an interactive screen flanked by high and low level storage worktops



*Mobile cabinets for flexible working*

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