

Metal In Action

STUDY & LEARNING CENTRE, MANCHESTER SOTECH LIMITED



The Alan Gilbert Learning Commons is a state-of-the-art study and learning centre boasting an onsite café, an impressive atrium providing a social meeting space with Wi-Fi access and flexible study spaces and environments throughout the building.

The principal sustainability objective was to minimise the building's emissions of CO₂; heat loss has been limited by high thermal insulation performance; natural ventilation is used where possible; heat recovery systems limit the amount of heating and cooling of fresh air and daylight is maximised.

The existing 1960s refectory building structure was retained and the incorporation of the original long-span structure into the new building resulted in carbon and cost savings. Cost and environmental benefits were also optimised with the specification of Sotech-Optima FC Eco rainscreen cladding. The Eco variant of the FC offers a simpler and more economical rail carrier system for the fully recyclable flat aluminium panels.

A key design feature was the introduction of visually recessed ribbon glazing set within 1500 square metres of Sotech Optima FC anodised aluminium rainscreen panels.

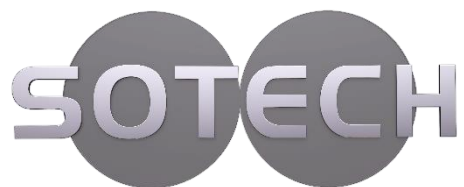
The recessed effect is achieved by incorporating a specially designed deep rail carrier system to the primary structure enabling the rainscreen to be projected 400mm forward of the windows, which although in line with the primary structure, appear to be recessed. To provide a totally uninterrupted 50mm shadow gap, a bespoke cap designed and manufactured by Sotech was installed between the panels concealing the sub-structure and creating a striking linear effect to the façade.



This public study space, which links the library, Learning Commons and the administrative heart of the campus at the University of Manchester, has been designed to give students a focal point for learning, offering a stimulating and comfortable 24/7 environment for study. Boasting more than 1,000 flexible study spaces, Alan Gilbert Learning Commons provides an inspiring range of equipment and furnishings for individual and group study.



Architect	Sheppard Robson
Main contractor	Wates Construction
Installer	Glass Solutions Limited
System	Optima FC secret fix rainscreen cladding
Location	Alan Commons Learning Centre, University of Manchester



www.sotech-optima.co.uk

