

Style creates innovative stepped divide

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Newcastle University's Frederick Douglass Centre is a £34m flagship building that delivers state-of-the-art teaching and learning facilities. Seating space in the impressive stepped auditorium has been maximised thanks to Style's installation of a bespoke set of moveable wall systems, that divide the room into two separate lecture halls, each seating 500 and 250 students.

Style worked in close collaboration with architect, Sheppard Robson, and contractor, Sir Robert McAlpine, to design a solution that is fully automatic, concurrently moving a double skin of Dorma Hüppe sliding wall panels, up through the tiered seating. Surpassing the client's demands for acoustic privacy between the divided areas, the final installation delivers a phenomenal 59db Dntw, on site tested performance.

"Everything on this project was a world first, from the stepped design, the installation challenges, the building structure and the site tests," says Andy Gibson, Style's director for the north.

