



## **Glasgow School of Art**

### **Access Control - A Work of Art**

*Universities and colleges are increasingly turning to CCTV and Access Control to improve the level of protection afforded to staff, students and premises. At the world famous Glasgow School of Art, a new CCTV and Access Control system was installed at the beginning of the Autumn Term 2003. Remarkably in just 17 working days from the date the order was received, the whole system was installed and tested, with 2100 students enrolled, photographed and issued with cards.*

#### **Mackintosh influence**

Internationally recognised as one of the UK's leading art schools, the

GSA has a long tradition of producing graduates who achieve success in their chosen fields. Without doubt its most famous graduate is Charles Rennie Mackintosh who designed the School's main building, which is still furnished by many of the artist's remarkable pieces of work.

One effect of the School's artistic heritage and academic success is the very high number of visitors that come to admire the School's regular exhibitions. The rising costs of manned security combined with the desire to introduce a more sophisticated level of security, led the School to re-examine its security requirements during the summer of 2003.

#### **Multiple challenges**

Scottish Installer, 1<sup>st</sup> Active Security, was approached to design a scheme for the School incorporating CCTV cameras, with the introduction of Access Control and the creation of a manned monitoring station in the Reception area of the Mackintosh Building.

Steven Collins, Managing Director of 1<sup>st</sup> Active Security, describes the challenge he faced: “The School presented multiple challenges to an installer. As a Grade 1 historic building, the Mackintosh Building itself is a very difficult environment in which to work. Secondly, the whole campus is a semi-public and very busy site with several internal exhibition spaces that are visited by members of the public. This means introducing Access Control on internal doors and even on lifts, not simply on external doors. Thirdly, the Campus is not on a single site but spread through ten academic buildings on half a dozen streets in central Glasgow. This meant the laying of 6,000 metres of twisted pair (CAT5), with the longest runs of up to 500 metres. Finally, students don’t work a 9-5 day. The school needed a system that could accommodate different operational modes according to the time of day.”

### Scheme Details

The initial CCTV scheme features 24 colour vandal resistant fixed domes (Vista VVRD4V8C) and 3 Sanyo high resolution colour cameras (VCC6572P) fitted with Vista 1/3” direct drive 4.0mm lenses mounted in Vista housings.

The Access Control system installed at the School is Net2 from Paxton Access, a PC based system that can accommodate up to 200 doors and 10,000 cards or tokens. Each door or access point is fitted with an Access Control Unit with a stainless steel TOUCHLOCK keypad and/or a PROXIMITY vandal proof card reader suitably sited nearby.

Situated in the School’s reception area, the monitoring station features ten 14” and two 17” Vista monitors (PVD1400DG) with three hard disk digital recorders for recording CCTV. A terabyte (1000Gb) of hard disk storage allows evidence archiving and a separate PC acts as a server for the Net2 access control.



“We recommended fixed domes, to reduce the ongoing maintenance cost of the system and suggested a Paxton access control system for its simplicity, both to use and administer. It’s very user friendly and offers exactly the right functionality and flexibility for the task at hand.”

Individual access rights vary according to the category of user, time of day and buildings accessed. In general, during the normal day, students and staff operate the doors just using their tags, but out of normal hours this switches to a combination of card and PIN. Many external doors are wheelchair accessible and these are automated and have secondary access pads positioned at a suitable height.



All doors are alarmed with alarms sounding if a door is not closed within twenty seconds of being opened. Paxton's software can generate usage reports by individual user or group of users and can also generate warnings of potential misuse.

### **Fast Implementation**

One of the School's most pressing needs was for a very fast implementation. 1<sup>st</sup> Active won the contract on a Friday with implementation set to start the following Monday. 17 working days later the system had to be completed and working in time for the start of term. This time also had to include the special manufacture and print of all the students' cards.

"Not only did we meet the deadline," explains Steven Collins, "the whole system was powered, checked and configured in just a few hours and not a single fault was found in over 4,500 connections. Part of the success of the project can be traced back to the quality of service we receive from Norbain", says Steven Collins. "Without doubt Norbain provides the best distribution service in the industry. We can have products shipped next day to Glasgow from as late as 7pm the evening before and Norbain's staff are sensitive and knowledgeable about the needs of engineers on the ground. This makes a tremendous difference on a project that is on a very tight timescale. Norbain really does help us to deliver."

## Benefits

Eliot Leviten FCA, Director of Finance and Resources at The Glasgow School of Art, is very pleased with the system: “Only a very robust and capable system can have 700 students photographed, registered and trained to use the cards in a single day. The system purchased, Paxton, has proved very good in this regard. The nature of our business is that the access control systems must be able to handle thousands of new users in a very short period of time and through a combination of a good system, good planning and a good contractor, the system is working well. 1<sup>st</sup> Active were quick and competitive – an ideal combination – and, as a medium sized organisation, matched us for size very well. Their recommendations fitted perfectly to our requirement”.

## Looking ahead

“As a result of this project we have made efficiency improvements and we are looking at an initial payback period of less than twelve months,” continues Eliot Leviten. “But this exercise was never simply about saving money. It is also about providing health and safety reassurance to students. Beyond that, we now also have an infrastructure in place that can be expanded to meet our growing needs. It can also be applied in numerous different ways and we are already looking at how we can use the system as imaginatively as possible to the benefit of students and The School; this system has given us many new options.”

