

# careers service unit manchester

category Commercial  
Higher Education  
client Careers Service Unit  
value £1.45m  
date 1998  
awards + RIBA Award 1998

This office building is to the eastern edge of the University of Manchester campus characterised by 'pavilion' buildings which stand in space rather than define it. It seeks to 'stitch' together the abrupt ends of the adjoining buildings and define a collegiate courtyard.

A wall of polished concrete panels defines the two edges of the site and completes the courtyard on which sits the layered and rendered building. Two folded planar roofs envelop the layers and intersect to generate a dynamic reception/entrance hall which rises through the three storeys. This space represents the public face of CSU and contains shared accommodation. Link bridges bisect the space joining the office accommodation housed within the concrete framed flexible wings. Service accommodation is articulated at the ends underpinning this flexibility.

The coffers to the floors are expressed not only to offer a rhythm resonant with the external wall, but as part of the environmental strategy. This is a naturally ventilated building – extremes in temperature being tempered by the thermal mass and the offices cross venting into the entrance hall.

*“ In lesser hands, such an apparently undemanding brief could well have led to ‘generic’ office typology; but what distinguishes Hodder’s solution is its uniqueness, a highly crafted building which responds imaginatively to the brief and enriches its environs. ”*

Prof. Peter Fawcett,  
*The Architects’ Journal*,  
September 1998

