



Architect: GA Studio Architects

Ashton 6th Form College, located in Lancashire, has recently been awarded 'Best Commercial Build' at the Northern Design Awards for the design of their student centre.

The brief for the project was to create a hub for both dining and socialising, whilst also providing a connection between the main building and existing ICT suite to improve the student flow across campus. To achieve this, GA Studio architects designed an open plan layout with an airy and mature feel, creating a relaxed and informal dining atmosphere.

The building itself includes a café, private study areas and a roof top terrace, with the kitchen and ancillary spaces housed in simple block forms to the north of the building.

The overall simple box form is made more complex by a series of cut outs and extractions, which create external terrace areas at both ground and first floor. Materials are utilised in their natural state with polished concrete and lacquered OSB combined with the exposed, industrial metals of the structure and services. The integration of such materials helped to create an urbanised and inspirational space for the students.

Glazing Vision's modular fixed Flushglaze rooflight system was installed to harness large amounts of natural daylight; this was situated above the stairwell leading to the mezzanine level on the north side of the building. The large glazing product sits within the void, casting daylight into an area that would typically have been shadowed, providing a view of the sky whilst simultaneously creating an internal flow of space between floor levels.

Ashton College, Lancashire

Each individual glazed section is supported structurally by aluminium back to back angles, which complement and enhance the contemporary style of the building's interior.

Ultimately, GA Studio Architects have created a series of spaces inspired by both urban and street food culture; this carefully implemented theme resonates perfectly with the students and provides a unique location to both study and socialise. Whilst achieving their objective to improve student flow across campus, GA Studio Architects have also created a building that stands out as an architectural celebration in its own right. The range of tones and shade created by the aluminium fins, alongside the dramatic lighting via large areas of glazing, has contributed towards a building that fully deserves its award-winning title.



To find out more about how to unlock light, air and space in your project please call our technical specification team on 01379 353 741 or [request a CPD](#).