
Robert Gordon University Library on schedule for 2013 completion

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Building work on the first phase of Robert Gordon University's new campus development, including the University Library, is on schedule for completion in spring 2013. Students and staff are set to move into the new building in time for the beginning of the academic year in September 2013, when all academic activities will take place at the Garthdee Campus – in the first phase of the university's 34 000m² development – in state-of-the-art teaching and learning facilities. These include a new library as well as formal and informal learning spaces for students. The development, which involves consolidating campuses (and two libraries), will allow staff and students from different disciplines to benefit from working more closely together than was possible previously.



Artist's Impression of phase 1 of the Garthdee Campus Development

The new facilities will complement the university's existing buildings in terms of their innovative design and style while also providing an outstanding educational environment for its students. The campus, on the bank of the River Dee, will retain its park-like ambience and provide a recrea-

tional setting for the benefit of staff, students and the local community.

The new library, housed in a nine-storey tower, will have a big impact on the skyline. The two existing libraries will be merged, providing dedicated space for individual study, technology-rich formal and informal learning spaces and seminar space to support the university's learning development programme.

The library design, by Building Design Partnership, has been developed with reference to user feedback and usage data gathered over a number of years, as well as with reference to other new library spaces, including the inspirational Sir Duncan Rice Library at the University of Aberdeen.

The enclosed floors of the library tower, with views over Royal Deeside to Lochnagar and back to the harbour in Aberdeen, reflect a desire from the entire university community for clearly defined learning spaces, including silent individual study spaces on the upper floors. There is also provision for collaborative study on lower floors, and there will be a flexible group-study centre in the existing library space, once it has been refurbished.

Informal meeting spaces line the 'street' that runs along the spine of the new building, and include a café and event space in the amphitheatre at the entrance to the library tower, linking the building with public areas that draw the community in.



Artist's impression: café and event space at the entrance to the library tower

Since works commenced in May 2011, Miller Construction, the university's main contractor, has progressed well with the new development. An aerial photograph of the site in November shows

the extent of progress, including glazing on the library tower.



Photograph of phase 1 of the development from the riverside, November 2012

Commissioning of the building services has commenced, including the ground source heat pumps. As part of its aim to contribute to environmental sustainability, the university has sunk bore holes 200 metres under ground to use the latent heat of the earth to heat or cool water to a constant 12°, thus saving money and fossil fuels.

A second phase, due to commence after 2014, will complete the Garthdee development. The total estimated cost of RGU's campus development is in the order of £170 million and will eventually see all the university's operations based at the Garthdee campus.

A video fly-through including an artist's impression of both the exterior and interior of the phase 1 development may be found at <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/strategy-and-planning/campus-development>