

Self-led use of Edge during term time /
Outline of Proposals for room entry and booking 2019 plus proposed implementation

Introduction

During November, Arts staff and the SU received feedback on the paper “Ideas for Edge room entry & booking 2019” and the proposals therein. Feedback was via surveys and three focus groups held at The Edge.

43 surveys were received and a range of staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students attended the focus groups providing representation for individual users, groups and societies - including Latin and Ballroom, DanceSoc, MusicSoc, ChaOS, Chamber Choir and BUSMS. Both channels informed the below proposals, and we would like to thank all those who participated, took the time to respond and added their ideas.

Below is a summary of views and what we now plan to implement in 2019 in this regard.

Library Card Access

Feedback was overwhelmingly warm to the idea of using library cards to access rooms at The Edge booked for rehearsal. We will therefore aim to include this in future implementation.

Self-Service Booking / Online Booking System (Ad-hoc bookings)

As above, feedback was overwhelmingly warm to the idea of self-service booking as the method for booking rooms ad-hoc and doing so digitally. We will therefore aim to include this in future implementation. There was genuine enthusiasm for the simpler, live and more convenient potential of an online portal than current method of booking, with all welcoming the likelihood of instant response times.

Membership

A good percentage were in favour of a move to a membership system that granted permissions to book rooms ad-hoc. Some expressed concern over paying for this however the majority of views from surveys and focus groups were positive, acknowledging that a smooth online booking system connected to Library Card Access would make the cost of membership worthwhile. We will therefore look into how we can implement this idea, keeping costs reasonable and setting out specifics on membership groups and durations, to be discussed further with users.

MusicSoc exclusive use of Amp Room

A good percentage were in favour of MusicSoc, along with The Edge, holding oversight of the Amp Room. We plan therefore to implement this to keep drum kit and PA in place on the understanding that people wishing to practice in this space will need to become members of MusicSoc for foreseeable future. Implementing a suitable online booking system to cater for this was felt by respondents to be important if it was to be successful.

Grand piano moved to Music Studio / Limiting individual piano practice in Ensemble Room

A good percentage were in favour of moving the grand piano presently in the Ensemble Room to the Music Studio. This is due to the room being currently in high demand for both groups who require a large space, and individual pianists who wish to play on the grand piano. This change was twinned with a desire to pursue the idea that the amount of time made available for individual practice in the Ensemble Room was reduced, to allow more time for group use of this large space. We will therefore look to implement these ideas.

Third Piano re-installed in individual practice room

A good percentage were in favour of re-introducing a piano in Practice Room 2 that currently holds the electronic drum kit. This would a) balance the reduction of time lost for individual piano practice in the Ensemble Room and b) take advantage of the full drum kit available for practice in Amp Room via MusicSoc membership. We will therefore look to implement this.

Instrument/equipment access and storage

All storage users agreed that the current access and storage of instruments/equipment needed addressing. In the focus groups possible ideas were discussed, such as allowing access to storage in rooms during rehearsals and creating more storage in less used rooms. As The Edge has limited storage spaces and the majority is in well-used rooms, we want to continue to hear users' thoughts on the best solutions. There will be a working group put into place to discuss possible options moving forward, with a call-out for this at the beginning of next term.

Other solutions

From the focus groups held at The Edge, the following concerns were raised alongside fresh ideas to solve them.

Concern 1: People not showing up for rooms they have booked

Solution: Library Card Access allows for a record of this, alongside a system that implements a 3 strike rule for no-shows

Concern2: Switching to a new untested system quickly could lead to problems

Solution: A test period between Feb-Apr would be deployed, with small selection of users asked to test and feedback on the process.

Concern3: That access for Societies via 5 people's library cards is not enough

Solution: Yet to be addressed

We will look to implement the solutions to concerns 1&2 above whilst thinking further on concern 3.

The table below summarizes what The Edge plans to implement in 2019 in line with ad-hoc bookings

Please note that all dates are approximate and the timescale of the implementation of a new system will be dependent on both the University of Bath IT team's capacity and the company chosen to provide the new online booking system.

Proposal Area	Initial Idea	Idea agreed to take forward	Approximate Implementation date
Room Entry	Use of Library Cards/xPLAN system to access for individual users and group users Use of Edge issued cards for MusicSoc (re: Amp Room)	Use of Library Cards/xPLAN for all users wishing to book ad-hoc space	Phased introduction from Feb 2019 Full introduction by October 2019
Room Bookings	Switch to online booking method	Online booking method	Phased introduction from Feb 2019 Piloted with individuals including a selection of Music Practice Card holders from Feb 2019

			Full introduction by October 2019
Room Bookings		Implementing 3-strikes rule for no-shows, introducing temporary sanctions/restrictions on offending users	Full introduction by October 2019
Membership	Individual & group membership packages for users & societies wishing to make ad-hoc bookings for rehearsal in Dance Studio, Fine Art Studio, Digital Studio and music rooms.	Individual & group membership packages will grant online access to make ad-hoc bookings	Piloted with individuals including Music Practice Card holders from Feb 2019 at no additional cost New membership scheme fully introduced for October 2019
Amp Room (use of)	Users required to be members of MusicSoc to book this room	Users required to be members of MusicSoc to book this room	Introduced from October 2019
Pianos	Move grand piano from Ensemble Room to Music Studio	Move grand piano from Ensemble Room to Music Studio	In place for February 2019
Pianos	Re-introduce piano in Individual Practice Room and remove electronic drum kit	Re-introduce piano in Individual Practice Room Remove electronic drum kit	In place for February 2019 From October 2019

Online booking options

Based on feedback received, Edge staff are currently looking at software/digital systems for ad-hoc online room bookings that satisfy essential criteria as follows:

An automated online (cloud based) booking system where members (students and staff) can book rooms, showing rooms available to book according to membership package

- Mobile access
- Separated booking option available for MusicSociety/Amp Room, available for student groups wishing to practice together as bands
- A real time calendar only showing what is available
- Provision to show when rooms cannot be accessed for lockers due to external bookings (ie; exams or conferences)
- Full integration with XPlan access control system, the university's door control software
- An ability to monitor who does and does not show up for bookings (through xPLAN)
- A system that has a penalty for repeated no-shows with temporary bans on making room bookings
- Near 24hr IT support
- An inventory of each room's equipment available in the booking form.
- Security team have access

Also based on feedback received, Edge staff are looking at software/digital systems that satisfy these other desired features (non-essential)

- Automated reminders

- First and second reserve system
- QR Codes for doors, showing when the room is available next
- Provision for societies to swap slots
- Self-service terminal in foyer for room bookings

Membership Cost

This will be announced in 2019 once a digital booking system that features the above essential criteria has been identified. As these needs are relatively bespoke, it is expected that a cloud provider will be required to support for contracted periods, which may elevate the cost above those outlined in initial proposal (Individuals: £6 Studio membership per term, £15 Music membership. Groups/Societies (ad-hoc): £36 per year). The Edge however is committed to identifying a package that feels at a reasonable cost for users.

Student Society Advance bookings

All feedback received indicated existing method of advance booking for Student Societies with regards to The Edge spaces including Weston and Theatre should continue with booking cycle for 2019-20 year commencing in Semester 2/Spring.

Implementation / Next Steps

The Edge plans to implement the ideas outlined between February and October 2019. With some feedback expressing concern over the speed of implementation, the process will be done via two phases as below:

Phase 1: Introducing a room booking system for a test sample of individual users (likely Music Practice Cards and some others) between February and April 2019. Users will at the same time be able to continue to use existing ad-hoc methods (see below). Piano changes outlined will be introduced also.

During Phase1 – existing ad-hoc methods (via contact with Edge box office) will continue for all users, unless notified otherwise with an adjustment to enquiry/service hours.

NB from February 2019, the box office function at The Edge switches in name to Visitor Services. Ad-hoc room bookings will be serviced between the hours of 9am and 5pm daily. From 5pm – 9pm Monday - Friday access to rooms will be granted as normal by a member of staff in The Edge, however please note: It will not be possible to make new room bookings or adjust existing room bookings during this time.

Phase 2: Introducing a full membership/room booking system as outlined in time for start of Autumn 2019 term (by October 2019).

Date	Item	Points to note
Phase 1		
February –July 2019	Room entry to be granted as presently by Edge member of staff.	Edge Visitor Services will administrate ad-hoc room booking enquiries manually between hours of 9am – 5pm
	Room bookings to be granted as presently by Edge members of staff.	Room entry granted until 9pm weekdays via Edge staff in foyer. Weekends via Security.

	Staff in Visitor Services station in Edge foyer to facilitate	
February – April 2019	Piloting of online room booking software and systems with test sample of users	Piloting conducted at no additional cost to users / Test case users still permitted to book in normal way also
From February 2019	Grand piano into Music Studio. Upright piano in Ensemble Room.	
From February 2019	Upright piano in Individual Practice Room 2	Electronic drum kit remains until October 2019
March – April 2019	Society advance bookings cycle completed for 2019-20	Undertaken in conjunction with Students' Union
Phase 2		
From October 2019	Membership initiative to book ad-hoc rooms at Edge launched	Cost to be discussed in Spring 2019 with prospective stakeholders
From October 2019	Online room bookings and automated room entry system launched linked to membership	Integrated with Library cards
From October 2019	MusicSoc sole use* of Amp Room during term time launched *together with Edge required use	