

## Scotland's leading modern university introduces step-free access in its cyberQuarter building

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Abertay University, recently ranked as a top modern university in the National Student Survey, is setting an exemplary standard in terms of accessibility by introducing step-free access across all five floors of the cyberQuarter building, thanks to [Stannah](#) lifts.

This lift retrofit and installation was awarded to Stannah, who secured first place in the APUC framework. This process allows the university to award contracts without the need for a tendering process, streamlining the project and ensuring top-quality work from a trusted provider.

Located in Scotland, the university formerly known as the University of Abertay Dundee blends traditional and contemporary design, with the old college dating back to 1888. The university is home to Abertay's cyberQuarter, a cutting-edge £18m cybersecurity research and development centre. This state-of-the-art facility brings together students, academics, and organisations to collaboratively address global cybersecurity challenges.

### The works

The existing lift in the building had become increasingly unreliable, with frequent breakdowns and maintenance issues that disrupted operations. This highlighted the need for a modernised lift system that could ensure consistent performance and compliance with current safety standards.

After a thorough evaluation by Stannah, it was clear that the best solution was to completely replace the old lift with a new, Stannah Machine Room-Less (MRL) traction lift. This type of lift not only meets all necessary safety standards but also provides enhanced efficiency and reliability, making it an ideal choice for the university.

Stannah was responsible for the entire design process of the new lift, ensuring it was tailored to the building specifications and client's needs. They also managed all on-site works, overseeing the removal of the old lift and the installation of the new MRL traction lift.

### The challenge

This project involved the complex task of removing the existing and installing a new lift system while the building remained a live teaching environment.

One of the primary challenges was ensuring the safety of all visitors throughout the construction process. This included keeping corridors clear and free from obstructions, implementing rigorous safety protocols, and maintaining minimal noise levels to avoid disrupting classes. To address these concerns, Stannah adhered to CDM (Construction Design and Management) regulations.

Due to the fact that this was a live building site, the project was completed on a strict three-month schedule. During construction, step-free access was available via the café lift.

An additional challenge was the removal of the existing MRL lift to make space for the new system. Stannah designed the new lift installation to match the dimensions of the existing lift shaft, thereby eliminating the need for additional structural work. Only cosmetic decoration was needed around the new landing doors.

Balancing construction activities with the daily operations of the building required meticulous planning and coordination, showcasing Stannah's commitment to creating a safe environment despite the challenges.

### The solution

With support and guidance from Stannah, an MRL lift was selected due to it being one of the fastest and most efficient lift systems available, providing a reliable solution for students, teachers, and visitors.

The 8-person lift features modern controls with buttons set at heights accessible for wheelchair users. This 630kg capacity traction MRL lift is equipped with a gearless variable voltage drive, meeting EN81-20/50 standards.

Requiring minimal space both inside and outside the shaft, this type of lift is ideal for most building applications. Its highly flexible design allows it to fit into existing lift shafts of any size, making it the perfect choice for this project.

### The result

Enhancing accessibility and efficient operation of the lift was an important factor at Abertay University's cyberQuarter building. Now, the new, reliable lift supports the needs of the users by providing full step-free access.

The new MRL lift meets all open protocol and design requirements set by the client. The design complements the university's aesthetic, whilst ensuring enhanced performance and reliability. The stainless-steel lift showcases a modern car interior, featuring artificial granite and user-friendly elements such as digital displays, enhancing accessibility for all users. The client chose options for the lift car interior from Stannah's brochure, including selections for the walls, ceiling, flooring, and car operating panel.

An open protocol lift system means that customers are not tied to Stannah for maintenance and repair.

The cyberQuarter building, which can accommodate up to 500 people, will necessitate daily use of the new lift. It will provide step-free access for all users, including wheelchair users and those with reduced mobility. All Stannah lifts are certified according to the Lifts Regulations 2016 (2016 No. 1093).

#### Customer feedback

Bob Cochran, Project Manager from Stannah said: “Enhancing accessibility and transforming lift operations were the primary goals of this project. Prioritising health and safety, along with effective communication, was crucial as we worked in a live environment. As a result, the lift replacement was a great success, with completion occurring just 12 weeks after starting on-site.”

Leigh Black, Estates Project and Design Manager for Abertay said: “We’re thrilled with the lift solution provided by Stannah. The new lift is a perfect fit for our cyberQuarter building providing a smooth and accessible experience for everyone. The installation process was seamless and it’s been great working with the Stannah team who used their lift expertise to overcome any challenges.”