

## **The 21st Century Learning Space**

If we look at the characteristics of the 21st Century Learner, this will provide us with an indication of what our learning spaces should look like.

21st Century Learners are:

- Technology literate and adept
- Media savvy
- Flexible and dynamic
- multitasking
- communicators and collaborators
- interactive and networked
- reflective and critical
- instant
- creative and adaptive
- student centric, lifelong learners & anywhere anytime learners
- have Multimodal learning styles

Our classrooms must encompass these characteristics.

### **Access to technology and media:**

The 21st Century classroom is networked, adequately provided with a rich internet connection to support media streams, personal (Skype) and group (video conferencing) communications. It enables the uploading and downloading of students work and research to suitable structures to support anywhere anytime learning and collaboration. Facilities need to be in place to enable media production, whether it's video, audio or text/image based.

### **Classroom design:**

21st Century learners are collaborators and communicators. So the classroom must be designed to enable group collaboration. They must have the flexibility in furnishings and technology to be rearranged with ease and speed to enable switching rapidly between individual and groups, presentation, communication and collaborative modes. From these groupings learners and educators must be able to connect, collaborate, share and report - projection and video conference, present and report back.

Classrooms must be able to adapt to different needs of the classroom - space for the students to work quietly and reflectively; space to operate in small groups discussing and debating; space to meet collectively to report, discuss, plan and teach.

**Display spaces:**

Students will need access to real and virtual display spaces: whiteboards, pinboards, collaborative learning spaces online, conferences etc. They will need easy and instant access to media systems that they can use to view materials and share their own.

**The classroom of tomorrow:**

These spaces will likely be multiple rooms within a single learning space. Small meeting rooms will be attached to the major learning space with an array of facilities: IWB, video conferencing, whiteboards, networks and collaborative spaces. These rooms would be used for reflection, planning, meeting, and collaborating, both face-to-face and on-line.

The main learning space would be a fluid environment with easy-to-move furniture that can be arranged and rearranged to suit the needs of the learning event. It would have multiple display systems which are easily linked and controlled allowing student connections and instructor management. It will be a larger space in which learners will have spaces rather than individual desks.

These spaces need to reflect the audience. They need to be comfortable and appropriate to our learners.