

Principal's Teaching Award Law School History wall project

Final Report – December 2017



Students making the models

Summary

The project aimed to develop learning and teaching through reflective practice, specifically on the potential of artefact-based learning using the University Special Collection of architectural drawings and through the research and making of sectional models of Old College.

It was designed to make use of existing pedagogical structures, namely a period of embedded externality within the undergraduate MA (Hons) Architecture degree and the MA (Hons) Architectural History work placement. In addition, students from undergraduate Illustration and postgraduate students from Design Informatics and Architectural History and Theory, took part through coursework or as an extension to their studies. Although the project took advantage of a unique situation, where the students were developing the work in parallel with the extensive restoration and re-purposing of the Law School, the aim of the project was to develop staff and student understanding of the value of 'live' projects within this established framework. The cross-disciplinary staff-student team allowed different groups to be exposed to different modes of learning through making, research and the curation of drawings and models.

Outcomes

The original application noted that successful outcomes would be:

- *the transfer of knowledge from students working directly with the artefacts to their peers and staff across the Schools of Law and Edinburgh College of Art*
- *a greater understanding across other areas of the University of the potential for reflective learning through the use of the University collections*
- *an academic reflection on the pedagogic value of the ESALA Projects office*

A secondary outcome, not funded as part of the application, was the potential to use the outputs of the project in a vertical installation within a new staircase that is under construction in Old College.

The main outcomes have been all been successfully achieved;

1. **Learning and Knowledge transfer** - A total of seventeen students and nine staff have benefitted from a direct involvement in the project from four different disciplines- Illustration, Architectural History, Design Informatics and Architectural Design. Staff from these disciplines joined with staff from Law in a series of interdisciplinary workshop events listed below. Students presented to each other and to staff on three occasions and everyone was able to hear of each

other's findings and ideas as they developed. The students working on the sectional models worked intensively for four weeks in January / February and then a couple of the students worked on to complete the models.



Staff and students taking part in the workshops

A series interdisciplinary workshop events were held during the project:

Workshop/ event	Participants
16 October 2016	Architectural History students
16 January 2017	Architectural History & Architecture students During the 4 weeks of the model-making staff worked with students, meeting twice a week to review progress and discuss issues as they arose. Architecture students worked full time on the models as part of their Practice experience.
18 January	Joint viewing of the Playfair drawings Special Research collections with the librarian (Grant Buttars)
18 January	Students attend public launch of book on the archaeological findings in the Playfair Library
20 January	First interdisciplinary workshop / lunch – Illustration, Law, Design Informatics Architectural History & Architecture students
10 February	Presentations of initial ideas by all disciplines and viewing of models nearing completion
7 April	Presentations of final ideas by all disciplines
16 April	MSc Architectural History and Theory PG student presentations Special Research collections
Summer 2017	Workshop staff develop prototype of laser cut etching of Playfair drawing, Fiona McLachlan develops simple 3D model of entrance area in Law School
27 September	Meeting with Law admin staff to update on project
End September	Architecture students work together with staff to develop posters and images for exhibition
12 October	Reception and opening of exhibition by Principal O'Shea attended by Head of Law, Head of ESALA, participants and invited guests
13 October 2017	Open day – public exhibition of the project in ESALA Projects Office This marked the completion of the project.



Students inspect the Special Collection artefacts in the Main Library

2 Use of the Special Collections for learning – the project was organised so that the undergraduate Architectural History students would start first in Semester 1, researching the history of Old College. In the process, developing new insights and previously unknown information. For example, Michael Zhou (4th year student) concluded that the original design suggested a processional route through the first arch and into the courtyards, which was not built as originally planned by Robert Adam. Evelyn Hays (4th year) tracked a series of eighteenth century paper models, some of which are distributed internationally. Two MSc students in Architectural History and Theory worked directly with the collection to help with cataloguing and this contributed to their dissertations. This is now offered annually to student on this programme. For the other students, exposure to the original drawings was a profound experience – for example, the making of drawings by hand, the use of watercolour to identify materials, the level of detail in construction. This collection is rarely used and it was very clear that although the collections can be accessed relatively easily by arrangement, students will be more inclined to make us of these artefacts if part of a specific theme.

3 Learning from Live projects

A series of site visits were set up and were considered a particular highlight of the project. (October 2016 Architectural History students, January 2017 - Illustration, Design Informatics and Architecture students and staff). Most of the students had never been on a construction site before and found it fascinating to learn about the history of the Old College through the exposed areas of stone, timber and brick. This was a once in a lifetime chance to visit the roof while it was stripped back to the rafters, and to see traditional leadwork being crafted.

The ESALA Projects Office was used as the base for the model-making and its location, immediately off street in Chambers Street gives an immediate opportunity for public engagement and outreach. It was also used for a one-day public exhibition which was extremely well received. This project is evidence that, in addition to formal practice experience in offices, structured short term live projects can contribute a different form of experiential learning.



Students and staff on site at Old College

Dissemination

The project has been disseminated through a variety of means and will continue to be reflected upon in coming months.

- Posters (refer Appendix)
- Open day exhibition
- Open day invite & poster (refer Appendix)
- Website news item <https://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/news/eca-disciplines-collaborate-project-inspired-universitys-law-school-building>
- Alumni Donor newsletter 'Your Impact'- (to be published Mid-January 2018 - refer Appendix)
- Student portfolios

Problems encountered and overcome

The model-making took longer than anticipated due to the lack of source drawings, particularly for the intermediate date of 1978. This was overcome by the students through visits to the City of Edinburgh Council Plan Store and Archives. They then made their own base drawings for the models. They also encountered many contradictions between drawings, which became a good source of discussions with John Cairns (Law) who has worked in the Old College building for many years and so was an excellent source of information. For various reasons, there was less contact with the current architects than we had hoped which meant the students had to puzzle out more by themselves.

On reflection, it might have been beneficial to organise a one-day inter-student workshop event to start the project. Although there was good exchange at the short workshops, each discipline worked fairly independently of each other. This was mainly due to difficulties in accommodating the project within the various set curriculums across the subjects, but might have allowed for a more interactive process for the students.

Benefits to the University

The models themselves are a lasting and tangible benefit to the University. They have been framed and discussions are ongoing with the Estates and Law School with the aim of incorporating them into the newly renovated building. They will provide a direct way for visitors, staff and students to understand the history of the Law School building.

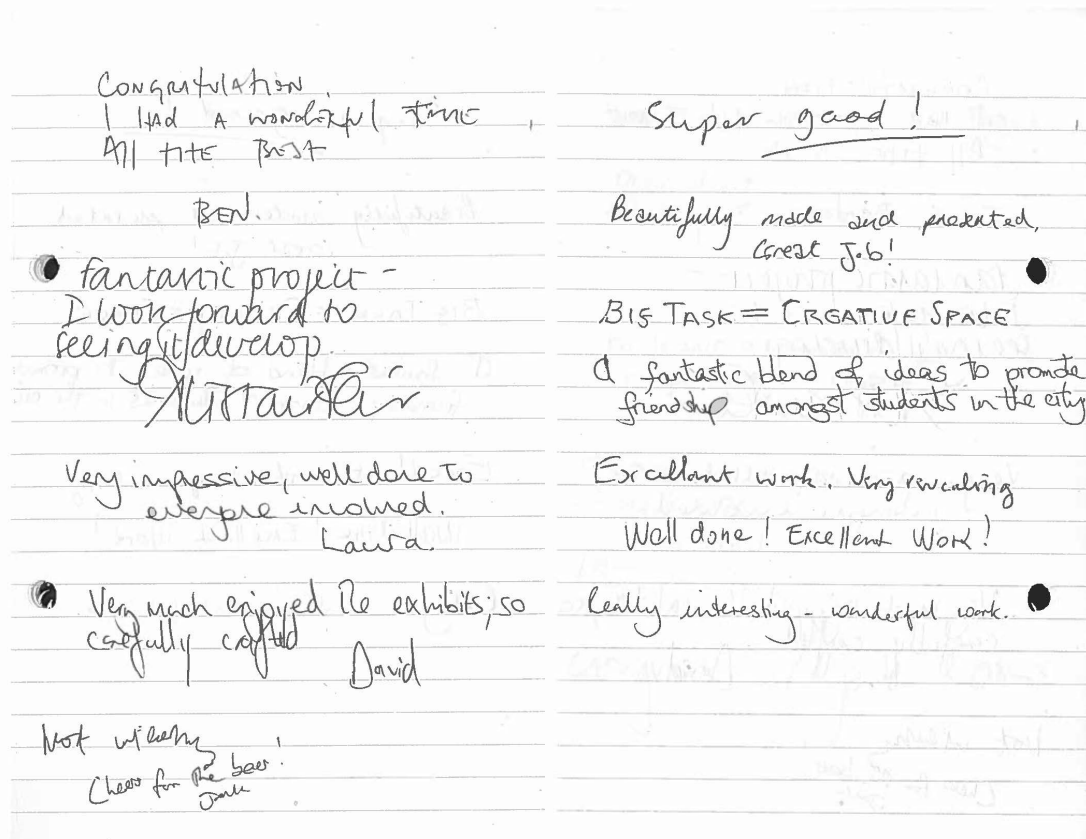
The one-day open exhibition generated extremely good response from the general public with posters explaining how each discipline gained from the project.

There has also been very positive feedback from the students and staff who took part:

'Many thanks for involving us in the Law School History Wall Project. This was excellent experience for a few Illustration students, and a great opportunity for collaboration and creative thinking across our various disciplines. It was great to see the models and printed visuals of the project, and to hear your students' view of the whole process. They have certainly done well with this particular brief greatly appreciate Tim O'Shea's acknowledgement of this project and its significance within and beyond the University of Edinburgh.' Jonathan Gibbs (Illustration)

The students very much enjoyed the opportunity to learn in a very different way from set courses, to visit the site, to see and make direct use of the Playfair drawing collection and to see and hear the different approaches from across the disciplines.

Longer term, this project can inform future interdisciplinary staff/student projects and contribute to consideration of experiential learning within the University.



Some of the comments left in the visitors' book

Participants

Architecture students

Hugh Gatenby

Ana Carolina Laterza

Eireann Iannetta- Mackay

Chris Tolmie

Arch History students

Michael Zhou

Evelyn Hays

Hao Li

MSc Arch History students

Shefali Nayak

Erin Hammond

Design Informatics Students

Wenjing Chen

Zhenhui Tan

Xian Tan

Yuru Li

Illustration students

Hannah Fleetwood

Ryan Hamill

India Pearce

Terri Po

Staff

Fiona McLachlan (AD) Project Lead

John Lowrey (AH) Project Lead

Ian Campbell (AH)

Richard Anderson (AH)

Chris Speed (DI)

Robin Hill (DI)

Lucy Roscoe (Illus)

Jonny Gibbs (Illus)

John Cairns (Law)

Consultants

Lesley McAra (Law)

Julia Dawson (Law)

Alex Nuth (Law)

*Dimitris Theodoosopoulos
(ACons/ Structure)*

Architects

Gregor Stewart (LDN)

Louisa Butler (LDN)

Dermott Patterson (LDN)

E&B

Crawford Ferguson

Helen Sang

John Hart

Budget

The expenditure was on budget much as planned, with the majority being spent in honorariums to the model-makers, materials, catering, and printing.

Appendices

- Website news
- Open day poster
- Sample posters (originals are A1 and are available on request)





**Free exhibition - Open to the Public
ONE DAY ONLY
Law School History Wall Project**

A collaborative inter-disciplinary project supported by a University of Edinburgh, Principal's Teaching Award, 2017
Friday 13th October 2017 10am- 4pm
ESALA Projects Office, Minto House, Chambers Street

As part of the project, four sectional models of the north side of the Old College building have been made by architecture students. The models on display represent the changes in the density and type of spaces in the building over a 200 year period from 1818- 2018. The intention is that these will become embedded within the new staircase in the Law School, when the building restoration is completed and are a gift from the Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA) to the Edinburgh Law School.



Law School History Wall Project

Architectural History

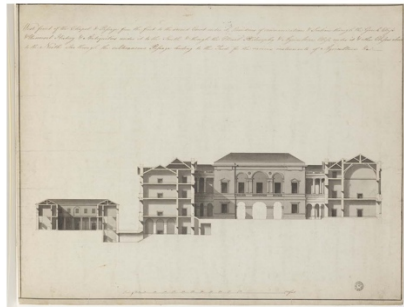
Staff: John Lowrey, Ian Campbell, Richard Anderson

Students: Michael Zhou, Evelyn Hays, Hao Li, Shefali Nayak, Erin Hammond



Images

- Old College 1789 [Canmore]
- Cross section c 1818 [Soane Museum_Adam_28_032, Ardon Bar]Hama_1200px.jpg
- City fo Edinburgh Plan Store Index
- University Special Collections-Students and staff view examples from the Playfair Collections



Alterations	Old College, University Court of Edin.	24	5	1763
Additional Saloons in Assembly Room	57/62 Turnbull & Wilson Std	21	6	
Alterations	24/30 Morrison's Horse Std	18	4	
Alter Shop Front etc	21/9 22, The Penitentiary For Ed. Std	21	7	1764
.. .. Premises	50/52, Princes Hotel (Leighton's Footway) Std	7	8	
.. ..	26/27 Gordon's Furniture Store Std	2	10	
.. .. Premises	67, Higher Leaning Archway to Std	25	1	1765
Alter Shop Premises	107-108, A. & J. Wilson Std	12	2	
.. .. Do	53, Jas. Sten	23	9	
.. .. Premises	Old College, University Court of Edin.	17	9	
.. .. Sub-division Room	Do, Ditto	1	10	



The project aims to develop learning and teaching through reflective practice, specifically on the potential of artefact-based learning using the University Special Collection of architectural drawings and through the making of sectional models of Old College. It makes use of existing pedagogical structures, namely a period of embedded externality within the undergraduate MA (Hons) Architecture degree and the MA (Hons) Architectural History work placement and as part of the MSc in Architectural History and Theory. The Architectural History students' main role was in research and communication with the other students on the project. This involved archival work in University Special Collections, city and national archives to produce a detailed understanding of both the architectural and institutional histories of Old College, which can be used to inform the work of the student participants from other disciplines.

The project takes advantage of a unique situation, where the students are developing the work in parallel with the extensive restoration and re-purposing of the Law School, to develop staff and student understanding of the value of live projects within this established framework. The cross-disciplinary staff-student team allows different groups to be exposed to different modes of learning through making, research and the curation of drawings and models.

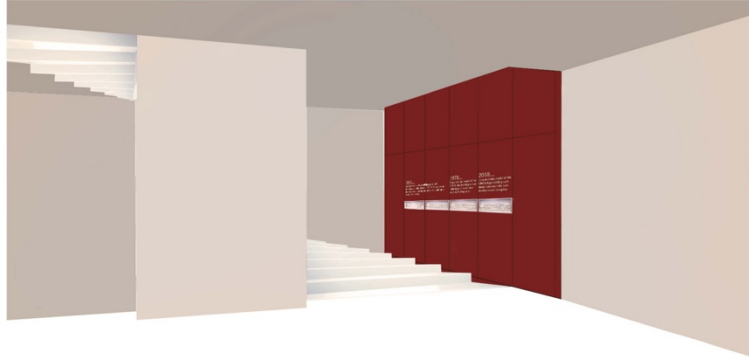
Successful outcomes:

- the transfer of knowledge from students working directly with the artefacts to their peers and staff across the Schools of Law and Edinburgh College of Art
- a greater understanding across other areas of the University of the potential for reflective learning through the use of the University collections
- an academic reflection on the pedagogic value of the ESALA Projects office
- the potential for a vertical installation within the new stair area in Old College, subject to further funding

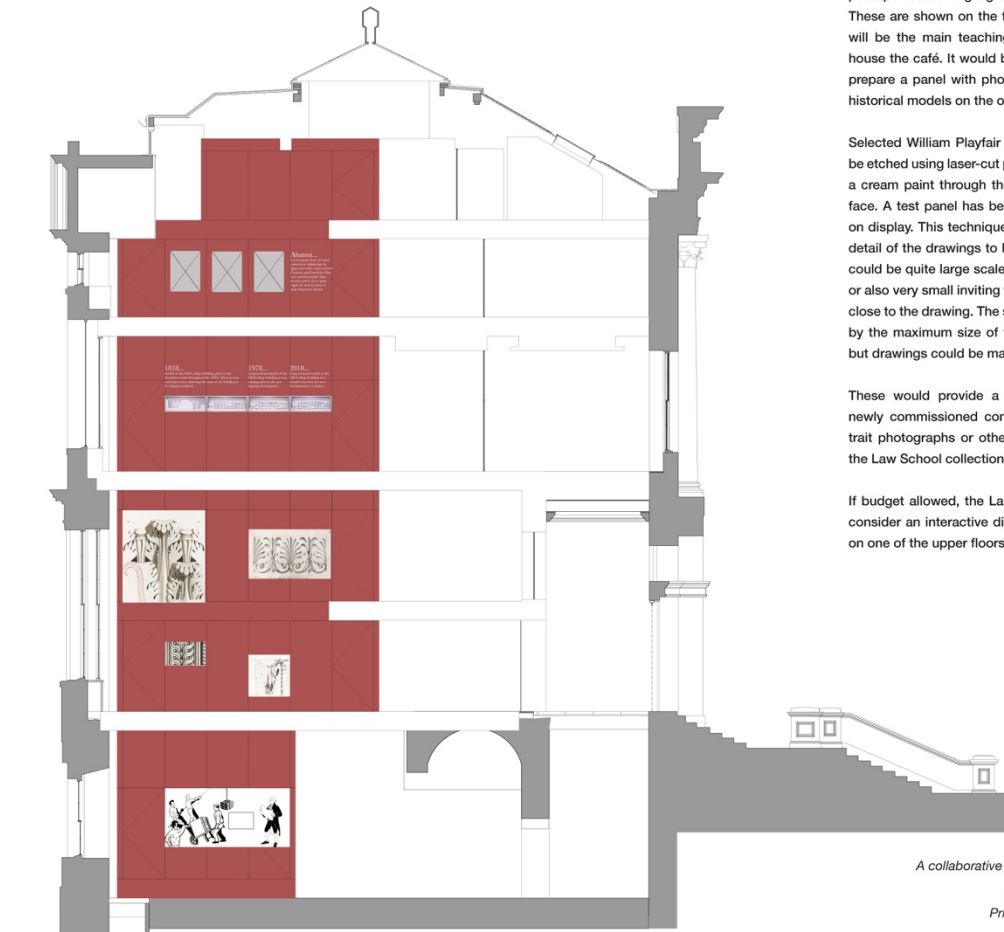
A collaborative inter-disciplinary project supported by a University of Edinburgh, Principal's Teaching Award

Law School History Wall Project

Ideas for an installation in the new stair



Sketch drawings by Hugh Gatenby, Eireann Iannetta-Mackay, Ana-Carolina Laterza



Telling the stories

Old College is rich in history, both of the building and its fabric, and of the Edinburgh Law School and the people who have worked and studied in the building.

This drawing shows a potential installation on the vertical walls in the new stair / lift area currently under construction within the north block of Old College.

In the lower ground floor, there is an opportunity to relate the archaeology of the court and perhaps develop a laser-cut, figurative panel of the construction of the Old College.

The four sectional models are shown recessed into the wall, which will be lined with vertical ducts, painted a deep brown-red colour. Gilt text captions could be applied to the surface with short texts and perhaps some highlighted quotations. These are shown on the first floor, which will be the main teaching floor and will house the café. It would be interesting to prepare a panel with photographs of the historical models on the opposite wall.

Selected William Playfair drawings could be etched using laser-cut panels revealing a cream paint through the deep red surface. A test panel has been made and is on display. This technique allows the fine detail of the drawings to be revealed and could be quite large scale on the surface, or also very small inviting the viewer to go close to the drawing. The size is restricted by the maximum size of the laser cutter, but drawings could be made in panels.

These would provide a background to newly commissioned contemporary portrait photographs or other portraits from the Law School collection.

If budget allowed, the Law School might consider an interactive digital installation on one of the upper floors.

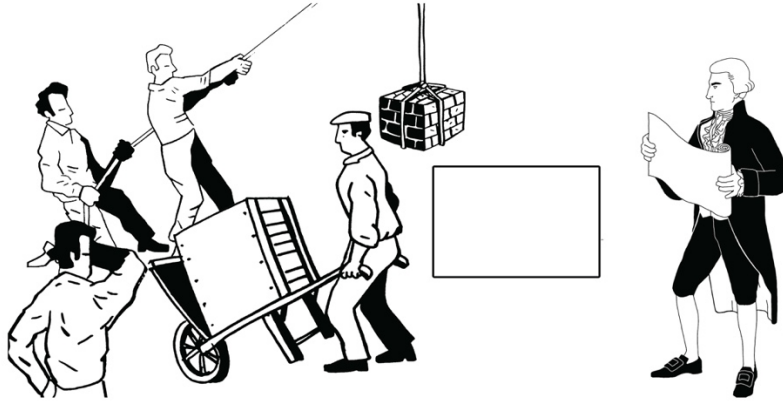
A collaborative inter-disciplinary project supported by a University of Edinburgh, Principal's Teaching Award

Law School History Wall Project

Illustration

Staff: Jonny Gibbs, Lucy Roscoe

Students: Ryan Hamill, India Pearce, Hannah Fleetwood, Terri Po

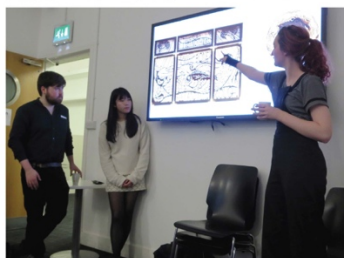


Image

• Illustration students' proposal for laser cut painted wooden mural showing Robert Adam and the building of Old College. They suggested that this could be located close to one of the architectural students' models of the building from 1818



Inspiration for mural - the work of Astrid Jaekel and Lotte Reiniger



As part of the project, staff and students from ECA Illustration, considered how narratives of text and image could tell stories about the making of Old College, the renovation project, and the people who use the building.

They started the project with a presentation of possible illustrative techniques including back-lit laser cut metal, or woodcuts.

There is the potential to further develop one of these murals, perhaps on the lower ground floor, alongside information on the archaeological finds from the excavation of the court, drawing on information from the recently published book, by Jean Grier, *Digging up our past*, 2016.

The students could also provide folding invitation cards for the building re-opening.

This has been an excellent opportunity for Illustration students to work explore an express the narrative possibilities of this site, its history, architecture and its function. These students work from nature and from life, as well as visualising texts in various contexts. As such, they are visual interpreters of text and literature as well as being authorial illustrators. In this case, their work is figurative as well as being abstract in the formation of designs, and it is conceived to complement a particular architectural setting. It is an inspiring and challenging brief, to chronicle the history of a building, from its earliest foundation to the present in various populations and identities through time. The students enjoyed the collaborative aspects of this project, as well as its location within the University of Edinburgh. It is several moves away from Evolution House, the Hunter Building and the Main Building of ECA, and it is also a connected to the map of a significant, eminent and multi-faceted University. Collaboration and cross-disciplinary projects offer excellent challenges and surprises, and give education in ideas from other academic subjects. It has been commendable and rewarding to be involved in the Law School Wall project.



A collaborative inter-disciplinary project supported by a University of Edinburgh, Principal's Teaching Award



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art



Above: A long section of Old College made by architecture students. It shows the building as it will be in 2018 after the Law School renovations.

Old College: a new learning experience

Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) students have put skills into practice investigating the history of the Law School building at Old College.

How can students benefit more from the University Collections in their learning? ECA students have been finding out thanks to the donor-funded Principal's Teaching Award.

Thanks to donors like you, students from four ECA disciplines – Architectural History, Illustration, Design Informatics and Architecture – were able to put their skills into practice through research, the curation of drawings, and model making. Their aim was to understand the changing architecture of the Law School at Old College, which is currently undergoing renovations.

The first stage of the research was to piece together drawings from a wide variety of sources, including the William Playfair archive in the University's Special Collection and more contemporary architectural drawings.

From here the students started to understand the construction changes and details. They also visited the Law School construction site to take in the scale of the live project.

Fiona McLachlan, Professor of Architectural Practice and project lead enthuses, "Everyone particularly

enjoyed the chance to be on site during the major renovation of Old College. Most of the students had never been on a construction site, so found it fascinating to see the building stripped back to the stone, timber and brick."

Architectural drawings were made of the changing building, including the work completed in years 1818, 1978 and (expected in) 2018. The pieces were laser cut and the detailed work to construct four models by hand began, which took the students four intensive weeks to complete.

"The sectional models were a success and the four architecture students are rightly proud of their achievement. The models were designed to be readily understood by a lay audience and they were very well received at our public open day exhibition," Fiona notes.

"The project simply would not have gone ahead without your support of the Edinburgh Fund. Your donations covered the costs of making the models, materials, paint, interdisciplinary workshops, the launch reception and public open day exhibition – thank you!"



ECA students inspecting the roof of Old College on a unique educational trip to a live building site.



Architecture students working on a sectional model of Old College.



Fiona McLachlan, Professor of Architectural Practice (centre), with architecture students.

Images from top: Rachel Collie, Fiona McLachlan (x2), John Lowrey