



## Exeter Schools

On behalf of Devon County Council, the contractor Mowlem has carried out a series of PFI school projects in Exeter comprising five new secondary schools and one new primary.

In collaboration with Mowlem and Aedas architects, Modulex has successfully provided wayfinding consultancy and all the exterior and interior signage for the programme, setting new standards of signing educational facilities in the South West.



### Business challenges

The PFI (Private Finance Initiative) model has revolutionized the procurement of public buildings and services in the UK in recent years, providing those involved with challenges and opportunities in equal measure. The Exeter schools PFI has been no exception, offering the chance to set new standards of educational facility in Devon, while imposing the challenge of tight budgets, short deadlines and a searching approvals system.

Since its commencement in 2003, this large and ambitious project has enjoyed a high profile in the South West and nationally in the world of educational procurement. Success was important to all parties and Modulex has worked hard to ensure that the wayfinding design and sign systems have been of the highest quality.

### Solutions

Despite a relatively late commission, Modulex made a rapid impact by deploying tested skills in wayfinding design and consultancy.

A willingness to listen and to consider the end-user is an outstanding feature of the Modulex methodology, as are attention to detail and a real desire to get the most out of the sign system.

A well designed and effective sign system

helps ensure that visitors to these new school sites are well taken care of. Since many of the facilities will be made available to the community at large as well as to the school children, it is of vital importance that the sign system be easily understood by all, irrespective of age, language or cultural background. In this respect Modulex is able to draw on a wealth of experience gained in the signing of large public buildings all over the world, providing solutions based on simplicity, clarity and consistency.

### Benefits

Modulex was able to deploy a robust and well-documented project management and installation system, tried and tested on many large public projects around the world.

At Exeter this has helped the team save time and avoid defective work.

Often the best costs more.

But not always. Modulex architectural sign systems have been refined over many years, offering an effective balance between system efficiency and the bespoke solution.

This translates into true cost-effectiveness, vital to the success of any public work procured by the PFI method. The signs in these new Exeter schools are simple, clear and economical.

Replacing every single secondary school at the same time is unheard of in a city of this size.

The Exeter plan is unique and people from all over the world will come to Exeter to see this remarkable new cluster of attractive buildings'

Ted Wragg

Professor of Education at Exeter University and chair of the Exeter Education Commission, in Aedas Review, April 2005

We have had an enormous amount of detail to agree on such an ambitious project. But I am delighted to say that we are on course to bring the Exeter education system into the 21st Century with this huge investment in modern buildings, that will give our children the best possible learning environment. The national Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) is already planning to use Exeter as a case study of the way that high quality design can be ensured in a PFI scheme

John Hart

Devon's Executive Councillor for Schools, in Public Service Review

Modulex helped us out with a tight programme and budget. They provided invaluable wayfinding consultancy, which we hadn't expected, and delivered as they said they would. We'd be happy to work with them again

Tim Barton

Associate, Aedas Architects Ltd.