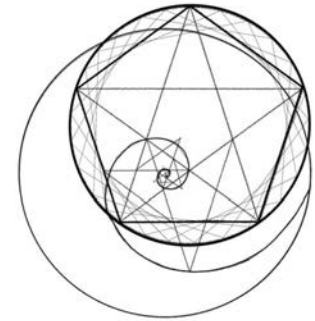


**Urban Walk** explores the ways in which interior design can respond to the mental health issues that impact students' daily lives. It investigates the theories of biophilia and renewing human connectedness to nature within a built environment which can positively impact students' well-being and improve their overall mental health.

The proposal is for a multi-functional student centre for relaxation, where students will be able to participate in a variety of activities such as yoga, meditation, gardening or simply relax with friends or in private. Evidence suggests that these are the most natural methods in helping prevent stress and developing issues related to mental health that students experience after starting University.



Concept Diagram





7 George Square, Edinburgh

Obtaining a university degree is a big milestone for many people. But the process of securing this degree can have a huge impact on the mental health and wellbeing of students.

In 2019, a survey conducted by Randstad UK where they asked over 1800 students highlights interesting results

Over a quarter of UK students (37%) are experiencing their state of mental wellbeing changing for the worse since starting higher education

64% of respondents claim that their studies and university lifestyle impacts state of wellbeing negatively

The new report also discovered that over half (59%) have considered leaving their course.

42% of participants were accessing counselling support.

The main solution that the University had to help students with their mental health was counseling. Yet, it seems that it was not always successful and more students were needing support each year. There needs to be another way to help students that will be more effective, and one that will prevent people from suffering rather than healing already existing issues.

I did my own survey finding out what exactly students are doing to relax so I could design interior space that will allow those activities.

How can interiors enhance relaxation?



Students considering leaving their course



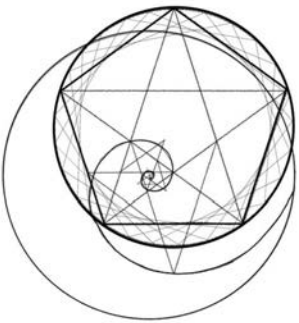
The positive impact that counselling services have had was represented in the feedback, helping students cope with:



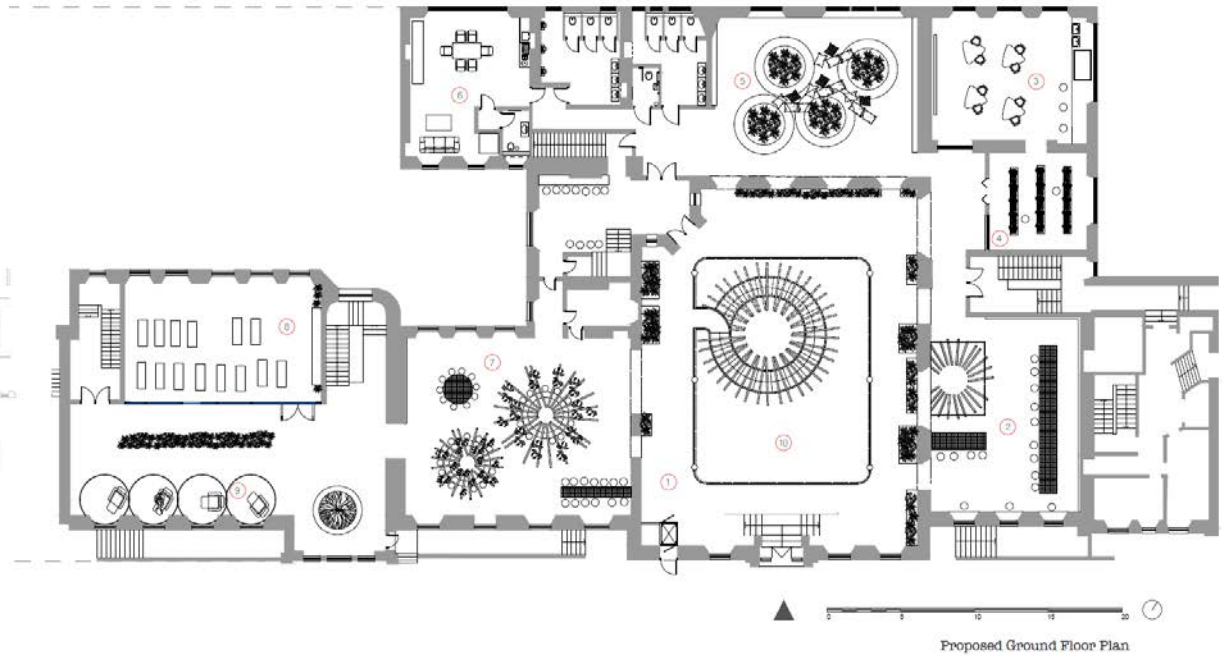
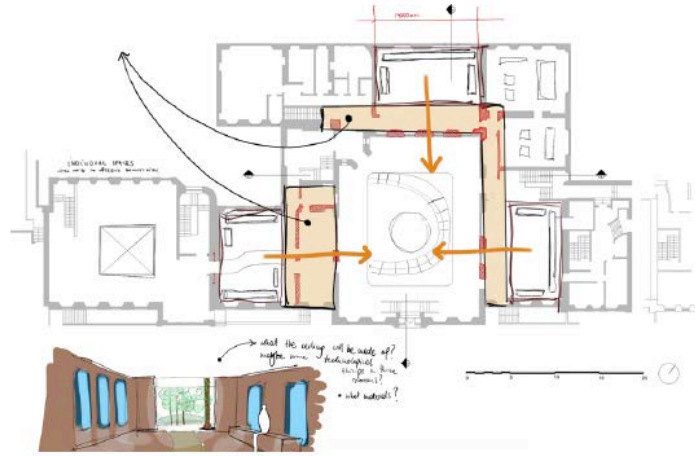
Survey conducted for this project research purposes asking students on how they like to relax, how they manage preventing stress and where

Q1: In terms of relaxing, would you rather relax in a vibrant, energising yet calm space that's unlike University setting to put your mind off your stresses or would you rather relax in a neutral, whitish, minimal, quiet space that is quite similar to the building?	Q2: What would you like to do in this space that would help you relax? except from having coffee and food (group activities with friends and other students? crafts and arts? just sit by yourself in peace? socialise? yoga? meditation? other workshops?)	Q3: Do you feel more comfortable in open spaces or more enclosed and private spaces?	Q4: What do you usually do to relax?	Q5: Such centre will be open 24/7 to accommodate various needs. It'll be an indoor garden with vibrant yet calming interior design. What else would make you help relax in such centre?

Total participants:  
17 students of Edinburgh University from various fields





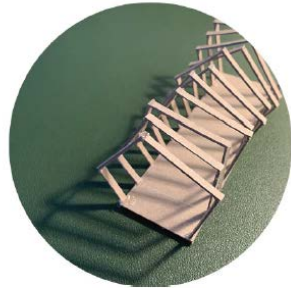


In the new centre there are two main screen exhibition rooms at the lower ground floor where students can immerse themselves with nature despite lack of natural light. Via experiencing art and using all 5 senses they will be able to release stress while walking around the exhibition.

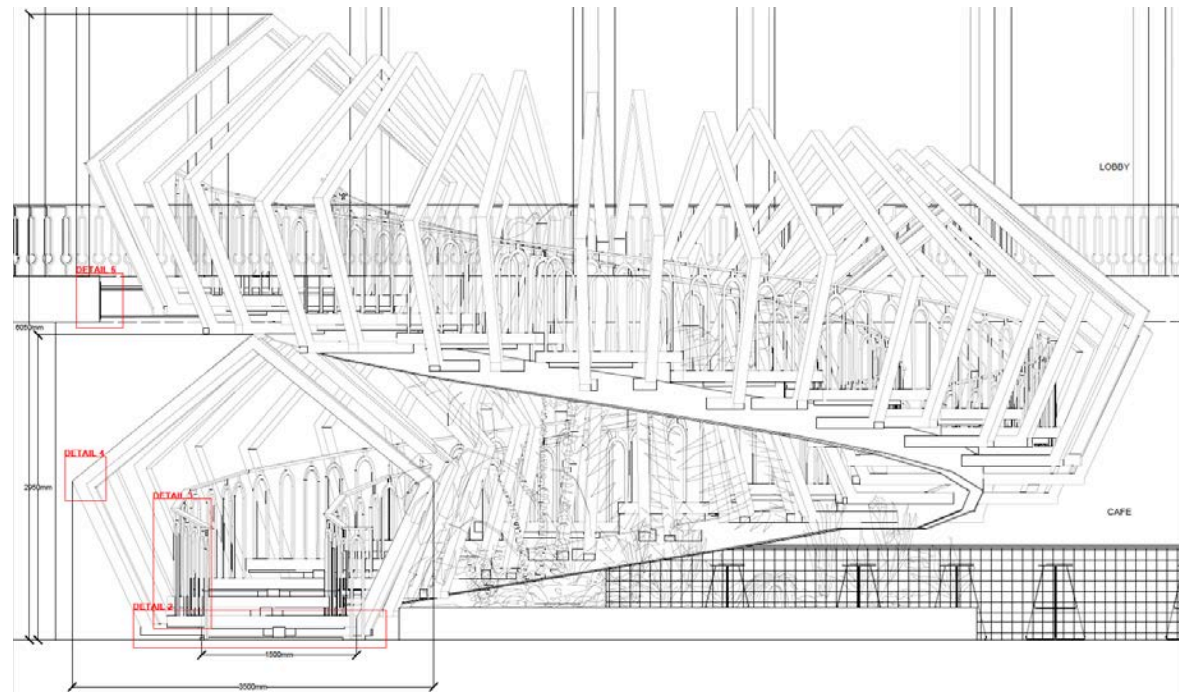
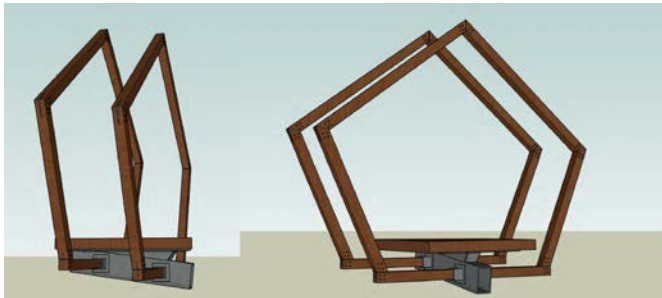
On the ground floor there are similar screens mounted on walls in some of the rooms like: socialising / relaxing room (see visual below) and study room. It won't be as effective as in the rooms on the level below because of natural light in those spaces. However, they will display slow motion nature inspired images that will help in putting students in a more calm and relaxed state and to help them focus. Also, they will reveal what is happening further into the space and guide students where exhibition rooms are.

Moreover, this socialising area is a result of Refuge / Prospect study. Students will feel protected under glulam tree construction while they will be able to observe flowers and plants in the space that will allow them to fully relax.

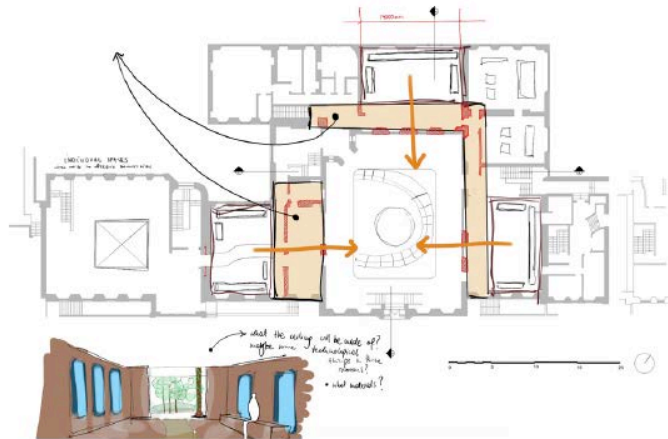




Concept model







Layout idea inspired by patterns 11 Prospect. An unimpeded view over a distance, for surveillance and planning, and 18 Refuge. A place for withdrawal from environmental conditions or the main flow of activity, in which the individual is protected from behind and overhead.

There were three "refuge" spaces in the building and next to them I wanted to design indoor gardens as "prospect" areas. I wanted to make windows in floors all the way up to the roof to bring more light so plants could grow in those areas but it could make people feel uncomfortable to walk on a transparent floor.

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