

Workplace jargon unlocked

Complete glossary
of commonly used
terminology in the
workplace sector.

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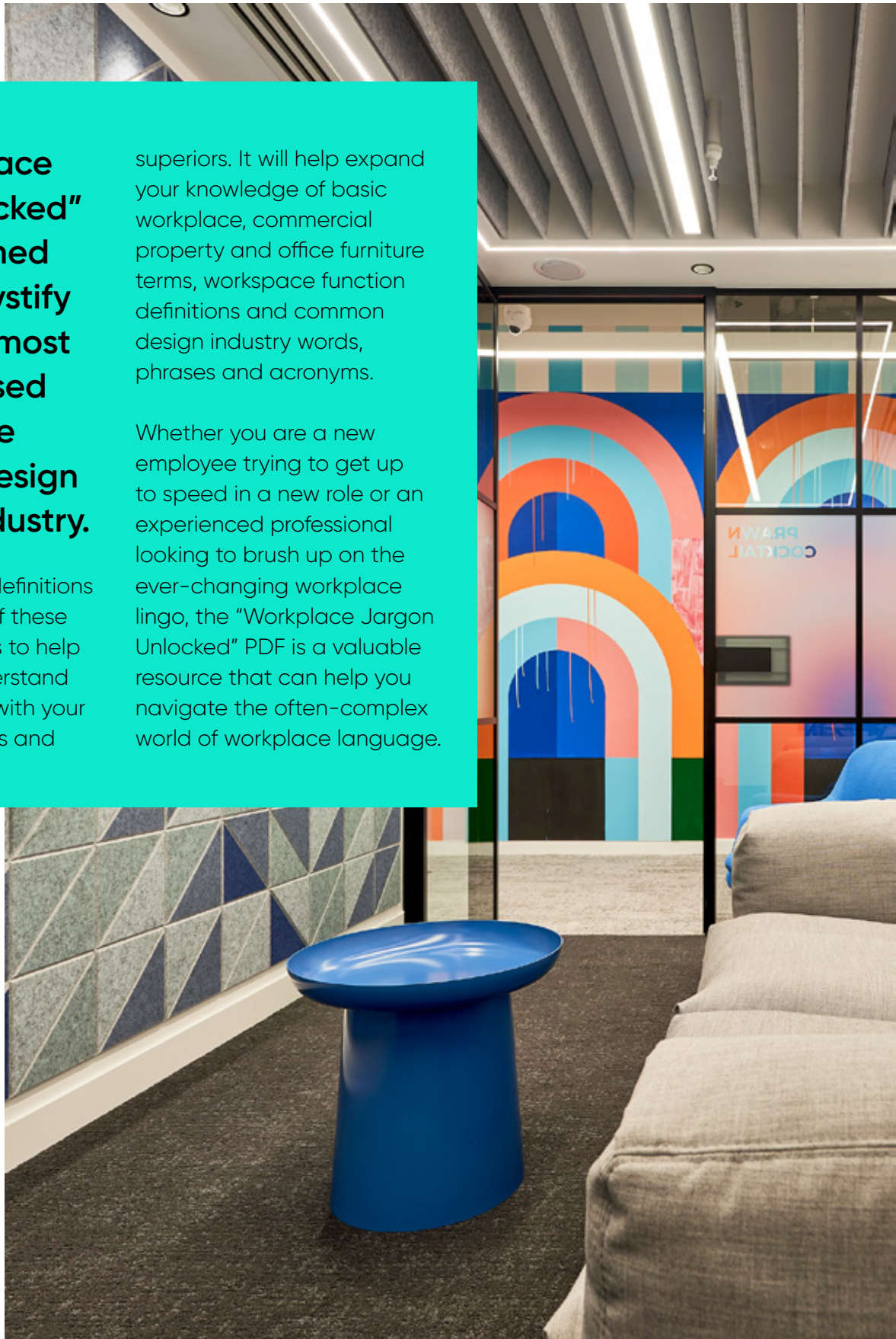


Our “Workplace Jargon Unlocked” PDF is designed to help demystify some of the most commonly used ‘jargon’ in the workplace design and build industry.

By providing clear definitions and explanations of these terms, this PDF aims to help readers better understand and communicate with your colleagues, partners and

superiors. It will help expand your knowledge of basic workplace, commercial property and office furniture terms, workspace function definitions and common design industry words, phrases and acronyms.

Whether you are a new employee trying to get up to speed in a new role or an experienced professional looking to brush up on the ever-changing workplace lingo, the “Workplace Jargon Unlocked” PDF is a valuable resource that can help you navigate the often-complex world of workplace language.



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01 | Commercial Property
Terms

Base Rent

The cost of renting a space. The amount can be set to increase or remain constant over the course of the lease. Base rent is often just one component of the overall cost of leasing the space. Other components can include maintenance and other standard fees.

Full service lease

In a Full Service lease, the landlord pays everything: taxes, property insurance, and utilities. All operating expenses are covered by the base rent of the office lease. Even cleaning of the tenant's space is typically included.

Gross floor area (GFA)

Total floor area of a building including all the spaces within a building, inclusive of those used for structural and mechanical purposes.

Gross leasable area (GLA)

The total floor area of a building that can be leased.

Initial term

The first period in a lease agreement.

Landlord representative

A representative that markets commercial property on behalf of a landlord in an effort to sell or lease commercial property.

Letter of intent (LOI)

A document that expresses the intent of each party in a real estate agreement. It is not a legally binding contract, but it is aimed at reducing misunderstandings between the parties.

Net lettable area (NLA)

A term used in the real estate industry to refer to the total floor area of a building that is available for lease or rent to tenants. It is typically used to describe the size and capacity of office buildings, retail spaces, and other commercial properties.

Prelease space

Space that has been leased to a tenant that has been announced for future development, but is not yet under construction or not yet finished.

Rent

The amount that a tenant pays to rent office space. Depending on the type of lease, the amount can be inclusive of operating costs and maintenance fees or it can be exclusive as well.

Request for proposal (RFP)

In the workplace design industry, an RFP may be used to request proposals for a variety of services, such as design and construction of a new office space, redesign of an existing space, or the procurement of office furniture and other equipment. Vendors who wish to respond to an RFP must carefully review the requirements and submit a detailed proposal that demonstrates how they can meet the needs of the company or organization.

Shell office space

Shell space refers to an office that has an unfinished interior without any improvements, refurbishment or finishes. It might consist of bare walls, concrete, windows and a ceiling with no treatment on it. It generally does include plumbing, electrical wiring or HVAC amenities.



02

Workplace Design
Terms

Workplace Design Terms

Activity based working (ABW)

A flexible and collaborative work style that allows employees to choose the best location and work environment for the tasks they need to perform. This approach to work is based on the idea that employees should be able to select the best space and resources for each specific task, rather than being tied to a traditional office or desk.

Agile working

Agile working is a flexible approach to work that is designed to be responsive to change. In an agile working environment, teams are organized around cross-functional, self-managing units that are responsible for delivering outcomes rather than following a predetermined process. This allows teams to be more responsive to changing business needs and to adapt to new information and developments as they emerge. Agile working often involves a range of flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, flexible scheduling and the use of shared workspaces. It can also emphasize continuous learning and development by encouraging open communication and collaboration among team members. The goal of agile working is to create a more flexible, responsive, and effective work environment that can better adapt to changing business needs and market conditions. It is increasingly being adopted by organizations in a variety of industries as a way to increase productivity, innovation, and employee satisfaction.

Assigned workspace

A workstation that has been assigned for individual employee use.

BIM

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is a digital model of the physical and functional characteristics of a building. Most BIM models include geometric, spatial and graphical information about the building, as well as data about its construction, operation and maintenance.

CAD

Computer Aided Design (CAD) is architectural software used to create detailed building models or for the drawing of space plans.

CAT A

A refurbishment which generally involves a complete overhaul of the building's infrastructure, including electrical and plumbing systems, HVAC, and elevators. It may also include the installation of new windows, doors and basic finishes. The goal of a category A refurbishment is to bring the space up to modern standards of comfort, convenience and functionality, making it attractive to potential tenants who will then typically personalise the space further.

CAT A +

A CAT A+ style refurbishment is generally something performed by the buildings landlord who is looking to make further additions to the CAT A to make the space more attractive to a potential tenant. This might include the installation of commonly sought after office features, such as meeting rooms, tea points and common areas, as well as some basic furniture to suit standard office functions, like workstations and task chairs.

CAT B

A CAT B style refurbishment typically comes after a CAT A and involves updating or replacing existing finishes and fixtures such as flooring, lighting and ceiling tiles, as well as making adjustments to the layout of the space including partitions or dividers. CAT B style refurbishments are generally commissioned by the tenant to make their leased space more suitable to the individual requirements of their organisation and team. They can also be used to improve the functionality and efficiency of the space, such as by adding new technology or making the space more energy efficient.

Cellular office

In a cellular style office often more senior staff have their own dedicated office or more portioned space to create clear hierarchical structure. Often support staff sit in teams in designated pods close to the relevant office of their superior. Pods are usually segregated from other teams with partitioning, meaning cross team collaboration is confined to meeting rooms only.

Circulation space

The space that is necessary to access work spaces. For example, a corridor that provides a path that leads to all of the different offices.

Common area

Common area refers to the areas within a building that is available for the non-exclusive use of all its tenants, such as lobbies, corridors and parking lots. Within the demise of a workspace a 'common area' usually refers to a shared space which all employees are welcome to use.

Co-working

A type of work arrangement in which people from different companies and organizations share a common workspace, typically in a shared office environment. This type of arrangement allows individuals and small businesses to rent workspace on a flexible basis, rather than committing to a traditional lease for an office space. Co-working spaces often offer a range of amenities and services, such as conference rooms, networking events, and access to office equipment, to support the needs of the people working there.

Design and build

Design and build is a procurement method in which a single entity, known as the design-build contractor, is responsible for both the design and construction of a project. This approach differs from traditional procurement methods, in which the design and construction phases are typically procured separately. Typically a design and build contractor has many different capabilities in-house such as designers, furniture specialists, technical specialists, pricing experts and construction staff to handle the entire process from concept to completion on site.

Desk sharing ratio

A desk sharing ratio is a measure of the number of people who share a single desk or workspace in a flexible work arrangement such as hot desking or co-working. The ratio is typically expressed as the number of people per desk or workspace. For example, a desk sharing ratio of 1:2 would indicate that two people share each desk. A desk sharing ratio of 1:1 would indicate that each person has their own dedicated desk or workspace.

Workplace Design Terms

Detail and build

In the design and build industry, detail and build is a procurement method where the design is supplied from the client, usually from an architect or designer which the client has appointed themselves and then handed over to another design and build company to execute. The then appointed design team work closely with the construction team and the client to ensure that the project is built according to the plans, specification and initial intent of the client. Usually the design will alter slightly over the course of a detail and build execution process as necessary tweaks are made so that the initial design can be built within the clients budget and programme requirements, as well as the individual constraints of the selected building. The appointed design and build contractor also handles the construction process, where the detailed design plans are turned into a physical structure. This typically involves a wide range of activities, such as site preparation, excavation, foundation work, framing and installation of systems and finishes.

Hot desking

A flexible work arrangement in which employees do not have a designated, permanent workspace and instead use any available desk or workspace. This can involve employees using a different desk or workspace each day, or for a certain period of time, such as a week or a month.

HVAC

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) is the heating, ventilation and cooling structures and systems of the building.

Hybrid working

Hybrid working is a flexible work arrangement that combines elements of both remote work and in-office work. Under a hybrid working model, employees have the option to work from home, a co-working space or any other location outside of the traditional office environment, while also having the option to work in the office on a regular basis. The goal of hybrid working is to provide employees with greater flexibility and autonomy while still maintaining some of the benefits of in-office work, such as face-to-face collaboration and access to resources and support. It is becoming an increasingly popular work arrangement as organizations seek to balance the needs of their employees with the demands of the business.

Manifestation

Graphics added to glazed partitioning for safety purposes. They can be as simple as dots or shapes, or bespoke branded graphics, however they must comply with local regulations.

Meeting room occupancy

Meeting room occupancies refer to the maximum number of people who are allowed to occupy a meeting room at a given time. Occupancy limits are typically set based on the size of the room and the available exits, as well as local building codes and fire regulations.

Open plan working

Open plan working in the office refers to a type of office layout in which individual workspaces are not separated by walls or other physical barriers. Instead, employees work in a shared,

Workplace Design Terms

open space, often with low partitions or other visual dividers or nothing separating one workspace from another. Open plan offices are designed to promote collaboration and communication among employees, and are often used in organizations that place a high value on teamwork and innovation. They can also be more efficient and cost-effective, as they require less space and fewer resources to set up and maintain than traditional office layouts.

Shell and core

The unfinished state of a building or floor space when it is ready to be leased or rented to tenants. A shell and core space is typically delivered by a developer or landlord in a bare-bones state, with only the basic structural elements and mechanical systems in place. 'Shell and core' is the first process of construction as it involves the construction of the framework and building structure such as stairwells and elevators. Shell and core spaces are often preferred by tenants who want to customize their work environment to suit their specific needs and preferences. They also offer landlords and developers a more flexible and cost-effective way to lease or rent out space, as the tenant is responsible for completing the fit-out of the space.

Snagging

Snagging refers to the process of identifying and rectifying defects or issues in newly constructed buildings. Snagging is typically carried out by the contractor after the construction work has been completed and is intended to ensure that the building meets the required standards and specifications.

Stay-vs-go analysis

A 'stay-vs-go' analysis is an exercise that examines how your organisations strategic goals intersect with your real estate options, ultimately pushing one path forward from vision to action.

Test fit

A test fit is a floor plan used to confirm that the needs and requirements can be accommodated within a specific space. It is typically engaged during the real estate search and selection phase as a tool for helping future tenants evaluate potential spaces. Unlike a space plan which take a more in-depth look at your space and defines things like circulation patterns and positioning of requirement and furniture, a test fit more simply seeks to attain whether or not your team can fit into a floor plate.

Workplace consultancy study

A workplace consultancy study is a type of consulting engagement that focuses on analysing and improving the effectiveness of a workplace. It typically involves gathering data about the current state of the workplace, identifying areas for improvement and developing recommendations for change. The goal of a workplace consultancy study is to help organisations become more efficient, productive, and successful. The study may also consider factors such as physical layout and design of the workplace, technology, tools and processes in place. The goal is to provide organisations with a clear understanding of the current state of the workplace and actionable recommendations for improvement.

Workplace Design Terms

Workplace densities

Workplace density refers to the number of people who work in a given space or area. It can be measured in terms of the number of employees per square foot or square meter of workspace. High workplace density can refer to a situation where there are a large number of employees in a small space, while low workplace density refers to a situation where there is more space per employee. There are several factors that can influence workplace density, including the type of work being done, the size and layout of the workspace and the availability of technology that allows employees to work remotely.





03 | Office Furniture Terms

Workplace Furniture Terms

Audio visual equipment (AV)

Any system or equipment which enables audio and visual communication.

Accent lighting

Lighting used to highlight a specific area. It draws the eye to a specific area or product.

Ambient lighting

Lighting for a larger area to fit the intended mood of the space. Places like conference rooms, hallways, and reception areas require brighter lighting to illuminate the entire area.

Banquette seating

Furniture item that can be fixed and made bespoke to fit a specific area. It is most commonly seen in the office in common areas or in tea points.

Contract ready

Not all furniture is suitable for commercial projects. To qualify correctly they often need certain certifications, such as fire ratings, specific foams, an element of recyclability etc.

Credenza

Sideboard with storage, often used in meeting rooms. Most have allowances for AV equipment and are a good solution to hide excess of cables.

Draftsman stool

Task chair and stool hybrid. An elevated seating option, often used by draftsmen hence their name sake. Today they are commonly used in labs, or in ABW work settings as an alternative meeting space.

Ergonomics

Defined as the science of fitting a workplace to the user's needs, ergonomics aims to increase efficiency and productivity and reduce discomfort. Think about the angle of your computer monitor, or the height of your desk.

Feature lighting

The light itself is the point of show and decorative solution. These are the lighting fixtures that people remember. Feature lighting furthers the experience of the space and is usually procured within a CAT B fit-out.

FF&E

Shorthand for Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment. In architecture and interior design, FF&E typically encompasses all movable or easily removed objects in a building.

Fire label

Commercial furniture must meet specified ignition requirements in respect to the materials they are made of. Fire labels are designed to ensure that upholstery components and composites used for furniture supplied meet specified ignition resistance levels and are suitable labelled. Specific regulations differ from region to region.

Flexible furniture

Mobile furniture that can easily be moved around and placed in different configurations depending on the task at hand or adapted to fit different working styles/situations, but also items which can be used for different uses, in a café, touchdown space, informal meetings etc.

Workplace Furniture Terms

Hardware

A generic term used to describe any metal fitting that goes onto furniture i.e., handles, locks, hinges, escutcheons. Also refers to sliding rails, hinges, couch legs, lifters, backrests, springs, gun nails, foot codes, connections or fastenings.

MDF

Medium Density Fiberboard (MDF). This is made by breaking down wood chips into fibers, mixing glue and fusing the resulting mixture under heat and pressure to produce a board commonly used for furniture.

Modular furniture

Furniture constructed in units that can be arranged in different configurations. This kind of design allows for unlimited possibilities for comfort, style and safety because the pieces of furniture can be used in multiple unique ways.

Pedestal

Personal Storage, usually lockable and on castors. Desk pedestals are sets of drawers and small cabinets which provide additional well-organised storage options.

Poseur

A higher table than a regular table. You can either stand (or pose) or sit on a stool at a poseur table. They are commonly used in breakout areas, touchdown areas and often VC meeting rooms.

Return

The part of an L-shaped desk that is at right angles to the main work surface, providing additional workspace.

Task chair

An ergonomic desk chair designed to allow people to sit for long periods of time. Different brands offer different levels of ergonomics. Typical task chairs include gas lifts, 5 star bases, h/a arms, a seat slide and lumbar support.

Task lighting

Lighting needed to perform a specific task. For example a desk lamp. Generally speaking a task light can be controlled by the individual and is not operated by a main switch.

Touchdown

Similar to hot desking, touchdown areas can also be made up of soft seating. The idea is that a touch down space is used as a quick stop, somewhere to 'plug & play' for a couple of hours before relocating.

VC

Video conferencing equipment (VC) is audio-visual hardware that enables video conference calls. This includes cameras, microphones, speakers, remote controls, etc. that are installed in a meeting room with a monitor so that conference participants can collaborate with others in a remote location.

VE options

Value engineered options: a method used to improve the value of your project by finding more cost effective solutions to specified products.



04

Workplace Sustainability
Terms

Workplace Sustainability Terms

BREEAM

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method) is a global sustainability assessment method for buildings and communities. It provides a framework for evaluating environmental performance based on a range of categories such as energy and water use, materials and waste, transport and health and well-being. It is widely recognised as a leading standard for sustainable building design and construction. Buildings that meet the BREEAM standards are awarded a certification based on their level of performance. BREEAM aims to reduce the environmental impact of buildings to promote healthier, more sustainable environments for people to live and work in.

Circular design

In the context of workplace design, a circular economy approach involves designing buildings, offices, and other workspaces in a way that reduces the use of resources, minimizes waste and maximizes the reuse and recycling of materials.

Cradle to cradle products

Cradle to Cradle Certified® is the global standard for products that are safe, circular and responsibly made. It assesses a product across 5 categories: Material Health; Product Circularity; Clean Air and Climate Protection; Water and Soil Stewardship; and Social Fairness.

Embodied carbon

Embodied carbon is the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (often simplified to "carbon") generated to produce a built asset. This includes emissions caused by extraction, manufacture/processing, transportation and assembly of every product and element in an asset. In some cases, (depending on the boundary of an assessment), it may also include the maintenance, replacement, deconstruction, disposal and end-of-life aspects of the materials and systems that make up the asset. It excludes operational emissions of the asset.

Environmental Product Declaration (EPD)

EPDs signal a manufacturer's commitment to measuring and reducing the environmental impact of its products and services and report these impacts in a transparent way. With an EPD, manufacturers report comparable, objective and third-party verified data that show the good, the bad and the evil about the environmental performance of their products and services. When developing an EPD, the environmental performance of the product shall be described from a life cycle perspective by carrying out a life cycle assessment (LCA) of the product.

ESG

ESG stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance. It is a set of standards used to evaluate the sustainability and societal impact of companies. ESG factors consider how a company performs in areas such as climate change, labour practices and board diversity, among others. ESG considerations can be incorporated into your workplace design to generate a range of positive ESG outcomes.

Workplace Sustainability Terms

Fitwel

Fitwel is a green building certification that seeks to prioritise wellness within the design, development, operation of buildings and the communities within them. It is a global certification that has three levels of certification awarded on a points-based system. They have 55+ design and operational strategies associated with unique point allocations to increase physical activity, promote occupant safety, reduce morbidity and absenteeism, support social equity, instil feelings of well-being, enhance community health and access to healthy food.

LEED

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a points based green building certification designed to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life. The LEED framework helps tenants implement management practices to prioritise building efficiency, decrease operational costs, increase asset value and ensure productivity, comfort, health and well-being for occupants.

Net zero construction

When the amount of carbon emissions associated with a building's product and construction stages up to practical completion is zero or negative, through the use of offsets or the net export of on-site renewable energy.

Net zero operational

When the amount of carbon emissions associated with the building's operational energy on an annual basis is zero or negative. A net zero carbon building is highly energy efficient and powered from on-site and/or off-site renewable energy sources with any remaining carbon offset.

Paperless workplace

A paperless workplace is an office or other work environment that relies primarily on digital technologies, rather than paper, to store, process and communicate information. A paperless workplace has environmental benefits, as it can reduce the amount of paper waste and other materials that are used and discarded.

SKA rating

A SKA Rating is a green building certification system that assesses refurbishment and fit-out projects against a set of environmental and well-being criteria to ensure the end result is healthy and sustainable. It comprises of more than a hundred 'good practice' measures and is divided into two stages for design and handover at project completion. There are Gold, Silver and Bronze categories.

WELL

The WELL Building standard is a green building certification that takes a more human-centric approach, focusing on improving human health and well-being through the built environment. It requires accomplishing health-first factors such as rigorous performance standards and operational protocols that help occupants by supporting physical and mental health across their 10 core concepts.

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