

# Does it matter where students sit in lecture halls?

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Lecture theater. Credit: FEBS

Lectures are a staple of higher education, and understanding how

students interact and learn within the lecture theatre environment is central to successful learning. In a new study published in *FEBS Open Bio*, researchers examined students' reasons for choosing particular seats in a lecture hall, and investigated how seating positions correlate with student performance.

Many students preferred being able to sit with their friends, while others were more concerned with either attracting or avoiding the lecturer's attention. Some students chose seats that allowed them to see and hear clearly, while others picked easily vacatable seats that made them feel less anxious.

Friendship groups who sat together tended to achieve similar grades, and students who sat alone at the edges tended to do worse than average. Lecturers may be able to use these findings to provide assistance to anxious students, and to support the learning of all students by encouraging interactions between the different groups.

"Interaction is a key part of learning and knowing who the students are interacting with can be a great benefit when designing activities," said lead author Dr. David P. Smith, of Sheffield Hallam University, in the UK.

**More information:** *FEBS Open Bio*, [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10 ... 1002/2211-5463.12494](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2211-5463.12494)

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