Welcome To The Information Commons.
Welcome to the Information Commons

We hope that you find this booklet helpful and informative. We have included all the essential information you need to get the most out of the Information Commons (IC) as well as some ‘top tips’ to help you get even more value!

New students

If you are new to the University please visit our website for lots of useful information and to find out about all the services on offer to you. There is a section for new students which contains tips that we think will be helpful, and there are also links to other useful pages on the University website.

www.shef.ac.uk/infocommons

Getting started

During Fresher’s Week, we like to make it as easy as possible for you to get started so we make special arrangements during the first couple of weeks of term:

• If you are a new student you can get into the IC before you receive your UCard - just remember to bring your acceptance letter, or anything with your admissions number on it, and show it at the Welcome Desk.

• Once you are in the IC, you can pick up your computer account details and email address using our self-service facility on Level 1.

• Induction courses will be run on the hour between 10am and 3pm. These will focus on the important things you need to know to get the most out of the IC and you will have the opportunity to ask questions, see demonstrations and have a tour of the building.
At any other time

- You cannot enter the IC without your UCard. If you lose your card you can get a replacement from the Student Services Information Desk (SSiD) in the Union building.

- If you don't pick up your computer account details when you first start, you will need to go to the Computing Centre on Hounsfield Road to register before you can use the PCs.

- If you would like us to show you round the IC, or demonstrate how to use any of our services or facilities, please just ask!

Accessibility

The Information Commons is fully accessible and parking is available for customers with mobility difficulties. There are also a number of facilities within the IC which may be of interest to students with additional support requirements:

- Large screen monitors and large print keyboards on every floor.

- Induction Loop at the Information Desks on Levels 0 and 1 as well as portable induction loops available to borrow for use within the building.

- Self-propelling wheelchair available for use within the IC.

- Low level photocopier on Level 1.

- Height-adjustable desks located around the building.

- Accessible toilets on every level.

- Low level card readers at entrance to IC.

- Automatic doors at the main entrance.

- Bookable scanners on Level 1.

- Refuge points on every level.

- Low level counters on Levels 0 and 1.

It may also be possible to book study rooms for using laptops with voice-activated software. For more information about this or any other accessibility issues, please contact Lois Burt on (0114) 22 27294 or email: lib-support@lists.shef.ac.uk

Further information: www.shef.ac.uk/library/services/addsupport.html
Help and support

In the IC

Most of the facilities in the IC are self-service, and therefore available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This includes:

- Borrowing, returning and requesting books
- Printing, scanning, photocopying and topping up credit
- Booking group study rooms, PCs and scanners

To collect requested books and for help with any queries you may have, you will need to come during service hours when the IC team are on hand. You can find us at the Information Desks on Level 0 or Level 1 and you can also call for assistance by pressing the Help button on the phones at any of the Business Units.

The concierge team are on duty 24 hours a day and can be called on at any time if you require assistance.

There are screens on every level displaying important and useful information about the building. You can use these to check PC availability, group room bookings and to find out what is going on in the IC.

Directories between the lifts on Levels 0-4 tell you what can be found on each floor. If you are looking for a book, check the subject information on the directories as this will tell you which number sequences can be found on each level.

We have recently made significant changes to our website. We value all feedback, particularly from new students. If you don’t like the website, or it doesn’t meet your needs, please let us know how we can improve it.

If you think it’s great – let us know that too!  www.shef.ac.uk/infocommons
Further Support
You can find help with IT facilities in the following places:

On the web:
For details of all of the services offered by Corporate Information & Computing Services (CiCS), including IT courses, software sales and computer account support, see the link below.

www.shef.ac.uk/cics

On the phone, by email or in person:
You can phone, email, or drop in to the CiCS Helpdesk for help with IT problems or laptop support. In addition, you can find answers to your problems by querying the helpdesk knowledgebase via the online Self Service Desk. See the link below for details on all aspects of the CiCS helpdesk.

www.shef.ac.uk/cics/support/help.html

Service status updates:
Use the service status page to see planned, potential and actual service failures and maintenance, or follow CiCS on Twitter.

www.shef.ac.uk/cics/status
twitter.com/CiCS

You can find help with library facilities in the following places:

On the web:
For details of opening times of other Libraries, the online catalogue, borrowing books and help with all aspects of Library services, including help for those with additional support requirements, see the link below.

www.shef.ac.uk/library

On the phone, by email or in person:
You can phone, email, or drop in to any of the Library sites if you require any further information or support. See the link below for contact details for the different sites, along with a link to a web-based form which you use for more general enquiries.

www.shef.ac.uk/library/contact

Service status updates:
Use the service indicator page to see scheduled maintenance, at-risk periods & irregular eResources unavailability, or follow the Library on Twitter.

www.shef.ac.uk/library/intro/eserviceindicators.html
twitter.com/unisheffieldlib

You can also get IC updates on twitter:

twitter.com/shefinfocommons
There are over 500 computers in the IC. These are found on individual study desks, in group study rooms, and in classrooms. Desks are generously spacious to provide room for your books, notes, and stationery. All PCs run the Managed Desktop Service which gives you access to a range of commonly used applications and specialist teaching software. Over a third of the PCs can be booked in advance using the myPC utility in MUSE.

Finding a Free Computer

A guide to the number of PCs currently available on each level is displayed on all information screens. Due to the size of the building, and the number of people logging on and off throughout the day, the guide cannot give exact information. However, as a general rule, if it says there are only a few PCs available, finding one is likely to be difficult.

Even when the IC is full, the computer rooms nearby are often half empty. PC availability for other sites is displayed on the information screen before the turnstiles by the main entrance. You can find out more about all the student computer rooms on campus at: www.shef.ac.uk/cics/computers including details about how to check PC availability via your mobile phone.

Booking PCs

Over a third of the PCs in the IC are bookable. This includes the PCs in the Silent PC room on Level 5. This is the best way to ensure you can use a PC when you need it, but remember that if you turn up over 10 minutes late for your booking, you will lose it. If you no longer need your booking – cancel it and free up the PC for someone else.

Quick Print PCs

We know it’s frustrating to need a PC just to print out your work for a hand-in. You can find Quick Print PCs on Level 1, near the scanners and Information Desk. Between 9am and 5pm, use is restricted to 20 minutes, and once your time is up, you will need to wait for one hour before you can log on again. If you think you might need more than 20 minutes, don’t use one of these. There are plenty of bookable PCs in the building. Book one in advance.

You can also print wirelessly from your laptop. See the following webpage for more details: www.shef.ac.uk/cics/printing
Kiosks

Kiosk machines are found on Levels 0-4 including the café. They allow you to check your email, search the library catalogue, access your online courses using MOLE, and use all of the web-based resources found in MUSE.

Kiosk machines do not give you access to your network filestore or your files, so although you can read and send email, you cannot send or save attachments. You can also use a kiosk to access the Internet. Login to MUSE and type into the address bar the web address of the site that you wish to access.

Wireless Network

The wireless network can be accessed from anywhere in the IC. You can connect your laptop on all levels:

- at tables
- in study rooms
- in the silent study spaces
- in the soft-seating areas
- in the café

Information Commons staff can help you configure your laptop to connect to the wireless network and it will then connect to the wireless network whenever it is in range.

The Information Commons is one of many buildings with wireless coverage. For a full list of wireless locations see the CiCS web pages at [www.shef.ac.uk/cics/wireless](http://www.shef.ac.uk/cics/wireless)

Power Sockets

You can plug in your laptop using the plug sockets located in the floor. Use the handle to lift the lid to reveal the plug sockets. Avoid trailing cables across the floor by using the socket nearest to the place you are sitting.

For charging mobile phone and laptop batteries, you can also use the pop-up plug sockets on the desks that have no PCs. However please remember that if something is already plugged in, that socket should not be used.

To help us ensure that all our computers are available for use please report faulty equipment, including sockets and lights, to a member of IC staff.
The Information Commons holds around 100,000 books on Levels 1-4. They're all on module reading lists and in heavy demand.

- **Green bands** - reference only. Cannot be removed from the Information Commons.
- **Red, white or no bands** - Normal Loan. Can be borrowed for at least a week unless requested.

The Information Commons holds only a small proportion of the University Library’s collections. A wide range of additional material is available at:

- Western Bank Library
- St. George’s Library
- the Health Sciences Library

At some point in your course you’ll probably need to use material held at these sites. Use STAR (the online Library catalogue) to check the location and availability.

**Borrowing**

You can issue books using the self-service issue facility on Level 0, or in the Business Units on Levels 1, 2 or 4. You will need your Library PIN and you can get this through the ‘Library’ tab in MUSE or from a member of staff at the Information Desks.

**Returning**

You can return books using the self-service facilities on Level 0. The returns machine by the main entrance will only take Information Commons books – simply place your book on the conveyor belt. The returns machine by the café will accept books for any Library sites.

Books remain on your account, and are your responsibility, until you return them, either over the counter or via self-service.
Library Everywhere!

Most of the Library’s resources are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Not only does the Information Commons provide you with 24/7 study space, but the Library tab in MUSE, the University portal, gives you access to the world’s knowledge from anywhere in the world that has an internet connection. You can use MUSE to:

- access the Library catalogue to locate and request the material you need. Simply search for the book and click on ‘request’. We will notify you by email when it is available and you can collect it during service hours from the Information Desk on Level 0. If a book isn't on loan, it is quicker for you to get it yourself, rather than request it.

- access myLibrary Account to view your requests, check your account details, renew your loans and pay any fines. You can renew books as many times as you like provided they haven’t been requested by anyone else.

- view myResource Lists, your online reading lists

- access the Library’s electronic resources, including ebooks, ejournals, subject databases, films, images and maps

- search Google Scholar and find links to the Library’s full text content

- access the Library web pages containing links to essential information

- access the Information Skills Resource containing guidance on finding, evaluating and referencing information, and avoiding plagiarism and collusion

Offprints

The offprint collection is located near the Business Unit on Level 1. This is a collection of copyright-cleared photocopies of recommended reading included on some module resource lists. We’re gradually replacing the photocopied offprints with digital content linked directly to myResource Lists.
The IC offers the ultimate workspace for all students. Whatever your preferred style of study you will be able to find a space that works for you. The IC has been designed so that you can work in groups without worrying about disturbing others; however if you prefer to study quietly on your own then the silent study spaces could be just what you are looking for. The University wireless network is available throughout the entire building so you can use your laptop anywhere.

**Individual Study**

There are a variety of study desks in the Information Commons: PC desks; study desks where you can use your laptop; and reading desks. Individual desks have their own study lamp and plenty of room for your books, notes and stationery.

**Silent Study**

Level 5 is a silent PC space. All desks have PCs which are bookable using myPC in MUSE. Levels 2 and 3 are silent study spaces with reading desks instead of PCs, although you can use your laptop there.

**Classrooms**

The classrooms on Levels 3 and 4 are intended for teaching. When the rooms are not in use for teaching they are open to students wishing to use the computers in there. Teaching bookings are displayed on the door. Please pay careful attention to this and leave promptly before a class is scheduled to take place. Equipment should not be unplugged in the classrooms as this may cause the teaching software to not work properly.

**In silent areas:**
- No talking
- Mobile phones on silent
- No personal audio equipment
Soft-Seating
There are many soft-seating areas around the Information Commons. These are arranged both in clusters and individually. There are power sockets in the floor around these seats so you can charge your laptop battery whilst you work.

We don't mind you consuming cold snacks and drinks in these areas, but please remember to clear your rubbish when you leave.

Group Study Tables
There are tables of various sizes distributed around Levels 1-4, some with a large screen PC. These are intended for you to work in groups. Use the plug sockets in the floor boxes to plug in your laptop if you wish.

Group Study Rooms
There are 13 group study rooms, situated on Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4. They contain a table, chairs, power sockets, a whiteboard and a wide screen PC. Whiteboard pens are available to borrow from the Information Desks or Welcome Desk in exchange for your UCard.

Different rooms accommodate different sizes of group, from small rooms suitable for three people to the large rooms suitable for ten people. Four of the rooms are fitted with higher quality furniture and leather chairs thanks to generous donations from University alumni.

The day’s room bookings are displayed on one of the plasma screens near the café on Level 0 so you can see at a glance if any are free.

Prayer Room
There is a non-denominational prayer and meditation room, accessible from the silent study area on Level 2.

This is available 24/7 to any student or member of staff who wishes to use it. Please remember to remove your shoes before you walk into the room.
The Flexispace on Level 4 consists of chairs, tables and screens on wheels. You can move the furniture around to create a tailored workspace to suit your needs. There are plug sockets in the floor for you to plug in your laptop.

Please feel free to experiment with different layouts and usages of the technology. If you’re not sure about how to use the space, ask a member of staff and we’ll be happy to discuss your requirements with you or show you how to use the equipment.

Huddle-Boards and CopyCams
The huddle-board and copycams are found in the Flexispace area on Level 4. The huddleboard is a whiteboard that your group can use to plan, make notes, and record ideas. Whiteboard pens are available from the Information Desk on Level 0. You can then hang the huddle-board on the wall and photograph it using the copycam. The images are available from:

www.shef.ac.uk/infocommons/copycam1
www.shef.ac.uk/infocommons/copycam2

Giant Flexispace Screen
There is a giant screen in the Flexispace, which can be used to display whatever is on your laptop. You will need a VGA cable to connect your laptop to it and this can be borrowed from the Information Desks or the Welcome Desk in exchange for your UCard. Connect the cable to your laptop and to the socket in the floor in front of the screen.
There is a Business Unit on each level which contains a combination of printers, photocopiers and value loaders (for topping-up your printing and copying credit). Each machine has a card reader and you will need to swipe your UCard to use them.

**Printing and Photocopying**

To print your work, choose your print queue (4100, 8150 or Colour) and go the relevant printer and release the print job by swiping your card.

If you find that the printer has run out of paper or there is a fault, please report this to a member of IC staff as quickly as possible. You can call for assistance from the phones on each Business Unit - just press the Help button.

**Finding your printer and photocopier**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4100 Printers</th>
<th>8150 Printers</th>
<th>Colour Printers</th>
<th>Photocopiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black and white</td>
<td>Black and white</td>
<td>Colour</td>
<td>Black and white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 only</td>
<td>A4 &amp; A3</td>
<td>A4 &amp; A3</td>
<td>A4 &amp; A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levels 1 - 6</td>
<td>Levels 3 and 6</td>
<td>Levels 1 - 6</td>
<td>Levels 1 - 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Value Loaders**
For topping-up your printing and copying credit
Levels 1 - 5

**Scanners**

There are four scanners on Level 1 near the Information Desks - one of which will scan A3 size documents. They can be booked through the myPC utility in MUSE, but if no-one is using them, you can simply log on.
Facilities

Toilets and Shower

There are male, female and accessible toilets on each level. There is a single shower cubicle available on Level 1, through the double doors opposite the left side of the Information Desk.

The University provides showers for those who cycle or walk to the University – a list of showers can be found at: www.shef.ac.uk/cycleforum/showers.html

Eating and Drinking

There is a 72-seat café on Level 0, selling a range of hot and cold food and drinks. During opening hours you can only consume food and drink purchased from the café, but at other times you can eat your own food in there. There are also vending machines available to the rear of the café, behind the counter. These offer hot and cold drinks, and snacks.

Food and Drink Policy (“Leave no trace”)

We have implemented a food and drink policy that allows you to eat and drink in the IC, within the guidelines set out below.

- Bottled water can be consumed anywhere – water fountains can be found near the toilets
- Desks with computers are food-free zones – this is to prevent damage to the keyboards
- Hot and cold drinks are allowed, provided they are in containers that reduce the risk of spillage (cartons, cans, bottles, flasks, cups with lids etc)
- Cold food is OK – but please try to avoid eating messy, greasy or smelly food out of consideration for other users
- Hot food is allowed in the café area on Level 0, but you can only consume your own food in there when the café counter is closed
- Please do not arrange to have take-away food delivered to the IC
- The consumption of alcohol on IC premises is banned at all times

Recycling and Litter Bins

We ask that you respect the building and be considerate of others by clearing away your rubbish and recycling waste where possible. We have provided ample waste and recycling bins, as well as cup recycling bins with reservoirs for safely discarding leftover drinks.

- If you do spill something, please do clean it up if possible, otherwise let a member of staff know as soon as possible
- Please try to leave your space in the state you would like to find it in – tidy up after yourself when you go.
We ask everyone using the Information Commons facilities to observe our code of good conduct which helps to ensure a clean, safe and comfortable environment for everyone:

**You must have your UCard with you to access the IC.** You need it to operate the entry and exit gates and also to enter the main doors when they are locked at night. This helps us know exactly who is in the building at any given time and is particularly important for the security of students working through the night.

**The computers in the Information Commons must be used for study-related purposes only between 9am and 5pm** (and at any other time if there are no PCs free). Accessing social email, internet chat, and the web for leisure is unacceptable when others are waiting to work.

**Logged on PCs should not be left unattended.** They may only be reserved via the myPC Booking utility in MUSE and not by leaving belongings at the desk. Anyone requiring the use of a machine that has been logged on and unattended for some time should speak to a member of staff who may re-boot the machine so it can be used.

**Discussion is allowed in the IC except in the silent study spaces,** however please remember that it is a learning environment, so keep voices down and try to avoid disturbing others who are working.

**Mobile phones are permitted in all areas except the silent study spaces on Levels 2, 3 and 5.** However please turn your mobile to silent if you are studying in a busy area where others may be disturbed. If you do wish to talk on your phone, think about moving to a stairwell or empty area.

**You must be ready to show your UCard to any member of University staff who requests it.** You must not use another person’s UCard, or to allow another person to use yours. Your UCard may be confiscated if you are caught doing this.

The IC has a relaxed food and drink policy however there are some areas where food is not allowed. Bottles, cartons, cans and lidded hot drinks are permitted everywhere in the IC, however **cold food is only allowed in spaces where there are no computers.** Hot food may only be consumed in the café area.
Access
The IC is open 24/7 to staff and students of the University only. You need your UCard to operate the turnstile - don't come without it!

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