Welcome To The Information Commons.
The Information Commons
the ultimate workspace for students.

The Information Commons provides computing and library resources and offers a diverse variety of workspaces to cater for your individual and group study needs, including:

- Computers on spacious desks for individual study
- Individual study desks for reading or using your laptop
- Soft-seating areas for relaxing or using your laptop
- Some soft-seating areas have outstanding views
- Group study tables
- Large screen computers for group study, in bookable rooms
- Silent study areas, one with PCs, one that allows laptops, and one where no computers are allowed
- Flexispace, in which wheeled furniture can be moved around to create the perfect study space

This brochure details the computing and library resources available in the Information Commons. It describes the diverse choice of study spaces available and outlines the rules. For further information visit www.shef.ac.uk/infocommons
**Resources**

**Pcs**

There are over 500 computers in the Information Commons. These are found on individual study desks, in group study rooms, and in classrooms. Desks are deliberately spacious to provide room for your books, notes, and stationary. All PCs run the CiCS Managed XP Service.

PC availability is displayed on the plasma screens. The right-hand column reveals the number of free computers available on each level.

You can reserve some PCs using the myPC utility in MUSE. On level 1 there are ‘quick print’ PCs, which can be booked up to 15 minutes and ‘short stay’ PCs which can be booked for up to an hour. You can book any PC in the silent PC area on level 5 for up to four hours.

However, you must not ‘reserve’ a PC by remaining logged in to it whilst you are elsewhere. If you do this, you will receive a warning email and if you do it a second time you will be logged out without saving your work.

**Kiosks**

Kiosk machines are found on all levels including the café on level 0. 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 cannot access 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 then click one of your Quick Links. In the new browser window you can type in the web address of the site that you wish to access.

**Classrooms**

There are classrooms on levels 3 and 4 intended for student teaching. When these are not in use you may use the classroom PCs for your own work. The bookings for each classroom will be displayed on the door.

The Information Commons holds only a small proportion of the student PCs available. There are student computer rooms all across campus, and their locations are marked on a map that is available from the Information Desk.

To locate free PCs, use a kiosk to access the PC Availability utility in MUSE, or use your internet-enabled mobile phone to go to mobile.shef.ac.uk.
Books

The Information Commons holds 100,000 books on levels 1–4. They’re all on module reading lists and in heavy demand. Reference copies of core texts (green bands) can only be used in the Information Commons. Short loan books (red bands) can be borrowed for two days and standard loan books (white or no band) can be borrowed for at least a week. All books can be renewed and kept for longer if not required by someone else.

If a book is not on loan and not on the shelf either, fill out a reservation card and it will be put aside for you when it’s found – it’s possible that it’s being used by another student in the Information Commons without being issued to their UCard.

At some point in your course you’ll probably need to use material held at other sites of the University Library. Use Star to check the location and availability.

You can issue books yourself using the self-service issue facility on level 0, or in the Business Units on levels 1, 2 and 4. Scan the barcode on your UCard, enter your Library PIN then place the book in the V-shaped cradle – you don’t need to open the book or scan the barcode.

You can return books yourself using the self-service facilities on level 0. This will automatically identify the book and remove it from your library record.

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 Star resource lists.

Electronic Library Resources

You can access the entire range of the University Library’s electronic resources from the Information Commons, including nearly 12,000 electronic journals, a range of electronic books, and, through Star resource lists, details of the resource lists linked to your modules. Many modules feature web-based resources provided by the Library, and there are online tutorials in My Online Learning Environment (MOLE) to help you with searching for and evaluating information. There are links to Star resource lists and MOLE in the myQuickLinks section of your MUSE homepage.

Printing and Photocopying

Colour A4 and A3 printers and black and white A4 printers are available in the Business Units on all levels, black and white A3 printers are found on levels 3 and 6. To print your work, swipe your UCard through the card-swipe machine by a printer.

There are photocopiers in the Business Units on levels 1–4. Swipe your UCard in the corresponding card-swipe machine to use the photocopiers.

The Business Units on levels 1–5 include value loaders that allow you to add credit to your UCard.
Scanners

There are two scanners on level 1 and two more on level 6. Scanners are bookable using the myPC utility in MUSE.

Power Sockets

You can plug-in your laptop (and even charge your mobile) using the plug sockets beneath the floor panels. Use the handle to lift the panel to reveal the plug sockets. You can also use the pop-up plug sockets on the desks that have no PCs.

However, you must never unplug an Information Commons PC to use the socket, nor can you use the pop-up plugs on tables that hold PCs. Information Commons PCs run on a lower (eco-friendly) voltage, if you plug your equipment into a low voltage socket you will break it and possibly cut off the power to the surrounding PCs.

Wireless Network

The Information Commons is covered by the wireless network. You can connect your laptop to the wireless network, on all levels, at tables, in study rooms, in the soft-seating area and in the café. However you must not take your laptop into the silent study area on level 2 (laptop-free zone).

Information Commons staff will be able to help you configure your laptop to connect to the wireless network at Sheffield. Once your laptop has been configured it will connect to the wireless network whenever it is in range.

You must not unplug the network cable from a PC to use with your laptop. Connect to the wireless network only.

Huddle-Board and CopyCam

The huddle-board and copycams are found in the flexispace area on level 4. The huddle-board is a whiteboard that your group can use to plan, make notes, and record ideas. Whiteboard pens are available from the Information Desk. 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 Plasma Screen

There is a giant plasma screen in the flexispace. This can be used to display whatever is on your laptop. To connect your laptop to the plasma screen, you will need a VGA cable. This can be borrowed from the Information Desk on level 0. Connect the VGA cable to your laptop, and to the socket under the floor panel in front of the plasma screen.
Group Study Desks
There are group-study desks of various sizes distributed around levels 1–4. These are intended for groups of students to sit around to talk about, plan, and work on projects. The tables are situated in the buoyant work areas, so you don’t need to whisper. Use the plug sockets under the floor panels to plug in your laptop if you wish.

Group Study Rooms
There are nine group study rooms, situated on levels 2, 3, and 4. They contain a table, chairs, power sockets, a whiteboard and a wide screen PC. Whiteboard pens are available from the Information Desk. If you need to practise a presentation you can shut out the outside world.

You can book a group study room using the myPC utility in MUSE. Some rooms can be booked for one hour, some for two hours and some for three and a half hours.

Different rooms accommodate different sizes of group, from small rooms suitable for three people to the large rooms suitable for ten people. Make sure you book the correct size room for your group, otherwise your booking will be cancelled. There are also luxury rooms available, with quality furniture and leather chairs. These can be booked in the usual way and staff at the Security Desk will open the room for you.

CILASS on level 1 also have three group study rooms that students may use outside of office hours. The CILASS rooms do not need to be booked.

Soft-Seating Areas
There are many soft-seating areas around the Information Commons. These are arranged both in clusters and in isolation. You can relax, work on your laptop, write notes, read, or take in the views.

Silent-Study Spaces
Level 5 is a silent PC space. All desks have PCs, which are bookable using myPC in MUSE.

Level 3 has a laptop-friendly silent study space. Sit at a desk and work on your laptop in a silent environment.

Level 2 has a laptop-free silent study space. Read or write notes without keys tapping in the background.

FlexiSpace
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 beneath floor panels to plug in your laptop. There are also two huddle-board and copycam systems for group study, and a giant plasma screen that you can connect to your laptop.
Food and Drink
There is a 70-seat café on level 0, selling a range of hot and cold food and drinks. During the semester, it is open 8:30am–10:00pm, Monday to Friday and 10:00am–5:00pm weekends, and different hours outside of the semester. If you are in the café while it is open, you can only consume food and drink purchased from the café. When it is closed however, you can eat your own food in that café area.

There are also vending machines available to the rear of the café, behind the counter. These offer hot and cold drinks, crisps and chocolate snacks.

You are allowed to take cold food and drink into the Information Commons, but these can only be eaten in the soft-seating areas. You can, however, take bottled water into all study areas. There is a water fountain on each level where you can fill your bottles. Fountains are found through the doors that lead to the toilet areas.

Shower
There is a single shower cubicle available on level 1. It is through the double doors opposite the left side of the helpdesk. It is especially useful for people who walk or cycle to University.

Prayer Room
There is a non-denominational prayer room, accessible from the laptop-free silent study area. You must remove your shoes before entering and store them inside the room next to the door. You must not enter the prayer room if it is occupied.

Recycling and Litter
Please help us to keep the Information Commons tidy. Put the litter in the bins when you leave and use the recycle bins provided to recycle your paper, bottles and cans.

Toilets
There are male, female and accessible toilets on each level. These are found through clearly marked wooden doors. There is also a water fountain in this area.
Access

The Information Commons is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During the semester it is staffed:

Monday–Thursday: 9:00am–9:00pm
Friday: 10:00am–9:00pm
Saturday–Sunday: 2:00pm–6:00pm

To access the building you will need to scan your UCard to release the gate.

You will also need to scan your UCard in order to exit the Information Commons. This ensures that a UCard cannot be used to admit more than one person, and helps us know exactly who is in the building at any given time. This is particularly important for the security of students working through the night.

From Monday to Friday the main doors are locked at 7:00pm and on Saturday and Sunday they are locked outside staffed hours. During these times you will need to swipe your UCard to get into the building.

Accessibility

The entrance is accessed via a ramp, there are automatic doors, and wide access gates with low UCard scanners.

10% of the desks are configured for left-handed users.

There are six height-adjustable desks distributed in different areas of the Information Commons. Staff will be able to direct you to these desks and provide a winding handle.

Hearing loops are installed at the Information Desk on level 0, the helpdesk on level 1 and at the security desk. There are two portable loops available for use inside the building.

On each floor there is a PC with a widescreen monitor that has a diagonal size of 20 inches, and a large character keyboard that has standard size keys with lettering that is four times larger than a standard keyboard. Staff will be able to direct you to these PCs.

Fire evacuation lifts are installed, but assistance may not be available outside staffed hours.

For more information ask an Information Commons staff member.
Books 000–329
- Computing
- Journalism
- Library and Information Studies
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Religion

Business Unit:
- Self-service book issue
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

Books 330–499
- Economics
- Education
- Language
- Law

Business Unit:
- Self-service book issue
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

CILASS collaboratories and group spaces
Legal Practise Resource Room
Mixed PC and study spaces
Soft-seating areas
Quick-print area
Scanner
Shower
Toilets
Water fountains
Kiosks

Stairs/Lifts to Levels 0–4
Kiosks
Toilets/Water fountain

Fire exit
Books (000–329)
Soft-seating area

Business unit
General study space
Cilass

Stairs/Lifts to Levels 0–4
Kiosks
Toilets/Water fountain

Fire exit
Books (330–499)
Soft-seating area

*Accessible toilet and water fountain also here.
Books 700–999
- Arts
- History
- Literature

Business Unit:
- Self-service book issue
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

Books 500–699
- Chemistry
- Engineering
- Life Sciences
- Management
- Mathematics
- Medicine
- Physics

Business Unit:
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 black and white (8150) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

Books 700–999
- Arts
- History
- Literature

Business Unit:
- Self-service book issue
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

Books 500–699
- Chemistry
- Engineering
- Life Sciences
- Management
- Mathematics
- Medicine
- Physics

Business Unit:
- A4 black and white (4100) printer
- A4 and A3 black and white (8150) printer
- A4 and A3 colour printer
- Black and white photocopier
- Value loader

Soft-seating areas
Classroom
Bookable group study rooms
Mixed PC and study spaces
Silent study balcony (laptop-friendly zone)
Toilets
Water fountains
Kiosks

Soft-seating areas
Classroom
Bookable group study rooms
Mixed PC and study spaces
Silent study balcony (laptop-friendly zone)
Toilets
Water fountains
Kiosks
Level 5

- Business Unit:
  - A4 black and white (4100) printer
  - A4 and A3 colour printer
  - Value loader

- Individual study spaces (all PC equipped)
- PC equipped silent study space
- Scanner
- Toilets
- Water fountain

Level 6

- Business Unit:
  - A4 black and white (4100) printer
  - A4 and A3 black and white (8150) printer
  - A4 and A3 colour printer

- Individual study spaces (all PC equipped)
- Soft-seating area
- Scanner
- Toilets
- Water fountain
Rules

You must not ‘reserve’ an Information Commons computer by remaining logged in to it whilst you are elsewhere.

If your PC is left unattended, you will receive a warning email and if you do it a second time you will be logged out without saving your work. Any personal belongings will be bundled into a bin bag and stored at the security desk.

If you see a PC that is being used but is unattended, please inform a staff member. If the user of the PC cannot be found, the staff member may log them out. You must not log out anyone else, yourself.

• Only cold food and drink may be consumed at the soft-seating areas. At study desks, please consume only bottled water. Hot food and drinks are not allowed anywhere outside of the café.
• Please help us keep the Information Commons clean and tidy by using the bins for all your litter.
• Laptops may be used anywhere except the laptop-free silent study space on level 2.
• You must not unplug the network cable from a PC to use with your laptop. Connect to the wireless network only.
• Mobile phones may be used anywhere expect in the silent study spaces.
• Please turn the task lights off when you leave your desk for any length of time.
• Please return unissued books to the trolleys to help other students find them. Books with green bands go on the green trolleys, and other books go on the other trolleys.

The Information Commons is part of the wide range of services provided by Corporate Information and Computing Services (CiCS) and the University Library. For information on our other services, see the ‘CiCS Student Computing Guide’ and the ‘Guide to Library Services’, both available at the Information Commons. More information is also available on the CiCS and Library websites.

www.shef.ac.uk/cics    www.shef.ac.uk/library