Get your KIT on: a quick-start guide for departmental Facilities Managers using Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue®

What is Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue®?

Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue is the online equipment database providing staff and students with an accessible and detailed directory of research equipment, specialist machines and facilities across campus. Developed by the Centre for Engineering and Design Education and IT Services with Professor Rachel Thomson of the Materials Research School, Loughborough's Kit- Catalogue is designed to reduce the need for costly double-purchasing of high Capital equipment by maximising the potential use of existing assets, inititate wider collaborative research, facilitate equipment management and act as a platform to showcase outstanding, state of the art equipment at Loughborough to the outside world.

If you browse the current catalogue (*http://equipment.lboro.ac.uk)* you will see over 1800 items from 15 departments across the university, many of which can be requested for use by staff and students from any department, and some even by external users.

If you are in charge of managing departmental equipment and facilities then please follow the four easy steps that follow:

1. System Role and Responsibilities

Departmental Facilities Managers are added to Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue by the System Administrators upon the instruction of Operations Managers. Once added, you will have administration rights over the equipment listed in your department on the database, enabling you to:

- Add equipment to your department's list on Kit-Catalogue and edit it.
- Designate custodians of that equipment
- Select the visibility and access level of that equipment
- Extract reports on your department's equipment

An RCUK Requirement

As a user with administrative priviledges of a department it will be your role to add new equipment and designate it with a custodian when it arrives in your department. This is now an RCUK requirement and part of the University's Purchashing Policy:

> *As RCUK are putting more stringent requirements in place for institutions when requesting grant funding to purchase equipment, it is critically important for Loughborough to hold an up-to-date record of its current assets. As such, it is now an instruction of Loughborough's procurement policy that staff requiring equipment should "check Kit-Catalogue before seeking to procure an item of equipment for research or teaching purposes to investigate what options may be available 'in- house" and "complete the details of the new equipment in Kit-Catalogue to ensure that the catalogue is kept up to date." For further details on the procurement policy view the .pdf* **click here***.*

To maintain an up-to-date catalogue it is also your responsibility to make sure that all items in your department exceeding £20,000, or those items that would be useful and eligible for sharing are present and correct on the catalogue. If you require any help with this process, you can contact Jonathan Attenborough (***j.d.attenborough@lboro.ac.uk***), who will be happy to help.

2. Adding Equipment and Designating Custodians

As stated above, when new equipment arrives in your department you should add it to the equipment database. This is a quick and easy process: just log-in to the equipment database, go to your department page and click the 'add item' option at the top of the list and fill in the form on the next page.

One of your main roles as a department administrator is to designate the custodian of the item that you are adding. Whilst you can also be a custodian, there is a distinction between the roles:

- Custodians are the individuals responsible for the management, maintenance and operating of individual items of equipment and, as such, they are the primary contacts for requests concerning that equipment. Unlike Department Administrators, custodians cannot add items to the Kit-Catalogue, however, they can edit equipment records that their name is attributed to.

3. Opportunity for Publicity

One of the many benefits of Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue is that it can be used to attract prospective students, staff and researchers, and also, it can enhance the potential for generating revenue by making equipment available for industries and third parties to hire.

Selecting the visibility of your department's equipment is another of your key roles as Department Administrator and this is done on the editing form when adding an item, or, when editing an already existing item. For equipment that you want to show off or for equipment which could be hired out to external industries, select Public as the visibility option; just make sure the equipment listing provides sufficient detail beforehand.

Similarly, it is imperative that you select the access level for each item that you add to indicate the type of use allocated for the equipment in your department. For example, you may wish to restrict the use of some items to researchers only and other equipment for teaching purposes only. For equipment that you'd be happy allowing all students and staff to use, select 'Full Access'; and for those items that you do not wish to grant access to, unless under very special circumstances, select 'Restricted'.

You can also add tailored use and acces caveats with the free-text field 'Restrictions'; for instance if the use is to be by the technician only, or if a week's lead time is expected from requests.

4. Managing Departmental Equipment and Facilities – Reports

Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue enables you to log a wide range of information on your department's equipment (including location, financial, calibration and PAT dates) so that you can use the system as part of your existing workflow and day-to-day departmental fulfilments.

You can extract and download reports on your department's equipment by a number of search options to make managing your equipment considerably easier, for example, you may wish to see what items are in a certain room or what items are maintained by a specific custodian.

If there is a report missing from the selection that would make your role easier, don't hesitate to contact the team and we will look into making it for you.

Support

For more detailed information on adding items and all other software functions you can view or download the complete user manual from the Kit-Catalogue website:

http://kit-catalogue.lboro.ac.uk/project/projectpages/documentation.php

You can also contact Jonathan Attenborough, the Kit-Catalogue Development Assistant at the Centre for Engineering and Design Education for training or guidance on how to use Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue and for help with cataloguing the items in your department:

j.d.attenborough@lboro.ac.uk

For all other enquiries, feel free to contact the Kit-Catalogue team:

kit-catalogue@lboro.ac.uk

Kit-Catalogue now has Twitter! Follow ***@KitCatalogue*** for updates on Loughborough's Kit-Catalogue and the wider Kit-Catalogue project.