A Guide to library resources
for computer scientists

WEST HUB

Computer science library resources guide
October 2023.

Cover illustration:
BBC Microcomputer. Designed and built by Cambridge based Acorn Computers, this was the machine which started the microcomputer revolution in Britain. It had 32kb of memory and was based around the 6502 microprocessor.

While the library in the Computer Laboratory closed in the Summer of 2019, library services for computer science students are now being provided by the Technology Libraries Team. The following notes are intended to assist new users in making full use of the wide range of resources available.

Introduction

The Technology Libraries Team principally serves the staff and students within the subjects of Chemical engineering, Computer science and Engineering. This guide details the available collections for research and teaching in computer science. All other members of the University are welcome to use these resources alongside those from their own subject. Please note, however, that we are generally unable to provide material supporting specific proprietary software.

Location of collections

The former collection from the Computer Laboratory library is now available to browse and borrow on the second floor of the West Hub on the opposite side of J.J. Thomson Avenue to the Computer Laboratory. The physical collections are found in the North Room, alongside resources for chemical engineering and veterinary medicine. The physical collection includes all of the most important books from the Computer Laboratory, including titles from current reading lists.

Opening hours

At present the West Hub is open to all between 8am and 9pm, Mondays to Fridays. with staff from the Technology Libraries Team available between 9am and 5pm to help with enquiries. The librarian responsible for supporting computer scientists is Nicholas Cutler who will be happy to answer your queries in person and by e-mail. Please ask at the enquiries desk on the first floor of the West Hub if you need help.

Hub help

Additionally, one member of the Technology Libraries Team will be available at the top of the main staircase in the West Hub between 10am and 12 noon every day during full term. They will be acting as a first point of contact for enquiries in person, so please feel free to approach them with any library related questions. They will also be able to refer more complex enquiries to another member of the team if necessary.

Catalogues

The principal public interface to the catalogue is known as *iDiscover*, and may be accessed from the web interface at:

http://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/

The interface to *iDiscover* will be familiar to anyone used to Web search engines. Please note that this system tries to present a single catalogue record for every holding of a particular title, and to group different versions of the same work together. This process happens automatically, so you may see several records for the same title. Similarly, it is advised that you ensure that the 'Cambridge libraries collections' option is enabled unless you explicitly wish to search for journal articles.

If you find a simple search produces too many results, then it may be worth trying the advanced search. This allows you to combine keywords from specified fields, and to further limit your search by location, material type, etc.

Finding an item

Having found the item on the catalogue, first check the library and location. If this is identified as the 'West Hub Library: North Room' then this will be in the physical collection in the West Hub.

Now take a note of the classmark. Both collections of books are arranged by the classification number in the Library of Congress scheme. For most books this will consist of up to two letters, a decimal

number, and a further subdivision constructed from the author's name. On the shelves the books are arranged alphabetically by the initial letters, then numerically, and finally in order of any subdivisions.

Any items identified on the catalogue as 'West Hub Library: Open Shelves' and a classmark in either of the Hub Learn, Inspire or Inform collections will be available in the low-intensity study area on the second floor. These are collections of general interest titles covering topics such as study skills, careers and current topics. They may be borrowed in the usual way.

Certain classes of material are not (at present) entered on the computerised catalogue and it will be necessary to check other sources to find such items:

Periodicals. Most current academic journals are only available in electronic format. Please check the University library's list of electronic journals when trying to find a recent paper. Older issues may be available in print if electronic access is not available. Please consult the catalogue by searching for the journal title in order to find the location of printed holdings.

Student's projects. Student's projects are no longer submitted in print, and recent copies (from about 2019) are only available online where the student has explicitly given their permission. The older projects which were held in the Computer Laboratory library have now been digitised. Please contact the librarian who will be happy to confirm availability of student projects.

Technical reports. The vast majority of technical reports have now been scanned, so readers are advised to check the list online first before consulting the librarian.

Teaching material. Other items intended to support undergraduate teaching, such as past exam papers and lecture notes can be accessed from the teaching pages of the Computer Laboratory website.

Seminar videos. Most of the video recordings from the Wednesday afternoon seminars have now been digitised and copies will be made available on the file server. Digital versions of the most recent seminars are available from the website.

Archives

In addition to the above, the library also held a considerable amount of archival material and miscellaneous reports. These collections are now in storage and the catalogue records are temporarily unavailable. Ultimately it is hoped that this material will be available on request along with other archival collections in the University Library. Pleast ask about the current situation if you are interested in our archives.

Items not in the library

If you are unable to find what you are looking for on the catalogue, then there are a number of possibilities, namely:

- The item you are looking for is included in the classes of material that are not catalogued, in which case consult the appropriate list, or ask the librarian.

- If you are unsure of the details of the item in question, please ask the librarian for help, who may be able check the details from another source.

- The item may be available in another library in Cambridge, particularly the Betty & Gordon Moore library or the main University library. If you are looking for a paper in a journal, then it may be available electronically.

- Titles of major importance, or likely to be of interest to others, may be suggested for purchase.

- As a last resort, if the item is not available elsewhere in Cambridge, or suitable for purchase, you may consider an inter-library loan. Please see below for further information.

Inter-Library loans

If you wish to obtain items which are not held in Cambridge, it is possible to obtain books on loan, as well as copies of papers, from the British Library and other libraries. Although this is a useful facility for obtaining material in low demand which is not otherwise available in Cambridge, it is also relatively expensive. This service is provided by the Main University library.

A considerable number of requests such as papers in journals can be satisfied using the Rapid-ILL service. You can place requests yourself via the catalogue, iDiscover. Log into the catalogue using your crsid, and search for the item using the 'articles and online resources' option and ensure that the 'expand beyond the library's' collections option is selected. Once the article has been found on the catalogue, you can request an electronic copy under the 'get it' section. Such requests are usually satisfied within 24 hours.

For more details on these services, please consult the guide or ask the librarian.

Borrowing and returning books

If you wish to borrow from the Computer Laboratory collection then you will need to be registered at the West Hub library. This should happen automatically for all current students, but if you have any concerns then please ask us for help. Once registered, you will be able to borrow books from the Computer Laboratory collection and other titles from the North Room. The self-service terminal is available immediately outside the North Room, where you can borrow and return books. If you encounter any difficulties then please ask at the information desk on the first floor.

All books borrowed from the West Hub library will be issued for four weeks. Beyond this time, books will be renewed automatically as long as they have not been requested by another reader.

To avoid inconvenience to others, please make every effort to return books promptly when you have finished using them, or if you

have been asked to do so. You may either return items using the self-service terminal, use the book drop facility outside the revolving door, or bring them to the information desk on the first floor.

If you want to borrow an item which is currently on loan to another reader then you may make a request through the catalogue, or by asking the librarian. You will then be contacted when the item is available for collection.

You can view a list of those items which you have on loan at any time by using the 'My library account' option in iDiscover. To find this, first click on the ellipsis icon at the top of the screen. Current staff and students will then be able to log in using their Raven password. This option will also show you the status on any requests you have made.

Electronic resources

Not surprisingly, the field of computer science is well supplied with electronic resources, mostly available on the World Wide Web. The full range of resources available is beyond the scope of this guide, but the list below will give some idea of what is available:

Electronic journal subscriptions are managed by the Journals Coordination Scheme, and most titles should be accessible from any computer on the University network. Access from home is often possible using Raven authentication. Please ask the librarian if you experience any problems with electronic journals.

Additionally we have access to the entire ACM and IEEE digital library packages. These offer a large number of important journal titles and conference proceedings within computer science. Online access to the book series Lecture Notes in Computer Science, published by Springer, is also available. Please note that these collections are partially supported by contributions from the Engineering department, and the Central Science Library.

Because of the huge quantity of material available online, it can be difficult to find the information you are looking for. As a starting point, the library's own web pages have links to a number of useful resources, and are regularly revised as new material becomes available.

Beyond this, a listing of electronic journals and other resources is available from the web pages maintained by the main University library. If you are trying to obtain details of a computer science journal or conference paper then you may find the Trier Bibliography (DBLP) useful. The ACM guide to computing literature may also help. Finally, as a last resort, try one of the well known Internet search engines, but be prepared for long lists of sometimes unrelated information. In this latter case, if you are looking for academic material, then Google Scholar is often more focused than its more general counterpart.

Equipment in the library

In addition to computer terminals for accessing the library catalogue, the library also offers a range of facilities:

Copiers, printers and scanners are located on the second floor (near the meeting rooms), with each machine being able to support all three functions. You will need a DS-print account to use these devices. Copying and printing costs 10p per A4 sheet, or 20p per A3 sheet, which is taken from the common balance on your DS-print account. Scanning is free. If you have difficulty printing from your laptop then Web Print may offer an easier option without the need to install any software.

The electronic legal deposit terminal is located on the first floor and can be used to view any book identified as electronic legal deposit in the catalogue with the message 'Online access restricted to designated PCs'. There are some restrictions, principally that only one reader may view a title at any one time, and that no digital copies may be made, either by downloading or by photography. Printing is possible using one of the DS-print devices upstairs.

Loanable equipment including laptop chargers, book and laptop stands are available in the building. If you wish to borrow a laptop charger then please ask at the information desk. Other equipment is available on the shelves inside the North room for you to use, but please return it when you have finished.

Access for disabled persons

We ask that readers respect the library and its other users. In particular, please observe the following points:

- Please keep noise to a minimum by switching off mobile ?phones, disabling sound on laptops, and talking quietly if collaborating with another reader.

- Please do not eat or drink (with the exception of plain water) in the library as accidents can easily happen.

- Return items to the shelves, or to the librarian when you no longer need them. Additionally, please do not leave personal belongings unattended for any prolonged period of time.

- If borrowing items then please return or renew them promptly at the end of the normal loan period

Library rules

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Using other libraries

There are over 100 libraries within the University, so even if we cannot help you directly, another library may hold the resources you need. If you are working in a subject related to computer science, then you may find the collections within another department useful. Also, undergraduate students will find that their college library holds at least some titles from the reading list. This can be a useful source for obtaining those books in heavy demand.

To find out more about the library system in Cambridge as a whole, and to find details for individual libraries, use the gateway at: http://www.libraries.cam.ac.uk.

For help with study skills such as using the catalogue, and performing a literature search you may find the *CamGuides* pages useful. These may be found at: https://camguides.lib.cam.ac.uk/. Finally a collection of guides to library resources and services for specific subjects can be found at: http://libguides.cam.ac.uk/home.

Enquiries

If you have any questions or suggestions relating to the library then please feel free to ask the librarian for computer science, presently Nicholas Cutler, who may be contacted by any of the following means:

In person:	during normal opening hours
By telephone:	(01223) (7)62729
Via e-mail:	ncc25@cam.ac.uk
In writing:	Nicholas Cutler,
	West Hub Library,
	J.J. Thomson Avenue,
	Cambridge.
	CB3 0US.