

Nikon Imaging Centre at King's College London (NIC@King's) - Access Policy

Eligibility - All KCL staff are eligible to use the NIC@King's. Users external to KCL may be allowed to use the facility at the discretion of the NIC@King's steering committee.

Training - All users must be trained by a NIC@King's staff member prior to any unsupervised equipment use. For first training session, users must bring their own samples. This will help with the customisation of the imaging parameters. Training is charged at £20 per hour in addition to the hourly rate of microscope use.

A second training session, booked through NIC@King's staff, must be completed. During this session the microscope will be operated by the user under the supervision of a member of NIC@King's staff. Following this, once the NIC@King's staff member is satisfied that a user can work responsibly without supervision, system access rights will be granted. Please note that more than two training sessions may be required.

System Access Rights – Access to the booking schedule for a specific system will be given to the user by NIC@King's staff when they have been trained and deemed fit to work unsupervised.

Out-of-hours Access – Access to equipment out of office hours (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm excluding public holidays) will be granted to users who can work on the microscopes unsupervised, at the discretion of NIC@King's staff. Those users operating microscopes during out-of-hours periods will be completely unsupported during this time and must be completely comfortable with all aspects of operating the equipment alone. Facility staff cannot be held responsible for incomplete imaging sessions that arise as a result of user error (due to the current or any prior users) or equipment failure (including computer equipment) during out-of-hours periods.

Data Management –

- **Users can store data on the NIC@King's network storage for 30 days before it is deleted.** It is the responsibility of the user to back-up any data they generate on the equipment within the NIC@King's
- **Data stored on the acquisition computers will only be kept on the system for 7 days before it is deleted.** This is without exception - the use of "do not delete" in folder or file names will be ignored. See the document named "network storage access" within the booking system or contact one of the NIC@King's Staff for instructions on how to access the temporary network storage space
- **No USB and portable hard-drive devices may be used on the acquisition computers.** To retrieve data, please copy it to the temporary network storage folders, then download the files using either the NIC image analysis computers or other computers connected to the KCL network

Charges for microscope use – Hourly rates charged for use of NIC@King's instruments are available to view at <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/nic>. For training sessions, a charge of £20 per hour is added to the hourly rate of microscope use. For long-term continuous imaging sessions the first 8 hours are charged at the normal hourly rate and the rest of the session is charged at 50% of the standard hourly rate.

Cancellation Policy – Cancellations made at least 24 hours before the start of the booking will not be charged. Sessions cancelled within 24 hours of the booking will be charged at 100% of the price of the booking. If another user books the vacated time slot, the cancellation charge is waived. If users are more than 30 mins late for a booking, they must contact NIC@King's staff. Time that is booked but not used due to failure to cancel or failure to show up will be charged the normal hourly rate. Time that is unused during a session will be charged at the normal hourly rate. Users can potentially reduce this charge by making the time available to other users. This is done by logging into the booking system and cancelling the remaining time. If the time remains unused the original charge will be unchanged. Repeated lateness or failure to show up for bookings may result in the user losing access privileges to the NIC@King's.

Booking Limits – There is a 3 hour booking limit per system per day between the hours of 9am-5pm for bookings made in advance. If there is more time available on the day of the booking the user can book further time. Bookings can be made up to 3 weeks in advance.

Tissue culture room – **Please note that the NIC@King's is a BCL1 Facility.** The tissue culture room is accessible to all users. It should be used only for sample preparation/procedures/treatments that are necessarily performed in close proximity to the microscope. The facility is not for longer term experiments/storage.

- **Samples may be stored temporarily** in the incubator and fridge/freezer. All samples must be labelled with the user's name and signed in/out using the sheets attached to the incubator/fridge/freezer.
- **Samples left in the fridge/freezer** for more than **30 days** will be disposed of.
- **Samples may be left in the incubator** for more than **14 days** will be disposed of.

Other Facility Rules –

- **Users are prohibited from training other users.** Only NIC@King's facility staff are authorised to provide training to users
- **Users must not provide anyone else with access to the NIC@King's** without consent of the NIC@King's facility staff
- **Microscope systems must be left in a clean and tidy state.** Any equipment brought into the microscope rooms for imaging sessions must be removed at the end of the session. If you find any system that has been left untidy or misused, please report it immediately to the NIC@King's staff
- **Absolutely no food or drinks are to be taken into or consumed in the microscope rooms**
- **Samples that have been brought to the facility must be taken away at the end of the imaging session, along with any waste materials.** Under no circumstances should biological waste be disposed of in grey, general waste bins
- **Users should check and clean oil immersion objectives before use** with lens tissue and lens cleaner provided. Oil must be used sparingly and cleaned thoroughly from oil immersion objectives after use.
- **Oil should never be used with dry objectives** and any oil should be cleaned from sample holders (slides/dishes/plates etc.) before the use of dry objectives
- **Users should check dry objectives for oil contamination before and after their imaging session** and should report any contamination immediately to a member of NIC@King's staff
- **If you notice any damage to the lenses, please report this** to the Nikon Imaging Centre manager immediately or you may be liable for any damage caused
- **If there are no bookings for 3 hours after the end of your session, or you are the last user of the day, please switch off the system, including the PC**
- NIC@King's facility staff perform routine checks on every system each weekday. If any issues regarding the microscopes are discovered during these checks an email may be sent as a reminder of the local rules and procedures to any users who had used the microscopes in the time between these maintenance checks
- NIC@King's facility staff perform weekly routine maintenance on each microscope. This takes ~1 hour per microscope. Users are not permitted to use, or work in the immediate proximity of, a microscope undergoing routine maintenance
- Relevant risk assessments for samples/reagents being brought into the NIC@King's must be completed within the user's own laboratory. NIC@King's staff may request to see these documents at any time
- **The KCL Basic Laser Safety course must be completed by all users prior to working with microscopes containing lasers**
- Please treat NIC@King's staff with respect. We will do our best to assist you and ensure the efficient and safe running of the Centre

Users violating any of the above facility rules may lose their NIC@King's access rights.

Acknowledgement Policy - Equipment in the NIC@King's is owned by King's College London or generously donated by our corporate partners and contributors. Therefore, any papers incorporating data acquired or analysed in the NIC@King's must acknowledge the use of the NIC@King's. Please include a statement in the acknowledgements section, such as "We thank the Nikon Imaging Centre at Kings College London for help with light microscopy".

We share any publications that use our equipment with the companies that support the NIC@King's. This allows us to demonstrate to the companies that have supplied the equipment that the NIC@King's is producing useful scientific results and helps us justify their continued support. When you publish a paper incorporating data acquired at the NIC@King's, please send either a reprint of the paper or the complete citation of the paper to James Levitt (james.levitt@kcl.ac.uk).