User guide to the Thermal and Optical platforms in CAF

Things to consider before running your samples.

1. Booking.

- Only one external user can be working at the thermal/optical area at a time. Users can only work from Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

- Users must pre-arrange instrument booking with the CAF technician by email, giving basic sample and method information, as well as a COSHH assessment if the sample is hazardous. After this, the platform online booking system will be updated by the CAF technician to reflect any booking so other users can be aware of the instrument use and any problem can be tracked down.

  CAF Online booking website:

  http://www.reading.ac.uk/caf/Booking/caf_booking.aspx

  Platform emails:

  caf.thermal@reading.ac.uk caf.optspect@reading.ac.uk

- There is a maximum booking of one day per week per user, unless there are not additional users waiting for analysis.

2. Analysis.

- Entry/exit to thermal and optical platforms is only possible through CAF door closest to lab G61. Once the user enters the laboratory they must hang an “occupied" sign that will on the doors and hang the “vacant” sign when leaving. **Users must sanitize** their hands before entering the Thermal/Optical area and **must wear gloves** at all times when inside.

- Users cannot access the other CAF platforms from the optical/thermal area, there are chains separating platforms.

- Users must follow the “Handling samples by users 170820 RA” risk assessment and the instrument RA and SOP for the correct sample and instrument disinfection. There is an instrument RA and SOP copy available next to each instrument.

- Data analysis won't be carried out at CAF laboratory; instead, a remote Teams session will be pre-arranged with the CAF technician.

- When long analyses are needed, the user only needs to load the samples and set up the method. Once the experiment finishes, a remote Teams session can be arranged to check the results. The results can also be transferred by email. If the user wishes to retain the samples, these will be returned by the CAF technician to the "drop box" in laboratory G61 designated for thermal and optical samples (it is on the closest bench to the G67 door).

- Users must fill in the instrument Excel logbook every time they use an instrument to track down use and any possible problems.

- Do you know the instrument and method you require? There are SOPs and useful documents available on CAF website (https://www.reading.ac.uk/caf/), on the Thermal and Optical platform sections. If you have any question, please contact Pedro Rivas to discuss:

  caf.thermal@reading.ac.uk caf.optspect@reading.ac.uk

- Please remember to prepare your sample in your own lab. If you have any questions please first check the documents available on CAF website and if these are not useful you can also contact Pedro Rivas to discuss.
  You can see the sample amount needed for every instrument in the SOPs available in the appropriate research platform of the CAF website.

  Always carry your samples into the CAF lab in an appropriate container. In addition, cap the vial/container with an appropriate lid.

- DSCQ2000 sample preparation: You should prepare your DSC sample pans with your own pans and lids, since the number of pans available in CAF is limited. Some pans can be provided as long as they are paid by your group.
  The Tzero press and dies needed to crimp/seal the pans will be placed in the drop-off/collection area after previous arrangement between the user and the CAF technician. You will need to return the press and dies together with the sample pans after proper cleaning with 70% ethanol (aqueous) solution. If the user does not return the press (and dies) in proper state, the cost of cleaning or repairs will be charged to the research group.