

Self Service and Custodial Management for Secure Environments

1. Service Summary

Unilink's solution is a biometrically enabled digital platform, designed for use within prisons, secure hospitals, young offender institutions and immigration detention centres. The service enables residents to manage everyday tasks, securely access a range of approved digital services - information, communication, education and entertainment. Biometric identification strengthens identity assurance for residents, visitors, contractors and staff, supporting secure access, accountability and accurate record keeping.

The system also provides staff with comprehensive set of software tools to manage and control residents' access to the system, process self-service transactions, and manage related operational activity more accurately and efficiently. It brings together biometric-enabled self-service, custodial management and operational control within a single, integrated system.

The service replaces paper-based and manual processes with secure digital workflows, improving efficiency, transparency and auditability. Resident access is controlled in line with custody status, location, role and local policy, ensuring that only approved services and content are available at any given time.

The service integrates with national and local systems via secure APIs and can be deployed either locally, in customers' approved Data Centre, approved customer cloud environment or in Unilink's secure cloud - subject to customer assurance requirements.

Delivered as a cloud service, the Self-service platform replaces fragmented, paper-based and manual processes with integrated digital workflows, centrally governed configuration, consistent service delivery across establishments, comprehensive reporting and reduced local system management overhead.

2. Service Features

The service provides an integrated, modular suite of resident-facing and staff-facing capabilities, including:

- Biometric identification enables secure resident access to approved self-service functions via in-room (or cell) devices, tablets and/or kiosks.
- Self-service access to account balances and transaction history.
- Digital submission, tracking and response of resident applications and requests.
- Digital canteen ordering and purchase management.
- Digital menu selection and meal ordering.
- Secure messaging between residents, staff and approved external contacts (where enabled).
- Case-related updates and notifications delivered digitally.
- Full audit trail of self-service usage and transactions.
- Secure access to approved multimedia, educational and learning content.
- Staff dashboards for managing, prioritising and monitoring requests and activity.
- Centralised system administration, Role-based access control and policy-driven configuration.
- Secure API-based integration with custodial, case management, financial and operational systems.
- Mobile and desktop access for staff to resident and case information.
- AI-supported insights and reporting to assist operational oversight.
- AI-enabled translation, accessibility and communication support.
- AI-powered chatbots supporting resident enquiries and application guidance.
- AI-supported vulnerability indicators highlighting residents potentially at increased risk.

3. Service Benefits

The service delivers rehabilitative, operational, security and governance benefits, including:

- Enables residents to take responsibility for managing everyday tasks.
- Reduces administrative burden through replacement of paper-based processes.
- Improves visibility of application status and outcomes for residents and staff.
- Expands access to education and digital learning opportunities.
- Reduces errors and waste through digital menu and canteen ordering.
- Supports wellbeing through secure communication with staff and approved contacts.
- Improves engagement and reduces frustration through timely digital access.
- Enhances security through biometric identification and verification.
- Provides clear audit trails to support governance and assurance, reducing disputes and misunderstandings.
- Ensures consistent service delivery across secure institutional settings.
- Reduces staff time spent on routine enquiries and follow-ups.
- Streamlines financial and payment-related processes, reducing staff administration.
- Improves consistency in case handling and operational decision-making.
- Provides greater visibility of resident location, status and needs.
- Supports earlier identification of residents requiring additional support.
- Improves communication and understanding through translation and chatbot support.

4. Service Scope

The service supports end-to-end custodial operations by combining resident self-service with staff-facing custodial management, movement control and operational oversight. Residents access approved self-service services in line with custody status, location and policy. Staff configure services, manage cases, monitor activity and respond to operational events through secure staff portals and dashboards. Content, access rules and operational processes are centrally managed to ensure consistency and governance, with comprehensive reporting and audit of self-service usage and outcomes.

4.1 Resident Self Service Capabilities

The service integrates with custodial, case management and financial systems to support end-to-end digital processes and is designed to support multi-site deployments through centrally governed configuration. The service is delivered as a modular platform. Modules can be enabled or disabled per establishment in line with local policy.

Authentication and Access

- *Login and Language Support:* Secure resident authentication with multilingual support and accessibility considerations.

Scheduling and Activities

- *Scheduling / Diary:* Displays planned activities and appointments; supports self-booking where permitted and staff scheduling with attendance tracking.

Education and Learning

- *Education:* Access to educational materials, courses and learning platforms; supports integration with learning management systems.
- *Approved Multimedia:* Controlled access to TV, radio, video, music, games and e-books, subject to policy and entitlement.

Communication

- *Messaging:* Secure internal messaging between residents and staff.
- *External Messaging (where enabled):* Controlled messaging with approved external contacts, subject to screening and moderation rules.

Daily Living

- *Menus and Meal Ordering:* Digital menu selection and meal ordering with dietary controls.

- *Canteen / Retail*: Digital ordering, stock-controlled purchasing and transaction processing.
- *Account Balance*: View of balances and transaction history, integrated with financial systems.
- *Property Management*: View and request property items held by the establishment.

Requests and Applications

- *Applications / Requests*: Digital submission and tracking of requests, applications and appointments with full audit trails.

Information and Engagement

- *Noticeboard*: Publication of notices and information with read-receipt tracking.
- *FAQs*: Searchable frequently asked questions and standard responses.
- *Surveys*: Targeted surveys with reporting and analysis tools.
- *Rewards (optional)*: Configuration of incentives and recognition aligned to local schemes.
- *Casework Information*: Display of key case-related information and updates

Visits

- *Visits Booking*: Self-service booking of approved visits in line with entitlement and security rules.

Oversight and Analytics

- *Staff Dashboards*: Real-time operational dashboards covering usage, requests, schedules and system status.
- *Activity and Behaviour Insights*: Analysis of self-service usage patterns to support operational awareness and early intervention (where enabled).
- *Prisoner Activity Overview*: Consolidated staff view of resident activity, status and engagement.
- *AIM*: analytical tool to identify residents that may be at higher risk of self-harm.

4.2 Staff Case Management and Operational Modules

The service provides a comprehensive set of staff-facing case management and operational modules, delivered through a secure cloud-based staff portal. These capabilities support day-to-day custodial operations, case oversight, movement control and assurance activities, while integrating tightly with resident self-service functionality.

- At the core of the platform is the **Housekeeping** module, which acts as the central administrative hub. Housekeeping enables system administrators to configure business rules, workflows, parameters, access permissions and security settings, ensuring the platform can be adapted to local operational requirements while maintaining governance, consistency and system integrity across sites.
- The **Reception** module supports biometric enrolment and individual record management at the point of entry into custody. It enables staff to manage identity verification, property records, checklists, associations, warnings and early risk indicators, ensuring accurate and complete records are established and maintained from the outset.
- The **Residence** module supports the management of housing, activities, penalties and room-share risks. Graphical views, diaries and early risk indicators assist staff in managing residential areas safely and effectively, supporting informed decision-making and risk management.
- The **Security** module provides a structured approach to incident logging and reporting. Staff can record, search and review incidents involving residents, visitors and staff, with all related parties captured within a single system. This centralised approach improves transparency, accountability and oversight of security-related matters.
- Staff presence and movement are managed through the **Staff Access and Management** module, which supports attendance recording, skills tracking, biometric identification and access control. This module integrates with third-party systems where required and provides robust reporting to support operational accountability.
- The **Bio Movements** capability uses biometric verification to track and verify individual movements throughout the establishment. It records locations, flags deviations from expected movement

patterns and supports compliance with temporary release or discharge conditions, strengthening security, accountability and operational control.

- Operational planning and activity management are supported through integrated **Scheduling and Activities** functionality. Staff can prioritise activities, manage waiting lists, record attendance and link attendance data to payments where applicable. Resident timetables are reflected through self-service, ensuring alignment between staff planning and resident engagement.
- Real-time operational awareness is provided through electronic rollboards and dashboards, which display resident location, status, activities and alerts. These tools replace manual whiteboards and paper-based tracking, improving situational awareness and responsiveness.
- The platform includes AI-supported capabilities designed to enhance accessibility, communication and operational efficiency, while remaining fully configurable and under staff control. AI-assisted tools support staff in generating digital notices for publication to self-service devices. Using guided prompts, voice-to-text input and structured planning modes, staff can create draft notices that are configurable by language, eligibility and audience. All notices remain subject to staff review and approval prior to publication.
- AI-supported image generation can be used to create visual representations of food and menu items within the self-service platform. Catering staff can generate and customise images based on detailed prompts aligned to local menus, improving accessibility for residents with learning difficulties or low literacy.
- AI-driven multilingual translation supports the presentation of content, notices and selected system information in multiple languages. Translation outputs are configurable and managed by staff, improving accessibility and understanding for diverse resident populations.
- AI-powered chatbots can be enabled to assist residents with general enquiries and application guidance. These tools provide structured support while routing formal requests through existing staff-led workflows and approval processes.
- The service also includes **AIM (Alert Intervene Monitor)**, an AI-supported capability that assists staff by highlighting changes in resident behaviour across operational data such as canteen usage, menu ordering and activity engagement. Deviations from established patterns are indicated using configurable High, Medium and Low indicators, supporting earlier awareness and intervention. AIM does not make decisions and does not replace professional judgement; it operates as an assistive tool under staff oversight.
- All staff-facing modules and AI-supported capabilities operate within the same centrally managed platform, with role-based access control, full audit logging and integration with custodial, case management, financial and operational systems via secure APIs.

5. How the Service Works

Residents authenticate on approved devices to access the self-service platform through approved in-cell devices or secure kiosks using authenticated access aligned to their custody status, location and local policy. Once logged in, residents are presented only with the services, information and content they are permitted to use, ensuring controlled and appropriate access at all times.

Through the self-service interface, residents can view personal information, submit applications and requests, place orders for meals or canteen items, access educational and multimedia content, and send or receive messages where enabled. All interactions are processed through configured digital workflows, providing residents with visibility of status and responses while reducing the need for paper-based processes or staff intervention.

Staff access the platform via secure desktop and mobile interfaces, that allow them to configure services, manage content, define rules and process resident activity. Requests and applications are routed automatically to the appropriate teams, where they can be reviewed, prioritised and responded to in line with

establishment processes. Dashboards and queues provide staff with real-time oversight of workload, activity and system usage. Authorised users can access reports and audit information to support operational management, compliance and assurance activities. All self-service interactions are logged, providing a clear and traceable record of activity and outcomes. Biometric checks strengthen identity assurance at key control points, while dashboards and alerts provide operational visibility.

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6. Onboarding and Offboarding

6.1 Onboarding

Onboarding is delivered as a structured and collaborative process, designed to ensure the service is configured in line with local operational requirements while supporting consistent, secure delivery across the estate.

The onboarding process typically begins with confirmation of service scope, including participating establishments, the self-service modules to be enabled, and resident and staff user groups. An initial discovery and planning phase is used to confirm workflows, access rules, content controls and approval processes, as well as reporting and audit requirements. This phase typically takes 2–4 weeks, depending on complexity and stakeholder availability.

Configuration of the service tenant, user roles, security controls and workflows is then completed, alongside the implementation and testing of integrations with custodial, case management, financial or learning systems where required. Configuration and integration activities typically take 4–8 weeks, depending on the number of modules enabled and the extent of system integration.

Where appropriate, onboarding includes a pilot or phased rollout to validate workflows in an operational setting before wider deployment. Training for staff users and the provision of resident guidance materials are delivered alongside rollout activities. Go-live and early life support are provided to ensure a smooth transition into operational use. Pilot and rollout activities typically take 2–4 weeks, although larger or multi-site deployments may be phased over a longer period.

Overall onboarding timescales typically range from 8 to 16 weeks per site, depending on scope, number of sites, integrations and local readiness.

6.2 Offboarding / exit management

Offboarding is managed in a controlled and auditable manner to ensure service termination is completed securely and in line with contractual and regulatory obligations.

Exit planning is agreed with the customer in advance and includes confirmation of data retention, export and deletion requirements, access withdrawal and integration decommissioning

Data extracts, reports and audit logs are provided as agreed, and access for residents and staff is withdrawn in a controlled manner. Integrations with external systems are decommissioned to prevent further data exchange.

Where the service is deployed across multiple establishments, offboarding can be performed on a phased basis to support continuity of operations. Overall offboarding activities are typically completed within 8–12 weeks, subject to agreed exit arrangements.

7. Support and Service Management

Incidents and service requests are managed in accordance with the agreed contractual service levels and the operational requirements of custodial environments.

Initial response times are:

- High and medium priority incidents: within 1 hour
- Low priority incidents and general service requests: within 2 hours

Standard support hours are Monday to Friday, 8:00am–5:00pm (UK time). In recognition of the critical nature of custodial systems, High priority incidents are supported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Support is delivered using an ITIL-aligned service management framework. All requests are logged through a central service desk and assessed by a triage function, which assigns priority and routes issues to the appropriate resolver group. Resolution is provided through structured 1st, 2nd and 3rd line support, with clear escalation procedures in place.

Customers are provided with a dedicated support email address and an assigned Business Account Manager, who provides ongoing service oversight, technical engagement and escalation support. Service performance and incident trends are reviewed through agreed governance processes.

8. Service Constraints and System Requirements

8.1 Service constraints

- Requires secure connectivity between resident devices and the hosted service.
- Available functionality depends on local policy approvals and system integrations.
- Throughput and usage patterns depend on establishment regimes and device availability.

8.2 System requirements

- Approved in-cell devices and/or secure kiosks.
- Secure network connectivity to the hosting environment (customer cloud or Unilink secure cloud).
- Standard PCs or approved staff terminals for operational and administrative users.
- User and role management aligned to customer security policies.

9. Security and Compliance

The service is designed with privacy and data protection controls built in by design, including role-based access control, audit logging and data minimisation, supporting UK GDPR and relevant information assurance requirements.

Where Unilink provides the managed service, it operates within ISO 27001-certified information security controls, GDPR-compliant data handling practices, and regular external security testing aligned to customer governance.

10. Training

Training is provided to support effective adoption of the self-service platform and is delivered as part of a broader business change approach. Training is role-based and tailored to the needs of different user groups, including system administrators, departmental staff responsible for processing requests, and operational managers with oversight responsibilities.

Training typically covers system configuration, management of self-service modules, workflow and rules setup, request and application processing, reporting and dashboard use, and operational assurance. Training also includes guidance on managing content, responding to resident activity, and using audit and reporting tools to support governance and compliance.

Training can be delivered on-site or remotely, depending on customer preference and operational constraints, and is supported by training materials and user-specific documentation. Where required, training is phased to align with pilot deployments and rollout activities, ensuring staff are prepared ahead of go-live.

Go-live support is provided to assist staff during the initial operational period, helping to address questions, reinforce training and support smooth transition to live service use. This approach supports rapid user adoption and minimises disruption to day-to-day operations

11. Ordering and Invoicing

This service is ordered via the Digital Marketplace in line with G-Cloud call-off procedures. Pricing is provided separately in the G-Cloud pricing document

12. Trial Service

A time-limited pilot or proof-of-concept can be provided to validate visit workflows, integrations and assurance policies prior to wider deployment.