Recent Changes

Immigration news
-On 17th March, the cost of making a visa application rose. A postal Tier 4 application made in the UK is now £448 (previously £439).

-From 1 February 2016 all private landlords in England will be required by law to make ‘right to rent’ checks. This means checking that all tenants have the right to be in the UK by checking passports and visas.

See the International Student Advice webpages at http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/visas-and-immigration/ for further details of these changes.

ISS News
Changes to the International Student Support Service opening hours, visa appointments and Quick Queries sessions:
From Monday 4 April 2016 the International Student Support office will be changing its opening hours.

We will now be open as follows:
Monday 09:30 – 17:00
Tuesday 09:30 – 17:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 16:00
Thursday 09:30 – 17:00
Friday 09:30 – 17:00

Quick Queries
We will be available to see students for drop-in visa advice (no appointment necessary) at our Quick Query sessions on
Monday 10:00 - 12:00
Friday 14:00 - 16:00

Appointments
Students can book in for a 45 minute visa application check during the appointment slots on
Tuesday 14:00 - 17:00
Thursday 10:00 - 13:00
Graduate Entrepreneur Information Evening

Are you in your final year of study and have you caught the entrepreneurial bug? If you have an entrepreneurial idea to start a business in the UK and you need a visa to remain in the UK then the Graduate Entrepreneur visa may be the route for you.

To find out more about this visa and if it is right for you please come along to our Information Session:

**Date:** Tuesday 26 April 2016  
**Venue:** ACEX 554  
**Time:** 17:30 (registration); 18:00 (presentation)

There will be drinks and snacks available at the session.

Visit our website for further details about the Graduate Entrepreneur visa!

Recent Events on Campus

Private Housing Information Evening

On 7th March, the Student Hub team hosted the annual Private Housing Evening, an event designed purposely to assist students moving into the private accommodation sector. It was the most popular to date, offering students the opportunity to speak to exhibitors and attend a presentation in the Great Hall.

The presentation covered the following topics:
- Finding a flatmate, and top tips for living in a shared home
- Setting a budget, and looking at the initial costs and ongoing costs of living in private housing (such as rent vs. utility bills and food)
- Choosing an area to live (including the cost of different areas in London, and considering the safety of the area, and the facilities which are close by)
- Deciding on a property (including what to be aware of if you’re unsure about a property)
- Reading and signing a contract (including the different types of agreement you may see, and what happens regarding your deposit)

Student’s who attended received a goodie bag, including a handy Area Guide with information and rent estimates for various areas in London which are popular with Imperial students; a Private Housing Guide, more information about the Student Hub, and an issue of the Student Hub Herald which contained information about the exhibitors who had stands available during the evening. These exhibitors ranged from letting agents and student accommodation providers to home and contents insurers and storage companies.

If you missed it, don’t worry! The Student Hub team are always on hand to assist. They are based on Level 3 of the Sherfield Building (South Kensington campus). You can phone them on 020 7594 9444, tweet them, email them or chat to them online, and you can see all of their contact information on the Student Hub webpage. They also have a database of student accommodation providers on: Imperial Home Solutions. And what’s more, there will be more housing-related events: the May Housing Fair on 11th May and Find a Flatmate on 26th May.
ISS Team Staff Update

Our office has undergone some staffing changes recently, with Sara Chesnick and Sue Webb both sadly leaving the team this year.

Never fear though, as we still have a full team to support you! Here’s a little bit about the fresh (and familiar) faces now in the ISS!

Lizzie – Head of International Student Support
I have just taken over as Head of the International Student Support Office here at Imperial. I have worked with international students for 17 years and have particular expertise in student immigration issues. In my spare time, I enjoy singing in a community choir, looking after my daughter and supporting Spurs!

Christian – International Student Adviser
I have been working as an International Student Adviser for over 6 years and working at Imperial since 2012. In my spare time I enjoy travelling, going to music gigs and enjoying all the cultural opportunities available in London.

Shelagh – International Student Adviser
I have recently started working here at Imperial and have over 20 years experience working with International Students in UK universities. I am originally from Liverpool, famous for the Beatles of course, and if you have time I can recommend it as a great place to visit. In my spare time I love going to the theatre and walking my dog on Hampstead Heath.

Kaitlyn – Assistant International Student Adviser
I’m originally from Perth, in sunny Western Australia and moved to London last year. I worked at the University of Western Australia for 2 years, looking after Study Abroad programs before joining the ISS team at Imperial in October 2015. I love travelling, food, music, running and skiing!

Claudia – Assistant International Student Adviser
I have recently joined the International Student Support team here at Imperial as Assistant International Student Advisor. My previous role was as an International Admissions Administrator at University of the Arts London. In my spare time I like to exercise, although you won’t see me training for a marathon anytime soon, you may see me at ETHOS at a spin class! I must also confess that I am ‘scripted reality’ TV junkie, so any fans of TOWIE, MIC please come and find me for a gossip!
Harry Potter Studio Tour

In January we went to Harry Potter Studios in Leavesden, which is just outside of London. We had an amazing time exploring some of the sets used in the films, including the Great Hall, Privet Drive, the Gryffindor common room and the Potions dungeon. The highlight of the tour for many people was seeing the magnificent snowy Hogwarts castle at the end! The Harry Potter shop was nearly as amazing as the tour itself, with so much Hogwarts merchandise and other magical goodies to choose from! A great day out and must-do for all Harry Potter fans! More info on how to visit: https://www.wbstudiotour.co.uk/

Mamma Mia! Musical night

We had a fantastic night out at the Novello Theatre, where we watched the two hour, sing-along friendly, Mamma Mia musical spectacular! The show is a must-see for any ABBA fans, featuring many of their greatest hits. More info on London theatre tickets: http://www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk/london-shows/

Houses of Parliament Tour

Despite the rain and cold (welcome to England!) we had a fantastic tour of the Houses of Parliament. Our guide was well informed with interesting facts about the history of the building and some of the famous people who have moved through these corridors. It was an amazing opportunity to walk through the actual House of Lords and House of Commons and be so close to the heart of the British political system – however the rooms did look much smaller than they appear on TV! More info on how to visit: http://www.parliament.uk/visiting/visiting-and-tours/
Oxford

On Saturday 5th March we travelled to the beautiful University City of Oxford. We enjoyed a short walking tour of the cobbled stone streets and old university buildings before exploring the town’s museums, shops and pubs for the rest of the day. We did have some rain but luckily, a little bit of sunshine and blue sky too. And we were lucky enough to see some of the Oxford graduates leaving their graduation ceremony!

Bath and Lacock

On Saturday 19th March we visited the historic city of Bath. With its iconic limestone architecture and rich history, this city is a must visit (especially for any Jane Austin fans!). After a few hours exploring Bath’s cobbled stone streets we headed on to the tiny, National Trust village of Lacock, in the Cotswolds. With its 13th century houses, walking through Lacock feels just like walking through a Jane Austin novel, which is quite fitting since it has actually been used as a filming location for many period dramas, including Pride and Prejudice, as well as Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince!

International Family Network

Family Easter Egg Hunt

The International Family Network team in the International Student Support Office organised a traditional Easter Egg Hunt for student parents and their families in the Imperial College Garden. This was a great opportunity for student parents to come together with their children and partners and gave them the chance to meet other student parents in a fun, relaxed environment. This free event ran from 3-4.30pm and proved to be a success as it gave the children a chance to have some fun with finding the very well hidden eggs and also gave parents a chance for a catch up over cup of tea and an Easter treat too!

There was also craft making with the children being able to customize their Easter egg bags with stickers and felt tip pens, as well as the chance to decorate their own Easter bonnet with daffodils, paper flowers and artificial baby chicks. We plan to do more of these events so please keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for further information for when the next event will be.
Easter in London

Spring is in the air, the days are getting longer and Easter is almost here. Whether it's chocolate egg collecting, hot-crossed bun sampling or just getting involved with the cultural events happening around London over this holiday break, Easter is an exciting time to be in London!

Here are our ideas on what to do in London this Easter!

Chocolate Market at Duke of York Square: Saturday 26th March 2016

Easter fever will be hitting Chelsea once again this year with a decadent Chocolate Market descending on Duke of York Square for a third year running. The chocolate market will be running alongside the Square’s regular Fine Food Market between 10am and 4pm on Saturday 26th March. So whether you’re a chocoholic or after something special to share with family and friends, there will be treats galore for everyone to enjoy where you can find all of your favourite brands or perhaps try something different and discover independent artisans with a delicious selection.


Passion of Christ Trafalgar Sq: Friday 25th March 2016

On Good Friday, the huge Wintershall cast of over more than 100 people as well as horses, doves and donkeys come to Trafalgar Square re-enact their annual, moving Passion and resurrection play of the last days of Jesus Christ. Big screens are provided so that the audience can see and hear the performance. Performances last for 90 minutes and take place at 12pm and 3.15pm. This is a free, open air event and attracts tens of thousands of spectators, made up of all faiths. For further information please see: https://www.wintershall-estate.com/events/the-passion-of-jesus/

National Trust Easter Egg Hunts

National trust are running 300 egg hunts around the UK! Find your nearest Easter Egg hunt - http://easter.cadbury.co.uk/find-an-egg-hunt/
London: Great Things To Do In And Around The City

What else is going on in London this Spring?

With British Summer Time commencing on Sunday 27th March, meaning the evenings getting longer and brighter, this is a great time to start exploring all the things that London has to offer.

Here are some upcoming events that you may be interested in and wish to go along to!

The 2016 Oxford vs. Cambridge Boat Race

The annual Boat Race between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge will take place on Sunday 27th March 2016.

The men’s race will start at 4.10pm will be joined on the banks of the Tideway by the women’s race, starting an hour earlier at 3.10pm. The traditional rowing race between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge began in 1829 for men and in 1927 for women and it now attracts around 250,000 spectators to south-west London every year. The four-and-a-quarter mile course runs along the Thames from Putney Bridge to Mortlake and takes around 16 to 18 minutes to complete (Cambridge holds the course record of 16 minutes 19 seconds, set in 1998).

Visit http://theboatraces.org/ for more information about the Cancer Research UK Boat Race, its history, official charity partner and the best places to see the race either in person or from the comfort of your front room.
The London Coffee Festival: 7-10th April 2016
The Old Truman Brewery on Brick Lane
Returning for 2016, the London Coffee Festival is the UK’s largest coffee and artisan food event, featuring over 250 artisan coffee and gourmet food stalls, tastings and demonstrations from world-class baristas, interactive workshops, street food, coffee-based cocktails, live music, DJs, art exhibitions and much more. For further information please visit http://www.londoncoffeefestival.com/Home

Feast of St George 23rd April 2016
Trafalgar Square
Join the St George’s Day celebrations, with English food, free activities and a Shakespearean twist at the Mayor of London’s annual Feast of St George in Trafalgar Square. This year’s event takes place on St George’s Day itself between 12 - 6pm. Trafalgar Square will be decorated in red and white and there will be plenty of free themed activities with live music, family games, dance and storytelling. Plus, watch celebrity chefs give live cookery demonstrations and sample traditional English fare from the food stalls, inspired by St George’s Day’s 13th-century origins as a national day of feasting. In addition to this, to mark 400 years since the death of William Shakespeare, which also falls on 23 April, this year’s event will also celebrate the bard’s life and work with themed activities. More details: http://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/8726328-feast-of-st-george-in-trafalgar-square

The Virgin Money London Marathon: 24th April 2016
The marathon is open to all abilities, from beginners who walk the course to professional athletes. The race starts at approximately 10am and first half of the route runs just south of the Thames through Greenwich and Blackheath. After crossing the river on Tower Bridge, runners pass some of the capital’s famous landmarks, including the Coca Cola London Eye and the Tower of London before finishing in front of Buckingham Palace. For more information visit https://www.virginmoneylondonmarathon.com/en-gb/

Canalway Cavalcade: 30th April – 2nd May 2016
Little Venice (Paddington)
This distinctive waterway festival has been taking place at Little Venice since 1983. There will be an array of boats, trade show stalls, morris dancing, competitions, food, family-friendly activities and a real ale bar, making it an enjoyable day out for families. Enjoying the festivals is free of charge so if the weather is good then this could be well worth a visit! For more information please visit https://www.waterways.org.uk/events_festivals/canalway_cavalcade/iwa_canalway_cavalcade
Eurovision Song Contest: Eurovision Song Contest: 14th May 2016

This year will be the 61st edition of the Eurovision Song Contest. It will take place in the Ericsson Globe in Stockholm, Sweden, following Sweden’s victory at the 2015 contest in Vienna with the song “Heroes”, performed by Måns Zelmerlöw.

This year sees a revamped voting system, which is the biggest change to the competition since 1975.

The UK’s entry for this year are former contestants from The Voice UK - Joe Woolford and Jake Shakeshaft who have teamed up for their song ‘You're Not Alone’.

In the UK, the BBC will be broadcasting the entire show live. If you’re not in the UK on the night, don’t worry as all participating countries will also be broadcasting the live final, or alternatively you can watch it from wherever you are in the world on http://www.eurovision.tv/page/timeline

For more ideas of things to do in and around London, check out Time Out and Visit London.

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Useful Links

- Like the International Student Support Facebook page and follow our Twitter account!
- Access College information and services anytime, anywhere with Imperial Mobile
- List of term dates
- Imperial College Union website
- Useful contacts around the College

As ever, our website has lots of useful information to get you started. However, if you can’t find an answer to your question on the website, please complete our web query form and we will do our best to help.

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Easter Closure

Please note that the office will be closed from 4pm on Wednesday 23rd March until we re-open on Thursday 31st March at 10am

Don’t forget to change your clocks on the 27th March!
More details available here: https://www.gov.uk/when-do-the-clocks-change

We wish you a safe and relaxing Easter Break!