IMPERIAL

People Function

People Management Framework Manager's Toolkit

An ecosystem for developing people management capability at Imperial

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People Management Framework

At Imperial, we know that great line management makes a real difference: shaping how supported people feel, how teams perform, and how our culture lives day to day.

The Imperial People Function has curated the People Management Framework: a structured development programme designed to strengthen line management capability across the institution.

Built around the real challenges our managers face, the People Management Framework brings together live workshops, peer-learning communities, practical tools and curated resources. Together, these elements are designed to make the experience of being managed at Imperial a consistently positive one. All of these are designed to build confident and effective managers over time. The framework is designed to reduce pressure on managers, not add to it.

The framework has been developed in close partnership with the Talent Strategy Working Group which has representatives from across Imperial, representing all job families, and varying levels of seniority. For further information, you can contact the Talent and Culture team on staffdevelopment@imperial.ac.uk

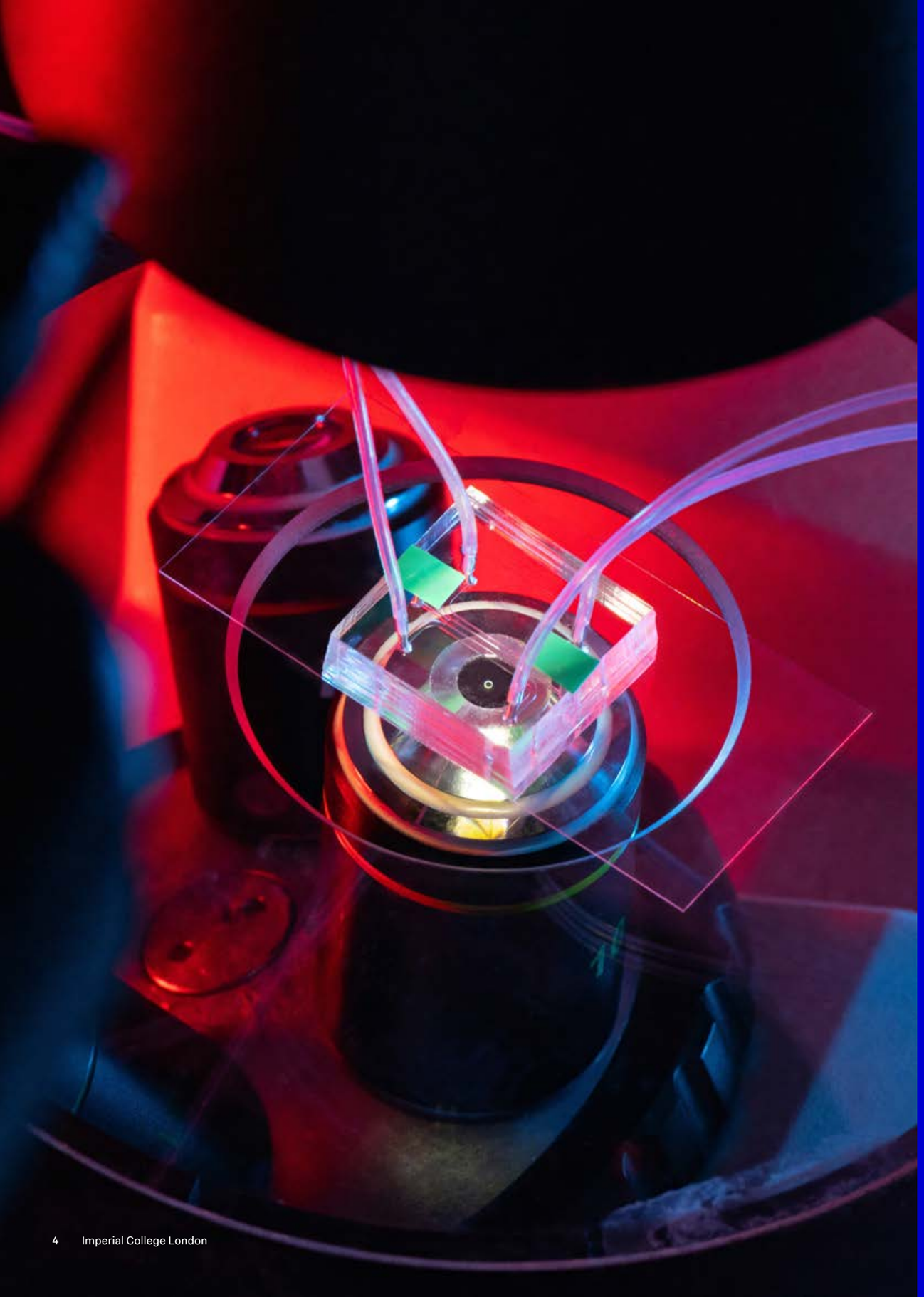
How to use the toolkit

This toolkit provides an overview of what is expected of you as a manager at Imperial. It signposts to policies and resources for your development.

This toolkit is for:

- new, existing and returning managers
- everyone who has responsibility for managing individuals and/or teams
- line managers across all job families

The toolkit supplements local, role-specific information, and signposts to further resources to support your performance and development.
As a manager, you have a direct impact on others: their performance, engagement, health, safety and wellbeing. How you behave – what you do and do not do – is critical to the success of Imperial and the success and wellbeing of all our employees.



Imperial Strategy: Science for Humanity

Our Science for Humanity strategy makes a clear commitment to 'attracting and nurturing the next generation of leaders'. It acknowledges the critical role that line managers play in empowering people to perform well in their roles and to realise their potential.

Imperial Values
The university has committed to improving our working culture and helping to build positive and enabling environments for all. In support of this goal, we have a suite of core Values and Behaviours that will guide our behaviour as a community.

- Respect: we treat each other fairly, with kindness and respect, valuing each person's individual experience, perspectives and contribution.
- Collaboration: we work together, cultivating an inclusive and impactful Imperial community.
- Excellence: we strive for quality in everything we do, taking pride in our work, and delivering impact through our commitment.
- Integrity: we do the right thing, we are honest and open, checking, challenging and changing our practices and behaviours.
- Innovation: we become inspired by possibilities, venturing into the unknown with open minds and having the courage to embrace change.

By defining and embedding Imperial Values and Behaviours, we can explain what is expected of us all – be that colleague, manager or leader. We will recognise and reward these behaviours, and have a framework to actively address poor behaviour. It is important for you to think about how you demonstrate these values in your work at Imperial and as a people manager.

- Values and Behaviours
- Our Values – The Behaviours for Leaders

Expectations of people managers at Imperial

Your specific role, position in the hierarchy, and the purpose of your group or team define the nature of your leadership and management responsibilities. Whatever the specifics of your role, you are likely to have responsibilities in the following areas.

- Managing self and personal skills
- Working with people
- Leading change
- Achieving results
- Using resources
- Providing direction

The following pages explain the ways in which managers can role-model good practice, as well as the behaviours to avoid.

Expectations of people managers at Imperial

Managing self and personal skills

Effective leaders/managers:

- know themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and how their behaviours impact others
- know how to manage themselves, show integrity and constantly develop as leaders/managers
- are transparent, adaptable and take initiative
- can influence and make better decisions by understanding their own and others' emotions.

Do:

- consider your impact on others
- role-model and promote Imperial Values, equality, diversity and inclusion
- reflect on your actions and learn from experiences
- find and use opportunities for self-development
- ask for feedback
- use the self-assessment tool to understand areas for development.

Don't:

- gossip about staff
- disregard others' opinions
- undermine staff in private or public
- blame others for failures
- say one thing and do another
- react without considering impact
- put ego over the purpose and objectives of the team/department
- be unpredictable in behaviours and decisions.

Working with people

Effective leaders/managers:

- achieve success through others
- actively work with team strengths
- promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- identify actions, what success looks like and allocate work accordingly
- encourage teamwork and wider collaboration
- address tensions and conflict
- support changing working needs and circumstances.

Do:

- implement policies and best practice
- provide feedback and support
- raise issues and resolve conflict
- build trust and positive working relationships
- show appreciation and celebrate success
- communicate with individuals and the team
- listen to and engage with team
- ensure learning and development plans are in place
- have coaching conversations.

Don't:

- interrupt others before they have been able to express themselves
- rely on a single method and style of communication
- fail to engage with and develop staff
- avoid offering appropriate support
- give unbalanced feedback
- push your agenda without considering others
- avoid difficult conversations.

Leading change

Effective leaders/managers:

- understand internal and external reasons for change
- engage and lead others effectively through change
- deliver intended change
- engage with others to learn from the change process.

Do:

- recognise opportunities for change
- engage interested parties/ stakeholders in discussions about change
- consult and engage with people affected by change
- plan, implement and monitor the change process
- review change initiative and learning
- encourage improvements and innovation
- have awareness of change impact and be ready to review/adjust
- manage own responses to change well.

Don't:

- stamp down on creativity and innovation
- take risks without considering the impact
- avoid engaging with people affected by change
- ignore project plans
- avoid searching for better ways of working
- mismanage your reactions to change.

Expectations of people managers at Imperial

Achieving results

Effective leaders/managers:

- put in place structure and processes to achieve the task, deliver objectives and outputs
- help the team see the direction and what 'good' looks like
- encourage further development, learning from success and failure
- create an environment of engagement where the team shares respect and accountability.

Do:

- manage own and others' behaviours and performance
- allocate work, review progress and make adjustments
- delegate appropriately and fairly
- evaluate, learn and improve
- ensure compliance with all legal, and health and safety standards.

Don't:

- neglect to offer feedback – positive or developmental
- tolerate under-performance
- show no willingness to learn from experiences and mistakes
- fail to value diversity and equality
- implement own ideas without discussing with others
- micromanage or be too hands-off.

Using resources

Effective leaders/managers:

- use resources to support efficient and effective running of projects, department and university
- set and monitor budgets, approve expenditure in line with budget and guidance
- manage physical resources, such as space, equipment and technology.

Do:

- use resources in line with Imperial guidelines
- make best use of diverse talents, technology and resources
- deliver work on time and within budget
- delegate and redistribute work fairly
- use project management tools and methodology
- review use of resources regularly.

Don't:

- fail to deliver work on time and within budget
- fail to comply with internal or external requirements
- fail to plan or schedule work projects
- fail to utilise suitable technology.

Providing direction

Effective leaders/managers:

- inspire team by creating a shared vision and purpose
- set ambitious and realistic goals, create short- and long-term plans
- share a clear picture of goals and how everyone contributes.

Do:

- involve others in contributing to a future direction
- consistently and regularly share vision and goals
- connect individual contributions to the bigger picture
- create and sustain a team culture that promotes equality and diversity, safety and wellbeing of all.

Don't:

- fail to see the bigger picture
- avoid engaging different perspectives in planning process
- work without a vision
- fail to translate the vision into smaller, manageable chunks
- have unclear expectations.

Employee journey

Leaders and managers have responsibilities for every one of their employees, from recruitment through to leaving the university. Your key responsibilities as a line manager at each stage of the employee journey are outlined below with supporting resources.

1. Recruitment and selection

2. Induction and probation

3. Performance and objective setting

4. Development

5. Leaving/exit

1. Recruitment and selection

Your role as a manager is to ensure that the recruitment process is fair and efficient. When recruiting a new member, you must ensure that recruitment is fair, free of bias, compliant with the legislation and best practice and conducted in a professional manner to appoint the best person for the job.

You will need to:

- liaise with the Recruitment Hub who will help you undertake recruitment
- complete the Interview Skills for Recruitment online e-learning (mandatory).

You should consider:

- how the interview process will work, what is your panel configuration, importance of body language and supporting neurodivergent interviewees
- preparation time required to shortlist candidates, draft questions and assessment criteria, configure panel, etc
- drafting well-structured questions and marking criteria with a clear indication of average, below average, and outstanding responses
- sharing of questions in advance and your local departmental policy.
- use of Artificial Intelligence to prepare responses, etc and how you may wish to consider asking further probing questions to establish expertise
- discussions about flexible working and core hours but not part of formal assessment.

Resources for your development:

- attend the Interview Skills for Recruitment (0.5-day course, recommended)
- complete Unconscious bias training
- consider workplace adjustments.

2. Induction and probation

The purpose of induction is to ensure that new starters are integrated into their role and working environment. The purpose of probation is to support and evaluate a new employee's performance with the aim of confirming them in post.

Your role is to support your new starter by:

- helping them adjust to their working environment and responsibilities
- providing them with clarity and purpose in their role
- giving them support, tools and knowledge to succeed: structures and procedures, strategy, job-specific information, and introduction to wider team and key stakeholders
- following probation procedure.

You will need to:

- plan a thorough timeline for your new starter before they arrive (use the checklists)
- Day one: Right to Work checklist, Employee Starter checklist, ID cards, Health and Safety form, email activation
- familiarise new starters with staff networks and support mechanisms within the university
- ensure they complete any forms
- schedule regular 1-2-1s to identify and resolve any issues
- document mid and end-of-meetings.

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is a change that helps remove or reduce a disadvantage that a team may experience at work due to a disability, health condition or other need. Providing reasonable adjustments is a legal requirement and an important part of creating an inclusive working environment.

Most adjustments are straightforward and can be agreed quickly through a conversation between you and your member of staff. This need may be flagged at the start of their employment or when the need arises. Team members do not need a formal diagnosis to have this conversation. If additional support is needed, you may wish to seek advice from your People Partner.

As a manager, you then need to ensure your member of staff records the adjustments in a workplace passport and that you check in to ensure they are helping every six months or so.
For more information and support, see our reasonable adjustments webpages.

3. Performance and objective setting

Your role is to manage performance based on outputs and results. This means having clarity of what the results should be, and a clear understanding of what inputs are necessary to get there.

You will need to:

- communicate a clear vision for your area, and how it links with wider Imperial strategy and individual objectives
- ensure you have a shared understanding of what needs to be achieved and what is expected
- have regular conversations about performance and provide feedback
- discuss implications of health and wellbeing on performance
- conduct (ARC) meetings with your direct reports
- role model and promote Imperial Values and Behaviours.

The role of managers in managing conflict

Conflict in a workplace is normal. When it occurs, it should be addressed quickly through early resolution, using facilitated conversations. Where early resolution hasn't worked, the Resolution Policy and Procedure aims to provide members of staff with a reasonable and prompt opportunity to resolve any complaints, and to secure constructive and lasting solutions to workplace conflict.

The role of managers in managing team workload

You can find out more about the role of managers in managing their staff's reasonable workload here.

Performance Improvement Policy

The Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure can be found here.
It applies to all staff except those in their probation period, and academic staff employed by the university. They are governed by the procedures set out in the Annexes to the Appendix to the Ordinances, which are available on the University Governance webpages.

Absences and leave

- Family leave
- Return to work checklist
- Risk Assessment for new mothers
- Special leave
- Sickness processes and your role: Return to Work meeting when a team member has been absent from work
- Guidance for Managers for staff Returning to Work from Family Leave.

4. Development

Development is a continuous process that enables employees to learn new skills, enhance their effectiveness, and progress their careers. Your role is to inspire, empower, and facilitate learning among all of your employees.

You will need to:

- conduct regular ARCs with your direct report to have a discussion about the key topics and actions that will help them to thrive at work
- document and agree on future work-related objectives as well as developmental objectives
- review progress, give feedback, and involve them in the discussions about their development.

You should consider:

- being mindful of equity of opportunity across your team and ensuring that all members get an equal chance to have a discussion about their development with you.
- your skill level to be able to conduct effective ARCs with your team.

Resources for your development:

- ARC Skills for Line Managers (online workshop) covers 3 areas: performance management conversations and feedback, wellbeing and support needs, and setting objectives and planning for development
- ARC Toolkit for guided reflections, question banks, video case studies, etc.

5. Leaving/exit

The leaving stage has implications for the individual, the team and the service/work itself. It has an impact on the present and can have consequences in the future. When individuals are preparing to leave Imperial, it is important that they are supported to do so in a positive way.

You will need to:

- acknowledge the contribution of the person leaving
- involve them in deciding how they would like to mark their leaving
- identify the impact on team workload, productivity and wellbeing
- plan and manage handover and future resource needs
- check relevant People Function pages on leaving employment
- manage the end of fixed-term contracts appropriately with support from Staff Hub.

Ensure leavers complete the confidential Leavers' Questionnaire to prevent overpayments and to help identifying trends in different experiences of working at the university, as well as areas for improvement.

Health, safety and wellbeing

Imperial is proud to take the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of its employees, students and partners seriously. The university is committed to building and promoting a healthy workplace for all. Health, safety and wellbeing encompass two important areas.

- Physical: a safe working environment, including compliance with safety regulations, policies and guidelines.
- Psychological: building a culture of trust and learning, where individuals feel psychologically safe with each other, feel supported by their manager and feel their work is meaningful and their contributions are valued.

Your role as a manager in facilitating and promoting psychological and physical health and wellbeing is critical.

Workplace wellbeing

The Workplace Stress and Wellbeing landing page sets out our institutional approach to workplace stress. It also defines the roles and responsibilities of individuals and managers, as well as signposting to support and resources.

Managing Workplace Stress contains the links to the workplace stress tools and when to use them.

Identify Your Work Stressors:

- tool for individuals to assess their own workplace stressors
- option for responses to be sent directly to their line manager
- automated emails triggered on submission to member of staff (and their manager, if selected).

Workplace Stress Risk Assessment and Support Plan:

- form to be completed by manager, with their member of staff, where a stress risk has been identified
- staff and manager receive a copy of the responses on submission of form.

Useful links

- Safety Department
- Safety training
- Health and Wellbeing pages
- Occupational Health pages
- Health Protection at Work

Additional policies you need to know

The People Function webpages have useful information, policies and guidance on all aspects of working at Imperial. You should ensure that you are familiar with the staff-related Policies and Procedures pages.

Change Management

One area where you need to provide appropriate support is in relation to managing change, particularly when staff are at risk of redundancy. You should be familiar with the Change Management Policy and Procedure and related guidance.
The responsibility for restructuring decisions rests with managers, although the People Partnering team will provide support with completing the Equality Impact Assessment. Those involved in managing the end of fixed-term contracts should read the guidance on Fixed Term Workers and ensure staff are prepared for the expiry of their fixed-term contracts, so there are no surprises.

Equity Pay Review process

The annual Achievement and Equity Pay Review processes enable managers to reward staff for exceptional contributions and achievements, and address any equal pay and internal benchmarking disparities within their areas.

Budgeting and finance

One aspect of your role is to manage your budget and resources effectively and to support your team in doing so. It is important that you are familiar with the financial responsibilities of your role. Budgets at Imperial are set in line with a financial year from 1 August through 31 July. Good budgeting requires you to clearly set out your plans and the associated cost of delivery. You must monitor actual spend against these budgets throughout the year. Here are the links to Finance pages.

Managing information

Information governance is concerned with protecting Imperial people and our technology devices from the malicious activities of others on the internet, and properly securing any information about you or others kept on Imperial systems. While everyone has a responsibility to keep information safe and secure, it is the manager's role to ensure that their teams are up to date and fully compliant with Imperial policies.
Here are the links to:

- Imperial Information Governance Policy Framework
- Data protection

Returning to work

Managers play a key role in helping staff feel welcomed, valued and supported when returning from a period of absence. You can familiarise yourself with the guidance and support available to you as a manager.

Sexual misconduct policy

Leaders and managers have a duty to familiarise themselves with the policy and are expected to ensure everyone is treated with equal respect and dignity. To encourage a culture of respect and speaking up, leaders and managers should be prepared to challenge inappropriate behaviours. All staff have to complete sexual harassment e-learning, and managers need to ensure their staff are compliant.

Developing your People Management capability

There are many leadership/management development opportunities available at Imperial. Some of the provision is generic – based on specific leadership/management competencies and available irrespective of job family or level of seniority. Other provisions focus on specific roles or grades, and availability may vary from year to year.

What training and support can I access?

What training do I need to attend?

1. Managers' Induction – Getting Started as People Manager at Imperial
2. Good Practice on Performance Management
3. ARC Skills (for Line Managers) | Staff

Available to all managers/team leaders

- Management and Leadership Development
- Managing Research Groups Imperial College London
- Thriving at Imperial
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Micro-Development for Staff and Managers
- Line Managers of Research Staff

Further training for line managers will be sent to you in the Line Managers' Newsletter

Available to senior leaders/managers (levels 6 and above)

- Heads of Department Onboarding Leadership Programme

Further support

People Partnering team

- Advises on change initiatives. Navigates and supports through complex People Function processes and employment relations issues.
- Early advice early prevents issues escalating.
- Serious concerns (grievances, disciplinaries).

Employee Relations and Policy team

- Manages formal procedures related to disciplinary and grievance issues. Advises People Function colleagues on policies and procedures, including those relating to restructuring and change management issues and redundancies.
- Publishes guidance and resources to support managers with implementing policies, procedures and best practice.
- Manages internal mediation service and takes forward facilitated conversations to resolve disputes informally.

Occupational Health team

- A specialist clinical team that provides medical advice, health surveillance and fitness-for-work assessments. It enables the organisation to meet its statutory responsibilities by supporting management of work-related health risks and supporting employees to remain in, or return to, work safely and effectively, especially if health problems may impact work.
- Also oversees the contract for the outsourced Employee Assistance Programme which provides free counselling for staff.

Staff Recruitment Hub

- End-to-end recruitment process support.
- Advertises and develops strategies to find the best candidates.
- Tools, templates and coordination support for shortlisting, interview planning and candidate communication.
- Assists with processing offers, approvals and issuing contracts.
- Ensures recruitment activity aligns with legal requirements, internal policy and best practice (eg fair and consistent selection).
- Supports and guides on how to use our Applicant Tracker System.
- Ongoing support via the Recruitment Hub for queries, issues and process navigation.

Staff Immigration and Compliance

The Staff Compliance team processes requests and responds to emails based on the request/case urgency level and the date of receipt.
Urgency level will be based upon factors such as:

- employee/candidate current UK visa expiry date
- proposed employment start date or date of contract change request
- eligibility for preferred visa routes, where there is a time factor
- individual circumstances.

International Mobility team

- Responsible for managing all overseas working requests and arrangements for staff.
- Core function is to facilitate legally compliant overseas working arrangements.
- Provides advice and guidance about all types of overseas working plans.
- Answers questions that colleagues or departments may have about facilitating staff working overseas.

Temporary Worker Services team

- Manages the casual worker lifecycle: onboarding, managing the timesheet app and offboarding the team (does not manage the recruitment of temporary staff).
- Provides support for queries on policy and procedure, immigration and compliance, and payroll about temporary workers.
- Manages the set-up, extensions and endings of Honorary and Visiting Researcher associations.

Talent and Culture team

- Professional Growth: offers tailored learning and leadership development.
- Thriving at Imperial: provides support and resources for health, wellbeing, engagement and an inclusive work environment.
- Driving potential and performance: frameworks and guidance to manage performance, develop talents and advance career.

Empowering people, enabling impact

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imperial.ac.uk/human-resources