

# IMPERIAL

**Faculty of Engineering**

**Department of Computing**



## Student Handbook 2025–26

# Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome to Imperial .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	Our Principles.....	5
	Doctoral Proposition .....	6
	Mutual Expectations for the Research Degree Student Supervisor Partnership .....	6
	Cornerstone .....	7
	Welcome from the Early Career Researcher Institute .....	8
	Introduction from the President of Imperial College Union .....	9
	Key dates 2025–26 .....	10
	My Imperial Campus .....	11
	Imperial Success Guide.....	12
	Student Shapers .....	13
	Imperial Award .....	13
<b>2.</b>	<b>Location and facilities .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Introduction to the Department.....</b>	<b>17</b>
	Welcome from the Programme Director .....	17
	Welcome from PGR Student Representative.....	17
	Academic and administrative staff .....	18
	Departmental Information .....	18
<b>4.</b>	<b>Department Procedures .....</b>	<b>19</b>
	Departmental Induction .....	19
	Conferences.....	19
	Processing your Expenses Claims .....	20
	Professional Skills.....	20
	Research Approvals.....	20
	Attendance and Absence .....	21
	Term-time and Home Addresses.....	21
	Mail.....	21
	Stationery.....	22
	Identity Cards .....	22
	Out of Hours Access .....	22
	Health and Safety Information .....	22
	Imperial Safety Department .....	24
	Occupational Health requirements.....	25
<b>5.</b>	<b>Doctoral Milestones and Progress Reports.....</b>	<b>26</b>

	Formal milestones .....	26
<b>6.</b>	<b>Academic Support.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Examination Procedures .....</b>	<b>34</b>
	My Imperial - Postgraduate Research Milestones .....	34
	Viva .....	34
	E-theses: Requesting an Embargo .....	35
	Plagiarism.....	35
	Collusion .....	36
	Dishonest practice .....	36
	Research Misconduct .....	36
<b>8.</b>	<b>University Policies and Procedures .....</b>	<b>38</b>
	Academic Regulations .....	38
	Unsatisfactory Engagement .....	38
	Fitness to Study .....	38
	Academic and Research Integrity.....	38
	Academic Appeals Procedures .....	39
	Student Complaints.....	39
	Student Disciplinary Procedure.....	39
	Protecting our students from incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct.....	40
	Copyright .....	40
	Use of IT Facilities.....	41
	Employment During Studies .....	41
	Study Leave.....	42
	Ethics.....	42
	Good Research Conduct .....	42
	Leave.....	43
	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) .....	44
	Your Union.....	44
	Student Support Zone .....	45
	Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors .....	45
	Coaching and Research Degree Mediation .....	46
	Advice Services .....	46
	Health Services .....	48
	Disability Support .....	49
	Library and IT .....	50
	Religious Support .....	51
	Support for International Students .....	51
<b>9.</b>	<b>Student Administration.....</b>	<b>52</b>

<b>10.</b>	<b>Work-life balance .....</b>	<b>53</b>
	Imperial College Union .....	53
	Move Imperial .....	53
<b>11.</b>	<b>Student feedback and representation .....</b>	<b>53</b>
	Student representation .....	53
	Staff-Student Committee .....	54
<b>12.</b>	<b>Student Surveys.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Professional Development Opportunities for Research Degree Students .....</b>	<b>56</b>
	Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA) .....	56
	Imperial Outreach.....	56
	Professional Skills Development Programme .....	57
<b>14.</b>	<b>And finally .....</b>	<b>58</b>
	Alumni services and benefits .....	58
	Opportunities for further study.....	58

## **1. Welcome to Imperial**

Congratulations on joining Imperial College London, the only university in the UK to focus exclusively on science, medicine, engineering and business.

From Fleming's discovery of Penicillin to Gabor's invention of holography, Imperial has been changing the world for well over 100 years.

You're now very much a part of this community of discovery and we hope you will take this opportunity to make your own unique contribution. At Imperial, we expect all members of our community, whether students or staff, to share and demonstrate our values of respect, integrity, collaboration, innovation and excellence in all we do and strive to achieve.

Imperial provides a dedicated support network and a range of specialist support services to make sure you have access to the appropriate help, whether that's further training in an academic skill like writing your literature review or simply having someone to talk to.

You'll have access to an innovative range of professional development courses by the Early Career Researcher Institute, the Careers Service, Library Services and other support services teams throughout your time here, as well as opportunities to meet students from across the university at academic and social events.

We actively encourage you to seek out help when you need it and try to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Our choice of over 360 clubs, societies and projects is one of the largest of any UK university, making it easy to do something different with your downtime.

As one of the best universities in the world, we are committed to inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers, clinicians and business leaders by continuing to share the wonder of what we do through public engagement events. Postgraduate students, alongside our academics and undergraduate students, make a significant contribution to events such as our annual Imperial Festival and our term-time Imperial Fringe events – if you're interested in getting involved then there will be opportunities for you to do so.

## Our Principles

In 2012 Imperial and Imperial College Union agreed 'Our Principles'. This series of commitments was developed by academic and support staff in partnership with undergraduate and postgraduate students and Imperial College Union.

### **Imperial will provide through its staff:**

- A world-class education embedded in a research environment.
- Advice, guidance and support.
- The opportunity for students to contribute to the evaluation and development of programmes and services.

### **Imperial will provide students with:**

- Clear programme information and assessment criteria.
- Clear and fair academic regulations, policies and procedures.
- Details of full programme costs and financial support.
- An appropriate and inclusive framework for study, learning and research.

### **Imperial students should:**

- Take responsibility for managing their own learning.
- Engage with the university to review and enhance provision.
- Respect, and contribute to, the Imperial community.

### **The Imperial College Students' Union will:**

- Support all students through the provision of independent academic and welfare assistance.
- Encourage student participation in all aspects of the university.
- Provide a range of clubs, societies, student-led projects and social activities throughout the year.
- Represent the interests of students at local, national and international level.

## Doctoral Proposition

### Imperial will:

#### **Provide a world-class research programme**

- focused on performing cutting-edge research that makes a significant contribution to the knowledge base
- throughout which internationally-acclaimed academics support, inspire and challenge you as you develop into an independent researcher
- in a vibrant and diverse community united by the aims of advancing the frontiers of science, technology, medicine and business, and addressing key economic and societal challenges

#### **Provide innovative and effective professional development**

- equipping you with skills to increase your research and personal effectiveness
- that gives you an insight into a wide range of career opportunities
- helping to ensure that you have the necessary attributes to excel in your chosen career

#### **Deliver outstanding networking opportunities**

- providing access to the elite international research community
- that arise from our extensive engagement with industry and business
- by organising a wide range of interdisciplinary meetings and social events within the university

#### **Offer life-long membership of the Imperial community**

- supporting you as a student and afterwards as an alumna/us
- enabling you to share your professional advice and experience with future students



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/doctoral-proposition/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/doctoral-proposition/)

## Mutual Expectations for the Research Degree Student Supervisor Partnership

The Early Career Researcher Institute has worked with students and staff to produce a list of minimum expectations that students and supervisors can expect from each other, “our mutual expectations”. It is designed to facilitate conversations to establish effective partnerships and Imperial requires that the document is discussed at the first meeting between a main supervisor and a new student, plus at regular intervals thereafter. It also brings to light the Imperial Values, which students and supervisors should embed in the way they work together. This is a key document, so make it a priority to discuss with your supervisor.



[//bb.imperial.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/xid-11805857\\_1](http://bb.imperial.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/xid-11805857_1)

## Cornerstone

In April 2022 the Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI) launched the Cornerstone programme. This dedicated umbrella support and development programme helps Imperial's doctoral supervisors better support and guide their students throughout the PhD journey. Cornerstone was developed by experts from across Imperial in partnership with doctoral students. The programme includes mandatory training for all new and experienced supervisors, as well as optional continuing professional development workshops. Cornerstone is a continually evolving provision and the Early Career Researcher Institute welcomes feedback from supervisors and students – please contact ECRI directly if you have any suggestions.



[ecri@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ecri@imperial.ac.uk)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/cornerstone/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/cornerstone/)



## Welcome from the Early Career Researcher Institute

### Welcome to Imperial and to the Early Career Researcher Institute!

The Early Career Researcher Institute works closely with Imperial College Union to enhance your experience and to ensure that when decisions are being made which affect your time at the university, your voice is heard.

Another important aspect of our role is to provide you with a free and exciting programme of professional development opportunities, delivered through a range of modes, so you can access these wherever you are in the world.

Our staff have a variety of research and other career experiences. Our professional development opportunities are designed to support you as you progress through your programme, but also to help you improve your personal impact, and be prepared for your chosen career, whether that is within academia, industry, government or something completely different!

Importantly, by attending our courses and workshops, you will meet students from other academic departments, enabling you to start building your research connections. We also deliver exciting competitions throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge as well as to have some fun!

Our primary way to communicate with you will be through our e-newsletter and our professional skills email bulletins. However, do check our website, blog and social media platforms to keep up to date with all the latest activities available to you.

Finally, Imperial is an extremely exciting, stimulating and diverse environment in which to work, to study and to research. Do make the most of all that the university and your programme has to offer.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/)

## Introduction from the President of Imperial College Union



Welcome to Imperial! To begin with, a huge congratulations on joining us here at Imperial– this is where you belong! This is a globally renowned institution and offers much more than just the degree you are looking to leave with. You will come across countless opportunities and meet an array of compelling people amongst your peers, accomplished academics and the wider university community. Imperial attracts the best talent from around the world - making it here is already a testament to your academic zeal and ambitious character. Now, what you make of your experience at Imperial has the potential to shape your future.

Being located in London is a true perk of being an Imperial student. Right on our west London doorstep are landmark museums and iconic venues, including the Royal Albert Hall which has hosted Imperial graduations for over 60 years. Beyond our campuses, the city has something for everyone; be that the West End, sporting arenas or diverse cuisines. I strongly encourage you to explore where and when you can – London is a fantastic place for your university memories to call home.

You will likely have chosen to come to Imperial for its academic reputation as an outstanding university, and it will deliver on this. The facilities for research and your learning are terrific. To accompany this, there are hundreds of student-led societies and events available to you outside of your degree. These are overseen by your students' union – Imperial College Union. The Union is led by students, for students. The three deputy presidents and I have all been democratically elected to work full time on improving your student experience at Imperial. We have a large team of permanent staff behind us, running the many functions of the Union such as supporting clubs and training student representatives.

The Union also runs the Advice Service, where guidance and support can be provided on issues such as life in halls, complaints, and academic appeals. This is a free and confidential service that is independent from the university. You can access this by emailing [advice@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:advice@imperial.ac.uk).

University is a new stage of life. For many, this stage presents itself with newfound freedom and control over what you do. As daunting as it may seem, take advantage of it! Immerse yourself in your degree, your extra-curricular activities and in the connections you make.

No matter what problems you have or opportunities you're looking for, we're here to help. Our office is on Level 2 in Beit Quadrangle, and you can check out our website for more information.

Wishing you an incredible year ahead,

Nico Henry, Imperial College Union President 2025-26



[union.president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:union.president@imperial.ac.uk)



[imperialcollegeunion.org](http://imperialcollegeunion.org)

## Key dates 2025–26

### Term dates

Autumn term:	27 September 2025 – 12 December 2025
Spring term:	03 January 2026 - 20 March 2026
Summer term:	25 April 2026 – 26 June 2026

### Closure dates

Christmas/New Year:	23 December 2025 - 02 January 2026 (Imperial reopens on 05 January 2026)
Easter Holiday:	02 April 2026 – 07 April 2026 (Imperial reopens on 08 April 2026)
Early May Bank Holiday:	04 May 2026
Spring Bank Holiday:	25 May 2026
Summer Bank Holiday:	31 August 2026

## My Imperial Campus

An app for students - designed by students!

My Imperial Campus is the beginning of a new mobile experience for the Imperial community.

Built by students and alumni, the ambition is for the app to reflect the real needs and ideas of the people who use it every day. We're developing it iteratively, constantly learning from our community and evolving the features that help all of us succeed at Imperial.

This is just the beginning. The app is still growing, and we're adding new functionality all the time—so download it, explore what's already there, and keep an eye out for updates and chances to get involved.

Available now on the **App Store** and **Google Play**.

### What we've built so far:

#### **Search & AI Chatbot**

Chat with an in-app assistant that pulls information from within the app, across the university's website and resources—delivering quick answers when you need them.

#### **Maps**

Explore 2D maps of all campuses, plus immersive 3D maps of South Kensington and White City. See services, navigate buildings, and find your way around campus with ease.

#### **Events**

Discover what's on across Imperial—from public lectures to Union events and society meetups. Set your preferences in Settings to tailor your feed, or use the *Welcome Week* filter to see what's lined up for new students.

#### **Timetable & Check-In**

If your department requires check-in, just use the app to register your attendance when you're on site. You'll also find a quick link to your full timetable in the browser.

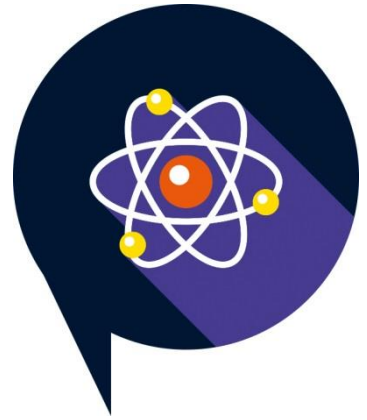
#### **Your Career**

Browse the latest internships and job opportunities from the Careers Service—updated regularly to keep you connected with what's new.

## Imperial Success Guide

The Imperial Success Guide is an online resource with advice and tips on the transition to university level study. More than just a study guide, it is packed with advice created especially for Doctoral students, including information on support, health and well-being and ideas to help you make the most of London.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/)



## Student Shapers

Student Shapers is a chance to actively contribute to improving your learning experience at Imperial. This programme lets you work directly with staff on exciting projects that enhance the curriculum, create innovative teaching methods, and make a real difference in our learning community. The Student Shapers programme is open to all Imperial students across all Departments. All opportunities that have been approved are listed in the 'Current Projects' area of the website.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/studentshapers/how-to-get-involved/current-projects/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/studentshapers/how-to-get-involved/current-projects/)

## Imperial Award

The Imperial Award is a programme that fosters personal development through self-reflection on your experiences, formally recognising this on your transcript. This programme is open to all students at Imperial, including UG, PGT, PGR and intercalating students. The Imperial Award aims to help you uncover more about yourself and your potential, and to enhance your ability to articulate the achievements and skills you have developed through activities beyond the lecture hall. For more information, please visit the Imperial Award page.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/imperial-award/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/imperial-award/)

## 2. Location and facilities

Imperial has a number of campuses in London and the South-East. All have excellent travel links and are easily accessible via public transport.

Your main location of study will be:

South Kensington

180 Queens Gate

London SW7 2AZ

### Facilities

The Department's postgraduate office is located at Huxley room 436

If you notice any facility defects or maintenance issues, please contact the Customer Services Centre (CSC):



[www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/customer-services-centre/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/customer-services-centre/)

### Library Services

The Abdus Salam Library at South Kensington is open 24 hours for study space, and further space is available to all students in GoStudy on levels 4 and 5 of the Chemistry Building.

Make sure you find out who your subject librarian is as they'll be able to help you find books and online resources for your assignments. Also, don't forget to check out the library's skills support and other campus libraries for access to specialist medicine and life sciences resources. You can borrow up to 40 books and, whether you're working on or off site, you'll be able to access e-books, e-journals and databases from their collection of over 637,000 titles. If they don't have what you need, they can get it for you, simply ask them to buy it or request a copy through their free Document Delivery service.

For any questions library staff will be happy to help, simply chat with them online or contact them via email, phone or social media, just check the website for details:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/library](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/library)

### Shuttle bus

A free shuttle bus runs between our South Kensington, White City and Hammersmith Campuses on weekdays. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. You need to show your Imperial ID card to board. You can download the timetable and check the latest service updates at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/travel/shuttle-bus](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/travel/shuttle-bus)

### Maps

Campus maps and travel directions are available at:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses)

### **Accessibility**

Information about the accessibility of our South Kensington Campus is available online through the AccessAble access guides:

 [www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/imperial-college-london](http://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/imperial-college-london)

### **Smoke-Free Policy**

All Imperial campuses and properties are smoke-free. This means that smoking and the use of e-cigarettes, including vapes, by staff, students or visitors is not permitted on or within 20 metres of Imperial. The policy covers all university properties, including student accommodation and sports grounds.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/smoke-free](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/smoke-free)

### **Security and Community Safety team**

The Security and Community Safety team are here to help and support you 24/7. Our priority is protecting our students, staff and visitors from harm and making sure that the campus is a safe, welcoming and inclusive space.

How our team can help you:

- Assist in an emergency
- Deliver first aid
- Offer advice on personal safety
- Provide high-quality D-locks
- Issue ID cards
- Lost and found
- Signpost to mental health support

How can you contact us?

In case of an emergency, contact us through the SafeZone app (more below)

If you need to speak with us in-person, our Security and Community Safety Hub for all enquiries, parking requirements, and services including lost property and bike security is located at:

- Chemistry Building, Level 1, Room 171A (Use Chemistry 2 Main Entrance)
- Open Monday–Friday, 8am–4pm. Visit Wells Way Cabin (Located behind the Abdus Salam Library and Sherfield) for out-of-hours enquiries.

Our ID Card Services Office is located at:

- Sir Alexander Fleming Building G53



## **SafeZone**

SafeZone is an Imperial app through which you can quickly and directly contact the Security and Safety team whenever you need them. Whether you're in an emergency situation, in need of First Aid or want to report an incident on campus, SafeZone allows you to be immediately put in touch with a member of our Security and Community Safety team and, at the touch of a button, can share your location and personal profile so that they can respond quickly and effectively to your specific needs. It also allows the entire Imperial community to stay informed in the event of a major incident in London or wherever you may be in the world. Safezone also provides information on other services, such as real-time updates on the university shuttle bus.



SafeZone is optional to register for and is now available to download on the Apple and Android App stores. Visit [www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/security/safezone/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/security/safezone/) for more details about SafeZone.

All existing phone numbers for the Security and Community Safety team are still operational. In the event of an emergency, you can still call 4444 from any internal College phone.

### 3. Introduction to the Department

#### Welcome from the Programme Director



Welcome you to the Department of Computing. We look forward to your embarking on this important research journey with us. Doing a PhD is a unique experience which transforms you to becoming an expert in your subject matter. It's also an opportunity to work with other experts in the area and to develop a range of transferrable skills. We are here to help you make the best out of your studies.

The Department of Computing has been home to exceptional talent over the years. It was ranked first in the UK's most recent REF (2021) for its research. We take pride in providing a stimulating research environment for our students, and in supporting them deliver impactful research and achieve their career aims. We host a series of events for our PhD students including student conferences, research seminars, networking events, competitions, and many more throughout the year.

This guide is intended to provide a brief introduction to the department and to provide some guidance on what to expect and how best to prepare for your start. Detailed arrangements are subject to change, so please stay tuned to announcements made by the College Registry and Graduate School.

For the latest information on departmental matters, please visit the Department's PhD web page:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/current-students/phd-info/phdmatters/>

We look forward to having you.

Dr Dario Paccagan

#### Welcome from PGR Student Representative

Welcome to the Department of Computing and congratulations on starting your PhD!

We are your Representatives, so please get in touch if you need anything 😊

Nikolai Rozanov [nikolai.rozanov13@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:nikolai.rozanov13@imperial.ac.uk)

Emmanuel Akinrintoyo [e.akinrintoyo23@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:e.akinrintoyo23@imperial.ac.uk)

Amber Gorzynski [amber.gorzynski22@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:amber.gorzynski22@imperial.ac.uk)

We have a Slack channel, and you are more than welcome to join:

[https://join.slack.com/t/iclcomputingphds/shared\\_invite/zt-okpi29qv-Mr2oN0ZF0Z7rjT3mHlcqsA](https://join.slack.com/t/iclcomputingphds/shared_invite/zt-okpi29qv-Mr2oN0ZF0Z7rjT3mHlcqsA)

## Academic and administrative staff



Prof. Paul Kelly



[p.kelly@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:p.kelly@imperial.ac.uk)

Senior PG Tutor



Dr Amani El-Kholy



Huxley room 436

PhD and MRes program officer



02075948220



[aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk)



Professor Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye



[demontjoye@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:demontjoye@imperial.ac.uk)

First year PhD Mentor



Dr. Pedro Mediano



[p.mediano@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:p.mediano@imperial.ac.uk)

Deputy Senior Tutor



Dr Konstantinos Gkoutzis



[k.gkoutzis@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:k.gkoutzis@imperial.ac.uk)

GTA coordinator

## Departmental Information

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/current-students/phd-info/>

## 4. Department Procedures

### Departmental Induction

During the first week of your PhD course various induction events are run within the department. These include:

- Welcome meeting run by the PhD Programme Administrator (Dr Amani El-Kholy) who will introduce you and give you the relative information on the main administrative tasks that you are required to do at the start of your PhD, such as to attend the safety induction session.
- Welcome talk by the Director of Postgraduate Research (Dr Dario Paccagnan) who will introduce you to the relevant aspects of your PhD course at Imperial, useful links and milestone schedule. This talk may also be attended by the PhD Admission Tutor, PhD Senior Tutor and 1st year PhD mentor who you will have the pleasure to meet and talk to after the presentation
- Presentation by the librarian Ann-Emily Brew, and the head of the Graduate School Professional Skill Development Programme.

Information of the day, time and location of these events is provided to you as part of your welcome pack.

### Conferences

The Department sets aside some funds specifically for the support of research student travel, with priority given to students who are *presenting papers* at international conferences and workshops. These funds are not for RAs, who are employees of the College, nor for students on Interruption of Studies.

At the time of writing each PhD student in the Department can expect to receive travel and consumables funding of up to £4000 from the PhD Fund over the course of his or her PhD studies, that is, from the date of initial registration until they stop paying fees. We expect students to make best use of these travel funds throughout the four years of their PhD. Purchase of small consumables can be authorized by the Senior Tutor on a per case bases; authorization must be obtained before any purchase and should be supported by the student's supervisor.

Approval for a trip must be obtained before the trip by submitting a completed Travel Request form to the PhD Programme Administrator. The form can be found at the departmental [PhD Matters](#) webpage.

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/current-students/phd-info/phdmatters/>

You must ensure that you have your supervisor's approval and signature on the form. To avoid delays, ensure that all details asked for on the form are supplied in full, together with brief justifications for all major items. The Postgraduate Tutor will approve the maximum amount that may be claimed. The approved amount may be lowered if items on the claim are excessive or inappropriate. If the trip amount exceeds the allowable limit set by the PhD Tutor, the student will need to ask the supervisor if they are willing to cover the additional costs.

After the trip, complete a College expense claim form, available from the PhD Programme Administrator, and submit this together with the approved Travel Request form and all receipts to the Departmental Accounts Officer via the Claims box in the post room. You will have to supply receipts for all items of expenditure. Note that the College imposes strict limits on travel expense claims. See College Expenses Policy Website:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/finance/financial-services/expenses>

## Processing your Expenses Claims

It is important that you familiarise yourself with Imperial's [Expenses Policy](#). After you have incurred an expense, your claim should be submitted as soon as possible to your department. Unless otherwise stated by your department, all claims should be submitted within 3 months but not later than 6 months. If your claim is submitted beyond 6 months, it is likely to be rejected and you will not be reimbursed.

## Professional Skills

All doctoral students are expected to achieve a minimum of four Early Career Researcher Institute professional skills credits and to complete the compulsory online plagiarism awareness course as follows:

- By the Early-Stage Assessment (ESA) – 2 credits plus the plagiarism awareness online course
- By the Late-Stage Review (LSR) – a further 2 credits

The Early Career Researcher Institute's Professional Development attendance requirement exists to ensure that all students receive a broad range of skills development training while at Imperial and the opportunity to engage with students from outside their department.

## Research Approvals

One claim during the PhD studies can be for a training trip, which is attendance at a conference, summer school, or similar event at which you are not presenting a paper. Trips to conferences of dubious standing will not be approved. You must supply a justification for the proposed trip and include signed approval from your supervisor. Short one-day trips within the UK, for example to attend a lecture at another institution, can be supported and will not count as training trips.

In order to allow the Department to support as many student trips as possible, PhD students are expected to minimise costs, for example:

- to use travel funds on Scholarships, Studentships or research grants where possible in preference to Departmental travel funds;
- to make sure they register as students when possible;
- to offer to work as a student volunteer (some conferences pay students to help with the running of the conference);
- to use public transport and not taxis when possible and safe;
- to use cheap/discount flights when possible and to book well in advance;
- to consider more hotels than just the conference hotel;
- to share a room with others if possible;
- to use cheap poster printing services: e.g. at the time of writing, an A1 poster at <https://www.pwauk.com> costs about £26 inc. delivery with a student/academic discount. You can also request to print the poster internally through Imperial College service point, contact your research group secretary or Amani for more details

You cannot claim for personal travel insurance. The College's travel insurance policy covers students of the College whilst abroad on College business. College business is deemed to include (but is not limited to) visits to overseas universities and other academic institutions, attendance at scholarly conferences and research meetings, visits to overseas laboratories and industrial plants in connection with College research projects or teaching duties, field trips and sporting visits as representatives of the College. The policy does not apply to private holidays. For details and additional advice and exclusions see:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/finance/financial-services/insurance>

Funding for other items, such as specialist books, small items of equipment, software and other services, may also be provided if they cannot be provided by your supervisor. Please submit enquiries to the PhD Programme Administrator in the first instance.

## **Attendance and Absence**

All PhD students are expected to be on campus during their studies. You must inform your supervisor if you are absent from the university for more than three days. If the absence is due to illness you must produce a medical certificate after seven consecutive days. You should also contact your supervisor for support and guidance if your research is being impacted by personal circumstances. This may include making a submission deadline extension request.

Postgraduate Research students undertaking taught elements of a doctoral programme of study should also refer to the Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/)

The Registry will be informed of all student non-attendances as the university is obliged to report the non-attendance of students on Student Route visas to the Home Office.

All funded students are advised to check the terms and conditions of their studentship which will set out their annual leave entitlement. Unless otherwise stated in these terms and conditions, the College's position is that all research degree students, including international students with a Student Visa, are entitled to a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 40 days per year (including public holidays and College closure days) of annual leave (pro rata for part-time students).

If you do not engage satisfactorily with your studies, Imperial will consider what action is necessary to support your continued study under the Unsatisfactory Engagement Policy and Procedure.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline)

## **Term-time and Home Addresses**

Students must provide both their term-time and home addresses upon registration at the start of each academic session. It is essential that any subsequent changes of address are notified to both the Registry and the Department's PhD Programme Administrator immediately. Change of address forms are available from the PhD Programme Administrator.

## **Mail**

You will be given a personal email account. You are expected to check your email every day. This is the normal means of communicating with your supervisor informing you of changes to the PhD programme, deadlines etc.

Research students' mail is put in pigeonholes in Room 440 (opposite the Department General Office). All student mail should be addressed as follows:

Student's Name

PhD student or Research Assistant — whichever is applicable

Department of Computing

Huxley Building, Imperial College London

180 Queens Gate

London SW7 2RH

The address MUST contain the designation 'PhD Student' (or 'Research Assistant') otherwise post may be delivered to the wrong pigeonholes. Students should check their pigeon holes daily.

## Stationery

You can get a variety of stationery items such as paper and pens from the Department General Office (room 436).

## Identity Cards

Everyone in the Department is required to have an ID card. Photographs for the cards are taken by the College Security Section. Please enquire at the Department General Office for details. The ID cards are also used to access printers and photocopiers, and other facilities. You will also need to have your ID card before you can use the College library.

## Out of Hours Access

Normal College hours are between 08.30 and 18.00, Monday to Friday. The times outside these hours are known as 'out of hours' periods. Students are permitted to work (not eat, play or sleep!!) in some parts of the Huxley Building for parts of the out of hours periods. Entry to the building will not be permitted after 22.00 and all students must leave the building by 23.00. The building opens at 05.00 in the morning. All students must carry their ID card to be allowed out of hours access. The Security Guards hold lists of student names showing for which rooms and times out of hours access is permitted.

When using the Huxley Building out of hours, you must:

- carry your ID card at all times,
- show your ID card to the Security Guard or other members of College staff on request,
- complete the attendance register at the Security Desk on level 2 when you enter the Huxley Building (or at 18.00 if you are already in) and complete it again when you leave.

## Health and Safety Information

Keeping you safe is a top priority for us. Each student is responsible for looking after their own health and safety and that of others affected by their College-related work and leisure activities. To this end, each student must:

- Comply with all local and College policies, procedures and codes of practice and with the arrangements which the College has in place to control health and safety risks.
- Ensure that their activities do not present unnecessary or uncontrolled risks to themselves or to others.
- Attend appropriate induction and training.
- Report any accidents, unsafe circumstances or work-related ill health of which they become aware to the appropriate person.
- Not interfere with any equipment provided for Health and Safety.
- Where a student is not confident that he or she is competent to carry out a work or leisure activity safely, inform his or her supervisor or the person in charge of the activity rather than compromise his or her own safety or the safety of others.

### **First Aid**

In the event of an accident or sudden illness, call a first aider. The location of the nearest first aider is shown on green notices on each floor. Alternatively, you can contact the College Health Service on extension 49400 during normal hours (Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 17.00, except when the College is closed). Give emergency details. If this fails dial 4444 and ask for an ambulance.

### **Fire Alarm Signals**

The GENERAL ALARM signal is a continuous ringing of the fire alarm bells. This is a signal that the Huxley Building should be evacuated immediately.

### **Evacuation Procedure**

- Act quietly. Use the nearest available exit — indicated by green 'Fire Exit' signs.
- Do not use the lifts.
- On leaving the building keep clear of the exits to avoid impeding the Fire Brigade. Report to the assembly point, which is outside the main entrance in Queen's Gate, but well away from the entrance. Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.

If you discover a fire

- Give the alarm immediately by breaking the glass in a corridor or room fire alarm. This will sound the alert signal. If you are unable to set off an alarm ring 4444 (four-digit emergency number). If you hear talking on the line decide whether the same emergency is being reported; if not, interrupt with details of the emergency.
- Try to extinguish the fire by using the nearest extinguisher or hose reel but do not take any personal risks.
- Shut all doors, and if possible, the windows, of the room in which the fire is discovered. This will prevent draughts and reduce the risk of the fire spreading.
- Telephone the Messenger/Security Guard (58907 or 4444) or go to the main entrance and give him/her the details. The Messenger/Security Guard will call the Fire Brigade to the Huxley Building.

### **Escape Routes from the Huxley Building**

Green 'Fire Escape' signs posted in the building mark escape routes. These are not always at the bottom of the stairwells. (For instance, it is necessary to exit at level 2 for the main stairs in the Huxley Building.) It is important that you are aware of the escape routes near the place you are working. Check these whenever you move your workplace, before any emergency occurs.



Remember NOT to use lifts in emergencies — the power may be cut off abruptly. In addition, short circuits can cause lifts to stop at the level of a fire.

### Fire Wardens

There are Department of Computing Fire Wardens on levels 2, 3, 4 and 5. When an ALERT signal sounds it is the duty of the Fire Warden to check their area, and then take action as described above. When the GENERAL ALARM sounds, it is the duty of the Fire Warden to ensure that the area for which they are responsible is vacated and that all persons in the area make their way out of the building by the nearest escape route. In level 1 lecture theatres the lecturer has the responsibility of the fire warden.

If a Fire Warden instructs you to evacuate, you should follow their instructions quickly and quietly, even if there is no other warning.

### Fire Drills

From time to time a fire drill will be organised. Please follow the standard procedures for evacuating the building.

### Bomb Warnings

In the event of a bomb warning, the evacuation signal may or may not be used. Security staff will have been alerted to ensure that sensible exit routes are used, and you should follow their instructions. You are advised to stay clear of the campus for at least one hour after the alarm. Any assembly point could itself be the location of the bomb.

The Imperial Health and Safety Statement can be found at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/safety-management/health-and-safety-policy-statement/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/safety-management/health-and-safety-policy-statement/)

### Your Departmental safety contactYour Departmental safety contact is:

Mr. Michael Ward



Room 435 Huxely



[michael.ward@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:michael.ward@imperial.ac.uk)

There is also a wide range of [eLearning micro-learning modules](#) focused on specialised topics and designed to raise awareness of hazards and control measures for working safely in hazardous areas (i.e., laboratories and workshops) across the university.

### Imperial Safety Department

The [Safety Department](#) offers a range of [specialist advice](#) on all aspects of safety. This includes anything which you feel might affect you directly, or which may be associated with teaching, research or support service activities.

The Imperial's activities range from the use of hazardous materials ([biological agents](#), [chemicals](#), [cryogenes](#), [gases](#) and [ionising/non-ionising radiation](#)) to field work, heavy or awkward lifting, driving, and working alone or late.

All of Imperial's activities are covered by general health and safety regulations, but higher risk activities will have additional requirements.

The Safety Department helps departments and individuals ensure effective safety management systems are in place throughout the university to comply with specific legal requirements.

Sometimes the management systems fail, and an accident or a near-miss incident arises; it is important that we learn lessons from such situations to prevent recurrence and the Safety Department can support such investigations. All accidents and incidents should be reported online at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/accidents--incidents/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/accidents--incidents/)

To report concerns or to ask for advice you should contact your programme director, academic supervisor or departmental safety officer in the first instance. You may also contact the [Safety Department](#) directly.

Michael Ward [michael.ward@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:michael.ward@imperial.ac.uk)

## **Occupational Health requirements**

Imperial's Occupational Health Service provides services to:

- protect health at work
- assess and advise on fitness for work
- ensure that health issues are effectively managed

The Service promotes and supports a culture where the physical and psychological health of staff, students and others involved in the university is respected, protected and improved whilst at work.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health)

## 5. Doctoral Milestones and Progress Reports

It is difficult to set out a fixed timetable for PhD work as there are so many variables and variations but, however it is structured, it is essential that some planned programme of work is followed. Failure to complete a PhD is often not due to lack of talent, but more to do with a failure to plan work sensibly and tackle the more mundane activities, such as writing up.

The College and the Department impose certain formal milestones, which are outlined here. The Department strongly advises students to plan for completion of the PhD by month 36. If you are worried about your progress, talk to your supervisors, mentor or the Postgraduate Tutor.

Here is general outline:

### Year 1

- Familiarisation with the research area, reading papers, identifying problem areas, formulating tentative solutions/advances.
- At the end of your first year, you should have identified quite closely the area you wish to work in and have developed some ideas on which your thesis could be based.

### Year 2

- Carrying out the bulk of your research or innovative work. Developing solutions, establishing primary results, writing implementations or applications. Drafting substantial parts of your thesis.
- By the middle of your second year, you should know what your thesis will contain. You should be able to draw up a realistic plan for the remaining time, and demonstrate that you can complete everything, including writing up, by the end of your third year.

### Year 3

- Completing your research and writing up. Even if you have been very successful in accumulating material the final production of your thesis is going to need at least four months of dedicated effort.
- Writing up your thesis is a substantial task. It always takes longer than you imagine and can be a daunting and depressing activity if you leave it all to the last moment. It is vitally important that you get into the habit of writing things down as you go along. This will help to clarify and communicate your ideas and build up a file of material that can be incorporated into your final thesis. If you enter the third year without such a source your chances of successfully writing up are very low. You will find that once you start to try and write down ideas you thought were fully worked out, clarification or expansion is required; the sooner you discover this the better.

[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/research-programmes/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/research-programmes/)

## Formal milestones

Besides wanting all research students to obtain the maximum benefit from their studies, the Department and the College come under considerable external pressure to ensure that PhDs are completed in their allotted time. For these and many other reasons there is a formal review procedure and deadlines for all research students. The deadlines are listed below.

### Registration

All students are registered for the PhD degree from the start.

## Research Plan Confirmation

PhD students are required by the Department of Computing to complete a Research Plan Confirmation (RPC) by 3 months for full-time students, and at 6 months for part-time students. This is a departmental milestone submitted via <https://scientia.doc.ic.ac.uk/>.

The RPC report aims to ensure that you and your supervisor are engaging in a coherent programme of work and allows the Postgraduate Tutor and primary year Mentor to monitor your initial period of study. You will be provided with an opportunity to have a meeting with the Postgraduate Tutor or 1st year Mentor.

In summary, the following is a list of what you must include in the RPC:

- title of your research topic
- name of your primary supervisor (and second supervisor optional)
- short abstract of the research topic
- list of key literature papers
- signature of your primary supervisor

## Early-Stage Assessment

Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Early-Stage Assessment (ESA) in order to continue as a PhD student. This is a formal review of progress in the first year, and consists of a written report, called ESA report, and an oral examination. The aims of the review are to:

- ensure the student is capable of and suited to PhD research;
- ensure the student is progressing with the research topic at a rate which will allow completion in the allotted three years;
- ensure the research topic is well structured and has the elements needed to provide a successful doctoral topic;
- check that supervision arrangements are working satisfactorily;
- check that there are no problems with the supply of equipment, or other materials;
- provide feedback, comments and technical suggestions;
- provide experience of writing technical reports at the level expected of a PhD dissertation; provide some experience of an oral ('viva voce') examination.

Students whose work fails to meet the required standards will be asked to resubmit at month 11. Students failing at that point will be required to withdraw or to transfer to the MPhil degree. The department expects the report to be submitted by 9 months for full-time students, and at 18 months for part-time students. The college requires report and final outcome of the ESA to be submitted on <https://scientia.doc.ic.ac.uk/> by 12 months for full-time students, and at 24 months for part-time students. Students must also have completed two of the four required Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School by then.

### *Report*

The ESA Report should be in pdf form and should not normally exceed about 30–40 pages. You may use any papers and technical reports you have produced over the year to develop the report. Your

supervisor can offer advice on content and structure. The report will normally include [most of] the following:

- Introduction and statement of problem. A clear statement of the research problem and aims and objectives. This should be described in a way that is accessible to any member of the Department's academic staff.
- Literature survey. An outline of the precedents for the proposed work, points of departure, and indication of potential significance; a comprehensive and critical literature review demonstrating a good knowledge of the background to the research problem. Where a detailed literature review chapter for the dissertation has already been drafted, this may be attached as an appendix and a summary of the main points included in the report.
- Methods and techniques. An account of the methods and techniques adopted in the study. This will normally include a presentation of the relevant theoretical computational or experimental methods to be employed.
- Summary of research. An account of research carried out so far.
- Results. A discussion of results obtained.
- Research Plan. A clear account of the future plans for the research with a schedule for completion of the work. This must include a realistic timetable of activities leading to a successful completion of studies. An outline of the dissertation [chapter and expected section headings] should be included. You should identify any risks and describe briefly the backup plans.
- Bibliography. Detailed papers and reports, if any, can be cited but need not be included.

College requires for all ESA reports to be submitted to Turnitin:

[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/)

### *Oral Examination*

The presentation in the oral examination should cover the following points:

- Introduction and statement of problem, structure of the talk
- Objectives and Aims: what you want to achieve, and how you will measure your success
- Techniques to be used, research carried out so far, (any) results obtained
- Comparable research work in the area
- Proposals for further work

Your target audience should be the Department's staff and fellow PhD students. Part of the presentation should therefore be at a level accessible to a computing graduate. On the other hand, you should not hesitate to include a technical part requiring specialist knowledge. You should expect to be asked lots of questions: about your understanding of the area, the choices you have made, related work, alternatives, etc.

### *Assessment*

Examiners are well aware that results at this stage will be limited and ideas still at a preliminary stage.

Students should not defer submission of the report because of a lack of results or because they have a paper deadline etc.

Each student will be allocated an assessment team consisting of at least three members of academic staff, including the supervisor (and co-supervisor), AND one or more independent assessors. The independent assessor must be an academic within the department, not a research assistant or senior researcher. Mentors cannot be part of the Assessment Team.

The outcome of the ESA assessment can be one of four basic recommendations:

- The student can progress to the 2nd year.
- The decision is deferred. The student needs to submit a revised report by month 11 and, at the discretion of the Assessment Team, possibly give a second presentation. A final decision will follow the re-submission.
- The student is required to downgrade to the MPhil degree.
- The student is required to withdraw.

### **Late-Stage Assessment**

Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Late Stage Report (LSR) in order to continue as a PhD student. This should be completed by month 24 for full-time students, and by month 36 for part-time students. This report is submitted in the form of a poster that includes:

- summary/presentation of the work done, and results achieved
- list of published papers

and an appendix no longer than 3 pages that includes a provisional table of content of the thesis and a schedule of planned research needed to complete the PhD. The poster and the appendix will have to be submitted as instructed at the time, in the form of a .zip file.

By then, the students must also complete the requisite Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School.

### *Assessment*

The LSR Poster and Appendix will be reviewed by the supervisor and the same independent assessor of the ESA (unless a change of topic has happened since the ESA milestone) as part of a departmental poster presentation event. There should also be strong evidence of progress from the ESA review. Assessment forms are available in <https://scientia.doc.ic.ac.uk/>

### **Progress Review Report**

By the end of month 36, full-time students are required to submit a zip file that includes (i) papers submitted/published so far, and (ii) a draft or outline of the thesis, with a narrative (per chapter) explaining how and which of the papers will be included into the thesis.

### *Assessment*

The report will be reviewed by the supervisor. The report should provide strong evidence that the PhD will be completed successfully and on time. It is expected that material for several chapters of the thesis will have been completed at this stage, at least in draft form. The report should be submitted in <https://scientia.doc.ic.ac.uk/>. The year mentor is in charge of monitoring the submission of this report.

## **Writing Up**

This is due at the end of PhD programme: 36 months for full-time students, and 60 months for part-time students. To enter the Writing Up stage, students must have (i) successfully completed both the Early-Stage Assessment and Late- Stage Review, and (ii) completed all experimental work and collection of material relating to their thesis and be able to submit their thesis within their writing up allowance. This stage is capped at a maximum of 12 months in duration for full-time students, and 24 months for part-time students.

Students in the writing up period will remain enrolled on their registered programme of study and must continue to re-enrol as required by the College until submission of the thesis for examination. Failure to re-enrol as required by the College may result in withdrawal from the programme.

Students in the writing up period will retain access to College facilities. However, students are not normally entitled to use laboratory facilities for primary research or experimental work during the writing up period.

The department recommends at this stage, that students attend the Thesis Writing Retreat, organised by the Graduate School to help them manage the thesis writing process in terms of setting clear and achievable goals, structure the content and narrative of the thesis, and most importantly maintain momentum and well-being at this final stage of the PhD journey.

The writing up status cannot exceed 12 months and should usually follow immediately after the end of the student's normal registration period. Students will have access to all College facilities and be eligible for Council Tax exemption if they were registered as full-time students immediately prior to going on to this status.

Please note that while the Department will do everything it can to accommodate writing up students, space restrictions mean that the Department cannot guarantee it will be able to continue to provide access to a desk or a desktop PC during this period.

Please note also that writing up status registration is not compulsory. A student who has completed the minimum period of registration may choose to write-up the thesis from College.

Please note that writing up or extending registration status does not affect your thesis submission deadline, which will always be 4 years from your initial registration, plus any approved extensions and Interruption of Studies taken.

Find out all necessary details about the Progress Review on [the Writing Up Procedure \(PDF\)](#) and check the information provided by your department.

Download the [Application for entry to Writing Up Status \(doc\)](#).

## **Examination Entry**

Students must submit their examination entry form in which they specify the title of their thesis and the nomination of the PhD examiners. The form needs to be filled in together with the supervisor and signed by the supervisor. This is due by 44 months for full-time students, and 68 months for part-time students.

## Thesis submission

The PhD thesis must be submitted by end of month 48 for full-time students, and 72 months for part-time students. This is a strict deadline and can only be extended by seeking formal approval from the College.

Note: full-time research students failing to submit within 48 months of registration (72 months for part-time students) are not permitted to enter the degree examination without prior permission. The examination has to be effected (form of entry submitted) no later than 44 (68) months after initial registration.

Imperial College London has an Open Access policy in relation to its students' theses. This means that when you finish your thesis, it will be made publicly available through the Imperial's open access repository, Spiral. Since the thesis will be openly accessible it is important that copyright laws are not infringed through use of material copyrighted by journals.

In some cases, it may be necessary to delay the release of a thesis to the public - this is referred to as an embargo. This can apply when the thesis involves specific intellectual property (IP). Intellectual property is the term used to describe creative outputs from scientific, engineering, literary and artistic endeavours that can be legally protected - such as the results arising from research. For more details, see:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgp/progressing-through-your-phd-/main-stages-of-the-phd/thesis-submission/>

Please review plagiarism in Theses Guidance:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/research-degree-examinations/Plagiarism-issues-in-theses.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/research-degree-examinations/Plagiarism-issues-in-theses.pdf)

**Important:** For the purposes of calculating milestones and deadlines, RAs who are registered for a PhD degree, whose RA project coincides with their PhD project, are treated by the College as *full-time* PhD students. RAs employed on different projects are treated as regular employees, with part-time deadline calculated accordingly.

For UKRI/EPSRC-funded students the College has an obligation to report annually to EPSRC on progress. The studentship can be withdrawn if that report is not satisfactory.

## The Imperial Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR)

As a doctoral student, you will be contributing to the formation of knowledge in a fast-moving field by communicating new, complex content to diverse, anonymous, often interdisciplinary audiences. You might be transitioning from your Master's into research communication, or you may have been in industry or out of academia for many years. Even if you have been actively communicating your research, you may need to develop higher-order communicative and linguistic competence to meet Imperial doctoral expectations and fulfil your ambitions as a researcher.



To support this, the university has set up the [Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement \(DACR\)](#) so that all new doctoral students receive communication training and feedback as early as possible in their doctoral programme.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/doctoral/academic-communication-requirement/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/doctoral/academic-communication-requirement/)

## **6. Academic Support**

### **Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors**

Your department has a system of academic and pastoral care in place to make sure you have access to the appropriate support throughout your time here. This includes:

#### **Senior Tutor (PGR)**

The Department's Senior Tutor (PGR) can offer pastoral support and advice. You can arrange to have a meeting with them at any time – what you discuss will be completely confidential.

If necessary, they will direct you to an appropriate source of support. Please reach out directly to Professor Kelly or Dr, Mediano or to Amani in the first instance to arrange a meeting.

## 7. Examination Procedures

### My Imperial - Postgraduate Research Milestones

You will be able to upload and submit your exam entry form, thesis declaration form and thesis, as well as view up-to-date information about your Early-Stage Assessment, Late-Stage Review and Viva Examination milestone status.

You will receive email notification when online access to Postgraduate Research Milestones is available to you. Access is via My Imperial using your Imperial single sign-on.



[www.my.imperial.ac.uk/](http://www.my.imperial.ac.uk/)

There is a step-by-step guidance to the Examination Entry form process and Thesis Submission process is available online at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/student-systems/student-records/student-journey/PGR-Manual---Students.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/student-systems/student-records/student-journey/PGR-Manual---Students.pdf)

### Viva

Once you have submitted your thesis, the Registry will ensure that copies are provided to your examiners, in advance of your viva examination.

Your supervisor, or another member of staff in your department/division, will be responsible for organising the viva and making all the necessary arrangements.

When your viva has taken place, you will be informed of the outcome.

Please find linked here under the *Examiner Reports for Research Programmes* section the thesis examiners' form so that you are aware of what is expected of the thesis:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/external-examining/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/external-examining/)

Please read the Success Guide for postgraduate research students for more advice on preparing for your viva:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progressing-through-your-phd-/main-stages-of-the-phd/the-viva/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progressing-through-your-phd-/main-stages-of-the-phd/the-viva/)

You can also find out more about how your examiners will assess your thesis by reading the examiner reports for research degrees:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/external-examining/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/external-examining/)

## E-theses: Requesting an Embargo

In some cases, it may be necessary to delay the release of a thesis to the public by applying for an embargo.

If you decide that your thesis should have an embargo, discuss this with your supervisor and tick the appropriate box on the Thesis declaration form:

[www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/research-and-innovation/scholarly-communication/public/thesis-declaration-form.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/research-and-innovation/scholarly-communication/public/thesis-declaration-form.pdf)

Reasons for requesting an embargo include:

- You plan to publish your thesis
- To avoid invalidating a potential patent application, see Intellectual Property: [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-policies/research-related-policies/ip-policy-college-login/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-policies/research-related-policies/ip-policy-college-login/)
- It contains commercially sensitive research or research with confidentiality obligations
- It contains information collected under the promise of confidentiality and anonymity e.g. patient information
- It shows evidence of animal experimentation and release to the public would pose a significant risk to the researchers involved or to Imperial staff and students
- It contains information of significance for national security

For further information please contact the Assessment Records team at [assessment.records@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:assessment.records@imperial.ac.uk)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/open-access/theses/requesting-an-embargo/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/open-access/theses/requesting-an-embargo/)

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's thoughts, words or images and diagrams as though they were your own. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional but must be avoided at all times.

When studying for a research degree (and as you continue in your research career) it is your responsibility to conduct and disseminate research results in an honest and ethical matter. When you prepare your Early-Stage Assessment, Late-Stage Review, or final thesis, as well as other publications and presentations throughout your studies, it is essential to avoid plagiarism.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/developing-your-skills/practicing-open-research/plagiarism-/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/developing-your-skills/practicing-open-research/plagiarism-/)

More information about plagiarism awareness for postgraduate research students is available on the Library Services website:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/library/research-support/plagiarism-awareness-for-researchers](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/library/research-support/plagiarism-awareness-for-researchers)

TurnitinUK is an online text matching service which assists staff in detecting possible plagiarism. The system enables institutions and staff to compare students' work with a vast database of electronic sources. You will be expected to run your Early-Stage Assessment through the Turnitin software – your department will be able to give you further information about this process.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/)

The Early Career Researcher Institute, in conjunction with the Library, has developed a mandatory online plagiarism awareness course which needs to be completed before your Early-Stage Assessment. It aims to equip Imperial research students with a working knowledge of the concept of plagiarism and how to avoid it. This enables students to use and share information ethically, with academic integrity.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-integrity-ethics-and-sustainability/plagiarism-awareness-doctoral-students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-integrity-ethics-and-sustainability/plagiarism-awareness-doctoral-students/)

## **Collusion**

This is the term used for work that has been conducted by more than one individual, where this has not been permitted in the assessment brief. Where it is alleged that there has been collusion, all parties will be investigated under the Academic Misconduct procedure.

You should note that whilst the university encourages students to support each other in their studies you should be careful to ensure that you do not exceed any assessment brief with regards to individual work, acknowledge the contributions of others in your work, and do not leave yourself open to allegations that you have supplied answers to enable another student to commit academic misconduct.

## **Dishonest practice**

This is the most serious category under the procedure. Examples of dishonest practice include bribery, contact cheating (purchasing an essay or other materials from other sources, (which is illegal in the UK) or other individual to submit as your own, making a false claim for mitigating circumstances or providing fraudulent evidence, falsifying documentation or signatures in relation to assessment or a claim for mitigating circumstances.


## **Research Misconduct**

Research Misconduct can be characterised as behaviours or actions that fall short of the standards of ethics, research and scholarship required to ensure that the integrity of research is upheld. It can cause harm to people and the environment, wastes resources, undermines the research record and damages the credibility of research.

Regardless of discipline and institution, the fundamental factor in ensuring the quality of research and research practices has to be the honesty of the individual investigator. Investigators should be honest with respect to their own work, which means subscribing to proper scientific practices such as acknowledging the contributions of colleagues or collaborators, ensuring veracity of data, and

acting with integrity in the depiction of results and conclusions. However, investigators are also expected to be honest in relation to the work of their colleagues and peers. Colluding in, or concealing, the misconduct of others is not compatible with an environment which encourages intellectual honesty and is, therefore, in itself misconduct.

Imperial's policy on, and procedures for, the investigation of allegations of research misconduct can be accessed here:


 [www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/secretariat/new-library-may-24/Annexes-to-Appendix-to-Ordinances-\(Staff\)\(13-December-2023\).pdf](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/secretariat/new-library-may-24/Annexes-to-Appendix-to-Ordinances-(Staff)(13-December-2023).pdf)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/)

Enquiries about the operation of these procedures, or about potential cases of misconduct should be addressed to Jonathan Hancock, Research Integrity Officer:

 [Jonathan.hancock@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:Jonathan.hancock@imperial.ac.uk)

Where a student completes taught module(s) as part of their research programme, they will also be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/)

## 8. University Policies and Procedures

### Academic Regulations

All registered postgraduate research students of Imperial are subject to the university Terms and Conditions as well as the Academic Regulations that apply to your degree.

If your PhD programme is divided into a 1 year Masters followed by 3 years of research, please note that the Masters year will be governed by the relevant taught academic regulations of the institution making the award (in most cases this will be Imperial but in some Centres for Doctoral Training this may be a partner institution in the consortium so please check with your programme team if you are unsure). The subsequent research (PhD/EngD) period will be governed by the relevant PhD or EngD academic regulations of Imperial.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/terms-and-conditions](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/terms-and-conditions)

### Unsatisfactory Engagement

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, sometimes students struggle to meet the university's expectations with regards to their engagement with their studies. Imperial has a process to identify and support students by reaffirming these expectations with an action plan. If a student does not engage satisfactorily with these supportive measures, they can be withdrawn from their studies. The full details of this process, and the appeals procedure relating to it can be found at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline)

### Fitness to Study

Imperial expects students to participate within the university community, such as by fully engaging and studying to the academic level required and working and living cooperatively. If there are concerns that a student is unable to engage as expected, due to an underlying physical and/or mental health difficulty, the university has a process to ensure that decisions about a students' ability to study are made through a supportive, timely and transparent process which operates in the best interests of the student:




[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline)

### Academic and Research Integrity


You are expected to conduct all aspects of your academic life in a professional manner. A full explanation of academic integrity, including information on Imperial's approach to plagiarism is available on the university website:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-governance-and-integrity/research-integrity/what-is-research-integrity/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-governance-and-integrity/research-integrity/what-is-research-integrity/)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/academic-integrity/Examination-and-assessments---academic-integrity.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/academic-integrity/Examination-and-assessments---academic-integrity.pdf)

## Academic Appeals Procedures

We have rigorous regulations in place to ensure assessments are conducted with fairness and consistency, claims for mitigating circumstances have been considered reasonably and in line with the regulations of the university, and that the decisions made at Early-Stage Assessment, Late-Stage Review or final thesis submission/viva maintain the integrity of our academic awards. Should you believe that you have grounds to appeal these decisions, we have laid out clear and consistent procedures through which appeals can be investigated and considered:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline)

The [ICU Advice service](#) can help you with understanding this policy and supporting you through the process.

## Student Complaints

Imperial strives to ensure that all students are well supported in their studies and receive a good experience of their programme and the wider university activities. If you feel that your experience has not lived up to these expectations Imperial has an agreed Students Complaints process through which your concern can be investigated and considered.

If you have any concerns about your experience at Imperial and have been unable to address these informally, you should contact Student Complaints who can provide advice about what is the appropriate way to seek to resolve this at:


 [student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline/)

## Student Disciplinary Procedure

Imperial has the right to investigate any allegation of misconduct against a student and may take disciplinary action where it decides, on the balance of probabilities, that a breach of the Student Code of Conduct has been committed. The general principles of the Student Disciplinary Procedure are available on the university website:



 [www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline/)

## Protecting our students from incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct

Imperial is committed to supporting students and preventing incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct.

Our dedicated website page outlines a range of information and resources, including:

- Information about what harassment and sexual misconduct is
- How to make a report
- What happens when you make a report
- Disciplinary procedures for staff and students
- Resources for advice and support


Visit [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/preventing-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/preventing-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/) for more information.

## Copyright

Copyright is an automatic right given to creators that allows them to control who copies, adapts, translates and makes public their work. Unless you have the copyright holder's permission, you cannot do these things unless permitted by law or licence.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/copyright-guidance/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/copyright-guidance/)

The Early Career Researcher Institute provides training on Copyright:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-integrity-ethics-and-sustainability/copyright-for-researchers-online-course/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-integrity-ethics-and-sustainability/copyright-for-researchers-online-course/)

## Intellectual Property Rights Policy

Imperial's [Intellectual Property \(IP\) policy](#) governs the ownership and management of universities Intellectual Property and Imperial's discretionary Reward to Inventors Scheme.

Further guidance on the Imperial Intellectual Property Rights Policy is available on the university website:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-policies/research-related-policies/ip-policy-college-login/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-policies/research-related-policies/ip-policy-college-login/)


Confidentiality is critical in research, especially when collaborating in shared laboratory spaces. Research students must protect sensitive information diligently to preserve trust, collaboration, and academic integrity. Your funding arrangements may also require that confidentiality is maintained.

You should strictly protect sensitive, personal or research-related information. Confidential information must only be shared with authorised individuals. Breaching confidentiality is considered as misconduct with disciplinary consequences.

Further information about the Imperial Enterprise Lab, a dedicated support service for students who want to develop their entrepreneurial mindset, skills, and networks, can be found at:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/enterprising-students](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/enterprising-students)

The Early Career Researcher Institute provides training on Intellectual Property:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-impact-and-knowledge-exchange/intellectual-property-online-course/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-impact-and-knowledge-exchange/intellectual-property-online-course/)

## Use of IT Facilities

View the Conditions of Use of IT Facilities:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/conditions-of-use-of-it-resources/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/conditions-of-use-of-it-resources/)

## Employment During Studies

If you are studying full time, Imperial recommends that you do not work part-time during term time. If this is unavoidable, we advise you to work no more than 10–15 hours per week, which should be principally at weekends and not within normal university working hours.

Working in excess of these hours could impact adversely on your studies or health.

If you are here on a Student Route visa you can work no more than 20 hours a week during term time. Some sponsors may not permit you to take up work outside your studies and others may specify a limit.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/visas-and-immigration/working-in-the-uk/work-rules-during-your-studies/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/visas-and-immigration/working-in-the-uk/work-rules-during-your-studies/)

If you are considering part-time work during your studies you are strongly advised to discuss this issue with your supervisor or Senior Tutor (PGR). If you are on a Student Route visa you should also seek advice from the International Student Support team regarding visa limitations on employment.

Please note, PhD students are entitled to 25 days annual leave during the year. If your annual leave has been approved by your supervisor you may work full-time hours on those annual leave days. You may also work full-time during university Christmas and Easter closure period, and once all academic requirements have been completed (e.g. you have submitted your thesis including final corrections).

Please note that these rules also apply to your work as a GTA:


 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/working-as-a-gta/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/working-as-a-gta/)


Imperial's processes will not normally consider as mitigating circumstances any negative impact that part-time work may have had on your performance in your examination or in other assessments. Examinations or vivas cannot be rescheduled to accommodate your part-time working arrangements.

## Study Leave

If you plan to carry out research away from Imperial for a period of 2 weeks or more as part of your PhD student registration, your department can approve study leave using the External Study Leave form (which is then submitted by your department to the Student Records team for recording).

Study leave is normally pursued either as a placement under the supervision of a third-party organisation (placements are managed by your department and are subject to Imperial Placement Learning Policy and Good Practice under the university's overall off-site working protocols) or fieldwork managed by your department under off-site working protocols. Contact your departmental postgraduate administrator for further guidance if you and your supervisor wish to have study leave considered.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/information-for-imperial-college-students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/information-for-imperial-college-students/) (note: if you are considering/planning a placement outside the UK you should also refer to the Placement Abroad Handbook available on this page)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/)

## Ethics

Imperial has an overall Ethics code which sets out key behaviours which the university expects of all its members in order to facilitate a leading academic community which demonstrates integrity in all its activities, and which manages relationships with third parties appropriately. These behaviours include honesty, fairness and transparency. The Code is intended to provide a starting point to help members of the university identify and tackle ethical issues faced in the course of their activities. It also describes routes available for members of the Imperial community to escalate ethical concerns where appropriate.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-ethics-committee](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-ethics-committee)

## Good Research Conduct

Imperial is committed to undertaking research of the highest international quality within an intellectually challenging and inspiring environment, to extending the frontiers of research within and beyond existing research disciplines, and to bringing together research expertise within and beyond the university to address the science challenges of today and the future. Imperial's achievements in

research are underpinned by the quality and expertise of the individuals within it, and the pages in the link below define the standards of research governance and integrity essential to the university's reputation and success.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/)

## Leave


### Annual Leave

It is important to take a break from your research and Imperial has a PGR Annual Leave policy in place to support you. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/ecri/public/research-degree-students/PGR-student-leave-policy.pdf>

If you plan to carry out research away from College for a period of 2 weeks or more as part of your PhD student registration, your department can approve study leave using the External Study Leave form (which is then submitted by your department to the Registry Records Team for recording). Study leave is normally pursued either as a placement under the supervision of a third-party organisation (placements are managed by your department and are subject to College Placement Learning Policy, Good Practice under the College's overall off-site working protocols) or fieldwork managed by your department under off-site working protocols.

Adequate supervision must be in place where the student will be taking up their Study Leave prior to any application being approved. It is important to consider the risks involved. Imperial has an Off-Site Working policy which the student's academic department will need to follow, and which includes a specific approach (placements) when a third-party placement provider is involved.

If you are funded, you should check the terms and conditions of your studentship which will set out your annual leave entitlement. Unless otherwise stated in your terms and conditions, the university's position is that all research degree students, including international students with a Student Visa, are entitled to a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 40 days per year (including public holidays and College closure days) of annual leave (pro rata for part-time students). This annual leave entitlement aligns with the UKRI's terms and conditions for training grants, student annual leave.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/ecri/public/research-degree-students/PGR-student-leave-policy.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/ecri/public/research-degree-students/PGR-student-leave-policy.pdf)

UKRI-funded students are entitled to four categories of leave: Family Leave, Medical Leave, Additional Leave and Annual Leave. You are not expected to study during leave absences. Full details on leave entitlements, including eligibility and possible studentship extensions, can be found in the [UKRI Standard Terms and Conditions of Training Grants](#).


### Sick Leave

Students must notify their supervisor as soon as possible if they are absent due to illness or injury and a medical certificate must be produced after seven days.

## Interruption of Studies

This should be requested when a personal emergency or other circumstance arises which means that a student needs to take a break from their studies. No fees are payable for such a period, during which a student's research registration is effectively suspended. It is vital that an interruption of studies is applied for immediately, so that the student's registration and timeline can be suspended until they return and they do not unnecessarily exceed the maximum registration period, assessments and thesis submission deadlines.

Interruption of Studies (IOS) should be put in place for any compassionate leave, maternity and paternity leave, personal emergency, lack of funding, internships etc. Students can apply for Interruption of Studies by requesting it on MyImperial page. A discussion with the PhD administrator or your supervisor prior to that is recommended.

For fee-paying registrations, no fees are payable for such a period although it should be borne in mind that registered student status, and the payment of any stipend, will also be suspended for the duration. Where an interruption of studies is taken on health grounds, a condition of the interruption  being granted is that you will be required to provide medical evidence as to your fitness to return to your studies and you will need to arrange to be seen by the College Health Centre prior to your return.

For information on interruption of studies for international students who are here on a visa please consult the international office [international@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:international@imperial.ac.uk)  
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students>



## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

All staff and students who work with personal data are responsible for complying with GDPR. Imperial will provide support and guidance, but you do have a personal responsibility to comply.

In line with the above please see the university's Privacy Notice for Students which form part of the Terms and Conditions of registration with Imperial.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/Privacy-Notice-for-Students-and-Pro prospective-Students.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/Privacy-Notice-for-Students-and-Pro prospective-Students.pdf)

## Your Union

All Imperial students automatically become members of Imperial College Union when they register at the university. The Union provides a range of independent support.

## Imperial College Union Advice Service

The ICU Advice Service delivers free, confidential, and impartial advice covering academic issues, complaints and disciplinaries, University accommodation, and internal and external signposting. Contact [the ICU Advice Service](#) and complete the registration form to speak with a member of the team.

 [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice)

### **Student representatives**

Imperial College Union operates two Representation Networks of 500+ elected student representatives – the Academic Representation Network and the Wellbeing Representation Network. Reps represent the voice of students and can direct you to internal and external support services. The Union's Liberation & Community Officers also work to make sure that the views of under-represented and interest groups are heard at Imperial. The student representatives are elected in one of ICUs election cycles that take place throughout the year so keep an eye out for your chance to get involved.

If you have any feedback about issues in your department relating to academic or wellbeing issues, you can speak to one of your student representatives.

 [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/a-to-z](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/a-to-z)

### **Officer Trustees**

The Union is led by a team of Officer Trustees who are elected every year by the students of Imperial. They work full time at the Union and either take up their role after their studies have concluded or take a year out of their studies to represent the voices of students in the Union, the university and the wider community.

The Officer Trustees represent students in a variety of roles, including Education, Welfare and Activities. These elected students are here to represent your views as a student body - do make sure you get in touch with them if there's something you would like to discuss or change.

### **Student Support Zone**

Student Support Zone has lots of information about the resources available at Imperial and beyond to help you to stay healthy and happy. It's a great place to start when you're looking for some support – it covers advice about housing and money, health, wellbeing and maintaining a good work-life balance, and provides the details of who you can contact if you need some extra support.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone)

### **Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors**

Your department has a system of academic and pastoral care in place to make sure you have access to the appropriate support throughout your time here. This includes:

#### **Senior Tutor (PGR)**


The Department's Senior Tutor (PGR) can offer pastoral support and advice. You can arrange to have a meeting with them at any time during your studies – what you discuss will be completely confidential.

If necessary, they will direct you to an appropriate source of support.

### Student Wellbeing Advisor


The department has a Student Wellbeing Advisor, Grazia Trioano, [g.troiano@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:g.troiano@imperial.ac.uk) she can provide confidential support and advice with a variety of things such as accommodation, exercise, food and nutrition, sleep, identity, mental health, stress and Anxiety and general wellbeing

### PhD Programme Administrator

 The PhD Programme Administrator is often the first point of contact for PhD students. Please email Amani [aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk) and she will be able to direct you to the correct support.

## Coaching and Research Degree Mediation

As well as professional development opportunities, the Early Career Researcher Institute has a dedicated coaching programme designed to help you through challenging times. The **coaching programme** has been established to provide an opportunity to talk, independently from your academic department, about challenges you may be experiencing during the course of your studies. The programme primarily focuses on building effective working relationships and there may be other self-development issues that you can explore with a trained coach.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/individual-support-and-wellbeing/coaching/coaching/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/individual-support-and-wellbeing/coaching/coaching/)

The Institute also provides support for students and supervisors who are finding their partnership difficult. The confidential and non-judgemental research degree mediation programme is designed to support students and supervisors to work through challenges they may be experiencing, to find ways to move forward and work together more effectively.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/individual-support-and-wellbeing/mediation/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/individual-support-and-wellbeing/mediation/)

## Advice Services

The tutor system is complemented by a university-wide network of advice and support. This includes a number of specialist services.

### Careers Service

The Careers Service has strong links to your Department and with a range of employers. You can access group workshops, presentations, networking sessions and individual one-to-one appointments. The Careers Services is based at the South Kensington Campus on Level 5, Sherfield Building however services are offered across our campuses and online to help facilitate access.

Visit the Career Service's website to:

- Find resources and advice on successful career planning
- Book on to workshops and events
- Book a careers appointment

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/careers](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers)

## Student Counselling and Mental Health

The Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service offers short-term counselling to all registered students. The service is free and confidential. Counsellors are available at the South Kensington, Hammersmith and Sillwood Park Campuses.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling)

## Financial support and tuition fees

If you've got any questions about student financial support (loans, scholarships and research council studentships, US and Canadian loans) then contact the Student Financial Support team:



020 7594 9014



[student.funding@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.funding@imperial.ac.uk)

If you suddenly find yourself in financial difficulties or experience an unexpected change in circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for emergency financial help through the Student Support Fund. The Fund offers a one-off payment of up to £2,000 to cover such emergencies as last-minute accommodation and travel necessities, equipment and childcare. It does not have to be repaid.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/financial-assistance/student-support-fund/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/financial-assistance/student-support-fund/)

For tuition fees queries, contact the Tuition Fees team:



020 7594 8011



[tuition.fees@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:tuition.fees@imperial.ac.uk)

## Imperial College Union Advice Service

Imperial College Union runs the Advice Service independently of the university with advisers on hand to provide free, confidential, independent advice on a wide range of welfare issues including housing, money and debt, employment and consumer rights, and personal safety. Contact the [ICU Advice Service](#) and complete the registration form to speak with a member of the team.



[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice)


## Student Hub

The Student Hub brings together information on many of Imperial's key administrative services in one easily accessible place. The staff in the Hub can provide general advice and information on a wide range of aspects of student life at Imperial, including your enrolment and student records (statement of registration for proof of your student status, transcripts and awards), fees and finance, accommodation and international student queries. If your query needs specialist guidance, the Hub team will sign-post you to other university student support services as appropriate.

The Hub are on hand to answer your questions in person (at our desks in South Kensington and White City), by email, phone or online through the ASK Student Hub service.



 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 9444


 [student.hub@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.hub@imperial.ac.uk)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub)

## Accommodation

Information and guidance around private housing and private halls for PG students is available from the Student Accommodation Office. Online you can find a Private Housing Masterclass that guides you through each step of your private housing search. The team also hosts private housing events, pop-ups and contract-checking services.

 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 3300

 [accommodation@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@imperial.ac.uk)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/prospective/pg/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/prospective/pg/)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation/)

## Health Services

### NHS Health Centre and finding a doctor

Even if you're fit and healthy we recommend that you register with a local doctor (GP) as soon as you arrive in London. For help finding your nearest GP see the Student Space website:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/your-health/doctor-and-dentist/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/your-health/doctor-and-dentist/)

There is the Imperial College Health Centre on our South Kensington Campus which you may visit during clinic hours if you're feeling unwell. Students living within the practice catchment area are encouraged to register with the Centre.

 [www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk)

### NHS Dentist (based in the Imperial Health Centre)

The Imperial College Dental Centre offers a full range of NHS and private treatment options.

 [www.imperialcollegedental.co.uk/](http://www.imperialcollegedental.co.uk/)

## Disability Support

### Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service provides confidential advice and support for all disabled students and students with specific learning difficulties.

If you hold an offer or are a current student, you are invited to visit the [Disability Advisory Service](#) pages for further guidance.

Once you begin your studies, there is a lot of support available to you, for example, if you think you may have a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) or autism, but have never been formally assessed, the Disability Advisory Service offers initial screening appointments.



020 7594 9755



[disability@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:disability@imperial.ac.uk)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service)

### Departmental Disability Officers

Departmental Disability Officers are the first point of contact within your department. They can apply for additional exam arrangements on your behalf, and will facilitate support within your Department.

For PhD students the designated DDO is Professor Paul Kelly: [p.kelly@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:p.kelly@imperial.ac.uk)

For any adjustment practicalities please contact Amani [aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:aoeaoe@imperial.ac.uk)

More information on Departmental Disability Officers is available at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/support-available/departamental-disability-officers/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/support-available/departamental-disability-officers/)

More information on procedures for the consideration of additional exam arrangements in respect of disability is available at:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/exam-arrangements-and-re-sits/Exam-arrangements-in-respect-of-disability.pdf](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/exam-arrangements-and-re-sits/Exam-arrangements-in-respect-of-disability.pdf)

## Library and IT

### Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

If you're having problems with technology (including computers, laptops and mobile devices), you can get help from ICT's Service Desk.



020 7594 9000

[www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/service-desk](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/service-desk)

### Software shop

The Software shop offers a variety of general and subject specific software programs and packages for free or at a discounted price for Imperial students.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/devices-and-software/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/devices-and-software/)

### Library Services

The Abdus Salam Library at South Kensington is open 24 hours for study space, and further space is available to all students in GoStudy on levels 4 and 5 of the Chemistry Building.

Make sure you find out who your subject librarian is as they'll be able to help you find books and online resources for your research. Also, don't forget to check out the library's skills support and other campus libraries for access to specialist medicine and life sciences resources. You can borrow up to 40 books and, whether you're working on or off site, you'll be able to access e-books, e-journals and databases from their collection of over 637,000 titles. If they don't have what you need, they can get it for you, simply ask them to buy it or request a copy through their free Document Delivery service.

For any questions library staff will be happy to help, simply chat with them online or contact them via email, phone or social media, just check the website for details:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/library](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/library)

## Centre for Academic English (CfAE)

The goal of the Centre for Academic English is to ensure you develop both the ability and the confidence to excel as a communicator during your doctoral research. From the very beginning of your research and all the way through, we're here to help you realise your potential.

To achieve this, we've designed a flexible academic STEMM communication programme for doctoral students. In the early stages of your research, you can join our sessions which provide the foundations of accurate and appropriate written communication for STEMM research. Our technical speaking courses provide you with practical training in successful oral communication, helping you prepare for early-stage presentations and your viva. By using our online resources, you can create your own personalised self-study learning pathway. As you build your pathway, you'll have the freedom to select the STEMM communication resources you need whenever you need them.

To find out more about what is available for you, visit the CfAE website.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/)

Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

[english@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:english@imperial.ac.uk)

## Religious Support

The Chaplaincy Multi-faith Centre has chaplains from many different religions, as well as prayer rooms and information on places of worship. In addition, it runs meditation classes and mindfulness workshops for stress management.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy)

## Support for International Students

### International Student Support team

Students from outside the UK make up around half of our student population, so our International Student Support team offers year-round support to help our international students settle into Imperial life. This includes UK visa and immigration advice and trips to different places of interest.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/)

## 9. Student Administration

The Student Administration team are responsible for the administration and maintenance of the student records for all students studying at Imperial. This includes enrolments, programme transfers, interruption of studies, withdrawals and processing of examination entry for research degree students. The team also use this information to fulfil reporting duties to the Student Loans Company and Transport for London, as well as other external bodies.

The team are responsible for the processing of student results and awards on the student record system as well as the production and distribution of academic transcripts and certificates of award. The 'My Documents' online portal allows you to access your documents, including proof of enrolment and award documentation. You can then digitally share these documents with third parties such as an employer or university.

Each document has a unique QR code with the official university watermark, making it easier for employers and others to verify your credentials. This online document sharing is a legitimate service, introduced and authorised by Imperial.

We would like to encourage you to use this online service in place of paper-based documentation. You can access the 'My Documents' portal here:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/request-an-official-document/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/request-an-official-document/)

### Student Records



+44 (0)20 7594 7268



[student.records@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.records@imperial.ac.uk)

### Degree Certificates



+44 (0)20 7594 7267



[certificates@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:certificates@imperial.ac.uk)

## 10. Work-life balance

The pace and intensity of study at Imperial can be demanding so it's important to find time for outside interests.

### Imperial College Union

The Union's range of 370+ student-led clubs, societies and projects is one of the largest of any UK university, opening up lots of ways for you to enjoy your downtime.

 [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us)

 [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/activities/a-to-z](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/activities/a-to-z)

### Move Imperial

Imperial has a wide range of sports and activities on offer that cater for all experience levels and abilities. We have a recreational activity offer, competitive sports teams and an elite sport programme. We are dedicated to ensuring we have a diverse, inclusive and exciting offer for all.

More information about Imperial student memberships and updates to our services can be found at:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/ethos/memberships/students/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/ethos/memberships/students/)

For an annual fee you will get use of the gym and swimming facilities on our campuses. More information about Imperial student memberships and updates to our services can be found at:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/sport](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/sport)

We have a huge collection of online resources, home workout videos, healthy recipes and playlists available to all as part of our Move More campaign, more information can be found at:

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/get-active/move-more/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/get-active/move-more/)

## 11. Student feedback and representation

Imperial and Imperial College Union are committed to continually improving your education and wider experience and a key part of this is your feedback. Feedback is thoroughly discussed by your student representatives and staff.

### Student representation

Student Representatives are recruited from every department and faculty to gather feedback from students to discuss with staff. More information about the role, and instructions on how to become an academic representative, are available on the Imperial College Union website.

 [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/representation/a-to-z](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/representation/a-to-z)

## Staff-Student Committee

Staff-Student Committees are designed to strengthen understanding and improve the flow of communication between staff and students and, through open dialogue, promote high standards of education and training, in a co-operative and constructive atmosphere. Imperial good practice guidelines for staff-student committees are available here:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/student-feedback](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/student-feedback)

The committee meets once a term. Please reach out to your PhD Mentor or PhD reps for any items you would like to be discussed.

## 12. Student Surveys

Your feedback is important to your department, university and Imperial College Union. Whilst there are a variety of ways to give your feedback on your university experience, the following survey gives you regular opportunities to make your voice heard:

- **Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)**

The PRES is your chance to tell us about a range of elements related to your student experience such as supervision, resources, research community, progress and assessment, professional development, and wellbeing. This is a national survey that helps us to compare how we are doing against other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that are valued by our students. The survey is open to postgraduate research students and runs across the spring and summer terms. At Imperial, PRES is run every other year, in odd-numbered calendar years. The survey is confidential. The more you take part the more representative the results so please take a few minutes to give your views.

You can read about the action Imperial has taken in response to the PRES here:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/networks-events-and-funds/pres/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/networks-events-and-funds/pres/)

If you would like to know more about any of these surveys or see the results from previous surveys, please visit:



[www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/student-surveys/pg-student-surveys](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/student-surveys/pg-student-surveys)



## 13. Professional Development Opportunities for Research Degree Students

### Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA)

Many research students across Imperial are involved with teaching, supervision and assessment (in the form of marking) of both undergraduate and Master's level students. Working as a GTA provides research students with an opportunity to broaden their experience at the university and develop further skills. These include learning to teach, convey complex technical concepts, writing/communication skills, etc. Furthermore, research students may find that acting as a GTA helps improve their own technical abilities (both theoretical and practical), enables them to broaden their knowledge base, and gain communication and task management experience. When considering a career in academia, teaching experience is important and GTA work allows building up a teaching portfolio and even becoming aware of one's own teaching style.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/tools-and-reference/quality-assurance-enhancement/roles-and-responsibilities/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/tools-and-reference/quality-assurance-enhancement/roles-and-responsibilities/)



[www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-and-promotions/recruitment/temporary-worker-appointments/graduate-teaching-assistants/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-and-promotions/recruitment/temporary-worker-appointments/graduate-teaching-assistants/)

### Imperial Outreach

The Outreach team at Imperial is responsible for delivering the university's programme of activities for schools and colleges. The team deliver a wide range of exciting and inspiring activities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds right across the United Kingdom.

The team focuses on raising attainment, changing perceptions, supporting teaching staff and stimulating interest in STEM subjects from primary through to A-Level education, as part of Imperial's widening participation and outreach agenda.

By working with teaching staff, schools, colleges and community organisations they are able to offer support specifically where it is needed through a dedicated portfolio of programmes for young people. These programmes form part of the Imperial Access Agreement.

To make sure the team offer the fullest breadth of activities, they collaborate with many members of academic staff, as well as student ambassadors who add the valuable perspective of life as a current Imperial student.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/schools-outreach/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/schools-outreach/)

### Recruitment and Outreach student ambassadors / Outreach STEM Leaders

Our ambassador and leader schemes provide you with an opportunity to work with young people to help inspire them to consider studying science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine.

Some activities will draw on your subject expertise, giving you the chance to communicate your research in a way that is suitable for a school age audience. Other opportunities may be more

generally focused on your experience of higher education through talks about student life for sixth form students or mock interview sessions for potential applicants.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-student-ambassadors/](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-student-ambassadors/)

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-stem-leaders/](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-stem-leaders/)

## **Professional Skills Development Programme**

The Early Career Researcher Institute at Imperial provides an internationally renowned and award-winning Professional Development Programme.

Funders of doctoral programmes, including governments, industry and research councils expect that you spend time on your professional development ([UKRI, 2024](#)), and developing generic research, personal and professional development is an important part of your postgraduate training.

Our Professional Development Programme offers you support in your study and research, as well as the opportunity to develop knowledge, attributes, and skills relevant to your doctorate and your future career whether inside or outside academia. These development opportunities can improve your ability to undertake focused and successful research, present your work to a variety of audiences, and enhance your overall experience at Imperial. Postgraduate alumni, academics and employers have noted the value of the programme.

We work across Imperial with academic and support departments, alumni, students and externals to enable and enhance joined up opportunities. This has a social benefit, fostering networking and collaboration, as our courses, events and activities provide fora for students to interact with others from different departments and divisions.

 [www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/)

## 14. And finally

### Alumni services and benefits

When you graduate, you'll become a member of a lifelong global network of more than 262,000 incredible people. You'll have access to an exclusive range of services and benefits, designed to support you in your next steps, wherever you are in the world, including:

**Lifelong learning:** from discounts on further study to mentoring, career support, online resources and events, we're here for you throughout your career to support your professional development.

**Connections:** Imperial's alumni community can be a source of friendship and professional contacts. Whether you're looking for top tips for a new city, to find a business partner or mentor, or get to know your local community, we've got you covered.

**Perks:** discounts, access to the library, Imperial College Union, and a dedicated co-working and lounge space in the heart of London – there are plenty of perks on offer for Imperial alumni whether you're based near campus or further afield.

Visit the alumni website to find out more about your new community, how to access your benefits, and how to get in touch with fellow alumni around the world.



[www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/recent-graduates/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/recent-graduates/)

### Opportunities for further study

After you have completed your PhD, you may choose to check out our PhD success stories webpage: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/prospective-students/courses/phd/phd-stories/>