IMPERIAL

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Department of Life Sciences



PhD Student Handbook 2026–27

Contents

1. Welcome to Imperial 4

Our Principles 5

Doctoral Proposition 6

Mutual Expectations for the Research Degree Student Supervisor Partnership 6

Cornerstone 7

The Early Career Researcher Institute 8

Introduction from the President of Imperial College Union 9

Key dates 2026–27 10

My Imperial Campus 11

Imperial Success Guide 12

Student Shapers 13

Imperial Award 13

2. Location and facilities 14

3. Introduction to the Department 16

Welcome from Head of Department, Professor Dan Davis 16

Welcome from Director of Post Graduate Studies, Dr Tony Southall 17

Welcome from PGR Student Representative 18

Academic and administrative staff 19

Director of Postgraduate Studies (Research) 19

Senior Tutors 19

Postgraduate Research Admin Team 20

Departmental Information 21

4. Department Procedures 22

Departmental Induction 22

Conferences and Publications 24

Processing your Expenses Claims 24

Professional Skills 24

Attendance and Absence 24

Health and Safety Information 25

Imperial Safety Department 26

Occupational Health requirements 27

5. Doctoral Milestones and Progress Reports 28

Progress Review Panel (PRP) Appointment 28

Compulsory Milestones 28

Exam Procedure: Year 3 Writing up status 31
6 Month Reviews 31
The Imperial Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR) 32
Doctoral Training Programme Schedule 33
6. Pastoral Support 37
7. Examination Procedures 39
My Imperial - Postgraduate Research Milestones 39
Viva 39
E-theses: Requesting an Embargo 40
Plagiarism 40
Collusion 41
Dishonest practice 41
Research Misconduct 41
8. University Policies and Procedures 43
Academic Regulations 43
Unsatisfactory Engagement 43
Fitness to Study 43
Academic and Research Integrity 43
Academic Appeals Procedures 44
Student Complaints 44
Student Disciplinary Procedure 45
Protecting our students from incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct 45
Copyright 45
Use of IT Facilities 46
Employment During Studies 46
Study Leave 47
Ethics 47
Good Research Conduct 48
Leave 48
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 48
9. Animal research 49
10. Wellbeing, support and advice 50
Your Union 50
Student Support Zone 50
Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors 51
Coaching and Research Degree Mediation 51
Advice Services 51

Health Services 53
Disability Support 53
Library and IT 54
Religious Support 55
Support for International Students 56
11. Student Administration 57
12. Work-life balance 58
Imperial College Union 58
Move Imperial 58
13. Student feedback and representation 59
Student representation 59
Staff-Student Committee 59
14. Student Surveys 60
15. Professional Development Opportunities for Research Degree Students 61
Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA) 61
Imperial Outreach 61
Professional Skills Development Programme 62
16. And finally 63
Alumni services and benefits 63

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 370 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/

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

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


www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/cornerstone/

The Early Career Researcher Institute

The Early Career Researcher Institute wishes you a warm welcome to Imperial. We work closely with Imperial College Union to enhance your experience and 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 community events throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge and meet new people.

Our primary way to communicate with you will be through our 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, study and research. Do make the most of all that the university and your programme have to offer.

www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/

Introduction from the President of Imperial College Union



Welcome to Imperial! On behalf of Imperial College Union, I am delighted to welcome you to our community and congratulate you on earning your place here. Whether you are joining us from nearby or from across the world, we are very pleased to have you as part of Imperial. This is a remarkable achievement, and one that reflects your hard work, curiosity and ambition. You should be very proud of yourself.

Imperial is known around the world for its academic excellence, research and innovation. Many of you may have chosen Imperial because of that reputation, and you will certainly be challenged and inspired. But Imperial is much more than the degree you will leave with. It is also the people you meet, the communities you join, the opportunities you embrace, and the memories you make along the way. Take the chance to meet people beyond your course, explore new interests, and allow yourself to grow through the communities and experiences you find here.

Being in London is also a huge part of the Imperial experience. Around South Kensington, you have museums, parks, music venues and cultural spaces right on your doorstep. Across the wider city, there is food, theatre, sport, history and communities from all over the world. I strongly encourage you to explore where and when you can. Some of your best Imperial memories may come from the moments you did not plan.

Outside your degree, Imperial College Union is home to hundreds of student-led clubs, societies and projects. Whether you are interested in culture, sport, music, performance, academic interests, or something completely new, there will be opportunities for you to get involved. These spaces are often where students find friendships, confidence and a real sense of belonging.

The Union is led by students, for students. The Deputy Presidents and I have been elected to work full time on improving your student experience, and your student representatives work across departments and faculties to make sure your voice is heard. Alongside us, the Union has dedicated staff teams supporting clubs and societies, student representation, events, activities and many other parts of student life.

The Union also runs the Advice Service, which provides free, confidential and independent support on issues such as life in halls, complaints, academic appeals and other concerns you may face during your time at Imperial. You can access this by emailing advice@imperial.ac.uk.

Please remember that you are not alone in this journey. Imperial can be intense, but there are people and communities here to support you. No matter what challenges you face, or what opportunities you are looking for, Imperial College Union is here to help.

Our office is on Level 2 of Beit Quadrangle, and you can find more information on our website.

Wishing you an incredible year ahead, and once again, welcome to Imperial!

Daniel Zhuo
Imperial College Union President 2026–27

union.president@imperial.ac.uk imperialcollegeunion.org

Key dates 2026–27

Important dates

Induction, in person:	7 October 2026
Away day at KEW, in person	9 October 2026
Early Stage Assessment Milestone Talk with DPS	5 February 2027

See schedule of events for 2026/27

Closure dates

Christmas/New Year:	23 December 2026 - 3 January 2027 (Imperial reopens on 4 January 2027)
Easter Holiday:	24 March 2027 – 31 March 2027 (Imperial reopens on 01 April 2027)
Early May Bank Holiday:	03 May 2027
Spring Bank Holiday:	31 May 2027
Summer Bank Holiday:	30 August 2027

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 reflects 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.

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**.

💻 My Imperial Campus | Administration and support services | Imperial College London

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 Imperial campuses, alongside immersive 3D maps of South Kensington and White City. Find buildings, discover campus services, and navigate your way around.

📣 **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**

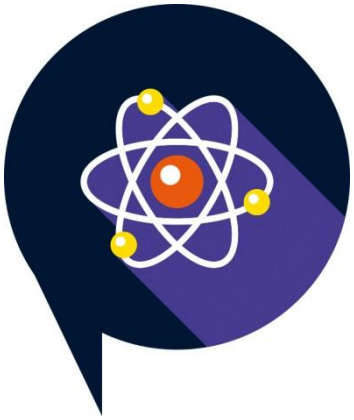
Access your timetable and, where required by your department, check in to teaching sessions directly through the app.

🚀 **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/

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/

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/

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.

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 750,000 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

Maps

Campus maps and travel directions are available at:

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

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

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, and services – including lost property and bike security – is located at:

- Wells Way Cabin (Located behind the Abdus Salam Library and Sherfield).

Our ID Card Services Office is located at:

- Sir Alexander Fleming Building G53

SafeZone

SafeZone is an app that allows you to contact the Security and Community Safety team. You can use it in an emergency; to request first aid assistance; or to share information through the app's tip reporting function whilst on any campus. SafeZone can also be used to send important updates and information to the Imperial Community during major incidents or disruptions, both on campus or elsewhere.

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/ 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 Imperial phone.

3. Introduction to the Department

Welcome from Head of Department, Professor Dan Davis



Welcome to the Department of Life Sciences at Imperial College London. I can't tell you how thrilled we all are to have you join us for your PhD. We aim to provide a superb and stimulating atmosphere for your training as the next generation of Life Scientists.

We are one of the largest Life Sciences groups in Europe, with world-leading research activity spanning levels of organisation from atoms to the biosphere. You can find out about the research carried out in the Department at: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/research/

Through regular newsletters, we'll let you know about all sorts of things going on the Department, from social events to our latest research discoveries. If you have any ideas yourself about things you'd like to do, or things we can improve on, don't hesitate to get in touch. The Departmental Postgraduate Research Education team, our senior tutors, and your Supervisor and advisors, are all here to support you. Reach out at any time.

This is a truly exciting time for Life Sciences. I sincerely wish you happiness and success in your time here.

Dan

Welcome from Director of Post Graduate Studies, Dr Tony Southall



Welcome to the Department of Life Sciences for your Postgraduate training. As a member of the Department, you are also part of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and a member of the Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI). We hope that you will enjoy your period of study here and achieve success as a PhD student.

The Department follows the strategic aims of Imperial College London which, in terms of education, are:

- To identify attract and develop students of the highest ability who are most able to benefit from an education at the College
- To provide an intellectually challenging and inspiring environment
- To provide an educational experience that empowers graduates to be leaders in their chosen careers and contribute to the long-term needs of society

This handbook contains essential information concerning the organisation and requirements of your Postgraduate programme.

In addition there is useful information about the Department of Life Sciences, together with information about the ECRI, opportunities for enhancement of your training, the Graduate Student Union (GSU), support groups and other useful details.

Research students will find additional information in the Imperial College booklet: Success Guide - postgraduate research students.

Regulations for Imperial College students appear in this handbook and can be accessed at here.

Please also take time to read Our Values and Behaviours which outlines commitments made between students and the College.

The Postgraduate training in the Department of Life Sciences is managed by the Postgraduate Research Education Team.

You will be asked to elect fellow students to represent you at the Student-Staff Committee. Find out more about the role of the student representatives here.

A number of events have been organised for you during the first few days find details here.

We hope you will have an enjoyable and productive time, and we look forward to working with you towards the successful completion of your Postgraduate programme.

Tony Southall

Welcome from PGR Student Representative



Welcome new students,

We are the PhD student reps, and we act as a bridge between the student body and the faculty within the Department of Life Sciences. Our primary goal is to gather student feedback and relay it to senior faculty at Student-Staff Committee (SSC) meetings held every ~4 months.

Here, we discuss issues and lay out action plans to address them. In the past couple of years, these issues have ranged from improving supervisor-student relationships and increasing available funding for student-led socials to providing alternative milk options for coffee and having regular socials. No issue of yours is too big or too small for us to address, so please let us know, and we will do our best to improve your PhD experience!

Your primary point of contact will be your cohort's PhD Representative, who volunteers to advocate for all PhD who joined in their year. All representative duties are voluntary, and you can remain in the position for as little or as long as you'd like. Many reps, however, enjoy the experience and stay on for the duration of their PhD.

Alongside our advocacy for student welfare, the reps' other main role is to organise social events for the students. In recent years, these have been split into smaller, regular events such as Paint-and-Sip (wine) sessions and board game nights, and larger annual events like Halloween pumpkin carving, Christmas Parties or Summer Sports Days. All these events are free to attend, often include free food and drink, and let you meet new people and provide a break from the PhD life.

If you like the sound of these events, please come along, and if you like the sound of being a PhD representative, please volunteer!

We hope you enjoy your PhD student (and if you don't, let us know and we will try to help)

Best wishes,

Your Student Representative Team.

Academic and administrative staff

Director of Postgraduate Studies (Research)



Dr Tony Southall
Director of Post Graduate Studies

Office 407 Sir Ernst Chain Building, South Kensington Campus

020 759 45338

t.southall@imperial.ac.uk

Senior Tutors



Dr Abigail Clements

Senior Tutor

Office: 1.42 Flowers Building, South Kensington Campus

a.clements@imperial.ac.uk



Dr Marco Trizzino

Senior Tutor

Office: 406, Sir Ernst Chain Building, South Kensington Campus

m.trizzino@imperial.ac.uk



Dr Julia Schroeder

Senior Tutor

Office: 2.13, Munro Building, Silwood Park Campus

seniortutorsilwood@imperial.ac.uk



Dr Emma Ransome

Senior Tutor

Munro Building, Silwood Park Campus

seniortutorsilwood@imperial.ac.uk

Postgraduate Research Admin Team



James Ferguson

Postgraduate Research (PGR) & Doctoral Training Programme Administrator

202, Sir Ernst Chain Building, South Kensington Campus

james.ferguson@imperial.ac.uk



Rozan Hamilton-Nixon

Doctoral Training Programme Administrator

202, Sir Ernst Chain Building, South Kensington Campus

r.hamilton-nixon@imperial.ac.uk

Roles of the Postgraduate Research Education Team

The following section provides an overview of the roles of individual members of the Postgraduate Research Education Team. It is not intended to be exhaustive, but to give you a general sense of each team member's areas of responsibility and to help you identify the most appropriate person to contact with specific questions or concerns.

Director of Postgraduate Studies and Senior Postgraduate Tutors

The Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Senior Postgraduate Tutors play a central role in supporting postgraduate research students throughout their studies.

Their responsibilities include:

- ensuring that appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place for all research students;
- monitoring postgraduate student progress and, indirectly, supervisory performance;
- checking that registration, early- and late-stage assessments, thesis submission, and examination are completed within a reasonable timescale;
- acting as pastoral guides for postgraduate research students;
- providing advice and guidance, either on request or where a student is not making suitable progress, and liaising as necessary with the student's supervisor and/or advisors;
- consulting with Faculty Tutors where appropriate;
- acting as mediators in cases of dispute between a student and supervisor.

In general, the Director of Postgraduate Studies deals with academic matters, while the Senior Postgraduate Tutors focus primarily on pastoral and general support issues.

The Senior Postgraduate Tutors also act as Disabilities Liaison Officers

Postgraduate Research (PGR) Administrator

The PGR Administrator is the first point of contact for all matters relating to the administration of your PhD.

Their responsibilities include:

- receiving all forms and reports relating to your research degree;

- dealing with issues related to registration, bursary payments, interruptions of study, changes to registration, and other administrative matters;
- being informed of any delays in the submission of reports, together with reasons for the delay and, where appropriate, supporting medical documentation.

Doctoral Programme Training (DTP) Administrator

The Doctoral Programme Training (DTP) Administrator is the first point of contact for all issues or queries relating to the Department of Life Sciences (DoLS) Doctoral Training Programme.

Their responsibilities include:

- coordinating the PhD Buddy Mentoring Scheme for mentors and mentees, including training;
- communicating information about training, workshops, and cohort events that form part of the doctoral training programme and schedule;
- acting as the first point of contact for PhD student representatives and coordinating social events alongside student representatives.

Departmental Information

The Department is a vibrant and internationally leading centre for research and education, with research spanning every level of biological organisation, from atoms and molecules through to whole organisms, ecosystems and the biosphere. Our research addresses some of the major challenges facing society today, from climate change and biodiversity to infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance.

With a large and diverse community of academic staff, researchers and postgraduate students, the Department provides an exciting and collaborative environment in which to undertake your PhD. Our researchers work across disciplines and actively foster collaboration and the development of new fields, creating opportunities for students to engage with a wide range of expertise and approaches.

The Department is based across two campuses: South Kensington in London and Silwood Park near Ascot in Berkshire. Both campuses support a range of state of the art research facilities and resources, providing an excellent environment for research and discovery.

As a postgraduate research student, you are an important part of our research community. Alongside the support provided by your supervisory team and research group, the Department offers a dedicated training programme designed to support your developing needs throughout your PhD journey. You will also have access to over 100 complimentary professional development courses covering areas such as research, study and transferable skills, helping you develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in your research degree and beyond.

4. Department Procedures

Departmental Induction

Events during the Welcome Season

DATE	SUBJECT	ORGANISER	TIME	LOCATION / LINK
Wed 7 October	**Life Sciences PhD Induction (Compulsory)**	**Department of Life Sciences**	**11:00 – 15:15**	**Sir Alexander Fleming Building, Room 122 (1st floor), South Kensington Campus**
	GTA Training (Compulsory)	**Department of Life Sciences**	**15:15 – 16:45**	**Sir Alexander Fleming Building, Room 121 (1st floor), South Kensington Campus**
Fri 9 October	**PGR Away Day at KEW Gardens**	**Department of Life Sciences**	**9:45 – 16:00**	**Jodrell Gate on Kew Road, TW9 3DS**
Wed 14 October	Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI) Welcome Event. Programme details and to register for this event here.	Early Career Researcher Institute	13:00 – 15:00	City & Guilds Building, South Kensington
Complete by 2 October	**Online safety course (Compulsory)**	**FONS Safety Team**	**Anytime**	**Introduction to Safety at Imperial (sharepoint.com)**

Induction and Safety Training

At the start of your research you need to discuss the safety issues associated with your project with your Supervisor as there may be additional courses you need to attend.

There are a number of online courses that new PGR students must attend. These are outlined below.

All New Postgraduate Students

All new postgraduate students should complete the following safety training available on SharePoint, by the 2nd October 2026.

- Safe Lab Practice (for all lab based students)
- Introduction to Safety at Imperial (Silwood)
- Introduction to Safety at Imperial (South Kensington)

Student Instructions: Introduction to Safety Course

1. Access the courses using the links provided and log in with your **Imperial College account**. If you use another account, your completion will not be recorded, and you will need to retake the course(s) using your Imperial login.
2. Complete the courses by **2nd October**.

3. The courses each take approximately **30 minutes** to complete and provides essential information on health, safety, wellbeing, and support services available while studying at Imperial.
4. Completion of the courses is mandatory and will be monitored. Students who do not complete the course by the required date may have their access to departmental buildings removed.
5. If you experience any problems accessing the course, please contact fonssafety@imperial.ac.uk

In addition to the items listed above, new PhD students may also be required to complete further training and inductions, dependent upon the hazards associated with their work.

- Complete an online computer health assessment for your workstation: https://imperiallondon.sharepoint.com/sites/cf/HealthSafety/SitePages/Computer%20Health.aspx
- Month One Safety Training (MOST) – enrol here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/training/safety-courses/month-one-safety-training-most-e-learning/
- Risk Assessment Foundation Training (RAFT) – enrol here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/training/safety-courses/risk-assessment-foundation-training-raft-e-learning/
- Fire safety training – all new staff and PhD students need to complete the e-learning fire safety course here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/training/safety-courses/fire-safety-and-awareness-training-e-learning/

Students Doing Lab Based Work

Staff and PhD students that are doing LABORATORY BASED work need to complete the additional courses at the earliest opportunity:

- Safe Lab Practice in Faculty of Natural Sciences https://imperiallondon.sharepoint.com/sites/fons/faculty/safety/SitePages/Safe-Laboratory-Practice.aspx
- Fire Prevention and Fire Safety at Work (Practical) – Book your place via this webpage: https://imperiallondon.sharepoint.com/sites/fons/faculty/safety/SitePages/Fire-Safety-Training.aspx

There are several courses you will need to attend based on the hazards you are going to be handling during your research. You must complete all safety courses relevant to your project and lab work. Discuss this list with your supervisor to identify which courses are relevant for you to complete.

- Safe use of Fume Cupboards: e-learning course (*all lab chemists to complete this course)*
- Cryogenics: e-learning and practical class
- Compressed gases: e-learning and practical class
- Class 3B or 4 lasers: e-learning courses and Practical Laser Safety Course
- Ionising radiation: e-learning
- Use of Vacuum pumps: practical class
- Fieldwork Outdoors First Aid + Mandatory e-Learning – e learning and practical class

Conferences and Publications

During your research work you will contribute to the research group's research publications. These are the written record of your research and the work of the Research Group as a whole. Your paper/s may be co-authored by your Supervisor and other research colleagues, but it is a requirement that all co-authors should have made a significant intellectual or practical contribution to the published work.

Students must discuss publications, conference presentations, etc with your Supervisor/s. Never publish or present material without your Supervisor's (or Head of Department's) consent.

For assistance in covering conference, travel and subsistence costs PhD students can apply for financial support:
Conference Funding
Life Sciences European Travel Fund

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 and the research security e-training (for students enrolling from 1 September 2026)
- 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.

The Doctoral Training Programme designed for 1st year PhD students in the Department of Life Sciences includes professional skills courses selected for your cohort which are delivered by the ECRI. These courses are credit baring and will count towards the credit requirements. Find details on your Doctoral Training Programme and schedule here.

Attendance and Absence

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/

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.

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

Engagement Data Monitoring for Visa Compliance Team

Imperial Visa Compliance Team will ask the Department of Life Sciences Postgraduate Research (PGR) Team to monitor the engagement between our supervisors and our students.

All students who hold a visa sponsored by Imperial should be in the UK and studying in-person (unless approved for external study leave or writing up away from University). Therefore, the majority of contact points or supervisory meetings should be in-person. If there are any concerns about their engagement/lack of contact, the PGR Team are to inform the Visa Compliance team.

Departments should ask supervisors to confirm that they have been in contact with their students on a regular basis and add the details of the contact points that students have met accordingly. Students must still have supervisory contact during their "writing up" year. Departments are asked to pay attention to students who have had no in-person contact and have had "remote" contacts consecutively. Students should be on campus and should have regular in-person meetings with their supervisor. This is monitored and reported to the PGR team. Students who hold a visa will be contacted with details on monitoring in person engagement processes.

Health and Safety Information

Keeping you safe is a top priority for us.

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/

A list of Local Safety Staff can be found here:
Local safety staff | Administration and support services | Imperial College London

You may be required to complete inductions and attend training sessions to safely complete this course. These are done locally, depending on your course.

Additionally, Safety Department offers a range of Safety Courses 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. A full list of courses can be found here:

Safety Courses | Administration and support services | Imperial College London
For assistance with Safety Courses please contact safetytraining@imperial.ac.uk

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/courses-and-programmes/safety-training/

Imperial Safety Department
The Safety Department offers a range of specialist advice on all aspects of safety, including Fire 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, cryogens, 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 via Imperial's online reporting system, CoreStream, the link to which can be found here:

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 at safetydept@imperial.ac.uk.

For matters related to Fire Safety please contact firesafety@imperial.ac.uk.

Lone Working
Lone working is a risk increasing factor as you may be hindered in summoning assistance in the event of an emergency. Lone working can occur at any time of the working day so all assessments and procedures must include whether lone working is allowed and if so are any special precautions needed. Lone working for your work must be discussed with your Supervisor and appropriate arrangements put into place.

Students must be appropriately supervised and monitored when working in a laboratory area or in the field.
PhD students must obtain consent from their Supervisors to work alone in any laboratory or in the field.

The College Lone Working Policy and Code of Practice must be followed. More guidance and details are here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/lone-working/

To apply for Lone Working visit:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/lone-working/applying-for-lone-working-consent/

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

5. Doctoral Milestones and Progress Reports

The Department has a vigorous monitoring system to make sure that our PhD students are able to complete their research and write their thesis on time. This section sets out what is required of students and Supervisors at each of several well-defined stages during the PhD process, and the time scale involved. All students will progress through the stages below. The schedule is based on a 3-year project that largely involves laboratory work, and the times given are designed to ensure the project is completed and the thesis submitted in the allocated time. The minimum registration for a PhD is two years although the normal duration of a PhD is three years.

Students who expect to be away on field studies for extended periods of study should discuss their plans with their Supervisors and a Senior Postgraduate Tutor and inform the DPS.

Progress Review Panel (PRP) Appointment

All students have 2 Advisors appointed as members of their PRP. Advisors must be permanent members of the academic staff or Senior Research fellows and at least one must be outside the "broad research group". At least one of the Advisors must be familiar with the area of research. The review panel should be viewed as a friendly body rather than a threat , it is there to help, not hinder your progress from registration to PhD submission.
The general roles for Advisors are to:

1. Keep a helpful eye on the student, in the absence of the Supervisor.
2. Provide informal advice on the progress of your research and your academic performance.
3. Be someone the student can go to discuss scientific issues, which, for whatever reason, they are not able to discuss with their Supervisor.
4. Monitor the student's progress through the PhD

The Supervisor is responsible for nominating the members of a student's PRP. One of the members of the PRP should normally be from the Department of Life Sciences and the other either from outside the "broad research group" or a different department and both must be approved by the Director of Postgraduate Studies.
Following approval of the nominated Advisors, you must submit your PRP's details here within 30 days of your start date.

Compulsory Milestones

During your PhD you are required to pass three progression milestones: the Formal Research Plan, the Early Stage Assessment and the Late Stage Review. Successfully passing each of these milestones is a requirement to maintain your PhD registration so you must take them seriously and abide by the deadlines. Details of the processes are described below.

Milestone 1: Formal Research Plan
Deadline: 30 days from your start date

You will prepare a Formal Research Plan (approx. 500 words) in consultation with your Supervisor(s). It will be assessed by the two independent assessors, who form your Progress Review Panel (PRP). Your Research Plan should be submitted to your PRP for comment and discussion. You, the PRP, and your Supervisor should sign the agreed outline and submit the

document withing 30 days from your start date. Details on the submission process will be communicated to you by the PGR team.

Please note to comply with funder terms and conditions, Research Council funded students must supply the PGR Administrator with a brief summary (maximum of 4000 characters, including spaces) of their research project and associated ethical considerations. The PGR administrator will send you a pro-forma to be completed.
Please note information given to the UKRI is available to the general public so you must agree the content of this document with your Supervisor before submitting.

Milestone 2: Early Stage Assessment (ESA)
Deadline: 7 Months from your start date

In order to continue with your PhD, you must pass the Early Stage Assessment. To do so, you must produce a report (maximum 4,000 words excluding figures, tables, legends and references) containing an extended literature review, an overview of progress to date and the overall plan of research.

Your PRP will assess the report and you will make a 10-15 minute presentation to the PRP followed by a 30-45 minute viva. The PhD Supervisor will not be present at the viva; the DPS (or their nominee) may be present at the viva if requested by either the Supervisor or the PRP. Assessment will be focused at ensuring that you have a clear understanding of your research field and the direction of your project; you are not expected to have generated substantial data at this stage of the PhD.

The PRP will produce a written report detailing their views on your understanding, project plan and progress, highlighting areas which need improving in year two. You will discuss this review with your Supervisor(s) and take any recommended actions. If you underperform at this stage a re-assessment may take place. Whether a re-assessment will be offered will be decided by the DPS in consultation with the PRP and Supervisor(s). Unsatisfactory progress at this stage can result in termination of your PhD registration.

The Department has to report the completion of your ESA, it is essential you follow the ESA process and timeline. This is a strict deadline and it is your responsibility to complete your ESA by your due date. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of your PhD registration.

To successfully complete the ESA you will need to have:

- Completed the Plagiarism Awareness course and the research security e-training (Trusted Research module), for students enrolling from 1 September 2026. The module will be made available through the Student Essentials which are mandatory for all doctoral students.
- Accumulated 2 ECRI professional skills credits.
- Fulfilled the Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR), which is mandatory for all doctoral students.

Details on the submission process will be communicated to you by the PGR team.

Information on Imperial's requirement for all ESAs to be submitted to Turnitin:

www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/

Milestone 3: Late-Stage Review (LSR)

Deadline: 18 Months from your start date

This is a strict deadline.

In order to complete the final progression milestone you must demonstrate that you have laid firm foundations to complete your PhD in terms of the data you have collected/methodology established, your background knowledge and that you have a realistic plan for completing your PhD in the remaining time. To do this you must pass your Late Stage Review.

You are required to produce a report of about 8000 words (excluding Figures, Tables, legends and references) which includes a substantial literature review (updating the 7 month report and setting the research in context), the key research findings that you have generated to date and a detailed outline of planned future work for timely completion of the research (this should include a Gannt chart or equivalent).

You should submit electronic copies of your report to your PRP, Supervisor and the PGR administrator. Your report should be organized as follows:

- Title and Abstract
- An introduction to the literature relevant to your research
- A statement of aims and objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Detailed future timeline
- References

As with your ESA, the assessment will involve you giving a 15-20 minute presentation to your PRP followed by a 30-45 minute viva discussing your work in the context of the written report. The PhD Supervisor will not be present at the viva.

The focus of this assessment will be on whether or not you have made sufficient progress and reached a sufficient level of knowledge to continue on with your PhD. If you underperform at this stage, the DPS (in consultation with the PRP and Supervisor(s)) will decide if a re-assessment will take place. If you still fail to satisfy the LSR requirements then your PhD registration will be terminated and you will be asked to either withdraw or transfer to an MPhil.

The Department must report of LSR completion date to stay within Imperial's milestone regulations. *This is a strict deadline and it is your responsibility to ensure that you complete your LSR by the due date. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of your PhD registration.*

To successfully complete the Late Stage Review you will need to have:

- Accumulated 2 further credits towards your attendance requirement attending professional development activities offered by the Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI).

Details on the submission process will be communicated to you by the PGR team.

Exam Procedure: Year 3 Writing up status

From 33 months after your start date

You will be able to upload and submit your exam entry form, thesis declaration form and thesis online, 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 College single https://my.imperial.ac.uk/

There is guidance to the Examination Entry form process and Thesis Submission process is available online at https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progressing-through-your-phd-/main-stages-of-the-phd/thesis-submission/

Once you have submitted your thesis, Registry will ensure that copies are provided to your examiners, in advance of your viva examination. Your Supervisor is 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 read the Success Guide for postgraduate research students for more advice on preparing for your viva: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progressing-through-your-phd-/main-stages-of-the-phd/the-viva/

There is also dedicated guidance for students on preparing for a remote viva or other remote milestone assessments https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/remote-phd-supervision/phd-supervisors-remote-supervision--exams/

Plagiarism in Theses Guidance document:

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

Information on academic policies and procedures

www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/research-programmes/

6 Month Reviews

A progress report is required at this stage and then every six months afterward. The report involves completing a short self-assessment questionnaire, which you must fill out and sign after discussing it with your Supervisor.

You will receive an automated email at the time each 6 – month progress report is due which contains a link to an online form. Please complete this form and upload the signed and completed self-assessment questionnaire.

Please note that you may discuss a confidential report directly to the Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) without consultation with your Supervisor. This will NOT be discussed with your Supervisor at any stage and will be treated as strictly confidential.

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. Whether you're coming from a Master's, from industry or even from research, you need higher-order communicative competence to meet Imperial doctoral expectations and fulfil your ambition as a researcher.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/doctoral/academic-communication-requirement/ The university requires every doctoral student to undertake initial academic communication training within the first year of their programme. This is known as the Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR).

www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/doctoral/academic-communication-requirement/

PhD Research Days

The PhD Research Days are an opportunity for Second and Third Year PhD students to present their research. Because you are presenting to a wide range of people it would be advised to do a general overview for an audience with mixed or minimal scientific background.

Second Year Postgraduate Poster Presentations

Second year postgraduate students are required to prepare and present a poster for their PhD Research Day. *This is a mandatory requirement for all 2nd Year PhD students.*
Posters will be assessed by academic members of staff, with prizes being awarded.

Third Year Postgraduate Research Presentations

As part of the Postgraduate Research Day all third year students will be expected to give a 20-minute presentation (15 minute talk and 5 minutes question and answer session) in addition to providing a 250 word Lay Summary of their research. Formal feedback will be provided.
This is mandatory requirement for all 3rd Year PhD students.
Prizes in Science Communication will be awarded for the best oral presentations by third year students.

Doctoral Training Programme Schedule

PhD YEAR 1 2026/27			
OCTOBER	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
7-10-2026	11:00-17:00	Induction	Room 122 (1st floor), SAF, SK Campus
9-10-2026	All Day	Away Day ay Kew	Kew Gardens
28-10-2026	10:00-13:00	Data Science: Basic Statistics (ECRI)*	Online
NOVEMBER	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
2-11-2026	13:00 - 14:00	Wellbeing Fair	TBC, SAF, SK Building
19-11-2026	15:30 - 16:30	Imposter Syndrome Workshop	Room G47A, Flowers Building, SK Campus
24-11-2026	13:30 - 15:30	Critical Thinking for Communication (ECRI)*	SALC 6, 5th Floor, Sherfield Building, SK Campus
DECEMBER	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
JANUARY	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
22-01-2027	14:00 - 17:00	Ensuring Integrity: Science, Research & Integrity (ECRI)*	SALC 5, 5th Floor, Sherfield Building, SK Campus
FEBRUARY	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
2-02-2027	10:00 - 13:00	Career Planning for PhDs (ECRI)*	G47A, Ground Floor, Flowers Building, SK Campus
5-02-2027	10:30 - 11:30	Early Stage Assessment Milestone Talk with DPS	Online
MARCH	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
17-03-2027	All Day	PhD Research Day	Level 1, SAF, SK Campus
APRIL	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
27-04-2027	13:30 - 15:30	Literature Review (ECRI)*	SALC 10, 5th Floor, Sherfield Building, SK Campus
MAY	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
JUNE	**TIME**	**EVENT**	**VENUE**
No Events			
JULY	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
No Events			
* You will automatically be booked into ECRI courses based on availability and your indicated preference, spaces are limited.			

The Department of Life Science's Doctoral Training Programme is designed with you, the student, at its centre, providing training and activities to support you throughout your PhD journey.

During the academic year, a range of workshops and cohort events are offered as part of the programme. These include sessions tailored to your cohort's research interests and professional development, as well as workshops delivered by the Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI).

First-year PhD students in the Department of Life Sciences are expected to participate in all events listed in the table above. Additional information and resources can be found below.

Students based at the Silwood Park Campus can claim reimbursement for travel to the South Kensington Campus for in-person training and events.

We are committed to offering training and workshops that align with your research interests and needs. If you have specific requests for workshops or speakers, please email dtp@imperial.ac.uk

Early Career Researcher Institute Courses

The Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI)* has been asked to arrange the courses listed in the table below for your cohort as part of your degree programme. These courses are pre-scheduled for

your group. However, some courses have limited space. To ensure everyone gets a chance to participate, we ask that you choose your top four courses to attend.

You will be allocated to courses based on your preferences and the course availability, but there's no guarantee you'll get into all of them. Course allocations will be made on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about each course, click on the course title the table.

Please complete this survey to indicate your top 4 choices by 15 October 2026, 17:00.

You will be automatically booked onto a selection of the courses below (based on your preference and availability) by a member of the ECRI administration team. ECRI uses a course booking system, Inkpath.

You will receive an email notification from ECRI/Inkpath notifying you of the course/s you have been booked into. You can manage your bookings for any courses delivered by the ECRI by logging into Inkpath. See details on accessing Inkpath below.

Please ensure you read and understand the ECRI's cancellation policy. It your responsibility to manage your attendance for the ECRI courses you are booked on to as a part of the Doctoral Training Programme.

Course Date	Course Title	Start Time	End Time	Mode of Delivery
28 October 2026	Basic Statistics	10:00	13:00	MS Teams
24 November 2026	Critical Thinking for Communication	13:30	15:30	SALC 6, 5th Floor, Sherfield Building, SK Campus
22 January 2027	Science, Research and Integrity	14:00	17:00	TBC
02 February 2027	Career Planning for PhDs	10:00	13:00	G47A, Ground Floor, Flowers Building, SK Campus
27 April 2027	Literature Review	13:30	15:30	SALC 10, 5th Floor, Sherfield Building, SK Campus

Information on Pre-course Activity:
Some of the above courses have pre-course setup and activities. You will receive information from our booking system, Inkpath, within your booking confirmation and reminders under the 'Important Information' section.

If anyone has any questions or queries relating to the courses, please contact ecri@imperial.ac.uk & r.hamilton-nixon@imperial.ac.uk

Important Information about Inkpath:

Inkpath is our professional skills course booking system. Accessible via smartphone app or web browser, Inkpath allows students to manage their own bookings, view any pre-course information as well as mark their attendances. You will be able to view our Inkpath guidance and FAQ section on our website: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/guidance-for-students-and-staff/inkpath-guidance/.

When booking onto courses using Inkpath you will receive the following email communications: booking confirmations, reminders etc. they will be sent from the following email address admin@inkpath.co.uk. Email communications from this mailbox often go into the junk folder and it is advisable to change from your junk inbox to your main college email address. We also strongly advise that you file all communications from Inkpath relating to any course bookings you make so you can access this information when needed.

Logging into Inkpath:

You can download the Inkpath app on your smartphone, or can access it using any web browser on your device / desktop:

- Get the Inkpath App - Google Play Store
- Get the Inkpath App - Apple Store
- Access via the web version: Inkpath (the preferred web browser is Google Chrome)

Logging into Inkpath the first time:

To access Inkpath for the first time, you will need to:

- Navigate to Inkpath using the app (as above) or on the web (the preferred web browser is Google Chrome)
- Please read the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy before 'ticking' to accept this.
- Click the next button and *"Use Single-Sign-On".*
- Select Imperial College London from the *Choose your organisation* options
- Complete your sign up via the Imperial Single Sign On system with your Imperial credentials. To note, your Inkpath profile has been imported with your long Imperial email address: k.hayes@imperial.ac.uk so you should only use this version of your email address.
- Inkpath will remember you but may occasionally ask you to log in again in the same way.

Early Career Researcher Institute & Cancellation Terms & Conditions

Over the last few years, the Early Career Researcher Institute has been experiencing higher than usual rates of attrition which has had a significant impact on their teaching provision and is impacting on the learning experience of students attending their workshops.

Failure to cancel your place on Early Career Researcher Institute workshops is impacting other students in the following ways:

- Workshops are being cancelled at the last minute
- Teaching activities for workshops must be changed/adapted/removed at the last minute, impacting on the learning experience of other students in attendance.
- Students on waiting lists are being prevented from being offered a place on workshops

It is your responsibility to manage your attendance at Early Career Researcher Institute workshops professionally and to cancel your place, with requisite notice, if you are no longer able to attend. If you do not cancel your place, the department will incur a fine. This will be reclaimed directly from you.

- Half day course (up to 3 hours) - £50
- Full day course - £100
- Two-day courses/programmes, including residentials: £200
- Three-day courses/programmes, including residentials: £300
- If students are late (15 minutes) to a Early Career Researcher Institute workshop, they will not be able to attend and will be required to re-register for the course. Provided students have given us prior notice that they will be late, they will not be charged. However, repeated lateness will incur fines of £50.

Extenuating circumstances will of course be considered, and you can email the Early Career Researcher Institute at *ecri@imperial.ac.uk* if you are not able to cancel your place due to unforeseen circumstances.

It has never been easier for you to manage your course bookings - bookings and cancellations are all made via the Inkpath app. You are reminded about the cancellation policy through Inkpath communications and through the Early Career Researcher Institute's termly newsletter and Professional Development Bulletins.

Cancellation notice periods

- Half day courses (up to 3 hours) and full day courses - a minimum of 5 working days' notice
- Half day courses (up to 3 hours) and full day courses - a minimum of 5 working days' notice
- For residential programmes and courses – a minimum of 15 working days' notice

You are advised to always double check the cancellation notice period for your course or programme which will be referenced in your Inkpath confirmation or email confirmation.

ECRI's Attendance and Cancellation Policy

6. Pastoral 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.

South Kensington Campus Senior Tutors



Dr Abigail Clements

Office: 1.42 Flowers Building

a.clements@imperial.ac.uk



Dr Marco Trizzino

Office: 406, Sir Ernst Chain Building

m.trizzino@imperial.ac.uk

Silwood Park Campus Senior Tutors



Dr Julia Schroeder

Office: 2.13, Munro Building

seniortutorsilwood@imperial.ac.uk



Dr Emma Ransome

Munro Building

seniortutorsilwood@imperial.ac.uk

Departmental Student Wellbeing Advisor

Student Services have a dedicated Student Wellbeing Advisor (SWA) in Life Sciences, they can help provide you with general guidance on managing your wellbeing and can talk with you about any wellbeing-related concerns that you would like to discuss. This service is confidential and they are on

hand to sign post you to College wide internal resources and/or external resources too, helping you manage your wellbeing during your time at Imperial.

Syeda Razzak
s.razzak@imperial.ac.uk
204, 2nd Floor, Sir Ernst Chain Building, South Kensington Campus

The life of a PhD Student: General Advice

Both the Department and the Early Career Researcher Institute wish to offer appropriate support to you throughout your PhD studies and respond to any concerns you may have that affect your wellbeing. We hope to:

- Encourage open communication of difficulties.
- Encourage formation of good working and social relationships.

Recognising that people perform best when they are able to 'be themselves', the Department of Life Sciences aims to create a working environment that is inclusive. All members of the department share the responsibility for achieving that.

💻https://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/about/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/

How to stay motivated

Most PhD students experience days where they feel frustrated with the apparent lack of progress of their research. Research is difficult. Students sometimes confuse lack of progress with lack of ability. The fact that you are here at Imperial means that you are an able and gifted student. It is important to keep motivated by good time management, ensuring that you make time to rest and relax and have a private life outside of your PhD. Avoid perfectionism – clarify with your Supervisor his/her expectations about standards of work. Remember that even the most famous Professor has been a novice researcher at one time!

How to stay confident

The Early Career Researcher Institute offers training courses to help ensure that you gain confidence to develop technical research skills needed to conduct research to a high standard. Try not to make unfavourable comparisons with your peers but to rather focus on your own personal development. Many excellent students have times when they feel they are just not good enough to complete their PhDs.

How to deal with stress

Don't make unreasonably high demands on yourself in the name of your research. Reflect on how you are feeling and if you have a persistent low mood, speak to the Senior Postgraduate Tutor or a Counsellor. Stress and unnecessary worries can cause students to lose their effectiveness. Be proactive about spotting and managing stress.

How to prepare for life after a PhD

You may know exactly what you would like to do after your PhD or you may be unclear about the next stage of your career. The Early Career Researcher Institute offers courses in career planning that you may find helpful and you may consult the Careers Advisory Service at any time.

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/

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

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/

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/

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/

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

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/
- 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

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-/

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

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/

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.

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/research-integrity-ethics-and-sustainability/plagiarism-awareness-online-course/

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.

Imperial College London expects that all staff and students engaged in research will conduct their research responsibly and in a way that supports public trust in Imperial's research methods and findings and complies with all relevant legal and professional standards, including Imperial's research misconduct policies and processes.

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 Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures (Regulation 21) can be accessed here:

http://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).pdfhttp://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/secretariat/new-library-may-24/Regulation-21---Research-Misconduct-Policy-and-Procedures.pdf

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/research-integrity-investigations/misconduct/

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

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/research-programmes

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

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 engage 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

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

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/

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

There is a requirement to do the trusted research course which can be found here:

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-security/research-security-training/trusted-research-e-learning/

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

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

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/

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/ 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/

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/

Intellectual Property Rights Policy

Imperial's Intellectual Property (IP) policy governs the ownership and management of university? 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/

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

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/

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/

Employment During Studies

You may opt to seek employment on a part-time basis during term time, alongside your research. You might do this to supplement other funding sources, such as GTA work, use existing skills, gain new skills, work in or lead a team, expand your network, build employability, support your wellbeing, or have fun, amongst other reasons.

Being engaged in a mixture activities is important for supporting wellbeing but it is important that the time you spend on degree-related research is balanced. For some students the need to earn extra income via part-time employment is an acute need which the university acknowledges.

If you are in unexpected financial need, you should investigate what other financial support options are available. An excess of time spent on non-degree activities, can be detrimental to academic achievement. Students are not normally encouraged to undertake part-time employment for more than 8 hours on average per week, including GTA work. Any non-degree activity should not normally entail missing learning sessions, tutorials, seminars, supervision and research group meetings, placements or milestone assessments.

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/?

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 30 days to a maximum of 40 days per year 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/

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/ (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/

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

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/

Leave

It is important to take a break from your research and Imperial has a PGR Annual Leave policy in place to support you.

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

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.

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.

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/Privacy-notice.pdf

9. Animal research

Understanding the basic biology of infections, injuries and chronic diseases is an essential step in finding new treatments and cures. From cancer to malaria and war wounds to heart disease, research using animals forms an important element of Imperial's work.

Imperial believes that the use of animals in research is vital to improve human and animal health and welfare. Animals may only be used in research programmes where their use is shown to be necessary for developing new treatments and making medical advances.
Imperial is committed to ensuring that, in cases where this research is deemed essential, all animals in the university's care are treated with full respect, and that all staff and students involved with this work show due consideration at every level.

For more information please see:



www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/research-integrity-investigations/animal-research/

10. Wellbeing, support and advice

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

Student representatives

Imperial College Union operates various Representation structures, including one for postgraduates, which consists of 500+elected student representatives from programme, group or stream study level to a faculty level, who have strong links to the Officer Trustees. Reps represent the voice of students and can direct you to internal and external support services. The Union's Liberation & Community Networks also work to make sure that the views of under-represented and interest groups are heard at Imperial. The student representatives are generally 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

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

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's (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.

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/

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/

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

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 Silwood Park Campuses.

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

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/

For tuition fees queries, contact the Tuition Fees team:
020 7594 8011
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

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 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

020 7594 9444

student.hub@imperial.ac.uk

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, webinars and contract-checking services.

Level 1, Faculty Building, South Kensington Campus

020 7594 3300

accommodation@imperial.ac.uk

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/prospective/pg/

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/

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

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/

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. F for example, if you think you may have a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) or autism, but this has never been formally investigated , the Disability Advisory Service offers initial screening appointments and referrals for full assessments if appropriate.

020 7594 9755
disability@imperial.ac.uk
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.

South Kensington Campus
Dr. Abigail Clements
a.clements@imperial.ac.uk

Silwood Campus
Dr Emma Ransome
e.ransome@imperial.ac.uk

More information on Departmental Disability Officers is available at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/support-available/departmental-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

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

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/

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

Centre for Academic English (CfAE)

As a student at Imperial, you want to be good at your research and you also want to be good at communicating it. CfAE can help you:

- communicate your science more easily and more effectively in writing and in speaking
- increase your chances of publication
- improve your employability prospects through enhanced communication skills

The CfAE team are experts in academic communication and work with all students and academic staff at Imperial. They understand how busy your research timetable is, as well as what support you need and when you need it. CfAE provide a range of options which accommodate different learning styles from personalised self-study resources to live group activities to 1:1 coaching sessions.

To find out how CfAE can help you throughout your doctoral journey, visit their website, email the team or come meet them on Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus.

www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/

Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

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

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/

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

Preventing harassment and sexual misconduct | Current students | Imperial College London

11. 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/

Student Records

+44 (0)20 7594 7268
student.records@imperial.ac.uk

Degree Certificates

+44 (0)20 7594 7267
certificates@imperial.ac.uk

12. 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

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/

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

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/

13. 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

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. Your elected Union representatives share student feedback here. Imperial good practice guidelines for staff-student committees are available here:

www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/student-feedback

14. 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:

 https://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/who-we-support/research-degree-students/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

15. 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/

www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-and-promotions/recruitment/temporary-worker-appointments/graduate-teaching-assistants/

The Department of Life Sciences welcomes and encourages doctoral students to get involved in teaching undergraduate and master's students. Working as a Graduate Teaching Assistant provides you with an opportunity to broaden your experience at Imperial College and develop further skills. GTAs are highly respected in the Department and provide invaluable support for students and staff both in person and online. The Department requires GTAs to seek permission from their Supervisors prior to starting their teaching. Furthermore, GTAs will need attend a **compulsory** GTA training session **before** carrying out GTA work in the Department.
The next training session will take place at PhD Induction on the 7th October 2026.

The training programme for new Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) covers the basics of teaching and learning, small-group teaching (e.g. tutorials, problem classes, labs and online teaching), health and safety, and assessment and feedback. The Early Career Researcher Institute (formerly known as the Graduate School) also offers three courses for GTAs, all of which count towards the College's professional skills minimum attendance requirement.

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/early-career-researcher-institute/learning-and-development/courses-by-programme/gtas-and-teaching/

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/

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/

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/

16. And finally

Alumni services and benefits

Graduation is just the beginning. As part of a lifelong global community of more than 275,000 Imperial alumni, you'll enjoy access to exclusive benefits, opportunities and support wherever your future takes you.

Whether you're looking to continue learning through study discounts, mentoring, career support, online resources and events, or hoping to build meaningful connections through a worldwide network of alumni, Imperial is here to support you at every step. With added perks including Imperial Plexus, our online alumni community platform, library membership, webinars, access to Imperial College Union, and more, you'll remain part of a community that continues to open doors long after graduation.

Visit the alumni website to explore your benefits and connect with fellow Imperial alumni across the globe.

www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/recent-graduates/