# DEPARTMENT OF LIFE SCIENCES

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Introduction by the Director of Postgraduate Studies

Dr Kleoniki Gounaris

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 Graduate School. 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
- 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 Graduate School, 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”. This can also be accessed electronically at http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/

Regulations for Imperial College students appear on page 24 of this handbook and can be accessed at https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/

Please also look at http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/students/newstudents and http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/our-principles/

The Postgraduate training in the Department of Life Sciences is managed by the Postgraduate Research Education Team the members of which are shown on page 4, and their roles outlined on page 5.

You will be asked to elect fellow students to represent you at the departmental Postgraduate Education committee. On page 5 you will also find the role of the student representatives.

A number of events have been organised for you during the first few days (please see page 10).

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.

Niki Gounaris
Departmental Postgraduate Research Education Team
The following members of staff manage and administer the Departmental Postgraduate Research training programme:

Dr Kleoniki Gounaris
Director of Postgraduate Studies
Email: k.gounaris@imperial.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7594 5209

Dr Tony Southall
Postgraduate Tutor - South Kensington Campus
Email: t.southall@imperial.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7594 5247

Dr Julia Schroeder
Postgraduate Tutor - Silwood Park Campus
Email: julia.schroeder@imperial.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7594 9086

Mr James Ferguson
Postgraduate Research Administrator
Email: james.ferguson@imperial.ac.uk
Tel: 020 7594 6407
Roles of members of the Postgraduate Research Education Team

The following provides an overview of the roles of the individual members of the PG team. This is by no means exhaustive and is there to give you a general idea of the areas of responsibility of the members.

Director of Postgraduate Studies and Postgraduate Tutors:

To ensure that proper supervisory arrangements are made for all research students.

To monitor postgraduate student progress and (indirectly) supervisor performance. To check that registration, early and late stage assessments, thesis submission and examination are carried out on a reasonable timescale.

To act as pastoral guide to postgraduate research students. To give advice and guidance if requested and if the student fails to make suitable progress or to liaise satisfactorily with their supervisor and/or advisors. To consult with the Faculty Tutors as appropriate.

To act as mediator in cases of dispute between student and supervisor.

In general, the Director of Postgraduate Studies deals with all academic issues and the Postgraduate Tutors deal mostly with pastoral and general support issues.

The Postgraduate Tutors are also the Disabilities Liaison Officers (please see page 31)

The PGR administrator:

To act as a first point of call for all issues associated with the administration of your PhD. All forms and reports should be submitted to the PGR administrator.

To deal with problems and issues arising with registration, bursary payments, interruptions of studies, changes of registration etc.

The PGR administrator should be informed if there will be a delay in submitting any reports together with reasons and doctor’s notes where appropriate.

The student representatives:

The student representatives are members of the Departmental Postgraduate Student / Staff Committee. You can feedback to them any issues you are unhappy with regarding the general management of the PhD program or any other College level issues associated with the care and supervision of PhD students. The student representatives can also gather and pass on student feedback about transferable skills courses/events and about welfare or other educational issues. They act as a direct link between yourselves and the Graduate Student Union (GSU), communicating GSU-wide events and any important news or information. Another key part of the role is to organise and run social events within the department (which can involve the support of the GSU); any suggestions for social events are welcome.
Welcome to the Department of Life Sciences at Imperial College London for your PhD studies. 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. Academic staff are grouped into research themes which reflect our range of interests. There are 12 current research themes: Anaesthesia, sleep and pain, Bacterial Pathogenesis, Cell and Developmental Biology, Ecosystems and the Environment, Evolutionary Biology, Glycobiology, Infection & Immunity, Integrative Systems Biology, Membrane Biology, Molecular Mechanisms of Disease, Molecular Plant & Microbial Systems, and Synthetic Biology. You can find out about the research carried out in the Department at: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/lifesciences/research

We are committed to excellence in both research and teaching, and recruit the best staff possible to support our mission in providing high quality training for the next generation of Life Scientists. The Departmental Postgraduate Research Education team, together with your supervisor and advisors, will support your PhD training, and I wish you best of luck in this exciting period of your studies.

Anne Dell
The Graduate School
Welcome from Professor Sue Gibson, Director of the Graduate School

Academic Departments, the Graduate School and the Graduate Students’ Union work closely together to ensure opportunity is provided for an excellent and internationally renowned research experience.

As part of this commitment to you, the Graduate School has developed a programme of professional skills courses, covering a broad range of themes, for example, personal effectiveness, writing skills, presentation skills, project management and leadership skills, all of which have been tailored to suit the different stages of your research degree. The skills developed during these courses are highly valued in the job market.

Graduate School courses are free of charge to Imperial research students and I would encourage you to take as many as you can to supplement your academic training. The Graduate School works closely with the Graduate Students’ Union (GSU) and is keen to respond to student needs so if there is an area of skills training, or an activity that you would like us to offer, but which is not currently provided, please do get in touch (graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk). You should regularly check the Graduate School’s website and e-Newsletters to keep up to date with all the events and training courses available to you. The current programme can be viewed at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/

The Graduate School also runs a number of exciting social events throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge as well as to meet other students and have fun. Particular highlights include the Ig Nobel Awards Tour Show, the Chemistry Show, the 3 minute thesis competition as well as the Research Symposium. I would encourage you to take part in these activities – there are times when it can feel lonely as a research student and these events are an opportunity to be part of the wider research student community. In addition, many of the advances in science, engineering, medicine and business occur at the boundaries between disciplines and meeting students from other Departments and Faculties offers opportunity to enrich your research.

Finally, I hope that you enjoy your studies here at Imperial, and I wish you well.

Sue Gibson
Welcome from Dr Janet De Wilde, Head of Postgraduate Professional Development

I would like to welcome you to the Graduate School programme for postgraduate professional development. Our team of tutors come from a wide variety of experiences and we understand just how important it is to develop professional skills whilst undertaking postgraduate studies and research. Not only will this development improve success during your time at Imperial, but it will also prepare you for your future careers. We are continually working to develop the courses we offer and over this year you will see a range of new courses including face-to-face workshops, interactive webinars and online self-paced courses. I encourage you to explore and engage with the diverse range of opportunities on offer from the graduate school and I wish you well in your studies.

Janet De Wilde

Janet De Wilde
Welcome from the Graduate Students’ Union

I am delighted to be able to welcome you to Imperial College and to introduce you to the Graduate Students’ Union (GSU). The GSU ultimately serves to represent you as a postgraduate student and to ensure you have the most fulfilling and enjoyable time possible at Imperial.

The GSU is a university-wide representative body for postgraduate students with a committee comprised of democratically elected postgraduate students. The GSU works to support students on welfare fronts, represent students on educational matters by working with you to voice your concerns to College/departments, whilst also hosting recreational events throughout the year.

Imperial College London is undoubtedly a world-class institution with unique strengths in both teaching and research. Having been an Imperial student for 5 years myself I can fully appreciate that the university is nothing more than the people that comprise it – you’re among some of the brightest minds in the world and Imperial welcomes your contributions and enthusiasm in every sense! I encourage you to make the most of being a valued member of the Imperial community.

I hope you have a fantastic time here at Imperial and manage to take advantage of the richness of opportunity that awaits you. If you have any questions at this stage, then please do get in touch.

Luke McCrone, GSU President 2017/18

gsu.president@imperial.ac.uk  www.imperialgsu.com
# Events during the first few days

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>ORGANISER</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun 1 October</td>
<td>President’s welcome event for international PG students, plus others</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>The Great Hall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mini-Fair and Buffet Lunch</td>
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<td>12:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>SCR &amp; QTR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 3 October</td>
<td>Fresher’s Fair</td>
<td>Imperial College Union</td>
<td>11:00 – 16:00</td>
<td>Across campus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Welcome Drinks Reception (Silwood Park students)</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.00 – 19.00</td>
<td>CPB Common Room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weds 4 October</td>
<td>Safety Primary Induction Session (Silwood Park)</td>
<td>Stefan Hoyle</td>
<td>15:30 – 16:30</td>
<td>LINK Lecture Theatre (Sir Ernst Chain Building)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 6 October</td>
<td>Imperial College Welcome Event for PhD Students (Silwood Park students)</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>10:00 – 11:00</td>
<td>Haldane, Darwin and Fisher Lecture Theatres,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Professional Skills Development Talk (Silwood Park students)</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>11:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Silwood Park</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Induction (PhD Students, South Kensington Campus)</td>
<td>Department of Life Sciences &amp; Graduate School</td>
<td>16:15 – 17:30</td>
<td>Siri Ernst Chain Building, Common Room, 7th Floor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome event – Drinks Reception (PhD Students, South Kensington Campus)</td>
<td></td>
<td>17:30 – 19:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 7 October</td>
<td>Postgraduate Mingle</td>
<td>Imperial College Union</td>
<td>19.00 onwards</td>
<td>ICU, Beit Quad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 13 October</td>
<td>Induction (PhD Students, Silwood Campus)</td>
<td>Department of Life Sciences</td>
<td>11:30 – 12:30</td>
<td>Haldane Lecture Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 16 October</td>
<td>Basic Lab Safety (South Kensington)</td>
<td>Stefan Hoyle</td>
<td>14:00 – 15:00</td>
<td>SAF 122</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 20 October</td>
<td>Imperial College Welcome Event for PhD students (South Kensington Students)</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>16:00-17:00</td>
<td>Marquee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD Students Drinks Reception</td>
<td></td>
<td>17:00-19:00</td>
<td>Marquee</td>
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Postgraduate English Requirement (PER)

Postgraduate research students who are not native speakers of English must fulfil the Imperial College London Postgraduate English Requirement as soon as possible after registering for their PhD. This requirement is separate from and in addition to meeting the College entry requirements (IELTS, TOEFL, etc).

Information about the requirement can be found here:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/phd-students/postgraduate-english-requirement/

Information about the writing courses and speaking courses offered by the Centre for Academic English to support students at different stages of their PhD can be found here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/phd-students/phd-academic-writing-courses/
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/phd-students/phd-technical-speaking-courses/

These courses are all FREE for PhD students.

N.B. The PER is about assessing and supporting students’ progress and proficiency in academic English – it is not a pass/fail event.

FAQs about the Postgraduate English Requirement can be found here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/phd-students/phd-frequently-asked-questions/

Contract details for the Centre for Academic English:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7594 3478
Email:english@imperial.ac.uk

Room 309, Centre for Academic English, Level 3 Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus
Induction and safety training for Life Sciences Postgraduate students

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

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.

Primary induction (South Kensington Campus)

The primary induction for all new post graduates (taught and research) will be on the 4th October 15:30 - 16.30 in Sir Ernst Chain Building Link Lecture Theatre

This provides a brief introduction to safety procedures at Imperial, essential security information and a brief session on fire safety.

Lab safety training (South Kensington Campus)

For postgraduates doing lab based work the Lab Safety session is on 16th October 14:00 - 15:00 in SAF 122.

The lab safety sessions covers several areas of basic lab safety, including biological safety, good lab practice, chemicals, gases and cryogenics and other hazards within the lab environment. At the end of the course a series of questions using the PRS clickers and software are used to identify if the learning outcomes have been met.

Risk Assessment Foundation Training (RAFT)

A online version of RAFT needs to be completed by all students. The course is based in BlackBoard and provides training on the basic principles of risk assessment, significant risk and College forms, procedures and guidance. The learning objectives for the course are tested in an online test. All research students will be enrolled and receive links and information at beginning of October.

Fire Prevention and Fire Safety at Work

All PhD students need to attend this course. You are required to enroll onto the next available course via the course entry on the Learning and Development webpages:
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/safety/index/firepreventionandfiresafetyatwork

If you have any questions on these courses please contact Stefan Hoyle (s.hoyle@imperial.ac.uk),

Fieldwork safety sessions

Sessions concerning fieldwork assessment and fieldwork first aid / emergency procedures are arranged at Silwood Park. Dates will be notified to the appropriate students in due course.

A full list of safety courses available to students are here: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/safety-training/safety-courses-

Accidents

The Dept. operates a ‘no blame culture’ in regards to accidents and near misses. The aim is to learn from any of these events so that they can be prevented from happening again. All accidents (those that result in injury, harm or damage) and all near misses (those that could have caused injury, harm or damage) are reported via the online reporting system called SALUS:
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.


To apply for Lone Working visit: https://share.imperial.ac.uk/services/SafetyDpt/loneworking/LoneWorkingForm/SitePages/Home.aspx
# PhD RESEARCH

## Programme Deadlines

### PhD Research Programme Outline

| Year 1 | 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017  
(start date for most students) | Start of programme.  
Start of Academic Training Programme.  
[Non-native English speakers: language tests; possible recommendations for English support courses]  
Complete IC/A registration form |
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<td>23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; October 2017</td>
<td>Progress Review Panel (PRP) appointed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November 2017</td>
<td>Formal Research Plan agreed with Supervisor and approved by PRP. A copy needs to be uploaded to BlackBoard.</td>
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</table>
| | 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017  
(RCUK-funded Students Only) | Research Council funded students must submit Je-S Project Details/Information to the PGR administrator. |
| | 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 | Compulsory Plagiarism Awareness Course should be completed and certificates uploaded to BlackBoard |
| | 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018 | Progress Report 1 (6 Month Self-Assessment Questionnaire)  
This will be repeated every 6 months during your PhD studies |
| | 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 | ESA -9 month report submitted, followed by a meeting/assessment with PRP to discuss progress.  
The meeting must take place within one month of submission of the report. |

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<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; April 2019</th>
<th>LSR- 18 Month report submitted, followed by a meeting/assessment with PRP. The meeting must take place within one month of submission of the report.</th>
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| | Spring/Summer 2019 | Postgraduate Research Day – 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Poster Presentation  
The exact date will be confirmed and notices will be sent out prior to the Postgraduate Research Day |
| | October 2019 | 24 Month Self-Assessment Questionnaire – at this stage a thesis outline and updated research plan is required |

| Year 3 | March/April 2020 | Postgraduate Research Day – 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Oral Presentations  
The exact date will be confirmed and notices will be sent out prior to the Postgraduate Research Day |
|---|---|---|
| | October 2020 | 3 years completed  
Research expected to be completed.  
You can either leave College, register for Writing-Up status – for a maximum of 12 months no tuition fees payable - or register for continuing your research - full tuition fees payable pro-rata. |

| Year 4 | 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 | College deadline for thesis submission:  
48 months post registration.  
This is an absolute deadline  
and it is independent of the status you enter after 3 years (see above) |
PhD Research Programme – Brief Outline

Year 1

Research plan - Deadline: 13th November 2017

A plan of research (maximum 1000 words) to be submitted for assessment by two independent assessors, who form the student's Progress Review Panel (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 from a different department and both must be approved by the Postgraduate Education Committee.

RCUK Studentship Details - Deadline: 13th November 2017

To comply with funder terms and conditions, Research Council funded students must supply the PGR Administrator with a brief summary of their research project and associated ethical considerations. The PGR Administrator will send students a pro-forma to be completed. Please note information given to the RCUK is available to the general public.

Mandatory Plagiarism Awareness Course - Deadline: 13th November 2017

The course is designed to provide you with guidance and information about proper citation and attribution in writing. After completing the course you should be able to explain what plagiarism is, be familiar with the concept of academic integrity, be able to explain how to avoid plagiarism and learn what the College’s policy concerning plagiarism is. The Department recommends all students* should complete the Plagiarism Course within the first six weeks.

Instructions on how to self-enroll are available here: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/study/graduate-school/public/course-materials/Plag-Awareness_Self-Enrol-Guide_N-Sciences_2016-17.pdf

Once you have completed the course you must print or PDF the certificate and upload it the relevant Dropbox on BlackBoard. Instructions available at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/study/graduate-school/public/course-materials/Guide-to-Certificates---Online-Plagiarism-Awareness-Course.pdf

*If you have completed a Master’s at Imperial College London you will not be expected to take the course again. However, students are encouraged to engage with the doctoral version of the course to refresh your knowledge.

Year 1 (9 months) – Early Stage Assessment – ESA - Deadline: 2nd July 2018

A report of about 4,000-5,000 words, (excluding figures, tables, legends and references) should be submitted containing an extended literature review, an overview of progress to date and the overall plan of research. Assessment will be focused at ensuring the student has a clear understanding of their field and the direction of their project, rather than the amount of data produced. The report will be assessed by the 2 assessors (PRP) and also read/ assessed by the primary PhD supervisor. A 10-15 minute presentation by the student to the assessors will be followed by a 30-45 minute viva. The PhD supervisor will not be present at the viva.

If the assessors or the supervisor identify any issues which may need to be dealt with during the viva, they should inform the Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) who may wish to attend the viva as an observer or nominate another member of staff. If a student underperforms at this stage a re-assessment may take place in about 6 weeks time. Whether a re-assessment will be offered will be decided by the
DPS in consultation with the PRP and supervisor(s).

**Year 2 (18 months) – Late Stage Review – LSR - Deadline: 1st April 2019**

A report of about **8,000** words (excluding figures, tables, legends and references) should be submitted. The report should include a substantial literature review (updating the 9 month ESA report and setting the research in context), it should present all data that resulted from the work completed to-date and also give a detailed outline of planned future work for timely completion of the research.

A 15-20 minute presentation by the student to the assessors will be followed by at least a 30-45 minute viva. The PhD supervisor will **not** be present at the viva. The focus of this assessment will be on whether or not the student has made sufficient progress and reached a sufficient level of knowledge to continue on to a PhD or be requested to exit with an MPhil at 24 months. If a student underperforms at this stage a re-assessment may take place in 2 months time. Whether the re-assessment will be offered will be decided by the DPS in consultation with the PRP and supervisor(s)

**Year 3 (From 33 months) - Thesis submission**

MONITORING AND REVIEWING STUDENT PROGRESS

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 the Postgraduate Tutor and inform the DPS.*

**Research Degree Registration**

If you have not already done so-you must register for your research degree, within the first 2 weeks of October. You can do this online through the student e-service:

[http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/postgraduates/before-you-arrive/registration/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/postgraduates/before-you-arrive/registration/)

Every student must register with the College for each year of his/her studies, as soon as they join the department and thereafter every October for the duration of his/her research.

**IC/A Registration Form**

Within one month of your first registration you must complete the College IC/A registration form and return it to your supervisor to sign and upload to BlackBoard.

**Progress Review Panel (PRP) Appointment Form**

The supervisor is responsible for nominating the members of a student’s Progress Review Panel (PRP), by email, to the DPS and the PGR administrator.

*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, after consultation with the Postgraduate Education committee.*

Following approval of the nominated Advisors, you should complete and upload your PRP Appointment Form to BlackBoard by Monday 23\(^{rd}\) October 2017 at the latest.

**Role of PhD Advisors**

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.
PhD PROGRAMME IN DETAIL
REGISTRATION AND START

Register for a PhD!

With the help of your supervisor:

a) Complete the College IC/A registration Form (available from the PGR Administrator)

b) Nominate the composition of your Progress Review Panel (PRP) to the DPS. Following approval complete the PRP Appointment Form and upload it to BlackBoard by 23rd October 2017.

c) All research students who are not native speakers of English must take an English assessment test at Imperial College when they start their research.

For more details and dates for the Initial English Assessment Tests see: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/phd-students/postgraduate-english-requirement/

AFTER REGISTRATION

The student prepares a Formal Research Plan (approx. 1000 words) in consultation with their supervisor. It will be assessed by two independent assessors, who form the student’s Progress Review Panel (PRP). The Research Plan should be submitted to the PRP for comment and discussion. The agreed outline should be signed by the student, the supervisor and the members of the PRP and uploaded to BlackBoard by 13th November 2017.

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 students a pro-forma to be completed.

6 MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION

A progress report is required at this stage and at every subsequent 6 month interval. The report takes the form of a short self-assessment questionnaire (see Appendix) to be completed by the student and signed by both student and supervisor.

Please note that you may, if you wish, submit 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”.

9 MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION – CONFIRMATION OF PhD REGISTRATION – Early Stage Assessment (ESA)

This is a strict deadline. The deadline for this academic year is Monday 2nd July 2018
A report of about 4,000-5,000 words, (excluding figures, tables, legends and references) should be submitted containing an extended literature review, an overview of progress to date and the overall plan of research. This would normally be presented in the form of an Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results to-date (if any) and a brief Discussion. A plan for future experiments should also be presented. Assessment will be focused at ensuring the student has a clear understanding of their field and the direction of their project, rather than the amount of data produced.
The report will be assessed by the 2 assessors (PRP) and also read/assessed by the primary PhD supervisor. A short (30 - 45 minutes) viva will take place. The PhD supervisor will not be present at the viva. Please check if your PRP would like you to make a brief (10-15mins) presentation.

If the assessors or the supervisor identify any issues which may need to be dealt with during the viva, they should inform the DPS who may wish to attend the viva as an observer or nominate another member of staff. If a student underperforms at this stage a re-assessment may take place in about 6 weeks time. Whether a re-assessment will be offered will be decided by the DPS in consultation with the PRP and supervisor(s).

Three hard copies of the report must be submitted to the PRP and the student must upload an electronic copy to BlackBoard.

You will meet with members of the PRP normally WITHIN ONE MONTH OF SUBMISSION. **It is the responsibility of the supervisor to arrange this meeting.**

Students will receive a written report detailing the PRP's views on their progress and in particular highlighting areas of their work, which need improving in year two. An electronic copy of the PRP's report should be sent to the Director of Postgraduate Studies (via the PGR administrator).

It is particularly important that the supervisor should report immediately, in writing, to the DPS any student whose progress is unsatisfactory, and in all cases when termination of study is being considered. If a student underperforms at this stage, a decision will be made by the DPS in consultation with the PRP and supervisor(s) about whether a re-assessment may be offered in 6 weeks time.

**12 MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION.**

The student must complete another self-assessment questionnaire (as at 6 months – see Appendix).

**18 MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION – Late Stage Review (LSR)**

The student is required to submit 3 hard copies of the report AND an electronic copy to the PGR administrator. This report should contain **about 8000 words** (excluding Figures, Tables, legends and references). Additionally, no more than 20 pages for tables, illustrations, legends and references are required. The report should include a substantial literature review (updating the 9 month report and setting the research in context), should present all data that resulted from the work completed to-date and also give a detailed outline of planned future work for timely completion of the research.

The report will normally comprise:
- An Abstract
- An introduction to the literature relevant to your research
- A statement of aims and objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Bibliography
- **AND a detailed, timetabled research plan**

The focus of this assessment should be on whether or not the student has made sufficient progress and reached a sufficient level of knowledge to continue on with your PhD or be requested to exit with an MPhil at 24 months.
PhD Research Days / Research Presentation & Posters

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 Postgraduates Poster Presentation

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 Postgraduates Research Presentation

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.
PhD STUDENTS & SUPERVISORS: What to expect

Supervisors expect you to:

1) *Take responsibility* for your thesis – in the end it is your work and your supervisors are here to help you accomplish your research objectives, but *not* to do the thinking for you!

2) *Work hard* – PhDs cannot be accomplished with only a 9-5 effort. Imperial College is a top ranked University and we expect that students will strive to accomplish good work.

3) *Display initiative* – ultimately, the person who drives the process and strives to understand the research area is you. We expect you to be curious about your work and to think about how other ideas/work have an impact on the research you are doing. In light of this, it is a requirement for you to attend all lab meetings, work in progress etc plus other seminars. TO BE A SCIENTIST – YOU SHOULD BE CURIOUS ABOUT SCIENCE!

4) *Write papers* (this is dependent on field of study) before you have submitted your thesis. The process of writing enables you to develop skills which are useful when writing up your thesis, and the fact that you have had papers refereed/accepted by International journals satisfies the external examiner that you have what it takes!

5) *Be self-critical* of your own work and results, and use these skills in being skeptical of results in the literature.

6) *Help colleagues* (especially less experienced ones) in the laboratory to learn through discussions and demonstrations.

7) *Keep up with the literature* in your field through searches on the computer every few months and by reading current papers.

8) *Write progress reports* every 6 months detailing your results – to this end, you should be conscientious about keeping a laboratory notebook and regularly entering all your data into tables and Excel spreadsheets.

9) *Be aware of safety* at all times and follow safety procedures, especially if you are working in a laboratory.

10) *Develop your skills and learn new ones* by attending the transferable skills courses and lectures provided by the Graduate Schools, your own and other College departments/divisions/faculties and by any other external providers.

In return, as a student you can expect your supervisor to:

1) *Be supportive* of you both intellectually and personally;

2) Set up a viable project and **ensure that you have a clear idea of aims and objectives** and an initial work-plan;

3) *Provide* an adequate work space for you
4) **Be available** (or provide an identified substitute) to talk about research problems at relatively short notice although, at certain times of the year, you may need to give a few days notice;

5) **Help** and guide you extensively in your first year; help you in your second year; and be a sounding board in your third year. The help is tapered as you develop confidence in your own abilities and research skills, to enable you to learn to work more on your own and to make more of your own decisions;

6) Help **develop** your skills in technical writing, oral presentations, problem definition, statistical data analysis and critical literature reviews;

7) Help **enable** you to attend at least one **conference** to present your work;

8) Provide adequate **funds and/or facilities** for your research project;

9) Read your thesis thoroughly and make **constructive comments** on both style and intellectual content.

**Together, students and supervisors are expected to:**

Stick strictly to the College time-frame which allows a maximum of 4 years between registration and submission of the PhD thesis. For further information see Imperial College’s publication “Learning to Research”: A Code of Practice for Successful PhD Completion for Research Students and Supervisors – available at:

http://workspace.imperial.ac.uk/communications/public/learningtoresearch.pdf
Plagiarism

You are reminded that all work submitted must be expressed in your own words and incorporate your own ideas and judgments.

Plagiarism, that is the presentation of another person’s thoughts or words as though they were your own, must be avoided. Note that you are encouraged to read and criticize the work of others as much as possible. You are expected to incorporate this in your thinking but you must acknowledge and label your sources.

Direct quotations from the published or unpublished work of others, from the internet or from any other source, must always be clearly identified as such. A full reference to their source must be provided in the proper form and quotation marks used. Remember that a series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source. Equally, if you summarize another person’s ideas, judgments, figures, diagrams or software, you must refer to that person in your text and include the work referred to in your bibliography. Departments are able to give advice about the appropriate use and correct acknowledgement of other sources in your own work.

The direct and unacknowledged repetition of your own work, which has already been submitted for assessment, can constitute self-plagiarism. Where group work is submitted, this should be presented in a way approved by your department. You should therefore consult your tutor or course director if you are in any doubt about what is permissible. You should be aware that you have a collective responsibility for the integrity of group work submitted for assessment.

The use of the work of another student, past or present, constitutes plagiarism. Where work is used without the consent of that student, this will normally be regarded as a major offence of plagiarism.

Failure to observe any of these rules may result in an allegation of cheating. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be dealt with under the College’s Procedure for Dealing with Examination Offences and may result in a penalty being taken against any student found guilty of plagiarism.

For information on Plagiarism awareness see:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/plagiarism-awareness/
Regulations for Students

1. All registered students of the College are subject to the provisions of these Regulations for Students, the College Academic Regulations, and such other Regulations and Instructions for Students as the College may from time to time approve.

2. Any student whose sessional tuition fees have not been paid in full may not be allowed to proceed to the next year of the programme and may be required to withdraw from the College. If any fees are still unpaid at the time when a student enters for the last examination necessary to qualify for the award of a degree/diploma, the award may not be conferred and no certificate in respect of the award will normally be issued until the debt has been paid in full.

3. Any student wishing to occupy residential accommodation provided by, or on behalf of, Imperial College will be required to abide by the terms and conditions of the Licence. Acceptance of an offer of accommodation will signify acceptance of such terms and conditions.

4. Every registered student of the College is automatically a member of Imperial College Union unless, under the provisions of the Education Act 1994, a student has formally opted out of student union membership by recording that decision with the Academic Registrar in the manner prescribed.

5. Student disciplinary offences of a non-academic nature are dealt with under a code of procedure agreed by Imperial College Union and approved by the Governing Body. In the case of serious offences, this may involve the suspension and/or expulsion of the student from the College. Students must not engage in any conduct which causes harm or unreasonable disturbance to students, staff, neighbours or visitors to the College, or damage to any property of the College or its students, staff, neighbours or visitors, or engage in any activity or behaviour which is likely to bring the College into disrepute. Illegal acts on or near College may also constitute offences under these College Regulations for students.

6. Candidates for the research degrees are required by the College regulations to give conditional authority for their thesis or dissertation to be made available for public consultation. Candidates who wish to seek a delay to making the thesis available for public consultation may seek an embargo for a limited period of normally no longer than 24 months... Acceptance of a place as a research student at the College is deemed to imply acceptance of these conditions.

7. Students must inform their Senior Undergraduate/Postgraduate Tutor if they are absent from College for more than three days during term. If the absence is due to illness a medical certificate must be provided for periods of more than seven days. If an examination is missed students must contact their Senior Undergraduate/Postgraduate Tutor on the day of the examinations and, if the absences is on account of illness, a medical certificate must be provided within five working days in accordance with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

8. A student who contracts an infectious or contagious disease may be required to present a medical certificate acceptable to the College Health Service, indicating freedom from infection, before resuming attendance at the College.

9. The College may require a student to be assessed by the College Health Service, or other appropriate medical practitioner approved by the Health Service, if there is reason to believe that the student’s state of health makes him/her unable to pursue his/her studies, or causes disruption to other members of the College, or causes or has the potential to cause harm to him/herself or others. If the medical assessment confirms that it is not in the interests of the student or the College that the student should continue his/her programme of study the Head of Department shall consult the College Tutors and, taking into account their advice, may suspend the student until he/she is fit to continue his/her studies or require
the student to withdraw from the College. A student who refuses to undergo assessment may be suspended until such time as a medical practitioner acceptable both to the student and the College has assessed the student and confirmed in writing that the student is fit to resume study.

A student who is required to withdraw has the right to appeal against the withdrawal decision but not against the results of the medical assessment on which the decision is based. The student may, however, request that a second medical assessment be obtained from a medical practitioner approved by the College Health Service. The responsibility for hearing and deciding upon appeals is vested in the Senate and is delegated by the Senate to Appeal Committees, whose decisions are final.

A student who is suspended will be regarded as having taken an interruption of studies, and will be required to provide medical evidence as to fitness to return to study in accordance with the conditions attached to the granting of interruption of studies.

10. No work may be carried out in any part of the College except in accordance with the current College Safety Policies. This includes, but is not limited to; ionising radiation, biological agents, compressed gases and hazardous substances. Details of these policies can be found on the safety website: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety

11. Students who make use of College Computing facilities are required to familiarise themselves with and to abide by the current edition of the Imperial College Information Systems Security Policy and Codes of Practice and Guidelines.

12. Computer misuse will be regarded as a serious offence and will be dealt with under the College Disciplinary Procedure or, where appropriate, under the provisions of the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

13. Students who are authorised, as part of their studies, to make use of ‘data’ and ‘personal data’ as defined under the Data Protection Act 1998 are required to familiarise themselves with, and to observe the provisions of, the Act. Further details are available from the College Data Protection Officer.

14. All students must familiarise themselves and comply with the College’s Intellectual Property Policy.

15. Students must ensure that their personal data on student e-service is kept up to date at all times including any change in their home or term time address or their emergency contact details.

16. Where a student has a pre-existing relationship, or develops a relationship during the programme of study, with a member of staff such that there is a potential conflict of interest, especially with regard to the student’s assessment, the student and member of staff must declare this in confidence to the Head of Department at the start of the programme of study or at the point at which the relationship has started if this is during the programme of study.

17. The College may on occasion record lectures and other learning and teaching activities. Student contributions to these activities may also be recorded.

18. The covert or concealed audio or video recording of staff or students by individual students is not permitted and will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

Senate June 2017
IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Annual Leave

Students should always report their holiday arrangements to their supervisor in advance (also please note student regulations above).

Remember that working without a break for seven days a week is likely to be less effective than hard work interspersed with some periods for rest and recreation. Always consult with your supervisor before you make any arrangements for your holidays.

*International students must notify the PGR administrator if they plan to go on leave.*

Working while studying

If you are studying full time, the College recommends that you do not work part-time. If this is unavoidable we advise you to work no more than 10–15 hours per week, which should be principally at weekends and not within normal College working hours. Working in excess of these hours could impact adversely on your studies or health.

If you are here on a Tier 4 visa you can work no more than 20 hours a week. Some sponsors may not permit you to take up work outside your studies and others may specify a limit.

If you are considering part-time work you are strongly advised to discuss this issue with your supervisor or Postgraduate Tutor. If you are on a Tier 4 visa you should also seek advice from the International Student Support team regarding visa limitations on employment.

Demonstrating (GTA) at College

The Department of Life Sciences welcomes and encourages doctoral students to get involved in teaching undergraduate and master’s students. Working as a demonstrator (or Graduate Teaching Assistant, GTA) 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. 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 sessions will take place on:

16:00 – 17:00 13th October 2017 - Room 121 SAF, South Kensington campus

16:00 – 17:00 26th January 2018 - Room 121 SAF, South Kensington campus

The training programme for new and existing Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) covers the basics of teaching and learning, small-group teaching (e.g. tutorials, problem classes, labs) and assessment and feedback.

The Graduate School also offers three courses for GTAs, all of which count towards the College’s professional skills minimum attendance requirement. More information is available here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/gtas/
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/gtas/graduate-school-support-and-workshops/
Academic 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 the College’s approach to plagiarism is available on the Student Records and Data website:


Cheating offences policy and procedures

It is important that you learn how to properly attribute and acknowledge the work, data and ideas of others. Plagiarism is scientific misconduct, and students whose assessments can be shown to contain plagiarism are subject to penalties as outlined in the College’s Cheating Offences Policy and Procedures – see Appendix 3 of the Examination Regulations which can be found here:

www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations

Intellectual property rights policy

For further guidance on the College’s Intellectual Property Rights Policy, please contact the Research Office: www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/ip

Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

The College wishes to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of its students are not jeopardised through misuse of alcohol or substances in College.

Please refer to the College’s policy: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/current-students/public/Student-Alcohol-and-Substance-misuse-policy.pdf
Academic Training Programme

Background

The Department has been concerned that postgraduate students have often focused too narrowly on their immediate research topics without developing either a broad knowledge of their subject or the broad range of skills needed to master their own subject efficiently. Individual students and supervisors have learned and taught what was needed, often in isolation. Many of the skills needed for effective life sciences research require multi-disciplinary input and group efforts. Therefore, an academic training programme has been put in place to address these concerns and to improve the quality of the training that the Department, in conjunction with the Graduate School, offers to its students.

Below are the aims and objectives of the Academic Training Programme.

Aims

To provide training in research methodologies aimed at equipping students to undertake their research projects efficiently.

To provide training which leads to the acquisition of personal transferable skills.

To provide guidance to students in planning their future careers.

Objectives

Through participation in the training programme students should be able to:

• use information technology to search for, process and present information
• use statistics to design experiments and interpret results
• organise time and information effectively
• plan and conduct research efficiently
• define research problems
• be able to communicate effectively with your supervisor and peers, and utilise appropriate negotiation skills
• understand basic laboratory safety issues
• understand the career opportunities/structure for post doctoral scientists and the skills needed at the various stages of seeking employment
• present written, graphical and oral summaries of your research to different interest groups
• successfully present a thesis for examination
• understand the approaches to protecting the intellectual property rights of your work

Seminars

In addition to the above skills, it is a major aim of the Departmental Academic Training programme, that PhD students are exposed to a broad range of research areas. To this aim, it is mandatory for all PhD students to attend most, if not all, Departmental seminars - they take place once a month and are widely advertised.
Student Surveys

Your feedback is important to your department, the College and Imperial College Union. Whilst, there are a variety of means to give your feedback on your Imperial experience, don’t miss your opportunity to express your views via the Union’s Student Experience Survey (SES) which will be run at the end of the Autumn Term 2019. This is the only College-wide survey in which research students will be asked to participate in 2019-20. The survey will cover your induction, welfare, pastoral and support services experience.

This is an annual survey and results from the previous surveys can be found at: 
https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/student-surveys/pg-student-surveys/postgraduate-research-experience-survey-pres/

Imperial also participates in the national, biennial, Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) run by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). This survey is important as it allows the College to benchmark itself against other UK higher education institutions. PRES covers topics such as supervision, research community, progress and assessment, opportunities and research skills. It also includes a few extra questions about issues that are particularly important to us at Imperial such as graduate teaching activities and professional development.

Imperial took part in PRES in 2008, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017. The surveys showed an increase in positive results across all the main categories of Supervision, Resource, Research Culture, Progress & Assessment and Student Voice. In 2017 87% of students described themselves as satisfied with their overall research degree programme experience, well above Imperial College’s and the Sector’s top quartile scores.

For further information on PRES see: 
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/surveys/pres

For further information on surveys please contact the Registry’s Surveys Team on surveys.registrysupport@imperial.ac.uk
The Life of a PhD Student: General Advice

Both the Department and the Graduate School 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.

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 Graduate School 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 PG 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 Graduate School offers courses in career planning that you may find helpful and you may consult the Careers Advisory Service at any time.
Pastoral Help and Advice for Postgraduate Students

The primary source of help and support for all students is, of course, their research supervisor(s). However, occasionally, issues may arise which students would prefer to discuss with someone other than their supervisor. The Postgraduate Tutors and Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) are more than happy to see postgraduates in the Department to discuss any matters of concern. You should certainly come and discuss with either of them any problems or concerns, which you feel unable to raise with your supervisor or advisors.

The PG Tutors are available to deal with any problems you feel unable to discuss with your supervisor. They can help you get further help if required and can liaise with your supervisor directly to help resolve any issues. If problems arise you would normally contact the PG tutors in the first instance. However, you can also contact the DPS if the PG tutors are unavailable.

Any discussions you may have with any of us will be treated in strict confidence.
Information for Students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties or long-term health issues

At Imperial College we recognise that studying at university can be a challenge, especially if you have a disability. We are keen that you have every opportunity to fulfil your potential and graduate with the degree you deserve. It is therefore important that you let us know about any disability, specific learning difficulty or health problem as soon as possible so that we can give expert advice and support to enable you to do this.

Some people never think of themselves as having a disability, but students who have experienced any of the issues listed below have found that a little extra help and support has made all the difference to their study experience.

- Specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD[H]D)
- Autistic spectrum disorder (such as Asperger’s)
- Deafness or hearing difficulties
- Long term mental health difficulties (such as chronic anxiety, bipolar disorder, depression)
- Medical conditions (such as epilepsy, arthritis, diabetes, Crohn’s disease)
- Physical disabilities or mobility impairments
- Visual difficulties

Where to find help:

1. **Your Disability Liaison Officer** will be your Postgraduate Tutor: Dr Tony Southall (South Kensington Campus) or Dr Julia Schroeder (Silwood Park Campus).

   Your Postgraduate Tutors are your first point of contact within the department and are there to help you with arranging any support within the department that you need. They are also the persons who will apply for Special Examination arrangements on your behalf, if required.

2. **Disability Advisory Service**: [http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice)

   The Disability Advisory Service works with individual students no matter what their disability to ensure that they have the support they need. We can also help if you think that you may have an unrecognised study problem such as dyslexia. The service is both confidential (information about you is only passed on to other people in the university with your agreement) and individual in that any support is tailored to what you need.

   Some of the sorts of things we can help with are:
   - Being an advocate on your behalf with others in the College such as your departmental liaison officer senior tutor or exams officer, the accommodation office or the estates department
   - Checking that your evidence of disability is appropriate and up-to-date
   - Arranging a diagnostic assessment for specific learning difficulties
   - Help with applying to the College for the cost of an assessment
   - Help with your application for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) see below
Helping students not eligible for the Disabled Students Allowance in obtaining support from other sources

Help with arranging extra Library support

Supporting applications for continuing accommodation for your second or later years

3. **Disabled Students Allowance:**

[http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice/supportatimperial/funding](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice/supportatimperial/funding)

Students who are home for fees and who have a disability can apply for a grant called the Disabled Students Allowance which can pay any extra costs that are a direct result of disability. This fund is not means-tested and is also a grant not a loan so any home student with a disability can apply and will not be expected to pay it back. Remember students with unseen disabilities such as mental health difficulties, dyslexic type difficulties or long term health problems are also eligible for this fund.
The PhD Well-being Assessment Information for PhD Students

Background
In early 2009, an on-line well-being assessment was developed specifically for Imperial's PhD population. The assessment was based on a clinically approved methodology and drew upon consultations with over 60 students and staff. After piloting, students were invited to complete the questionnaire during May 2009.

Results
1202 students completed the assessment, giving a response rate of over 45%. In addition to quantitative data, 229 free text comments were received.
Statistical analysis has allowed us to rank the issues that have the greatest negative impact on researchers' well-being. The top ten are reported here, along with some questions that students might like to consider.

The well-being top ten most troublesome items:
1. Feeling frustrated / demotivated by your results and apparent lack of progress.
2. Experiencing high levels of stress because of your research.
3. Being unclear about the next stage of your career after your PhD.
4. Lacking confidence in your ability to conduct research to the necessary standard.
5. Being frustrated with the college's administration systems.
6. Having a high workload that impacts on your private life.
7. Making unreasonably high demands of yourself in the name of research.
8. Experiencing a persistent low mood because of your research.
10. Feeling disappointed in your own abilities as an academic researcher.

Questions to consider

About doing research

Are your expectations for your rate of progress realistic? Are you aware that for most researchers progress is non-linear and there may be periods when you feel like you are getting nowhere?

Are you receiving sufficient and useful feedback and guidance about your work? If not, let your supervisor(s) know.

Is/are your relationship(s) with supervisor(s) sufficiently open to allow you to raise difficulties and doubts? It is usually better to address problems quickly, before they grow.

Do you have sufficiently strong relationships with others in your group / department so that problems may be discussed?

Are you taking up appropriate opportunities to speak about your work at seminars or conferences?

Is your workload appropriate? Do you need to discuss it with your supervisor(s)?
Do your research group activities include a social element? If not, consider starting something up – probably everyone else would appreciate it?

*About stress and your health*

Are you aware of the support available within the department (postgraduate tutors) and beyond (College tutors), the counselling service and stress management workshops run by the graduate schools?

Are you being proactive to manage your stress levels? Don’t ignore the signs of stress or wait for problems to become serious.

Are you taking suitable breaks, doing any physical exercise, eating well, etc?

Is your work-life balance acceptable and healthy?

Are you working late evenings and at weekends too often?

Do you find some time for recreational activities?

Are you aware of your holiday entitlements? Are you actually taking any holiday?

*About your future plans*

Are you aware of the career management courses offered by the Graduate Schools and that you may freely consult the Careers Advisory Service (who offer services and events specifically for PhD students)?

Have you talked to your supervisor and others in your department/division about your career plans?

Are you starting to think about your next steps early on in your PhD? Career planning takes time, so don’t leave it too late!

*About other matters*

Do you regularly get together with other researchers for social as well as research related reasons?

Is there clear guidance within your department/division about administration processes? If not, ask for it.

Written by Elaine Walsh, Graduate Schools, Imperial College London
General support and advice

If you feel the need to seek help, advice or guidance, there are a number of people you can talk to:

**Student Counselling Service**
Level 4, Sherfield Building, Tel: +44 (0) 20 759 49637 (Email: counselling@imperial.ac.uk)
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling

Counselling is available to any student registered with the College, about any personal issue. Appointments are available at the South Kensington, Hammersmith and Silwood Campuses. To arrange an appointment, please telephone or email (details above).

**Disability Advisory Service**
9.00-16.00 – Monday to Friday
Level 4, room 445 Sherfield Building, Tel: +44 (0) 20 759 48935
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice
Email: disabilities@imperial.ac.uk
Confidential advice to students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties or health related difficulties in relation to accessing academic studies, the campus, accommodation or disability related benefits.

**Chaplaincy Centre**
East Basement, Beit Quad
Tel: +44 (0) 20 759 49600
Email: Chaplaincy@imperial.ac.uk
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy

Andrew Wilson, Coordinating Chaplain (Anglican) a.willson@imperial.ac.uk
Geoff Wheaton, Chaplain (Roman Catholic), More House, 53 Cromwell Road +44 0(20) 7581 2130
Pastoral care, hospitality and support to all members of the College. The Chaplaincy has a quiet room available during the day. For a programme of services and events, as well as finding places of worship and student faith societies, please take a look at the website above. The Chaplaincy can give contact details for many other London chaplains of a variety of faiths.

The Muslim Prayer Room, basement - 9 Prince’s Gardens from 12 to 2pm. Friday prayers are held each week at different locations around campus.
Email: islam@imperial.ac.uk for more information.

The ICU Handbook contains further details of societies for specific faith groups.

**Graduate School Union**
Research students are members of the College Students’ Union and are encouraged to participate in its activities; the Union has an active postgraduate group, which holds regular social events and discussions. Web: https://www.union.ic.ac.uk/presidents/gsu/
Union Support
The Advice Centre, Imperial College Union
Mezzanine Level, Beit Quad, South Kensington Campus
Web: www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice
Confidential, impartial and independent advice on welfare issues including housing, money and debt advice, sexual, mental and general health awareness, drugs and alcohol, employment and consumer rights, and personal safety. Also deals with academic issues, such as assisting students in appealing against a decision or making a complaint.

Student Representation Network
Each course has elected departmental representatives with whom you can raise any issues regarding your course. Alternatively, for advice or assistance on academic issues, contact the Deputy President (Education).
Email: dpeducation@imperial.ac.uk
Web: www.imperialcollegeunion.org/representation

Health Care
It is important that you register with a GP close to where you live. If you live near College (SK Campus) you should register with a GP at the College Health Centre.

Health Centre
40 Prince’s Gardens.
Reception and appointments Tel:+44 (0) 020 7584 6301
Email: imperialcollege.hc@nhs.net
Web: www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk
The Health Centre has on staff doctors, nurses, psychotherapists, counsellors, psychiatrist, sports medicine specialist, physiotherapy, acupuncture, they also offer the Alexander Technique, homeopathy, osteopathy, reflexology, aromatherapy.

NHS Dentist (based in the Imperial College Health Centre)
Imperial College Dental Centre offers a full range of NHS and private treatment options.

Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/student-space/here-for-you/dentist

Careers Advisory Service
10am-5.15pm – Monday to Friday Jane Pooler, Careers Consultant
Level 5, Sherfield building, Tel: +44 (0)20 7594 3481
Email: j.pooler@imperial.ac.uk
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/careers
Careers and further study related information, advice and guidance services.

Student Financial Support
Level 3, Sherfield Building, Tel:, +44 (0)20 7594 9014
Web: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/contact-us/
Student funding advice and administration (Access to Learning Fund, College Hardship Fund, emergency loans, study support bursaries and scholarships.)

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

Student Hub
Level 3, Sherfield Building South Kensington Campus
Email: student.hub@imperial.ac.uk
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/studenthub
The Student Hub is a one-stop shop for enquiries bringing together many key support departments, such as Registry, Accommodation and Finance, in one location.

Immigration advice and student visa extension service
International Office, Room 163, Level 1, Sherfield Building (opposite Nat West Bank),
Tel:+44 (0) 20 759 48040
Email: international@imperial.ac.uk
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/international
Support and advice for all Imperial students from outside the UK, including immigration advice and student visa extension service.

Sources of Advice and Support outside Imperial

London Nightline
Tel: 020 7631 0101
Email: listening@london.nightline.org.uk
Web: www.nightline.org.uk
Nightline offers confidential listening and practical information, every night of term at any hour of the night to talk about anything under the sun.

Samaritans
Tel: 116 123
Email: jo@samaritans.org
Web: http://www.samaritans.org/
The Samaritans offer a 24 hour confidential emotional support to anyone in emotional distress - you can drop into your local branch to meet with a Samaritans volunteer face to face. Please visit the website to find your local branch.
APPENDIX I

Good Laboratory Practice

1. Always ensure that an appropriate risk assessment has been completed and you are familiar with the identified risks and emergency procedures before starting lab work.

2. Ensure you get a local lab induction and are aware of general safety issues and procedures in the lab.

3. Do not eat, drink, smoke or apply make-up.

4. Wear a laboratory coat and fasten it correctly.

5. Do not pipette anything by mouth.

6. When necessary wear gloves of an appropriate type and do not wear gloves in corridors.

7. Always use the correct route for waste disposal.

8. Wear correct eye protection when appropriate.

9. Keep benches tidy and floor areas and corridors unobstructed.

10. Know the drill for emergency evacuation.

11. All Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences must be reported.

12. Report all defects to your supervisor or your Area Safety Representative.

13. Permit to work forms must be completed before visiting "contractors" begin work.

14. All protocols and procedures must have a risk assessment. If you are unsure about risk assessments for your work contact your supervisor.
APPENDIX II

Safety information for Students within the Department of Life Sciences

All students at the College have specific health and safety responsibilities. These are listed below:

Students responsibilities (taken from College Health and Safety Policy)

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

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

The College’s Health and Safety Statement can be found at:
Department of Life Sciences Safety Contacts and Advice

The Dept of Life Sciences receives professional safety advice from Faculty Safety Managers (FSMs). FSMs are assisted in their role by trained personnel within the buildings and environs that the Dept of Life Sciences operates.

The Dept has a Health and Safety committee that meets each term. The committee has a Postgraduate (PG) representative who attends the meetings and ensures that PG views and concerns are discussed and where appropriate action taken.

A list of contacts for safety advice within the Dept is shown below:

**Faculty Safety Manager**
Mr Stefan Hoyle  (s.hoyle@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 5020 Mobile: 07872 850 018

**Silwood Park campus**
Martin Selby  (m.selby@imperial.ac.uk)

**South Kensington Campus**
*Flowers building:*
Shajna Begum  (shajna.begum@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 3070

*SEC building:*
Ms. Fiona May  (f.holt@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 5410

*SAF building:*
Ms Alison Hunter  (a.hunter@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 5352
Mr Lukasz Bukowski  (l.bukowski@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 5352

*Institute of Systems and Synthetic Biology (Bessemer building)*
Ms Barbara Skene  (b.skene@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 3649

*Plant growth rooms, insect culture (SAF building) and Grodome (Roderick Hill building)*
Mr Martin Selby  (m.selby@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7595 0503

*Bioreactor and X-ray Facilities:*
Mr Marc Morgan  (rhodri.morgan@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 3204

*Cross Faculty NMR suite:*
Dr Yinqi Xu  (yingqi.xu@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 5336

*Electron Microscopy centre:*
Dr. Tillman Pape  (t.pape@imperial.ac.uk)  020 7594 2059

*MPL lab at Diamond Light Source*
Dr Isabel Moraes  (i.moraes@imperial.ac.uk)  01235 778 664

Useful websites for safety information, guidance, and training:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/staff-info/safety/
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/safety
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/occhealth
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/facilitiesmanagement/security
APPENDIX III

Department of Life Sciences

Progress Review Panel Appointment Form

Student Name ________________________________

Project Title
______________________________________________

Lab/Level/Room/Building: ____________________________

Lab Tel No: ________________________________

Email address: ________________________________

Home address and Tel: ________________________________

Composition of Progress Review Panel (PRP)

Supervisor(s):
Name(s)______________________________
Signature(s)______________________________

Advisor 1:
Name ________________________________
Signature ________________________________

Advisor 2: ________________________________
Name ________________________________
Signature ________________________________

Start date: ________________

Expected completion date: ________________

Student’s signature ________________________________

Please note all information contained in this form is treated as CONFIDENTIAL

Please upload this form to BlackBoard
Guidelines

All research students are required to submit, annually, two progress reports on their work. The Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) is responsible for ensuring that these reports are produced.

In the Department of Life Sciences this Progress Report consists primarily of a self-assessment exercise, which takes the form of a questionnaire to be completed by the student and then discussed with your supervisor. This questionnaire is similar to those used in other departments here at Imperial. It is hoped that the exercise will:

1) help you to reflect on your performance as a research student
2) help you to identify your strengths and weaknesses
3) provide a formal structure to aid discussions with your supervisor

On completion of the questionnaire and the ensuing discussion you have with your supervisor about it, the pro-forma should be completed and signed by you and your supervisor and uploaded to BlackBoard

Please note:
You have the option to submit a confidential report to the Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS). This confidential report will be for the information of the DPS and will not be seen by your supervisor
The 6 monthly Progress Report

Name of student:
Supervisor:
Advisors:

Your Research Topic (in a couple of sentences):

Briefly summarize what you have been doing over the last six months:

State any difficulties you may have encountered:

We have discussed the self-assessment questionnaire:

Signed: (PG student) Date:
Signed: (Supervisor) Date:

Comments from Supervisor:
6 Month Self-assessment Questionnaire

Student Name: Date:

The objective of this assessment is to enable you to identify your strengths and weaknesses in order to help you become more effective. There are no correct answers. Simply indicate how you assess yourself at this time in response to each of the seventeen questions below on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is low and 10 is high.

1) How excited are you by your research?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

2) How well do you understand your research topic and what is expected of you?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

3) How much background material have you read and understood?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

4) How satisfied are you with the progress you have made over the last six months?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

5) How effectively do you think you are using your work time?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

6) Are you happy with the balance you achieve between your research and your life outside IC?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

7) How well do you work with other members of your research group?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

8) How effectively do you interact with your supervisor?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

9) How do you feel you communicate your work during presentations or lab meetings?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

10) How useful is your contribution to group discussions?
    1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
11) How do you rate your written work?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12) How do you rate your technical competence in the laboratory?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13) How do you rate your awareness of the safety issues associated with your work?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14) How do you rate your ability to work without close supervision?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15) How quickly would you seek help with your work?
   (where 1 is as soon as you identify a problem and 10 is only as a last resort)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16) How confident are you of your ability to deliver what is expected of you?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17) Generally, how happy are you at present?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10