

**Imperial College
London**

**Faculty of Medicine
National Heart and Lung Institute**

Research Degrees Student Handbook

2020/21

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1. Welcome to the College

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 part of this prestigious community of discovery and we hope you will take this opportunity to make your own unique contribution.

We understand that this is a challenging time for our student community due to the impact of coronavirus and we are committed to providing you with the very best academic resources to enrich your experience. Information on teaching and learning, services and facilities to support the wider student experience during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found on the College's webpages, alongside local information provided by your Department. We also provide 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 note taking or simply having someone to talk to.

You'll have access to an innovative range of professional development courses within our Graduate School throughout your time here, as well as opportunities to meet students from across the College at academic and social events – see page 6 for more information.

We actively encourage you to seek out help when you need it and try to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Our choice of over 360 clubs, societies and projects is one of the largest of any UK university, making it easy to do something different with your downtime. Access to the gym and other sporting facilities will be dependent on government guidance. We are working to ensure that you have access to a variety of resources online to support your health and wellbeing if there are restrictions.

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.



2. Welcome from the Graduate School

www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school



Welcome to Imperial College London and the Graduate School!

The Graduate School is responsible for the postgraduate experience at the College and we work closely with the Union and the Graduate Students' Union to ensure that when decisions are being made, which affect your time at Imperial, your voice is heard.

Another important aspect of our role is to offer you a free and exciting range of professional development opportunities which you can access wherever you are in the world.

Our team of tutors have a variety of research and other career experiences. We understand the importance of developing professional skills and our programmes will help you to progress in your academic studies and research and will prepare you for your future career. Whether you wish to pursue a career in academia, industry or something else, professional development training will improve your personal impact. You will also get to meet students from other Departments when attending our courses.

The Graduate School runs exciting competitions throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge as well as to meet other students and have fun. Our primary way to communicate to you will be through our monthly newsletter. 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 College is an extremely exciting, stimulating and diverse environment in which to work, to study and to research. Do make the most of all that the College and your programme has to offer.

2.1 The Graduate School

You automatically become a member of the Graduate School when you register as a postgraduate student at Imperial.

The Graduate School has been set up to support all postgraduate students at the College through:

- Training and development courses
- Networking activities, social and academic events to encourage cross-disciplinary interactions
- Forums to represent the views of postgraduate students throughout the College

‘Masterclass’ professional skills courses

You can see the full range of free professional skills courses for postgraduate students on the Graduate School website:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/masters/

All courses can be booked online.



Contact us

 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 1383

 graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk

 www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school

3. Welcome from the Director of Postgraduate Studies

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the National Heart and Lung Institute (NHLI), Imperial College London.

NHLI is an international centre of excellence for basic, respiratory, vascular and cardiac sciences and is currently one of the largest within the Faculty of Medicine, which is the largest of the 4 Faculties, with laboratories and groups on 5 campuses.

While you are here you will be interacting with world leaders in their fields and will have the opportunity to conduct your research within a highly motivated environment. This will enable you to make important contacts and friendships which will last into your future career.

Within NHLI you will have access to an excellent network of support including supervisors, mentors, postgraduate tutors and of course the NHLI Postgraduate Research Office team, with whom you will be interacting a great deal.

Enjoy your time with us, make the most of it and remember that you will always be welcome to come back.

Professor Michael Lovett
Director of Postgraduate Studies (Research)

4. Welcome from the NHLI Postgraduate Research Student Committee

We all know how difficult it can be to adjust to a new, foreign environment and how welcome help and advice is. The NHLI student committee has been established with this in mind. We will try to help students integrate into campus life. If you need help or advice, for example, regarding accommodation, settling in or getting to grips with what's expected of you, we hope to be able to help.

If you have any difficulties or questions, you can approach anyone from the committee, which has representatives from Respiratory and Cardiovascular Sciences, as well as representatives for all the main campuses.

We hope you enjoy your time at the NHLI and use this opportunity to not only work and learn but also socialise. We will be organising social events throughout the year and hope you will participate. We are also happy to advertise other interesting social events, if you are keen on organising any.

We represent your views to the rest of the College and therefore if there's an opinion you feel needs voicing please let us know. Moreover, you're very welcome to become involved in the committee itself. The more the merrier!

Best wishes,
NHLI Postgraduate Research Student Committee

5. The National Heart and Lung Institute

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/nhli/>

The National Heart and Lung Institute (NHLI) is a major department of Imperial College's Faculty of Medicine and is a leading international research centre for investigating the mechanisms underlying many chronic diseases within the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, hypertension, atherosclerosis and heart failure.

The Institute continues to be highly respected for its powerful blend of first-rate academics, great facilities, effective teaching and productive collaborations, and indeed it was the highest ranked of all Imperial's medical departments in the last survey of research quality, the 2014 Research Excellence Framework. It was awarded an Athena SWAN Silver Award in 2009, renewed in 2014 and 2017, and a Bronze Award in 2018, in recognition of its support of equality and diversity in academia.

One of the largest heart and lung departments in the world, NHLI enjoys close links with the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust, which has two Biomedical Research Units (Cardiovascular and Respiratory), as well as the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, the new Academic Health Sciences Centre and other hospitals across London. It also collaborates with other UK and international institutions, such as the MRC & Asthma UK Centre in Allergic Mechanisms of Asthma, the MRC & DH Centre of Environment and Health (both with King's College London), the Centre for Respiratory Infection, the British Heart Foundation Centre of Research Excellence in Cardiovascular Disease and the British Heart Foundation Cardiovascular Regenerative Medicine Centre.

NHLI's main aim is to advance research, development and education in cardiovascular and respiratory science through its two research divisions:

- Cardiovascular Science
- Respiratory Science

5.1 Who's Who in NHLI

Head of Institute

Professor Edwin Chilvers

Respiratory Division Heads

Professor Jadwiga Wedzicha (clinical)
Professor Clare Lloyd (non-clinical)

Respiratory Section Heads

- Airways Disease
- Genomic and Environmental Medicine
- Inflammation, Repair & Development
- Respiratory Infections

Professor Sebastian Johnston
Professor Debbie Jarvis
Professor Sejal Saglani
Professor Peter Openshaw

Cardiovascular Division Heads

Professor Justin Mason (clinical)
Professor Jane Mitchell (non-clinical)

Cardiovascular Section Heads

- Cardiac Function
- Cardiac Respiratory Interface
- Cardiovascular Trials and Epidemiology
- Genetics and Imaging
- Vascular Science

Professor Kenneth MacLeod
Dr Vania Braga
Professor Darrel Francis
Professor Dudley Pennell
Professor Anna Randi

Director of Postgraduate Studies

Professor Michael Lovett

Deputy Director of Postgraduate Studies

Professor Uta Griesenbach

Director of Education (Taught Programmes)

Professor Louise Donnelly

Senior Welfare Tutor (PGT)

Dr Duncan Rogers

Senior Welfare Tutor (PGR)

Dr Charlotte Dean

Institute Lead for Equality and Outreach

Professor Sara Rankin

Deputy Institute Lead for Athena Swan

Dr Charlotte Dean

Institute Lead for Postdocs

Professor Miriam Moffatt

NHLI Postgraduate Tutors

- Royal Brompton Campus
- St Mary's Campus
- Hammersmith Campus

Professor Jenni Quint
Dr Omar Usmani
Dr Fiona Culley
Dr Tristan Rodriguez
Dr Beata Wojciak-Stothard
Prof Peter Sever

Higher Degrees Research Committee (HDRC):

- Director of Postgraduate Studies (*Chair*)
- Deputy Director of Postgraduate Studies
- NHLI PGR Tutors
- NHLI Heads of Sections
- NHLI Divisional Representatives
- Education Manager
- NHLI Postgraduate Research Student Committee Representatives
- Postgraduate Research Education Administrator

Postgraduate Research Student Committee:

Royal Brompton Campus

Lauren Headley
Julia Frankenberg Garcia
Clara Domingo Sabugo
Xun Yuan

St Mary's Campus
Hammersmith Campus

David Swieboda
Alice Francis
Rachel Walters

Postgraduate Research Office:

- Postgraduate Research Administrator Mr Tony Umelo (Current students)
- Education Administrator Ms Uzma Chaudhary (Admissions)
- Education Manager Dr Katerina Koutsantoni

Institute Administration:

- Institute Manager Ms Joanna O'Brien
- Hammersmith Division Manager Mr Matt Smith
- Royal Brompton Division Manager Mr Richard Mattin
- South Kensington Division Manager Ms Eleanor Tucker
- St Mary's Division Manager Ms Martha Hills-Cousins
- Research Manager Dr Alun Owen
- Education Manager Dr Katerina Koutsantoni
- Education Coordinator Dr Jemma Trick
- Finance Manager Ms Laavannya Paramanathan
- Finance Administrator Ms Jacqui Simmonds

6. Faculty of Medicine

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/medicine/>

The Faculty of Medicine is one of Europe's largest medical institutions – in terms of its staff and student population and its research income.

Established in 1997, it brings together all the major West London medical schools into one world-class institution. It maintains close links with a number of NHS Trusts with whom it collaborates in teaching and research activities.

6.1 Who's Who in the Faculty

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Dean | Professor Jonathan Weber |
| • Vice-Dean (International Activities) | Professor Desmond Johnson |
| • Vice-Dean (Institutional Affairs) | Professor Clare Lloyd |
| • Vice-Dean (Research) | Professor Martin Wilkins |
| • Vice-Dean (Education) | Mr Martin Lupton |
| • Vice-Dean (Academic Development) | Professor Neil Ferguson |
| • Faculty Operating Officer | Dr Chris Watkins |

Institute/ Department

Department of Infectious Disease
Department of Immunology and Inflammation
Institute of Clinical Sciences
National Heart and Lung Institute
School of Public Health
Department of Surgery and Cancer
Department of Brain Sciences
Department of Metabolism, Digestion and
Reproduction

Head

Professor Wendy Barclay
Professor Marina Botto
Professor Dame Amanda Fisher
Professor Edwin Chilvers
Professor Deborah Ashby
Professor George Hanna
Professor Paul Matthews
Professor Mark Thursz

7. Research Students – Definitions

Students may be classified as either full-time or part-time:

7.1. Full-Time Student

All full-time students follow full-time milestones, i.e. devote 80%-100% of their time to their research. The minimum registration for MPhil is 12 months and for PhD and MD(Res) it is 24 months. Full-time PhD and MD(Res) students must submit their thesis for examination within 48 months of the date of the initial degree registration (i.e. within four years). Full-time MPhil students must normally submit their thesis for examination within 24 months of the date of the initial degree registration.

Such students may include:

- Those who are self-funded
- Those who are on studentships and undertaking research on a full-time basis
- Staff of Imperial College London (e.g. Research Assistants, Clinical Research Fellows) or NHS staff (from associated hospitals).

Full-time students have accompanying concessions such as eligibility for housing, Council Tax exemption, receipt of tax-free stipend (as applicable). These students will pay fees as Home/EU (H/EU) or Overseas (O) Students.

7.2 Part-Time Student

Students who are described as part-time follow **true part-time milestones**, i.e. devote 50%-79% of their time to their research. The minimum registration period is 48 months for PhD and MD(Res) and 24 months for MPhil. Students enrolled on PhD and MD(Res) programmes must submit their thesis for examination within 72 months of the date of the initial degree registration. MPhil students must normally submit their thesis for examination within 36 months of the date of the initial degree registration.

As above, such students may include:

- Those who are self-funded
- Staff of Imperial College London (e.g. Research Assistants, Clinical Research Fellows) or NHS staff (from associated hospitals).

8. Application and Registration Procedures

8.1 Full-Time Students

All students must apply to Imperial via Registry and subsequently register their degree with NHLI.

8.1.1 Full-time Application with Imperial College London (through Registry)

Full guidance on the application process is available on NHLI webpage here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/how-to-apply/>

Admission to College as a full-time student must take place before the student commences on site. Individual members of academic staff are not permitted to make offers to students; this is a contract between Imperial and the individual and the process is undertaken by Registry.

Full-time candidates must create an account and complete a College application online on [Imperial Gateway](#) which requests information from which an assessment of academic background, level of fluency in the English language and fee status is made. The completed application is processed by Registry before being forwarded to the Department for review. Annotations on the application will indicate:

- whether the academic qualification is satisfactory and, if not, whether the supervisor wishes to make a special case for acceptance
- level of fluency in English. Students must be able to demonstrate a full command of the English language. Students whose first language is not English must take an English language test on arrival and achieve an acceptable grade or score before admission can be confirmed (see Section 9. or contact Registry for further clarification)
- the fee status (H/EU or O)

Confirmation of the candidate's first degree result is part of the application process for full-time candidates and, if they are applying before they know their result, this will form one of the conditions of acceptance. Advice on the acceptability of non-standard entry qualifications should be sought from Registry as early as possible.

Two written independent references are also required before an offer can be issued and prospective supervisors are required to make every effort to make direct contact with the student, preferably by interview but, failing this, by telephone.

Depending on the selection process, the project and supervisor will normally be identified at an earlier stage than the application. The supervisor will be required to indicate on the form whether they accept the candidate and to identify the general area of research, as well as any conditions which need inclusion on the offer letter.

Evidence of sponsorship/studentship or financial support will be required before the offer is finally confirmed. Self-financing students must confirm in writing that they will cover the cost of fees for the entire duration of studies.

The date on which a **full-time** student commences their research is the date of enrolment. Enrolment with College Registry ensures that attendance is marked for each academic year and that student records are correct. This also entitles students access to facilities such as accommodation, council tax exemption and other concessions. More importantly, it allows students to receive their stipend if paid from a studentship.

8.1.2 Full-time Registration with the NHLI

Upon starting, full-time students will be given form NHLI01. This form should be completed and returned to the NHLI Postgraduate Research team along with the documentation described in Appendix A. within two weeks of their start date.

Please note that registration with NHLI **must** be completed within one month of commencement of study and before the end of the calendar year. The student must submit a Research Proposal (Section 14.2) within four-six weeks of their start date. This research proposal must be the student's own work and describe studies to cover the entire duration of the intended degree.

Full-time students must complete the minimum Graduate School training requirement and attend the NHLI Postgraduate Induction and NHLI Postgraduate Research Day.

8.1.3 Staff students with a College contract

Students with Imperial College employment contracts who enrol on the NHLI PhD/ MD(Res) programme and will be self-funding their studies must ensure their contract covers the entirety of their research programme in order to remain eligible for fee remission. Information is available on the College's [Discounts for College staff](#) page.

Backdating results in loss of funding to the Faculty and College's OfS income. The College will allow backdating only in exceptional circumstances. It will not normally permit more than 3 months' backdating of registration from the date of accepted offer AND as long as it does not go back to the previous calendar year.

8.2. Part-Time students

All students must apply to Imperial College via Registry and subsequently register their degree with NHLI.

8.2.1 Part-time Application to Imperial College London (through Registry)

Full guidance on the application process is available on NHLI webpage here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/how-to-apply/>

Admission by College as a part-time student must take place before the student commences on site. Individual members of academic staff are not permitted to make offers to students; this is a contract between Imperial and the individual and the process is undertaken by Registry.

Part-time candidates must create an account and complete a College application online on [Imperial Gateway](#), which requests information from which an assessment of academic background, level of fluency in the English language and fee status is made. The completed application is processed by Registry before being forwarded to the Department for review. Annotations on the form will indicate:

- whether the academic qualification is satisfactory and, if not, whether the supervisor wishes to make a special case for acceptance
- level of fluency in English. Students must be able to demonstrate a full command of the English language. Students whose first language is not English must take an English language test and achieve an acceptable grade or score before admission can be confirmed (see Section 9. or contact Registry for further clarification)
- the fee status (H/EU or O)

Confirmation of the candidate's first degree result is part of the application process for part-time students and, if they are applying before they know their result, this will form one of the conditions of acceptance. Advice on the acceptability of non-standard entry qualifications should be sought from the Registry as early as possible.

Two independent written references are also required before an offer can be issued and prospective supervisors are encouraged to make every effort to make direct contact with the student, preferably by interview but, failing this, by telephone or individual correspondence with the student concerned.

Depending on the selection process, the project and supervisor will normally be identified at an earlier stage than the application. The supervisor will be required to indicate on the form whether they accept the candidate and to identify the general area of research, as well as whether or not there are other conditions which need inclusion on the offer letter.

Evidence of sponsorship/studentship or financial support will be required before the offer is finally confirmed. Self-financing students must confirm in writing that they will cover the cost of fees for the entire duration of studies.

8.2.2 Part-time Registration within the NHLI

Upon starting, part-time students will be given form NHLI01. This form should be completed and returned to the Postgraduate Administrator along with the documentation described in Appendix A. within two weeks of their start date. Please note that registration with NHLI **must** be completed within one month of commencement of study.

Employees in industry who wish to study towards a higher degree with Imperial College on a part-time basis must complete a [PRI form](#) as well as the NHLI registration form.

The student must submit a Research Proposal (Section 14.2) within four-six weeks of their start date. This research proposal must be the student's own work and describe studies to cover the entire duration of the intended degree.

Part-time students must complete the minimum Graduate School training requirement and attend the NHLI Postgraduate Induction and NHLI Postgraduate Research Day.

8.2.3 Funded Students

It is the student's responsibility to inform the NHLI Postgraduate Research team and their relevant Division or Section Manager about details of their funding and any extension.

All stipend and consumables payments are set up and managed by the student's Section Manager, so it is important that they know who this is for their campus. Please refer to the [Research support](#) page on the NHLI website for contact details.

Backdating results in loss of funding to the Faculty and College's OfS income. The College will allow backdating only in exceptional circumstances. It will not normally permit more than 3 months' backdating of registration from the date of accepted offer AND as long as it does not go back to the previous calendar year.

8.3 Special Case Registration

Supervisors wishing to register postgraduate students who do not meet the academic standards set by Imperial College London or NHLI must submit a special case for registration. The application has to be supported by the Institute (via the Postgraduate Research Office), before being put forward to the Graduate School for consideration.

If a supervisor is requesting a special case registration for a prospective postgraduate student, the supervisor will need to complete the relevant form (NHLI 02) along with the application and registration documentation described in Appendix A before a decision can be made to support the special case registration.

The supervisor will need to arrange for the prospective student to prepare and present a 10 minute slide presentation of the proposed work along with a 300 word summary. This will be followed by a question-and-answer session with the Director of Postgraduate Studies and two assessors, one nominated on behalf of the Higher Degrees Research Committee and one suggested by the supervisor. Both assessors must be Imperial College staff and experienced postgraduate supervisors with good track records of postgraduate supervision.

The special case application must be forwarded to the Director of Postgraduate Studies and Postgraduate Research Education Administrator before the candidate can be recommended for admission.

9. English Language Requirement

Before application: ALL European and International students MUST complete a recognised English test (e.g. TOEFLS or IELTS) before they will be permitted to enrol with Imperial. Prior to arrival, all international students will have been informed of the necessity to take a recognised test, either online or in their country of origin, and to submit the results prior to or on enrolment.

Following enrolment: Once enrolment is completed (including the taking of an “admission test” if necessary), all postgraduate research students who are not native speakers of English must undergo an English assessment at Imperial when they start their research studies, the Imperial College London Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR). This is an internal College assessment test, chiefly of writing skills, and is completely separate from the English requirements for entry (IELTS, TOEFL, etc). A second assessment within 9 months of the degree start date may be required depending on the result of the earlier internal assessment.

The purpose of the process is to ensure that students who need language support are given it during the registration period and that they can complete their thesis submission on time.

Students who are not native speakers, but whose level of English is near that of a native-speaker, can be exempt from the Requirement with the agreement of their supervisor **and** NHLI’s Director of Postgraduate Studies.

The exemption categories are currently:

1. native-speakers
2. students who are bi-lingual (by birth or domicile)
3. students with 1st degree in the medium of English (3 years minimum) or students with extensive education or work experience (4+ years minimum) in the medium of English

ALL overseas students, including EU students, must contact the Centre for Academic English (CAE) at Imperial College to take the College’s internal Initial English Language Test (DACR).

Unless exempted, all international students are required to take the CAE Initial Test. Depending on the result, students may be offered remedial classes by the CAE, and may also need to take a second test (Test at ESA) before being allowed to progress in their degree following their Early Stage Review. A score of 60 in the CAE Initial Test is required in order that the further test is not required.

Further information about the requirement, test dates and exemption from it can be found at <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/doctoral/academic-communication-requirement/>

It is important not to confuse the “admission” test required for admission/enrolment, with the CAE Initial Test which is usually taken some time in the first term of studies (unless exempted). Further details on the language requirements and the nature and timing of tests are available from Centre for Academic English: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english>

10. Research Approvals

Projects Involving Patients/Clinical Material for which Ethical Approval is required

Prior to commencement of the project, the supervisor must ensure that:

- appropriate ethical permission has been obtained and this must be confirmed on the application form
- the consultants in charge of the overall care of the patients have given their consent to the study
- a suitably senior clinician is identified with whom the student can liaise
- the requirement for ethical permission is clearly explained to the student and that the appropriate clinical contacts have been established
- appropriate patient numbers are available for the study, as described in the guidelines on research projects involving clinical trials – please refer to Appendix C.

Projects Involving Animal Work for which Ethical Approval is required

Prior to commencement of the project, the supervisor must ensure that:

- appropriate animal models are available for the study, as described
- appropriate ethical approval in the form of a project licence has been procured/sought

Personal licences may be applied for during the project.

11. Occupational Health Requirements

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health>

The College Occupational Health Service provides services to protect health at work, assess and advise on fitness for work and to ensure that health issues are effectively managed. Its mission is to promote and support a culture where the physical and psychological health of staff, students and others involved in the College is respected, protected and improved whilst at work.

11.1 Application and registration

Some postgraduate work carries particular risks and requires that new students are referred to Occupational Health at Imperial. Any risks related to the work that the students are going to be doing will have been identified by the 'Risk Assessment' which the supervisors provide for the students. Specifically:

1. Working with biohazardous materials (if you are unsure about this please ask your supervisor): students will need to complete the form "**Health Screening: Biological Agents**" and return it to Occupational Health.
2. Working with live animals or with insects: students will need to complete the form "**Animal Allergy Health Surveillance**" and contact Occupational Health at South Kensington to arrange an appointment for initial surveillance and mask fit-testing – please email occhealth@imperial.ac.uk or telephone 0207 59(49401) no more than one month before the animal work will start.
3. Contact with hospital patients: students need to contact Occupational Health at South Kensington to arrange an appointment to update immunisations where necessary – please email occhealth@imperial.ac.uk or telephone 0207 59(49401).

Other postgraduate students do not require specific clearance from Occupational Health.

11.2 Working in other (non-Imperial) laboratories and fieldwork/study leave

If a student is spending a part of his/her studies in a laboratory elsewhere, or is doing fieldwork, then they will need to consider the risks involved. Imperial has an 'Off- Site Working' policy which they will need to follow. Details are available at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/off-site-working/>

11.3 Returning to study after a prolonged sickness

Upon returning to study following an Interruption of Study (see Section 14) for health reasons, Registry will require a confirmation from a medical practitioner that the student is fit to return to study.

If a student has been off sick and has health-related concerns about their return to study, they should contact Occupational Health directly.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

12.1 The Role of the Director of Postgraduate Studies

The Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) has the same responsibilities as the Postgraduate Tutors (see section 12.2). In addition, the DPS has overall responsibility for the coordination and management of postgraduate research training within NHLI.

The DPS reports to the Graduate School and is the chair of NHLI's Higher Degrees Research Committee (HDRC).

12.2 The Role of the Postgraduate Tutors

The Postgraduate Tutors are responsible for the overall smooth running of the Institute's postgraduate affairs. Along with the Heads of Sections, they form the NHLI's Higher Degrees Research Committee, chaired by the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

Their duties and responsibilities include the following:

- Pastoral and administrative responsibility on the Institutional level for all research students.
- The arrangement of induction sessions for research students.
- Ensuring that proper supervisory arrangements have been made for all research students.
- Monitoring the initial stages of each student's research and the arrangements for subsequent degree assessments.
- Acting as mediators in cases of dispute between a student and a supervisor.

In some of the larger Schools/Institutes/Departments the pastoral and administrative responsibilities of the Postgraduate Tutor are shared amongst two or more people or by the Postgraduate Tutor and the Director of Postgraduate Studies respectively. You can arrange to have a meeting with the postgraduate tutor at any time during your PhD/MD(Res). Students are also able to refer issues of a pastoral nature to the Senior Welfare Tutor (PGR), Dr Charlotte Dean (c.dean@imperial.ac.uk) Please note all meetings will remain completely confidential.

It is important that you contact the postgraduate tutor if:

- You are having problems with your supervisor, particularly if you feel that you are not being adequately supervised.
- You are in financial difficulty.
- You have problems outside of work that are affecting your ability to complete your PhD/MD(Res).
- You have health issues. Please remember the postgraduate tutor must be informed if you take more than a week off your studies through ill health.

The postgraduate tutor may be able to offer practical solutions to the problems you are experiencing; they can certainly offer advice and if necessary can act as a mediator between you and your supervisor.

Formal meetings with the postgraduate tutor

- You will meet some of the postgraduate tutors with other new postgraduate students at the induction session.
- After any of your 6-monthly progress reports you will have a meeting with the postgraduate tutor to discuss this report if there is any indication that you are having problems.

12.3 The Role of the Mentor

Each postgraduate research student within NHLI is entitled to a mentor at the start of their studies.

If an MD(Res) or PhD student is interested in having a mentor, they should contact Ms Alex Dawes (alexandra.dawes@imperial.ac.uk), NHLI's Career Development Coordinator. If the student already has an idea of who they would like as a mentor, please mention this when contacting Alex.

The main role of the academic mentor is a pastoral one. It is not intended that the academic mentor should act in a supervisory role; rather, the role of academic mentor must remain separate from the role of supervisor. The idea of the academic mentor is to provide the student with an additional person with whom to consult informally.

The academic mentor must:

- be employed by Imperial College London
- be independent from the research group and section
- have supervision experience
- ideally have attended the supervision and mentoring workshops.

It would be helpful if the academic mentor had some knowledge of the area of research, but this is not crucial to the role.

If the mentor leaves Imperial College London during the course of the student's registration, a new mentor must be allocated as soon as possible.

It is important that the student's mentor is carefully chosen to be able to play an active and clear role during the period of research study in order that conflicts of interest might be prevented. Therefore a research student should not have a supervisor and a mentor who are related by marriage or who are partners.

NHLI provides mentoring workshops for both mentors and mentees and students are encouraged to attend the training.

Formal meetings between the student and their mentor

Students are able to contact and meet with their mentor at any point during their research degree. At a minimum, we recommend that formal meetings should be organised for a discussion of progress upon:

- Registration and/or submission of the first 6-monthly report
- Submission of the last 6-monthly report (30 months for PhD and 18 months for MD(Res) students)

The responsibility for mentee-mentor relationship sits with the mentee.

12.4 The Role of the Supervisor

- (i) Supervisors of postgraduate students (PhD and MD(Res)) are obliged to comply with all aspects of Imperial College London procedure. They must ensure that the compulsory reports at 4-6 weeks and every 6 months are completed in a professional and timely manner. Supervisors must also ensure that the PhD and MD(Res) Early Stage Review (ESA) is submitted within 9 months from registration and that thesis submission is completed within the recommended 36 months, and not later than 48 months.
- (ii) Adequate supervision is difficult to define, but it is suggested that each supervisor will maintain regular contact with their students through tutorials, group meetings or at the bench and should set aside normally a minimum of one hour per week for consultation with them.
- (iii) Only individuals with an academic post within Imperial College London and funding in place for the duration of the student's registration are eligible to be primary supervisors. Individuals who do not hold an academic post at Imperial College London or with less duration of funding may be eligible to be secondary supervisors in some circumstances.
- (iv) Where the primary supervisor holds an Honorary contract, the secondary supervisor must be an Imperial College London employee and hold an academic post for the duration of the degree registration.
- (v) The College does not prescribe a limit but it is suggested that few academic staff would be likely to have more than six research students at any one time (i.e. perhaps two in each year of the postgraduate programme).
- (vi) Primary supervisors must have supervised PhD/MD(Res) students to successful and timely completion and must have attended:
 - a. the '[Supervising PhD Students](#)' core workshop run by the Centre for Educational Development and been a secondary supervisor.
 - b. Or the '[Introduction to Supervising PhD Students: A course for main and co-supervisors](#)' online workshop run by the Graduate School.Supervisors who do not meet these criteria will be obliged to attend the training course before the registration can be completed. Information about the availability of relevant training courses can be obtained from the Postgraduate Research Office.
- (vii) Supervisors will need to ensure that each student has been through an official NHLI induction process before registration can be approved by the Institute. Induction days are held twice a year by the NHLI Postgraduate Research Office and Tutors. If the student's registration does not coincide with these timings, the supervisor will need to arrange a meeting between themselves, the student and the NHLI Campus Postgraduate Tutor.
- (viii) Where the student and the supervisor are related either through marriage or family, the nature of the relationship must be declared and discussed with the Head of Institute and the Director of Postgraduate Studies, before registration can proceed.
- (ix) If the student wishes to be assigned a mentor, they should contact NHLI's Career Development Coordinator. The main role of the academic mentor is a pastoral one. It is not intended that the academic mentor should act in a supervisory role and the role of academic mentor must remain separate from the role of supervisor. The idea of the academic mentor is to provide the student with an additional person with whom to consult informally. The academic mentor must be employed by Imperial College London and must be independent from the research group and section. The mentor must have supervision experience and ideally have attended the Supervisor and Mentoring workshop. It would be helpful if the academic mentor had some knowledge of the area of research, but this is not crucial to the role. If the mentor leaves Imperial College London during the course of the student's registration a new mentor must be found as soon as possible.
- (x) In cases where it is considered appropriate for a student to be co-supervised by academic staff who are married to each other or who are partners, this relationship must be declared to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. It is important that the student's mentor is carefully chosen to be able to play an active and clear role during the period of research study in order that conflicts of interest might be prevented. However, a

research student should not have a supervisor and a mentor who are related by marriage or who are partners.

12.5 The Role of the Assessors

In addition to your postgraduate supervisors, you will have two assessors. These will be scientists in academia with the appropriate knowledge base and expertise to judge your progress and offer you advice on your research.

These two assessors will be appointed on behalf of the NHLI Higher Degrees Research Committee; one suggested by the supervisor and the other nominated on behalf of the HDRC. At least one must be from outside your supervisors' research group.

The assessors will review your Research Proposal (RPC), Early Stage Assessment (ESA) and Late Stage Review (LSR) milestones and make a recommendation as to whether a student should progress with their degree.

The final decision will be made by the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

The assessment reports will be made available to both student and supervisors.

13. Training

Supervisors and their students are expected to meet regularly, at least once a week, to formally review progress. There may be day-to-day meetings in the lab but it is essential that regular meetings are arranged and adhered to. Both supervisors and students should endeavour to keep a record of what is discussed, especially when things are not going smoothly, so that any differences of opinion can be backed up by evidence. Please contact the Postgraduate Research Office team on nhlipgr.team@imperial.ac.uk if you would like sample forms that can be used during these meetings.

The Graduate School provides a comprehensive Professional Development Programme. **All students registered for an MD(Res) or a PhD are required to attend the specified number of workshops outlined on the Graduate School's webpages.** Evidence of attendance will be required and confirmation of degree will not be approved without a record of Graduate School Academic Training Seminars attended.

Details can be found on the Graduate School's webpages for doctoral students: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/>

In addition the Institute hosts a Postgraduate Induction for all new students and a Postgraduate Research Day (normally in July, annually). Attendance is mandatory for all NHLI students.

To maintain a broad scientific understanding, students are also required to attend a number of seminars and lectures in each year of study. This can include up to 5 sessions attended at symposia, Imperial College London seminars (both NHLI and other Schools/Institutes/Departments) and Imperial/NHLI scientific events. It is recommended to attend an average of approximately 20 such seminars/lectures a year. However, these should not include group work in progress lab meetings.

NHLI Events

There are a large number of events, which are held annually within NHLI, including:

- Annual Cardiovascular and Respiratory Lectures
- Inaugural and Professorial Lectures
- Visiting Lecturers
- Respiratory and Cardiovascular Grand Rounds
- Research events

Generally these events are open to everybody and they will be widely publicized through the NHLI Newsletter and other mechanisms.

Your attendance at these events is highly encouraged.

14. Progress and Assessments

14.1 Six Monthly Reports

Each April and October, the student and their supervisor must complete a six-monthly progress report. The form for the 6-monthly report is in two parts and both parts can be submitted independently.

Students should also meet with their Mentor formally following their first and last six-monthly review.

- 6 months into the degree for MD(Res) and PhD students
- at 18 months for MD(Res) students • at 30 months for PhD students

Students are responsible for submitting the second part of the 6-monthly form. If for any reason, a meeting to discuss the first section is not possible, the student must ensure that they submit their part regardless of the first section not being completed. However, both parts are required for review by the NHLI Tutors.

All forms must be completed and returned promptly to the Postgraduate Research Administrator.

Students can submit their completed part of the form in confidence where there is a problem, whilst the supervisor must discuss their comments with the student prior to return. The aim is to identify any problems at an early stage and to find solutions to them.

Feedback from 6-monthly progress reports

These 6-monthly reports are a written summary of progress meetings between the student and the supervisor where feedback would have been provided to the student on their progress. When they are submitted, the NHLI Postgraduate Research Office checks that everything appears in order, i.e. signatures from all parties, satisfactory progress of student, meetings with supervisors, level of satisfaction with supervisors, attendance at meetings and courses, etc.

If any significant issues have been highlighted, the matter will be followed-up by the Postgraduate Research Education Administrator, Education Manager or Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Postgraduate Tutors. If no issues have been highlighted, the reports will be placed on the student's record after review.

It is in the interest of both students and supervisors to ensure that these progress meetings and reports are undertaken.

14.2 Research Proposal Confirmation (RPC)

The research proposal, which must be written by the candidate with the supervisors' assistance, should be 2-4 pages (single-spaced) including figures (optional) with usually no more than 10 references and should be submitted electronically.

The purpose of this proposal is to allow assessment of the intrinsic scientific merit of the project and of the student's understanding of the project. It must, therefore, contain sufficient detail to allow a decision to be reached.

The research plan should be formulated on the basis of a two year MD(Res) or three year PhD programme of research. It should not just describe the work that would lead up to the Confirmation Review at 9 months.

The structure of the research plan should be as follows:

- a. **Title of the research and name of the student and supervisors**
- b. **Background to project:** The background should be a survey of the literature directly relevant to your work. It will involve placing your molecule or system of interest in the context of your field. It may involve work that has been carried out in the laboratory before you arrived. This section should also provide the information from which you have formulated your hypothesis. You should add a concluding paragraph which provides a clear, succinct statement of the hypothesis on which your work will be based (one or two sentences at most).
- c. **Hypothesis**
- d. **Aims:** The main goals of your research should be stated concisely, either as short sentences or bullet points.
- e. **Plan of Investigation:** Describe the methods that you will adopt in sufficient detail to allow both your understanding of them and their feasibility to be assessed. Detail whether these methods are currently available in the division/department/section or how they are to be established. Evidence of successful pilot work should be incorporated into this section and will be particularly noted.

Approval Process

The assessors will review the Research Proposal and complete an assessment report form confirming that:

- a. The candidate meets the required standard with reference to the following:
 - appropriately qualified
 - proficiency in spoken English
 - abilities and background suitable to undertake the research project
- b. The project and supervisor meet the required standards with reference to the following:
 - well-defined aims
 - appropriateness of the plan of investigation
 - comments on successful pilot work, if appropriate
 - well-identified project such that the candidate has scope to carry out their own research even though they may be working in a large team with complementary projects
 - if truly part-time, the fraction of time that the candidate will be able to devote to their studies
 - necessary space and facilities can be provided
 - sufficient funds are available for the expected duration of the programme. Where availability of funds has been confirmed by the signature of the supervisor/s, the liability for the provision of those funds will lie with the supervisor/s and not with the Institute

- supervision can be given for the expected duration of the programme (suitability and experience of supervisor)

The assessors' reports will be made available to both student and supervisors.

It is important to note that this process is one of **approval** and **not a Pass/Fail** examination.

Research Proposals that are not approved at initial consideration may only require some modifications to be made in order for approval to be given at a later date. There is sometimes, but rarely, a need for the project to be entirely revised (see section on Resubmission below).

Resubmission

In cases where the assessors do not approve a Research Proposal, the student will normally have the opportunity to re-submit their document for approval. The request to re-submit will be given a timeline.

14.3 Early Stage Assessment

The purpose of the Early Stage Review (ESA) is to confirm that the student has a clear understanding of their field of research and the direction of their project, and has the potential to pursue research. Data presented at this stage may be minimal but should be indicative of the student's ability to perform.

The Early Stage Assessment process includes the submission of a written report no later than 9 months from date of registration, the subsequent oral assessment, the English Test if required, re-submission of report or re-viva (if needed) and attendance at the Graduate School courses, all of which must be completed within 12 months from registration.

If a student underperforms at this stage, they may be reassessed within 2 months, and no longer than 12 months from initial registration. For PhD students, the consequences of poor performance include the option to downgrade registration to MPhil.

Written Report

The Written Report should be written by the student and should contain:

- a. Title page with word count, name and CID
- b. Abstract
- c. Background of the subject
- d. Hypothesis
- e. Methods
- f. Results obtained to date
- g. Discussion, including a statement on the originality of the project
- h. Outline of future work

All students are urged to read carefully through *Informal Notes on Requirements and Common Mistakes* (please refer to Appendix E). These are intended to indicate what should be included in the report and they provide a guideline for figures and legends as well as common errors to be avoided.

It is appreciated that at 9 months there may be little concrete data, but a clear protocol and techniques to be used should be well established. If there are any published or submitted papers or abstracts these should be included (these are not a pre-requisite for the report).

The report will be reviewed by two assessors; these would normally be the same assessors who undertook the initial Research Proposal review

Subsequent to the submission of the ESA report, the student will then arrange an oral assessment with the assessors.

Oral assessment

The oral examination should take the form of a brief presentation by the student to the assessors (of 10-20 minutes, with the option of visual aids) followed by an assessment to review:

- Oral presentation skills
- Capacity for critical but constructive thinking
- Thorough understanding of the relevant academic discipline
- Competence in the relevant techniques
- Awareness of the associated literature
- Understanding of the hypothesis
- Research ability
- Published papers and abstracts
- Originality of the research
- PhD/MD(Res) potential

- Confirmation project is feasible within the remaining registration period (with thesis submission within 4 years)

The presentation should conclude with a slide outlining the timetable and future work for completion of the research.

If a student underperforms at this stage they may be reassessed within 2 months, and no longer than 12 months from initial registration. This should be discussed with the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

For PhD students, the consequences of poor performance include the option to downgrade registration to MPhil.

Prior to student progress being confirmed to year 2, all research students must have fulfilled their Graduate School requirement.

Submission of Documentation

Document
An up-to-date curriculum vitae
A fully referenced report of 5,000 - 6,000 words (excluding references and figures, but including an abstract of about 400 words). Word count needs to be indicated on the first (i.e. Title) page.
A list of 20 seminars attended (this can include up to 5 sessions attended at Symposia but does not include internal lab meetings and departmental seminars i.e. work in progress seminars)
Documentary evidence of attendance at Graduate School Professional Development workshops (available on the Graduate School pages: www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school). These should amount to 2 credits.
All required documents are submitted electronically via Blackboard
The appropriate number of Six Monthly Progress Report forms must have been completed by both student and supervisor(s) and returned to NHLI's Postgraduate Research Office

14.4 Late Stage Review

The purpose of the Late Stage Review (LSR) is to confirm that the student has comprehensive understanding of the research problem, has a critical awareness of the relevant literature on the subject and has a realistic research plan and schedule for completion within the registration period.

Within 18-21 months from their start date, each research student (MD(Res) and PhD) following full-time milestones (by 36-42 months for those following part-time milestones) is required to give an Oral Presentation to their assessors (the same assessors as for their Research Proposal and Early Stage Assessment) to ensure that good progress is being made with their research.

Students and supervisors are responsible for organising the LSR and therefore must ensure they liaise with the assessors in plenty of time to set a date for the oral presentation within the 18 to 21 months' window from the student's initial registration.

Importantly, students and supervisors should liaise with NHLI's Postgraduate Research Degrees Office should they encounter any delays or difficulties in arranging the LSR, so that it can help.

Students and supervisors must inform the Postgraduate Research Office of the confirmed date of the LSR. The feedback form for the LSR will then be provided to the assessors.

If a student underperforms at this stage they may be reassessed within 3 months, and no longer than 24 months from initial registration.

Written Report and Slides

The report summary must be fully referenced and no more than 4 pages in length (excluding references and figures). If there are any published or submitted papers these should be included. Minor changes to the slides may be made between submitting them to the Postgraduate Research Office and giving the Oral Presentation.

Oral Presentation

The presentation (about 30 minutes) should start by describing the progress which has been made and conclude with a plan of future work through to submission.

The presentation should be to an open group (e.g. Section, group meeting) followed by a private meeting if requested by student or assessors. Every effort must be made to have both assessors present but can be undertaken with assessors if the other cannot attend the meeting.

Exceptionally, if both assessors cannot attend an LSR oral assessment with an open group within the 18-21 month window, then a private assessment within the window with both assessors is possible.

Submission of Documentation

Document
An up-to-date curriculum vitae
A fully referenced report of no more than 4 pages (excluding references and figures).
Any journal articles published or submitted for publication
Documentary evidence of attendance at Graduate School Professional Development workshops (available on the Graduate School pages: www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school). These should amount to a further 2 credits.
Oral presentation PowerPoint slides

15. Attendance Requirements and Annual Leave

MD(Res) and PhD programmes of study follow the 52 week academic year and students must attend as such. Imperial College closure days can be found here: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/leave/annual-leave/college-closures/>

Annual leave is dependent on the student's status (e.g. Imperial or hospital staff and full-time students) and each student should discuss this at the start of their research degree with their supervisor.

All annual leave must be requested from and approved by the supervisor and students must provide adequate notice.

Supervisors must be notified of any sick leave and the return to work policy following sick leave must be followed: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/guidance/sickness/>

In a case where the supervisor is not available, the student must contact their Section Manager or the Postgraduate Research administration team.

Supervisors must monitor student attendance and any student who fails to attend an expected interaction will be reported to their Section Manager and the Postgraduate Research administration team immediately.

As part of its obligation to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), Imperial will report to the UKVI all overseas students who miss 10 expected interactions.

It is therefore essential that students communicate with their supervisor(s), section Manager or Postgraduate Research Administrator any annual or sick leave.

16. Interruption of Studies

It may happen that a personal emergency or other circumstance arises, which requires a student to interrupt their studies. It is vital that the student inform their supervisors immediately, and they in turn the Postgraduate Research Office, so that the student's registration and timeline can be suspended until they return

Interruption of Studies (IOS) should be put in place for any compassionate leave, maternity and paternity leave, personal emergency, lack of funding, etc. No fees are payable for such a period.

Please note that an interruption of studies is independent from any employment procedure carried out with Human Resources.

Note – only in exceptional circumstances can registrations be suspended retrospectively.

Upon returning to study following an IOS for health reasons, Registry will require a confirmation from a medical practitioner that the student is fit to return to their study. If a student has been off sick and has health-related concerns about their return to study, they should contact Occupational Health directly (Section 11).

Information about applying for an Interruption of Studies and related guidance can be found at:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/>

17. Study Leave

Some students may be required to collect material or study elsewhere than at the College; part of the time may need to be spent in other places. Any Study Leave must be applied for using an IC/D form which must be submitted to NHLI's Postgraduate Research office at least 6 weeks in advance of the period for which leave is sought. Forms are available here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/>

If a student is spending a part of their studies in a laboratory elsewhere, or is doing fieldwork, then they will need to consider the risks involved. Imperial has an 'Off-Site Working' policy which they will need to follow. Details are available at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/off-site-working/>

The minimum period of attendance for a research student at Imperial College London is normally 12 months of full-time study for both full-time and part-time students (i.e. Imperial or hospital employees). Study leave is not allowed during the first or last three months of study and therefore students must be in attendance at College for the first 3 and last 3 months of the programme, save in exceptional circumstances specifically agreed in advance by NHLI and by the College.

Adequate supervision must be in place where the student will be taking up their Study Leave prior to any application being approved.

Where Study Leave is undertaken inside the UK, tuition fees are charged at the full rate. Where Study Leave is undertaken outside the UK, tuition fees are charged at the full rate if the period of absence is less than 3 months. If the period of Study Leave outside the UK is 3 months or more, a reduced fee may be charged at the discretion of the department. The fee for the Study Leave period will be charged on a pro-rata basis at the rate for part-time students, with fees being charged on a pro-rata basis as normal for the period of full-time attendance at the College.

18. NHLI Postgraduate Research Day

The NHLI Postgraduate Research Day is an annual event, held in June or July, compulsory for all NHLI Postgraduates as it is part of the NHLI postgraduate curriculum.

It is an excellent opportunity for students to socialise with peers and present their work as well as experience the format and requirements of a scientific meeting. It also gives a milestone for each year of the student's degree.

- 1st year PhD students must attend
- 1st year MD(Res) students and 2nd year PhD students must present a poster; and attend
- 2nd year MD(Res) students and 3rd year PhD students must give an oral presentation; and attend.

Monetary prizes for the best posters and oral presentations in different categories are awarded by a panel of judges composed of academics, postdocs and students.

All supervisors are strongly encouraged to attend and funders (charities, industry) are invited to attend thus creating good networking opportunities and the ambiance of a scientific meeting.

The day is followed by a social evening.

19. Undergraduate Teaching – Graduate Training Assistants

The number of teaching opportunities offered by the Department has increased greatly since we have taken on responsibility for more of the first year teaching. If you are interested in gaining some experience in undergraduate teaching, or becoming involved in postgraduate taught programmes' activities, NHLI offers training sessions specifically for PhD students. Following attendance at one of these sessions, your name will be added to the list of Graduate Training Assistants who are eligible to teach and you will be notified of teaching opportunities as they arise.

There are three main reasons why you might want to try taking on some tutoring or demonstrating. First, some teaching experience is a useful extra line on your CV, particularly if you are considering a career in academia. Second, PhD students who are in receipt of grants or bursaries are eligible for payment for their teaching activity (however, if you are studying for your PhD whilst employed by Imperial College, you will not be eligible for payment). Finally, it's good to experience something new and you may find you have a talent for teaching and enjoy it. Our students are a sparky and interesting bunch of people who are enjoyable to be around.

Please note that postgraduate students must have the written permission of their supervisors both to attend the training course and also to teach our undergraduates.

For more information, please contact the Education Manager, Dr Katerina Koutsantoni, by emailing a.koutsantoni@imperial.ac.uk

20. Student Recruitment and Outreach

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/student-recruitment-and-outreach/>

Imperial Outreach are looking for postgraduate students who are interested in getting involved with science activities for pre-University students. Imperial College London has a long established reputation for delivering excellent outreach activities to school and college students; maintaining this relies on engagement from those interested in inspiring the next generation to take up study in science, technology, engineering or medicine.

Outreach Postgraduate Ambassadors (OPA)

The aim of this scheme is to encourage enthusiastic postgrads to communicate their research or studies to a school-based audience. You can do this either in the classroom in the form of a school placement or you can give a demonstration lecture here at Imperial to an invited party of children. There are no restrictions or requirements other than a willingness to inspire and delight a young and captivated audience!

Once you register your interest, we will invite you to a short training session to give you more information and also to carry out a Criminal Records check.

You can then choose what activities you would like to take part in but these can include:

- School visit to talk about your research
- School visit to give a careers talk (i.e. your personal career path from school to scientist!)
- Assisting with a specific project or science club/activity a school may require help with
- Giving a demonstration lecture here at Imperial College
- Assisting with one of our summer schools or science taster days

You can do as much or as little as you want. The emphasis is on fitting it flexibly around your work and study commitments. We have a comprehensive list of schools around London which are keen to have the support and input of an ambassador so if you wish to go to a school for one of your activities, you can choose where you go. Alternatively if you wish to suggest a local (or far-reaching!) school that you wish to go to, we welcome that too. Some researchers may wish to return to their old secondary school and we strongly encourage such links.

The scheme is voluntary but we have some provision to pay back out-of-pocket expenses should you need to buy any equipment or items for your demonstrations or talks. Our vision is to get the scheme accredited through the Graduate Office so you can use it as part of your continuing professional development but for the time being we hope that you just enjoy the experience and find talking to a young audience refreshing and exciting!

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/student-recruitment-and-outreach/imperial-students-and-staff/volunteer/ambassador-schemes/opa/>

If you would like to work with us running workshops, doing one-off lectures, getting involved with the Open Day or mentoring at one of our existing programmes, please visit the College's webpages on contact us on <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/outreach>

NHLI wholeheartedly encourages outreach activities and has a dedicated Institute Lead for Outreach, Professor Sara Rankin (s.rankin@imperial.ac.uk).

21. Examination Entry and Submission of Thesis

21.1 Examination Entry Forms

All full-time and part-time students are required to submit a thesis within 48 months of their initial degree registration. Truly part-time students are required to submit a thesis within 72 months of their initial degree registration.

Before you can have a viva voce examination, you, your supervisor and the Institute will need to complete examination entry forms.

You should aim to complete your exam entry forms at least four months before you would like to submit your thesis, or four months before your final submission deadline. This means completing these requirements no later than 44 months after your start date if you are a full-time student, or 68 months after your start date if you are a true part-time student.

Please note that submission of your thesis is not permitted until you have completed the minimum registration period.

There are two forms to complete via your [‘MyImperial’](#) account

- Nomination of Examiners & Examination Entry Form
- Thesis Declaration Form

Once you have completed the first part of the form and the thesis declaration section your supervisor will then receive an email notification to complete the main part of the form.

Your supervisor will then complete Section II of the examination entry form, including nominating two examiners for your viva within the Guidelines for Supervisors for the Appointment of Examiners. Once your supervisor has completed Section II, an email notification is automatically sent to the Director of Postgraduate Studies for approval.

Full information can be found here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/examination-information/examination-entry-forms/>

21.2 Thesis Submission

Once you have submitted your exam entry forms, you will be told when your entry has been processed and you are able to submit your thesis.

When you submit your thesis, you should make sure that you also provide a copy of the Abstract and the Declaration of Number of Words.

For more information, please refer to the College pages here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/examination-information/thesis-submission--vivas/>

21.3 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 may be informed of the outcome by the examiners. You may be required to make some corrections to your thesis before submitting the final version and being awarded your degree.

For more information, please refer to the College pages here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/examination-information/thesis-submission--vivas/>

22. Writing Up Period

At the end of the research period students may apply to transfer to Writing Up. There are two forms of writing up – Completing Research Status (CRS) and Writing Up Away from College (WUAC)

Research students may apply to register for Completing Research Status (CRS) for a maximum period of 12 months upon payment of a CRS registration fee of £200.00, covered by the Department.

To be eligible to register for CRS the student must have completed the minimum period of registration and completed all experimental and programming work. A formal CRS milestone must be completed to ensure the student has completed all substantive research and that during the CRS period the student will be solely engaged in writing up the thesis. Students are expected to submit an Examination Entry Form no later than 4 months prior to their expected submission date.

The CRS registration cannot exceed 12 months and should usually follow immediately after the end of the student's normal registration period. Students will have access to all College facilities and be eligible for Council Tax exemption if they were registered as full-time students immediately prior to going on to CRS. At the end of the CRS period, the student is expected to submit their thesis.

Students can also apply to Write Up Away from College (WUAC). In this instance no admin fee is applied and students will retain VPN access, but no access to College buildings and facilities.

If circumstances demand that students need to be in attendance to finish experimentation beyond the expiry of their studentship or contract, this will involve fees and again must be discussed as soon as possible with their supervisor/s and the Postgraduate Research Office.

Please note students are not insured to work in the lab during the writing up period.

For more information, please refer to the College pages here:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/examination-information/completing-research-status/>

23. Plagiarism Awareness

The College's formal position on examination offences, like plagiarism, is detailed in its [Academic Misconduct Procedures](#), which list what the College classes as breaches of the examination regulations.

You are reminded that all work submitted as part of the requirements for any examination (including coursework) of Imperial College London and the University of London must be expressed in your own words and incorporate your own ideas and judgements.

Plagiarism, which is the presentation of another person's thoughts or words as though they were your own, must be avoided, with particular care in coursework, essays and reports written in your own time. You are encouraged to read and criticise the work of others as much as possible, and you are expected to incorporate this in your thinking and in your coursework and assessments. **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 summarise another person's ideas or judgements, 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. The College may submit your coursework to an external plagiarism detection service, and by registering with the College you are automatically giving your consent for any of your work to be submitted to such a service.

Failure to observe these rules may result in an allegation of cheating. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be dealt with under the College's Academic Misconduct Procedures and may result in penalties being taken against any student found guilty of plagiarism.

Please refer to the College pages for information regarding plagiarism awareness:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/research-support/plagiarism-awareness-for-researchers/>

24. Support Services

24.1 Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service is committed to providing the best possible support for all students at Imperial College London. Each person's disability can affect them in different ways and therefore the support the service offers is flexible and tailored to you.

A disability is any long-term condition that has a substantial impact on your ability to study effectively, such as:

- a specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia/DCD
- an enduring mental health condition, e.g. depression, OCD, generalised anxiety disorder
- a visual, hearing or other sensory impairment
- a long-term medical condition, e.g. IBS, ME, diabetes
- a social/communication difficulty, e.g. autistic spectrum condition
- a mobility or dexterity issue

Disability advisors offer confidential advice and support and are experienced in a range of disabilities. If you have a disability or think that you may have, we encourage you to contact the Disability Advisory Service as soon as possible on disabilities@imperial.ac.uk

24.2 Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service

The service is free and confidential. The Student Counselling Service provides brief individual counselling, for registered students at the College for any personal issue/s that may be affecting your well-being. These might include academic problems, low mood, anxiety, depression, relationship issues, loneliness, bereavement, issues around sexuality, self-esteem or self-harm. They also offer some Life Skills workshops. The service is free, and is confidential except under exceptional circumstances.

All registered students of Imperial College London can make an appointment to meet with a Student Counsellor in the service. Please contact the service in the first instance on counselling@imperial.ac.uk

24.3 Advice

During your time at Imperial there will be a range of practical issues that you need to take care of, for example, managing your money, finding accommodation, your visa, or perhaps managing your studies alongside family or caring responsibilities.

The service's webpages (<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/advice/>) include practical information on a range of common issues and tell you more about where you can access expert advice and support. If you can't find what you are looking for, or don't know where to start, contact the Student Hub or the ICU Advice Centre for assistance.

24.4 Careers Service

As a postgraduate research (PGR) student you have access to many of our services and events and we work collaboratively with our academic departments and other professional services to assist you to find and reach your career and/or research aspirations. We understand the variety of reasons for undertaking a postgraduate research programme and we know that your qualification may lead to a wide variety of careers both within and outside of research and academia.

You'll find many of our resources and services are directly applicable to you during your doctoral studies and we'd encourage you to set some time aside throughout your doctoral programme to consider your future career direction.

For more information, please visit <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/>

25. Working while Studying

If you are studying full time, the College recommends that you do not work part-time during term time. If this is unavoidable we advise you to work no more than 10–15 hours per week, which should be principally at weekends and not within normal 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 during term time. 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 during term time you are strongly advised to discuss this issue with your supervisor or Personal 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.

The College's examination boards will not normally consider as mitigating circumstances any negative impact that part-time work during term-time may have had on your performance in examinations or in other assessed work. Examinations or vivas cannot be rescheduled to accommodate your part-time working arrangements.

26. Health and Safety

You are responsible for looking after your own health and safety and that of others affected by your College-related work and leisure activities. You 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 your activities do not present unnecessary or uncontrolled risks to yourself or to others.
- Attend appropriate induction and training.
- Report any accidents, unsafe circumstances or work-related ill health of which you become aware to the appropriate person.
- Not interfere with any equipment provided for Health and Safety.
- Inform your supervisor or the person in charge of the activity in cases where you are not confident that you are competent to carry out a work or leisure activity safely, rather than compromise your own safety or the safety of others.

The College's Health and Safety Policy can be found at:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/safety-management/health-and-safety-policy-statement/>

Your Departmental safety contact is:

 Sue Francis

 B183 (Basement), Guy Scadding Building, Royal Brompton

 +44 (0)20 7594 1029 **Mob:** 07566 950 823

 s.francis@imperial.ac.uk

Appendix A: Documentation Required for Application & Registration and Assessments

Application & Registration

Full-time Students	Part-time Students (Imperial College and NHS staff)
Application via Registry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Application Form • 1st degree confirmation • 2 written references (not future supervisors) • Confirmation of financial support 	Application via Registry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Application Form • 1st degree confirmation • 2 written references (not future supervisors) • Copy of contract • Confirmation of financial support
NHLI Registration via Postgraduate Research Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHLI 01 • Research Proposal (electronic) • CV (electronic) 	NHLI Registration via Postgraduate Research Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHLI 01 • Research Proposal (electronic) • CV (electronic)

Please note: Employees in industry who wish to study towards a higher degree with Imperial College London on a part-time basis must complete PRI forms as well as NHLI registration paperwork.

9 Month Early Stage Assessment (ESA)

- A fully referenced report of 5,000-7,000 words (excluding references and figures, but including an abstract of about 400 words). Word count needs to be indicated on the first (i.e. Title) page.
- Up-to-date CV
- Documentary evidence of attendance Graduate School Workshops (2 credits)
- A list of 20 seminars attended

Late Stage Review Assessment (LSR)

- A copy of the slides
- A 4-page report
- Documentary evidence of attendance Graduate School Workshops (further 2 credits)

Appendix B: Glossary of Imperial College London and NHLI Forms

Form	Purpose	Due Date
Online Application Form	Imperial College online application form	Prior to start date
IC/B <i>(Higher Degrees Registration Amendment Form)</i>	(a) For notification of interruption of studies (b) For notification of change of supervisors or department	(a) when/if appropriate (b) when/if appropriate
IC/C <i>(Application for Approval of Attendance Arrangements as a Part-time Student)</i>	Notification of proposed minimum registration period (the normal College requirement is 48 months)	Before offer is made for new students; at the time change to part-time registration is sought for continuing students
External Study Leave Form	Approval of study leave	At least 6 weeks before the study leave is expected to begin
NHLI 01	NHLI postgraduate degree registration form	NHLI postgraduate degree registration form
NHLI 02	NHLI Special Case Request for registration of postgraduate student	Prior/during application process
NHLI 03	NHLI Postgraduate Degree Backdating Request	With NHLI01
NHLI 04	Late entry form	When/if appropriate when submitting the Examination Entry Forms
Occupational Health Clearance		When/if appropriate
6-Monthly	NHLI Six Monthly Progress Report	Every April and October
Bursary Form	To initiate payments of student bursaries or to make adjustments to existing bursaries	When/if appropriate
Expenses Claim Form	To claim expenses for employees, casual staff and visitors to the College	When/if appropriate
Nomination of Examiners & Examination Entry Form (online forms)	For entry to the MPhil, PhD or MD(Res) examination	At least four months before the proposed date of submitting the thesis.

Appendix C: Biomedical Research Guidelines

1. Clinical Research

These notes are only meant as a guide and members of staff are referred to the ICH/ GCP (Good Clinical Practice Guidelines), the Declaration of Helsinki, and the Royal College of Physicians Guidelines on the Practice of Ethics Committees in Medical Research involving Human Subjects. New members of staff should be provided with these documents by their immediate supervisor.

Guidelines

- a) Research involving human subjects and human foetal tissue, and advertising for human volunteers for research projects, must be approved by a Research Ethics Committee before it may proceed. Research Ethics Committees must give permission for research involving patients (both NHS and private) and also for access to NHS premises and records. All clinical research staff are required to register their clinical research projects with their NHS Trust (including projects involving private patients being treated in Trust facilities). Any clinical research wherever it is conducted which involves the College's clinical academic staff should be considered as if the research were to take place in the UK.
- b) For particular types of clinical research (e.g. gene therapy) the UK has established national bodies (e.g. Gene Therapy Advisory Committee) as the responsible approval agency. The College requires all those undertaking clinical research in these areas to obtain the appropriate approval for their work.
- c) Clinical research workers must obtain approval from the College Secretary before the College's name or logo can be used in any promotional literature or web site.
- d) The role of named collaborators should be properly defined. As with other types of research the College expects that the principal investigators will share the responsibility for the project. The lead investigator will be the project manager and will be accountable for all aspects of project performance.
- e) Potential research subjects are entitled to choose whether or not they will participate in research; obtaining valid informed consent is central to the ethical conduct of research. Before they are asked for their consent, the subjects should be fully informed about the nature of the research methods and the likelihood, nature and possible degree of bodily or psychological harm. They should also be briefed about the purposes (including a realistic assessment of benefit) and potential value of the experiments and the right to withdraw during the course of the experiment. The consent forms should be filed in the patient's notes. In the case of private patients the notes must not be kept by the clinician concerned, but must be held in the Trust facility for private practice and be available for a minimum period of ten years.
- f) Subjects should not be deceived either by the withholding of information or intentional misleading regarding the procedures or purposes of research unless there is a valid methodological reason for doing so.
- g) Where research may involve the invasion of privacy, the research proposal must contain provisions that the subject will be fully informed, in advance, of the nature of the information required and the subsequent use to be made of that information. Each subject is to be given the freedom to decide what additional information not currently in the public sphere of knowledge can and cannot be communicated.
- h) Each subject has a right to maintain his or her anonymity.
- i) It is difficult to conduct clinical research with human subjects and experimental design should have clearly defined research objectives to allow for this. Every clinical study should have distinct goals, criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of cases, and should minimise the scope for investigator bias. There should also be details of the methods and timing of follow-ups, statistical methodology and the type of outcome measures expected.
- j) Data should be consistent with the medical records used as source material and should be abstracted as the trial proceeds.

- k) In both prospective and retrospective trials, data collection forms should be used.
- l) To enhance the validity of the clinical research any changes to the conduct of the study or the interpretation of the results should be put before a Research Ethics Committee for its approval and, following this approval, should be explained to all research participants by the investigator.
- m) All clinical research must be conducted in accordance with the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki.

2. Animal Research

Imperial College has an active policy of ensuring that all biomedical research involving protected animals undergoing regulated procedures complies both with the letter and the spirit of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act of 1986. Applicant personal licensees must have attended the requisite modules of an accredited training course and it is they who bear the primary responsibility for the health and welfare of animals that have undergone regulated procedures. The overall responsibility to ensure legal compliance by the College is held by the certificate holder, who is also the director of central biomedical services (CBS).

The ethical review process advises the certificate holder and scientists, and enhances the roles of named animal care and welfare officers and veterinary surgeons. This is to ensure that only fully justified research involving animals is permitted; all prospective work will only be allowed if no other non-sentient alternative is possible, and the minimum number of animals are used under the best conditions for their welfare and achieving the scientific aim.

These principles are called the three Rs:

- a) Replacement of live animals wherever possible with non-sentient material.
- b) Reduction in the numbers used through good experimental design.
- c) Refinement of techniques to minimise any discomfort and maximise the scientific results.

Guidelines

- a) All research must comply with the CBS protocols relating to health and safety legislation.
- b) No-one is permitted to work within CBS facilities unless they have been satisfactorily screened by the Occupational Health Service for allergy to laboratory animals.
- c) Heads of Department/Divisions/project leaders/CBS Director must ensure that all staff are aware of the relevant protocols.

3. Bio hazardous Research

The College acknowledges its responsibility to provide a programme for the handling, storage and disposal of bio hazardous waste material, as well as a capacity to provide emergency response to bio hazardous incidents, through the Safety Unit. However, the investigator is responsible for following these guidelines in order to ensure proper scientific conduct. 'Faculty groups', which regularly conduct research in this area, and research groups, should develop their own more specific guidelines to help direct staff.

Guidelines

- a) Investigators must ensure that they comply with the Health and Safety Executive's Laboratory Bio safety Guidelines.
- b) Detailed protocols of specific work procedures for handling bio hazardous material must be developed by the Head of Department/Division/Centre/research group in consultation with the Safety Unit.
- c) Staff and students participating in bio hazardous research must be given adequate direction, training and instruction in the safe performance of their work. This is the responsibility of the principal investigator.

- d) The principal investigator must ensure that the use of bio hazardous material is limited to the certified facilities.
- e) Appropriate emergency and decontamination procedures must be developed by the Head of Department/Division/Centre and research groups in consultation with the Safety Unit.
- f) The principal investigator must report all potentially hazardous incidents and accidents to the Safety Unit.

4. Genetic Modification Work

All work involving genetic modification of animals, plants and micro-organisms must be carried out according to the regulations of the Health and Safety Executive, its Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification and, where appropriate, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

5. Plant Pathogens and Pests

All work with plant pathogens and pests, and their vectors, including bacteria, fungi, insects, viruses and other organisms, must be carried out according to the regulations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and where necessary, the appropriate licence obtained.

Appendix D: Guidelines for Research Projects Involving Clinical Trials

Requirements for a research degree, when planning a project that is based around a clinical trial, are as follows:

- The project must form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and afford evidence of originality by: the discovery of new facts
- The exercise of independent critical power

It is the “exercise of independent critical power” that has become increasingly harder to justify in the case of clinical trials. Thus, the Higher Degrees Research Committee will pay particular attention to evidence of academic content in all future applications. This could take many forms. In a study which is mainly epidemiological, the design of the study, and its subsequent analysis are the main intellectual components and as such would fulfil the University’s requirement for a research degree.

When the trial is designed by an external body (e.g. a drug company) and the student’s main role is to recruit patients, administer the trial and perform assays, an academic component is more difficult to identify. This is especially true where the assays are of a routine nature (or conducted on behalf of the student). Obviously, the final analysis of the data is important. However, this is dictated to some extent by trial design. If the student played little or no part in the design, then the administration of the trial and analysis of data does not constitute a research degree. Additional experimentation (e.g. a sub-study which provided additional insight) would be required to enable the student to demonstrate independent critical thought. Equally important is a degree of confidence that the study can be completed (including any unblinding of data) in a time-frame compatible with the duration of the studentship.

Appendix E: Informal Notes on Requirements and Common Mistakes

The following informal guidelines are intended to indicate what should be included in the 9-month Confirmation Review report together with common errors to be avoided.

Abstract

This should be on one side of A4 and summarise the work performed so far together with a brief introduction and discussion (2-3 sentences for each). It should be like an abstract you would submit to a conference.

Background

The background should be a survey of the literature directly relevant to your work. It will involve placing your molecule or system of interest in the context of your field. It may involve work that has been carried out in the laboratory before you arrived. This section will probably contain the majority of your references since you are citing work from other groups in order to underline the importance of your own work in the field.

At the end of this section, it should be possible to make a clear statement of the hypothesis on which your work is based and the aims of your research. This is a vital part of the assessment and should follow on logically from the background section. The hypothesis should be succinct and will be much easier to follow if it is not swamped by background. The aims should be brief and to the point; no more than two or three sentences (or bullet points).

Materials and Methods

This should be a relatively short section, comparable to the equivalent section in a paper. Refer extensively to papers/textbooks that describe the methods that you use rather than describing, in detail, a commonly-used technique, such as Western blotting. Obviously, if you have introduced critical modifications to a protocol, these should be detailed. It is also acceptable to refer to “manufacturer’s instructions” but it is preferable to qualify this with an original reference. For your final thesis, this section will need to be considerably more extensive and detailed.

Results

The results section should illustrate the fact that you have the necessary ability and experience to perform experiments. There should be several figures or pictures illustrating primary data, which at this stage of your project may be largely establishing assays rather than extensive novel results. Obviously, summary diagrams are useful but the primary data are of paramount importance. These figures should be clearly labelled. They should have a figure number: Figure 1, Figure 2 etc., a title and a comprehensive legend. It should not be necessary to refer constantly back and forth from text to figure to understand the figure. Thus, a figure legend requires a very brief description of what the figure is, how the experiment was performed, a comprehensive key to any abbreviations used in the figure and some indication of the results. The figure legend is also an excellent place to describe problems with the results; aberrant bands on a gel, non-specific bands/blobs, etc.

Discussion

The discussion should be brief and summarise the main achievements of your work so far, with an interpretation of the novel data if there are any. In order to interpret experiments fully, it may be necessary to discuss the experiments you plan to do to complete certain features. This approach is fine, but bear in mind that the last section “Future Work” should still be a separate section. If this involves a certain amount of repetition, then so be it.

Future work

This is a critical part of your assessment as it illustrates the fact that you understand what data are required for a doctoral research degree and whether you have enough time to complete the necessary work. It is never possible to do all the work you might wish to, so this section also underlines your ability to prioritise and focus on your studies. This should be a concise statement of experiments that are required to complete sections of work and bring them up to the level required

for a doctoral research degree. For these purposes, bullet points are probably easier to follow. However, do not make them too terse.

For example:

1.

RIGHT

To complete the sequence of clone p154, I will need to PCR the 2 x 500bp pieces and directly sequence them in both directions. I can then derive the full-length coding sequence.

WRONG

I will sequence the clone.

2.

RIGHT

For characterisation of the monoclonal antibody I have produced, I will continue with the resetting assays/FACS analysis but use blocking antibodies such as X, Y and Z together with the irrelevant control antibodies A and B. This will indicate which epitopes my antibody binds to.

WRONG

I will characterise the antibody.

Statement of Originality

A brief statement giving details of the parts of your work that are novel or novel methods you have used to study a problem. Negative data represent an original contribution, provided sufficient controls have been performed. It is always more difficult to prove negative data than positive data.

Overall Comments

Although no one expects English of the quality of Thomas Hardy, the document is still a test of your ability to write well and clearly. The same is true of spelling. Occasional spelling mistakes are forgivable but two or three per page is unacceptable. With the high quality of "spell-check" programs, there is little excuse for inaccurate spelling. Colloquial expressions should not be used. This is a serious scientific document and should be written as such.

Figures should appear in the order in which they are cited. The reader should not have to scramble five pages forward to find Figure 1 and five pages backwards to find Figure 2 when they are mentioned in the text. Obviously, this is not always possible. However, the general rule is that the first time you mention a figure in the text, the figure should be on that page or the page immediately following it.

Always check your references to ensure that they do indeed provide the evidence you need. If you just copy them from somebody else's thesis, you will inevitably end up with a situation in which mistakes are both replicated and amplified. They presumably copied them from somebody else and so on. By the time you copy it, the reference will be completely unrecognisable from the original.

Follow these fairly simple guidelines and you should be fine. Bear in mind, however, that there is very little substitute for good experimentation. Research Degrees are experimental, so do the experiments and get good quality data!

Appendix F: Research Students and Supervisors: What to expect

Supervisors expect you to:

- 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!
- Work hard - PhDs cannot be accomplished with only a 9-5 effort. Imperial is a top ranked University and we expect that students will strive to accomplish good work.
- 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!
- 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!
- Be self-critical of your own work and results, and use these skills in being sceptical of results in the literature.
- Help colleagues (especially less experienced ones) in the laboratory to learn through discussions and demonstrations. • Keep up with the literature in your field.
- 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.
- Be aware of safety at all times and follow safety procedures, especially if you are working in a laboratory.
- 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:

- Be supportive of you both intellectually and personally;
- Set up a viable project and ensure that you have a clear idea of aims and objectives and an initial work-plan;
- Provide an adequate work space for you;
- 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;
- 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;
- Help develop your skills in technical writing, oral presentations, problem definition, statistical data analysis and critical literature reviews;
- Help enable you to attend at least one conference to present a paper;
- Provide adequate funds and/or facilities for your research project;
- 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.

Appendix G: Useful Contacts

- **Graduate School**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/>

- **Graduate School – Professional Development Programme**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/>

- **Registry**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/registry/>

- **Academic Governance – Regulations (Research)**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/2019-20-regulations-research/>

- **ICT Service Desk**

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/contact-ict-service-desk/>

- **Fees and Funding**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/>

- **Imperial College Health Centre**

<https://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/>

- **Disability Advisory Service**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/>

- **Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling/>

- **Advice**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/advice/>

- **Careers Service**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/>

- **Chaplaincy**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy/>