

Imperial College London

Faculty of Engineering
Department of Computing

Postgraduate Research

Student Handbook

2022-23

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1. College Introduction

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

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, learning, supervision, and 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 and the Graduate School. 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 writing your literature review 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.



Our Principles

In 2012 the College and Imperial College Union agreed 'Our Principles', a series of commitments made between students and the College. The Principles are reviewed annually by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and changes recommended for Senate approval.

Imperial will provide through its staff:

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

Imperial will provide students with:

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

Imperial students should:

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

The Imperial College Students' Union will:

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



www.imperial.ac.uk/students/our-principles

Doctoral Proposition

Imperial College London will:

Provide a world-class research programme

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

Provide innovative and effective professional development

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

Deliver outstanding networking opportunities

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

Offer life-long membership of the Imperial community

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

Mutual Expectations for the Research Degree Student Supervisor Partnership

The Graduate School has produced a list of minimum expectations that students and supervisors can expect from each other. It is designed to facilitate conversations to establish effective partnerships and the College requires that the document is discussed at the first meeting between a main supervisor and a new student. It should be noted that this is not exhaustive and that the student and supervisor may wish to discuss and personalise each point to suit.

 www.bb.imperial.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/xid-11805859_1

Cornerstone

In April 2022 the Cornerstone Programme was launched. This dedicated umbrella support and development programme helps Imperial's doctoral supervisors better support and guide their students throughout the PhD journey. Cornerstone was developed by experts from across College in partnership with doctoral students. The programme includes a new online self-paced course for supervisors and a website hub where all information and resources to support doctoral supervision at Imperial are available. The new online course is mandatory for all new supervisors and is available for all supervisors to access at any time to keep up to

date with College supervisory processes and to enhance their supervisory practice. In addition, every six years, all supervisors are required to attend a Focus on Best Practice in Supervision CPD workshop tailored to their Department. Cornerstone is a continually evolving provision and welcomes feedback from supervisors and students – please contact Dr Victoria Crossley, the Cornerstone Programme Lead.

 v.crossley@imperial.ac.uk

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/staff/cornerstone/

2. Welcome from the 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 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. Our programme is offered to you through multi-mode delivery so that you can access it 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 completely different, 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.

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 established to support all postgraduate students at the College through:

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



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/doctoral/professional-development/

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

Imperial Mobile app

Don't forget to download the free Imperial Mobile app for access to College information and services, including your programme timetable, College emails and a library catalogue search tool.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/imperialmobile

Welcome to Imperial app

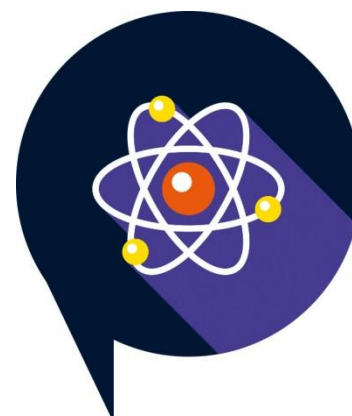
The College has a Welcome to Imperial app which contains important information about campus operations, aspects of student life, a schedule of welcome activities and information about life in halls. All new students should download this guide to ensure they have the most up to date information and event schedule for the start of term.

You can download the App from the Apple or Google App Stores.

Imperial Success Guide

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/



Key Dates 2022-23

Term dates

Autumn term:	1 October 2022 - 16 December 2022
Spring term:	7 January 2023- 24 March 2023
Summer term:	29 April 2023 - 30 June 2023

Closure dates

Christmas/New year:	24 December 2022 - 2 January 2023 (College reopens on 3 January 2023)
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Easter Holiday:	6 April 2023 – 12 April 2023 (College reopens on 13 April 2023)
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Early May Bank Holiday:	1 May 2023
Spring Bank Holiday:	29 May 2023
Summer Bank Holiday:	28 August 2023


Key events

Great Exhibition Road Festival:	17 June 2023 – 18 June 2023
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Location and Facilities

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

Your main location of study will be:

 South Kensington Campus

Department of Computing, Faculty of Engineering
Imperial College London,
Queen's Gate,
London SW7 2AZ

Facilities

For details on computer access and printing is available please visit:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/about/facilities/>

Full details of all systems and facilities can be found on the Department's Computing Support Group (CSG) at:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/people/csg/>

The Department's PhD office is located at 4th floor, Huxley Building and open 9:00 – 17:00.

Shuttle bus

A free shuttle bus runs between our South Kensington, White City and Hammersmith Campuses on weekdays. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. You need to

show your College ID card to board. You can download the timetable and check the latest service updates at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/travel/shuttle-bus

Maps

Campus maps and travel directions are available at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses

Accessibility

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

 www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/imperial-college-london

Smoke-Free Policy

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/smoke-free

SafeZone

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



SafeZone is optional to register for and is now available to download on the Apple and Android App stores. Visit www.imperial.ac.uk/estates-facilities/security/safezone/ for more details about SafeZone.

All existing phone numbers for the Security team are still operational. In the event of an emergency, you can still call 4444 from any internal College phone. In the event of a wider incident in London, you can now also call 0300 131 4444, Imperial's Emergency Recorded Message Line, which will point you in the direction of up-to-date information and advice.

1. Introduction to the Department

Welcome from Head of Department and/or Director of Postgraduate Studies



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

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

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

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

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

We look forward to having you.

Welcome from PGR Student Representative



Konstantinos Barmapas

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

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


We have a [Slack channel](https://join.slack.com/t/iclcomputingphds/shared_invite/zt-okpi29qv-Mr2oN0ZF0Z7rjT3mHlcqsA), and you are more than welcome to join: https://join.slack.com/t/iclcomputingphds/shared_invite/zt-okpi29qv-Mr2oN0ZF0Z7rjT3mHlcqsA





Alex Spies


Academic and Administrative staff





 Dr Nicolas Wu
Senior PG Tutor


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 Dr Amani El-Kholy
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PhD Admissions Tutor


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 Professor Cristian Cadar
Deputy Director of PG Research

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 Dr Thomas Heinis
Deputy PhD Admissions Tutor and AI4Health

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 t.heinis@imperial.ac.uk

Departmental Information

The Department of Computing is part of the Faculty of Engineering, which encompasses all the different types of Engineering departments within college. Relevant information about the Faculty of Engineering can be found here:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/mechanical-engineering/study/phd/>

General information about Faculty of Engineering can be found at:

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

Research activities support and facilities within the faculty:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/research>

Faculty team members:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/staff/faculty-teams>

General information about the department can be found on the department website at:

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

For information about the Computing Support Group which provides and operates computing services used for teaching, research and administration within the Department of Computing:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/csg/>

Research Seminars

Research is a social activity too. You will learn more by talking with people working in your area and attending seminars than you will by reading papers in isolation. Many of the best ideas spring from casual conversations or accidental meetings. The Department has a wide range of active research groups that are well over the 'critical mass'.

There are frequent informal seminars to complement the official Departmental seminars (held usually on Wednesday afternoons). Seminars are announced by email, and on the Department's web pages including:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/seminar-series>

Research groups with the department might also run their own technical research seminars. Descriptions of the Department's research structure, listings of current research themes, and staff research profiles may be found at the link below.

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/research/>

Check the dedicated webpages under the groups found within the themes for details.

As a PhD student you can attend all such seminars and use any departmental facilities such as the Common Rooms on the 4th and 5th floors of the Huxley Building. Try and maximise the opportunities this offers.

As well as attending seminars you should be prepared to give some. Most of the research group seminars are pitched at an informal level to encourage the early dissemination and discussion of ideas. The sooner you get used to exposing your ideas to others the better; you will find the audiences sympathetic and constructive.

Student Conferences

Since 2011, the PhD students of the Department have successfully organised and run their own student conference with keynote talks by leaders in the field. The latest series of these is the Imperial College Conference. This is a biannual event in which students have the opportunity to showcase their work. Typically, one is held in December and the other in July. Check out the Imperial Computing Conference (ICC) webpage for details.

 <https://icc.doc.ic.ac.uk>

Social Activities

There are many other events and activities throughout the year. There is a 'Pizza' gathering each week so that all PhD students can come together socially, discuss life and the universe and make friends. Reminder emails are circulated weekly.

There is a very popular series of "Minute Madness" events: first year PhD students have one minute to explain to the audience what their research is about; second year students get two minutes; third year students get three.

There are poster competitions held typically at the ICC event.

The following provides access to information about:

PhD matters (including events) within the Department of Computing:

 <https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters/>

Research activity within the Department of Computing:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/research>

News and events within the Department of Computing:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/about/news>

News and events within the Faculty of Engineering:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/news-and-events>

Activities within the Faculty of Engineering:

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/study/current>

Graduate School events:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/events/>

2. Departmental Procedures

Departmental Induction

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

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

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

Study room allocation

As a research student you will be allocated a working space in a room shared with other research students. When you arrive, you will be told where this will be. Office keys are obtainable from the Department's General Office. The department has a hot desk policy for PhD students who are in the writing up status and do not necessarily need their working space to write up their thesis. Working desks will be shared among students with similar needed during their writing up stage.

Access to Common Rooms

Research students are entitled to use the Maths/Computing Common Room on level 5 of the Huxley Building. It is open from 09:00 to 17:00 and serves tea, coffee, sandwiches and other items. To be a little bit eco-friendlier bring your own mug.

Research students also have access to the 4th floor staff common room on level 4 of the Huxley Building expect on Wednesdays 13:00 to 14:00. Please check signpost on the door for other closure times.

Conferences and Consumables

Include information about conference attendance and funding provided by the department.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Professional Skills

All doctoral students are expected to complete a total of 4 Graduate School Professional Development credits as part of their doctoral degree registration.

By the Early-Stage Assessment (ESA), all students must attend either:


- a minimum of 2 professional skills courses;
- a Graduate School Retreat; or
- an International doctoral summer school.

In addition to this, all doctoral students must complete mandatory plagiarism awareness training by the ESA.

By the Late Stage Review (LSR), students must have completed a further 2 Graduate School courses.

The Graduate School's Professional Development attendance requirement exists in order to ensure that all students receive a broad range of skills development training while at Imperial and have the opportunity to engage with students from outside their programme and in different departments.

See the Graduate School's website for details:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/attendance-requirement/

Please note that it is the student's responsibility and not the supervisors to ensure that this component of the course is completed in time.

Students, via Directors of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) within their department, can apply for exemption to this if students have attended equivalent courses elsewhere. However, all Doctoral students, even those who have successfully applied for an exemption, must attend at least two Graduate School courses prior to the Late Stage Review (LSR). To find out more, please visit:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/attendance-requirement/>

English Language Requirement

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

Students with a minimum English language proficiency of IELTS 8.0 overall (or equivalent test scores: TOEFL score of 110 overall or higher, Pearson PTE score of 76 overall or higher), or those who have studied a full undergraduate degree in a majority English speaking country will receive an email from the CfAE confirming formal exemption from the Imperial College

London Postgraduate English Requirement within two weeks of enrolling onto their PhD programme. If exemption is granted on this basis, the student does not need to take an English assessment but is still eligible to take advantage of our higher-level courses, workshops and 1:1 consultations at any point during the PhD.

See the Admissions website for details:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/requirements/english

For information on English language support available while you're here, see [page 52](#).

Attendance and Absence

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/

The Registry will be informed of all student non-attendances as the College is obliged to report the non-attendance of students on Tier 4/Student Route visas to the Home Office.

UKVI Requirements for Overseas Students

The Government imposes a requirement on universities to monitor the attendance of Tier 4 student visa holders, and to report to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) any Tier 4 visa holders who cease to be in regular attendance. The College is required to notify the UKVI where a student visa holder has missed ten expected interactions with the College. It is therefore essential that students communicate any annual or sick leave to their supervisor(s) or designated departmental contact.

The departmental requirement is that students must attend at least one monthly meeting with their supervisor, who will be certifying the attendance through CATE at:

 <https://cate.doc.ic.ac.uk>

Term-time and Home Addresses

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

Mail

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

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

Student's Name

PhD student or Research Assistant — whichever is applicable

Department of Computing

Huxley Building, Imperial College London

180 Queens Gate

London SW7 2RH

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

Stationery

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

Identity Cards

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

Out of Hours Access

Normal College hours are between 08.30 and 18.00, Monday to Friday. The times outside these hours are known as 'out of hours' periods. Students are permitted to work (not eat, play or sleep!!) in some parts of the Huxley Building for parts of the out of hours periods. Entry to the building will not be permitted after 22.00 and all students must leave the building by 23.00. The building opens at

05.00 in the morning. All students must carry their ID card to be allowed out of hours access. The Security Guards hold lists of student names showing for which rooms and times out of hours access is permitted.

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

- carry your ID card at all times,
- show your ID card to the Security Guard or other members of College staff on request,

- complete the attendance register at the Security Desk on level 2 when you enter the Huxley Building

(or at 18.00 if you are already in) and complete it again when you leave.

Health and Safety Information

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

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

Keeping you safe is a top priority for us. Since 1 April 2022, the UK Government removed all restrictions on public areas, including Universities and education settings. Imperial College still encourages students to wear face coverings in crowded areas, to stay at home if you have symptoms of respiratory disease, to get fully vaccinated, to cover your coughs and sneezes, and to respect others' personal space.

The latest Imperial College guidance to students can be seen at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/covid-19/students/

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/safety-management/health-and-safety-policy-statement/

First Aid

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

Fire Alarm Signals

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

Evacuation Procedure

- Act quietly. Use the nearest available exit — indicated by green 'Fire Exit' signs.
- Do not use the lifts.

- On leaving the building keep clear of the exits to avoid impeding the Fire Brigade. Report to the assembly point, which is outside the main entrance in Queen's Gate, but well away from the entrance. Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.

If you discover a fire

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

Escape Routes from the Huxley Building

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

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

Fire Wardens

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

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

Fire Drills

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

Bomb Warnings

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

Your Faculty of Engineering safety contact is:



Beth Wallis

 b.wallis@imperial.ac.uk

The College Safety Department

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

The College's activities range from the use of hazardous materials (biological, chemical and radiological substances) to field work, heavy or awkward lifting, driving, and working alone or late.

All College activities are covered by general health and safety regulations, but higher risk activities will have additional requirements.

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/safety

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

Occupational Health requirements

The College Occupational Health Service provides services to:

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health

3. Doctoral Milestones and Progress Reports

It is difficult to set out a fixed timetable for PhD work as there are so many variables and variations but, however it is structured, it is essential that some planned programme of work

is followed. Failure to complete a PhD is often not due to lack of talent, but more to do with a failure to plan work sensibly and tackle the more mundane activities, such as writing up.

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

Here is general outline:

Year 1

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

Year 2

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

Year 3

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

Formal milestones

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

Registration

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

Research Plan Confirmation

PhD students are required by the Department of Computing to complete a Research Plan Confirmation (RPC) by 3 months for full-time students, and at 6 months for part-time students. This is a departmental milestone submitted via CATE¹. A description of what this should contain is provided below.

Early-Stage Assessment

Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Early-Stage Assessment (ESA) in order to continue as a PhD student. The ESA consists of a report and presentation which the department requires to be completed by 9 months for full-time students, and at 18 months for part-time students. Students must also have completed two of the four required Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School. The College requires report, presentation and final outcome of the ESA to be submitted on CATE¹ by 12 months for full-time students, and at 24 months for part-time students.

Late-Stage Assessment

Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Late Stage Report (LSR) in order to continue as a PhD student. This should be completed by month 24 for full-time students, and by month 36 for part-time students. This is in the form of a poster to be submitted via CATE¹. By then, the students must also complete the requisite Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School.

Thesis Outline

Students are required by the department to produce a .zip file that includes (i) papers submitted/published so far, and (ii) a draft or outline thesis, with a narrative (per chapter) explaining how and which of the papers will be included into the thesis, and indicating where more work is needed. This is due by 36 months for full-time students, and 60 months for part-time students. This is submitted in pdf format to the primary supervisor with a copy to the PhD Programme Manager.

Writing Up

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

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

¹ Please note that CATE is being replaced. For any submission related issues, please contact PhD Office.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Examination Entry

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

Thesis submission

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

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

Important: Students who started their postgraduate research degree in September 2019 will need to follow the Colleges policy on using Turnitin as part of the Early-Stage Assessment. Students who started their postgraduate research degrees prior to this date should follow their local departmental policy on submission requirements and any measures and guidance they may have in place on good academic practice.

Information on preparing for the viva & link to online Passing Your Viva can be found on this website:



<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/online-learning-resources/viva-video/the-viva-process/>

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

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

The following procedures were introduced in January 2011, and subsequently updated in 2016, to replace the previous MPhil/PhD scheme.

Guidance on milestones may be found at:

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

General information about the research programme is available at:

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

Students who started their postgraduate research degree on or after the 28 September 2019 will need to follow the College's policy on using Turnitin as part of the Early Stage Assessment:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/

Plagiarism in Theses Guidance can be found at:

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

Reports

Research Plan Confirmation

All research students are required by College to draw up and agree a formal research plan with their supervisors within the first three months of registration. This consists of a provisional thesis title, names of the primary and second supervisor and a short abstract of the research topic identified in consultation with the primary supervisor. Your supervisor is required to discuss your progress with you and to sign the report. The student must submit, through CATE, as a minimum requirement, a single A4 page (in .pdf) including the above information and signed by the supervisor. The submission is done by uploading the .pdf file in CATE, as part of the module 611 (Research Plan Confirmation (RPC)).

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

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

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

Early Stage Assessment (ESA)

This is a formal review of progress in the first year, which must take place at month 9 from the registration date. This consists of a written report, called ESA report), and an oral examination. Students whose work fails to meet the required standards will be asked to resubmit at month 11. Students failing at that point will be required to withdraw or to transfer to the MPhil degree.

The aims of the review are to:

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

Report and Presentation

The ESA Report should not normally exceed about 30–40 pages. You may use any papers and technical reports you have produced over the year to develop the report. Your supervisor can offer advice on content and structure. The report will normally include [most of] the following:

- *Introduction and statement of problem.* A clear statement of the research problem and aims and objectives. This should be described in a way that is accessible to any member of the Department's academic staff.
- *Literature survey.* An outline of the precedents for the proposed work, points of departure, and indication of potential significance; a comprehensive and critical literature review demonstrating a good knowledge of the background to the research problem. Where a detailed literature review chapter for the dissertation has already been drafted, this may be attached as an appendix and a summary of the main points included in the report.
- *Methods and techniques.* An account of the methods and techniques adopted in the study. This will normally include a presentation of the relevant theoretical computational or experimental methods to be employed.

- *Summary of research.* An account of research carried out so far.
- *Results.* A discussion of results obtained.
- *Research Plan.* A clear account of the future plans for the research with a schedule for completion of
- the work. This must include a realistic timetable of activities leading to a successful completion of studies. An outline of the dissertation [chapter and expected section headings] should be included. You should identify any risks and describe briefly the backup plans.
- *Bibliography.*

Detailed papers and reports, if any, can be cited but need not be included.

Examiners are well aware that results at this stage will be limited and ideas still at a preliminary stage. Students should not defer submission of the report because of a lack of results or because they have a paper deadline etc. They must submit their ESA report through CATE by uploading the .pdf file of the report in CATE.

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

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

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

Assessment

Each student will be allocated an assessment team consisting of at least three members of academic staff, including the supervisor, the second supervisor (or co-supervisor), AND one or more independent assessors. The independent assessor must be an academic within the department, not a research assistant or senior researcher. Mentors cannot be part of the Assessment Team. Assessment forms are available in CATE. The independent assessor will fill in form F1, whereas supervisor(s) will jointly fill in form F2. Director of Postgraduate Research (DPS), or year mentor, or PhD Programme Manager will confirm the final outcome using form F4.

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

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

Hilfred Chau Memorial Prize

The Hilfred Chau Memorial Prize is awardable annually for the best 9-month ESA report. Supervisors should nominate suitable candidates to the Postgraduate Tutor as soon as possible.

Late Stage Review (LSR)

By month 24, students are required to submit a Late Stage Review report in the form of a poster to be presented at one of the ICC poster events that year. The poster should include the following information:

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

The appendix should be no longer than 3 pages and include a provisional table of content of the thesis and a schedule of planned research needed to complete the PhD. The poster and the appendix will have to be submitted in CATE in the form of a .zip file.

Assessment

The LSR Poster and Appendix will be reviewed by the supervisor, the second supervisor and the same independent assessor of the ESA (unless a change of topic has happened since the ESA milestone) as part of a departmental poster presentation event. There should also be strong evidence of progress from the 9-month ESA review. Assessment forms are available in CATE. The independent assessor will fill in form F1, whereas supervisor(s) will jointly fill in form F2. Director of Postgraduate Research, or year mentor, or PhD Programme Manager will confirm the final outcome using form F4.

Progress Review Report

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

Assessment

The report will be reviewed by the supervisor and the second supervisor. The report should provide strong evidence that the PhD will be completed successfully and on time. It is expected that material for several chapters of the thesis will have been completed at this stage, at least in draft form. The report should be submitted in CATE. The year mentor is in charge of monitoring the submission of this report.

Examination Entry (up to 44 months for full-time students)

Before you can submit your thesis or be examined on it you, your supervisor and your department will need to complete examination entry forms. You should aim to submit your examination entry forms at least four months before you would like to submit your thesis, or four months before your final submission deadline. This means submitting your forms 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 part-time student. Please note that submission of your thesis is not permitted until you have completed the minimum registration period. Before you submit the examination entry forms you should ensure that you have completed all your milestones and that the Registry has received all relevant documentation. You will find the examination entry form on our Departmental Website at:



<https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters>

Further details can be found here:

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

Thesis Submission

Students *MUST* submit their thesis by the end of month 48 for full-time students, 72 months for part-time. This is a strict deadline imposed by the College. Before you can submit your thesis or have a viva voce examination, you, your supervisor and the Department need to complete several examination entry forms. Once you have submitted your examination entry forms you will be told when your entry has been processed and you are able to submit your thesis. You will not be able to submit a thesis without a valid examination entry. Please read the submission requirements carefully to ensure you submit in the correct format. When you submit your thesis, you should make sure that you also email a copy of the Thesis Declaration Form directly to the Registry.

Your thesis must be submitted electronically via the MyImperial website:

 <https://my.imperial.ac.uk>

Further details can be found here:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/student-systems/student-records/student-journey/PGR-Manual---Students.pdf>

Please consult your supervisor to ensure that these formalities are completed in a timely manner. Although month 48 is the final deadline allowed by the College for thesis submission, most students submit between month 36 and month 42. Do not let your supervisor divert you into writing papers in this final period. Your priority should be submitting an excellent thesis; additional papers can be written afterwards.

Post-Submission

Thesis submission is done electronically (via <https://my.imperial.ac.uk>) Your supervisor will arrange the date of your viva. It normally takes place within two or three months of thesis submission although the wait can be considerably longer depending on the availability of the examiners and their other commitments. After the viva, the examiners will make a recommendation. The most common two recommendations are: to award the PhD immediately with no further changes (comparatively rare), or (most usually) to award the PhD subject to some minor specified amendments to be carried out within 3 months of the viva and approved by the examiners. There are other, less desirable, outcomes when sub-standard work is submitted. Work with your supervisor to ensure that your work will be judged to be of PhD standard.

Preparing for the 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, will be responsible for organising the viva and making all the necessary arrangements.

You can find information on how to prepare for the viva on the following links:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progression-and-feedback/thesis-submission-and- viva/preparing-for-your-viva/>

Thesis Embargo

The College recognises that theses contain unpublished work created for examination and that in some circumstances it may be necessary to delay their public release. This is referred to as an embargo. An

embargoed thesis will not be available to read, on Spiral or in print, until an agreed date. Students should discuss with their supervisor whether their thesis should be embargoed and tick the appropriate box on the Thesis declaration form.

For information on open access to research degree theses, and on how to apply for an embargo:

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/find-books-articles-and-more/theses>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/open-access/>

Please contact the Research Degrees Team (research.degree@imperial.ac.uk) if you have any queries regarding the College's policies on embargo.

4. Academic Support

There are many formal and informal ways of obtaining support, help and advice.

PhD Team


The PhD team of the Department of Computing is composed of various academics and administrative staff. These include Director and Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research, Senior PG Tutor, PhD mentors, PhD academic progress mentor, Postgraduate and Deputy Admissions Tutor and PhD Programme Manager. Staff allocated to these roles change periodically.

Director of Postgraduate Research



Dr Dalal Alrajeh

The Director of Postgraduate Research (DPR) is responsible for maintaining oversight of quality issues and liaison with College committees, chairing PhD strategy Committee, representative on the Department Management Committee, overall PhD training and PhD initiatives. For details visit

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/qa/public/good-practice/roles-and-responsibilities/08.-DPGS-Role.pdf>

 Dalal.alrajeh@ic.ac.uk

 www.doc.ac.ic.ac.uk/~da04

Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research



Professor Cristian Cadar

Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research deputises the director and participates in the Staff-Student committee and other departmental and college committee meetings.

 c.cadar@imperial.ac.uk

 <https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/~cristic/>

Assistant Director of Postgraduate Research



Dr Antonio Filieri

As the previous Director of Postgraduate Research, the assistant DPR is available to provide advice and recommendations to assist in the transitioning phase with the new director and the PhD team based on previous experience.

 a.filieri@imperial.ac.uk

 <http://www.antonio.filieri.name/>

Departmental Senior Postgraduate Tutor



Dr Nicolas Wu

The Senior Postgraduate Tutor is responsible for providing pastoral support for research students. He is available to discuss any matter, personal or academic, in confidence. RAs registered for a PhD requiring pastoral support may also contact the Department's RA mentor. You can arrange to have a meeting with them at any time – what you discuss will be completely confidential. For more information on the role of the senior tutor please visit the roles and responsibilities page at:

 [https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/qa/public/good-practice/roles-and-responsibilities/Senior-Tutor-\(PGR\).pdf](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/qa/public/good-practice/roles-and-responsibilities/Senior-Tutor-(PGR).pdf)

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

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/people/n.wu>

 n.wu@imperial.ac.uk

PhD Admissions Tutor



Dr Giuliano Casale

Responsibilities include initial screening of PhD applications, making final decisions on acceptance and offers, chairing the periodic departmental scholarship committee meetings, representing the department in faculty scholarship ranking meetings (President's PhD Scholarship and other College schemes).

 <http://wp.doc.ic.ac.uk/gcasale/>

Deputy PhD Admissions Tutor



Dr Thomas Heinis

Responsibilities include overseeing the departmental PhD admission process for the AI4Health CDT and chairing its selection panel.

 <http://wp.doc.ic.ac.uk/theinis/>

Year Mentor

In addition to the primary supervisor, second supervisor and the Postgraduate Senior Tutor, every PhD student has a *mentor* whom they can consult. In the Department of Computing, there is one mentor for each of the 1st and 2nd year and one mentor for the joint 3rd and 4th year cohorts. If the mentor of your year-group is also your supervisor or second supervisor, then you should be free to have as mentor one of the other year-groups' mentor.

The role of your mentor is that of a trusted advisor who can provide counsel, encouragement and career advice, and generally take an interest in your development. The mentor is independent of your supervisors and takes no responsibility for performance or assessment of your progress. Mentors may also organise social and other events for their year-group and monitor the PhD milestone for that year (see section on milestones). Where students need more pastoral support the mentor may refer them to the Postgraduate Tutor.



Dr Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye

1st Year PhD Mentor

 deMontjoye@imperial.ac.uk

 <http://www.demontjoye.com/>



Professor Lucia Specia

2nd Year PhD Mentor

 l.specia@imperial.ac.uk

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/people/l.specia>



Dr Francesco Bellardinelli

3rd and 4th Year PhD Mentor

 Francesco.belardinelli@imperial.ac.uk

 <https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/~fbelard/>

PhD Programme Manager



Dr Amani El-Kholy

The PhD Programme Manager is the first contact for all non-supervision related matter. Responsibilities include all administration concerning PhD applications, enrolment, student progress, examination form processing, and giving advice to students.

 a.o.el-kholy@imperial.ac.uk

Other formal sources open to PhD students include, but are not limited to:

- Head of Department: Professor Michael Huth: m.huth@imperial.ac.uk
- Departmental student representative: Alex Spies afspies@imperial.ac.uk, Konstantinos Barmpas konstantinos.barmpas16@imperial.ac.uk

Other Support

Primary Supervisor

The primary responsibility for organising your research work lies with you. However, it is your supervisor's responsibility to guide your research, point you in interesting directions, monitor your progress and generally provide moral and technical support. Supervisors differ in their methods, but you should normally expect to see your supervisor at least once a fortnight. Feel free to contact him or her at any time if you have a problem or are unsure how to proceed.

You will find that you can obtain the most benefit from meetings with your supervisor if you prepare some material for him or her to read or formulate some specific questions you would like to discuss.

For details, please see

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/ga/public/good-practice/roles-and-responsibilities/Roles-and-Responsibilities-08.04.22-F.pdf>

Second Supervisor

Every PhD student must also have a second supervisor. The role of the second supervisor is to give help when your supervisor is unavailable and generally to keep in touch with your progress. Typically, they will be involved in your first-year assessments. Your primary supervisor must appoint one within the first 3 months of your PhD. Please remind them to do so.

Staff-Student Committees

The PhD Staff-Student Committee is the forum for general discussion of issues that affect research students. It consists of the Director and Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research, the Postgraduate Tutor, the PhD Programme Administrator, the PhD Admissions Tutor, Deputy PhD Admissions Tutor, the year mentors, and PhD student representatives elected by the research students (one for each year). Meetings are held at least once a term, and on demand.

The PhD Staff-Student Committee is not the appropriate forum to raise or solve specific problems affecting one or two individuals. It is the place to discuss persistent or widespread problems, or general points that affect all students. Constructive suggestions are encouraged and are always welcome.

You may approach any member of the Committee or send an email message if there is an issue you would like to raise.

Additional information about academic and administrative staff of the Department can be found on the Department Website:

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

Supervisor and Student Expectations

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: a research degree cannot be accomplished with only a 9–5 effort. Imperial College is a top- ranking 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.
- Provide regular reports detailing your results. You should be conscientious about keeping a laboratory
- notebook and regularly entering all your data into tables and 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 School, by your own and other College departments/divisions/faculties, and by any other external providers.

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 workspace 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:

Adhere to the College timeframes: most importantly, in the case of a PhD you have a maximum of 4 years between registration and submission of the PhD thesis.

In addition, you can expect your supervisor to identify suitable PhD examiners and make arrangements for the viva examination.

5. Examination Procedures


My Imperial - Postgraduate Research Milestones

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

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

 www.my.imperial.ac.uk/

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/student-systems/student-records/student-journey/PGR-Manual---Students.pdf


Vivas

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

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

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progression-and-feedback/thesis-submission-and-viva/preparing-for-your-viva/

There is also dedicated guidance for students on preparing for a remote viva or other remote milestone assessments:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/remote-phd-supervision/

E-theses: Requesting an Embargo

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


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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/research-and-innovation/scholarly-communication/public/thesis-declaration-form.pdf

Reasons for requesting an embargo include:

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

For further information please contact the Assessment Records team


 www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/open-access/theses/requesting-an-embargo/


Plagiarism

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

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

An online course on plagiarism awareness is available through the Graduate School. The course is compulsory, and will provide you with guidance and information about proper citation and attribution in writing.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/online-courses/

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/success-guide/pgr/progression-and-feedback/writing-reports-and-presentations/being-original-and-plagiarism/

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/plagiarism-awareness/phd-students/

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/teaching-learning/turnitin/

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

Collusion:

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

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

Dishonest practice

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

6. College Policies and Procedures

Regulations for Students

All registered postgraduate research students of the College are subject to the Regulations for Students General Regulations, and the Academic Regulations that apply to your degree.


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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/terms-and-conditions

Unsatisfactory Engagement

Unfortunately, sometimes students struggle to make satisfactory progress in their study or their engagement with their studies falls below our expectations. The College has a process to identify and support students by reaffirming these expectations with an action plan. If a student does not engage satisfactorily with these supportive measures, they can be withdrawn from their studies. The full details of this process, and the appeals procedure relating to it can be found at:


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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline

Academic and Research Integrity

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-governance-and-integrity/research-integrity/what-is-research-integrity/


 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/academic-integrity/Examination-and-assessments---academic-integrity.pdf

Research Misconduct

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

Regardless of discipline and institution, the fundamental factor in ensuring the quality of research and research practices has to be the honesty of the individual investigator. Investigators should be honest with respect to their own work, which means subscribing to proper scientific practices such as acknowledging the contributions of colleagues or collaborators, ensuring veracity of data, and acting with integrity in the depiction of results and conclusions. However, investigators are also expected to be honest in relation to the work of their colleagues and peers. Colluding in, or concealing, the misconduct of others is not compatible with an environment which encourages intellectual honesty and is, therefore, in itself misconduct.

The College's policy on, and procedures for, the investigation of allegations of research misconduct:


 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/secretariat/public/college-governance/charters-statutes-ordinances-regulations/ordinances/Ordinance-D17-Nov-2020.pdf

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/

Academic Appeals Procedures

We have rigorous regulations in place to ensure assessments are conducted with fairness and consistency, claims for mitigating circumstances have been considered reasonably and in line with the regulations of the College, and that the decisions of the Boards of Examiners maintain the integrity of our academic awards. Should you believe that you have grounds to appeal these decisions, we have laid out clear and consistent procedures through which appeals can be investigated and considered:


 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline

Student Complaints

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


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

 student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline

Student Disciplinary Procedure

The College has the right to investigate any allegation of misconduct against a student and may take disciplinary action where it decides, on the balance of probabilities, that a breach of discipline has been committed. This Procedure is currently under review and will be updated during the 2022-23 academic year. The general principles of the Student Disciplinary Procedure are available on the College website:


 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/complaints-appeals-and-discipline/

Copyright

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/copyright-guidance/

The Graduate School provides training on Copyright:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/research-integrity/copyright-for-researchers-online-course/

Intellectual Property Rights Policy

For further guidance on the College's Intellectual Property Rights Policy is available on the College website:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/research-policies/research-related-policies/ip-policy-college-login/

Further information about the Imperial Enterprise Lab can be found at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/enterprising-students

 www.imperialenterpriselab.com/support/experts-in-residence

The Graduate School provides training on Intellectual Property:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/research-integrity/

Use of IT Facilities

View the Conditions of Use of IT Facilities:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/conditions-of-use-of-it-resources/

Employment During Studies

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

Students may undertake teaching or demonstrating work when this is compatible with their training and provided their supervisors approve. The total time spent (including preparation and marking) should not interfere with the progress of the PhD. The amount of time is at the RO and supervisor's discretion but it is recommended that this is no more than six hours in any week.


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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/study/graduate-school/public/gta-website/GTA-Framework_Updated-May-2021.pdf

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.

In addition, the Department provides opportunities for PhD students to carry out work for the Department. These are used to provide some additional financial support and to allow students to engage in the teaching activities of the Department.

- PhD students (excluding teaching scholars, 1st-year CDT PhD students, self-funded PhD students and RAs), who receive a financial contribution from the department to their scholarship are expected to contribute 100 hours per academic year to the teaching activities in the department. This corresponds, on average, to supporting one teaching course per term (~50 hours per term), in activities such as tutorial help, lab support, coursework marking and exam invigilation. The department will pay for teaching support at the standard hourly rate. This applies to any cohort year (from 1st to 4th year PhD). Students who are heavily involved in the writing up stage of their PhD and very close to their completion date might be exempt. These cases will be considered on an individual basis. Continuation of financial support by the department for a PhD scholarship depends upon both satisfactory progress in the PhD and on the fulfilment of the teaching support requirement. To fulfil the teaching requirements, 1st year PhD students should make sure that:
 1. They attend the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) workshop as soon as possible in the 1st year, in order to receive the necessary training for their teaching support activities.
 2. They finalise the paperwork needed to register in college for casual pay. This will allow the students to receive payments for the teaching support hours that you will be claiming. Note that preparation time for tutorial classes can be claimed (normally two hours of preparation per a one-hour tutorial).
 3. They volunteer for courses as soon as possible by logging into the Tutorial Support Coordination website:
 <https://tsc.doc.ic.ac.uk>
 4. If they are not able to be allocated to any teaching activity, they should report this as soon as possible to the supervisor and contact the Director of Postgraduate Research of the Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research.
- RAs, registered also as a PhD student, are employees of the College and are not eligible for additional payments to support Departmental teaching. Their involvement in teaching activities will be rewarded in the form of an individual financial credit that can be used towards certain approved types of expenditure.

Study Leave

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

Adequate supervision must be in place where the student will be taking up their Study Leave prior to any application being approved. It is important to consider the risks involved.

Imperial has an Off-Site Working policy which the student's academic department will need to follow, and which includes a specific approach (placements) when a third-party placement provider is involved.

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.

Where the placement is undertaken outside the UK additional support is provided in the Placements Abroad Handbook.

Contact your departmental postgraduate administrator for further guidance if you and your supervisor wish to have study leave considered.



<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/information-for-imperial-college-students/>



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

Ethics

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



www.imperial.ac.uk/research-ethics-committee

Good Research Conduct

Imperial College London is committed to undertaking research of the highest international quality within an intellectually challenging and inspiring environment, to extending the frontiers of research within and beyond existing research disciplines, and to bringing together research expertise within and beyond the College to address the science challenges of today and the future. The College's achievements in research are underpinned by the quality and expertise of the individuals within it, and the pages in the link below define the standards of research governance and integrity essential to the College's reputation and success.



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

Leave

Annual Leave

Annual leave is dependent on the student's status, 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.

Before taking any holidays, students must agree the dates with their supervisor. Holidays should not be taken at times when they will impact on PhD milestones, and are not an acceptable reason for delaying the submission of reports, etc. A holiday longer than 3 weeks must be approved by the Postgraduate Tutor.

For details on the annual leave policy (including parental leave) please refer to:



https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/attendance-requirements-for-pgr/PGR_student_leave_policy_February_2023.pdf

Sick Leave

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

Interruption of Studies

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

Interruption of Studies (IOS) should be put in place for any compassionate leave, maternity and paternity leave, personal emergency, lack of funding, internships etc. Students can apply for Interruption of Studies using the IC/B form:



[Interrupting your studies | Imperial students | Imperial College London](#)

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

If you are an international student on a Tier 4 student visa, you will have to leave the UK for the period of your interruption. An exception to this would be if you had been declared unfit to travel. Please see further information for international students on how your visa may be affected by an interruption of studies. See below for more information:



<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students>

For more information about other forms of leave please visit:



www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/leave/

Attending Taught Courses

Currently, as a PhD student you are entitled to attend all lectures in the Department. This is a great opportunity and you should continue your education by taking advantage of it. Of particular interest to PhD students will be the Department's MSc in Advanced Computing and MSc in Computing (Specialism). The topics covered often represent the frontiers of work in the relevant areas and provide an ideal introduction or background for your research. Discuss with your supervisor which

courses you should attend. Course syllabuses, reading lists and timetables are published in the Department's web pages. Classes are normally held between 09.00 and 18.00 except for Wednesday afternoons. If you plan to attend any lectures it is courteous to ask the lecturer beforehand as space and availability of handouts may be limited.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

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

In line with the above please see the College's privacy notice for students which form part of the terms and conditions of registration with the College.



www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/Privacy-Notice-for-Students-and-Prospective-Students.pdf

8. Wellbeing and Support

Student Support Zone

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone

Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors

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

Student Wellbeing Advisor

The department has a Student Wellbeing Advisor, Caroline Gilchrist, you can provide confidential support and advice with a variety of things such as accommodation, exercise, food and nutrition, sleep, identity, mental health, stress and Anxiety and general wellbeing. Her location is Room 454, her email is

 c.gilchrist@imperial.ac.uk

She has drop-in sessions on Thursday (10am-1pm or 2pm-4pm) and Friday (10am- 1pm or 2pm-4pm).

Senior Tutor (PGR)

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

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

PhD Programme Administrator

The PhD Programme Administrator is often the first point of contact for PhD students.

Student Support

The student support webpages (Student Space) are the central point for information on health and wellbeing.

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

Director of Student Support

The Director of Student Support has overall responsibility for all matters relating to student support and wellbeing.

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

Postgraduate Coaching and Research Degree Mediation

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/community-support/coaching/

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/mediation/

Advice Services

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

Careers Service

The Careers Service has strong links to your Department and you will have a named Careers Consultant and Placement and Internship Adviser who will run both group sessions and individual meetings within your Department. You can arrange to meet with your linked Careers Consultant or Placement and Internship Adviser either in your Department or centrally at the South Kensington Campus on Level 5, Sherfield Building where the Careers Service is based.

Visit the Career Service's website to:

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/careers


Student Counselling and Mental Health

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling

Financial support and tuition fees

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


 020 7594 9014

 student.funding@imperial.ac.uk

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

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

For tuition fees queries, contact the Tuition Fees team:

 020 7594 8011

 tuition.fees@imperial.ac.uk

Imperial College Union Advice Centre

Imperial College Union runs the Advice Centre independently of the College with advisers on hand to provide free, confidential, independent advice on a wide range of welfare issues including housing, money and debt, employment and consumer rights, and personal safety.


 www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice

Student Hub

The Student Hub represents a single point of contact for all key administrative information and support. The Student Hub team can help you with enquiries about:

- Accommodation (including checking contracts for private accommodation)
- Admissions
- International student enquiries
- Research degrees
- Student financial support
- Student records
- Tuition fees

 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 9444


 student.hub@imperial.ac.uk


 www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub

Accommodation

Imperial offers a wide range of accommodation to suit a range of budgets and in a variety of locations.

The Student Hub team can help you find the right place to live, whether it's the College accommodation or private accommodation.

 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 9444

 student.hub@imperial.ac.uk

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/campus-life/accommodation/

Health Services

NHS Health Centre and finding a doctor

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/your-health/doctor-and-dentist/

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

 www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk

NHS Dentist (based in the Imperial College Health Centre)

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


 www.imperialcollegedental.co.uk/


Disability Support

Disability Advisory Service

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

If you think you may have dyslexia or another specific learning difficulty but have never been formally assessed, the Disability Advisory Service offers initial screening appointments.

 Room 566, Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

 020 7594 9755

 disabilities@imperial.ac.uk

 www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service

Departmental Disability Officers

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

 <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/support/ddos>

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

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/exam-arrangements-and-re-sits/Exam-arrangements-in-respect-of-disability.pdf>

The Department Disability Officer is Dr. Thomas Lancaster t.lancaster@imperial.ac.uk .

More information on Departmental Disability Officers is available at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/current-students/support-available/departamental-disability-officers/


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

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

Library and IT

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

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

 020 7594 9000

 www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/service-desk

Software shop

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/devices-and-software/

Library services

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

Make sure you find out who your subject librarian is as they'll be able to help you find books and online resources for your assignments. Also, don't forget to check out the Library's range of training workshops and our other campus libraries for access to specialist medicine and life sciences resources. You can borrow up to 40 books and, whether you're working on or off site, you'll be able to access e-books, e-journals and databases from our collection of almost 400,000 titles. If we don't have what you need, we can get it for you, simply ask us to buy it or request a copy through our free Document Delivery service.

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/library

Religious Support

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy

Support for International Students

English language support

The Centre for Academic English provides free in-sessional English courses for international students while they are studying. These include classes and workshops on academic language, social language, the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, 1-1 consultations with a tutor to work on a piece of academic writing or an oral presentation, self-study resources in the VLE Blackboard, and the Conversation Project, which partners students with a native-speaker volunteer to practise social and conversational English.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english

International Student Support team

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

 <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/>


9. Student Administration

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

The Team is responsible for the processing of student results and awards on the student record system as well as the production and distribution of academic transcripts and certificates of award.


The Student Records and Data Team produce a variety of standard document requests for both current and previous students including council tax letters, standard statements of attendance and confirmation of degree letters.

Student records and examinations

 +44 (0)20 7594 7268

 student.records@imperial.ac.uk

Degree certificates

 +44 (0) 20 7594 7267

 certificates@imperial.ac.uk

10. Work-life Balance

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

Imperial College Union

The Union's range of 380+ student-led clubs, societies and projects is one of the largest of any UK university, opening up lots of ways for you to enjoy your downtime.

 www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us

Move Imperial

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/ethos/memberships/students

With an annual fee of £35 you will get use of the gym and swimming facilities on our campuses.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/sport

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/move-more/

11. Student feedback and representation

Feedback from Students


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

Since PRES 2021, and in response to students request on clarification about where most relevant information relating the DoC PhD programme may be found, we have created a FAQ page with all most frequently asked questions are answered.

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

Student Representation

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

 www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/academic-representatives/overview

Below is a list of your current year representatives. Please don't hesitate to reach out to them with any questions or concerns you may have.

- Mary Kenneth and Frederik Kelbel (1st year PhD reps)
- Miriam Fischer (2nd year PhD rep)
- Alex Spies, Konstantinos Barmpas and Harry Coppock (3rd Year PhD reps)

Staff-Student Committee

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

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

12. Student Surveys

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

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

The PRES is your chance to tell us about your experience of supervision; resources; research community; progress and assessment; skills and professional development; and wellbeing. This is a national survey that helps us to compare how we are doing against other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that are valued by our students. The survey is open to postgraduate research students and runs across the spring and summer terms. PTES is run bi-annually at the College. The survey is confidential. The more you take part the more representative the results so please take a few minutes to give your views.

The Union's "You Said, We Did" campaign shows you some of the changes made as a result of survey feedback:

 www.imperialcollegeunion.org/you-said-we-did

The Union's response to surveys can be found here:

 www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/responses


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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/student-surveys/pg-student-surveys


13. Personal Development Opportunities for Research Degree Students

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA)

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/tools-and-reference/quality-assurance-enhancement/roles-and-responsibilities/

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/gta/framework-/

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/gta/teaching-opportunities/

For information on how to sign up within DoC, please visit the link below.

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

Imperial Outreach

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

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

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

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

 www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/schools-outreach/

Recruitment and Outreach student ambassadors / Outreach STEM Leaders

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

Some activities will draw on your subject expertise, giving you the chance to communicate your research in a way that is suitable for a school age audience. Other opportunities may be more generally focused on your experience of higher education through talks about student life for sixth form students or mock interview sessions for potential applicants.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-student-ambassadors/

 www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/volunteering/outreach-stem-leaders/

Professional Skills Development Programme

The Graduate School at Imperial provides an internationally renowned and award winning Professional Development Programme for Postgraduate Research and Postgraduate Taught students.

Funders of doctoral programmes, including governments, industry and research councils expect that you spend time on your professional development (RCUK, 2013), and developing generic research, personal and professional development is an important part of your postgraduate training.

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

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

The Postgraduate Development Unit (PDU) ensures that the Programme is educationally relevant, developing new initiatives and safeguarding quality and relevance. Our Programme is underpinned by educational research focused on the postgraduate student experience.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/

14. And finally

Alumni Services

When you graduate you will be part of a lifelong community of over 190,000 alumni, with access to a range of alumni benefits including:

- discounts on further study at the College and at Imperial College Business School
- alumni email service
- networking events
- access to the Library and online resources
- access to the full range of careers support offered to current students for up to three years after you graduate
- access to our Alumni Visitor Centre at the South Kensington Campus, with free Wi-Fi, complimentary drinks, newspapers and magazines, and daytime left luggage facility

Visit the Alumni website to find out more about your new community, including case studies of other alumni and a directory of local alumni groups in countries across the world.



www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni