Imperial College London

Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship

Postgraduate Research

Student Handbook

2023-24

Contents

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.

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

You'll have access to an innovative range of professional development courses 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'. This series of commitments was developed by academic and support staff in partnership with undergraduate and postgraduate students and Imperial College Union.

Imperial will provide through its staff:
- A world class education embedded in a research environment
- Advice, guidance and support
- The opportunity for students to contribute to the evaluation and development of programmes and services

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

Imperial students should:
- Take responsibility for managing their own learning
- Engage with the 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.

🖥 [13343972 (blackboardcdn.com)](13343972)

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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/staff/cornerstone/

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

Finally, Imperial 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

All courses can be booked online.

🖵 [Professional Development Programme for Doctoral Students | Imperial students | Imperial College London](#)

Contact us

📍 Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

📞 020 7594 1383

✉ graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk

🖵 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/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/
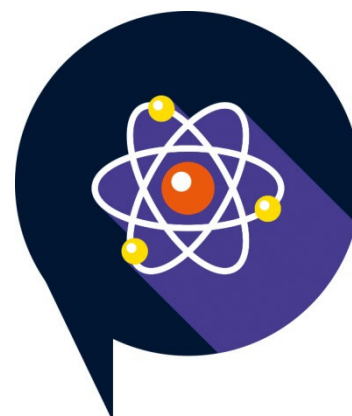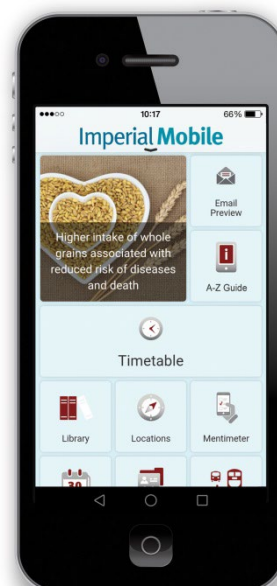
Key Dates 2023-24

Term dates

Autumn term:	30 September 2023 – 15 December 2023
Spring term:	6 January 2024 – 22 March 2024
Summer term:	27 April 2024 – 28 June 2024

Closure dates

Christmas/New year:	23 December 2023 - 1 January 2024 (College reopens on 2 January 2024)
Easter Holiday:	28 March 2024 – 2 April 2024 (College reopens on 3 April 2024)
Early May Bank Holiday:	6 May 2024
Spring Bank Holiday:	27 May 2024
Summer Bank Holiday:	26 August 2024

Key events

Great Exhibition Road Festival:	15 June 2024 – 16 June 2024
Festival of Learning and Teaching	May 2024 (exact date TBC)

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

Level 5, Sherfield Building, Imperial College London, South Kensington Campus, SW7 2AZ

Facilities

The closest computers for student use can be found in the Abdus Salam Library, South Kensington campus (number 25 on the campus map). The library is open 24 hours a day, except between 23:00 Friday night and 10:00 Saturday morning. Printers can also be found in the library, as well as in the CHERS offices.

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
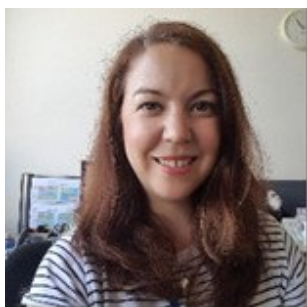
Welcome from Director of Postgraduate Studies
Welcome to Imperial College London and the Centre for HE Research and Scholarship (CHERS). This is an exciting time for educational research at Imperial and we hope that you enjoy your time here. This handbook describes the support that will be available to you during your studies and explains some of the procedures governing research degrees.
During your studies you will have access to an excellent network of support including you supervisor, postgraduate tutors and administrators. Details of who these people are and how best to contact them are provided in this handbook. Furthermore, there is a series of regular meetings (CHERSNet, CHERS reading group), which we would encourage you to attend as well as take the opportunity to present your own research. These meetings, as well as other events such as Festival of Learning and Teaching, 'Talking Teaching' and the Perspectives series of talks will also enable you to engage with others from across the college who are undertaking educational research and scholarship.

I wish you the very best with your studies.

Dr Jo Horsburgh

Welcome from Director of CHERS
I would like to add my welcome to the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship. The centre provides a locus for cross College pedagogic scholarship and research at Imperial. It hosts our MEd programme for staff who support learning across College who are learning more about the scholarship underlying the practice of university learning and teaching. CHERS is also a home to PhD students undertaking research in STEMMB pedagogy and supports others doing similar research based in other departments. As postgraduate students studying and researching pedagogy you are a vital part of the centre and its mission and support Imperial's evidence-based approach to teaching innovation and excellence.
There are pockets of ongoing educational research and research interests linked to STEMMB pedagogy distributed across College; our mission is to facilitate this by providing an 'actual' or a 'virtual' home for all those researching pedagogy across Imperial's disciplinary context. Imperial provides a rich and challenging research-intensive environment in which to study and offers a platform and opportunities that few can match. This is a fascinating place and a great time to be engaged in pedagogic research and study, with cross-institutional curriculum innovation, evaluation and development and the wider Higher Education sector ever more focussed on pedagogy and the challenges it presents.

I wish you every success in your research and look forward to sharing in the insights into STEMMB-focused pedagogy that I am sure will result. Enjoy your studies and all Imperial has to offer, but aim for a healthy work-life balance and try and make the most of all aspects of your time with us as a postgraduate student.

Professor Martyn Kingsbury

Academic and Administrative staff

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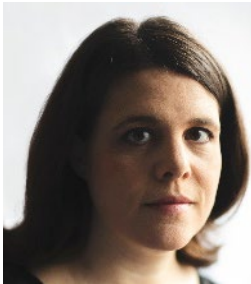
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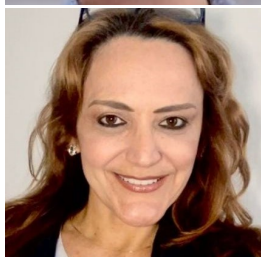luke.mccrone12@imperial.ac.uk

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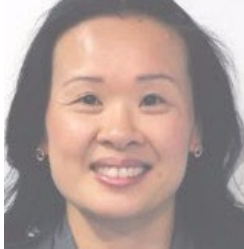|		
	Vilma Rupeikaite Programme Support Coordinator	Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus +44(0)20 7594 8781 v.rupeikaite@imperial.ac.uk
	Dr Sue Sing Research Assistant	Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus s.sing@imperial.ac.uk
	Ruth Stannard Centre Manager	Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus r.stannard@imperial.ac.uk
	Dr Julianne Viola Research Associate	Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus j.viola@imperial.ac.uk

2. Departmental Procedures

Departmental Induction

The Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship is the home of research into education, learning and teaching at Imperial College London. It is comprised of academic staff and PhD students active in research in this field.

The Educational Development Unit falls under the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship and offers academic programmes in learning and teaching including an MEd in University Learning and Teaching, as well as workshops and events for Imperial College's educational community.

🖥 Educational Development Unit | Staff | Imperial College London

🖥 Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship | Research and Innovation | Imperial College London

Conferences

We encourage students to attend and present their work at relevant conferences, this should be discussed with students' supervisor(s) in the first instance. To book conferences please contact Sheri Djafer (sherif.djafer@imperial.ac.uk) who will be able to assist with the booking. Please note that conference fees will be charged from your allocated PhD funding.

Professional Skills

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

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

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

See the Graduate School's website for details:

🖥 https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/

Research Approvals

The Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship does not have a research approval process. However, your proposed project will require ethical approval which can be obtained via the Educational Ethics Review Process (EERP). Your application should be discussed with your supervisor prior to submitting.

🖥 Education Ethics | Research and Innovation | Imperial College London

English Language Requirement

If you are not a native English speaker you must meet the College's English language requirements.

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 27.

All overseas students, including EU students who have not received an exemption, must contact the Centre for Academic English (CfAE) to arrange to take the College's internal Initial English Language Test. Please note that this test is in addition to the PG1 test required for admission and enrolment. Depending on the result, you may be offered support classes by CfAE, and you may also need to take a second test at the time of your first and/or second year assessments. A score of 60 in the CfAE Initial Test is required in order that the further Transfer Test is not required. (See the CfAE website for further details about the tests and who may qualify for exemption.) Your supervisor and the research student administrator will help you with this process and you should seek guidance from them before contacting the Centre for Academic English (CfAE).

Attendance and Absence

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 consecutive days. You should also contact your supervisor for support and guidance if your research is being impacted by personal circumstances. This may include making a submission deadline extension request.

Postgraduate Research students undertaking taught elements of a doctoral programme of study should also refer to the 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.

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

💻 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/regulations/2022x2f23/Unsatisfactory-Engagement-Policy-and-Procedure.pdf

Annual Leave

Students are permitted to take up to 40 days holiday per academic year. Students should notify their supervisor(s) when they wish to take leave. Please see policy here:

💻 PGR_student_leave_policy_February_2023.pdf (imperial.ac.uk)

Health and Safety Information

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 London still encourages students to wear face coverings in crowded areas, to get fully vaccinated, to cover your coughs and sneezes, and to respect others' personal space. All staff and students are advised to stay at home if you are feeling ill or have any symptoms of respiratory disease.

The latest Imperial College guidance to students can be seen at:
💻 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/covid-19/

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/

Your Departmental safety contact is:

👤 Ruth Stannard

📍 Educational Development Unit, Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus, Imperial College London, SW7 2AZ

📞 020 7594 8785

✉ r.stannard@imperial.ac.uk

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

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 agents](), [chemicals](), [cryogens, gases]() and [ionising/non-ionising radiation]()) to field work, heavy or awkward lifting, driving, and working alone or late.

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

The Safety Department helps departments and individuals ensure effective safety management systems are in place throughout the 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/safety-by-topic/accidents--incidents/]()

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

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

Summary of department timeline for full-time PhD students
Month 1: Registration; Enrolment.

Month 9: Early stage assessment (ESA).

Month 18: Late stage Review (LSR).

Month 18: Earliest date for submission of Entry to Examination form.

Month 44: Latest date for submission of Entry to Examination form.

Month 48: Latest date for submission of thesis.

Summary of department timeline for part-time PhD students
Month 1: Registration; Enrolment.

Month 18: Early stage assessment.

Month 36: Late stage assessment.

Month 42: Earliest date for submission of Entry to Examination form.

Month 68: Latest date for submission of Entry to Examination form.

Month 72: Latest date for submission of thesis.

Registration

When: Before, or immediately upon, arriving and at the start of each academic year thereafter.

What: Online enrolment.

You should enrol online via the [My Imperial student portal](#) as soon as possible after arriving if you have not done so already. Registration opens 30 days before the start of your course and remains open for 21 days after your start date.

To access the student portal, you will need to first activate your College computer account to get your username and password. You will receive details of how to do this via email, following an offer from the College.

For further information on how to complete your registration, including a video guide, please see:

🖥 [Online enrolment | Imperial students | Imperial College London](#)

Within the student portal you can also upload a recent photograph of yourself (conforming to passport standards) for your College Identity Card. You will need this card to gain access to some College buildings and it also serves as your library card and entitles you to discounts at some of the campus shops and canteens.

Continuing research students need to re-enrol online each academic year, prior to the start of term, to confirm your attendance.

Once enrolment is completed, all overseas students, including EU students who have not received an exemption, must contact the Centre for Academic English (CfAE) to arrange to take the College's internal Initial English Language Test. Please note that this test is in addition to the PG1 test required for admission and enrolment. Depending on the result, you may be offered support classes by CfAE, and you may also need to take a second test at the time of your first and/or second year assessments. A score of 60 in the CfAE Initial Test is required in order that the further Transfer Test is not required. (See the CfAE website for further details about the tests and who may qualify for exemption.) Your supervisor and the research student administrator will help you with this process and you should seek guidance from them before contacting the Centre for Academic English (CfAE).

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

🖥 [www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/staff/turnitin-guidance/](#)

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

Research plan

In addition to the formal assessments detailed below, students may, if appropriate and agreed with the supervisory team, submit a research plan approximately 3-4 months into their studies. This will be discussed with the supervisory team but not formally assessed. It may also be useful to discuss this informally with others within CHERS and/or present at

meetings such as CHERSNet. A research plan would likely include possible research question(s), possible methodology and methods, theoretical framing for the work and key literature, and a timeline.

Assessment stages

All PhD students are formally monitored through two assessments (ESA and LSR). It is important to note that the deadlines listed on this document are the departmental deadlines and may differ from your PGR milestones on [MyImperial](#). In order to meet the College deadlines for your ESA and LSR it is important that students aim to meet the deadlines listed in this document, ensuring your assessment signed off in time. You will be expected to complete your ESA after 9 months (18 months for part-time students) and your LSR after 18 months (36 months for part-time students).

The possible outcomes for both the early stage assessment and the late stage review are: progression; resubmission of the assessment; transfer of registration to MPhil; or withdrawal. Where an outcome other than progression is recommended as a result of an assessment, the final outcome will be decided in consultation with the supervisor(s) and the relevant Postgraduate Tutor and/or the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

In addition to the assessment stages, you may at any time submit a report in confidence to the relevant Senior Tutor and/or the Director of Postgraduate Studies if there are any aspects of your studies that concern you and that you would prefer not to raise directly with your supervisor. You do not need to fill in a special form for this; simply send your comments by email with the subject heading 'in confidence'.

Students who started their postgraduate research degree in September 2019 will need to follow the College's policy on using Turnitin as part of the Early Stage Assessment and Thesis submission process. 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.

You will be enrolled on the CHERS PGR submission centre Blackboard course and you will find the Early Stage Assessment submission point here. Further information on how to submit your ESA to Turnitin, including a step-by-step guide, can be found here:

🖥 [Submitting the ESA to Turnitin | Imperial students | Imperial College London](#)

Early-stage assessment

When: within 9 months of start date for full-time students; within 18 months of start date for part-time students.

What: Written assessment and oral exam.

Length: Written report - 10,000-15,000 words. Oral exam – 1-2 hours.

The aim of the early stage assessment is to provide some external input on your progress so far, the viability of your planned research and guidance on possible next steps.

Submission for the written report will likely include:

- a detailed research plan, including well-focussed research questions, an explanation of your research methods, a discussion of any time critical points, consideration of any ethical issues and how you will deal with these;
- appreciation of methods and methodology needed to answer question
- a timeline and/or concept map for your research
- a working bibliography and indication of critical engagement with the literature relevant to your research.

These will vary in detail between research projects and should be agreed in advance with your supervisory team.

The early stage assessment must be submitted via Turnitin. Student guidance on submitting through Turnitin can be found here:

💻 [Submitting-the-ESA-through-Turnitin---a-Process-Map-(2).pdf (imperial.ac.uk)](Submitting-the-ESA-through-Turnitin---a-Process-Map-(2).pdf)

You will be examined orally on your submission by two members of staff, at least one of whom is not one of your supervisors. An assessor may be nominated by your supervisor but must be approved by the CHERS Postgraduate Studies Committee. After the assessment, the assessors will complete the ESA form. For further details of the procedures, see the Registry guidelines.

In addition to the academic assessment, to progress through the Early Stage Assessment you must also have completed the Plagiarism Awareness course available via Blackboard and the requisite number of professional skills courses.

Where resubmission of the Early Stage Assessment is recommended, this must be completed within 11 months of the start of your registration.

Late-stage review

When: normally 18 months after start date for full-time students; normally within 36 months of start date for part-time students.

What: Written report and oral exam.

Length: Written report - 10,000-15,000 words. Oral exam – 1-2 hours.

The purpose of the late stage review is to assess your understanding of the research problem and critical engagement with the literature on the subject, and to confirm that you have made sufficient progress to be able to complete the PhD within the remaining time. The LSR The LSR also provides an opportunity to begin forming an overall narrative of your work, integrating your understanding of the literature and the theoretical faming of your research question, with the methods used to answer it and interpreting the data to formulate an answer. The LSR is a formal chance to create and defend this integrated narrative and is an opportunity to trial the narrative that will eventually develop into your thesis and be defended in your PhD viva voce.

Submission for your LSR written report will likely include:

1) Progress with answering your research question(s) including some analysis and interpretation of your data.
2) Details of how the research questions are framed by theory and literature.
3) Plan to complete thesis, including how the research question(s) will be fully answered.

These will vary in detail between research projects and should be agreed in advance with your supervisory team. The written report should be submitted via Blackboard (but not Turnitin).

You will be examined orally on your submission by two members of staff, at least one of whom is not one of your supervisors. An assessor may be nominated by your supervisor but must be approved by the CHERS Postgraduate Studies Committee. It is likely that the focus of the oral exam will be more on the analysis and interpretation of data and completion of the thesis, but may also explore other areas such as literature and theoretical framing. After the

assessment, the assessors will complete the LSR form. For further details of the procedures, see the Registry guidelines.

Where resubmission of the Late Stage Review is recommended, this must be completed within three months of the first attempt.

As with the final PhD viva the supervisor(s) can attend ESA and LSR oral exams if invited by the student to take notes, help manage the feedback process etc.

Year 3 Progress Review

For research degrees lasting more than 3 years there is opportunity for an informal review focusing on actions needed to finish up and submit the thesis. This review would take place after the LSR and before the submission of your entry to examination forms. This should include your supervisory team and could helpfully include other experienced supervisors, head of centre or DPS. If including others outside of your supervisory team then you should provide a short written summary of your work thus far.

Entry to Examination

When: Between six and four months before thesis submission; and, for full-time students, no later than 44 months after start date or, for part-time students, no later than 68 months after start date.

What: Complete the examination entry form via My Imperial giving details of research topic, title of thesis and date of thesis submission.

At least four months prior to thesis submission, you must enter for examination via the Examination Entry milestone visible in the Postgraduate Research Milestones tile in My Imperial. You will be asked to provide details relating to your research topic, thesis title and expected date of submission. Once submitted, the electronic form will automatically be sent to your supervisor who will be asked to nominate examiners for your thesis. It is expected that you will discuss possible examiners with your supervisors to enable you to propose appropriate internal and external examiners for your work. Each PhD thesis will be assessed by at least two examiners, both of whom will be independent of the work and the student but will be sufficiently expert and familiar with the topic to assess the work. Depending on the nature of the work and the experience of examiners more than two may be assigned in order to ensure an appropriate examination. One of the appointed examiners will be the 'internal examiner', they are predominantly responsible for upholding Imperial Colleges processes, expectations and standards; they will often take responsibility for checking 'minor corrections. There will also be an 'external examiner', while all examiners will be external to the work, the external examiner is selected to represent the standards and expectations of the discipline area of the work.

The examination entry details and the examiner nominations will then be considered by the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Upon their approval, the examination entry will be processed by the Registry Assessment Records Team and you will receive written notification via email once your entry to examination is confirmed. For further details and step-by-step guidance on using the Postgraduate Research Milestones tile in My Imperial, please see:

🖥 [Examination Entry Forms | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)

Normally a PhD is expected to take 36 months, although it can take up to 48 months. If your work takes longer than 36 months then the expectation is that you should not be actively collecting data, rather, you will be interpreting and writing up your data. In this case you will be transferred to 'writing up status' and during this time you will pay reduced student fees,

but still retain your student status. However, you will not be insured for experimentation and data collection and the expectation is that you will not be collecting data.

Submission of the thesis

When: No later than 48 months after start date for full-time students; no later than 72 months after start date for part-time students.

What: The thesis and an online declaration form via My Imperial.

Length: 100,000 words maximum including footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices.

The thesis is the culmination of your studies and stands as your original contribution to knowledge in your field. Your supervisor will advise you whether your thesis is ready for submission, but the decision to submit rests with you alone. If you have not submitted your thesis within 18 months of submission of the Entry for Examination forms, your entry will be cancelled.

You must submit your thesis electronically via the Postgraduate Research Milestones tile in My Imperial. There are two parts to this: a thesis declaration and the thesis upload. In the thesis declaration you should review the information available and complete the embargo section if required (as agreed with your supervisor). Once complete, confirm the information is correct by ticking on the Declaration section. The declaration will be sent to your supervisor for approval. Once approved, you can submit your thesis via the Thesis upload tile. For further information and a step-by-step guide, please see:

[Thesis Submission & Vivas | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)

Viva Voce

When: Normally within three months of submission of the thesis.

What: Oral examination.

Length: No fixed duration but typically about two to four hours.

At Imperial College all PhDs are examined by examination of the thesis and an oral examination of the defence of that thesis in a viva voce oral examination.

The examiners will all be sent a copy of your thesis as submitted by Registry in electronic and/or hardcopy and it is only this 'official copy' that forms part of the examination. On receiving a copy of your thesis, the examiners will liaise with your supervisor(s) and the postgraduate administrator to set a date for the viva examination, this will normally be 1-2 months from submission but can vary to allow for appropriate reading time and aligning schedules.

Examiners each read your thesis and complete an independent preliminary report on the strengths and weaknesses of your written work and their initial tentative recommendation based only on this written submission. The independent preliminary reports are then shared, and the examiners plan the viva exam.

The purpose of the viva voce exam is to allow you to:

- confirm to the examiners that the written work is your own work
- clarify, expand or correct aspects that the examiners feel require it
- explain and defend the narrative argument you formed from your research
- discuss your work in the wider context of disciplinary theory and literature
- show you are aware of the limitations and wider implications of your work
- communicate your expertise in your research field and engage in scholarly debate

In order to do this the viva can include (almost) anything that examiners want in order for them to be able to make their decision, but generally it is a discussion that starts with some 'warm-up' questions about the nature of your work or sometimes a short presentation summarising your thesis. If this is to be more formal with slides your examiners will tell you in advance so that you can prepare. However, it can be useful to prepare a short 5-10 minute informal presentation or elevator pitch summarising your work with no slides just in case it is needed. After the general questions the examiners will often ask any questions they have to explore things in your thesis they feel need clarifying, expanding or correcting. Often the viva ends with questions that allow you to discuss your work in the wider context of disciplinary literature and show that you understand how it fits with context/field/discipline, how it contributes to knowledge and its potential limitations and impact in the field. This discussion can extend beyond your work and allows you to demonstrate criticality, scholarship and expertise in your field of research.

In addition to the examiners, your supervisor may also attend your viva if you want them to – it is <u>your</u> choice. If present, your supervisor will not be allowed to contribute to the proceedings to ask or answer questions or be involved in discussion. They can provide clarifications of process and context, but only if explicitly invited to do so by the examiners. Generally, their role is to be a friendly face, provide some moral support and take notes to help you manage any amendments or changes required by the examiners. You should discuss whether you want your supervisor present with them, generally most supervisors are happy to be there if you want them to but will not be offended or disappointed if you prefer to.

After your PhD viva voce, your examiners are asked to agree that, based on both your written thesis and your performance in the viva, they are satisfied that your work:

a) is genuinely the work of the candidate
b) forms a distinct contribution to knowledge of the subject
c) affords evidence of originality:
    (i) by the discovery of new facts and/or
    (ii) by the exercise of independent critical power
d) is an integrated whole and presents a coherent argument
e) gives a critical assessment of the relevant literature
f) describes the method of research and its findings
g) includes discussions of those findings and how they advance the study of the subject
h) in so doing demonstrates a deep and synoptic understanding of the field of study, objectivity and the capacity for judgement in complex situations and autonomous work in that field
i) includes a full bibliography and references
j) demonstrates research skills relevant to the thesis
k) is of a standard to merit publication, in whole, in part or in revised form.

They often send candidates out of the viva to allow a short private discussion of the result and then invite them back in at the end to informally inform them of their decision. You will probably find out your result at the end of the viva, more formally the examiners need to submit a final combined report to Registry who will then inform you officially of the decision.

The possible outcomes of the examination of your thesis and your viva will be one of the following:

1) Pass.

2) Pass, subject to minor amendments to be completed and checked by one or both of the examiners within three months.
3) Not pass, but candidate allowed to rewrite the thesis and resubmit it within 18 months for examination by the same examiners (a viva voce examination need not be held on re-entry).
4) Not pass but be allowed to submit to a further viva voce examination within 18 months on the same thesis and by the same examiners.
5) Fail PhD, but either has met the requirements for the MPhil or might after revision of the thesis during a 12-month period be able to meet the requirements for the MPhil.
6) Outright fail. No further entry to the PhD or MPhil degree will be allowed

Very few PhD's are awarded a straight 'pass' with no corrections. The most common outcome is pas subject to minor amendments and in this case you would have up to three months to make the required corrections or add small amounts of additional information. This is then checked by usually the internal examiner who informs Registry that the changes are satisfactory, and the PhD is awarded.

[Research programmes | About | Imperial College London](#)

[Plagiarism-issues-in-theses.pdf (imperial.ac.uk)](#)

4. Academic Support

Departmental Support and Faculty Senior Tutors

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

Administrative support

Administrative support is provided by the CHERS support team.

Your main point of contact is Sheri Djafer (sherif.djafer@imperial.ac.uk), Communication and Research Co-ordinator. Sheri can help with matters relating to registration, milestones, conference registration and travel bookings.

Ruth Stannard, Centre Manager (r.stannard@imperial.ac.uk), who can help with issues relating to tuition fees and bursary payments.

Postgraduate tutor

The postgraduate tutor for CHERS is Dr Camille Kandiko Howson (c.howson@imperial.ac.uk). She will be able to advise you about College procedures, give general advice about studying for a PhD, and provide pastoral support in addition to your supervisor(s). Most students are happy with the supervision they receive. However, if you have any concerns about the quality of your supervision or your relationship with your supervisors, you should raise these with your postgraduate tutor or the director of postgraduate studies.

Assessor(s)

An independent assessor or assessors will review key stages of your studies. The assessors are selected by the postgraduate tutor and approved by the Postgraduate Studies Committee. The assessor will be an academic who has the appropriate expertise to judge progress and offer advice on your project. The assessor(s) will assess your written submissions and oral presentation for your early stage and late stage assessments. In addition to the above points, the assessor will look at:

- Whether you have demonstrated the capability to conduct the research.
- Whether you have made sufficient progress.
- Whether you have an in depth understanding of your field of research and the associated literature.
- Whether you have a clear and realistic plan of future work.
- Given the plan of future work and your current rate of progress, whether you are likely to be able to submit a thesis for a PhD within the remaining time available.

Taking all the above into account, the assessor will make a recommendation as to whether you may progress. The assessor may also be able to provide additional input into your project, with suggestions for specific methodologies or potential new directions for your research project.

Director of postgraduate studies (DPS)

The director of postgraduate studies has overall responsibility for research students. You will normally meet the director of postgraduate studies during the induction session at the start of your first year and may make an appointment to see her during the course of your studies if you have any concerns or queries about your progress, or the quality of your supervision.

Faculty senior tutor

In addition to the support offered within the department, all students have access to a Faculty Senior Tutor regarding academic issues and all aspects of pastoral care and discipline within the College. In the case of CHERS students this is Faculty of Natural Sciences senior tutor, Professor Ingo Mueller-Wodarg (i.mueller-wodarg@imperial.ac.uk)

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/

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.

💻 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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/turnitin-guidance-for-students/

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.

💻 www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/research-integrity/plagiarism-awareness-doctoral-students/

Collusion:

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

You should note that whilst the 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.

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/

6. College Policies and Procedures

Student Academic Regulations

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, for a variety of reasons, sometimes students struggle to meet the College's expectations with regards to their engagement with their studies. 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 engage with these supportive measures, they can be withdrawn from their studies. The full details of this process, and the appeals procedure relating to it can be found at:

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

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

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

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. 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/students/academic-support/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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/professional-development/research-impact/intellectual-property-online-course/

Use of IT Facilities

View the Conditions of Use of IT Facilities:

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

Employment During Studies

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.

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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/graduate-teaching-assistants/

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.

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 Student Records Team for recording). Study leave is normally pursued either as a placement under the supervision of a third party organisation (placements are managed by your department and are subject to 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. Contact your departmental postgraduate administrator for further guidance if you and your supervisor wish to have study leave considered.

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

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

Ethics

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

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

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

Read the policy here: 13343973 (blackboardcdn.com)

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:

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.

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/students/academic-support/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/students/academic-support/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 Service

Imperial College Union runs the Advice Service 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/

The Imperial College London Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement (DACR)

Imperial College London is dedicated to the wellbeing of its doctoral students, which includes supporting the development of their ability to communicate their research effectively and to manage the writing-up process independently. The purpose of the Imperial College London Doctoral Academic Communication Requirement is to quickly identify, and subsequently support, students whose academic writing competence needs to be further developed so that they can successfully complete their degree on time.

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

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.

The Departmental Disability Officer for CHERS is Kate Ippolito.

✉ k.ippolito@imperial.ac.uk

More information on Departmental Disability Officers is available at:

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

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

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

Library and IT
Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

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

📞 020 7594 9000

🖥 www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/service-desk

Software shop

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

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

Library services

The 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

Centre for Academic English

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

To achieve this, we've designed a flexible academic STEMM communication programme enabling you to create your own personalised learning pathway. As you build your pathway, you'll have the freedom to select the language resources you need whenever you need them. These resources are the result of close collaborations with departments and so will meet your communication needs for Imperial written and spoken course assignments and assessments.

🖥️ https://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/

Religious Support

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

🖥️ www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy

Support for International Students

International Student Support team

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

🖥️ www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/

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 and Transport for London , 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 'My Documents' online portal allows you to access your documents, including proof of enrolment and award documentation. You can then digitally share these documents with third parties such as an employer or university.

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

We would like to encourage you to use this online service in place of paper-based documentation. You can access the 'My Documents' portal here: www.student-edocuments.imperial.ac.uk/Account/LoginViaAzure

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.

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

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

Students on PhD programmes will be invited to join a joint committee with student reps from all stages of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship's MEd in University Learning and Teaching and to attend the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting on Wednesday 19 January 2022, 12.00-14.00.

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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/students/doctoral/graduate-teaching-assistants/

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/students/academic-support/graduate-school/

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