

Agreement between supervisor and PhD student on mutual obligations

Department of Computing, Imperial College London*

As your supervisor I expect you to:

1. **Take responsibility** for your thesis — in the end, it is your work and I am here to help you accomplish your research objectives, **not** to do the thinking for you!
2. **Work hard** to hand in a good thesis **on time** — PhDs cannot be accomplished with a 9 to 5 effort only. Our Department is top ranked in the United Kingdom and we expect that students strive to meet that ranking by accomplishing good work.
3. **Display initiative** — ultimately, you are who drives the process and strives to understand your research area. We expect you to be curious about your work and to think about how other ideas and work impact what you are doing.
4. Try to **publish papers** before you submit your thesis — the writing and refereeing process enables you to develop writing skills needed for crafting a solid thesis. Refereed and accepted papers will also help your examiners in assessing the technical merit of your work.
5. **Be self-critical** — try to assess your own work and results, as well as those of existing literature, in a critical and honest manner.
6. **Help younger colleagues** — engage them in discussions, demonstrations or interact with them socially.
7. **Keep up with the literature** — search the web, the library, and conference proceedings about once a month.
8. **Be aware of safety** — please follow departmental and college-wide safety procedures at all times.

*This is a customized version of the form used by the Graduate School of Engineering & Physical Sciences (GSEPS) for the Internal Workshop K. Created by Michael Huth and Julie McCann on 1 October 2003.

9. **Keep a lab notebook** — maintain a daily log book of your research activities. This will help you with tracking and reporting the progress of your PhD research.
10. Develop your skills and learn new ones by **attending the transferable-skills courses** and lectures provided by the Graduate School of Engineering & Physical Sciences (GSEPS), our department, other Imperial College Departments and any other external provider.

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

1. **Be supportive** — of you both intellectually and personally.
2. Set up a viable project and an initial work-plan and **ensure that you have a clear idea of aims and objectives**.
3. **Be available** — to talk to you about research problems at relatively short notice although, at certain times of the year, I may need a few days' notice or I may identify an appropriate substitute.
4. **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.
5. **Help you develop your skills** — in technical writing, oral presentation, problem definition, scientific and engineering analysis, and critical literature reviews.
6. Try to enable you to **attend a conference** — to present your refereed paper at at least one major international conference.
7. Attempt to provide **adequate funding** — for your research activities.
8. Ensure that I will carry out all administrative work pertaining to your studies in a **timely** and accurate manner. To **review progress** periodically, including discussion of requirements for MPhil-PhD transfer and submission of your PhD thesis.
9. **Read your thesis** — in a thorough manner and make constructive comments on both style and intellectual content.

For further information see Imperial College's publication "Research Students and Supervisors: their responsibilities and duties."