# Faculty of Engineering

# Department of Computing

## Research Degree Student Handbook

2019–2020

Last update September 2019

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1 Introduction to the College

Imperial College London is the only university in the UK to focus exclusively on science, medicine, engineering and business. As a postgraduate student you will be contributing to an expert community, whose research has a profound impact on society and the economy. From Fleming’s discovery of Penicillin and Gabor’s invention of holography, to Kibble’s contribution to the Higgs boson and Stevens work on rapid testing for AIDS and Malaria, Imperial’s research has been changing the world for well over 100 years.

Imperial has the greatest concentration of high impact research of any major UK university, according to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014. Our research crosses international boundaries and we are particularly known for our support of research that spans different subject areas. We offer funding, infrastructure and cultural encouragement to bring researchers together across the disciplines to explore different approaches to solving a problem. The result is a dynamic culture of discovery to which you will be an important part of.

We are committed to sharing the wonder of what we do through public engagement events. Postgraduate students, alongside our academics and undergraduate students, make a significant contribution to these events, such as our annual Imperial Festival and our term-time Imperial Fringe events.

Doctoral Proposition
(http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/about-us/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
Welcome from Director of the Graduate School

Academic Departments, the Graduate School and the Graduate Students Union work closely together to ensure opportunity is provided for an excellent and internationally renowned research experience. As part of this commitment to you, the Graduate School has developed a programme of professional skills courses, covering a broad range of themes, for example, personal effectiveness, writing skills, presentation skills, project management and leadership skills, all of which have been tailored to suit the different stages of your research degree. The skills developed during these courses are highly valued in the job market.

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

The Graduate School also runs a number of exciting social events throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge as well as to meet other students and have fun. Particular highlights include the Ig Nobel Awards Tour Show, the Chemistry Show, the 3 minute thesis competition as well as the Research Symposium. I would encourage you to take part in these activities there are times when it can feel lonely as a research student and these events are an opportunity to be part of the wider research student community. In addition, many of the advances in science, engineering, medicine and business occur at the boundaries between disciplines and meeting students from other Departments and Faculties offers opportunity to enrich your research.
I would like to welcome you to the Graduate School programme for postgraduate professional development. Our team of tutors come from a wide variety of experiences and we understand just how important it is to develop professional skills whilst undertaking postgraduate studies and research. Not only will this development improve success during your time at Imperial, but it will also prepare you for your future careers. We are continually working to develop the courses we offer and over this year you will see a range of new courses including face-to-face workshops, interactive webinars and online self-paced courses. I encourage you to explore and engage with the diverse range of opportunities on offer from the graduate school and I wish you well in your studies.

Janet De Wilde
The Graduate School

You automatically become a member of the Graduate School when you register as a postgraduate student at Imperial. The Graduate School has been set up to support all postgraduate students at the College through:

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

Masterclass professional skills courses

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

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

All courses can be booked online.

Contact us

Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus
020 7594 1383
graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school
Welcome from the Graduate Students’ Union (GSU)

I am delighted to welcome you to Imperial College! Let me introduce you to the Graduate Students Union (GSU).

We are the elected representative body standing up for your interests as a postgraduate student. In addition, we are here to help you to make the most of your time at Imperial. We work towards building a thriving and enjoyable postgraduate community, spanning across all faculties and campuses at Imperial College.

As a postgraduate student, there are facilities and events available just for you. The graduate school provides a range of invaluable courses ranging from communication to professional progression to business skills courses. Our student Union has over 100 different societies for you to get involved in, ranging from boxing to consulting. You also have your own, graduate only, bar (h-bar) which opens Monday to Friday from 5pm till late with tapas style food and events every week ranging from Karaoke to weekly pub quizzes.

So, what are we up to for this coming year? We are going to focus on these major areas of action:

- Develop the GSU to become central to the postgraduate community by improving the two-way flow of information, between the GSU and you across all campuses.
- Improve services at h-bar to your needs.
- Organise exciting events such as student well-being workshops and entrepreneurship opportunities throughout the year.
- Continue improving postgraduate well-being by increasing the quality of supervision, and by creating strategies to tackle common mental health challenges in higher education.

We are here to make your time here as enjoyable and beneficial as possible, if you have thoughts, ideas or feedback, make sure you get in touch! Finally, I hope that you have a fantastic time here at Imperial and take advantage of the richness of opportunities that await you.

www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-are-we-run/constituent-unions/graduate-students-union

Mohit Devgan, GSU President 2019/20
gsu.president@imperial.ac.uk.
2 Introduction to the Department

Welcome from Dr Antonio Filieri, Director of Postgraduate Research

Welcome to the Department of Computing. We hope that you will find the next three years studying for your PhD degree stimulating and enjoyable. Research work can form the basis of a very rewarding career and a successful PhD is the ideal way of starting out. Computing is one of the most rapidly developing disciplines with numerous opportunities for innovative and original work. The Department is pre-eminent in many branches of computing.

The following notes have been put together to assist you in planning and organising your work and to introduce you to the facilities available. We hope you find them useful and that you will be able to play your full part as a member of the academic community. If, at any time, you have any doubts or queries feel free to raise them with the appropriate person.

Detailed arrangements are subject to frequent changes, often introduced by the College Registry and Graduate School. For up-to-date information please consult the Department’s PhD web pages:

http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters

Any expanding scientific discipline looks to its PhD students to provide a rich source of new ideas. We are sure that you will enjoy your time here and will contribute substantially to developing the subject.

Faculty Structure

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

- General information about Faculty of Engineering
  https://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/

- Research activities support and facilities within the Faculty
  http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/research/

- Faculty team members
  http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/staff/faculty-teams/
Department Structure, Academic and Administrative Staff

The PhD team of the Department of Computing is composed of various academics and administrative staff. These include Director and Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research, PhD Tutor, PhD mentors, PhD academic progress mentor, Postgraduate and Deputy Admissions Tutor and PhD Programme Administrator. Staff allocated to these roles change periodically. The current PhD team’s members are specified in Tables 1 and 2.

Additional information about academic and administrative staff of the Department can be found on the Department Website: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing.

Table 1: PhD Team members (a)

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Postgraduate Research</td>
<td>Dr Antonio Filieri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research</td>
<td>Prof Alessandra Russo</td>
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<td>Postgraduate Tutor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Progress Mentor</td>
<td>Dr. Abhijeet Ghosh</td>
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You and your Supervisor

The primary responsibility for organising your research work lies with you. However it is your supervisor’s responsibility to guide your research, point you in interesting directions, monitor your
progress and generally provide moral and technical support. Supervisors differ in their methods but you should normally expect to see your supervisor at least once a fortnight. Feel free to contact him or her at any time if you have a problem or are unsure how to proceed. You will find that you can obtain the most benefit from meetings with your supervisor if you prepare some material for him or her to read or formulate some specific questions you would like to discuss. Within the first 3 months of your PhD course your supervisor must appoint a 2nd supervisor. Please remind them to do so. The role of the 2nd supervisor is to give help when your supervisor is unavailable and generally to keep in touch with your progress. PhD students are a vital part of a flourishing research community. You should do your best to participate as fully as possible in the academic life of the Department. You will find that informal discussions with your colleagues play a large part in your education. You should work hard to build up a good relationship with your supervisor but it does occasionally happen that you find it impossible to work together. Or your research may lead you into avenues that are outside your supervisor’s areas of interest. In such circumstances a change of supervisor is appropriate and can sometimes be arranged. Discuss it first with your supervisor if you can, and then involve the Postgraduate Tutor and any other potential new supervisors. **Postgraduate Tutor**

The Postgraduate Tutor is responsible for the overall running of the Department’s PhD programme and for providing pastoral support for research students. She is available to discuss any matter, personal or academic, in confidence. RAs registered for a PhD requiring pastoral support may also

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### Table 2: PhD Team members (b)

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<tr>
<td>PhD Programme Administrator</td>
<td>Dr. Amani El-Kholy</td>
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contact the Department’s RA mentor.

**Mentor**

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

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

**Departmental Information**

General information about the department can be found on the department website http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing. Following the various links you will be able to access to information about

- Research activity in the department
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/research/)
- Departmental facilities
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/about/facilities/)
- Public events organised and run by member of staff of the department
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/about/news/)
- Cross-College Events and Research Seminars
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/graduate-school-events/)
- News and events within the Faculty of Engineering
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/news-and-events/)
- Activities within the Faculty of Engineering
  (http://www.imperial.ac.uk/engineering/study/current/)
- Cohort building activities at departmental level
- Cohort building events organised by the HPEDS Centre for Doctoral Training
  (http://wp.doc.ic.ac.uk/hipeds/events/)

**Research seminars and social activities**

Research is a social activity too. You will learn more by talking with people working in your area and attending seminars than you will by reading papers in isolation. Many of the best ideas spring from casual conversations or accidental meetings. The Department has a wide range of active research groups that are well over the ‘critical mass’.
There are frequent informal seminars to complement the official Departmental seminars (held usually on Wednesday afternoons). Seminars are announced by email, and on the Department’s web pages (e.g., http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/seminar-series/). As a PhD student you are entitled to attend all such seminars and use any departmental facilities such as the Common Rooms on the 4th and 5th floors of the Huxley Building. Try and maximise the opportunities this offers.

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

Descriptions of the Department’s research structure, listings of current research groupings, and staff research profiles may be found on the Department’s web pages.

There are many other events and activities throughout the year. There is a ‘Cakes’ day in the 5th floor Common Room each week so that all PhD students can come together socially, discuss life and the universe and make friends.

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

Beginning in 2011, the PhD students of the Department have successfully organised and run their own workshop with printed proceedings including papers submitted by outside persons and talks by prestigious invited speakers (see http://iccsw.doc.ic.ac.uk).

ACM Student Chapter
The Imperial College London ACM Student Chapter aims to create a strong Computing research student community within our university. All research students are strongly encouraged to participate actively in organising and attending chapter activities. You will get to know the other postgraduate students in the department and their research interests. You can find students working on similar problems, with similar interests. You can find future collaborators, discuss ideas and get feedback. In addition, activities of the student chapter provide opportunities to meet distinguished computing professionals and grow your professional network. You will broaden your knowledge by taking part in lectures and discussions from different computer science fields. See  http://acm.doc.ic.ac.uk/  or the link on the Department’s PhD web pages.

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

The PhD Staff/Student Committee is not the appropriate forum to raise or solve specific problems affecting one or two individuals. It is the place to discuss persistent or widespread problems, or general points that affect all students. Constructive suggestions are encouraged and are always welcome.
Approach any member of the Committee or send an email message if there is an issue you would like to raise.

See the Who’s Who link on the Department’s PhD Student webpages:

http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters.

3 Departmental Procedures - General

Departmental Induction

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

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

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

Postgraduate English Requirement

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

Students with a minimum English language proficiency of IELTS 8.0 overall (or equivalent test scores: TOEFL score of 110 overall or higher, Pearson PTE score of 76 overall or higher), or those who have studied a full undergraduate degree in a majority English speaking country will receive an email from the CfAE confirming formal exemption from the Imperial College London Postgraduate English Requirement within two weeks of enrolling onto their PhD programme. If exemption is granted on this basis, the student does not need to take an English assessment, but is still eligible to take advantage of our higher level courses, workshops and 1:1 consultations at any point during the PhD.

Funding for Conferences

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

At the time of writing each PhD student in the Department can expect to receive travel funding of up to £4000 from the PhD Travel Fund over the course of his or her PhD studies, that is, from the date of initial registration until they stop paying fees. We expect students to make best use of these travel funds throughout the four years of their PhD.

Approval for a trip must be obtained before the trip by submitting a completed Travel Request form to the PhD Programme Administrator. The form can be found at the departmental PhD Matters webpage (https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters/). You must ensure that you have your supervisor’s approval and signature on the form. To avoid delays ensure that all details asked for on the form are supplied in full, together with brief justifications for all major items. The Postgraduate Tutor will approve the maximum amount that may be claimed. The approved amount may be lowered if items on the claim are excessive or inappropriate. If the trip amount exceeds the allowable limit set by the PhD Tutor, the student will need to ask the supervisor if they are willing to cover the additional costs.

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

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

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

- to use travel funds on Scholarships, Studentships or research grants where possible in preference to Departmental travel funds;
- to make sure they register as students when possible;
- to offer to work as a student volunteer (some conferences pay students to help with the running of the conference);
- to use public transport and not taxis when possible and safe;
- to use cheap/discount flights when possible and to book well in advance;
- to consider more hotels than just the conference hotel;
- to share a room with others if possible;
- to use cheap poster printing services:
  e.g. at the time of writing, an A1 poster at www.pwauk.com costs about £18 inc. delivery with a student/academic discount.

You cannot claim for travel insurance. The College’s travel insurance policy covers students of the College whilst abroad on College business. College business is deemed to include (but is not limited
to) visits to overseas universities and other academic institutions, attendance at scholarly conferences and research meetings, visits to overseas laboratories and industrial plants in connection with College research projects or teaching duties, field trips and sporting visits as representatives of the College. The policy does not apply to private holidays. For details and additional advice and exclusions see: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/finance/sections/insurance/overseastravelinsurance.

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

Health and Safety Information (use of equipment, training, etc).
Each student is responsible for looking after their own health and safety and that of others affected by their College-related work and leisure activities. To this end, each student must:

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


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

Safety procedures
Fire Alarm Signals
The GENERAL ALARM signal is a continuous ringing of the fire alarm bells. This is a signal that the
Huxley Building should be evacuated immediately.

**Evacuation Procedure**

- Act quietly. Use the nearest available exit — indicated by green ‘Fire Exit’ signs.
- Do not use the lifts.
- On leaving the building keep clear of the exits to avoid impeding the Fire Brigade. Report to the assembly point, which is outside the main entrance in Queen’s Gate, but well away from the entrance. Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.

**If you discover a fire**

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

**Escape Routes from the Huxley Building**

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

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

**Fire Wardens**

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

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

**Fire Drills**

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

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

**Bomb Warnings**

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

*The College Safety Department*

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

The College’s activities range from the use of hazardous materials (biological, chemical and radioactive substances) to field work, heavy or awkward lifting, driving, and working alone or late. All College activities are covered by general health and safety regulations, but higher risk activities will have additional requirements. The Safety Department helps departments and individuals ensure effective safety management systems are in place throughout the College and to thereby 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: [http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety).

Your programme director, academic supervisor and departmental safety officer are the first people to whom you should report concerns or ask for advice, but 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 and to 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 [http://www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health).

*Additional Departmental Procedures*

**Study room allocation**

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

**Common Room**

Research students in the Department of Computing are entitled to use the Department Common Room on the 4th floor (room 418) of the Huxley Building. Tea and coffee are available. Research students are also entitled to use the Maths/Computing Common Room on level 5 of the Huxley Building. It is open from 09:00 to 17:00 and serves tea, coffee, sandwiches and other items. To be a little bit more eco-friendly bring your own mug.

**Term-time and Home Addresses**

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

**Mail**

You must read your email every day. This is the normal means of informing you of changes to the PhD programme, deadlines etc.

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

- Student’s Name
- PhD student or Research Assistant — *whichever is applicable*
- Department of Computing
- Huxley Building
- Imperial College London
- 180 Queens Gate
- London SW7 2RH

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

**Telephones**

All research student offices have telephones that can dial internal College numbers. Please inform Bridget Gundry in the General Office if your phone number (or office) changes. Most offices also have a phone that can dial external local calls. Dial 7 for personal calls and 9 for work related calls to get an outside line. If personal calls come to more than about 5 pounds a month your office will get a bill (this rarely happens). If you want to dial long distance from the College phone network, you can get a calling card and you will be billed. If you can work out the access codes you might also be able to call other UK universities directly, and do all sorts of complex things such as call diversion.

For calls from outside, the direct line for your office phone is obtained by prefixing the extension number with 020 759. For example, the outside number for extension 48251 is 020 7594 8251. This only works for extensions starting with 4. The international dialling code for the UK is +44.

**Stationery**

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

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

Out of hours access

Normal College hours are between 08.30 and 18.00, Monday to Friday. The times outside these hours are known as ‘out of hours’ periods. Students are permitted to work (not eat, play or sleep!!) in some parts of the Huxley Building for parts of the out of hours periods. Entry to the building will not be permitted after 22.00 and all students must leave the building by 23.00. The building opens at 05.00 in the morning. All students must carry their ID card to be allowed out of hours access. The Security Guards hold lists of student names showing for which rooms and times out of hours access is permitted.

When using the Huxley Building out of hours, you must
- carry your ID card at all times,
- show your ID card to the Security Guard or other members of College staff on request,
- complete the attendance register at the Security Desk on level 2 when you enter the Huxley Building (or at 18.00 if you are already in), and complete it again when you leave.

Professional Skills Attendance Requirement

All research students are expected to complete a number of the Graduate School Professional Skills courses as part of their research degree registration. Students registered after October 2012 must meet the minimum attendance requirements by the 9 month (Early Stage Assessment or ESA) milestone. The attendance requirement is there to ensure that all students receive some generic skills training while at Imperial and have the opportunity to engage with the programme, alongside their laboratory and other work.

All students must attend either (a) a minimum of 2 professional skills courses plus the online plagiarism awareness course; or a Graduate School Retreat plus the online plagiarism awareness course; or an International doctoral summer school plus the online plagiarism awareness course.

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

Please note that it is your responsibility and not your supervisors to ensure that you complete this component of the course in time.

Students, via Directors of Postgraduate Studies (DPS) within their department, can apply for exemption to this if students have attended equivalent courses elsewhere. However, all Doctoral students, even those who have successfully applied for an exemption, must attend at least two Graduate School courses prior to the Late Stage Review (LSR). Find out more about equivalent courses and exemptions: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/equivalency-and-exemption/).
UKVI requirements for overseas students

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

The departmental requirement is that students must attend at least one monthly meeting with their supervisor, who will be certifying the attendance through CATE (https://cate.doc.ic.ac.uk).

4 Doctoral Milestones & Departmental Requirements

It is difficult to set out a fixed timetable for PhD work as there are so many variables and variations but, however it is structured, it is essential that some planned programme of work is followed. Failure to complete a PhD is often not due to lack of talent, but more to do with a failure to plan work sensibly and tackle the more mundane activities, such as writing up.

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

Here is general outline:

**Timetable**

**Year 1**

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

**Year 2**

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

**Year 3**

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

Formal milestones

Besides wanting all research students to obtain the maximum benefit from their studies, the Department and the College come under considerable external pressure to ensure that PhDs are completed in their allotted time. For these and many other reasons there is a formal review procedure and deadlines for all research students. The deadlines are listed below. For EPSRC-funded students the College has an obligation to report annually to EPSRC on progress. The studentship can be withdrawn if that report is not satisfactory.

The following procedures were introduced in January 2011, and subsequently updated in 2016, to replace the previous MPhil/PhD scheme. Deadlines for part-time students are shown in brackets. Description of what the student is expected to submit for each of these milestones is given below after the table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration</th>
<th>From 1st January 2011, students are directly registered for the PhD degree. (Prior to 1st January 2011, students were initially registered for the MPhil degree.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 months (PT-6 months) DoC Milestone</td>
<td>Students are required by the department to complete a Research Plan Confirmation (RPC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months (PT-18 months) ESA College Milestone</td>
<td>Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Early Stage Assessment (ESA) in order to continue as a PhD student. The ESA consists of a 9-month report and presentation. Students must also have completed two of the four required Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School (see above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 months (PT-24-36 months) LSR College Milestone</td>
<td>Students are required by College to complete a satisfactory Late Stage Report (LSR) in order to continue as a PhD student. Students must also complete the requisite Professional Skills Development courses prescribed by the Graduate School (see above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 months (PT-60 months) Outline thesis DoC Milestone</td>
<td>Students are required by the department to produce a .zip file that includes (i) papers submitted/published so far, and (ii) a draft or outline thesis, with a narrative (per chapter) explaining how and which of the papers will be included into the thesis, and indicating where more work is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 months (PT-60 months) Completing Research Status Form</td>
<td>End of PhD programme. Students can if they wish continue to access College resources (e.g. Library, email) for a further 12 months by entering Writing-Up Status (Completing Research Status) and paying a fee of £200.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 months (PT-68 months) Examination Entry</td>
<td>Examination Entry Form. Students must submit their examination entry form in which they specify the title of their thesis and the nomination of the PhD examiners. The form needs to be filled in together with the supervisor and signed by the supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 months (PT-72 months) Thesis submission</td>
<td>The PhD thesis must be submitted by end of month 48. This is a strict deadline and can only be extended by seeking formal approval from the College. Students who started their postgraduate research degree in September 2019 will need to follow the Colleges policy on using Turnitin as part of the Early Stage Assessment 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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information on preparing for the viva & link to online Passing Your Viva can be found on this website http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/online-video-resources/.

Note that full-time research students failing to submit within 48 months of registration (72 months for part-time students) are not permitted to enter the degree examination. The examination has to be effected (form of entry submitted) no later than 40 (68) months after initial registration and preferably
earlier. Students who fail to do so may be refused submission.
Deadlines for Part-time PhD students

The College deadlines for part-time students are given in parentheses in the table above. Deadlines given in this handbook are typically stated for full-time students. Part-time students should assume the corresponding part-time deadline when reading.

Deadlines for RAs registered for a PhD

Important: For the purposes of calculating milestones and deadlines, RAs who are registered for a PhD degree are always treated by the College as full-time PhD students, even if they work part-time for the PhD.

Research Plan Confirmation (3 months)

All research students are required by College to draw up and agree a formal research plan with their supervisors within the first three months of registration. This consists of a provisional thesis title, names of the 1st and 2nd supervisor and a short abstract of the research topic identified in consultation with the 1st supervisor. Your supervisor is required to discuss your progress with you and to sign the report. The student must submit, through CATE, as a minimum requirement, a single A4 page (in .pdf) including the above information and signed by the supervisor. The submission is done by uploading the .pdf file in CATE, as part of the module 611 (Research Plan Confirmation (RPC)).

The 3-month report aims to ensure that you and your supervisor are engaging in a coherent programme of work, and allows the Postgraduate Tutor and 1st year Mentor to monitor your initial period of study. You will be provided with an opportunity to have a meeting with the Postgraduate Tutor or 1st year Mentor.

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

- title of your research topic
- name of your 1st supervisor and 2nd supervisor
- short abstract of the research topic
- list of key literature papers
- signature of your 1st supervisor

Early Stage Assessment (ESA) (9 months)

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

The aims of the review are to:

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

Report and Presentation

The 9-month ESA Report should not normally exceed about 30–40 pages. You may use any papers and technical reports you have produced over the year to develop the report. Your supervisor can offer advice on content and structure. The report will normally include [most of] the following:

• **Introduction and statement of problem.** A clear statement of the research problem and aims and objectives. This should be described in a way that is accessible to any member of the Department’s academic staff.

• **Literature survey.** An outline of the precedents for the proposed work, points of departure, and indication of potential significance; a comprehensive and critical literature review demonstrating a good knowledge of the background to the research problem. Where a detailed literature review chapter for the dissertation has already been drafted, this may be attached as an appendix and a summary of the main points included in the report.

• **Methods and techniques.** An account of the methods and techniques adopted in the study. This will normally include a presentation of the relevant theoretical computational or experimental methods to be employed.

• **Summary of research.** An account of research carried out so far.

• **Results.** A discussion of results obtained.

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

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

Examiners are well aware that results at this stage will be limited and ideas still at a preliminary stage. Students should not defer submission of the report because of a lack of results or because they have a paper deadline etc. They must submit their ESA report through CATE by uploading the .pdf file of the report in CATE as part of the module 612 (Early Stage Review (ESR)).

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

• Introduction and statement of problem, structure of the talk

• Objectives and Aims: what you want to achieve, and how you will measure your success

• Techniques to be used, research carried out so far, (any) results obtained

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

Assessment
Each student will be allocated an assessment team consisting of at least three members of academic staff, including the supervisor, the 2nd supervisor (or co-supervisor), AND one or more independent assessors. The independent assessor must be an academic within the department, not a research assistant or senior researcher. Mentors cannot be part of the Assessment Team. Assessment forms are available in CATE. The independent assessor will fill in form F1, whereas supervisor(s) will jointly fill in form F2. Director of Postgraduate Research (DPS), or year mentor, or PhD administrator will confirm the final outcome using form F4.

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

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

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

Late Stage Review (LSR) (18-24 months)
Between month 18 and 24, students are required to submit a Late Stage Review report. This will be in the form of a poster and appendix. The poster should include the following information:

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

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

Assessment
The LSR Poster and Appendix will be reviewed by the supervisor, the 2nd supervisor and the same independent assessor of the ESA (unless a change of topic has happened since the ESA milestone) as part of a departmental poster presentation event. There should also be strong evidence of progress from the 9-month ESA review. Assessment forms are available in CATE. The independent assessor will fill in form F1, whereas supervisor(s) will jointly fill in form F2. Director of Postgraduate
Research (DPS), or year mentor, or PhD administrator will confirm the final outcome using form F4.

Draft thesis review (36 months)

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

Assessment

The report will be reviewed by the supervisor and the 2nd supervisor. The report should provide strong evidence that the PhD will be completed successfully and on time. It is expected that material for several chapters of the thesis will have been completed at this stage, at least in draft form. The report should be submitted in CATE https://cate.doc.ic.ac.uk/. The Academic Progress Mentor is in charge of monitoring the submission of this report.

Writing-Up (‘Completing Research Status’) (37–48 months)

PhD students are permitted to ‘write up’ their thesis in College and continue to have access to certain College facilities for 12 months immediately following the end of their registered period of PhD studies (normally, months 37-48). From 1 January 2014 ‘writing-up’ status is known formally as Completing Research Status (CRS). Note that students who are awarded an EPSRC scholarship will have a minimum registration period of three and a half years and their writing up status will normally start in month 43.

Research students may apply to register as CRS students for a maximum period of 12 months upon payment of a CRS registration fee of £200.

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

The CRS registration status cannot exceed 12 months and should usually follow immediately after the end of the student’s normal registration period. Students will have access to all College facilities and be eligible for Council Tax exemption if they were registered as full time students immediately prior to going on to CRS. At the end of the CRS period a student will be recorded as ‘Writing up Away from College’ until the thesis is submitted.

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

Please note also that CRS registration is not compulsory. A student who has completed the minimum period of registration may choose to write-up the thesis away from College. Students in these circumstances are formally recorded as ‘Writing up Away from College’ until the thesis is submitted. They will not be registered during this period but will retain VPN access until thesis submission and for a further 12 months from the date of thesis submission.
Examination Entry (up to 44 months)

Before you can submit your thesis or be examined on it you, your supervisor and your department will need to complete examination entry forms. You should aim to submit your examination entry forms at least four months before you would like to submit your thesis, or four months before your final submission deadline. This means submitting your forms no later than 44 months after your start date if you are a full-time student, or 68 months after your start date if you are a part-time student. Please note that submission of your thesis is not permitted until you have completed the minimum registration period. Before you submit the examination entry forms you should ensure that you have completed all your milestones and that the Registry has received all relevant documentation. You will find the examination entry form on our Departmental Website https://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters/.

Further details can be found here:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/
for-current-students/research-degrees/

Thesis Submission (up to 48 months)

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

Your thesis must be submitted electronically via the eThesis website www.ethesis.co.uk.

Further details can be found here:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/
for-current-students/research-degrees/examination-information/
thesis-submission--vivas/

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

Post-Submission

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

Preparing for the viva
Once you have submitted your thesis, the Registry will ensure that copies are provided to your ex-
aminers, in advance of your viva examination. Your supervisor, or another member of staff in your
department, will be responsible for organising the viva and making all the necessary arrangements.
You can find information on how to prepare for the viva on the following links

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/
  professional-skills/online-video-resources/

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/
  professional-skills/online-video-resources/passing-your-viva/

The above videos have been created by the Graduate School and Dandylion Films to support research
students with viva presentation.

When your viva has taken place you may be informed of the outcome by the examiners. You will
possibly be asked to make some minor corrections to your thesis before submitting the final copy
and being awarded your degree. Once you have submitted the final thesis and your examiners have
agreed that they are satisfied, the Registry will write to you confirming the award of your degree.
Your degree certificate will be issued after this date.

E-theses: requesting an embargo
The College recognises that theses contain unpublished work created for examination and that in
some circumstances it may be necessary to delay their public release. This is referred to as an
embargo. An embargoed thesis will not be available to read, on Spiral or in print, until an agreed
date. Students should discuss with their supervisor whether their thesis should be embargoed and
tick the appropriate box on the Thesis declaration form.

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

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

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/
  support-for-staff/scholarly-communication/open-access/theses/

Please contact the Research Degrees Team (research.degree@imperial.ac.uk) if you
have any queries regarding the e-theses policy or an embargo.
5 Academic Support

There are many formal and informal ways of obtaining support, help and advice. The formal sources open to you include, but are not limited to:

- your supervisor;
- your assessors (if applicable);
- your [academic] mentor (if applicable);
- your cohort leader (if applicable);
- your departmental postgraduate tutor;
- your departmental Director of Postgraduate Studies;
- your departmental Safety Officer;
- your Head of Department;
- your departmental student representative;
- your faculty student representative.

The following is extracted from the Graduate School web pages PhD Students & Supervisors.
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/quality-assurance/phd-students-and-supervisors/

Supervisors expect you to:

- Take responsibility for your thesis: in the end it is your work and your supervisors are here to help you accomplish your research objectives, but not to do the thinking for you!
- Work hard: a research degree cannot be accomplished with only a 9–5 effort. Imperial College is a top ranking University and we expect that students will strive to accomplish good work.
- Display initiative: ultimately, the person who drives the process and strives to understand the research area is you. We expect you to be curious about your work and to think about how other ideas/work have an impact on the research you are doing. In light of this, it is a requirement for you to attend all lab meetings, work in progress etc. plus other seminars. To be a scientist — you should be curious about science!
- Write papers (this is dependent on field of study) before you have submitted your thesis. The process of writing enables you to develop skills which are useful when writing up your thesis, and the fact that you have had papers refereed/accepted by International journals satisfies the external examiner that you have what it takes!
- Be self-critical of your own work and results, and use these skills in being sceptical of results in the literature.
- Help colleagues (especially less experienced ones) in the laboratory to learn through discussions and demonstrations.
- Keep up with the literature in your field.
- Provide regular reports detailing your results. You should be conscientious about keeping a
laboratory notebook and regularly entering all your data into tables and spreadsheets.

- Be aware of safety at all times and follow safety procedures, especially if you are working in a laboratory.
- Develop your skills and learn new ones by attending the transferable skills courses and lectures provided by the Graduate School, by your own and other College departments/divisions/faculties, and by any other external providers.

As a student you can expect your supervisor to:

- Be supportive of you both intellectually and personally.
- Set up a viable project and ensure that you have a clear idea of aims and objectives and an initial work-plan.
- Provide an adequate work space for you.
- Be available (or provide an identified substitute) to talk about research problems at relatively short notice although, at certain times of the year, you may need to give a few days notice.
- Help and guide you extensively in your first year; help you in your second year; and be a sounding board in your third year. The help is tapered as you develop confidence in your own abilities and research skills, to enable you to learn to work more on your own and to make more of your own decisions.
- Help develop your skills in technical writing, oral presentations, problem definition, statistical data analysis and critical literature reviews.
- Help enable you to attend at least one conference to present a paper.
- Provide adequate funds and/or facilities for your research project.
- Read your thesis thoroughly and make constructive comments on both style and intellectual content.

Together, students and supervisors are expected to:

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

In addition, you can expect your supervisor to

- identify suitable PhD examiners and make arrangements for the viva examination.

6 Academic Regulations

Academic and Examination Regulations

The College academic and examination regulations for the award of research degrees can be viewed here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/
Regulations for Students

All registered students of the College are subject to the provisions of these Regulations for Students, the College Academic Regulations, and such other Regulations and Instructions for Students as the College may from time to time approve. The Regulations for Students can be viewed here:

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

7 Academic Matters – Policies and Procedures

Academic Integrity

As a student at the College 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 Colleges approach to plagiarism is available on the website

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/ regulations/ under the Cheating Offences Policy and Procedure.

Code of Practice for Research Students

Students are required to comply with Imperial College London degree regulations and other College procedures and regulations, including following College safety requirements and procedures. The College has developed a code of practice for research students, which gives advice on all stages of a research degree:


Code of Student Discipline

The Code of Student Discipline provides for the hearing of complaints concerning breaches of discipline by students, and for rights of appeal where appropriate, and sets down the penalties that may be imposed, including termination of membership of the College.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/college-governance/ charters-statutes-ordinances-and-regulations/ordinances/students/

Complaints, Appeals and Disciplinary Procedures

The College aims to give the highest specialised instruction and provide you with the training, resources and administrative support you need to succeed. We also have rigorous regulations in place
to ensure assessments are conducted with fairness and consistency. We recognise however, that students may believe that they have grounds for complaint about academic or administrative services, or wish to appeal the outcome of an assessment or final degree. Accordingly we have laid out clear and consistent procedures through which complaints and postgraduate research student appeals can be investigated and considered:

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

Copyright

Copyright guidance is available from the Library:

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

Employment during studies

The College recommends that full-time students do not take up part-time work during term-time. If this is unavoidable we advise students to work no more than 10-15 hours per week, which should be principally at weekends and not within the normal working hours of the College. Working in excess of these hours could impact adversely on a students studies or health. International students should be advised that most visas allow students to work no more than 20 hours a week. Some sponsors may not permit students to take up work outside their studies and others may specify a limit. College Training Grant Guide states that: Students may undertake teaching or demonstrating work when this is compatible with their training and provided their supervisors approve. The total time spent (including preparation and marking) should not interfere with the progress of the PhD. The amount of time is at the RO and supervisors discretion but it is recommended that this is no more than six hours in any week.

Students considering part-time work during term time are strongly advised to discuss this issue with their supervisor or postgraduate tutor. If a student is planning to work more than 6 hours alongside their studies, we would expect them to reduce the hours spent on their studentship to part time (although not less than 50/50).

International students should also seek advice from the International Office regarding visa limitations on employment. Please refer to the policy on employment during studies:


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

Starting from the new academic year 2017-2018, the departmental policy regarding involvement of PhD students in teaching duties is as follow:

- PhD students (excluding teaching scholars, HiPeds PhD students, self-funded PhD students and RAs), who receive a financial contribution from the department to their scholarship are
required 100 hours per academic year to contribute to the teaching activities in the department. This corresponds, on average, to supporting one teaching course per term (50 hours per term), in activities such as tutorial help, lab support, coursework marking and exam invigilation. The department will pay for teaching support at the standard hourly rate. This applies to any cohort year (from 1st to 4th year PhD). Students who are heavily involved in the writing up stage of their PhD and very close to their completion date might be exempt. These cases will be considered on an individual basis.

Continuation of financial support by the department for a PhD scholarship depends upon both satisfactory progress in the PhD and on the fulfilment of the teaching support requirement.

To fulfil the teaching requirements, 1st year PhD students should make sure that:

1. They attend the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) workshop as soon as possible in the 1st year, in order to receive the necessary training for their teaching support activities.
2. They finalise the paperwork needed to register in college for casual pay. This will allow the students to receive payments for the teaching support hours that you will be claiming. Note that preparation time for tutorial classes can be claimed (normally two hours of preparation per one hour tutorial).
3. They volunteer for courses as soon as possible by logging into the Tutorial Support Coordination website (https://tsc.doc.ic.ac.uk).
4. If they are not able to be allocated to any teaching activity, they should report this as soon as possible to the supervisor and contact the Director of Postgraduate Research of the Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research.

- RAs, registered also as a PhD student, are employees of the College and are not eligible for additional payments to support Departmental teaching. Their involvement in teaching activities will be rewarded in the form of an individual financial credit that can be used towards certain approved types of expenditure.

**Study Leave**

[http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/research-degrees/administration/)

It is possible that the course of study will require a student to collect or study material elsewhere than at the College; part of the time may need to be spent in other places. Your supervisor will need to apply using FormIC/D. Study leave is not permissible during the first or last three months of your study.

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

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

Details are available at

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

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

**Ethics**

Procedures for ethics approval, Home Office licences, etc.

The Imperial College Research Ethics Committee (ICREC) website gives information about ethical approval for certain types of proposed research, and explains the avenues by which this approval can be obtained.

[http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-ethics-committee](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-ethics-committee)

**Good Research Conduct**

The College expects that all research will be conducted with integrity. The Guidelines for Proper Scientific Conduct in Research describe practices that have been established by several professions and are generally accepted by members of academic staff in the College. Their purpose is to encourage the education and training of junior staff by senior colleagues and to ensure that the quality and integrity of research is maintained in the College.


**Investigation of Allegations of Scientific Misconduct**

The College's policy on, and procedures for, the investigation of allegations of research misconduct is intended to satisfy the requirements of those who fund research at Imperial College London that the College has proper mechanisms in place for the management of complaints of research fraud or misconduct. It is recognised that instances of misconduct are rare, and the procedures set out in this policy will consequently be implemented only in exceptional circumstances.


**Research Misconduct**

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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 and collaborators, ensuring veracity of data, and acting with integrity in the depiction of results and conclusions. However, if 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.

Students should be aware of the College Guidelines for Proper Scientific Conduct in Research available here


and the Policy and Procedures for Investigation of Allegations of Scientific Misconduct, available here

**Intellectual Property Policy**

Where students generate IP in the course of their study or research they will own that IP in their own right unless one of the following applies:

- they generate IP which is subject to governing term or an agreement with an external organisation whereby the IP vests with College or a third party;
- they generate IP which builds upon existing IP generated by College Employees or Associates;
- they generate IP jointly with College Employees or Associates;
- they are, or have the status of, College Employee (in which case they are treated by College and the law as employees).

In the above listed circumstances, students will be required to assign IP to College and, in respect of revenue generated by that IP, the student will be treated on the same basis as College Employees under the Reward to Investors Scheme. For further guidance, contact the Research Office.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-office/.

**Annual Leave**

Annual leave is dependent on the students status, and each student should discuss this at the start of their research degree with their supervisor. All annual leave must be requested from and approved by the supervisor and students must provide adequate notice.

The Departmental guideline is that students may take up to 8 weeks annual leave including College closures and Bank Holidays (about 5 weeks excluding College closures and Bank Holidays). This is in line with UK Research Council studentship conditions. Before taking any holidays, students must agree the dates with their supervisor. Holidays should not be taken at times when they will impact on PhD milestones, and are not an acceptable reason for delaying the submission of reports, etc. A holiday longer than 3 weeks must be approved by the Postgraduate Tutor.
**Sick Leave**

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

**Interruption of Studies**

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

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

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

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/
administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/
academic-policy/attendance-requirements-for-pgr/
Research-Degree-Registration-Amendment-Form.doc

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

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

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/

**Note** only in exceptional circumstances can registration be suspended retrospectively.

**Religious Obviance**

Guidelines for students with religious obligations during assessment periods are available here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/
administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/
academic-policy/exam-arrangements-and-re-sits/
Examinations-and-religious-obligations.pdf
Attending Taught Courses

Currently, as a PhD student you are entitled to attend all lectures in the Department. This is a great opportunity and you should continue your education by taking advantage of it. Of particular interest to PhD students will be the Department’s MSc in Advanced Computing and MSc in Computing (Specialism). The topics covered often represent the frontiers of work in the relevant areas and provide an ideal introduction or background for your research. Discuss with your supervisor which courses you should attend. Course syllabuses, readings lists and timetables are published in the Department’s web pages. Classes are normally held between 09.00 and 18.00 except for Wednesday afternoons. If you plan to attend any lectures it is courteous to ask the lecturer beforehand as space and availability of handouts may be limited.

8 Plagiarism

Plagiarism

It is important that students learn about how to properly attribute and acknowledge the work, date and ideas of others. Plagiarism is scientific misconduct, and students whose thesis can be shown to contain plagiarism are subject to penalties as outlined in the Colleges Cheating Offences Policy and Procedures which can be found here:

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

However, in the case of PhD theses there are issues as to what should count as plagiarism. In particular, is a student permitted to re-use their own work (for example material from a previous publication that they have written)? There are considerable grey areas, that require academic judgement, but this document is intended to provide guidelines for students, supervisors and examiners.

In general it is acceptable academic practice for a PhD student to include in their thesis material that has been previously written and published by themselves (including figures and text): they should make it clear that they themselves have published this previously and reference appropriately.

However, they must not include material written by others (including their supervisor) without proper attribution, even if they are authors on the publication.

Students should note that reproduction of published work may infringe copyright, as discussed in

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

It is not acceptable to reproduce material that has been submitted for an examination at Imperial or another university (for example from the students Masters thesis). It is acceptable for students to reproduce text and figures that they have previously written and submitted as part of their early or late stage assessment and/or other reports to funders or other bodies. Any documents that are publicly accessible should be appropriately referenced.

It must be remembered that a thesis is more than a collection of publications. There may be considerable similarity between sections of a thesis and a publication, however, the level of detail and the nature of the discussion in a thesis is different than that in a journal publication. It is good practice to indicate that parts of the thesis have been previously published, for example by including a statement
like. Some of the work described in this thesis has been previously published in **** and ***.

There are some sections of a thesis that frequently show high similarity when put through TurnitinUK or similar programmes. For example, the Material and Methods of theses from the same discipline often show similarity. This may be because there are only a limited number of ways in which a particular method can be accurately described. While it is not good practice to simply cut and paste methods into a thesis, students should not contort their text simply to avoid similarity with another publication. Plagiarism is misappropriation of another person's original ideas, thoughts or data. While it is important to cite those that have developed the methodologies used in a thesis, similarity in describing those methodologies is usually acceptable.

Plagiarism advice for postgraduate research students can be found on the Library website at:

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

**TurnitinUK Plagiarism Detection Service at Imperial College London**

TurnitinUK is an online plagiarism detection service that enables plagiarism comparison.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/teaching-learning/elearning-services/turnitin/about-turnitin/

**Plagiarism Awareness Online Course**

The Graduate School, in conjunction with the Library, has developed an online course designed to provide you with guidance and information about proper citation and attribution in writing. After completing the course you should be able to explain what plagiarism is, be familiar with the concept of academic integrity, be able to explain how to avoid plagiarism and learn what the College's policy concerning plagiarism is.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/onlinecourses/

### 9 Wellbeing and Advice

The department has a Student Wellbeing Advisor, Michelle Langan, you can provide confidential support and advice with a variety of things such as accommodation, exercise, food and nutrition, sleep, identity, mental health, stress and Anxiety and general well being. Her location is Room 454, her email is m.langan@imperial.ac.uk. She has drop-in sessions on Thursday (10am-1pm or 2pm-4pm) and Friday (10am-1pm or 2pm-4pm).

**Student Support**

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

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-space/
Director of Student Support

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

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/people/d.wright

College Tutors and Departmental Support

College Tutors operate outside of any department. They provide guidance and assistance to students in regard to welfare issues and are also involved in College disciplinary matters involving students. For more information see:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-space/here-for-you/college-tutors-and-departmental-support/

A detailed description of the role is available here:


Postgraduate Tutors

Postgraduate Tutors offer pastoral support and offer advice and if necessary they will direct you to an appropriate source of support. You can arrange to have a meeting with the Postgraduate Tutor at any time during your studies. Please note all meetings will be completely confidential. Your Postgraduate Tutor is Prof Sophia Drossopoulou. See information given above.

Imperial College Union (ICU) Advice Centre

The ICU Advice Centre offers advice and support on a wide range of issues. Imperial College Union runs the Centre independently of the College. The Student Advisor provides free, confidential, independent advice on welfare issues including housing, money and debt, employment and consumer rights, and personal safety.

https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/welfare-and-advice

Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service

The Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service offers short-term counselling to all registered students of Imperial College London. It is free and confidential.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling/

Disabilities, specific learning difficulties, long-term health issues

Studying at university can be a challenge, especially if you have a disability. The College is keen that you have every opportunity to fulfil your potential and graduate with the degree you deserve. It is therefore important that you let us know about any disability, specific learning difficulty or health problem as soon as possible so that we can give expert advice and all available support.
Some people never think of themselves as having a disability, but students who have experienced any of the issues listed below have found that some help and support has made all the difference to their study experience.

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

Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service offers confidential advice and support to students with a disability, specific learning difficulty, enduring health or mental health condition.

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

Departmental Disability Officers

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

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

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


Some of the sorts of things that the Service can help with are:

- Being an advocate on your behalf with others in the College such as your Departmental liaison officer, Senior Tutor or Examinations officer, the Accommodation Office or the Estates Department
- Checking that your evidence of disability is appropriate and up-to-date;
- Arranging a diagnostic assessment for specific learning difficulties;
- Help with applying to the College for the cost of an assessment;
- Help with your application for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) — see below;
- Helping students not eligible for the Disabled Students Allowance in obtaining support from other sources;
• Help with arranging extra Library support;
• Supporting applications for continuing accommodation for your second or later years.

**Disabled Students Allowance**
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisorservice/supportforstudents/dassupport

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

**NHS Health Centre and Finding a Doctor**
The Imperial College Health Centre provides 24 hour care for its NHS registered patients in conjunction with the local after hours GP service. Students are able to register on the NHS if within the practice area. For further information see details on:

http://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/

More information on finding a local doctor is available at:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-space/here-for-you/find-a-doctor/

**NHS Dentist (based in the Health Centre)** The dental team provides the full range of NHS treatments. The surgery can also provide private treatment.

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

**New Students**
Information on how to settle in and find your way around.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/

**Religious and Faith Support**
The Chaplaincy Multi-Faith Centre is a place of resource, help, advice and information relating to issues of faith and spirituality. The Chaplaincy service provides prayer rooms, information about local places of worship, and people from different faiths you can talk with about issues of spirituality and religion. http://www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy/.

## 10 Student Support

**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 on Level 5 Sherfield where the Careers Service is based.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers

The Careers Service offers resources and advice on successful career planning.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/exploring-your-options/career/

To book a careers appointment -

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/services/book-an-appointment/

Centre for Academic English

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

www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english

The Graduate School

Every postgraduate student at Imperial is a member of the Graduate School. In partnership with academics, students across the College and the Graduate Students Union, the Graduate School provides opportunities for students to meet each other at a variety of social and academic events, promoting interdisciplinary knowledge exchange, encouraging collaborations and creating supportive global research communities and peer groups. The Graduate School runs a Professional Skills Development programme for Masters students.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

ICT provides all the central IT systems across Imperial and provides IT support for students. If you need help, you can contact the ICT Service Desk on 020 7594 9000, find help online at www.imperial.ac.uk/ict or visit the Service Desk on Level 4 Sherfield Building, open Monday Friday from 8.30am until 6pm.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/online-services/

You should also familiarise yourself with the Conditions of Use of IT Facilities:

It is Departmental policy that all research students have, at the very least, their own desktop PC with appropriate word-processing software, access to printers, archive and back-up facilities, email, and networks. Most students will have access to more sophisticated computing equipment in addition, as required by the nature of their research. Research students may also borrow a laptop from the Department for a short time, e.g. for giving a presentation at a conference. If you have problems with hardware or software, or want to learn more, you should contact the Computing Support Group (CSG) preferably by mailing help@doc.ic.ac.uk. All such emails are logged allowing you to follow the progress of requests.

If you have a computer and access to the internet at home it is possible to connect to College systems via the Colleges VPN service. Consult the Colleges ICT service

http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ict/services/networks/networkconnections/vpnconnection.42

Useful information can be accessed via either the Department or the College webpages. It is worth spending some time familiarising yourself with them and bookmarking pages with useful information. The Departmental PhD web pages are at

http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/research/phd/phdmatters.

As a PhD student you should be on the Departments phd-list mailing list. As an RA registered for a PhD, you should be on the ra-list as well as the phd-list. You should check your email regularly, as important notifications are disseminated using email. All research students are entitled to a certain amount of photocopying, either in the Department or in the Central Library. Check with Ann Halford in the General Office about allowances and access codes for the printer-copiers.

**International Student Support**

Imperial is an international community with students of more than 100 nationalities. Specialist support is offered to assist overseas students to adapt to life in the UK.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/

**Library Services**

Our Library Services deliver a wide range of resources to support students needs. The Central Library at South Kensington offers over 1,300 study spaces, many with PCs, while our campus libraries support the research needs of medical students and those based at Silwood Park. Alongside these physical spaces the Library also provides over 170,000 electronic books, journals and databases available both on and off campus. Subject librarians provide expert advice and training and are always on hand to help just drop in!

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/

Note that students are automatically registered with the Library when they are issued with a College ID card on joining the College. Your ID card is used as your library card, to swipe into the Library, borrow books and operate the Library printers.

**Registry**
The Registry is split into sections with different responsibilities, including:

**Student Records and Data**

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

The team is currently 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.

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

Appeal administration also sits within the team, as does the responsibility for confirming qualifications via the Higher Education Degree Datacheck service.

**Student Records and Examinations:** records@imperial.ac.uk or +44 (0)20 7594 7268

**Degree Certificates:** certificates@imperial.ac.uk or +44 (0)20 7594 8037

**Student Financial Support**

The Student Financial Support team is responsible for a variety of funding schemes to help support prospective and current students. For student support fund see:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/

**Postgraduate Scholarships and Research Council Studentships:** scholarships@imperial.ac.uk or +44 (0)20 759 48047/48130

**US Federal Loans, Hardship funding and Emergency loans:** student.funding@imperial.ac.uk or +44 (0)20 759 48122

**Student Hub**

The Student Hub is the one stop shop for all key information and support that students need for everyday life at Imperial. All the student support departments are brought together here, so that you can get answers to your most frequent queries in one place. The Student Hub team can help you with enquiries on:

- Accommodation (including checking contracts for private accommodation)
- Admissions
- International student enquiries
- Research degrees
- Student financial support
• Student records
• Tuition fees
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub/

Accommodation
For information on halls and private accommodation see:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/campus-life/accommodation/

Sport Imperial
Since the establishment of the Sport Imperial brand in 2005, Sport Imperial has maximised investment in state-of-the-art facilities, scholarships and the promotion of sporting excellence and participation, including the Get Active campaign to increase sport participation throughout the Imperial community. For more information see: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/.

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.

Imperial College Union
Imperial College Union is devoted to the educational interests and welfare of its members. All students at Imperial are members of Imperial College Union:
https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us

Graduate Students Union
The Graduate Students Union is the postgraduate arm of Imperial College Union, and is concerned primarily with the affairs of all postgraduate students at Imperial.
https://union.ic.ac.uk/presidents/gsu/

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 (ICU) website.
https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/academic-representatives/overview
Election of the Department PhD student representatives is normally run within the first few weeks of each new academic year. Emails will be circulated by the PhD Programme Administrator to collect nominations prior to election.

12 Student Surveys

Your feedback is important to your department, the College and Imperial College Union. Whilst there are a variety of means to give your feedback on your Imperial experience, the following College-wide surveys give you opportunities to make your voice heard:

- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is the only national survey of research degree (PhD, EngD) students we do and so the only way for us to compare how we are doing against the national average and to make changes that will improve our research students experience in future. PRES concentrates on your study experience and includes questions on:

- supervision
- resources
- research community
- research skills and professional development
- motivations
- demographic details

PRES last ran in spring term 2017 and will next run in spring term 2019. All these surveys are anonymous and the more students that take part the more representative the results so please take a few minutes to give your views.

The Unions “You Said, We Did” Campaign at https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/you-said-we-did shows you some of the changes made as a result of survey feedback.

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

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

For further information on surveys please contact the Registrys Surveys Team on surveys.registrysupport@imperial.ac.uk.

13 Personal Development Opportunities for Research Degree Students

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

PhD students have the opportunity to work as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) in the Depart-
ment. Working as a GTA provides you with an opportunity to broaden your experience at Imperial, and develop further skills.

For more information about GTAs see:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/gtas/

Imperial Outreach

Imperial has a long established reputation for delivering excellent outreach activities to school and college students. Opportunities on offer range from open days for prospective students, inspirational science-based hands-on activities, summer schools, mentoring programmes in schools, exciting lectures and schools visits to raise awareness of Higher Education.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/student-recruitment-and-outreach/

Outreach Postgraduate Ambassadors (OPA)

The Outreach Postgraduate Ambassadors Scheme provides enthusiastic postgraduates with training and the opportunity to communicate their research or experiences to school-aged audiences. Talks and demonstrations can take place in schools or at events on campus including Demonstration Lectures, Taster Days and summer schools. There are no restrictions or requirements other than a willingness to inspire and delight a young and captivated audience! You can do as much or as little as you want. The emphasis is on fitting it flexibly around your work and study commitments.


Professional Skills Development Programme

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

Professional Skills Training

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 skills 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 skills relevant to your Doctorate and your future career whether inside or outside academia. These skills 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.

The Graduate School 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.

**The Programme**

The Graduate School Professional Skills Development programme is one of staged learning to ensure that you acquire basic research skills at the start of your doctoral studies and continue to develop as a well rounded researcher, gaining the skills and experience to successfully complete your research degree and move on. The programme is an integral part of your research degree and you should use it to support your personal development. The courses vary in length and format, from one-hour lectures, webinars and on-line courses, to three-day interactive residential workshops. The short programme is divided into innovation areas as follows:

- Writing for Success
- Perfecting Presentations
- Ensuring Integrity
- Information Landscape
- Maximising Management Skills
- Understanding Yourself and Others
- Successful Interactions
- Entrepreneurship
- Teaching

The Programme is regularly reviewed and updated and new courses added throughout the year. Courses are free but we do have a cancellation policy.

**Why does the Graduate School offer 'professional skills' courses?**

Research funders, including: Research Councils, Governments and Industrial sponsors require universities to invest in your professional development. This requirement stems from the 2002 Report of Sir Gareth Roberts Review SET for Success which discussed the changing nature of doctoral programmes and recommended skills training for doctoral students. The report found that doctoral graduates were often too narrowly focussed on their area of research and had difficulty adjusting to work (which involves a broader range of skills) whether inside or outside of academia. (On a national basis only 3.5% of domestic science doctoral graduates go on to become permanent academic research staff (Royal Society report (2011).

Following the 2002 report the RCUK Joint Skills Statement recommended that skills including Personal Effectiveness, Communication Skills, Networking and Teamworking, Career Management should be covered (as well as Research Skills and Techniques, Research Environment and Research Management available via departmental provision).

The Joint Skills Statement has now been replaced by the more elaborate Researcher Development Framework (RDF) available here.
Writing, Presentation & Careers Helpsheets

Some online help sheets have been developed as back up to workshops provided by your Department and the Graduate School. These help sheets provide general, generic guidance and some tips for getting started. However, they do not replace the detailed and practical information given in workshops, by tutors or supervisors.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/onlinecourses/

Online Resources

Some online courses have been developed as back up to workshops provided by your Department and the Graduate School. These provide general and generic guidance on a growing number of topics. However, they do not replace the detailed and practical information given in workshops, by tutors or supervisors.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/onlinecourses/

14 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 an online account, alumni email service, networking events, access to the Library and online resources, Careers support, and our Alumni Visitor Centre. Explore your new community and find out what other alumni have done, search for a local group and join the conversations in our LinkedIn group and on our Facebook page. Above all, please keep in touch! We would love to hear about what you are getting up to, and would like to help and support you as much as we can. You can always drop us an email at alumni@imperial.ac.uk.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/