

Orientation Information

for the use of new Visiting Students (non-degree)

This covers exchange and non-exchange study periods commencing during the academic year (2024-25)

This document is produced by the Registry, Imperial College London.

You can find a contents list on page 2.

Welcome

As a visiting (non-degree) student you are one of many arriving from a variety of countries as well as from within the UK. We hope that your stay at Imperial is an enjoyable one.

We look forward to welcoming students to our campuses during the 2024-25 academic year for an educational experience that will maximise in-person teaching and on-campus project supervision throughout the academic year unless we are prevented from doing so by any fresh UK government covid restrictions.

As a university that offers a practical approach to learning, we are always very excited to be able to open the doors of our labs, workshops and other teaching facilities to our visiting non-degree students (such as our many exchange students). Perhaps your study plan is lecture/coursework/project based leading to examinations, or perhaps your focus is a project or research period, but whatever you are attending Imperial to undertake do take advantage of the many extra-curricular activities that our own students engage in. Getting the balance right between study and recreation is always a challenge and more so probably for students from abroad (where experiencing a new cultural environment is likely to be a motivation for many students coming to Imperial and London!) Above all we hope it is a time of discovery for you both in an academic and personal sense. We hope you are equally excited to be undertaking your mobility at Imperial.

Some of the changes Imperial had to make to the learning experience over the period of the pandemic have worked well, and therefore Imperial has retained some of these approaches to enhance the overall experience on campus, for example, lectures, where these are relevant to a Visiting Student, may be hosted online when this method is deemed to be educationally beneficial to students.

Exchange students: An exchange student who has queries concerning their study plan should email the exchange co-ordinator in their host department. A list of exchange co-ordinators can be found here: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/student-exchanges/information-for-student-exchange-partner-universities/> and for further advice please refer to pages 15-19.

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INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced to help you (a visiting non-degree student, often an exchange student) to:

- (1) make sense of the information that is available on the Imperial website and in other places.
- (2) to help you understand information provided by host departments.
- (3) to help you understand the services provided by Imperial.

Review the helpful ‘contents’ list on page 2.

Throughout this document we have highlighted important actions and sections in **bold** and **yellow**, but this is not exhaustive so do read the whole document. **Refer to this document throughout your time at Imperial, especially about (if it is relevant to your study plan) how transcripts (official document details marks/grades and credits) are published.**

While enrolled as a student at Imperial a Visiting Student has the responsibility to inform themselves and to ask any questions.

Sometimes Imperial refers to “visiting students” as “occasional” students.

A few important notices to start with!

- **Imperial will continue to provide covid-19 advice:** <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/covid-19/>
- **Important:** use your Imperial mailbox daily as soon as you have access (all messages from Imperial will be sent to your Imperial mailbox).
- **Download the My Imperial Campus App but read this document first!!!!**
- **Accommodation:** read the section on page 7.
 - **Imperial halls of residence** are **only** available to **eligible undergraduate** exchange students.
 - **Private housing:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation/>
- **International students (non-UK/Ireland):**
 - important information/guidance for international students is included in the enrolment section (p.8-10)
 - **when can you travel to the UK?**

Answer: you can arrive before your course starts. This can be either:

 - > up to 1 week before, if your course lasts 6 months or less.
 - > up to 1 month before, if your course lasts more than 6 months.

however, you must **not** travel to the UK before the start date given on any visa.
 - **when should you depart the UK?**

Answer: you should depart by the end date on your visa.

 - > **if your course is longer than 12 months:**
your student visa should expire 4 months after your course end date as given on your CAS.
 - > **if your course is between 6 – 12 months long:**
your student visa should expire 2 months after the course end date given on your CAS.
 - > **if your course is no more than 6 months:**
you need to leave the UK before your permission to be in the UK expires, so this will be 6 months after your course start date.
 - **you should not presume you can extend your stay.**
 - > seek guidance from Imperial’s [International Student Support team](#).
- **Teaching** (where attendance on taught modules is part of your “study plan”) will be timetabled by each academic department. Exchange Students should refer to correspondence from their host

academic department. However, many Visiting Students who attend Imperial for periods within and across academic years do so to undertake a project or period of research See also the section on pages 14-17.

- **There are no specific welcome activities for students who commence during the academic year.** However, there will be “actions/tasks” that you need to fulfil. **Please use this document to assist your own orientation and please ask questions along the way. We are here to help.**

UNDERSTANDING IMPERIAL’S WEBPAGES

plus, other communications which you might be sent automatically by Imperial

(1) Auto-emails from Imperial

As you are due to arrive during Imperial’s academic year, Imperial will email you (auto emails) about a.) tasks to undertake and b.) information of importance or interest. **If you are confused, you can email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk for help.**

(2) Exchange students

Exchange students will receive bespoke emails from the student exchange co-ordinator, Mr Adrian Hawksworth (see also page 6) and (importantly) from their host academic department.

(3) Imperial’s “new students” webpages: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students>

- **Our “new students” webpages are designed for undergraduate and postgraduate full degree students, and not specifically for visiting non-degree students such as an exchange student.** Therefore, it is very important that a new visiting non-degree student reads this orientation information document before reading the many relevant webpages across Imperial’s website.
- On the “[week before you start](#)” and the “[your first week here](#)” page you will find a helpful reminders of tasks to undertake.
- If you are an international student you may still find the term “TIER 4” referred to on webpages or in Handbooks instead of the up-to-date term “Student Route Visa (admissions for more than 6 months)”. TIER 4 is an old term for Student Visa.
- If you click the “Exchange Students” item at the bottom of <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/> you will be taken to <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/student-exchanges/information-for-student-exchange-partner-universities/> where you can find a copy of this document.

(4) Download the [My Imperial Campus App](#) (but **please finish reading this orientation document first**)

- The My Imperial Campus App has current functionality like campus maps, a chat bot to find resources and “**Imperial events**”. When a student arrives during the academic year it probably has less items on it, but it is a useful tool nonetheless.
- Depending on your host department it may also include (**but not** necessarily straight away for a new visiting/exchange student) your timetable and class check-in (for attendance monitoring). **This feature is being piloted and therefore not all students will have access to it. However, Visiting students (especially exchange students) must note that even if their host department is piloting use of this feature/function their own timetable will not necessarily appear on My Imperial Campus App until they have arrived and been inducted by their host dept.**
- When your host department contacts you please look for references to My Imperial Campus App, and if you are unsure you can contact the host department for clarification.

HOW TO LOCATE IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

By the time you read this document you are likely to have already planned your journey to London. The following website provides helpful advice about the location of our campuses and how to reach them: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/>.

However, if you have been admitted as an **undergraduate student** and have or will have secured (accepted) accommodation in an Imperial hall of residence please see your **online accommodation induction** (*after you have accepted a room in a hall of residence*). This will provide information regarding travelling arrangements to your hall of residence.

Most visiting students are taught on the South Kensington campus.

Exceptions: Chemistry students are mainly taught at our White City Campus; while some students studying life sciences or medical-related disciplines (ordinarily projects) may find themselves taught at other [campuses](#):

- White City campus
- St Mary's campus in Paddington
- Hammersmith campus
- Royal Brompton campus in South Kensington
- Charing Cross campus in Baron's Court
- Chelsea & Westminster campus in Chelsea
- North West London Hospitals campus (Northwick Park Hospital; St Mark's Hospital) in Harrow
- Silwood Park (Ascot, Berkshire - outside London to the west)

Unless you are told otherwise assume your main campus is South Kensington.

If you do need to travel between campuses you can use TfL routes OR if you are travelling between South Kensington and White City you can review the timetable for the [College's own shuttle-bus](#).

TERM DATES FOR 2024-25

Term 1 (Autumn Term): Saturday 28 September 2024 to Friday 13 December 2024

Term 2 (Spring Term): Saturday 4 January 2025 to Friday 21 March 2025

Term 3 (Summer Term): Saturday 26 April 2025 to Friday 27 June 2025

Important notes regarding Imperial's term dates: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/registry/term-dates/>

- These are term dates, not accommodation occupation dates.
- Imperial does **not** have a semester system.
- The summer term for undergraduates is typically focused on preparation for examinations, actual examinations and project work. However, and depending on the academic department in question, examinations can/do take place at other times during the academic year.
- Approved attendance by a visiting student can also include part/all of the period of July to Sept 2025.
- **Important:** The dates of study periods for students who are admitted to undertake a project can sometimes not mirror/match term-dates. Dates of attendance for projects are normally decided after consultation with the host supervisor.

WHERE TO ASK QUESTIONS AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON & OTHER UNIVERSITY LEVEL POINTS OF CONTACT

We hope that this document will answer most, if not all, questions/concerns you may have.

Further questions can be addressed to the points of contact referred to throughout this document. Always quote your 8-digit Imperial College Identifier Number (CID) in any email.

The principal “point of contact” for asking questions is our [Student Hub](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub/):

- <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub/>
- email: student.hub@imperial.ac.uk
- The Student Hub is a physical “office” based on the South Kensington Campus (Sherfield Building), which also has a presence on the White City campus. **Please check the Hub’s [website](#) for opening times; and any booking system which may be in operation at the beginning of the academic year.** If you visit the Student Hub in person, please note that the closing times are tightly controlled so try not to arrive when the Student Hub is due to close!! It is important that you have sufficient time to liaise properly with staff and them with you.

OTHER UNIVERSITY LEVEL POINTS OF CONTACT:

- **Exchange students: Mr Adrian Hawksworth**, Assistant Registrar for Placements (part of the Academic Registry team). **Adrian is Imperial’s Student Exchange Co-ordinator.** Please feel free to email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk or phone +44 (0)20 7594 8044 (internal extension 48044). **If you phone, please leave a message as Adrian works mostly from home.** Adrian has been co-ordinating Imperial’s student exchanges for many years and is always **happy** to help with general queries and/or signpost students to other staff within Imperial who can help them with their concerns/questions. However, please do **not** use MS Teams or Zoom to contact Adrian.
- **All students:** Our **[International Student Support \(ISS\) team](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/)** (part of the Academic Registry team) supports all international students, including visiting students, **with visa related queries.** Their website (<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/international-students/>) also contains practical advice for all international students who are new to London and Imperial. **The ISS Team also provide trips and events for international students (see page 24).**
- **All students:** Our **[Student Records team](#)** (part of the Academic Registry team) is responsible for ensuring your “record” is accurate; Our **[Assessments Records team](#)** (part of the Academic Registry Team) is responsible for allocating official assessment results (grades/marks) to a student’s My Imperial account and for overseeing the dissemination of official assessment results to exchange students’ home institutions. **Please see later section (Documents, pages 18-20) for information on, for example, how and when transcripts (grade reports) are produced.**
- **Student Accommodation Office:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/>
- **All students should note** a.) The Registry is responsible for student exchange links and not Imperial’s International Relations Office (IRO), b.) the person responsible for any exchange arrangements with your home university is Mr Adrian Hawksworth* and c.) the International Student Support team (*which is part of the Registry Team*) and the International Relations Office (IRO) are separate Offices. * *The IRO co-ordinates the MIT-Imperial student exchange.*

Naturally, you will normally only receive an answer to an email or a phone call during “office hours” but see a later section of this document (page 12) for what to do in an emergency.

You can also ask your host academic department relevant questions, however, we just ask you to be aware of the university-level offices/people (listed above) who may be able to answer a question more fully. See also the section entitled ‘*Your host academic department*’ (see pages 14-17).

COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION (Halls of Residence)

Undergraduate

Undergraduate exchange students who have applied for, been offered and accepted a room in an Imperial College hall of residence should follow the instructions provided by our Student Accommodation Office.

Postgraduate (PG)

- All PG visiting students, including exchange, are **ineligible** to apply for College halls of residence.

ARE YOU STILL LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATION?

a.) Postgraduates and undergraduates seeking private sector accommodation:

- We advise you to commence your [search for private sector accommodation using the resources provided by the Student Accommodation Office](#) (SAO). If you don't have housing arranged when you are due to travel to London please do consider arriving a few days in advance of your "start-date" to give you time to search. Finding housing in London, especially for short periods can be difficult.
- The SAO's webpages on private accommodation are very comprehensive. Whether you are starting your search or need advice and assistance (for example, how to deal with landlords, agents, contracts and deposits) you will find all the information you need at:**
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation>
 (importantly) <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation/additional-support/>
- The **Imperial Home Solutions** facility is very helpful :
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/accommodation/private-accommodation/private-accommodation/>
- Contact the SAO (accommodation@imperial.ac.uk) for [advice](#) if the SAO webpages don't answer your queries.
- Important:** When you have obtained private accommodation please update the term-time address section on My Imperial (My Personal Details).

ACCOMMODATION DURING THE 2025 SUMMER VACATION: If the **end date** of your study period falls after the end of Imperial's academic year (27 June 2025), then an alternative source of accommodation for the period July to mid-Sept 2025 is [student summer vacation accommodation administered by the Student Accommodation Office](#). **Please note:** this type of accommodation cannot normally be applied for until spring 2025.

IMPERIAL ENROLMENT: On-line enrolment for all students:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/undergraduates/before-you-arrive/enrolment/online-enrolment/>

NEW visiting (non-degree) students should enrol online using their “My Imperial” account, when prompted by Imperial.

Please note: Visiting students (exchange and non-exchange) are expected to have fulfilled any offer conditions (of admission) AND when not a UK or Rep of Ireland national to have uploaded a copy of their passport and visa/entry document to My Imperial **before** they can complete their on-line enrolment.

How to enrol on-line (video)

- Log on to your My Imperial account.
- **Click on My Personal Details and check/complete relevant fields.** Includes providing emergency contact details for a parent or relative. If you do not know your term-time address in London then use your “home address” BUT update it as soon as you know it. Unless you expect to be paid a bursary by Imperial (normally only some research postgraduates) then you will **not** need to complete the bank details section.
- **Upload a digital photo of yourself for your ID card at My ID Photo.** Watch the above video as it will remind you that the photo you upload must conform to certain requirements.
- **If you need to upload a visa/passport and other associated (often travel) documents click on My Passport, Visa and CAS.**

See the guidance notes below if you are entering on a Student Visa or a Visitor Visa.

- **Then click on My Student Record; complete the requests; resolve any “errors” and then enrol.**
- **Please note** (important) your enrolment will be “pending” on My Imperial until all requested information has been provided and relevant documents have been uploaded and have been checked online. Only then will your My Imperial account indicate that your READY-TO-ENROL.
- **Download your “enrolment confirmation”.** We suggest printing or at least keeping an accessible electronic version in case you are asked to show it to staff at Imperial.
- **See “resolving technical problems” below should you run into problems.**

Guidance for students entering on a Student Visa: see the section on page 10 entitled “*International Students : Student visa holders (study periods of more than 6 months)*”

Guidance for students entering on a Visitor Visa:

- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals entering as visitors who can use E-gates AND non-visa nationals (certain nationalities only) who can use E-gates will not be stamped in at the UK border.** Therefore, you will need to provide evidence of your arrival date to the UK and upload evidence in the form of your boarding pass or booking confirmation to My Imperial. Please upload your boarding pass or travel information to My Imperial under the My Visa section. You can select “Short Term Other” as the visa type and enter the start date as date of arrival to the UK and end date as the end date of your course or return date. In the visa number field you can state “ticket”.
- **If you are a non-EU/EEA/Swiss national then depending on your nationality, you will either need to obtain a Visitor Visa prior to arriving in the UK or non-visa nationals (certain nationalities only) can seek permission to enter as a visitor upon entry to the UK.** In both cases, as a visitor, you are restricted to study periods of 6 months or less and will have no working rights in the UK. You must wait until your arrival to the UK to 1. Upload a copy of your visitor visa or entry stamp to the My Visa section and 2. to complete your on-line enrolment.

Guidance for students who have pre-settled or settled status under the European Settlement Scheme:

- EU/EEA nationals only - **If** you have pre-settled or settled status under the European Settlement Scheme: you are required to generate a share code via the UK government website which we will need to check and verify your status. The code to prove your immigration status is different to the code for right to work or right to rent checks. When prompted please select it is for “something else”. Please ensure you generate the correct code which can be done here: <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status> . Once you have the share code, please log in to My Imperial and go to My Visa. In the Visa Type, you will need to select EU and then in the visa number please input the share code which will be checked by Imperial. You can also enter the start and end date of your permission.

Please note (important) your enrolment will be “pending” on My Imperial until all requested information has been provided and relevant documents have been uploaded and have been checked online. Only then will your My Imperial account indicate that your READY-TO-ENROL.

Resolving technical problems

- **If for any reason you are unable to enrol online** (for example, you may experience technical problems) you may seek assistance at the Student Hub (see earlier section) **or** by emailing the [ICT Service Desk](#) (see also pages 10-11). *Remember: when contacting any section within Imperial please provide your CID number and please be patient while awaiting a response.*
- **Perhaps you have forgotten your My Imperial username/password details?** If you have forgotten your password, then go to: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/passwords/>. *However, if you still experience problems then phone our ICT Service Desk on +44(0)2075949000 quoting your CID number.*

Outcomes of enrolment

- **Terms and conditions of enrolment:** as flagged as you proceed through the enrolment process.
 - **For example:**
 - you must abide by **Imperial’s Student Code of Conduct** which sets out expectations for behaviours: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/student-code-of-conduct/>
 - AND**
 - you must abide by **Imperial’s Information Security Policy, IT Acceptable Use policy** and policy on monitoring electronic communications: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/conditions-of-use-of-it-resources/>
- **Academic Regulations:** By enrolling you are agreeing to abide by the appropriate set of regulations as they are relevant to Visiting (non-degree) Students. The regulations for 2024-25 are located at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/> .
- Please note Imperial’s **Privacy notices**, including the “privacy notice for students”: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/information-governance/data-protection/processing-personal-data/privacy-notices/>
- **Insurance:** Enrolment as a student at Imperial means that you are covered by Imperial’s employer and public liability insurance policy while on campus, and off-campus should your host academic department require you to attend off-site teaching activities.
- **Consent Matters:** **Important:** **Imperial College London is committed to being a respectful and safe environment for everyone.** After you have completed enrolment Imperial will expect you to complete **a short on-line course on consent and why it matters** unless you opt out. Therefore, after you have completed enrolment on My Imperial we will send a message to a student’s Imperial mailbox providing instructions for accessing the on-line course (including how to opt out).

If you have any queries concerning the above please contact Adrian Hawksworth, Assistant Registrar (Placements): a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk (Academic Quality and Standards team, Registry).

Student visa holders (study periods of more than 6 months)

Please respond promptly to any communications from Imperial's Visa Compliance team: visacompliance@imperial.ac.uk

- **If you are non-EU/EEA national and applied overseas for your Student Visa then our Visa Compliance team will email you when your BRP arrives at Imperial. You will be requested to provide evidence of your entry to the UK.** Once this is checked, you will need to be sent an appointment link to book an appointment. You will be able to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) at the appointment. However, if you are not collecting your BRP from Imperial and collecting it from the Post Office then you will need to upload a copy of your entry evidence such as a copy of your stamped 90-day entry vignette and both sides of your BRP to My Imperial. ***Post 31 December 2024:*** All BRPs will come to an end on 31 December 2024. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) are developing a digital immigration system. This means they are replacing physical documents with an online record of your immigration status. This is known as an eVisa. You can create an UKVI account now and also view your eVisa. Visa Compliance team will contact you about updating your status on My Imperial with your eVisa details in the future. More information can be found on our [website](#).
- **If you are an EU/EEA national then you will receive digital immigration status.**
 - **You will need to ensure you generate a share code** via the UK government website which we will need to check and verify your status.
 - The code to prove your immigration status is different to the code for right to work or right to rent checks. **When prompted please select it is for “something else”.**
 - Please ensure you generate the correct code which can be done here: <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status>.
 - Once you have the share code, please log in to My Imperial and go to My Visa. In the Visa Type, you will need to select SV and then in the visa number please input the share code which Imperial will check. You should also enter the start and end date of your permission. You will also need to provide evidence of your entry to the UK in the form of a boarding pass or travel confirmation.
 - **Please note, you must only travel to the UK on or after the start of your digital immigration permission.**

STUDENT ACCESS TO COMPUTER AND ON-LINE SERVICES (including email)

You will access Imperial computer and on-line services using the same username & password that you use for My Imperial. **Please go to <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/new-to-imperial/students/> to ensure you are familiar with all aspects of student ICT provision**, in particular:

- **Your Imperial mailbox:** You should have already have access your Imperial mailbox if you hold an unconditional offer of admission to Imperial. **Please ensure you use your Imperial mailbox for university related correspondence. All important notifications from Imperial will be sent to your Imperial mailbox. Check it daily.**
- **Virtual Learning Environments (VLE):** Your host academic department will indicate what VLE is in use. Commonly, it is Blackboard or Panopto, but some departments may use other VLEs. **Wait until you receive welcome information from your host academic department during September.**
- File storage options; Library access; Printing/copying/scanning.

If you are unsure of your password use the “reset your password” function on My Imperial or call the **ICT Service (Help) Desk** on +44(0)2075949000, remembering to state your CID number. Password information cannot be given out over email for security reasons.

All queries/questions concerning computer accounts should be addressed to the **ICT Service Desk**. **The physical location** of the ICT Service Desk is the Abdus Salam Library, South Kensington Campus.

You must abide by the appropriate Imperial policies, including Imperial’s Information Security Policy, IT Acceptable Use policy and policy on monitoring electronic communications: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/conditions-of-use-of-it-resources/>

IMPERIAL ID CARDS

When completing pre-arrival on-line enrolment using My Imperial you will be asked to upload a digital photo of yourself via My ID Photo. **This is very important.**

On your first day at Imperial your host academic department should require you to undertake a Day 1 Safety Induction (see page 12). Once you have completed your Safety Induction you should then GO TO the Imperial ID Card Office (with your “enrolment confirmation” statement from My Imperial).

The Imperial ID Card Office is situated next to vending machines in the entrance lobby on Level 1, Sheffield Building, South Kensington Campus. The ID Card Office opening hours: Monday-Friday are normally 09:00 – 13:30 (subject to change).

Other campuses: If you are being hosted on a campus other than South Kensington then your host Dept will help you make contact with the local security office/team in order to obtain your ID Card.

Purpose of the Imperial ID Card: Your ID Card has **five** purposes and must always be carried with you whilst on campus and (if relevant) in your hall of residence (use a lanyard if you prefer):

1. **ID** for when it is requested by Imperial staff.
2. **Library card** (see later section, page 21) and **Ethos (Sports Centre) card** (subject to completing membership and induction: see later section, page 22).
3. **Swipe-card access to the campus buildings and halls of residence you have an entitlement to enter** (*please note that access to most halls of residence is by this method, although some halls of residence provide a separate key or card*).
4. **Enables you to pay the student payment rate (discounted rate) on purchases made at Imperial managed shops and cafes** (most importantly, on the South Kensington Campus, at the Junior Common Room and Queens Tower Rooms): <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/food-and-drink>
5. Finally, and **importantly**, the ID card acts as confirming your status as a student of Imperial, and allows you to access the services of the **Imperial College (Students) Union** (see later section on page 13).

Full advice on collecting your Imperial ID card - including what to do if you lose your ID card or it is stolen - go to the UG or PG section (as appropriate) at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/new-students/your-first-week-here/>

Undergraduate or Postgraduate? For purposes of enrolment, your “enrolment confirmation” will state that you either an “undergraduate” or a “postgraduate”. This may be confusing to some visiting (non-degree) students who are used to a bachelor/masters/doctoral system in their home country. Therefore:

- If you are following a study plan comprised of courses/modules from the curriculum of a BSc/BEng or MSci/MEng or MBBS degree programme, then you are classified as an “undergraduate”.
- If you are undertaking a study plan based on a graduate-level MSc programme or you are undertaking a masters level project you would normally be classified as a “postgraduate”.
- If you are currently a PhD student at another university then you will be classified as a postgraduate student.

If you think this will pose you any problems, please email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk

SAFETY, TAKING CARE OF POSSESSIONS & WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR INCIDENT

SAFETY

All students who are new to Imperial are required (i.e. it’s compulsory, mandatory) to undertake a Safety Induction.

- For undergraduates living in an Imperial hall of residence there will normally be a safety talk in the hall of residence when you first arrive, followed by a timetabled safety induction in your host academic department.
- For all other students there will be a safety induction in their host academic department.

You may be required to attend further safety talks/briefings during your stay.

If a student is undertaking a project or research period as their study period or as part of a study period (either from the start of their study period or commencing during their study period) then the student should not commence their project or research period until they have completed all safety induction to the satisfaction of their host academic department.

Safety talks (safety processes) are very important. Do not delay attending a safety talk or completing, where necessary, any Safety Induction document.

TAKE CARE!

- **Please ensure you always act responsibly, both on or off campus, whilst you are a student at Imperial:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/security/safe-and-secure/>
- **Always take care of your valuables, including whilst on campus:** While this is obvious advice, please remember that the South Kensington Campus is an open (public) campus.
- **Be “IT secure”:** <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/be-secure/>

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN INCIDENT ON CAMPUS

It is important for you to know how to react if you need to respond to or report an emergency involving yourself or others on campus.

Please review the Security Office website: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/security/>

For example:

- Your Safety Induction will cover how to respond to the fire alarm.
- **The emergency phone number for the South Kensington Campus is 020 7589 1000.**
- Emergency phone numbers for other campuses at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/security/contact-us/>
- **IMPORTANT:** Please ensure your department has your mobile phone number when requested, and that your personal details (address; phone numbers etc.) are up to date on My Imperial.

WELCOME ARRANGEMENTS

Please note that there are normally **no** university-level welcome arrangements (i.e., in-person orientation) for visiting (non-degree) students who commence during the academic year.

Day 1 (in the host academic department): All visiting students should follow the instructions provided by their host academic department. If you have not received these instructions please email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk for advice.

See also: Imperial College Union (next section).

IMPERIAL COLLEGE (STUDENTS) UNION

Imperial College Union ([ICU](#)) is the student body.

- As an enrolled student at Imperial you automatically become a member of ICU. Your Imperial ID card confirms your student status at Imperial (for accessing ICU services).
- [ICU provide many services and resources](#) (including the running of many ICU delivered [Welcome events/activities](#)) for students.
- Please acquaint yourself with the location of the ICU offices and facilities. The ICU is located in Beit Quad on the South Kensington Campus (see [online maps](#)).
- View information on the ICU's many **Clubs and Societies.**
- **FELIX** (Felix is the ICU student newspaper: <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/activities/a-to-z/felix>).
- **Places to Eat and Drink operated by the Imperial College Union**
- **IMPORTANT!! ICU has an Advice Centre for all students.** The Advice Centre provide lots of useful [information on academic issues, for example on exams](#), **and** non-academic issues.

Our ERASMUS Club (Erasmus Student Network: ESN)

- The Club is normally active throughout the year, although mainly from October until mid/late March. The Erasmus Club is run by students who were mainly studying abroad in 2023-24. The club aims to meet regularly, and organise a variety of visits, parties and events. However, to benefit from their events, you will need to take out membership of the Club but that normally includes an [ESN card](#) [external link].
- **All new exchange students who commence during the year can make contact with the Erasmus Club at erasmus@imperial.ac.uk.**

YOUR HOST ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

Imperial College London embodies and delivers world class scholarship, education and research in science, engineering, medicine and business, with particular regard to their application in industry, commerce and healthcare.

INFORMATION FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL

Please read the information which your host academic department should email you prior to your planned arrival.

If you are an exchange student and you have not received these instructions from your host academic department please email Adrian Hawksworth at a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk

THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU IN YOUR HOST DEPARTMENT?

- Undergraduate exchange students (admitted as an “undergraduate”: see previous note on page 12): The Departmental Exchange Programme Coordinator in the host academic department is normally responsible for all aspects of an undergraduate exchange student’s stay in the host department. Please view the list of exchange co-ordinators at : <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/student-exchanges/information-for-student-exchange-partner-universities/>. If you are unsure as to whom to contact in your host academic department email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk
- Postgraduate Exchange Students (admitted as a “postgraduate”: see previous note on page 12): If you are unsure as to whom to contact in your host academic department then email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk
- All Exchange Students should also read the guidance for student exchange partner universities at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/student-exchanges/information-for-student-exchange-partner-universities/>
- Non-exchange visiting (non-degree) students should normally contact the undergraduate or postgraduate students’ office (or equivalent) in their host academic department for guidance. However, most non-exchange students attend solely to undertake a project or a research period and

therefore the person responsible for them is normally the project or research period supervisor. Some non-exchange students do attend for a full-year study plan on a fee-paying basis.

DISCUSSING YOUR STUDY PLAN

- **Your proposed study plan** (*which you will have attached to your formal on-line application to study at Imperial*) **will have been evaluated as part of the admission process.**
- You are welcome to continue the discussion of your study plan with your host department **in advance of arrival** (*especially if you are an Erasmus study exchange student and your home institution requires you to submit a signed learning agreement before your departure to London*).
- However, for most new visiting (non-degree) students who accept admission and who plan to undertake courses/modules **their study plan will be discussed in full and finalised upon arrival** (and this process may take several weeks for some students). **This is normal.**

Exchange Students

- If an Exchange Student has any queries about their study plan please email the exchange co-ordinator in their host department. A list of exchange co-ordinators can be found here: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/student-exchanges/information-for-student-exchange-partner-universities/>

INDUCTION BY YOUR HOST DEPARTMENT

- All NEW visiting students (exchange & non-exchange) should be informed by their host department (study plans) or supervisor (project or research period) ahead of their arrival as to what is expected of them on their first day.
- Ordinarily, you will be required to undertake a departmental registration **and** to attend an **initial (briefing) meeting** with either the Departmental Exchange Programme Co-ordinator (study plans) **or** your supervisor (project or research period). **The departmental registration and initial meeting should take place during the first week. Elements of these interactions may take place remotely.**
- At the **initial meeting** you will normally learn more about (*if you have not received such information in advance of your arrival*) how your host academic department manages the academic administration for your study period (e.g. *module/course registration; timetables; exams; exam registration; exam timetabling; study facilities; intranet learning environments; intranet document facilities for course materials; procedures*). **Depending on how much of a conversation you had with the host department ahead of arrival you will normally also have an opportunity to discuss your proposed study plan and/or project/research in more detail with the department and/or project supervisor. The latter conversations about your study plan might take place remotely.**
- (if applicable) **Departmental module/course registration (and access to timetables)**: The process for registering for modules **differs** from department to department. In some departments registration for modules takes place before you arrive, and you will be contacted by the host academic department. **However**, in some departments registration for modules takes place after arrival. **If you did not receive guidance from your host academic department on registering for modules prior**

to your arrival at Imperial you should expect to receive this guidance at the “initial meeting”. See also the point below regarding “assessment” and the general advice about accessing modules (below).

- (if applicable) **Assessment**: If your study plan requires you to undertake examinations (and/or other forms of formal assessment, e.g. assessed coursework) then the process for this should be explained to you by your host academic department. **This level of detail is normally provided in a student handbook (normally web-based) produced by the host academic department.** The timetabling of examinations also differs from department to department (*i.e. the students of one department might be told this information at the beginning of the year while the students of another department might be told at the appropriate moment during the academic year.*) While the main examination season is the summer term other formal assessments and examinations may take place at other times (e.g. during a module; end of module; end of term).

ADDITIONAL ADVICE ABOUT ACCESSING MODULES

(sometimes “modules” are called “courses”):

(1) The majority of new visiting (non-degree) students will only take modules provided by the host academic department or where access to modules taught by other academic departments **comprises part of** the host academic department’s curriculum (***including undergraduate humanities and language modules taught by the [Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication](#) and undergraduate management modules taught by the Imperial College Business School.***)

(2) **Otherwise, please do not ask to take modules taught by other academic departments unless you have the approval of your host academic department, and in the case of exchange students, your home university. To repeat: it is very important that you do not approach other academic departments for access to modules unless you have the approval of your host academic department. Access to modules taught by other academic departments cannot be guaranteed.** However, should you receive approval from your host academic department to approach another academic department, (1) they (your host academic department) will normally expect you to arrange such access, and to be responsible for ensuring you meet the needs/demands of the “other” academic department and (2) the results/marks for examinations and other assessments for modules taught by “other” academic departments (*i.e. other than your “host” department*) need to be reported (communicated) by the “other” academic department to your “host” academic department for processing with your other exam results/assessments. **It would be your responsibility to ensure this happens. Please note that we cannot guarantee access in this manner, nor that should you be given approval to do so that there will not be timetable clashes/examination clashes.**

ADDITIONAL ADVICE ABOUT PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PERIODS:

- If, as part of a study plan, an undergraduate visiting student wishes to also take a project the host academic dept will decide whether they are able to offer access to a suitable (appropriate) project “module” from the host dept’s curriculum. If the host academic dept can provide access to a suitable (appropriate) project “module” from the host dept’s curriculum that access would normally indicate how the project is allocated (*i.e. do you have choice; are you just allocated a project etc*). **As the project is a “module” from the curriculum it means that Imperial will assess and allocate a mark for your project** regardless of any intention by your home university to mark a project report separately. **This is normal.** However, there can be exceptions and the exchange programme co-ordinator in your host academic dept would indicate what the process is.

- Visiting (non-degree) students (undergraduate, postgraduate) whose study plan will be a single long project or research period would normally pursue this on an “independent” basis (*i.e. the project or research period would not be part of the host dept’s curriculum*) and would not be formally assessed by the host academic department. However, there are some exceptions (*for example, undergraduate visiting students in Departments of Aeronautics, Chemistry and Chemical Engineering can discuss having their “independent” projects formally assessed*).
- Visiting (non-degree) students (undergraduate, postgraduate) whose study plan will be a single long project or research period have a responsibility to discuss with their project or research period supervisor – in advance of a project or research period starting - the extent, if any, that their home university are requesting the supervisor to contribute informally or formally to any assessment by the home university. See also the advice (below) about learning agreements and transcripts.

MISCELLANENOUS INFORMATION:

- **Student Support Zone**: Provides “well-being” support for you as a member of our student community: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/>
- In accordance with Imperial’s pastoral care (student welfare) system, **all visiting students** should expect to be allocated (by their host academic department) a personal tutor or a supervisor **depending on the nature of their study period (modules, modules/project, project, research period)**. When you are introduced to your academic department at the “initial meeting” make sure you understand what support you have access to. **The “personal tutor” for an exchange student is often, but not always, the department’s exchange programme co-ordinator.**
- Your host dept will **monitor the attendance of all students**, and special attention will be taken of student visa holders. Your host department **might** utilise functionality on My Imperial Campus App.
- **English Language Support & Library Services**: see later sections on pages 20-21.
- **Virtual Learning Environments**: Your host academic department will indicate what VLE is in use. Commonly, it is Blackboard or Panopto although some departments use other additional VLEs. Your host academic department will advise you.
- **Requests to change the dates of your study period (which may occur due to a change in your circumstances) will not be automatically approved**: Discuss first with your host dept.
 - = If you are a non-UK/Ireland national, it may not be possible to extend a period of study due to immigration restrictions (*i.e. your visa or immigration clearance may not allow it*). You should first check with [International Student Support](#).
 - = Your host academic department should email any agreed change to your dates of attendance to **Imperial’s Student Records team (Registry)** (student.records@imperial.ac.uk) who will formally check and, if acceptable, process the change.
 - = Exchange students should also discuss changes to dates of attendance (at Imperial) with their home institution before pursuing any formal consideration of the change at Imperial.

Changes to dates of attendance should not be considered approved UNTIL they are confirmed by Imperial’s Student Records team (Registry) and displayed on My Imperial.

DOCUMENTS

Statements of enrolment (attendance): <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/request-an-official-document/>

Certificates of arrival/attendance: A student who requires a certificate of arrival or a certificate of attendance to be completed, signed and stamped by Imperial (*i.e. a form provided by a third party, such as their home university/college or a financial sponsor*) should take it to the Student Hub in person (take your ID card), where a member of the (Registry) Student Records team will assist, **or** they should email it to student.records@imperial.ac.uk. **!!Exception!!: Exchange students should send such documents to Mr Adrian Hawksworth for completion: a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk**

Learning Agreements for Studies (normally Erasmus study exchange students only)

- IF the BEFORE section of your learning agreement has not been completed by the host academic department and returned to you prior to your arrival at Imperial, you should speak to the Departmental Exchange Programme Co-ordinator in your host academic department to locate it. **It is quite common for this part of a learning agreement to be completed after you arrive.**
- **Learning Agreements normally only require to be signed by your host academic department** (by the Departmental Exchange Programme Co-ordinator). However, if your particular learning agreement requires an institutional (university) level signature then please note that you must ensure that the **BEFORE section of your Learning Agreement** is completed in full and has been signed by the Dept Exchange Programme Co-ordinator in your host academic department before you ask Adrian Hawksworth (a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk) to sign/stamp it.
- Modifications to Erasmus study plans should utilise the DURING section of your Learning Agreement as necessary during your study period, i.e. some students will not have to use this section of the learning agreement.
- Complete the AFTER section with the assistance of both your home and host Departmental Exchange Programme Co-ordinators at the end of your study period. **However**, the “AFTER” section is not a substitute for a transcript issued by Imperial College London (see next section on transcripts) and Imperial will normally not insert academic results in the AFTER section.

Learning Agreements for Traineeships (normally Erasmus Traineeship students only)

If you are mobile within the Erasmus Traineeship Scheme and are being hosted at Imperial as a visiting student (non-degree; non-exchange) for an independent project or research period, then your host supervisor will normally be responsible for ensuring that your learning agreement is processed in your host department. Please address any questions to your supervisor. If the supervisor of an Erasmus Trainee has queries concerning the administration of a learning agreement they can email a.hawksworth@imperial.ac.uk

Release of official marks/grades on My Imperial Issuing of a Transcript (an e-transcript) on My Imperial (My Documents)

This section is divided into two parts (A & B).

(Part A) for students who have been formally assessed/examined by Imperial (curriculum only)

An “transcript” is an official document issued by Imperial which lists **a.)** any formal assessments/examinations a student has registered for*, **b.)** records the mark achieved for each assessment/examination **and c.)** lists the ECTS credit awarded if the assessment has been undertaken successfully.

Please note that a “transcript” in the form of an e-transcript can only be made available to you once your official marks have been formally published by Imperial’s Registry on your My Imperial (My Student Record) account.

Official marks for undergraduate modules will appear on My Imperial from mid-July through to the end of August, while for postgraduates it may be as late as October-November. Where an undergraduate visiting student has undertaken a purely postgraduate module we do try to release official mark as early as possible.

IMPORTANT – How an e-transcript is issued:

- Imperial’s Assessment Records team will **email** students to let them know their results have been released to My Imperial.
- A student’s transcript (use the e-transcript version) will be accessible on My Imperial within 5 working days of them receiving that **email**. Once official marks are displayed on My Imperial a student will be given access to an e-transcript which they can download (as a PDF) via the My Documents section of My Imperial.
- A transcript will list all modules which you have registered for. Therefore, if you decide to not take the exam at the conclusion of the module it will be recorded as a zero mark on the transcript.
- If your home university needs it to be sent via a secure route then follow the instructions for “sharing a document with other people”. There is a [user guide](#) (see page 18 for “sharing a document with other people”) and accompanying [FAQs](#).
- If you happen to send a PDF of your e-transcript to your home university but they remind you that they actually need to be sent a secure version then advise your home university to scan the QR code on the e-transcript and enter their details, and then YOU will then need to authorise the release of the information to them (see also page 18 of the [user guide](#)).
- **Exchange students only:** Imperial will also send a copy of a e-transcript (as a pdf) to an exchange student’s home university. This action will be completed no later than the end of August 2025, unless the release of official marks has been delayed for some reason (*e.g. resit examinations, about which see below*) in which case Imperial will issue your transcript as soon as possible thereafter.

- **Exchange students only:** Please note that if you only attended Imperial in the autumn term your transcript will not be available until summer 2025. Universities that send exchange students for only the autumn term are aware of this.
- **Exchange students only:** A host department may be willing in exceptional circumstances to communicate marks - on an unofficial basis - to an exchange student's home institution at a date earlier than when they might be expected to be published on My Imperial. Departments are normally willing to do this only to assist certain students who are due to start their next academic year (*or who are due to graduate*) shortly after leaving Imperial and their home university need guidance on the student's level of achievement. **However, this is always at the discretion of the host academic dept and neither an exchange student nor their home institution can demand it.** Universities that send exchange students to Imperial are aware of this. Speak to the Exchange Programme Coordinator in your host academic department for guidance. Also, Erasmus students should note that the "AFTER" section of the Learning Agreement for Studies is not a substitute for a transcript.
- **Should a student not pass (i.e. "fail") an examination** they can discuss it with their Dept's Exchange Co-ordinator and with their home institution. There is no obligation for a student to ask for a resit, and equally Imperial does not guarantee to allow re-sits for visiting students. A fee might apply.

(Part B): Independent projects and research periods (non-curriculum)

- If you are attending Imperial to only undertake an "independent" project or research period (i.e. a project or research period which is not a formal part of Imperial's curriculum) then you would **not** be issued with an e-transcript. Instead, if you require a statement on your performance you should ask your "independent" project or research period supervisor to kindly provide you with one.
- If you are undertaking an "independent" project or research period (i.e. a project or research period which is not a formal part of Imperial's curriculum) as part of a broader study plan (that includes modules) then you would **not** expect to have the outcome of your independent project or research period to appear on your e-transcript. Instead, if you require a statement on your performance you should ask your "independent" project or research period supervisor to kindly provide you with one.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Centre for Academic English

- All visiting (non-degree) students can access The Centre for Academic English **free-of-charge**.
- Guidance available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/current-students/undergraduate/>
- The Centre for Academic English is accessed via Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus (access to the south of the Great Hall)
- General information on the Centre can be found at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english/about-us/>

Language exchange/pairing

- The Centre for Language, Culture and Communication operates a **language exchange (pairing) scheme**: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/languages/clcc-language-exchange/>
- An alternative method of obtaining an informal language partner is to meet English-speaking students through the Erasmus Club, or just by making friends!!

LIBRARY FACILITIES

You will be able to automatically access library services when you have completed Imperial enrolment, and your Imperial ID card works as your library card – use it to swipe into the library, borrow books and operate the printer-copiers.

Library induction for exchange students is normally organised by their host academic department, but any visiting student can also reach out themselves to the subject librarian for your department: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/subject-support/>

For further details see: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/library-services-for-new-students/>

DISABILITY ADVISORY SERVICE

If you have a **disability** you can raise any concerns/questions you may have with Imperial's Disability Advisory Service on disability@imperial.ac.uk or Tel: 020 759 49755.

- Please view DAS's webpages at: www.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice
- Each department has a Disability Officer: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/about-us/departmental-disability-officers/>

Read about other **support services** (including those that support students with mental health) in our [Student Support Zone](#)

HEALTH CARE IN THE UK and registering with a doctor

If you are not already a resident of the UK you need to ensure you have appropriate health insurance cover for your stay in the UK and know how and where to access health care (including in an emergency).

- If you enter the UK on a Student Route visa you will have had to pay (as part of the visa application) the Immigration Health Surcharge). When resident as a student in the UK for more than 6 months on a Student Route visa you have access to the National Health Service (NHS) in the same way as a permanent UK resident, i.e., they will receive NHS care generally free of charge but may be charged for services a permanent resident would also pay for, such as eye tests, dental treatment and prescription charges (i.e. prescribed items of medicine by a GP/Doctor) in England.

Important: Full-time students from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Switzerland studying in the UK may be eligible for a **reimbursement** of the Immigration Health Surcharge. Further details at (external: UK Government website): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-health-surcharge-for-eu-students-in-the-uk>

- If you are a student entering the UK as a Visitor you are advised to possess comprehensive sickness insurance (CSI) and follow the instructions provided by your insurer when you need to access healthcare. You will need to pay for any NHS care you get at the point you use it - unless it's an [NHS service that's free](#) [external]. The NHS generally functions on a treat first pay later basis in the case of an emergency admission to a hospital. Always keep evidence of your health insurance on your person.

- A student is expected to have purchased travel insurance for their travel to and from and for their stay in the UK. **Please note** that travel insurance will not always be an appropriate form of insurance cover – for health purposes - when someone is living in another country for a prolonged period.
- We suggest consulting the [webpages of the UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Health-and-healthcare) for more detailed guidance on healthcare in the UK (*and, if applicable, any visa conditions or right of residency rules applicable to your personal circumstances*). UKCISA link (external): <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Health-and-healthcare>

Registering with a doctor (GP: General Practitioner)

The Imperial College Health Centre (*external*): <https://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/>

- You cannot register with the NHS, until you arrive in the UK.
- All students (regardless of their health insurance position) should check whether they are eligible to register at the [Imperial College Health Centre](https://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/new-patients/new-student-checklist/). Students who find themselves ineligible should note the “out-of-area” patient registration which might, depending on your circumstances, remain relevant: <https://www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/new-patients/new-student-checklist/>
- If you are not eligible (based on the post-code of your accommodation in London) to register at the Imperial College Health Centre then you would need to locate a health-centre/doctor’s practice in the area you live. Students who are living in Imperial or private halls of residence will probably find that this information is freely provided while a student in private accommodation might simply need to ask those they share with or go to <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/find-a-gp> (*external: UK Government website*).
- If you have private healthcare then your policy might prescribe with whom you seek medical care.
- Further information: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/your-health/doctor-and-dentist/>

VARIOUS

- **Living in London**: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/living-in-london> .
- **Imperial sports and leisure facilities (Move Imperial)**: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/>. Imperial has a sports centre called Ethos (www.imperial.ac.uk/ethos) located on the South Kensington Campus. Other sports and leisure facilities exist (check the [website](#)). Visiting Students can access these facilities in the same way as a full-degree student. Once enrolled (membership) a student would use their Imperial ID card as their “membership” card. Fees may apply.
- **Places to eat on campus (operated by Imperial)**: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/food-and-drink/>. **Please note**: most cafes/restaurants are open to all students. The *exceptions* are mainly on the South Kensington Campus: SCR (Staff & postgraduate research students only); The Roastery (part of the SCR: staff and postgraduate research students only); the Garden Room Restaurant (Staff only).
- **Places to eat and drink operated by the Imperial College Union** <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/food-drink>
- **Please note that most outlets on campus operate on a cashless basis**. You can pay with contactless and chip and pin cards as well as with [Yoyo](#).
- *Supermarkets can be found locally to the South Kensington campus (Sainsbury’s, Waitrose) and a Tesco in the Earls Court/West Ken area. There is a small convenience store called “Essentials” located in Eastside, Princes Gardens. Halls of Residence will also indicate the nearest food shopping options.*

TRAVELLING IN THE LONDON AREA

Within London, public transport (*comprised of Buses, the Tube, 'Overground' Train services, South London Trams, National Rail Services In London, Elizabeth line, River Boat and Dockland Light Railway-DLR*) **is managed by Transport for London (TfL)** [external]: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk>.

The TfL website is an external site and Imperial College London is not responsible for its content. TfL operate with full respect towards everyone's safety: <https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/safer-travel-guidance>.

Travel (and its cost) is based on Zones (*on maps of the TfL network these display themselves as concentric circles from the centre - Zones 1 to 9*) with normally increased cost when travelling within or through the central Zone, Zone 1).

- Ahead of arrival, you can set up an oyster or contactless payment account: <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/contactless-and-oyster-account?intcmp=54644> . This provides access to the **cheapest** single journey prices while you decide as to what will best serve your weekly travel needs
- If you don't opt to set up an oyster or contactless payment account before arriving in London then, of course, you can do so at any time.
- However, if you have yet to decide what you need and would prefer not to use your bank card or smart phone to pay "as you go" then you can pay £5 (non-returnable) at any tube station for a **regular 'oyster' card (top up and then pay as you go)**. This provides access to the **cheapest** single journey prices while you decide as to what will best serve your weekly travel needs.
- Your daily Monday to Friday routine will determine whether you can save more money by purchasing a 'travelcard' or 'season ticket' (depending on the type of transport) for your daily journey.
- Therefore, if you are living in accommodation at a distance (*i.e. a regular tube/bus/train journey away*) from the Imperial campus where you will be taught you may benefit from applying for an **18+ Student Oyster Photocard** (*note: the 18+ Student Oyster Photocard Discount Scheme is operated by Transport for London*). **The 18+ Student Oyster Photocard provides discounted travel (currently 30%) on an adult-rate (weekly/monthly) 'travelcard' or 'season ticket'**. Information on all the options at: <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel?intcmp=54647>
- To be **eligible** for an **18+ Student Oyster Photocard** you need to be **enrolled at Imperial on a full-time basis, living at a London address during term-time, for a minimum of 14 weeks**.
- The **online application** procedure for an **18+ Student Oyster Photocard** will cost you (admin fee) £20. You must have a bank account (UK or non-UK). You must upload a photo of yourself. **You can apply as soon as you have enrolled on-line with Imperial College**. Transport for London request the endorsement of Imperial College London before your application is processed, and Imperial seeks to do this as quickly as possible. Further advice available: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/student-travel-discounts/>
- **However, if you are living within walking or cycling distance of the South Kensington Campus (i.e., your daily travel is not by public transport) it may not be cost-effective to purchase a "season" ticket, and therefore no need to apply for an 18+ Student Oyster Photocard.**
- If you think you will do a lot of rail travel in the UK beyond London you can also think about obtaining a National Rail [16-25 Young Persons Railcard](#) [external link] to save money on off-peak rail travel.
- It is your decision to make!

UK BANK ACCOUNTS

- If you plan to open a bank account in the UK, please review the information at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/request-an-official-document/> (scroll down)
- There are no banks on the South Kensington campus. Banks located on nearby “high streets”.
- However, it is often difficult to open bank accounts in the UK when you are resident here for short periods. Here is some [banking advice for visiting students here for less than 6 months](#).

COUNCIL TAX

- Council Tax is a local tax set by local government to help pay for local services like policing and refuse collection. It applies to all domestic properties. **Students living in Imperial halls of residence are automatically exempt from paying Council Tax.**
- Students living in other forms of accommodation should read: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/request-an-official-document/> (scroll)
- The Student Hub can assist with general Council Tax queries/questions.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

Yes, that is the full title of the UK! There is so much to see and do in our wonderful country, within and outside London. Make the most of the opportunity by exploring the activities provided by the many clubs and societies of the Imperial College Union. **Our International Student Support team** also offer a [programme of activities](#) at the start of the academic year and a programme of activities throughout the academic year, e.g. [Day trips](#), [Do it yourself trips](#)