



Science and Solutions for a Changing Planet Doctoral Training Partnership Programme Information 2024-25

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Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment
Imperial College London
Exhibition Road
London
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UK Centre for
Ecology & Hydrology



Science & Technology
Facilities Council
RAL Space



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Welcome from the Directors

Welcome to the Science and Solutions for a Changing Planet Doctoral Training Partnership based in the Grantham Institute at Imperial College London.

You are joining a diverse and dynamic community of research staff and students, spanning the Faculties of Engineering, Natural Sciences and Medicine, as well as Imperial College Business School. It is this rich multidisciplinary environment that enables our students and staff to tackle the global challenges associated with climate change and environmental challenges and provides world-class training and development opportunities by drawing on and bringing together expertise not only from its many departments, but also from business, government and the voluntary sector.

Research within the Science and Solutions for a Changing Planet Doctoral Training Partnership (SSCP DTP) will cover a wide range of research topics, and our aim is to not only provide you with the tools and skills to complete your research projects, but to develop your appreciation of issues in environmental science, mitigation, adaptation and impacts. This includes the effective communication of research to decision-makers in government, businesses, the media and the general public, thereby informing environmental debates.

This handbook will be a valuable resource of information over the course of your PhD, outlining the DTP's and College's requirements to enable you to successfully complete your studies.



Professor Ralf Toumi
SSCP DTP Chair
Co-Director
Grantham Institute for
Climate Change and the
Environment



Dr Helen Brindley
SSCP DTP Director
Reader in Earth
Observation
Department of Physics



Professor Jenny Collier
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Dr Caroline Cox
SSCP DTP Director
Research Scientist
RAL Space

The Grantham Institute



The SSCP DTP sits within the Grantham Institute. Director of the SSCP DTP Ralf Toumi, Professor of Atmospheric Physics (pictured), is the Co-Director of the Grantham Institute.

The Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment, is one of [seven Global Institutes](#) at Imperial College London. As a hub for climate and environment research at Imperial, the Institute brings together researchers from across the College to work towards a vision for a sustainable, resilient, zero-carbon society.

The Institute's mission is to drive forward discovery, convert innovations into applications, train future leaders and communicate academic knowledge to businesses, industry, and policymakers to help shape their decisions.

All the work of the Institute is based on, and backed up by, the [world-leading research](#) by the community of academic staff at Imperial – known as [Grantham Affiliates](#). The Grantham Institute and the Royal Institute also launched a new initiative, focused on innovation in 2021: [Undaunted](#). It provides innovation support through a number of innovation programmes, such as [Climate Launchpad](#), [The Journey](#) and [The Greenhouse](#).

The Institute offers SSCP DTP members access to expertise and opportunities in research, policy, innovation, and outreach.

Along with the SSCP DTP, the Institute runs a variety of education programmes, including the [MSc in Climate Change, Management and Finance](#) and new this year, [MSc Cleantech Innovation](#). The Institute's programmes aim to develop future leaders in both science and business.

Introduction

The SSCP DTP is one of 17 landmark [doctoral training partnerships](#) funded by NERC.

It is led by Imperial College London with steer from six host research partners ([British Geological Survey](#), [UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology](#), [Rutherford Appleton Laboratory SPACE](#), [Natural History Museum](#), [Royal Botanic Gardens Kew](#), and [Zoological Society of London](#)) and in association with many other external partners.

Places within the SSCP DTP are extremely competitive, so congratulations on your success!

We are delighted to welcome you and your colleagues who represent a diverse range of disciplines. During your time with the SSCP DTP, you will be given bespoke specialist training, work on Challenge Team projects to change the world, gain exposure to Imperial's wider climate and environment network, and take on adventurous opportunities including secondments - all aimed to address the skills you need to give you a distinct advantage with future employers.

DTP activities allow you to apply your research and skills to real-world situations. As representatives of the programme and of the Grantham Institute you can inform and influence industry, government, and voluntary sector colleagues. You will also engage with students and staff on other DTPs during your studies.

You are in the privileged position of being a part of a unique multidisciplinary cohort. Through participation in, and leadership of, cohort activities, you will grow whilst helping to develop a thriving cohort that is supported by the wider environmental community at the College and with our partners. I strongly encourage you to make the most of this time and the opportunities that will be coming your way during your PhD. All students will also be expected to contribute to the SSCP DTP and the Grantham Institute throughout your time with us. Opportunities will be shared, which will allow you to build your skill set, whether this be as part of the Student Staff Committee, sharing your experience with those interested in undertaking a PhD, or providing a session on your area of expertise with school children. Details on the kinds of opportunities that will be open to you will be provided during and after induction week.

The Grantham Institute strives to make the Institute a fair and welcoming place for all our staff, students, and affiliates. As part of the Grantham Institute, you should feel welcome, included, valued and equal. All our PhD students are expected to treat all others with these values in mind.

During your research you will no doubt come across barriers to get around or find that experiments haven't quite gone to plan and it's normal to feel isolated at times, but it is important to know that you are not alone. As well as your research team and cohort colleagues, there is a huge wealth of support available from the College and the Grantham Institute, and it is there to be used. I am also here on behalf of the SSCP DTP to provide support where I can, so please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your main points of contact for the DTP will be our Doctoral Training Coordinator, Christiane Morgan, and our Education Programmes Manager, Alex Gibbs. You can discuss any aspect of the DTP, your supervision or training with either Christiane, Alex or myself at any time. Contact details can be found on the DTP website or the back of the handbook.

I wish you all the best for an interesting, productive, and enjoyable time with the SSCP DTP.

Anne Houston
Director of Training

DTP Timeline

	Compulsory DTP activities	Programme Requirements
First Year	<p><u>Autumn Term</u></p> <p>16-19 September: Induction Week</p> <p>18 or 25 October: Challenge Team training: Introduction to MBTI</p> <p>25 October: Communications and Impact: Evidence Synthesis for Environmental Policy</p> <p>6 November: Communications and Impact: Public Engagement</p> <p>22 November: Challenge Team training: Putting Project Management into Action + Challenge Team Kick-off</p> <p><u>Spring Term</u></p> <p>15 January: Challenge Team training: Collaborative Working and Role Development</p> <p>15 January tbc: Communications and Impact: Policy</p> <p>February tbc: EDI training + Challenge Team Get-together</p> <p>March tbc: Communications and Impact: Infographics training (optional)</p> <p>March tbc: Communications and Impact: Presentation skills</p> <p><u>Summer Term</u></p> <p>May tbc: Innovating for Sustainable Development residential training</p> <p>September tbc: Joint DTP Conference</p> <p>Throughout the year: Technical lectures and courses Challenge Team project work Attendance at 4 Changing Planet Seminars</p>	<p>Attendance is compulsory at all activities</p> <p>Completion of Training Needs Analysis via Inkpath in September or October</p>
Second Year	<p>18 September: Challenge Team showcase at Induction Week</p> <p>22 November: Challenge Team kick-off</p> <p>February: Challenge Team get-together + EDI training</p> <p>September: Joint DTP Conference</p> <p>Throughout the year: Challenge Team project work Attendance at 4 Changing Planet Seminars</p>	<p>Completion of Training Needs Analysis via Inkpath in September or October</p>
Third Year	<p>18 September: Challenge Team showcase at Induction Week</p> <p>September: Joint DTP Conference</p> <p>Throughout the year: Attendance at Changing Planet Seminars</p>	

Training and Development

Essential Skills Training

First year

In the first year, all students attend a bespoke Essential Skills Training programme. These courses deliver training in areas prized by environmental sector employers but are equally applicable to careers outside of this sector. They will also increase your knowledgebase for your research.

Essential Skills Training is typically delivered as in interactive workshops, each led by a representative from Imperial or a core partner institution, with input from several external speakers on the topics.

Innovating for Sustainable Development



In this course we explore sustainability issues by inviting key leaders from the business and scientific community, NGOs, and government. Students are challenged to work on solutions for a low-carbon future and are exposed to current innovators who impact and shape the world's economy and environment. This is co-organised with Scenario DTP.

Communications and Impact for environmental science researchers



Students will develop skills to communicate, engage and apply science to inform decision-making with various stakeholders, including policy makers, businesses and the public. The course will allow students to build awareness on the importance of research impact and engagement.

Technical training courses



Students will need to complete a minimum of 10 hours of **technical training** across at least two modules in their first year. These must be discussed and agreed to with your supervisor, and they are *in addition* to the essential skills training provided by the SSCP DTP. This may be through postgraduate lectures or courses at a similar level, specific to a student's PhD. Good examples are [NERC Advanced Training Short Courses](#).

Challenge Teams

First and second years (we welcome third years interested in mentoring a team)

Climate and environmental change are unique in its threat and complexity. As world leading researchers in this field, you have an opportunity to make an impact highlighting the key issues and promoting the need for action among various audiences.

During the first term you will have the opportunity to suggest a topic yourself. This is a fantastic opportunity to communicate your research and engage with others outside of Imperial.

At a Challenge Team kick-off on 22 November all suggestions, including those from existing teams and others, will be put to the vote by SSCP DTP students. You will then be asked to nominate your preferred choices as to which team you would like to join. Please note that each team is made up of students from different disciplines and stages of their PhDs with a shared outreach goal, and it may not always be possible to allocate you with your first choice.

Some Challenge Teams *might* continue into the next academic year, but team members would change.

The success of Challenge Teams relies on your proactivity and will make full use of your multidisciplinary skills to tackle the project – and present your results at the Challenge Team showcase. More information and guidance will be provided during induction and Challenge Team preparation days.

Your team should be meeting every 4 – 6 weeks. If you would like to book the Grantham Boardroom for a meeting contact Christiane Morgan.

Examples of past [Challenge Team](#) activities include:

- [Music of the Earth](#) – enabling the public to experience biodiversity of the ears of the Earth through immersive soundscapes and imagery
- [Grantham Expedition Group](#) – to organize sustainable scientific expeditions
- [Urban Wildlife Challenge](#) – to help city school children to appreciate, understand and value biodiversity around them. This team won the President’s Award this year for Excellence in Societal Engagement.
- [Climate Friendly Food Kitchen](#) – to educate the public on climate-friendly cooking. This team won an award for joint effort to produce sustainable, budget-friendly food.



Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI) courses

You will complete some Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI) courses within the SSCP DTP. For 2024, these will be:

Myers Briggs® Type Indicator (MBTI ®): a popular framework to understand behavioural difference. It will help you to gain greater self-awareness and improve your understanding of others. The resultant insights may be applied to improve your working with others and progress in your studies.

Putting Project Management into Action: This course will examine how project management techniques can be used flexibly allowing for different outcomes and opportunities.

Collaborative Working and Role Development: This training will focus on team dynamics and conflict management, using the Eddie Obeng quiz, an in-workshop task and debrief.

SSCP DTP Trips

The SSCP DTP have previously organised some field trips to sites of scientific interest and to partner organisations, and we hope to be able to organise these again.

All students are encouraged to take part as it is a great opportunity to spend time with your cohort while gaining a unique insight into specially selected sites.



Visit to RAL

DTP Annual Conference

First, second and third years

The DTP Annual Conference takes place in August/ September every year and is a unique opportunity for SSCP DTP students to present their work to date and practice giving conference presentations in a highly supportive environment, gain wider perspective of the environmental space, and network with peers, external partners and industry.

Conference attendance is compulsory for NERC-funded students; all aligned students, too, are strongly encouraged to attend. We would also recommend that during your PhD you present a poster or deliver an oral presentation at least once.

The conference, organised in collaboration with [London NERC DTP](#) and [SCENARIO DTP](#), is a celebratory showcase to present your research so far, as well as to inform our partners of your interests and your progress.

Students are highly encouraged to be a part of the organising committee, and they will be supported by the respective DTP administrators.



Internships

Second and third years

We encourage students to undertake an internship during their second or third year.

The SSCP DTP Management actively seek internship opportunities with a climate or environment angle at private companies, NGOs, think-tanks and charities. New opportunities will be advertised to students as and when they are available.

Internships typically last three to six months, with students being very welcome to source their own internship for consideration. These should be discussed with [Alex Gibbs](#) as they develop.

Students will be remunerated for the duration of the internship, either by the host or by the SSCP DTP.

Please note that opportunities funded by the SSCP DTP are normally limited to NERC-funded students.

Many of our students have made an impact on the organisations they have worked with, and it is a valuable chance to gain 'real world' experience outside of the academic environment. As well as having the opportunity to influence, internships help to contextualise research and is something employers greatly value.

If you are interested in pursuing a secondment, please speak to [Alex Gibbs](#).



Above: Mahika Dixit (cohort 8) inside the Houses of Parliament during her internship with the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST).

"I recently undertook a 3-month post as a Research Fellow with the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, where I was seconded to the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC), one of several select committees operating within Parliament. The role of select committees is to scrutinise Government policy, in this case with relation to the environment. During my Fellowship, I principally led an inquiry, researching a completely novel subject of relevance to policy. Using this research, with the Committee I planned an oral evidence session, where relevant experts from a variety of organisations were invited to share their expertise and advise the Committee. To inform my work I interviewed a variety of experts and government bodies. During my time with the EAC, I most notably learnt how to research for a policy audience – for which the primary sources of information are not academic journals, unlike an academic audience. I also had the opportunity to develop my skills writing a variety of documents for a policy audience and a wide variety of soft transferable skills. Throughout my Fellowship I was consistently supported, and my learning and professional development were made a priority by the whole select committee team. I would highly recommend this Fellowship to anyone interested in applying science to policy – it was thoroughly enjoyable and has not only helped me develop my plans after my PhD, but has also definitely made me a better PhD student. Working in the House of Commons and having access to behind-the-scenes rooms and staff events was also rather incredible!"



"In the third year of my PhD, I completed a three-month internship with Natural England through the UKRI scheme. Joining the Hen harrier team, I worked on a unique project that was different to my PhD research. I was able to use a lot of the skills I'd learnt from my PhD for the role, but the data analysis and statistical methods were new to me, providing a development opportunity that I might otherwise not have gained. I also enjoyed experience of working on scientific research within a large team, which was a refreshing shift from the solo focus of my research and the usual PhD routine.

The internship not only broadened my awareness of non-academic roles in science, opening up new career horizons post-PhD, but also provided firsthand experience of the direct impact of academic research on policy decisions. Understanding how our work contributes to advice that might shape policies was particularly eye-opening and rewarding. Stepping back from my PhD for a few months and learning from others helped me gain fresh insights that improved my own research. Overall, the experience was positive, and I'd recommend it to anyone considering such opportunities. It's a chance to explore, learn, and maybe even reshape your career path."

Verity Miles (cohort 7)

Training Needs Analysis

In the first few months of your PhD you should meet with your supervisor to discuss the [Mutual Expectations Document](#). With your supervisor(s), you should also identify suitable training courses from within the College's excellent range of Master's programmes, Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI) courses, partner courses and NERC Advanced Training Short Courses to meet the technical training requirement. If you find you need additional training that the SSCP DTP and Imperial College London do not currently provide, please let us know.

Your training needs and academic outputs will be captured via [Inkpath](#) – a skills and career development platform, also used by the Early Career Researcher Institute (ECRI). Inkpath is a useful platform to capture your completed training and development courses, which can develop your professional CV. Please print these out before you finish at Imperial, as you will lose access to Inkpath when you no longer have an Imperial login.

This information is also important to the SSCP DTP as we will use it to report back to NERC.

How to find SSCP DTP activities on Inkpath

All users will need to go to imperial.inkpath.co.uk and login using their Imperial Single Sign On credentials. Once logged in, SSCP DTP Users will be able to use the “Switch Organisation” button in the top right corner to toggle between the DTP and the Early Career Researcher Institute's accounts.

Training Short Courses

Throughout the year you will have access to other training opportunities organised by external partners and other organisations. These will be advertised in the weekly newsletter. If you have any ideas for training, please contact the Academic Reps of the Student Committee (yet to be confirmed for 2024-25).

Seminars

Seminar Series

There are currently two seminar series. [Speaker suggestions](#) are always welcome.

Changing Planet Seminar Series

The Changing Planet Seminar Series is led by students and supported by the Grantham Institute. These occur twice a term in the Grantham Boardroom or online.

Past speakers have included Tammy Mayer, Founder and Director of One Climate Action; Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive, Environment Agency; Professor Jo Williams, Senior Lecturer, Bartlett School of Planning, Director of Circular Cities Hub; Professor Jim Skea, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); Dr Natalie Seddon, Professor of Biodiversity, University of Oxford. A full list of [CPS seminar speakers](#) is available here; all previous seminars can be available via [YouTube](#).



SSCP DTP students are sometimes able to arrange one-to-one meetings with invited speakers before seminar and can network with the speaker after the seminar. If you would like to arrange to meet one of our speakers, please liaise with the seminar series reps (yet to be confirmed for 2024-25).

You must attend a minimum of four seminars each year.

Women in STEM Seminar Series

The Women in STEM Series commenced in September 2021. It is being led by student members of the SSCP DTP ED&I Education Committee and supported by the Grantham Institute.

These occur around twice a year. In March 2023, the SSCP ED&I Committee organized a [Women in Conservation panel discussion](#) as part of Women at Imperial Week. This included a special message from Dr Jane Goodall.



Student/ staff committee

Our [student /staff committee](#) was established as a way for our students to directly feed their ideas back to the DTP management acting as a voice for the cohort, as well as to provide opportunities for social interaction and collaboration.

New committee members will be invited in October 2024 and we aim to have representation from cohorts 9-11.

The committee meets termly and currently consists of representatives from most cohorts, as well Anne Houston, Alex Gibbs, Christiane Morgan, and Ralf Toumi. If you have ideas of events, socials or trips you'd like to run, please email the relevant student reps in the first instance, found in the Governance section of the SSCP DTP website.

“The SSC committee is made up of DTP student representatives and is responsible for planning key parts of the experience of the PhD, such as workshops, seminars, and socials. The committee interfaces directly with Grantham DTP directors and therefore the representatives are the best to contact if you would like something organised or any changes made within the DTP experience. We would encourage all DTP students to participate in as many committee-led activities as possible.”

Monica McCall, cohort 9

Connecting Your Research

The Grantham Institute publishes a range of [briefing papers](#) to highlight the latest science to policy makers, businesses and civil society, to help make sure that scientific research has an impact.

We offer DTP students the opportunity to work on these papers, carrying our research on environmental or climate topics that might be a bit different than your PhD work. You will learn about communicating science to different audiences, broaden your writing skills and earn some money as a casual worker for 3 months. Dr Caterina Brandmayr, Grantham Director of Policy and Translation, will circulate opportunities when they become available.

Within the Grantham Institute, there will be several opportunities to engage with a wider audience. These will be advertised in our newsletter and via email.

Communications

Emails

Our primary mode of direct communication with you will be through email. Any emails will be sent to your Imperial email address, rather than a personal email account.

It is extremely important that you access your emails on a regular basis as this will be our main line of communication during your PhD.

Google Drive

The SSCP DTP [Google Drive is where](#) you will be able to view SSCP DTP related information, useful forms and templates.

Newsletter and your achievements

You will receive SSCP DTP newsletters and SSCP DTP news emails on Mondays or Fridays in term time. These contain details of events, additional training workshops, internships and funding opportunities. They are also designed to celebrate any exciting news and achievements you have, so please email [Christiane Morgan](#) when you have something to share. Please also add these achievements to Inkpath – including conferences, presentations, presentations, published papers, awards etc.




It is your responsibility to keep the details on Inkpath up-to-date.

Calendar

All SSCP DTP activity will be sent to you by an Outlook invitation. For all SSCP DTP training and events, you will also be required to register via Inkpath unless notified otherwise. Inkpath will be the primary attendance tracker.

Social Media

News and information will also be available through our Twitter feed and a cohort WhatsApp. A brief description of how we will use each is below for information. The Grantham Institute also has a [LinkedIn page](#).

 <p>@SSCP_DTP</p>	<p>Publicise the great work you do to interested parties, as well as live tweeting from events. Follow us, but also let us know your twitter handle so that we can follow you.</p> <p>Note please stay engaged with us and email Christiane Morgan if you would like us to share any news via twitter.</p>
 <p>WhatsApp</p>	<p>Each Cohort also has their own WhatsApp group, which is set up during induction week. If you would like to be added please contact Christiane.</p>
 <p>WhatsApp</p>	<p>There is also a WhatsApp group by all cohorts for all cohorts.</p>

Branding and acknowledgement

As a member of the DTP cohort, you are expected to follow the Institute’s official branding guidelines. Templates are supplied on Google Drive and should be used for all presentations, posters and written material relating to your PhD project. This includes any departmental presentations and posters you are expected to produce during your PhD. We would love to see the materials you produce, which should be sent to [Christiane Morgan](#) to ensure we have a record of your activities. This will also help use with reporting to NERC on our programme and individual student activities.

Please note that all publications should acknowledge the DTP in your address as follows:

A. Person¹; ¹ Science and Solutions for a Changing Planet DTP, and the Department of [Civil Engineering], Imperial College London.

You will also need to acknowledge your funding as follows – if you are funded by NERC via the SSCP DTP:

This work was supported by [ENTER YOUR PRIMARY FUNDER HERE, e.g. the Natural Environment Research Council; and the [ENTER YOUR SECONDARY FUNDER HERE etc].

Funding Example for Cohort 6 and up: This work was supported by the Natural Environment Research Council [NE/S007415/1]

Please note Research Council funded students (e.g., NERC, RCUK) are eligible to have papers published in open access. To do so, please include the grant reference on the form when applying via Symplectic. You also might find [this page useful regarding the UKRI Open Access Policy](#) and [Imperial's policy is available here](#).

Finance

This section is mainly for NERC and Grantham-funded students. A set of slides explaining basic principles and a recording of a finance session regarding below can be found in [this folder](#) on the SSCP DTP Google Drive.

Bursary payments

NERC and Grantham funded students within the SSCP DTP will be provided with an annual stipend in line with UKRI rates (£21,237 for 2024/25). Bursary payments are made on the 7th of each month, covering the month ahead.

First year students must register before the 23rd of the month preceding the date in which your first bursary payment is made (i.e., you must have registered by 23 September to receive a bursary payment on 7 October). You can visit the [Imperial website](#) to find out more information on registration.

All fully funded SSCP DTP studentships are for a duration of 3.5 years. Extensions are only considered in exceptional circumstances and on a case-by-case basis.

Your participation in the SSCP DTP is considered when considering any requests.

Consumables

NERC/GI funded SSCP DTP students will all receive consumables funding (£5k in total), which is paid directly to a dedicated account set up by the department in which they are based. Students are responsible for liaising with the supervisor directly regarding the use of these funds during your PhD.

Your consumables funds will be transferred in tranches each year (£2k in year 1, £2k in year 2 and £1k in year 3). The transfer is dependent on attendance at least 80% of DTP events and submitting required materials throughout the year. Every effort should be made to attend, but if you are ill or away on fieldwork you should notify [Christiane Morgan](#) as soon as possible to be noted as an authorised absence.

If your attendance falls below 80% without authorised absence, or you do not complete required training, your consumables for the next year may be withheld.

Fieldwork

Some NERC-funded SSCP DTP students have an additional budget for fieldwork or exceptional lab costs. This is confirmed during selection by the DTP Board. Any fieldwork spend must be as described in the proposed budget, which was submitted by the lead supervisor along with the project description.



- **Reimbursement of fieldwork costs**

There are three options. Students can either:-

- Make purchases through their consumables account. Fieldwork funds will not sit here but the additional funds required can be journaled across later.
- Make purchases from their own funds (following Imperial guidance) and seek reimbursement via an [Expense claim](#) (E1); there is the option of requesting an advance payment (see below), which will be off- set against a subsequent Expense claim.
- Make purchases using supervisor's account (as agreed with them), then send [Christiane Morgan](#) the amount spent, along with itemised receipts/invoices (credit card slips only are not permitted). The SSCP DTP will liaise with the department to reimburse the account used via a journal – usually within one week of being contacted.

Note: all goods must be purchased from Imperial's [preferred supplier list](#), where possible.

- **Advance – Personal**

If you travel overseas for fieldwork or need to make a purchase that cannot be done through the Imperial purchasing systems (ICIS), you can request an advance claim. Advance payments against consumables are an option and are usually organised through departments.

NB Students are responsible for tracking their fieldwork spend and must ensure that they keep a copy of all receipts and invoices.

After speaking to your department, if you have any further queries about advance claims please contact [Christiane Morgan](#).

Absences and break of study

Absences during training activities

Attendance at DTP workshops and events is mandatory, but we recognise that occasionally other obligations may clash with our events. In these instances, you must seek, with as much notice as possible, authorisation from the SSCP DTP management team to be excused. Please email [Christiane Morgan](mailto:christiane.morgan@imperial.ac.uk) in the first instance.



Interruption of studies (non-health)

This should be requested when a personal emergency or other circumstances arise which mean that you need to take a break from your studies. No fees nor stipend are payable for such a period, during which your research registration is effectively suspended.

Retrospective or backdated interruptions cannot be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances and a compelling case. Any retrospective interruptions will need approval from the student's Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Academic Registrar.

To arrange this, you must firstly liaise with your supervisor and Departmental Postgraduate Administrator. Secondly you need to inform [Christiane Morgan](mailto:christiane.morgan@imperial.ac.uk) of the dates that cover your interruption alongside a copy of your interruption of studies form.

Tier 4 students must familiarize themselves with [this guidance](#) on how your visa may be affected by an interruption of studies.

Absence through illness or for personal reasons

If you are unable to attend College because of illness or urgent personal circumstances, you should inform your supervisor or the Department as soon as practicable. College regulations require that postgraduate students inform their Postgraduate Tutor if they are absent from College for more than three days during term. If the absence is due to illness, a medical certificate must be produced after seven days. UKRI regulations state that payment of a Studentship must continue for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to thirteen weeks within a rolling 12-month period. If the illness lasts for more than thirteen weeks, your studentship will be interrupted for the period beyond the thirteen weeks.

[Full guidelines for Interruption of Studies can be found here.](#)

Welfare

We take the welfare of our students very seriously and will try to provide all the assistance we can if you encounter problems of any kind.

It is not uncommon for students to feel periods of intense pressure. If you are having any difficulties, either with your research or with personal matters, your first contact should be your supervisor. Please also contact [Alex Gibbs](#) or [Anne Houston](#).

Within the College there are several services available to support you, most notably the [Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service](#). They have a student mental health adviser (SMHA) whose role is to provide support for students who may have had, or are experiencing, moderate to severe mental health difficulties. Students need to be referred by a member of College staff, with the student's permission, in order to be seen by the SMHA. The SMHA is unable to take self-referrals from students or their family and friends.

The Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service also delivers workshops on relaxation, self-esteem, procrastination and mindfulness.

Links to further support can be found on the Grantham Institute's [Wellbeing Resources Page](#). The SSCP EDI committee are always grateful for any further suggestions and can be [emailed](#). You will also find additional support pages on your respective departmental student wellbeing pages.

Most departments will have a Post-Graduate Welfare Advisor. Outside the Institute and Departments, the College provides extensive services for health, counselling, English language support, etc. Details of these are given in the students pages at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/>.

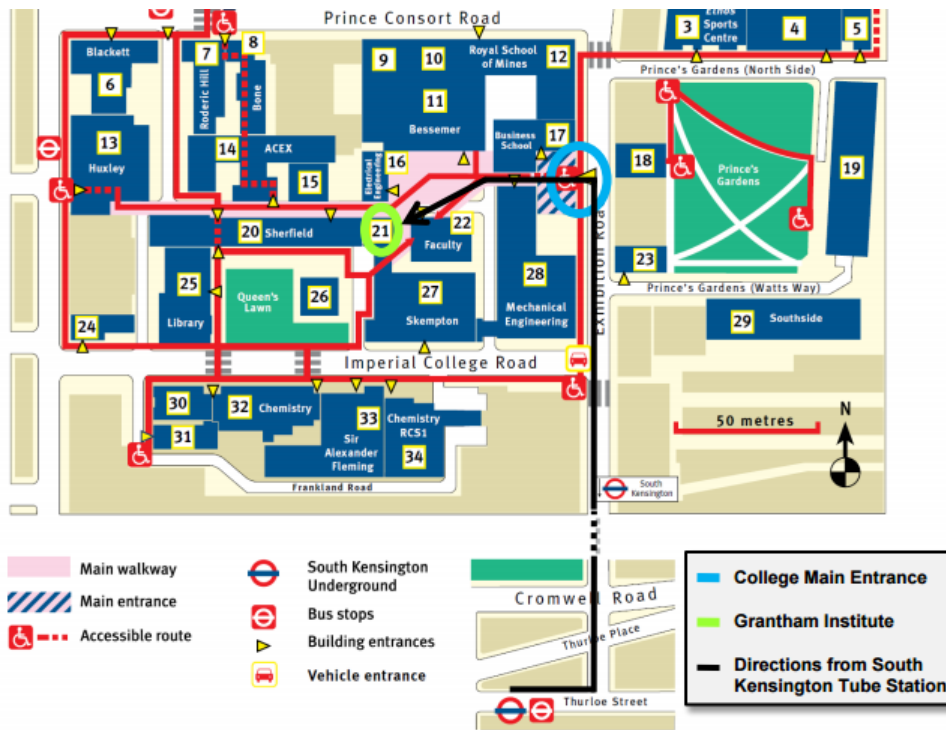
The Student/Staff Committee also have student Welfare Officers (see page 16). Anne Houston is also trained as a Mental Health First Aider.

Finishing

Throughout your PhD, please keep us informed of your progress. This should include updates up to the point of finishing your PhD (submission of your thesis, your Viva date and the outcome of the Viva.)



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If you are interested in learning more about the Grantham Institute’s Directors, Researchers, Policy and Communications Team (email address grantham-communications@imperial.ac.uk) and Operations staff please visit the [Institute’s website](#).