



DRP Symposium Guidance

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The next DRP symposium is scheduled **Wednesday 14th of January 2026**, from **12pm to 2pm** in **HXL 341/342**

Our Mathematics department here at Imperial is one of the most supportive, diverse and encouraging places for an undergraduate - we want to celebrate that! Our goal is to provide an environment in which collaborative Mathematics can thrive.

So far, the groups seem to be working really well together, learning some very advanced material, and being social in sharing that learning with their group. We want to give group members a wider opportunity to present and share their DRP projects, and hopefully build some confidence in talking about the Mathematics they love - the DRP team, the group leaders and all group members are there to support and will you on after all! This is meant to be a low stress environment to share your achievements during the term - I'd really grab the opportunity with both hands!

Building a *sense of community* is something we really value. I feel what we've managed so far with the formation of the DRP groups is to get students interested in collaboration in a more relaxed, small-group setting and this is really positive. The next goal is to take it further, and use the confidence built from those sessions to share their experience with a wider community, beyond the small-group.

Now I appreciate this can be daunting! We've found that many participants can feel anxious at the prospect of presenting something at the boundary of their knowledge, particularly presenting to students of all year groups and people they may have never seen before. With that in mind, we're trying to create an environment in which members can improve their communication skills in a more low-stress and more supportive environment - I would really encourage you as a group member to give it a try, and as a group leader to try and encourage your group members to present!

We maintain that this is something *voluntary*, and no one should feel forced to present. However, I think presenting at the symposium can be an amazing step towards wider presentation experience and actually mathematical confidence which should serve well - I would *strongly encourage* you to present. With all that said, looking forward to seeing you all there !

*Best wishes,
Shen*

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1 Format

For those who have completed the first year of undergraduate study at Imperial, our intention with this is to make the style similar to the M1R Year 1 project poster session with some modifications to fit our DRP.

- The total time is a strict 2 hours due to room booking for 341/342. Presenting students will be required to punctual.
- There will be **4 slots of 30 minutes**, each student has a **30 minute slot** to present their material (though please allow 2 minutes at the end for changeover so later presenters have enough time).

Note: We will allow multiple people to present the same posters (again collaboration!) - in that case we may increase the allotted time.

- The presenters stand by their poster (see below) and a whiteboard to draw out their ideas.
- People will be coming around to discuss your DRP experience and what you've learnt. This means that the style will feel more conversational, rather than a traditional colloquium style presentation.
- On that, we'll try and get some more experienced members of the department (student and staff where appropriate) to see if they're interested in coming and discussing your project so that you're definitely given the opportunity to explain the higher level parts of the project if you'd like.
- Once you are done presenting, or before you present, there will be opportunity for you to go around and check out other stalls to see what everyone else is getting up to! There will be an info document with everyone's presentations (see below). There'll be plenty of food to enjoy in the meantime!

2 Submitting materials ahead of the presentation

Checklist

Refer to the below checklist. Details for each step are provided below.

The following should be sent by **12:00pm January 8** to your **group leaders**

1. A confirmation you are presenting and how many people are presenting together.
2. Your presentation abstract (200 word limit)
3. Your presentation poster (A0)

It is then the job of the group leaders to collate all these relevant materials and share with David, Karthik, Ahmed and myself (there will be more specific guidance closer to the time for group leaders - we anticipate it will be through a sharepoint folder).

Please do **not** send these materials directly to us, please do so **through your group leader**. This is to make sure a systematic approach to organising the event.

Abstract

This sounds quite formal - it is not. This is just a quick paragraph or so to describe what you've gotten up to until now. These will all be advertised so that people interested in the topic can find your stall! In that regard, think about how you can summarise what you've been up to in an exciting but concise manner.

Your group leader should be able to give you some strong advice for producing an abstract. If in doubt, come speak to myself or Karthik for some more guidance.

Poster

In the past we have not made presenters to use a poster. This year we are going to make this a **requirement** - there are numerous reasons below.

We've created a template¹ here for you to use

¹A modified Imperial Beamer template. Credit to Victor Kojey-Merle for our DRP logo

<https://www.overleaf.com/read/fpwhfdyphgyq#3eed98>.

There is no obligation to use this template; however, it should make it really easy to modify and use to create a poster in the desired format.

The poster does not have to be in LaTeX and either landscape/portrait is fine, but will be printed in **A0 size and dimensions**, so make sure if you do use alternative software that the resolution is sufficiently high.

Why we would like a poster

- A well-organised poster can hopefully draw more people to the presentation
- This gives everyone something *physical* to take away from their DRP experience, and can actually help you reflect on what you've learnt in the process of creating it
- Getting used to producing expository materials about what you've learnt is a really key skill - perfect opportunity to practice.
- [We actually have space for posters now we're in a bigger room!]

3 Guidance

The talks are capped on time, and there is definitely not enough time to present everything a DRP participant has gone over in a whole term - that's part of the challenge! Instead, participants should think of the presentations as a chance to talk about a small sample of the material they've worked on in a more conversational style:

- Consider a narrative you want to illustrate to people
- Give some basic definitions to introduce the setup
- Present one or two interesting examples/models
- Consider key results and motivations
- What aspects did you particularly enjoy
- What are you looking to do going forward.

We also share some standard advice about giving a presentation in this poster format. We thank Charlotte Kestner and Inkeri Hibbins for their M1R presentation guidelines (2023).

- A poster is not an essay on an A0 piece of paper. It should instead *grab attention*
- Less is often more, except when it comes to graphics!
- Consider what is *essential* to understanding the ideas you want to illustrate.
- Consider your audience and err on the side of making the content simpler & easier to digest - it is much better to build up knowledge from the ground up, as even if the audience is experienced it aligns them with your point of view.
- Tell a story - why care about the field?

The same guidance includes more specific advice on poster layout.

- Prepare an outline and divide information into main sections
- Title: It should be short and snappy (use a subtitle if necessary), as it will be what people look at first, after the pictures.

- Aim and introduction: clear and concise aim/hypothesis/objectives.
- What are some key results?
- Summary of your learning so far and next steps
- Any citations/acknowledgements (less important here)
- Keep the overall structure *simple* with well delineated sections.

We finally thank the Stanford DRP organisers for their presentation guidelines. What follows is an adaptation of their work here.

- Start with a quick outline of the talk, what the narrative is, and where the different chapters lie.
- Don't rush into answering questions as they arise, take a moment or two to consider what it is that the audience member is asking.
- Consider your use of notes. Having some notes to refer to is definitely good, but don't be reliant to the extent of just reading off them.
- If writing on a whiteboard, you'll probably have to write a lot larger than you first anticipate! Write things out in full where possible rather than short forms. And always begin writing in the top left to give yourself enough space!
- Don't assume knowledge from the audience - it's always better to build up knowledge from the ground up, as even if the audience is experienced it aligns them with your point of view.
- Try to relate what you are talking about to other mathematical objects that the audience might be familiar with or give some applications to relatable things.
- In general, be considerate of your audience, and remember that the purpose of a talk is for those listening to learn something.