Imperial College London

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Department of Life Sciences

Silwood Park Campus

STUDENT GUIDEBOOK 2020–2021

Contents

Welcome to the College

Congratulations on joining Imperial College London, the only university in the UK to focus exclusively on science, medicine, engineering and business.

From Fleming's discovery of Penicillin to Gabor's invention of holography, Imperial has been changing the world for well over 100 years. You're now part of this prestigious community of discovery and we hope you will take this opportunity to make your own unique contribution.

We're committed to providing you with the very best academic resources to enrich your experience. We also provide a dedicated support network and a range of specialist support services to make sure you have access to the appropriate help, whether that's further training in an academic skill like note taking or simply having someone to talk to.

We understand that this is a challenging time for our student community due to the impact of coronavirus and we are committed to providing you with the very best academic resources to enrich your experience. Information on teaching and learning, services and facilities to support the wider student experience during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found on the College's webpages, alongside local information provided by your Department. We also provide a dedicated support network and a range of specialist support services to make sure you have access to the appropriate help, whether that's further training in an academic skill like note taking or simply having someone to talk to.

You'll have access to an innovative range of professional development courses within our Graduate School throughout your time here, as well as opportunities to meet students from across the College at academic and social events – see page 6 for more information.

We actively encourage you to seek out help when you need it and try to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Our choice of over 360 clubs, societies and projects is one of the largest of any UK university, making it easy to do something different with your downtime. Access to the gym and other sporting facilities will be dependent on government guidance. We are working to ensure that you have access to a variety of resources online to support your health and wellbeing if there are restrictions.

As one of the best universities in the world, we are committed to inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers, clinicians and business leaders by continuing to share the wonder of what we do through public engagement events. Postgraduate students, alongside our academics and undergraduate students, make a significant contribution to events such as our annual Imperial Festival and our term-time Imperial Fringe events – if you're interested in getting involved then there will be opportunities for you to do so.

Our Principles

In 2012 the College and Imperial College Union agreed ‘Our Principles’ a series of commitments made between students and the College. The Principles are reviewed annually by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and changes recommended for Senate approval.

Imperial will provide through its staff:

- A world class education embedded in a research environment
- Advice, guidance and support
- The opportunity for students to contribute to the evaluation and development of programmes and services

Imperial will provide students with:

- Clear programme information and assessment criteria
- Clear and fair academic regulations, policies and procedures
- Details of full programme costs and financial support
- An appropriate and inclusive framework for study, learning and research

Imperial students should:

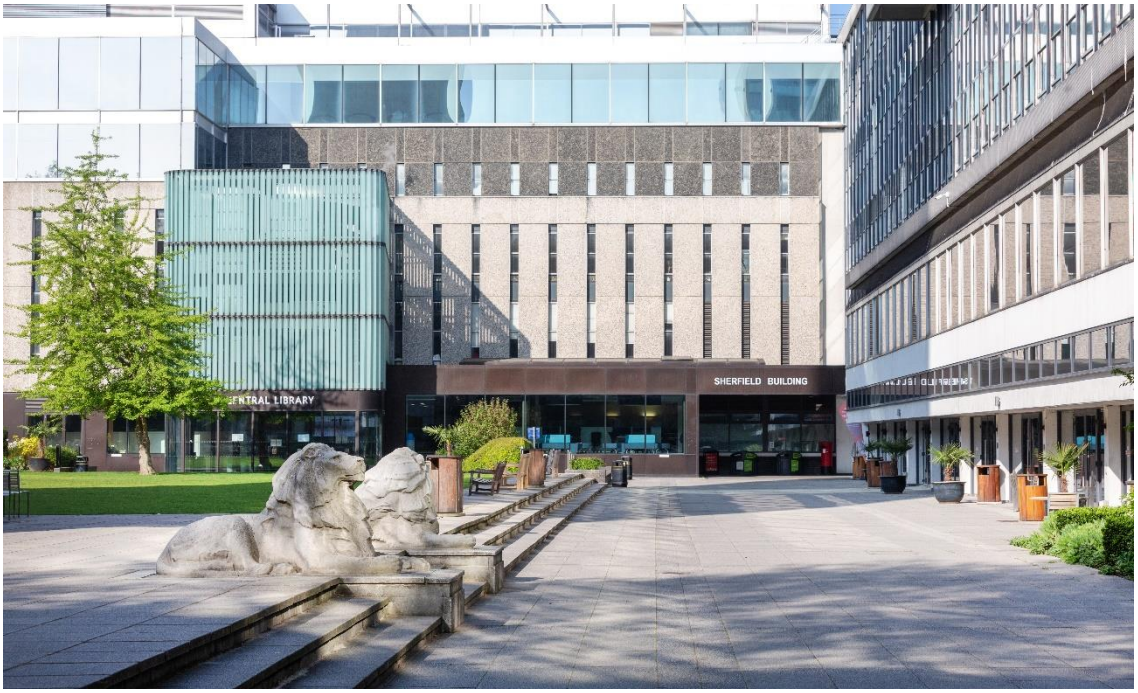
- Take responsibility for managing their own learning
- Engage with the College to review and enhance provision
- Respect, and contribute to, the Imperial community

The Imperial College Students' Union will:

- Support all students through the provision of independent academic and welfare assistance
- Encourage student participation in all aspects of the College
- Provide a range of clubs, societies, student-led projects and social activities throughout the year
- Represent the interests of students at local, national and international level

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/our-principles

Welcome from the Graduate School



Welcome to Imperial College London and the Graduate School!

The Graduate School is responsible for the postgraduate experience at the College and we work closely with the Union and the Graduate Students' Union to ensure that when decisions are being made, which affect your time at Imperial, your voice is heard.

Another important aspect of our role is to offer you a free and exciting range of professional development opportunities which you can access wherever you are in the world.

Our team of tutors have a variety of research and other career experiences. We understand the importance of developing professional skills and our programmes will help you to progress in your academic studies and research and will prepare you for your future career. Whether you wish to pursue a career in academia, industry or something else, professional development training will improve your personal impact. You will also get to meet students from other Departments when attending our courses.

The Graduate School runs exciting competitions throughout the year which are an opportunity to broaden your knowledge as well as to meet other students and have fun. Our primary way to communicate to you will be through our monthly newsletter. However, do check our website, blog and social media platforms to keep up to date with all the latest activities available to you.

Finally, Imperial College is an extremely exciting, stimulating and diverse environment in which to work, to study and to research. Do make the most of all that the College and your programme has to offer.

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The Graduate School

You automatically become a member of the Graduate School when you register as a postgraduate student at Imperial.

The Graduate School has been set up to support all postgraduate students at the College through:

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

'Masterclass' professional skills courses

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

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

All courses can be booked online.

Contact us

Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

020 7594 1383

graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk

www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school

Welcome from the Graduate Students' Union (GSU)

I am delighted to welcome you to the Imperial College and the Graduate Students' Union (GSU). I hope you have a fantastic time here.

The Graduate Students' Union is a university-wide representative body elected by postgraduate students. Our job is to stand up for your interest as a postgraduate and ensure that you have the most enjoyable and beneficial time possible at Imperial. As the GSU President, I want to emphasise that it is postgraduate students that Imperial is relying on to maintain its position as a Top 10 university in the world, therefore, your voices really do matter!

This year, our GSU Committee will keep improving postgraduate well-being by increasing the quality of supervision and by creating strategies to tackle mental health issues. Meanwhile, we will also try to strengthen the relationship with enterprises, so that we can co-organize more campus activities, negotiate job and internship opportunities for our postgraduate students and raise more money for our social and recreational events.

We also realised your learning, researching and job/internship application in this year might be terribly influenced by the the COVID-19 pandemic. This might also be worrying you. To minimise the effects and guarantee that your voices are heard, my team and I will meet you through online or offline channels, collect your opinions and ideas, and advocate them to the university.

This GSU Committee is ready to serve for you. We are happy to answer your questions and fully expect to receive your feedback. I wish you all the best at Imperial. Please stay happy and healthy!

Zixiao Wang
President of Graduate Students' Union
Imperial College London
Email: gsu.president@imperial.ac.uk

GSU
IMPERIAL GRADUATE STUDENTS' UNION

1. Introduction to the Department

The Department of Life Sciences (DoLS) embraces the full breadth of modern life science activity and comprises one of the largest such departments in Europe. DoLS is located on 2 campuses at South Kensington and Silwood Park. DoLS has a vibrant and internationally leading research programme that spans levels of organisation from atoms to the biosphere, that strongly supports multidisciplinary collaborations and that actively fosters the development of new fields. The Head of Department is supported by a Deputy Head on each campus. DoLS sits in the Faculty of Natural Sciences (FoNS), which was established in 2005 to promote interdisciplinarity in the Physical and Biological Sciences. We run two undergraduate degrees (Biological Sciences and Biochemistry/Biotechnology), and 15 Masters courses.

The Department of Life Sciences has 12 research themes:

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/research/research-themes/

The Silwood Park campus of the Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London, is dedicated to the study of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and consists of one of the largest groups of research labs dedicated to this field worldwide.

Prior to 1947, Silwood Park was a private residence, the manor house of Sunninghill. The original Manor, at which Prince Arthur stayed in 1499 was known as Eastmore and was situated on the hill near Silwood Farm. In about 1788, Sir James Sibbald built a Georgian mansion on part of the present house and demolished the old "Eastmore", he called it Selwood or Silwood Park. The name stems from the Old English for Sallow (*Salix caprea* Agg.) which presumably grew then along the banks of the streams that flow through the Park.

Over 1000 postgraduate students have been trained at Silwood since its establishment, about half of them taking PhDs. They have come from more than sixty countries, and Silwood-trained graduates have gone to almost every corner of the globe. The number of graduate staff and students working at any one time has risen from about a dozen in 1948 to over 200 today. Undergraduates from the main South Kensington campus visit or reside at Silwood Park during Field Courses or the final year projects in summer. Silwood Park provides a wide range of habitats for the study of animals and plants in the field, as well as laboratories, controlled-environment growth facilities and computing resources for advanced experimental, molecular and theoretical research.

Silwood Park is world-renowned for the study of the ecology, evolution and conservation of biodiversity. It housed the Centre for Population Biology from 1989 to 2010, and is currently home to the Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and The Environment Initiative: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ecosystemsandenvironment. The Department of Life Sciences has formal links with the UK's leading Biodiversity Institutions, the Natural History Museum, London, the Institute of Zoology and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, plus numerous formal and informal collaborations with academic and conservation institutions around the world.

Accommodation, dedicated study areas, library and computing facilities are all on campus as well as a gym, an outdoor exercise circuit, and a squash court. Seminars are arranged for most weeks.

Academic and Administrative staff

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Deputy Head of Department

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guy.woodward@imperial.ac.uk

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Director of Postgraduate Studies

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Dr Michael Tristem

Silwood Park Masters Coordinator

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Dr Will Pearse

Senior Tutor (PG) /Disability Officer

2.04 Southwood Building

Will.pearse@imperial.ac.uk

Amanda Ellis

Postgraduate Administrator

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amanda.ellis@imperial.ac.uk

Andrew Greig

Campus Services Coordinator

Accommodation Office, Hamilton

020 759 42212

a.greig@imperial.ac.uk

Taru Khanna

IT Support Specialist

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020 759 57889

Service.desk@imperial.ac.uk

Sarah Reid

Senior Library Assistant

Silwood Library

020 759 42461

Silwood.library@imperial.ac.uk

Martin Selby

Senior Laboratory Technician/Safety Rep

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020 759 42226

m.selby@imperial.ac.uk

Catalina Estrada

Silwood Fieldwork Coordinator

G.11 Hamilton Building

020 759 42217

c.estrada@imperial.ac.uk

Alba Herraiz Yebes

First Aid Coordinator

N1.12 Munro Building

07548320617

A.Herraiz-yebes@imperial.ac.uk

A complete list of academic and support staff in Life Sciences and Silwood Park can be found online at http://www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/academic-staff/ and https://www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/support-staff/

English language requirement

If you are not a native English speaker you must meet the College's English language requirements.

See the Admissions website for details:

www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/requirements/english

For information on English language support available while you're here, see page 45.

Attendance and absence

You must inform your Senior Postgraduate Tutor if you are absent from the College for more than three days during term. If the absence is due to illness you must produce a medical certificate after seven days. If you are ill and miss an assessment deadline (this could be an examination, presentation or a coursework submission) you will need to make a claim for mitigating circumstances within 10 working days of the deadline. Please see the section on mitigation below.

The Registry will be informed of all student non-attendances as the College is obliged to report the non-attendance of students on Tier 4 visas to the Home Office.

Key dates 2020-2021

Department dates

First Monday of Autumn Term:	5 October 2020
First Monday of Spring Term:	11 January 2021
Silwood Christmas Event:	18 December 2020
Silwood Masters Staff-Student Committee 1:	2 March 2021
Spring Exams:	29-30 March 2021
Fieldwork First Aid Course	TBC
Silwood Masters Staff-Student Committee 2:	4 May 2021
Final Project Submission (electronic):	26 August 2021 (13:00hrs)
FrEEC Symposium:	7 - 9 September 2021
Internal Vivas:	13 - 15 September 2021
External Vivas and Examination Boards:	16 - 17 September 2021

EEC MRes winter project submission dates are noted in the course-specific guidebook.

College Closure dates

Christmas/New year:	24 December 2020 - 1 January 2021 (College reopens on 4 January 2021)
Easter holiday:	1 April - 6 April 2021 (College reopens on 7 April 2021)
Early May bank holiday:	3 May 2021
Spring bank holiday:	31 May 2021
Summer bank holiday:	30 August 2021

Key events

Great Exhibition Road Festival:	3-4 July 2021
Bugs, Birds and Beasts Day	July 2021

2. Programme Information

This student guidebook contains information about academic and non-academic topics that apply across all the Masters courses at the Silwood Park campus of the Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London. Please refer to your **course-specific guidebook** for information about topics such as taught modules, descriptions, timetables and student assessment.

Imperial Mobile app

Don't forget to download the free Imperial Mobile app for access to College information and services, including your programme timetable, College emails and a library catalogue search tool.

www.imperial.ac.uk/imperialmobile

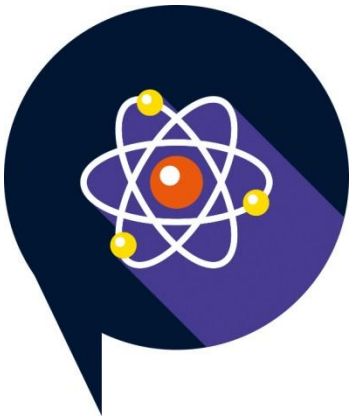
Welcome to Imperial app

The College has a Welcome to Imperial app which contains important information about campus operations, aspects of student life, a schedule of welcome activities and information about life in halls. All new students should download this guide to ensure they have the most up to date information and event schedule for the start of term.

You can download the App from the Apple or Google App Stores.

Imperial Success Guide

The Imperial Success Guide is an online resource with advice and tips on the transition to Master's level study. More than just a study guide, it is packed with advice created especially for Imperial Master's students, including information on support, health and well-being and ideas to help you make the most of London.



www.imperial.ac.uk/success-guide

Seminars and Symposia

Weekly Seminars

A weekly seminar takes place most weeks on Thursday at 1pm in the Hamilton Building (https://www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/research/thursday-seminars/). All masters students are expected to attend these seminars unless told otherwise, even if one is rescheduled to a day other than Thursday. Certain courses require students to submit a "seminar journal" as part of their coursework mark (please refer to your course's guidebook). You are encouraged to arrange additional seminars to get feedback on your ongoing research, ideas for a research project, or practice critical thinking about research. Rooms can be booked for these by contacting Martin Selby (see contacts above).

Monthly Silwood Social Seminars

Held typically on the first Tuesday of the month, PhD student and postdoc researchers present their work in an informal setting. This is a great way to learn more about the research environment that you will be part of over the next year. The seminar comes with free drinks and food.

The FrEEC Summer Symposium

A summer symposium co-organized by Masters and PhD students will be held early September, soon after all the Masters students have submitted their dissertations (dates in Section 3). Called the Frontiers in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Symposium (FrEECS!) it provides you an opportunity to present your research, see what your colleagues are up to, and discuss challenges in Ecological and Evolutionary research (see freesymp.org). This is a great opportunity to get feedback on your project and get you geared up for your vivas later in September. All courses also formally mark the final student presentations — please see your Course specific Guidebook.

The symposium will be broken into concurrent sessions of focal research themes. There is also potential for an open poster session to be held in the CPB Common Room where PhD students can present their work. Session themes may be current 'hot' topics, such as ecological and evolutionary responses to climate change, deforestation and the global carbon cycle, responses of food webs and plant-pollinator networks to climatic warming, techniques for conserving biodiversity etc., or technical/methodological topics. External invitees, including as many our very own gang of seven external "20-percent" faculty members as possible, will give plenary talks in the different sessions, and host discussions session themes. In most cases, we expect that you will find personnel with the necessary expertise right on campus, but you can invite people from outside when needed.

A symposium organization committee consisting of 1-2 members of academic staff, 2-3 PhD and 7-10 Masters students (at least one from each masters course) will be established in late Autumn. This will be a valuable opportunity to develop your organisational skills, from selecting, inviting and hosting speakers, to dealing with the logistics of catering. You will learn how to engage and discuss with your peers to prioritize topics for workshops, and to invite speakers when necessary. If you are interested in being on the FrEEC graduate symposium committee, please email the Postgraduate Administrator.

Guidelines for talks and posters will be released in early spring, coinciding with the first advertisement of the symposium.

Dissertation Projects

Every MSc and MRes student conducts an independent research project (two projects for EEC MRes) leading to a written report (dissertation). All projects must be overseen by one supervisor from the Department of Life Sciences at Imperial College but can be based at external organisations with additional external supervision. Previous external organisations include the Zoological Society of London, the Meteorological Office, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Natural England, the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and many others. Web links to potential internal supervisors as well as external supervisors and institutions are given below.

Choosing your Project

Research project topics are generally part of ongoing active research within the Department and across a range of academic partners. We maintain an online database of available projects to which new project proposals are added throughout the year. The details of available projects are available at: https://silwoodmasters.info/project_proposals

This list provides broad details of research projects but the precise topics and focus will typically be finalised in discussion between the student and potential supervisor(s). Project descriptions will appear throughout the year but we aim to provide the majority of project topics by mid-October of the year. We also encourage students to approach potential supervisors with their own project ideas (see section on Finding supervisors below).

The main mantra in all this is, **act early**! Don't approach supervisors at the eleventh hour, because you are likely to fail to elicit a response. Start contacting potential supervisors as soon as you can to discuss project ideas and to gauge how well you will fit in their lab (also see section below on student and supervisor expectations).

You are encouraged to look up titles and abstracts of previous year projects, both specific to your course and others, which can be obtained from the Library via the Spiral Repository http://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/. Example titles and reports are also available from course websites.

Note that the main difference between 5-month and longer (e.g., the CMEE Masters projects are almost 9 months long) will often be the scope. Appropriate project topics vary according to the course you are undertaking (see your Course Guidebook). Generally, they can be on any biological, ecological, evolutionary or conservation-related topic (including the social sciences and policy).

Finding a Project Supervisor

Be proactive about finding a supervisor (or co-supervisors). Each student on the course will have different backgrounds, different strengths and different interests and it is important that you find a supervisor whose interests match your own. Spend time on the Silwood Park website reading about the research of Academic Staff, including Fellows and Postdocs.

Please look up potential Silwood and non-Silwood supervisors through the DoLS website: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/research/research-themes/. A list of Silwood academic staff can be found here: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/silwood-park/academic-staff/

Make sure you prepare before making first contact with a supervisor. They will ask what it is you want to do, and if you don't know it leads to an awkward moment that is best avoided. So before meeting or calling a potential supervisor, check through their past work and be ready to tell them what papers they've authored that you're particularly interested in, or what ideas you have for a project.

Please note that there are also a number of faculty members at the South Kensington and other ICL campuses that you could approach. Recommended websites to read about research interests of ICL staff in other departments and colleges are:

- **Mathematics**: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics, their staff list with personal web pages are at http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/about/people
- **Biomathematics**: http://www2.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/php/researchgroups/bms/
- **Statistics**: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/statistics/research, especially the Statistical Genetics and Bioinformatics Group: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/statistics/research/biostatistics
- **Malaria modelling group:** https://www1.imperial.ac.uk/malariamodelling/
- **Grantham institute:** http://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/
- **Centre for Complexity Science:** http://www.imperial.ac.uk/complexity-science
- **The Centre for Environmental Policy:** https://www.imperial.ac.uk/environmental-policy/

In addition, have a look at

- GCEE: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/ecosystems-and-environment/
- SAFE Project: http://www.safeproject.net/working-at-safe/ecological-monitoring/?id=5
- VectorBiTE: www.vectorbite.org
- Vectorbase: https://www.vectorbase.org/
- Silwood Long-Term Experiments: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/silwood-park/research/field-experiments/
- PREDICTS: http://www.predicts.org.uk/

External Supervisor and Organization Research Areas

Note that every Silwood Masters Project student is required to have an internal supervisor from the Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London (ICL DoLS), mainly for administrative purposes. Therefore, if you choose a project external to the ICL DoLS, we strongly suggest that you let the external supervisor know that they need to identify an internal supervisor for the project proposal (see below) to be approved.

Other research institutions where staff may be interested in supervising you include ZSL Institute of Zoology (IoZ), Natural History Museum (NHM), Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), and UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). Many projects with external partners are likely to be advertised. The websites to find potential supervisors of our tried-and-tested and/or partner external organizations are,

- ZSL Institute of Zoology (IoZ): http://www.zsl.org/science/ioz-staff-students; Contact Dr. Chris Carbone http://www.zsl.org/users/chris-carbone
- Natural History Museum (NHM): NHM has a massive collections digitization project going on that are yielding unique and massive datasets on species morphologies, and spatio-temporal distributions, among other things. Contact Andy Purvis Andy.Purvis@nhm.ac.uk or Steve Brooks S.Brooks@nhm.ac.uk for more information and project ideas. Also visit their website: www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/departments-and-staff/life-sciences
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) – Simon Jennings and others; A wide range of projects in applied and fundamental aspects of fisheries management and marine ecology and ecosystem management may be available linked with the CEFAS Lowestoft Laboratory in Suffolk. Projects may be located at Silwood or possibly at Lowestoft. For more information about CEFAS and what work goes on there, read http://www.cefas.co.uk/ ; also Contact Sophie Pitois, Plankton ecologist (Cefas), sophie.pitois@cefas.co.uk
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Wallingford: Research areas for projects are based around ecological modelling of UK systems, often with practical or policy implications.
- UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC): A wide range of projects addressing global/regional biodiversity and ecosystem services issues, including: international agreements synergies, conservation priority setting, international trade and regional economies, drylands and livelihood support, wildlife trade and social networks, access and benefit sharing, protected area targets and social values, monitoring deforestation and degradation, and more.
- Somerset Wildlife Trust: Broad research interests cover the interaction of land use methods and biodiversity on lowland wetlands. A variety of projects are possible from looking at restoration of biodiversity on restored peat extraction sites through to examining the effects of drainage and re-wetting on peat soil integrity and micro-arthropod diversity. Many projects are available concerning the conservation of nationally rare invertebrate species.

The Project Proposal

All masters students must submit a two-page project proposal in pdf format after they have selected a project. These project proposals may be assessed in certain courses (such as TFE and EEC MSc – please check your course-specific guidebook). The proposal must be submitted in pdf format, **by the deadlines and following the procedures specific to your course (e.g., though blackboard; please consult your Course-specific Guidebook or Director)**.

Proposal Document Specifications. The proposal should be on A4 paper with 2cm margins, in 11pt Arial font, 1.5-spaced, with lines numbered continuously. It must not exceed 2 pages *excluding* references and title page. The proposal should begin with a title page consisting of Project title, supervisor name(s) with affiliation(s) and contact email. Thereafter, it should contain the following sections (all necessarily brief, of course):

(i) Six keywords (these will help us to allocate appropriate Examiners/Markers to your project)
(ii) Introduction to the project idea and proposed questions
(iii) Proposed methods
(iv) Anticipated outputs and outcomes (including stakeholders involved if applicable)
(v) Project feasibility supported by a timeline of tasks (including a Gantt chart)
(vi) An itemized budget
(vii) Cited references. The references can be formatted compactly, but must contain the full title of the paper, and each reference must have been cited in the main text of the proposal. In-text citations *must not* be in a numbered or superscript format, i.e., they should be in some form of author name-year format (e.g., Jenkins et al 2015).

The proposal will presumably be prepared under guidance of the project supervisor(s) (see Supervision guidelines below). Detailed instructions on the project budget are given below.

Project Budgets

Tropical Forest Ecology Masters students have different rules than those stated here — please refer to your Course Guidebook if you are a TFE student.

Every Masters student's research project expenses may be supported through the supervisor (s) for the entirety of the research component of their Course.

The permitted expense categories that *can* be claimed are:

- Lab equipment
- Field equipment
- High Performance Computing time
- Research-related travel (e.g., to field site)
- Research-related accommodation
- Costs of support staff, including interpreters, translators, transcribers

The expense categories that *cannot* be claimed are:

- Person time (e.g., hiring somebody on an hourly basis to carry out certain tasks)
- Per diems

Each dissertation project proposal **must** include a tabulated budget that includes budget categories and costs associated, with a brief justification for each category. Please discuss the project budget carefully with your supervisor(s) — major changes to the cost allocations are unlikely to be approved.

Each proposal should have on a separate (last) page the name, signature and date of the primary supervisor, with the statement:

"I have seen and approved the proposal and the budget"

Project Supervision Guidance

This section provides guidance on the general pattern of Masters project supervision. Projects differ *very* widely, so the timelines suggested below are not written in stone but intended to give students and supervisors a rough framework and some suggestions to work around. The guidance isn't for a project of a specific length — it just highlights the steps along the way.

Student Expectations and Managing your Supervisor

Each Masters project is an independent piece of research and we expect you to drive forward your project. If you need training in a particular technique or advice on a particular problem, then don't be shy about asking for help - that is what the supervisor is there for. However, do not expect to be told what to do or what to test - you need to *take ownership of the research* and have a strong command of the methods, literature and broad context of your work.

Your supervisor will be fundamentally interested in your research or they wouldn't have suggested it as a project. However they will be busy, so you should be well prepared for any meeting: have a **list of clear questions** and read the literature around those questions so you can suggest, for example, potential experts to consult with or methods to apply. If you are having analysis or stats problems, then bring a computer with the data and your code.

Ask your supervisor how s/he prefers to communicate. Some supervisors will prefer meetings, whilst others will prefer email or telephone. If preferred by your supervisor, do not be afraid to email questions - you will often get a reply more quickly to a carefully phrased email than if you wait for a meeting. However take care to write the question carefully, clearly and with good detail - you will often find that writing out your question like this provides an answer or insight!

Take the initiative and let your supervisors (and course directors) know how things are going, both when you are on-campus, and when/if you are in the field. If you're at the end of your tether and about to throw all the hard drives in a hedge and run off to China[1] then stop, come and talk to us. We're here to support you and every project has tough periods - do not be embarrassed to ask for help and support. The primary role of all Internal supervisors is to ensure that your project proceeds smoothly and intervenes if the External supervision is not satisfactory. Internal supervisors can be involved in active co-supervision if the project lies in their area of expertise. The smart student proactively seeks input from their supervisor(s).

A guide to what students and their supervisors might mutually expect from each other is available at:

 Mutual Expectations

[1] This is not a joke. Their supervisor had to pay quite a lot of money to data recovery specialists.

Guidelines for Progress on your Project

Even if you pay no further attention to the framework below

- Start writing at the start of the project, don't ever stop writing. Stick to this wherever you are. Even if you're knee deep in alligators and 100 kilometers from the nearest power socket: write on paper, write on leaves, write on the alligators[2].
- Beware of data collection madness. That one extra data point might change p=0.06 to p=0.05, but rushing your report can easily change a 72% to a 62%.
- Give your supervisor time for feedback – at least a fortnight. If preferred by your supervisor, drip - feed them writing throughout your project.

a. First month

Student: You will almost certainly be straight into **data collection, theory development, or coding** through whether that is lab work/field work/computer work. You will be busy. You should however also be **reading the literature** around your project voraciously. By the end of this first month, you should have a **draft of your introduction**: this must explain why your work is new and important, how it fits into the literature and why you are testing the hypotheses that you set out. Setting this out clearly now - whilst you still have time to adapt - is a huge step towards a successful project. It is also gets you to **write your project as you go along**. You might want to read this book:

> Paul J. Silva (2007) *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing Paperback.* American Psychological Association

It isn't long or difficult and has a very simple message that writing is something you should do frequently and regularly. It doesn't need a laptop or inspiration or perfection: it is the act of organising your thoughts as words and as long as words are being written, you are advancing your research.

Supervisor: The first few weeks are going to need the most input from you as students are uncertain about the process. Agree a framework and a timetable for project progress and perhaps make the student revisit and revise the Gantt chart that was submitted with the project proposal (see section above).

Set a deadline for a draft introduction and provide short feedback on literature coverage, hypothesis framing and writing style. Alternatively, this could be a longer essay to provide a broader overview from which to condense an introduction.

b. End of the first third

Student: You should now have made quite a bit of progress. It is very possible that initial attempts and methods have gone slightly wrong and you are only now beginning to see your data start roll in. Do not panic - teething problems are a common part of research!

However, you do now know what your methods are and what you are doing from day to day. **Write your project methods now whilst it is fresh in your mind.** Explain to yourself and your supervisor what you are doing so that anyone can replicate it - do not leave this until the end. As your work progresses, **update your methods** document but keep the paper style - you are not typing out your lab book, you are writing a paper.

Supervisor: Ask for a draft of the methods at this period. It may not be complete but give guidance on the level of detail and whether the writing is compact enough.

[2] Paper you can bring back, photograph the leaves and alligators.

c. End of second third

Student: Your methods should now be pretty stabilised, so **reread your introduction and methods** and give them a bit of a polish. You almost certainly have enough data now to start preliminary analyses for some of your hypotheses. The dataset may be so small that the analyses have no power, but you can **start to plot your figures** and **start to write the code to do your statistics.** Using this, start to **plan your results section**: write out the structure of your results and think about the key figures and tables?

Supervisor: Ask for a results structure document. At this point, have a planning meeting to check that the hypotheses and analyses all line up clearly and that the student is confident about how the analyses are going to proceed.

You must try and get feedback from your peers as well as your supervisor(s) throughout the early stages in particular. And after the end of the second third or so, you should consider making project-related presentations. These presentations can play a crucial role in giving the committee members, supervisors (and whoever else you can get to attend!) a proper understanding of the project's progress! Ask yourself (and your supervisors(s)!) whether the project continues to be feasible and approximately on schedule (don't forget you made a Gantt chart).

d. Last third

Student: You now have introduction, methods and at least preliminary results. At this point you should **stop collecting data**. It is always tempting to collect more and more data. Don't succumb to this temptation: **rushing your write-up is a quick route to a lower grade no matter how good your data**.

At a minimum, try and give yourself six weeks clear before the deadline. Four weeks of this are to run final analyses and write your discussion. The last two are to **give your supervisor a fortnight before the deadline to look at your final complete draft**. You will need a couple of weeks to give them a chance to provide feedback and then to give you a chance to make changes.

Hand in your thesis. However flawed you might think it is, getting no marks is the worst possible outcome. At this point[3], you are the worst possible judge of the quality of your report - you're too close and too invested to assess it. **Do not delay handing it in** to just revise that last section - the deadline penalties are accumulating faster than you're adding marks. Hand it in and if it is wrong, discuss it in the viva.

Supervisor: Push the complete draft deadline strongly and then try and get final feedback to them as quickly as possible.

Supervisor guidelines

Here are some guidelines for supervisors:

Note that the following text is addressed to supervisors, not students! Students should of course read and be aware of Supervisor guidelines.

The main expectation is each supervisor (you!) guides the student through the process of research. You can and should expect students to *take ownership of the question*. You must provide guidance on the literature, techniques and analysis but you might want to stop short of structuring the scientific story.

On writing, you should expect to provide feedback once on each section. In the suggested framework, this will come to you in sections in a timely fashion. You might give a detailed rewrite on a shorter section to show improved style but otherwise just comment on the draft. The final draft should allow you to check continuity and look at the discussion.

[3] Days, hours or possibly minutes from the deadline.

A possible strategy is to give detailed line-by-line feedback and comments on four pages of the student's choice. This allows the student to pick a section that they are uncertain about and get 'co-author' style feedback. Any further comments should be limited to general structural oversight.

Please do not greatly exceed this level of writing support - we want the students to have roughly equal support and we want to encourage students to critique their own writing. You might be interested in publishing the project too but you're going to have to hold back on polishing the manuscript: it's a project not a manuscript!

Information regarding typical duties and giving a better definition of the role of project supervisors can be found at:

Roles and Responsibilities of the Masters Main Project Supervisor

Thesis Writing and Submission Guidelines

Your dissertation should be submitted in pdf format.

The Thesis should adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Cover Page*: Include a cover page bearing the project title, your name and the month and year of submission. In addition, the following text must appear at the bottom of the cover page:

  A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science/Research at Imperial College London

  Submitted for the MRes/MSc in XXXX

- *Declaration*: The first page inside the cover must provide a brief declaration of the contributions made by you and by others to your project. Key points to address are:
  - Was the data provided to you or did you collect or assemble it?
  - Were you responsible for data processing or cleaning, if required?
  - Were any mathematical models developed by you or by your supervisor?
  - What role, if any, did your supervisor play in developing the analyses presented?

Data and Code Availability statement: At the end of your Main text, before the References section, you must provide a statement titled "*Data and Code Availability*", where you name a data (e.g., Dropbox, FigShare, Zenodo, etc) and a code (e.g., Dropbox, GitHub, etc.) archive from where the data and code can be obtained that will allow replication of your results. The code may be in the form of a single script file. You will be taught the principles of reproducible analyses in the R week of your coursework. If the data cannot be made available publicly (e.g., because it is yet to be formally published), or if there are some other confidentiality issues with submitting the data, speak with your course director and supervisor, and include a clear statement about why the data cannot be made available under the same *Code and Data Availability* header. Note that most data repositories allow timed embargos on data (e.g., Zenodo; see http://about.zenodo.org/policies). *Please note that all these materials will be made available to not just supervisors and project markers but also the external examiners.*

- *Structure and Style*: All reports should have an Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion and possibly, a separate Conclusions section. *Do not format your report to look like a paper from a specific journal*.

- *Word limit:* The main text should not exceed 6,000 words in length (excluding figures, tables, references and appendices/supplementary information). Using the full 6,000 words is often not advisable – this is an absolute maximum. Clarity and brevity are better than wordiness, so do not puff up your thesis to reach 6,000 words. More instructions on content are provided below.

  You **must not** abuse the exclusion of figure and table legends from the word count to squeeze in more material. They must only explain the contents of the figure or table!

- Most journals have an upper limit of the total number of figures and tables – it is rare to see more than a total of about 6 – 8 figures and tables (not 6 – 8 of each!). We would like you to **try and keep under a total of 8 figures and tables.** If you have more than this, then think carefully about whether they are all crucial to helping the reader understand your research. If they are, then include them; if not, then move them to supplementary material.

  Published papers often use complex multipart figures to reduce figure counts. Bringing related figures and tables together is good practice, but is often very time consuming and fiddly. You should prioritize making your selected figures and tables as clear and informative as possible: do not spend time and effort merging figures unless you are sure you have nothing else left to do!

- You should use a 'normal' font at 11 point or 12 point size. We recommend Helvetica, Arial or Times New Roman – similar fonts are also fine. Do **not** use highly stylized or bitmap fonts. You may have any number of references, but note that excessive referencing will be as frowned upon as inadequate referencing!

- Use a in text citation style that has author names (e.g., Smith & Thomas, 2015). *Do not* use numbered in-text citation formats (e.g., as seen in Nature or Science papers).

Typesetting. You may use whatever tool you like, such as Microsoft Word, Openoffice writer or LaTeX. If you are preparing your thesis in LaTex, a template can be found here: https://www.overleaf.com/edu/imperial#templates (a beamer presentation template is also available there).

Make sure you examine the marking criteria to get general guidelines for what markers are looking for. These are available in section 16 Appendix.

Thesis Content

Always aim to be clear and concise. The size of the thesis will vary according to the student and project, but aim to make it as short as necessary to describe the work done and to discuss it in a general context. However, do not omit relevant data and information such as experimental procedures. A common mistake is to assume that the reader knows the projects as well as you do and to leave out clear descriptions of the motivation and structure of your research.

There are a few ways in which your thesis is likely to differ from a typical scientific paper:

- You should make sure that you clearly state your aims/hypotheses/questions towards the end of your introduction.
- You should take care to explain everything adequately so that the examiners can see clear evidence of understanding of all the concepts and methods -- this might entail providing more detail or background in the introduction and methods than in a typical paper. However, some of this detail can be put in an appendix / supplementary information (more information on this below).
- You should make clear what you did versus what you were provided with. For example, did you collect the data that you analysed or were they provided to you by someone else? Did you build the mathematical model yourself, or were you given one that you then analysed or simulated? Did you write all the simulation or analysis code yourself?

You should make sure to discuss limitations of your study and what future work you would do to address those limitations or other questions raised by your work. In your project, most likely you will run out of time to complete everything you want to do. In most papers, the research would not be so time limited, so limitations can be addressed by further work.

The following guidelines on content include tips from Andy Purvis, author of over 100 scientific papers and referee of many more.

- Introduction. A good introduction should leave the reader with a clear idea of the problem to be tackled and looking forward to the more detailed sections to follow. It should include a section on

the general way the problem has been approached. An essential concluding part of the introduction is to clearly define the aims of the research project and any hypotheses tested. Also, think about:

- What is this paper about? (i.e., the broad area, big picture) Why is that interesting?
- Given it's so interesting, why don't we know the answer?
- So, what is this about, more specifically? What are hypothesised to be the important things? Build from the most general and fundamental hypotheses to the most refined or tenuous ones.
- How, roughly and briefly, will you go about testing these hypotheses? Why are you using this system? What approach will you use?
- State clearly what your hypotheses are.

- Methods. This should contain details of any methods used extensively during the project, layout of field experiments, theoretical methods, methods of statistical analyses etc. You can use subheadings for different procedures or tests. If field work is done, a general description of the study area may be included here. Extra methodological details can be placed in appendices. The golden rule is that the reader should be able to repeat what you did, should they so wish. The other rule -- more important for your project than in a paper -- is that you describe in enough detail to show you've understood what you did.

  You should feel free to use subheadings in your methods and results to help organise different parts of your project. If so, keep the same order of the different parts of the project in all of your sections: the methods for testing each hypothesis and the results of those tests are described in the same order as the hypotheses are described in the introduction. Also, think about:

  - What is the overall design of the study?
  - What are the variables and how do they relate to the hypotheses?
  - How did you get the data?
  - What are the characteristics of the data set / experiment -- how many observations, how many replicates etc.
  - General procedures, if any, that are true in all of the analyses (e.g., transformation of data, model checking, how models were compared)
  - How did you test the hypotheses, in the logical order outlined in the introduction (i.e., from the general to the specific)? Make sure you show that your tests are appropriate.

- Results. Describe your results in a logical order: this may not necessarily be the order in which you did the experiments. Briefly summarise the main results at the end of each main experiment or sequence of associated experiments. Do not duplicate results -- put a table or a graph but not both unless the two methods of presentation demonstrate different points of importance. You must refer appropriately to figures or tables in the text and remember to emphasise and perhaps quote significant results. In particular, think about:

  - What were the results of your hypothesis tests, in the order you describe them in the Methods?

- Discussion. This should attempt to tie together the results, what they indicate in a broader context, the extent to which the original aims have been satisfied and what future work is suggested. Return to and address the ideas raised in the introduction. In particular, think about:

  - What's the main thing we know now that we didn't know before?
  - What's the chain of logic and results that means we know it?
  - How does this affect our -- and other scientists' -- view of the world? What are the implications?
  - What are the implications of the intermediate steps in the chain towards the main thing?
  - What are the caveats that apply to this study? (Leave out caveats that apply to all studies.) What might be done about them? (Very important in a project write-up -- What would you do differently if you were doing the project again or had more time?)
  - What future work could build more broadly on what we've found?
  - A nice wrap-up, emphasising how this study in this system is of interest to people who work on other things, or other systems.

- Abstract. Now, and only now, write the abstract, making sure it includes the key point from each of the tips above. Don't rush the abstract -- it is your first opportunity to tell a reader about the research and a clear, concise abstract sets them up to understand your work!

- References. Make sure all cited references appear in this list at the end of the thesis using the standard style from your chosen journal. If you are using LaTeX, use BibTex, of course! If you are using a WYSWYG editor like MS Word, use bibliographic software (e.g. Mendeley) to manage and format your citations. In particular, note that you can use Mendeley to output *.bib files that you can use in LaTeX.

- Supplementary Information. You may provide Supplementary Information (SI) to provide parts of the study not directly relevant to the main narrative: detailed methods, mathematical derivations, details of computer algorithms, long tables of detailed results, and taxonomic descriptions, lists and drawings in an otherwise ecological study. For example, a molecular study might state in the Methods section of the main text that you extracted DNA according to a phenol/chloroform extraction protocol according to a particular reference. In the SI, you should then describe the steps of your lab protocol in sufficient detail that other people could reproduce this procedure by following your description. Similarly, you should put long tables of results in the main text (these should be in SI); only summary tables or graphs and key results of analysis should appear in the main text. However, the project markers are not obliged to read the SI, so the text in the main manuscript should detail everything that the marker *needs to know*. The SI should be presented as an additional document and must be concatenated to the end of the main thesis pdf file before submission (that is, a single pdf file must be submitted). Make sure that the SI is neatly formatted (using the same style as the main text), and that all Sections, Tables and/or Figures of the SI are appropriately cited in the main text.

- Computer Programs. If the program has been published, cite the reference, include it in the reference list and provide a brief outline of the methods it uses. If you are using a program or code generated for the project then a more complete description is needed in the main text. You should provide the code used in an appendix and consider providing a flow chart and usage notes to help interpretation. You should take care to define all the input variables used in the program.

- Figures. You should prepare figures to the same standard required for publication. All journals provide advice on preparing figures for publication, so do look at the advice to authors pages for your chosen journal. All figures must be numbered and have a caption that is sufficiently detailed to explain the main features of the content by itself. All figures must be referred to in the main text of the thesis. Put the figures in appropriate points in the text, close to the text that refers to them. In particular:
  - The resolution of your figures is crucial. For plots, try to use vector image formats (exported as svg, pdf, or eps) and not bitmapped (raster) formats like JPG and TIFF. Standard /LaTex documents typically allow *.eps or *.pdf figures to be inserted. Using the freely available (and very capable!) vector graphics program Inkscape to ``fine-tune'' your figures is often a good idea. Inkscape will also allow svgs to be exported in a /LaTex compatible format (see the Inkscape documentation). For RASTER graphics, the freely available GIMP editor works very well.
  - When using Word, figures in Windows Metafile format are the most reliable vector format. For Word 2011 on Mac, figures in PDF format should give a good result. If you do have to use bitmaps, make sure they are at a high resolution (300 dpi or more) -- this can be particularly important if you need to present line drawings or photographs of specimens or equipment.
  - Plots are all about the data, so reduce margins and maximise the space in the figure for showing the data.
  - Create the figure at the right size -- when it is included in your thesis are all the axis labels and text going to be clearly legible.
  - Avoid `chartjunk' (google Edward Tufte!) -- and avoid superfluous lines, legends and titles along with 3D effects.

- Tables. Each table should be numbered, have a full descriptive caption and again must be referred to in the main text. Column headings should state units of measurement. Avoid large, complicated tables in the main thesis and if you have a large body of numerical data put it in an appendix.

Thesis Format and Submission

Students are required to only submit a digital version of their thesis, however, the layout should be as follows.

The main body of the text should use 1.5 line spacing and page numbering should be used. The thesis margins should be at least 2 cm and the main text font size should not be smaller than 11 point.

Should you wish to bind a copy of your report for yourself or your supervisor a ring binder should be used to bind the thesis. You should include a transparent plastic sheet in front of the cover page and use a plain white A4 sheet of card at the back. You will be provided with printed cover sheets with the college logo.

You must submit an electronic version of your project report on Blackboard and your class git repository (CMEE Masters). Any printed copies should be identical to the electronic version, including the pagination and cover sheet.

We suggest that you bring a printed copy of your Thesis to your External and Internal Vivas.

Penalties for Late Submission

The Policy on Penalties for Late Submission of Assessed Work can be found here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/marking-and-moderation/Late-submission-Policy.pdf

Final Presentations and Viva

The Final Presentation

All students will make a final project presentation as part of the Silwood Frontiers in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation (FrEEC) symposium in early September (see dates in section 3), following their dissertation submission. This presentation will help you prepare for your internal viva, and so will aid in your dissertation assessment. Therefore, please take it seriously. The structure and content of the presentation should match that of the final dissertation. Please see the FrEEC Symposium section (page 13) for further details. All courses formally mark the final presentation — please refer to your Course-specific Guidebook.

EEC MRes students will also give a presentation on their Winter Project in March 2021. This is organised by the EEC Course Directors — details will be sent to you by email.

Internal Viva

Each student will undertake a 30-min Viva with two Examiners (the markers). The marking criteria are available in section 16 Appendix.

External Examiner Viva

Some or all students (depending on course – check your Course specific Guidebook) will be informally interviewed project by the External Examiner, the purpose being to reveal any problems the candidate may have had with the project, and to probe their understanding of the research they undertook. There is no mark attached to this viva with the external examiner, but the examiner will take part in moderation discussions in the Exam Board Meeting and use the feedback from students in assessing the quality of the course and the Student's dissertation work. The candidates for the external viva will be communicated after your first viva is completed. Please consider this when making travel arrangements – we expect you to be present on campus during the whole viva week.

3. Assessment

Master's Programme Regulations

For more general guidelines, see: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/regulations/2017-18/exam/2.-Regulations-for-the-Examination-of-Taught-Master's-Degrees_Oct-2017.pdf

In the regulations below, ***Element*** refers to a large body of work contributing a significant percentage to the student's final mark. Examples include a dissertation or the combined written or viva voce examined elements in a programme. ***Component*** refers to a single piece of work that combines with others to form an element of a programme. Examples include individual essays, presentations, projects or examinations. Imperial College (and therefore, Silwood) Master's programmes normally contain no more than three elements, each contributing at least 25 per cent of the assessment for the award of the degree as a whole.

Please see your Course Guidebook for weightings of individual course components, which varies across Masters Courses.

These regulations are set out in detail in the respective course's Programme Specifications, and in the Academic and Examination Regulations for Master's level degrees on the College's website. https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/

General Masters (MSc or MRes) course regulations

Taking the Course

The word 'take' in the context of these regulations means that you have attended the timetabled parts of a course (unless prevented by illness), sat its examinations (if applicable), submitted the coursework specified for it, and completed the research project (s).

Class Boundaries

The College sets the class of Degree that may be awarded as follows:

- *Distinction*: The student has achieved an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above across the programme.
- *Merit*: The student has achieved an overall weighted average of above 60.00% but less than 70.00%.
- *Pass*: The student has achieved an overall weighted average of 50.00% but less than 60.00%.

  Fail*: A student* is considered to have *Failed* if an overall weighted average of less than 50.00% has been achieved.

Students with a Programme Overall Weighted Average of 69.50-69.99, 59.50-59.99 or 49.50-49.99 (inclusive) will have their Programme Overall Weighted Average rounded up to 70.00, 60.00 or 50.00 respectively. They will be considered as having automatically met the requirement for the higher classification band provided they also meet all other criteria.

Note that if there is more than one Component within an Element (e.g., Exam and Coursework components of the taught element of an MSc, or two projects within the Project Element of an MRes), then the weighted average of both Components must meet the degree classification marks boundaries listed above.

The boundary for a *Distinction* and a *Merit* is the minimal criterion for obtaining a degree with that classification. Additional requirements will also have to be met, which can be specific to each course.

These boundaries will be moderated at the final Board of Examiners meeting with inputs from the Mitigation Advisory Panel to take account of any difficulties you may have experienced (such as illness).

Where appropriate, and at their discretion, a Board of Examiners may recommend an award of distinction where a candidate has achieved an aggregate mark of 70.00% or greater across the programme as a whole AND has obtained a mark of 70.00% or greater in each element with the exception of one element AND has obtained a mark of 65.00% or greater in this latter element.

Where appropriate, and at their discretion, a Board of Examiners may recommend an award of merit where a candidate has achieved an aggregate mark of 60.00% or greater across the programme as a whole AND has obtained a mark of 60.00% or greater in each element with the exception of one element AND has obtained a mark of 55.00% or greater in this latter element.

Candidates should only be considered for promotion to pass, merit or distinction if their aggregate mark is within 2.50% of the relevant borderline. Nevertheless, candidates whom the Board deems to have exceptional circumstances may be considered for promotion even if their aggregate mark is more than 2.50% from the borderline.

Depending on the course (note course specific guidelines) - Where appropriate, students who have a Programme Overall Weighted Average of 70.00 or above or 60.00 or above but have not achieved a minimum of a distinction (70.00%) mark or a minimum of a merit (60.00%) mark in a designated dissertation or major project module/element will be considered for the next classification band where their mark in a designated dissertation or final major project module/element falls within 2.50% of the boundary for a distinction or merit mark respectively (68.00-69.49; 58.00-59.49%).

All marks, results and indicative grades, both at assessment component level and module/ element level, are provisional until considered and ratified by the appropriate Examination Board.
Where a student passes a module/element the student will be awarded the volume of credit assigned to that module/element. The award of partial credit for a module/element is not permitted.
A module/element that has been passed, and for which credit has been awarded, may not be repeated in order to improve a mark or gain additional credit.

Research Projects. Assessment will be by written report and for most courses, viva voce after the completion of each project (Please refer to your Course Guidebook). Information conveyed in the final project presentation will also be taken into consideration, or may be marked independently (check your Course Guidebook).

a) The Supervisor will complete an assessment form on your performance during the project, sending the mark direct to the Course Director.
b) Your project report will be marked by two examiners. Exceptionally, advice may be sought from scientists of equivalent standing from outside the Department.
c) The two markers will both independently mark the thesis (report) and then agree a mark.
d) The Supervisor and Markers should each add a written justification of their marks, to inform the External Examiners.
e) The Markers will viva the student and assign a mark based on the student's performance in the viva.
f) In the case that the two markers differ in 10% or more in their mark, they will provide a written justification on an agreed mark in the assessment form.

MSc Course Regulations

MSc courses are broken into Taught and Research project elements. The Taught element is further broken into Exam and Coursework components. All taught modules (which are parts of a Component, which part of an Element — see definitions above) listed in your Course Guidebook are compulsory.

Assessment of Performance

Taught element. All components (and taught modules within) this element are assessed by written examinations and coursework, or a combination of the two. Coursework assessment will typically be in the form of assessed lab or computer practicals, reports, or practical write-ups. All examinations will be timed limited remote assessments (TRAs) and all coursework will be submitted online.

Receipt of marks for assessed coursework is absolutely dependent upon you delivering the work by the stated deadlines (making due allowance for sickness). Marks for assessed practical class reports can be gained only if you attend and perform the relevant practicals.

Research Project element. Assessment will be by written report and viva voce after completion of the project.

Resit Examinations.

a) If you should fail the examination you are entitled to resit it the next time it is offered;
b) if the coursework element failed to reach the threshold 50% mark, whether through inadequacy or lateness of submission, the student will normally be asked to repeat the specific failed course components (i.e. take them again);
c) a candidate who has attended most of a course but fails its coursework element because of ill health or bereavement will normally be allowed to resubmit the relevant coursework by a new deadline;
d) a candidate who has taken a course but fails to sit its exam because of ill health or bereavement will normally be allowed to carry over their coursework mark for that course to when they next take the exam.

MRes Course Regulations

MRes courses are broken into Taught and Research project elements. The taught element is typically assessed through Coursework. Attendance of all modules within the taught component listed in your Course Guidebook is compulsory.

Assessment of Performance

Research Project element. Assessment will be by written report, a presentation, and viva voce after the completion of each masters project (both winter and summer projects, if applicable).

Instruction to Candidates for Examinations

Students who are candidates for examinations are asked to note that all examinations are conducted in accordance with the College Regulations. The relevant set of regulations will depend on your programme and year of entry, please see our Regulations webpage to determine which apply to you:

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

Instructions for exam candidates can be found here:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/exam-arrangements-and-re-sits/Instructions-to-candidates-for-examinations.pdf

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

As your programme of study continues, you will be taught the concept of academic integrity and how you can ensure that any work that you complete now, or in the future, conforms to these principles. This means that your work acknowledges the ideas and results of others, that it is conducted in an ethical way and that it is free from plagiarism.

Academic misconduct is the attempt to gain an academic advantage, whether intentionally or unintentionally, in any piece of assessment submitted to the College. This includes plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, exam offences (cheating) or dishonest practice. Full details of the policy can be found at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/undergraduate-and-taught-postgraduate/exams-assessments-and-regulations/plagiarism-academic-integrity--exam-offences/

Definitions of the main forms of academic misconduct can be found below:

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's thoughts, words, images or diagrams as though they were your own. Another form of plagiarism is self-plagiarism, which involves using your own prior work without acknowledging its reuse. Plagiarism may be intentional, by deliberately trying to use another person's work by disguising it or not citing the source, or unintentional where citation and/or referencing is incorrect.

Plagiarism must be avoided, with particular care on coursework, essays, reports and projects written in your own time and also in open and closed book written examinations. You can support your understanding of proper referencing and citation by using the resources available from the College such as the Library learning support webpages at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/plagiarism-awareness/

Where plagiarism is detected in group work, members of that group may be deemed to have collective responsibility for the integrity of work submitted by that group and may be liable for any penalty imposed, proportionate to their contribution.

TurnitinUK is an online text matching service which assists staff in detecting possible plagiarism. The system enables institutions and staff to compare students' work with a vast database of electronic sources. Your programme team will explain how it is used in your programme

www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/teaching-learning/turnitin/

Collusion

This is the term used for work that has been conducted by more than one individual, in contravention of the assessment brief. Where it is alleged that there has been collusion, all parties will be investigated under the Academic Misconduct procedure.

You should note that whilst the College encourages students to support each other in your studies you should be careful to ensure that you do not exceed any assessment brief with regards to individual work, acknowledge the contributions of others in your work, and do not leave yourself open to allegations that you have supplied answers to enable another student to commit academic misconduct.

Exam offences

Exam offences fall into two categories. These are offences that may be disruptive in the exam venue or are considered an attempt to cheat. This can include behaviour such as bringing unauthorised material into an exam, attempting to communicate with others apart from the invigilator, trying to remove examination material without permission, taking an exam for someone else or getting someone else to take an exam for you. It would also include having an electronic device that has not been fully turned off or failing to follow a reasonable instruction of the invigilators.

Dishonest practice

Examples of dishonest practice include bribery, contact cheating (buying work from an essay mill or other individual to submit as your own), attempting to access exam papers before the exam, making a false claim for mitigating circumstances or providing fraudulent evidence, falsifying documentation or signatures in relation to assessment or a claim for mitigating circumstances.

4. Final Board of Examiners

Final Board of Examiners

Each course has a Final Board of Examiners consisting of a Chair (a Silwood Academic), the course's Director(s), and the External Examiner(s). An exam board meeting will be held after all the Coursework and Research Project marks have been finalized, and will follow 1:1 meetings of students (the External Examiner "Viva" – see section above). The purpose of the board meeting is to determine whether any of the students' marks need to be moderated based upon the External Examiner's interviews with students, and for the External Examiners to provide feedback about the quality of the course and the Students' dissertations to the Course director(s). Subsequently, the external Examiners will submit a report that provides an assessment of the course and any recommendations for improvement.

Details of the External Examiners for your course can be found in your Course-specific Guidebook.

External examining acts as an essential part of the College's quality assurance and enhancement process, serving to ensure that academic standards are maintained. The knowledgeable and independent views of external examiners are invaluable in certifying that the College's awards are appropriate and comparable as well as highlighting good practice and potential areas of enhancement.

It is inappropriate for you to submit complaints or representations direct to external examiners or to seek to influence your external examiners. Inappropriate communication towards an examiner would make you liable for disciplinary action.

A summary of External examiners reports from the previous academic year can be found here:

www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/tools-and-reference/quality-assurance-enhancement/external-examining/information-for-staff

5. Location and Facilities

Imperial has a number of campuses in London and the South East. All have excellent travel links and are easily accessible via public transport.

Your main location of study will be:

Silwood Park Campus, Buckhurst Road, Ascot, Berks SL5 7PY

The emergency number for Silwood Park is 4444

You may also contact Silwood Park Security by:

020 7594 2515

spsecurity@imperial.ac.uk

The Department's administration office is located on the ground floor of the Hamilton building (room G.16) and is open Monday to Friday, 08.30-16.30.

The technicians office is located on the ground floor of Hamilton building (room G.11) and is open from Monday to Friday, 08.30-11.00, 11.45-16.30. The technicians can help with office keys, CE rooms and greenhouses, lab and course materials and equipment, coordination for fieldwork including maps and Silwood field data. Also the booking of and queries relating to lecture rooms.

Computing and Information Technology

Computer access and printing is available in the Computer Room, on the first floor of the Hamilton building, next door to the library. There are 26 desktop computers available for students to use, and numerous network points for laptops. There are a further 10 PCs available in Seminar Room 1, along with a colour printer. A second colour printer is also available in the ground floor foyer of the Hamilton Building. Computer practicals will typically be held in the Hamilton Computer Room.

In addition, during certain modules you will be required to use two local, multi-core linux machines in the Pawar lab, called ``William'' and ``Harvey''. These make it relatively easy to learn to run large-ish parallel jobs. If you want access, please ask Samraat Pawar. You would be able to log onto one of them remotely and run single-core or multi-core simulations, statistical fitting, and other computing jobs, with a few rules or constraints to be followed out of respect for other users. William has 16 cores and Harvey has 12. They each have around 50Gb memory. Documentation for these can be found at https://bitbucket.org/mhasoba/pawarlab/raw/8d814b4571d265d3939b84f9d4fb793e2c716fce/Computing/LabServers/LabServers.pdf

Finally, the Imperial College High Performance Computing (HPC) Cluster puts over 10,000 cores at the disposal of a researcher. For most purposes in quantitative biology this is essentially infinite computing power.

IT help and support is provided via the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) web page at: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ict. To request help, please contact the ICT Service Desk by email service.desk@imperial.ac.uk or call ext 49000. ICT Computer support at Silwood Park is available in Hamilton Building Room 1.12 (on the 1st floor) from 12.30 to 13.30 Mondays to Fridays during term. Online support is also available: https://imperial.service-now.com/ict/

Please also check your Course guidebook for course-specific instructions about computing.

Lecture Rooms

Most core lectures will be held in the Hamilton Building. Your timetable and Blackboard should be consulted for room allocations.

Field Laboratory

The Field Lab is located on the ground floor of the Hamilton building directly opposite the main entrance.

GIS Laboratory

The cross-faculty GIS Lab provides technical and analytical support to multiple research projects, tailor-made training for researchers and students, and facilitates access to many global and regional sources of geographical, environmental and biodiversity information relevant to particular scientific subjects and study areas. There is access to licensed professional GIS software (ArcGIS, ENVI) and variety of freeware packages, high-performance workstations and collection of GIS handbooks and digital base maps. The facility includes a large-format plotter suitable for printing professional-quality maps and posters. Located on the ground floor of the CPB Building.

Desk and Work Spaces

Throughout the year, students are also welcome to work in the Hamilton building. However, the Hamilton building lobby closes at 19.00. Students can also work in the Library and the desks in the CPB common room, though the library has limited desk spaces.

Project supervisors may also make desk space available to Masters students at their own discretion. Feel free to ask your supervisor about obtaining a desk space in her/his lab.

Silwood Park Library

The Silwood Park Campus Library (the Michael Way Library) is located on the first floor of the Hamilton Building. It specialises in ecology, evolution, biodiversity, conservation, plant and animal biology and entomology, and also covers related subjects in agriculture, life sciences and environmental sciences. It maintains a collection of recommended textbooks for the Master's courses and loan copies of some MSc and MRes theses from the last 5 years, the rest of which are available electronically. Books held at other Imperial libraries can be requested, and it is also possible to borrow books and be supplied with articles from non-Imperial libraries upon request. Students and staff of the College also have access to an enormous number of e-books and e-journals with their institutional log-ins.

The library has a few study spaces, and is open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It is staffed from 10.00-17.00 Monday to Friday. **NB:** opening hours are subject to change at short notice during the 2020/21 academic year.

Silwood.library@imperial.ac.uk

www.imperial.ac.uk/library

Lockers

Lockers are available for use throughout the year and are located on the ground floor of the Hamilton building. A £5.00 cash deposit is required for a locker key which can be obtained from the Postgraduate Administrator.

Tree House Refectory and Silwood Bar

The Tree House refectory opens for breakfast, morning coffee and lunch on weekdays.

Breakfast and coffee: 08.00-12noon

Lunch: 12noon-14.00

The menu changes daily and can be viewed in the refectory building.

The refectory building also houses the Silwood Bar, which is open from 5pm usually on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, but is subject to change. The bar is not open at weekends, but pub games, a foosball table, dart board, table tennis table, pool table and various board games are available from the games room adjoining the bar, and can be accessed at any time.

Silwood Park Fields

The campus covers about 100 ha, and contains grasslands, scrubland, and ancient as well as several decades-old oak-dominated woodlands. It also hosts several active field studies, some of which have been run for decades. These experiments are helping to test a broad range of hypotheses about the impact of agrochemicals and alteration of grazers-plant interactions on plant and microbial communities, the effects of climate change on the assembly of natural communities and ecosystem function, and the effect of species interactions and habitat structure in population dynamics and animal behaviour. The well-known history of the fields along with a substantial amount of information about the species that live here makes Silwood Park an ideal site for field research.

You can find more information about the field and long-term studies and weather at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/research/field-experiments/

Maps

Campus maps and travel directions are available at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/silwood-park/find-us/

Smoke-Free Policy

All Imperial campuses and properties are smoke-free. This means that smoking by staff and students is not permitted on or within 20 metres of College land. The policy covers all College properties, including student accommodation and sports grounds.

www.imperial.ac.uk/smoke-free

SafeZone

SafeZone is the College's new app through which you can quickly and directly contact the Security team whenever you need them. In an emergency situation, whether you're in need of First Aid or want to report an incident on campus, SafeZone allows you to be immediately put in touch with a member of our Security team and, at the touch of a button, can share your location and personal profile so that they can respond quickly and effectively to your specific needs. It also allows the entire College community to stay informed in the event of a major incident in London or wherever you may be in the world. SafeZone also provides information on other services, such as real-time updates on the College shuttle bus.

SafeZone is optional to register to and is now available to download on the Apple and Android App stores. Visit www.imperial.ac.uk/campus-security for more details about SafeZone.

All existing phone numbers for the Security team are still operational. In the event of an emergency, you can still call 4444 from any internal College phone. In the event of a wider incident in London, you can now also call 0300 131 4444, Imperial's Emergency Recorded Message Line, which will point you in the direction of up-to-date information and advice.

Changes due to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The College will keep you informed about any further changes that may affect you due to the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19). The COVID-19 FAQs on the website are a repository of helpful information and the latest guidance can be found at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/covid-19/students

6. Placements

The College defines a placement as:

“work experience, assessed project work, a period of course-based study or a period of research (for which academic credit is awarded and/or where the student remains subject to College student regulations during the relevant period) and where there is a transfer of direct supervision of the student to a third party (i.e. where a member of staff at the third party acts as the day-to-day supervisor/manager) for a period of two weeks or more.”

Academic departments are responsible for managing any study or work placement which forms part of your degree programme. It is expected that you will contribute to the process of planning your placement.

For guidance on this, see the College’s Placement and Learning Policy and associated good practice:

www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/placement-learning

For more information on placements visit the Placements website:

www.imperial.ac.uk/placements

If you are considering/planning a placement outside the UK you should also refer to the Placement Abroad Handbook:

www.imperial.ac.uk/placements/information-for-imperial-college-students

7. Working While Studying

If you are studying full time, the College recommends that you do not work part-time during term time. If this is unavoidable, we advise you to work no more than 10–15 hours per week, which should be principally at weekends and not within normal College working hours. Course Directors reserve the right to timetable activities at any time within normal College working hours, and they will not flex those timetables around you working hours.

Working in excess of these hours could impact adversely on your studies or health.

If you are here on a Tier 4 visa you can work no more than 20 hours a week during term time. Some sponsors may not permit you to take up work outside your studies and others may specify a limit.

If you are considering part-time work during term time you are strongly advised to discuss this issue with your supervisor or Personal/Senior Tutor. If you are on a Tier 4 visa you should also seek advice from the International Student Support team regarding visa limitations on employment.

The College's examination boards will not normally consider as mitigating circumstances any negative impact that part-time work during term-time may have had on your performance in examinations or in other assessed work. Examinations or vivas cannot be rescheduled to accommodate your part-time working arrangements.

8. Health and Safety

Keeping you safe is a top priority for us. We continue to be guided by the latest official government guidance. At Imperial, we also have some of the world's leading researchers of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic who are advising governments around the world on the most effective measures to take to protect people from the virus as well as developing and testing a new vaccine.

Government guidance will continue to change in the UK over the coming months and we are regularly updating our plans for your safe return to campus.

You can find the latest guidance on the measures we are taking for your safety, plus information about the healthcare support available to you at:
www.imperial.ac.uk/about/covid-19/students/keeping-you-safe/

What measures to expect in the Autumn Term?

Arrangements may change, but on current plans, as a minimum you can expect:

Welcome pack

On arrival at Imperial, you will receive a welcome pack that will include three washable cotton face coverings, hand sanitiser and anti-viral wipes.

Good infection control

The College is implementing good infection control procedures, for example, by frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly including door handles, light switches, furniture, handrails, IT equipment, desks, phones, flush plates, taps and dispensers. Perspex screens will also be used across the College in reception and service areas.

Hand sanitisers and multi-surface cleaning wipes

Around the College there will be hand sanitisers and multi-surface cleaning wipes for you to use, as well as plenty of hand-washing facilities.

Social distancing

You should keep at least two metres apart from other people. If you need to be in closer proximity, you should still stay more than one metre apart and it will be essential you adopt additional mitigating measures, such as wearing a face covering or a face visor, depending on where you are within campus. There will be clear signage systems and protocols to ensure you can go about your business while maintaining social distancing and good hygiene.

Face coverings

On campus, wearing a face covering is essential in most locations. Face coverings should cover both your mouth and nose.

When it's essential to wear a face covering:

- Walking around campus
- Cafes and welfare spaces
- Lecture theatres
- Teaching rooms
- Library (in queues)
- Halls of residence
- Travelling on public transport

When it's not essential to wear a face covering:

- Library (when studying)
- Offices
- Laboratories
- Workshops

For laboratories and other high-risk areas please refer to the local risk assessments for exact requirements.

You are responsible for looking after your own health and safety and that of others affected by your College-related work and leisure activities. You must:

- comply with all local and College policies, procedures and codes of practice and with the arrangements which the College has in place to control health and safety risks.
- ensure that your activities do not present unnecessary or uncontrolled risks to yourself or to others.
- attend appropriate induction and training.
- report any accidents, unsafe circumstances or work-related ill health of which you become aware to the appropriate person.
- not interfere with any equipment provided for Health and Safety.
- inform your supervisor or the person in charge of the activity in cases where you are not confident that you are competent to carry out a work or leisure activity safely, rather than compromise your own safety or the safety of others.

The College's Health and Safety Statement can be found at:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/safety-management/health-and-safety-policy-statement/

Your Departmental safety contact is:

Stefan Hoyle

Sir Alexander Fleming Building, South Kensington Campus

07872 850018

s.hoyle@imperial.ac.uk

You may be required to complete inductions and attend training sessions to safely complete this course. These include:

Risk Assessment Foundation Training (RAFT)

This is a mandatory course for all students. It is an electronic assessment that is based on Blackboard and provides training on the basic principles of risk assessment, significant risk and College forms, procedures and guidance. RAFT must be completed by all students *before* undertaking research

projects. The learning objectives for the course are tested in an online test. All MRes students will be enrolled and receive links and information at beginning of October and MSc students will be enrolled before commencement of projects. If you have any questions on the course please contact Stef Hoyle (s.hoyle@imperial.ac.uk).

Further information is available here:

http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/safety/index/raft

The College Safety Department

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

The College's activities range from the use of hazardous materials (biological, chemical and radiological substances) to field work, heavy or awkward lifting, driving, and working alone or late.

All College activities are covered by general health and safety regulations, but higher risk activities will have additional requirements.

The Safety Department helps departments and individuals ensure effective safety management systems are in place throughout the College to comply with specific legal requirements.

Sometimes the management systems fail, and an accident or a near-miss incident arises; it is important that we learn lessons from such situations to prevent recurrence and the Safety Department can support such investigations. All accidents and incidents should be reported online at:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/safety

To report concerns or to ask for advice you should contact your programme director, academic supervisor or departmental safety officer in the first instance. You may also contact the Safety Department directly.

Occupational Health requirements

The College Occupational Health Service provides services to:

- protect health at work
- assess and advise on fitness for work
- ensure that health issues are effectively managed

The Service promotes and supports a culture where the physical and psychological health of staff, students and others involved in the College is respected, protected and improved whilst at work.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health

Lone Working and Supervision

Students must be appropriately supervised and monitored when working in a laboratory area.

Masters students **must not** be left to work alone in the lab. Masters students cannot supervise each other, an experienced competent member of the lab must be available.

Fieldwork activities must be planned so that Masters students are not working alone or their supervisor approves a Lone Working request.

Fieldwork Health and Safety

Please ensure that you think about health and safety for your fieldwork well in advance, and that you discuss your plans early with your prospective supervisor, Course Director and the Department Health and Safety representatives.

Where the FCO advice is either avoid all travel or avoid all but essential travel to parts of a country, or other information sources suggest that travel is not advised then the students must avoid these countries completely and identify other less hazardous countries in which to conduct their projects.

Students should plan their fieldwork so there is no lone working while out in the field.

Please refer to the General guidelines for Silwood Park field experiments and collections if you plan to do any fieldwork in the grounds of the campus. This document contains a Health and Safety Procedures section and is available online: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/research/field-experiments/

Before setting up your experiment or course practical please get familiar with the areas where field research at Silwood Park is taking place and with the marks and tags used by the experiments: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/silwood-park/research/field-experiments/field-signs-and-markings/

Good Laboratory Practice

- Always ensure that an appropriate risk assessment has been completed and you are familiar with the identified risks and emergency procedures before starting lab work.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke or apply make-up.
- Wear a laboratory coat and fasten it correctly.
- Do not pipette anything by mouth.
- When necessary wear gloves of an appropriate type and do not wear gloves in corridors.
- Always use the correct route for waste disposal.
- Wear correct eye protection when appropriate.
- Keep benches tidy and floor areas and corridors unobstructed.
- Know the drill for emergency evacuation.
- All Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences must be reported.
- Report all defects to your supervisor or your Area Safety Representative.
- Permit to work forms must be completed before visiting ‘contractors’ begin work.
- All protocols and procedures must have a risk assessment.

9. College Policies and Procedures

Regulations for Students

All registered students of the College are subject to the College Regulations. The relevant set of regulations will depend on your programme and year of entry, please see our Regulations webpage to determine which apply to you:

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

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/terms-and-conditions

Academic Feedback Policy

We are committed in providing you with timely and appropriate feedback on your academic progress and achievement, enabling you to reflect on your academic progress. During your study you will receive different methods of feedback according to assessment type, discipline, level of study and your individual need. Further guidance on the Policy of Academic Feedback can be found on the Academic Governance website:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/academic-feedback/Academic-feedback-policy-for-taught-programmes.pdf

Please note that your examination scripts once completed belong to the College under the GDPR legislation. This means that you do not have the right to view them. Please see the College GDPR webpages for further information at www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/information-governance/data-protection/internal-guidance/guide-2---exam-records/

Provisional Marks Guidance

Provisional marks are agreed marks that have yet to be ratified by the Board of Examiners. These results are provisional and are subject to change by the Board of Examiners. The release of provisional marks is permitted except in certain circumstances. Further information can be found in the Guidelines for Issuing Provisional Marks to Students on Taught Programmes:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/marking-and-moderation/Guidelines-for-issuing-provisional-marks-to-students-on-taught-programmes.pdf

Late Submission Policy

You are responsible for ensuring that you submit your coursework assessments in the correct format and by the published deadline (date and time). Any piece of assessed work which is submitted beyond the published deadline (date and time) would be classed as a late submission and will incur a penalty (a cap at the pass mark, or it is classed as a fail). Further guidance on Late Submission of Assessments can be found on the Academic Governance website:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/marking-and-moderation/Late-submission-Policy.pdf

If you submit late due to mitigating circumstances, you may be able to make a claim that means that the cap on your mark is lifted. Please see below and the policy document.

Mitigating Circumstances

During your studies you may be affected by sudden or unforeseen circumstances. You should always contact your personal tutor for advice and support. If this happens at the time of, or immediately preceding your assessments you may be able to make a claim for mitigating circumstances. If successful this claim enables the Board of Examiners when reviewing your marks at the end of the year to have greater discretion with regards to offering repeat attempts (either capped or uncapped), a repeat year, or with your progression or final classification. Please note, the Board are not permitted to amend the marks that you were awarded, only to take your claim into account making decisions.

All claims must be supported by independent evidence and submitted within 10 working days of the assessment deadline. Any claim made after this deadline is likely to be rejected unless there is a good reason (such as you were still unwell) until the point of submitting the claim. Details of the College's Mitigating Circumstances procedure can be found under the Mitigating Circumstances tab on the page below:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/

Through the procedure you may also be able to request an extension to deadline to some forms of assessment. This procedure should be used where possible to enable student to complete their studies within the normal College year, rather than outside the teaching session.

Support for ongoing or long-term conditions, or for registered disabilities would not normally fall under the remit of mitigating circumstances and students should be supported through their studies with Additional Examination Arrangements. More details can be found at

 www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service/support/exams/

Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures

As has been highlighted under the Academic Integrity section, it is important that you learn how to properly attribute and acknowledge the work, data and ideas of others. Any proven form of academic misconduct is subject to penalties as outlined in the College's Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/

MRes Code of Practice

The Code of Practice for MRes programmes is available here:

 www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/masters-level-precepts/Code-of-practice-for-MRes-programmes.pdf

Unsatisfactory Progress

Unfortunately sometimes students struggle to make satisfactory progress in their study or their engagement with their studies falls below our expectations. The College has a process to identify and support students by reaffirming these expectations with an action plan. The full details of this process, and the appeals procedure relating to it can be found at:

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

Academic Appeal Procedure

We have rigorous regulations in place to ensure assessments are conducted with fairness and consistency, claims for mitigating circumstances have been considered reasonably and in line with the regulations of the College, and that the decisions of the Boards of Examiners maintain the integrity of our academic awards. In the event that you believe that you have grounds to appeal these decisions, we have laid out clear and consistent procedures through which appeals can be investigated and considered:

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

Arithmetic Marks Check

If you consider that there may have been an error in the adding up of your marks, you may request an arithmetic mark check. Please note that this must be requested within 10 working days of the official notification of your results from the Results team using the procedure below. You may not request a marks check for a previous year of study.

Student Complaints

The College strives to ensure that all students are well supported in their studies and receive a good experience of their programme and the wider College activities. If you feel that your experience has not lived up to these expectations the College has an agreed Students Complaints process through which your concern can be investigated and considered.

If you have any concerns about your experience at the College and have been unable to address these informally, you should contact Student Complaints who can provide advice about what is the appropriate way to seek to resolve this at:

student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk

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

Student Disciplinary Procedure

The College has the right to investigate any allegation of misconduct against a student and may take disciplinary action where it decides, on the balance of probabilities, that a breach of discipline has been committed. The general principles of the Student Disciplinary Procedure are available on the College website:

www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/college-governance/charters/ordinances/students/

Intellectual Property Rights Policy

For further guidance on the College's Intellectual Property Rights Policy is available on the College website:

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/enterprising-students/intellectual-property/

Further information about the Imperial Enterprise Lab can be found at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/enterprising-students
www.imperialenterpriselab.com/support/experts-in-residence

Use of IT Facilities

View the Conditions of Use of IT Facilities:

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/computers-printing/staff-computers/conditions-of-use-for-it-facilities/

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

All staff and students who work with personal data are responsible for complying with GDPR. The College will provide support and guidance but you do have a personal responsibility to comply.

In line with the above please see the College's privacy notice for students which form part of the terms and conditions of registration with the College.

https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/ICL---Privacy--Notice-for-Students-and-prospective-students.pdf

10. Well-being and Advice

In your department

Your Department has a system of academic and pastoral care in place to make sure you have access to the appropriate support throughout your time here. As well as the information below, the Silwood Master's website (https://silwoodmasters.info/) is a regularly updated resource with information and advice on how to stay happy and healthy during your studies.

Your Personal Tutor

Your Personal Tutor is your first point of contact for pastoral support and advice. You can arrange to have a meeting with them at any time during your studies (although most Personal Tutors will have set office hours or may require you to make an appointment).

If necessary, they will direct you to an appropriate source of support.

Senior Tutor

The Department's Senior Tutor can offer pastoral support and advice. You can arrange to have a meeting with them at any time during your studies.

If necessary they will direct you to an appropriate source of support.

Dr Will Pearse

020 7594

Room 2.04, Southwood, Silwood Park Campus

will.pearse@imperial.ac.uk

Students with academic problems relating to their course should initially talk to the relevant module convenor or the course director. Personal problems, financial difficulties, etc, can be discussed with the course directors, the course welfare tutor or the Senior Tutor. Students may also be assigned a personal tutor with whom they can discuss both academic and personal matters.

Departmental Disability Officers

Departmental Disability Officers are the first point of contact within your department for issues around disability. They can apply for additional exam arrangements on your behalf, and will facilitate support within your Department.

Dr Will Pearse is the Disability Officer for Silwood Park.

020 7594

Room 2.04, Southwood, Silwood Park Campus

will.pearse@imperial.ac.uk

More information on Departmental Disability Officers is available at:

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

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

www.imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/undergraduate-and-taught-postgraduate/exams-assessments-and-regulations/additional-exam-arrangements-in-respect-of-disability

Your Union

All Imperial students automatically become members of Imperial College Union when they register at the College. The Union provides a range of independent support.

Imperial College Union Advice Centre

The Union's advisers are on hand to provide free, confidential, independent advice on a wide range of welfare issues including housing, money and debt, employment and consumer rights, and personal safety.

www.imperialcollegeunion.org/advice

Student representatives

Imperial College Union operates two Representation Networks of over 600 elected student representatives – the Academic Representation Network and the Wellbeing Representation Network. Reps represent the voice of students and can direct you to internal and external support services. The Union's Liberation Officers also work to make sure that the views of under-represented and interest groups are heard at the College.

If you have any feedback about issues in your department relating to academic or wellbeing issues, you can speak to one of your student representatives.

www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/a-to-z

Student Hub

At the Student Hub, you can access advice about accommodation, admissions and financial support and get help with international student enquiries, questions about student records, and exams.

www.imperial.ac.uk/student-hub

Student Support Zone

The Student Support Zone has lots of information about the resources available at Imperial and beyond to help you to stay healthy and happy. It's a great place to start when you're looking for some support – it covers advice about housing and money, health, wellbeing and maintaining a good work-life balance, and provides the details of who you can contact if you need some extra support.

www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone

Useful support contacts

Health and wellbeing

Even if you're fit and healthy we recommend that you register with a local doctor (GP) as soon as you arrive. The local surgery is Kings Corner Surgery in Sunninghill. Appointments are available on campus on Thursday mornings between 10:50 and 11:30. Appointments are available at other times by visiting the surgery in Sunninghill.

Kings Corner Surgery, Kings Road, Sunninghill, Ascot, Berks, SL5 0AE
01344 623181
www.kingscornersurgery.co.uk

Imperial College Health Centre
40 Prince's Gardens, South Kensington Campus
020 7584 6301
imperialcollege.hc@nhs.net
www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk

Imperial College Dental Centre
Prince's Gardens, South Kensington Campus
020 7589 6623
imperialcollegedental.co.uk

Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service
020 7594 9637
counselling@imperial.ac.uk
www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling

Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Service
Chemistry Building, South Kensington Campus
chaplaincy@imperial.ac.uk
www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy

Disability Advisory Service
Room 566, Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus
020 7594 9755
disabilities@imperial.ac.uk
www.imperial.ac.uk/disability-advisory-service

International students' support

Centre for Academic English

Level 3, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

www.imperial.ac.uk/academic-english

International Student Support team

020 7594 8040

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

Careers

Careers Service

Level 5, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

020 7594 8024

careers@imperial.ac.uk

www.imperial.ac.uk/careers

ICT and software

ICT Service Desk

Central Library, South Kensington Campus

020 7594 9000

www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/service-desk

Software shop

www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/shop/software

11. Student Records and Data

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

The Team is responsible for the processing of student results and awards on the student record system as well as the production and distribution of academic transcripts and certificates of award.

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

Student records and examinations

+44 (0)20 7594 7268

student.records@imperial.ac.uk

Degree certificates

+44 (0)20 7594 8037

certificates@imperial.ac.uk

12. Work-life Balance

The pace and intensity of postgraduate study at Imperial can be demanding so it's important to find time for outside interests.

Silwood Park Students' Union

Silwood Park Union (SPU) represents the student community based at Silwood Park Campus.

Silwood Park Union (SPU) represents the student community based at the Silwood Park Campus of Imperial College London. We organise events and run clubs and societies with a grant from Imperial College Union (ICU). Most importantly, our Union is run by the students for the students - we need *you* to make things happen. Though your first priority at Silwood will be your academic work, getting involved will help you make friends, gain experience working in or leading teams and help you make the most of your time here.

Silwood.chair@imperial.ac.uk

Graduate Students' Union

The Graduate Students' Union is the postgraduate arm of Imperial College Union. The GSU works alongside the Imperial College Union President to ensure that the requirements of postgraduate students are catered for. It also organises a number of academic and social events during the year.

Move Imperial

Imperial College has a wide range of sports and activities on offer that cater for all standards and abilities. We have a recreational activity offer, competitive sports teams and an elite sport programme. We are dedicated to ensuring we have a diverse, inclusive and exciting offer for all.

Whilst we are closely monitoring government advice, we are also beholden to the overarching College strategy of a phased return to campus and a reduction in on-campus activity until at least the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year. In line with this, we are anticipating being able to begin to reopen some of our facilities from Monday 7 September; details will be communicated regularly to our community.

Sports facilities at Silwood Park include the 'Impetus' fitness gym, which offers state-of-the-art cardiovascular and resistance equipment, along with changing facilities. The gym is open to all students, staff and Science Park employees seven days a week from 07.00-22.00.

www.imperial.ac.uk/sport

We have a huge collection of online resources, home workout videos, healthy recipes and playlists available to all as part of our MoveFromHome campaign, more information can be found at

www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/movefromhome

13. Student feedback and representation

Feedback from Students

The College and Union is committed to continually improving your education and wider experience and a key part of this is your feedback. Feedback is thoroughly discussed by your student representatives and staff.

Student Representation

Student Representatives are recruited from every department to gather feedback from students to discuss with staff. More information about the role, and instructions on how to become an academic representative, are available on the Imperial College Union (ICU) website.

www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/academic-representatives/overview

Each masters Course will nominate one Student Representative by the end of October — your Course director will explain the procedure for nominating representatives at the start of the course.

Staff-Student Committee

Staff-Student Committees are designed to strengthen understanding and improve the flow of communication between staff and students and, through open dialogue, promote high standards of education and training, in a co-operative and constructive atmosphere. College good practice guidelines for staff-student committees are available here:

www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/student-feedback

Each Masters Course at Silwood Park will have the following Staff-Student Committee meetings:

a. A course-specific feedback session with their course Director(s) in the **Autumn** and **Spring Term** (dates vary by Course — please talk to your Course Director). This will be attended by the course student representative, as many of the students as possible, and the Course Director. It is the Student Representative's duty to come prepared with a list of course-related issues that have come up. The objective of this meeting is for the students to provide feedback that may be used to address the issues, to the extent possible, in the remainder of the course. The Individual Course Directors will then provide a summary of their respective meetings and subsequent actions in Course Directors Meeting in **Late Summer** to the Silwood Park Masters Coordinator.

b. A cross-course feedback session twice a year**,** attended by the Faculty Vice-Dean (Education), Director of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty Education Manager, representatives from the Graduate Union, the Silwood Park Masters Coordinator, Course Administrator, Senior Tutor, and each course's Student Representative. Additional Faculty-led meetings also take place at specified times during the year.

14. Student Surveys

Your feedback is important to your department, the College and Imperial College Union.

Whilst there are a variety of ways to give your feedback on your Imperial experience, the following College-wide surveys give you regular opportunities to make your voice heard:

- PG SOLE lecturer/module Survey or departmental equivalent
- Student Experience Survey (SES)

The PG SOLE module/lecturer survey (or equivalent for your department) runs at the end of the autumn and spring terms. This survey is your chance to tell us about the modules you have attended and the lecturers who taught them.

The Student Experience Survey (SES) is an opportunity to give your views on your experience beyond the lecture theatres or labs. This survey will cover a range of College services and on the Imperial College Union.

All these surveys are confidential and the more students that take part the more representative the results so please take a few minutes to give your views.

The Union's "You Said, We Did" campaign shows you some of the changes made as a result of survey feedback:

www.imperialcollegeunion.org/you-said-we-did

The Union's response to surveys can be found here:
https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/your-representatives/responses

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

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

For further information on surveys, please contact the Registry's Surveys Team at:

surveys.registrysupport@imperial.ac.uk

15. And finally

Alumni Services

When you graduate you will be part of a lifelong community of over 190,000 alumni, with access to a range of alumni benefits including:

- discounts on further study at the College and at Imperial College Business School
- alumni email service
- networking events
- access to the Library and online resources
- access to the full range of careers support offered to current students for up to three years after you graduate
- access to our Alumni Visitor Centre at the South Kensington Campus, with free Wifi, complimentary drinks, newspapers and magazines, and daytime left luggage facility

Visit the Alumni website to find out more about your new community, including case studies of other alumni and a directory of local alumni groups in countries across the world.

 www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni

16. Appendix

MARKING CRITERIA for EXAMS and ESSAYS

The following criteria should be used to mark both exam answers and coursework essays.

Only the percent figures in column 2 should be used *(marks entered on returned work should be the grade scores only, with pluses and minuses to indicate scores in between the boundaries).*

NB Mark must take account of what is reasonably achievable under exam conditions.

Literal Grade	Mark %	Criteria (Problem type answers should be marked on a semi-absolute scale)
A	100 95 90 85	**Exceptional** Answer is an exceptionally well presented exposition of the subject, showing: (i) command of the relevant concepts and facts, (ii) a high critical or analytical ability**, (iii) originality, and (iv) evidence of substantial outside reading (where applicable).
B	80 76 72	**Excellent** Answer is a very well presented exposition of the subject, showing many of the above features, but falling short in one or two of them.
C	68 65 62	**Very Good to Good** Answer (i) shows a clear grasp of the relevant concepts and facts, (ii) gives an accurate account of the relevant taught material *(as exemplified in the model answer),*and (iii) shows evidence of some outside reading *or* of critical or analytical ability**.
D	58 55 52	**Adequate** Answer: (i) shows a grasp of the basic concepts and facts, (ii) gives a mainly accurate account of at least half of the relevant taught material *(as exemplified in the model answer),*and (iii) does not go beyond that, *or* goes beyond that but is marred by significant errors.
E	48 45 42 38 35 30 25 20 15 10 5 0	**Unsatisfactory** i) shows only a weak grasp of the basic concepts and facts, and is marred by major errors or brevity ii) shows a confused understanding of the question iii) is too inaccurate, too irrelevant, or too brief to indicate more than a vague understanding of the question iv) presents only two or three sentences or facts that are correct and relevant to the questions v) includes at most one sentence or fact that is correct and relevant to the question vi) contains nothing correct that is relevant to the question.

** *Analytical* = assessing a hypothesis or statement by breaking it down into its elements and examining their inter-relationships and contribution to the whole; cf. *Critical* = judging a hypothesis or conclusion by examining the validity of the evidence adduced for it.

MSc & MRes PROJECT ASSESSMENT: THESIS (OR MID-PROJECT REPORT)
MARKING CRITERIA

Literal Grade	% Mark	Criteria (Please give leeway if it is a mid-project report and give due consideration to the duration of the project (e.g., 5- vs. 9-month))
A*	100 95 90 85	**Exceptional.** Work is of a publishable standard**. It is an exceptionally well-presented exposition of the subject, showing: (*i*) command of the relevant concepts and facts, (*ii*) a high critical or analytical ability***, (*iii*) originality in thought, approach and/or and experimental or modelling design, and (*iv*) mastery of the relevant literature.
A	80 76 72	**Excellent.** Thesis is written to a publishable standard** with minor revision. It is a very well presented exposition of the project, showing most of the above features, but falling short in one of them.
B	68 65 62	**Very Good to Good.** Thesis contains potentially publishable material**, but needs revision of the text and further research. It is otherwise a well presented exposition of the project, showing: (*i*) a clear grasp of the relevant concepts and facts, (*ii*) appropriate, though not highly sophisticated analysis or evaluation, and (*iii*) a sound knowledge of the relevant literature.
C	58 55 52	**Adequate.** Thesis is not written to a publishable standard and requires major revision and substantially more research. It is an adequately presented exposition of the project, showing: (*i*) a grasp of the basic concepts and facts, (*ii*) an adequate use of statistics in its analyses and/or approaches of evaluation, and (*iii*) sufficient knowledge of the relevant literature to set its results in a scientific context.
D	48 45 42	**Unsatisfactory.** Thesis is an incomplete presentation of the project and is marred by major errors or gaps, missing analysis, lack of references, misconceptions, or excessive brevity, at most showing a weak grasp of the basic concepts and facts.
	35 30 25	Thesis as above, but presentation extremely poor and overall impression indicates a very weak grasp of the basic concepts and facts.
	20 15 10	Thesis as above, and in addition no real attempt to analyse data or present results in a scientific manner.
	5	Thesis as above but incomplete and lacking understanding in all areas.
	0	Thesis not produced.

** This publishability assumes that the data or theory is *per se* worth publishing.
*** *Analytical* = assessing a hypothesis or statement by breaking it down into its elements and examining their inter-relationships and contribution to the whole with quantitative methods where possible or necessary; cf. *Critical* = judging a hypothesis or conclusion by examining the validity of the evidence adduced for it.

Silwood Masters Oral Presentations: criteria for assessment

Class	%	Criteria
Distinction (A)	100	Presentation does an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. The presenter **held the audience's attention**, showed **command of the relevant concepts and facts**, **spoke authoritatively and without obvious notes**, showed **evidence of substantial background reading** (where appropriate), provided a **consistently analytical*, critical* and/or synthetic* treatment** of the information (where relevant), gave **excellent answers to questions**, and showed **fluency in the use of any teaching aids** (PowerPoint, demonstrations, handouts, PRS clickers, *etc*). Any **visual aids were conference-level**.
	95	
	90	
	85	Presentation does an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. It meets all of the criteria for a mark of 68, as well as meeting **most but not all of the criteria for a mark of 90+**.
	80	
	76	Presentation does an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. It meets all the criteria for a mark of 68 as well as meeting **one or a few of the qualities of a 90+ presentation**.
	72	
Merit (B)	68	Presentation very effectively communicates a significant body of scientific information, being a **logically-structured exposition** enabling the audience to appreciate the significance of the material presented. Presentations in this range would generally be expected to show the following characteristics: **appropriate background reading**, **good critical, analytical or synthetic treatment of the information**, **no evidence of significant errors of understanding** during the talk or in answers to questions, **used resources well**, **spoke without detailed notes**, **little or no hesitation**, and **kept more or less to time.**
	65	
	62	
Pass (C)	58	Presentation successfully communicates a significant body of scientific information. It is a **mostly accurate account of most of the expected relevant material**, showing evidence of **some background reading** and **adequate preparation**, but is marred by confused sections, poor use of resources, over-run, omissions, errors, hesitation, irrelevance (*e.g.* slides that do not add value), over-reliance on non-primary sources, or by reading from notes.
	55	
	52	
Fail (D)	48	Presentation achieves only limited communication of scientific information, containing major errors or omissions. Presenter delivers a **mainly accurate account of at least a third of the expected relevant material**, showing a generally weak understanding and evidence of little background reading or preparation.
	45	
	42	
Bad fail (E)	38	Presentation fails to communicate any significant scientific information. Presenter demonstrates **understanding of less than a third of the expected relevant material** (either through errors, through lack of preparation, or by omission).
	35	
	30	
	25	Presentation fails to communicate scientific information and is on balance misleading. It shows **understanding of less than a quarter of the expected relevant material**, but is so inaccurate and/or irrelevant that it succeeds only in misinforming and confusing the audience.
	20	
	15	Presentation includes **very little that is correct and relevant.**
	10	
	5	
	0	Presentation not given.

Footnotes: **Analytical** = breaking a concept down into its parts and examining their inter-relationships, *e.g.* comparing and contrasting two models. **Critical** = judging a hypothesis or conclusion by examining the validity of the evidence presented for it, *e.g.* evaluating two competing models. **Synthetic** = integrating concepts from several sources. *e.g*. discussing relevant background reading, or combining material into a coherent or original whole.

Masters marking criteria: *viva voce* examinations

Class	%	Criteria
A*	100 95 90 85	The student did an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. The student **gave accurate and logical answers**, showed **command of the relevant concepts and facts**, **spoke authoritatively**, showed **abundant evidence of knowledge and understanding beyond that which had been provided in the thesis**, provided a **mostly analytical*, critical* and/or synthetic* treatment** information in their answers (where relevant). The student **demonstrated an appreciation of the limitations** of his/her work, and **showed clear and possibly novel insight** into the subject. The student was able to **robustly defend criticism of the strategy, ideas or information** provided in the thesis.
A	80 76	The student did an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. They met all of the criteria for a mark of 68, as well as meeting **most but not all of the criteria for a mark of 90+**.
	72	The student did an excellent job of communicating a very substantial body of scientific information. They met all the criteria for a mark of 68 as well as meeting **one or a few of the qualities of a 90+ viva**.
B	68 65 62	The student effectively communicated a significant body of scientific information, enabling the examiners to appreciate the significance of the material presented. Vivas in this range would generally be expected to show the following characteristics: **good evidence of knowledge and understanding beyond that which had been provided in the thesis**, **good critical*, analytical* or synthetic* ability** in developing answers to questions, **no evidence of significant errors of understanding** during answers to questions, **sound knowledge of how the study fits in to the relevant literature** and **some ability to defend criticism of the strategy, ideas or information** provided in the thesis.
C	58 55 52	The student successfully communicated a body of scientific information, showing a **mostly accurate understanding of the material presented in the thesis**, showing evidence of **adequate preparation**, but was marred by confused answers, omissions, errors, hesitation or irrelevance. There was **little evidence of secure knowledge and understanding beyond that which had been provided in the thesis**.
D	48 45 42	The student achieved only limited communication of scientific information, with a viva performance let down by major errors or omissions. The student demonstrated an **understanding of at least a third of the material presented in the thesis**, showing evidence of little preparation. There was **no evidence of knowledge and understanding beyond that which had been provided in the thesis**.
	38 35 30	The student failed to communicate any significant scientific information. The student demonstrated **understanding of less than a third of the material presented in the thesis** (either through errors, or by omission).
	25 20	The student failed to communicate scientific information and was on balance misleading. They showed **understanding of less than a quarter of the material presented in the thesis**, but answers were so inaccurate and/or irrelevant that they succeeded only in misinforming and confusing the examiners.
	15 10 5	The student provided **few or no answers that were correct and relevant.**
	0	Viva not attended.

Footnotes: **Analytical** = breaking a concept down into its parts and examining their inter-relationships, *e.g.* comparing and contrasting two models. **Critical** = judging a hypothesis or conclusion by examining the validity of the evidence presented for it, *e.g.* evaluating two competing models. **Synthetic** = integrating concepts from several sources. *e.g*. discussing relevant background reading, or combining material into a coherent or original whole.

MASTERS SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT: MARKING CRITERIA

Grade	%	Criteria
A*	100 95 90 85	**Student performance was consistently excellent in all areas throughout the project.** The student played a fundamental role in the design and development of the project; worked consistently hard; was consistently excellent technically; showed consistent awareness of all relevant health and safety issues; engaged seriously with the relevant primary literature; showed excellent attitude in the face of any setbacks; showed initiative throughout the project; showed excellent organisation; and was a consistently constructive member of the research group. A reference would recommend the student for a relevant PhD entirely without reservation.
A	80 76 72	**Student performance was excellent overall.** The student attained an excellent level in all areas listed in A* by the end of the project, or was consistently excellent in many of them throughout the project while still having one or a few areas that – though still strong on an absolute scale – are relative weaknesses even at the project's end. This level of performance would be entirely acceptable in a first-year PhD student.
B	68 65 62	**Student performed very well overall.** The student always performed to a high standard, though this standard varied over time or among the aspects listed under A*. Alternatively, performance was patchy with some areas of excellence but one or more areas of weak performance. This level of performance would be mostly acceptable in a first-year PhD student but one or more areas need to be addressed.
C	58 55 52	**Student performed well overall.** The student performed consistently to an acceptable standard throughout the project and across all the aspects listed under A*, without properly taking ownership of the project or excelling. Alternatively, performance was very patchy, being unacceptable in more than one area. Typically, students at this level will have needed much closer step-by-step supervision than is normal. This level of performance would be seriously concerning in a first-year PhD student.
D	48 45 42	**Student did not perform well overall.**. The student did not perform to an acceptable standard without unusually close step-by-step supervision across most of the areas listed under A*, and clearly did not meet the standard of performance required of a first-year PhD student.
	35 30 25	**Student did not perform acceptably.** The student did not improve unacceptable aspects of performance despite having them pointed out and explained.
	20 10 0	**Student performed appallingly.**