

POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT ADMISSIONS POLICY

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1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 Admission to Postgraduate Taught Courses at Imperial College:

Consistently rated amongst the world's top universities, Imperial College London is a science-based institution with an international reputation for excellence in both teaching and research.

We provide rigorous and intensive Master's, Diploma and Certificate courses in science, engineering, business and medicine. These courses are designed to produce graduates for fast-track graduate employment, business, or research. They are intended to benefit students of high ability, whatever their ethnic or national origin, religion, politics or gender in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy. In order to cope with, enjoy and succeed on these courses, our students need to be extremely well-qualified on entry, see Section 3. This policy includes MRes courses which, although they form part of the postgraduate research provision of the College, are treated for admission purposes in a similar manner to postgraduate taught courses. This Postgraduate Taught Admissions Policy is approved and monitored by the College's Recruitment and Admissions Strategy and Policy Committee.

1.2 Equal Opportunities Statement:

The College's mission is to maintain excellent standards of achievement in teaching and research in order to attract and admit students of the highest calibre, and its national and international reputation relies on the people who make up its diverse and high-achieving community. In pursuing its aim of excellence, Imperial adheres to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities which ensures that it does not discriminate against any individual, from the first point of contact through to graduation. Selection for entry is based on consideration of academic ability, motivation for study, interest in the subject area and the potential both to benefit from the experience and to contribute to College life while on course. All applications are considered and evaluated on the basis of individual potential.

2. **APPLICATION ROUTES AND DEADLINES**

2.1 How to apply:

All applications for admission to our postgraduate taught courses should be submitted online via the Imperial College website: www.imperial.ac.uk Receipt of an application will be acknowledged, following which an initial assessment will be made by Admissions. The application will then be forwarded to the relevant department who will consider suitability for a place. Students are only permitted to submit one application, however, two choices of programme can be stated on the application form; these will be processed according to the stated preference.

2.2 When to apply:

The majority of our taught postgraduate programmes start at the beginning of October each year. There are some variants to this which can be found in the prospectus: www.imperial.ac.uk/pgprospectus. Applications usually open in mid November prior to the year of entry. While we do not have set deadlines for the receipt of applications there may be deadlines for funded-related courses. Some courses may have specific deadlines in place for students moving from undergraduate programmes at Imperial. The majority of our courses are oversubscribed and are closed to new applicants as they become full. Scholarships may be available for some courses, therefore applicants are advised to check the relevant department's web page for further information and in particular, where a scholarship deadline may be in place. International applicants should note that an application submitted after 31 July may leave insufficient time to obtain a student visa prior to the start of the course in October.

3. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Academic Requirements:

We welcome applications from those who already possess the required qualifications or who expect to obtain them before the degree course commences. Candidates will be required to have satisfied both the College general entrance requirements and the course requirements before they can join their chosen degree course. Applicants should consult the individual course web pages on www.imperial.ac.uk for more specific guidance. The following paragraph outlines the College's **minimum** general entrance requirements for entry to our postgraduate taught courses:

- Normally at least Second Class Honours degree (although in practice most successful applicants have at least an Upper Second Class Honours degree) or a taught Master's degree awarded by a UK university institution or a degree of an equivalent standard awarded by an overseas university institution in a subject deemed appropriate to that of the programme to be followed

Or

- A registrable qualification in Medicine, awarded by a UK university, or a qualification of an equivalent standard awarded by an overseas university, and which is appropriate to the programme to be followed

Or

- A professional or other qualification obtained by written examinations and approved by the College.

Special Cases

The College will consider applications that do not meet the College's normal minimum entry requirement. Admissions will make a preliminary assessment of the application and advise the Department on the status of the candidate's qualifications in relation to College minimum requirement. If the Department wishes to offer a place to such an applicant, it must make a special case via Admissions to an independent panel comprising of academic staff, from other departments. The panel will consider the case, taking into consideration, relevant work experience and references and will convey its decision to the Department via Admissions.

Special Qualifying Examination

An applicant with qualifications which fall below the College's minimum entry requirement may be considered for a place, at the discretion of the Department, and will be required to sit a Special Qualifying Examination (SQE). Such applicants follow the normal application process and in the first instance are considered by the Department in the same way as all other applicants. If after consideration the Department decides that the applicant should be invited to take an SQE, it makes a case to an independent panel of academic staff. If the panel supports the Department's case, the Department is informed and makes the necessary arrangements for the SQE. The SQE is marked by the Department and is sent to the external examiner(s) to moderate. The external examiner(s) will then advise whether an offer should be made on the basis of the SQE result. The result of the SQE and recommendation of the external examiner(s) is sent by the Department to Admissions, who will then confirm the decision to the applicant.

Advanced Prior Learning

The College has the discretion to grant a candidate applying to study part-time, credit towards the award of a Master's degree for study undertaken at the College, or another institution, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) acceptability for credit transfer of work undertaken at the College or another institution does not confer right of entry to any programme;
- (b) the work accepted for credit must be sufficiently contemporary and appropriate in range, and quality to form a coherent whole with the proposed programme of study;
- (c) a candidate granted credit transfer may be exempted from not more than 30 ECTS credits of the programme of study;
- (d) a candidate may not be granted exemption from the dissertation element of the programme.

3.2 English language qualifications:

All courses in the College are taught in English. To obtain maximum benefit from studies at Imperial College **all** students must have full command of written and spoken English.

Students coming to the College for postgraduate study must normally have a minimum of grade B in GCSE English Language or an acceptable alternative English Language qualification before admission can be confirmed.

Overseas applicants for whom English is not the first language must provide evidence of a very good command of English before commencing the course. Full details of our English language requirements can be found here:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/admissions/pgenglish>

Please note that the scores or grades indicated are the minimum levels generally acceptable to the College. Selectors have the discretion to prescribe higher requirements either for specific courses of study or for individual applicants where they feel that to be appropriate. Applicants should view the departmental pages for specific information regarding their chosen course.

Overseas applicants who meet the requirements but would like to improve their confidence in English are recommended to spend some time in an English Language school in the UK prior to commencement of their College course. Once enrolled at Imperial, they may wish to attend in-house language classes which are available free of charge to all non-native English speaking students.

4. SELECTION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

4.1 Timetabling of selection:

The selection process for taught courses is continuous from mid November, when the first applications are received, until August, except when courses become full (2.2 above). All applications are given careful consideration. Applicants can normally expect to receive a decision on their application within 6-8 weeks of submission, however we advise applicants to check the relevant department's web page for specific information.

4.2 Selection Criteria:

While the specific selection criteria vary by course there are, however, certain general points which are equally applicable to all departments.

(i) Interviews

Applicants for Master's, Diploma and Certificate courses may be asked to attend an interview. You can find more information about a Department's interview process, including its policy on interviewing applicants based overseas on the individual department websites. <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/pgprospectus/facultiesanddepartments>

(ii) The references

All departments attach considerable importance to the report of the academic referee. This can play a major part in deciding whether an applicant is called for interview and in determining whether an offer is made. The assessment of previous academic performance is of particular value, as are indications of the strength of an applicant's motivation to study the chosen subject at higher degree level. A professional reference can also be of use in establishing an applicant's postgraduate career development and is a requirement for certain courses which stipulate relevant experience as an entry requirement.

(iii) The personal statement

The personal statement should outline the reasons for applying for the programme, relevant work experience and interests.

Applicants with disabilities:

The College's policy is to consider all applications solely on academic grounds. However, any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary will be put in place to enable all students to compete on an equal basis. It is important therefore that the College is informed of any disability well in advance so that early discussion can take place to determine the reasonable adjustments that it may be possible to put in place. Every effort is made to ensure that our courses are accessible, but occasionally, due to the nature of the course competency standards, it may not be possible to make the necessary adjustments to enable an individual candidate to study a particular course.

We therefore encourage those with disabilities to contact us as early as possible and preferably before making an application, indicating the course or courses they are interested in together with the nature of the disability so that a meeting can be arranged to discuss any adjustments that may need to be made. The Disability Advisory Service, (DAS), works closely with the Registry, the Student Accommodation Centre and academic departments to

provide a variety of support initiatives to enable students to access their studies successfully. The Disability Advisers are available to discuss, on a confidential basis, any issues of concern which people with disabilities may have and can advise on necessary evidence of disability that will be required.

More information can be found here: <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/disabilityadvisoryservice>

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 Imperial College London's Disability Equality Scheme is available at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/hr/equality/disability/disabilityequalityscheme>

This document can also be made available in ordinary or large print. Should a Braille or taped version be required this can also be arranged on request.

Criminal Convictions

(i) Applicants for medical courses who declare a criminal conviction:

While we do not wish to penalise an ex-offender the College does have a duty of care to its wider community and there may be occasions when an academically suitable applicant will be refused entry.

The College's policy is that applicants who declare a criminal conviction are initially reviewed on the same academic grounds that apply to all applicants. It is the responsibility of applicants to inform the College of any convictions occurring after an application has been submitted and throughout their College career.

5. CHECKING THE STATUS OF AN APPLICATION

The acknowledgment email sent to applicants following receipt of the application, contains information regarding access to Student e-Service. Student e-Service enables applicants to track the progress and view the outcome of the application. It also enables applicants to view the progress of any outstanding supporting documents which have been submitted.

6. ACCEPTING OUR OFFER & CONTRACT OF ADMISSION

All offers for a place on postgraduate Master's, Diploma or Certificate courses are transmitted electronically via the College's Student e-Service. Any offer of a place made by the College is made on the basis of the applicant's:

- Acceptance of the College's rules and regulations as published and amended from time to time
- Acceptance of the following statement:
The College prospectuses and website describes the courses offered by the College. Further documents describe the educational services offered by the College, the regulations governing the conduct of students and details of registration and assessment. Further details can be found at <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/students> The College takes all reasonable steps to provide the educational services described in the prospectus and in the documents listed but it does not guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the College interfere with its ability to provide educational services, the College undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any resultant disruption.
- Undertaking to pay the fees required for the course and any other fees for services

offered by the College and accepted, such as accommodation.

- Undertaking to pay the 10% deposit.
- Ensuring that statements made in applying for entry are accurate, as the discovery of false statements or omissions may lead to the offer being withdrawn (or in the case of students registered, to their registration being terminated).

7. FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

The College receives a large number of applications for every place and, as entry is very competitive, it is unable to make offers to all applicants. Imperial College acknowledges that it is important that unsuccessful applicants are informed as early as possible so that they can consider other options. We will provide feedback to all unsuccessful postgraduate applicants at their request.

When to request feedback:

Feedback can only be requested during the application cycle in which the application was made.

How to request feedback:

Applicants should request feedback by emailing the appropriate admissions team, details can be found at <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/abouttheregistry/contacts#admissions> quoting their full name, College ID number and programme applied for. Please note the College cannot provide feedback to third parties such as parents, guardians, teachers or referees without the express written permission of the applicant.

How you will receive feedback:

Feedback will be issued via an email (normally within 15 working days of a request being made).

8. CHANGES TO COURSES

The College will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver courses in accordance with the descriptions set out in its prospectus. The College reserves the right to make variations to the content or methods of delivery of courses, to discontinue courses and to merge or combine courses, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary by the College in the context of its wider purposes. If the College discontinues any course, it will use reasonable endeavours to provide a suitable alternative course.

9. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Please note that you may not appeal against the academic or professional judgement of those making a decision but you may complain if you are dissatisfied with the processing of your application. Complaints should be made to the Academic Registrar in writing.