Imperial Plus

Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Email address   imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk

Website   **imperial**college**union**.org/imperialplus

Imperial Plus overview

Who is it run by?

Imperial Plus is a Union led initiative that provides co-curricular learning and development opportunities for students at Imperial. It is run by the Student Development team, a staff team with expertise in development and training delivery within higher education and charitable organisations. Responsibility for Imperial Plus sits primarily with the Training & Development Manager, and the Student Development Coordinator (Skills & Enterprise). They can be contacted at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk.

Who is it for?

Imperial Plus is open to all students, with some elements specifically designed to help student volunteers develop in their roles and gain recognition for their volunteer hours.

Imperial Plus workshops   *open to all students*

Volunteer certificate   *open to student volunteers only*

Skills Development Programme   *open to student volunteers only*

Workshops *open to all students*

Imperial Plus workshops are interactive, hands-on workshops that are designed to help you to develop new skills and improve upon existing ones. Workshops are delivered by student trainers. They cover a range of topics focussing on soft-skills, with each workshop being repeated twice termly throughout the academic year.

The topics covered are:

- Effective Communication
- Emotional Intelligence
- Leadership Development
- Persuasion & Negotiation
- Project Management
- Team Management

Can I attend Imperial Plus workshops?

All current students are eligible to attend Imperial Plus workshops. They are free to attend and you can register online via the Union's 'What's On' calendar.

Which workshop should I attend?

Whichever you like! There are no strict criteria in order to attend a workshop, just sign-up to the one that interests you. You could identify them by picking a skill that you want develop further, e.g. project management, or learn about something completely new, like emotional intelligence.

It would be great if you could attend all 6 workshops throughout the year, and with each being delivered twice termly, there is plenty of opportunity to.

How were workshop topics chosen?

Workshop topics were chosen by the Student Development Team as they reflect the current values and skills that graduate recruiters and employers are currently looking for in prospective employees. Topics are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect the current graduate market and are useful and relevant for students at Imperial.

Why are the workshops run by student trainers and not staff?

We believe that peer-to-peer learning is incredibly important. Student trainers have often worked towards an element of Imperial Plus before becoming a trainer or have had a volunteer role. Thus they are able to relate their experiences to you in training in a relevant and accessible way. All student trainers receive extensive training from the Student Development Team to ensure that they are capable and excel at delivering our workshops, and they receive on-going support from the team throughout the year.

How do I prepare for the workshops?

Little preparation is needed before you attend the workshops. You just need to register online and make a note of the time, date and location of the session. You will receive a calendar invite confirming your registration, and a reminder email up to 2 days before the workshop takes place.

Some workshops do require pre-course work to be completed. This is often very short and can be completed within 10 minutes. Pre-course work details can be found in the reminder email received up to 2 days before the workshop takes place. If you have any questions regarding pre-course work please contact a member of the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk.

Workshops are oversubscribed online, can I still attend?

We ask that you don't attend a workshop that you have not registered for online. We understand it can be frustrating not to get onto the workshop you would like, however workshops are tailored for a specific number of people and turning up without prior warning puts other students learning experience at risk.

Workshops are run twice termly throughout the academic year, with an additional 6 workshops delivered at other Imperial Campuses throughout the year. Therefore there are plenty of opportunities to attend. If you are really struggling to register for workshops you would like to attend, please contact a member of the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk.

As there is such a demand for workshop places, we do ask that if you have registered and are unable to attend, that you let us know via email as soon as possible and no later than 2 days before the workshop is due to take place. This will enable us to open up spaces to those who wish to attend but have previously been unable to register.

Volunteer certificate - *open to student volunteers only*

The Volunteer Certificate is your tool to log all your hours spent volunteering, reflect upon your experiences and the skills learnt along the way. You log hours through eActivities and receive a certificate for the hours milestone you have met by the end of the year.

Can my volunteer hours be counted towards be counted towards Imperial Plus?

In order to log hours with Imperial Plus you need to have a volunteer role through the Union, Imperial College London, or one of our partner organisations. Roles could include:

- A club, society or project volunteer roles i.e. Paediatrics Play Team, Soup Run volunteer etc.
- Community Connections partner charities
- Pimlico Connections
- #HelloICU Crew
- Presidents Ambassador scheme

If you have a volunteer role that doesn't fall under the categories above, then please contact a member of the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk with details of your role.

How do I get started?

Before you can start logging hours towards the Volunteer Certificate you must complete an initial self-assessment via eActivities. This short activity will help you to set development goals for the academic year in specific skills areas. This gives you a goal to work towards and will help you to reflect at the end of the year on what you have achieved and learnt.

For more information on how to log on to and navigate eActivities, please see our online guide.

Why do I need to set development goals?

Imperial Plus is here to help you to reflect upon your experiences throughout the year, to develop new skills, and to show how you have grown in your volunteer role. By setting development goals at the beginning of the year, you set a benchmark to measure your development by, and have something specific to reflect upon at the end of the year. It's a worthwhile task that shouldn't take you too long, and you will benefit from it throughout your engagement with Imperial Plus.

How many hours can I log?

You can log as many hours as you want through Imperial Plus, as long as they are related to your volunteer role. You will receive a certificate for the milestone that you reach by the end of the academic year (31 July). Milestones are:

- Every 25 hours from 25 – 100 hours
- Every 50 hours from 100 – 500 hours

Certificates are issued at the end of the academic year and will reflect the milestone you have reached at the point.

I have a volunteer role, but I can't log my hours. Why not?

The most likely cause will be that you have not completed your initial self-assessment, or your initial self-assessment has not yet been approved. If this is not the case, please contact a member of the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk and include a screenshot of what you see on eActivities. They will be able to find out the issue and get back to you with a solution.

When do I receive my certificate?

You can receive your certificate in one of two ways.

1. Upon attendance of the Unions' Volunteer Celebration hosted annually in June.
2. By post of upon collection from Imperial College Union reception after 31 July.

You will be contacted with an invite to relevant events, or when your certificate is ready to collect. We do have capacity to send your certificate to you via post. We specifically ask that if you live in London, you do not ask for the certificate to be posted to you and instead opt to collect it from the Union reception. Certificates are held until the end of autumn term of the following academic year so there is plenty of time to collect your certificate.

Certificates are provided as hard copies only, and no electronic version is available.

Do my hours from previous years count towards my total?

Only volunteer hours accrued during the current academic year are counted towards your Imperial Plus hours total. The academic year runs from 1 August – 31 July (e.g. 1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018).

I don't see the role I want to log hours for, what do I do?

If the volunteer role you want to log hours for is not available on the drop-down menu on eActivities, then please get in touch with the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk. Please include details of your role. If it is a role within a society e.g. Soup Run Volunteer, you will need to be a fully enrolled member of the society before your role can be added. Some society memberships are free, however for others there may be a small fee.

_____

Skills Development Programme *open to student volunteers only*

The Skills Development Programme (SDP) is endorsed by the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM). It is a programme that encourages participants to reflect on their experiences and learn new skills through workshops, volunteering opportunities and written assignments.

What do I need to do to complete the SDP?

In order to complete the SDP you must:

- Actively log hours towards Imperial Plus via eActivities (please see Volunteer Certificate section of this document for FAQs relating to this).

- Attend a minimum of 4 / 6 Imperial Plus workshops by 30 June.
- Complete a minimum of 4 / 6 assignments by 30 June.

How do I get started?

If you are confident that you can meet the criteria for the SDP and would like to register for the programme, please get in touch with the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk. They will register you for the programme and keep in touch regarding your progress throughout the academic year.

Who are ILM?

ILM stands for the Institute of Leadership & Management. They are a professional membership body for those who deliver training and coaching opportunities to promote leadership amongst their members. As the Skills Development Programme is ILM endorsed, you, the learner, can be confident that you are receiving the best quality leadership training!

Does it cost me anything?

The SDP does not cost you anything, however the Union does incur a cost of £69.00 for every student who we register with the Institute of Leadership and Management. We therefore ask that you only register for the programme if you are committed to completing the programme in its entirety.

How much time does it take?

The SDP does require a time commitment, and this is why we ask that you fully commit to the programme upon registration.

Workshop attendance will take a minimum of 8 hours over the academic year (minimum of 4 x 2 hour workshops). The time spent on writing assignments will vary per person, but we estimate approximately 1 – 2 hours per assignment.

I really want to take part in the SDP, but I don't have a volunteer role. What can I do?

Currently the Skills Development Programme is only open to students with a volunteer role. If you want to complete the programme, but don't have time to commit to a regular volunteer role, you may want to consider a one-off volunteer activity with Community Connections. This will make you eligible for the Skills Development Programme, should only take 2 – 4 hours of your time, and you'll do some good in the community as well!

Find out more about Community Connections at www.imperialcollegeunion.org/volunteering.

Assignments

Assignments are submitted by participants on the Skills Development Programme as part of the programmes requirements.

How long should they be?

There is no set word limit for SDP assignments, however we recommend that they are no longer than 1 side of A4.

I don't know what to write for the assignment – who can help me?

Assignment criteria, available online, which you will receive a copy of upon registration for the SDP, details what you need to address in an assignment in order to pass. If, after looking at this document, you are unsure of how to move forward with your assignment, then please contact the Student Development Coordinator (Skills & Enterprise). They will be able to answer any questions you have, or to arrange a telephone / face-to-face meeting to discuss further.

My assignment has been moderated, did I do something wrong?

Assignment moderation is an internal process that the team must do in order to provide quality control assurance to ILM. Approximately 25% of assignments are moderated and those that are, are selected at random. If your assignment has been moderated please be assured that this is no reflection of your work. You will know whether your assignment has been moderated as it will be noted in the feedback sheet you receive, and the moderators name and comments will be included.

My assignment keeps being returned to me, what do I do?

It is common for assignments to be returned at least once before they are passed, and it is not something to worry about! This will just mean that you have note quite met the assessment criteria. You will receive detailed feedback per criteria, highlighting which you have / have not met and any areas for improvement. If you want to discuss your assignment or the feedback further, please contact the Student Development Coordinator (Skills & Enterprise) at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk.

The team runs assignment workshops throughout the year. These 1 hour workshops give you the opportunity to look at assignment criteria in more detail, to understand the assessment process, and how you can structure your assignment. All students registered on the SDP will receive details including time and dates of these workshops as soon as they are available.

I disagree with the assessment outcome, what can I do?

There may be occasions where you disagree with your assessment outcome, and it is your right to appeal the decision. If you wish to appeal then please contact Paulina Sekrecka, Training & Development Manager at p.sekrecka@imperial.ac.uk. Please provide full details as to why you are appealing against the decision. Paulina will be in touch to discuss the issue further.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is attempting to use another's work without duly crediting them or trying to pass it off as your own. We take plagiarism very seriously and will not accept any assignment that has plagiarised content. If we suspect a candidate of plagiarism we will return their assignment un-assessed with further details of the offence outlined.

Please note that any plagiarism runs the risk of being expelled from the programme.

Examples of plagiarism we have encountered in the past include:

- Copying text from websites with no reference to the source.
- Copying text from workshop content / hand outs with no reference to the source.

Plagiarism does get caught; the easiest way to avoid problems is to always:

- Use quotation marks when directly quoting a source, and to provide a reference for the source.
- Reference any websites used including details of when they were accessed.
- Refer to any hand-outs used and if directly quoted, use quotation marks and reference the source.