

Imperial College
London



IMPERIAL AWARD STUDENT GUIDANCE



Your time at Imperial will pass so quickly — the Imperial Award is designed to help you make the most of your experience



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Imperial students like you are the heart of the College community and I am personally inspired when I see the breadth, depth and impact of the activities in which you participate. Your activity not only makes a significant contribution to College life, but also shapes you as a future professional.

You will find that your time at Imperial will pass so quickly — the Imperial Award is designed to help you make the most of your experience, by providing a developmental journey within which you will reflect on your experiences and discover more about your potential.

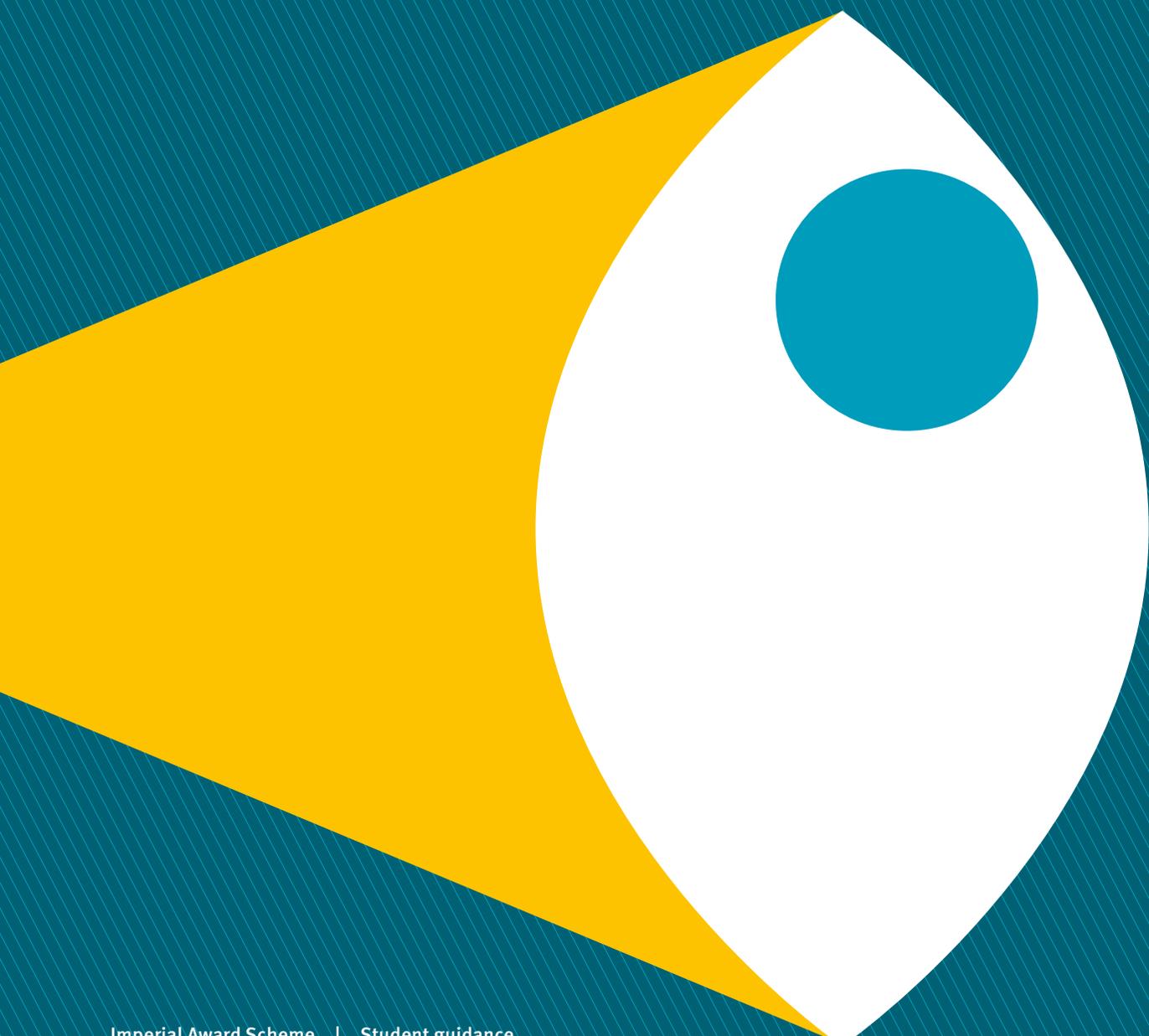
The Award provides a structured approach to improving specific attributes that our students, staff as well as employers have identified as key to success in the 21st century. It gives you the space not only to improve and build confidence, but also to savour and take pride in your achievements.

Upon completing the Award and receiving recognition from the College and Imperial College Union, you will have evidenced your development in each of the attributes and will have gained lifelong skills to help make the most of future opportunities.

The benefits

- **Develop practical self-reflection skills**
- **Discover more about yourself and your potential**
- **Develop your ability to ‘pitch yourself’ to various audiences (self-advocacy)**
- **Support your peers and receive support from your peers**
- **Gain a formal recognition from the College ▲**

What is the Imperial Award?



The Imperial Award encourages self-reflection on specific skills valued by society and employers.

In today's fast changing environment, personal development and soft skills are required to complement the technical skills and knowledge acquired during a degree. Structured around three main streams, or areas of competency, the Imperial Award is designed to support you in reflecting on, and evidencing vital attributes such as creativity, communication, and problem solving. By participating in the Programme you will gain greater confidence in your skills and improve your ability to articulate your skills effectively to various audiences, including future employers.

The Imperial Award can shape some of your Personal Tutor or mentor meetings, helping you to get more out of them. Finally, it will help you discover more about your self and your potential, empowering you to make informed choices for your life and career.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE IMPERIAL AWARD?

The Award recognises students who evidence the transformative impact of their engagement in activities whilst at university. It requires students to demonstrate critical reflection upon how their experiences have helped them develop specific attributes.

Working towards the Imperial Award you will need to:

- ▲ Capture and record your activities and experiences;
- ▲ Reflect upon the significance of each attribute;
- ▲ Map your experiences against the Imperial Award attributes;
- ▲ Prepare a reflective submission demonstrating why specific experiences caused you to develop each attribute and the impact that this has had on yourself and others;
- ▲ Reflect on and incorporate feedback from assessors during the process ▲

The structure

The Imperial Award is split into three streams, each containing four attributes. Every stream requires you to submit a separate, short reflective submission demonstrating how you meet the criteria for each attribute in that stream. You do not need to submit for all streams at the same time; you can spread them out.

The Award webpage lists key dates. There are multiple chances to submit, each year.

To prepare your reflective submission you will need to recall, discuss and reflect on your chosen activities and experiences in relation to the Imperial Award attributes.

To complete a stream, you will need to provide a convincing argument that you meet the Award criteria.

You will be formally recognised on your official College transcript for each stream attained.

Students who gain all three streams will be recognised as having achieved the full Imperial Award ▲

Further information on each of the Imperial Award streams and attributes is provided on page 12.

IMPERIAL AWARD STREAMS AND ATTRIBUTES



Stream one
Independent,
open-minded thought

- Innovative approach
- Creativity
- Practical, intelligent problem-solving
- Enterprising mind-set



Stream two
Effective teamwork

- Communication and active listening
- Motivation
- Awareness of group dynamics and collaboration
- Strategic mind-set



Stream three
Self-awareness and
active self-management

- Critical self-analysis/self-evaluation
- Social conscience
- Recognising opportunities
- Global mind-set

Gaining the Imperial Award



Register online

Use the online support resources to make sure you understand what is required



Start capturing your activities and experiences in your online portfolio

Map your experiences to the Award attributes in your online portfolio (Use this like a diary or journal)

Discuss and plan your progress with your personal tutor, mentor or your peers

Use the Reflection guide to help you select and reflect upon your experiences

Participate in Imperial Award workshops and mentoring sessions to practice and improve your reflective thinking

Decide that you're ready and then prepare your reflective submission.

Receive feedback from the assessors if your reflective submission requires further development.

Each completed stream is acknowledged on your graduation transcript. When all three are completed you will have achieved 'The Imperial Award'.

The Imperial Award requires an iterative approach, you may need to go through some steps multiple times before completing the Award

Registration and support

REGISTRATION

To register online visit:
imperialcollegeunion.org/imperial-award

Once registered, you will gain access to the Imperial Award portfolio to let you begin capturing, reflecting on and mapping your experiences.

You will also be added to the Imperial Award mailing list and invited to Imperial Award workshops and events.

SUPPORT

Try to meet with your Personal Tutor or mentor to discuss your progress through the Imperial Award. They can help you reflect on your experiences and set goals. They can also offer advice reflecting on your evidence of attributes.

We recommend meeting with your Personal Tutor, mentor or peers at least once per term so that you can track and discuss your development. Negotiate and book meetings with them in advance.

Watch our videos and read our Reflection guide which you can access online. Workshops and mentoring sessions are offered regularly to all students participating in the Award. For more information and to access all support resources visit imperialcollegeunion.org/imperial-award.

If you have any specific questions or concerns, please email us using imperialaward@imperial.ac.uk

ONLINE PORTFOLIO

By registering to the Imperial Award, you will gain access to your personal online portfolio (this is private and only you can see its content). This is a virtual journalling tool, specifically designed so that you can capture and then reflect on your experiences against the Award attributes.

OVERVIEW MATRIX

Your online tools also include a matrix, generated when you map your activities against each attribute. Your matrix shows you where you have strengths and gaps in support of a particular Award stream ▲

ACTIVITY RECORDING

EXPERIENCES

MAPPING ATTRIBUTES

THE MATRIX OVERVIEW

Activities and Experiences	Community Connectives volunteer	Volunteering with local clubs	Comprising Department Rep	Student consultations on both submissions	Student Staff Committee Meetings	A new experience	Events Officer - ACE Dance Company	Events Officer - ACE Dance Company
Totals	26	16	7	6	5	23	8	7
Community Connectives volunteer	1	1				2	1	1
Volunteering with local clubs	1	✓				2	✓	✓
Comprising Department Rep	2	1	1			5	3	3
Student consultations on both submissions						2	✓	✓
Student Staff Committee Meetings	1			✓		2	✓	✓
A new experience	1	✓				1	✓	✓
Events Officer - ACE Dance Company	2	1	1			5	1	1
Events Officer - ACE Dance Company	2	✓				5	✓	✓

The process

PORTFOLIO

RECORD ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES ONLINE

You can capture and record anything in your online portfolio; only you can see the details. It will be extremely helpful when you decide to produce your submissions, prepare your CV or cover letter and when preparing for an interview.

Example activities:

Academic or wellbeing representation
Clubs, societies and projects
Event organisation and management
Learning and study
Life events
Professional and personal development
Research experiences
Teaching, tutoring or marking
Volunteering
Work (Casual, part-time or career experiences, enterprises)

This is not exhaustive; you can draw upon any experience you feel has caused personal development related to the Award attributes.

MAP AND EVIDENCE ATTRIBUTES

You will need to align your activities and experiences to the attributes. Your online portfolio enables you to judge which experiences align best, and which gaps you wish to fill with new experiences.

Stream one: Independent, open-minded thought
Innovative approach
Creativity
Practical, intelligent problem-solving
Enterprising mind-set

Stream two: Effective teamwork
Communication and active listening
Motivation
Awareness of group dynamics and collaboration
Strategic mind-set

Stream three: Self-awareness and active self-management
Critical self-analysis/self-evaluation
Social conscience
Recognising opportunities
Global mind-set

AWARD SUBMISSION AND ASSESSOR FEEDBACK

REFLECTION

Before you start to produce your submission, take time to think about your activities and experiences in relation to the Imperial Award attributes. Use the Reflection Guide the workshops, mentoring sessions and resources on the website to help.

PREPARING YOUR SUBMISSIONS

Your short reflective piece for each stream must be submitted through the Imperial Award system. Each stream requires a separate submission; you cannot combine them. You will receive feedback from the assessors on each piece you submit, which you should further reflect upon.



Stream one
Independent, open-minded thought



Stream two
Effective teamwork



Stream three
Self-awareness and active self-management

You can work towards streams of the Imperial Award at your own pace, throughout the course of your degree.

To avoid disappointment, we recommend that you submit your first reflective piece before your final term of study.

First year undergraduates can sign-up for the Imperial Award but cannot submit until their second year, allowing time to gain experiences and reflect on their impact.

Online resources and workshops

Personal Tutor / mentor support

Assessment

Reflective Submissions

Your reflective pieces can be submitted as one of the three methods below. Whatever method you choose, keep your submission simple and criteria focused.

You can mix and match per stream as streams will still be submitted separately. The same assessment criteria apply to all methods (see the Student Guide for the full assessment criteria).

You must submit your reflective piece through the Imperial Award system.

You must appropriately reference any media not created by you. Your reflective submission is about your developmental journey so be intentional about any media that you use that you did not create.

You may change submission methods when resubmitting in a stream. Keep in mind that assessors check past submissions to gauge whether you have understood and applied their feedback. Your resubmission must meet the Imperial Award criteria as a stand-alone piece. When resubmitting, we suggest that you keep the content that met the criteria and only amend or edit the content that “Needs development” based on the assessor feedback. ▲

	 WRITTEN SUBMISSION	 VIDEO SUBMISSION	 MULTIMEDIA SUBMISSION
DEVELOPMENTAL ADVANTAGE	Practise reflective writing	Practise speaking technique	Practise creative presentation of information
LIMITS	4000 characters per stream	Six minutes total per stream. It does not have to be one take, cutting is allowed.	4000 characters which you may distribute as you would like within the following parameters:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ 1 min video is equivalent to 700 characters ▲ 1 image is equivalent to 100 characters ▲ Icons, symbols & spaces can be used freely.
DESCRIPTION	A reflective essay	Video-call style video of you sharing your reflections.	Text, images and/or short video clips to communicate your reflections.

*Example 1: 1 × 2 min video, Six images, 2000 characters arranged as a poster;
 Example 2: 4 × 15s videos, four images, 2900 characters arranged as a mind map

See the Imperial Award website for more guidance and examples.

Imperial Award criteria and framework

The Imperial Award framework contains the definitions of the Streams and Attributes; you can find this on the next pages. The Imperial Award Criteria explains what is required in order for a student to awarded a stream of the Award.

Assessors will use the Criteria to decide whether your submission 'Needs Development' or has 'Met' the criteria for each attribute.

The overall outcome for your stream submission will be equal to the lowest attribute outcome. For example, three out of four attributes could be 'Met' but, if the final attribute 'Needs Development', then 'Needs Development' will be your overall outcome.

WHAT DOES MY OVERALL SUBMISSION OUTCOME MEAN?

MET

This means you have been successful in communicating how you have developed all the attributes within a particular stream; you will be awarded that stream.

NEEDS DEVELOPMENT

This means that you have not met the criteria for all of the attributes in that stream. The assessor will provide formative feedback explaining what you can work on to meet the criteria when you resubmit.

IMPERIAL AWARD CRITERIA (AS USED BY THE ASSESSORS)

Carefully read the Imperial Award Criteria below and the definitions of Streams and Attributes in the Imperial Award Framework on the next two pages. These are used by assessors as the basis for checking whether your submission meets the Award requirements. *The overall stream outcome is equal to the lowest attribute outcome.*

NEEDS DEVELOPMENT

The assessor will regard the attribute as requiring further development if:

- ▲ The attribute is not discussed
- ▲ The attribute is merely described or implicitly referenced
- ▲ The student does not demonstrate understanding of the attribute
- ▲ There is insufficient demonstration of reflection upon how the experience was transformative/ caused the development of that attribute in the student.
- ▲ The student does not demonstrate independent engagement in the activity
- ▲ The experience discussed does not relate to the attribute/there is no cohesive argument relating the experience to the attribute

MET

The assessor will regard the attribute as achieved if:

- ▲ The attribute is understood and explicitly reflected upon and there are clear links between the attribute and experiences chosen as evidence
- and*
- ▲ The student demonstrates ability to reflect on their experiences providing a critically considered argument that evidences awareness of their personal development
- and*
- ▲ The submission supports a clear and persuasive claim as to how independent engagement in the activities led to the transformative impact on the student, and, where appropriate, others.

PLAGIARISM

Cheating offences and plagiarism are taken very seriously and are dealt with according to the College's Cheating Offences Policy & Procedures.

You can find out more information about plagiarism on the Library webpages: imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/learning-support/plagiarism-awareness

COMPLAINTS

If you encounter any issues concerning the Imperial Award, we encourage you to contact us by email: imperialaward@imperial.ac.uk ▲

THE IMPERIAL AWARD FRAMEWORK



Stream one Independent, open-minded thought

Thinking for yourself and taking open-minded approaches to situations or tasks means that you draw on, but are not confined by, what you already know from your studies and from your life experiences. The four attributes can be discussed in relation to a single activity or may have been gained/demonstrated across several activities. The emphasis in this stream is on the student's ability to distinguish the different aspects of each attribute and relate them to their own thinking.



Stream two Effective teamwork

Imperial students have a strong tradition of group activities, however progressing beyond mere groupwork to effective teamwork requires an effort to understand teams, develop teamwork skills and apply them to enhance the team's activities. Students will use this stream to evidence their transformation into an effective contributor to a team, reflecting upon their impact on a team's operation and their contribution to team achievements.



Stream three Self-awareness and active self-management

Imperial students are known for overcoming intense academic challenges. Many also enjoy a reputation for working to benefit society and for being achievers who can identify opportunities and have an impact, aware of the world beyond their own context. In this stream, students are required to demonstrate their emotional intelligence, to recall and reflect upon their own internal drivers and to consider their impact on others. Students will reflect upon instances and events which demonstrate attributes going to the core of their identity and their ability to manage transformation.

THE IMPERIAL AWARD ATTRIBUTES

Innovative approach

Applying your scientific or research knowledge, or skills, to improve an existing thing, or to develop, identify or establish something new.

Creativity

Generating ideas and applying them to develop an initiative, solve a problem, instigate a course of action, or bring value to an individual, situation, or process.

Practical, intelligent problem-solving

Identifying a solution and justifying it with intelligent reasoning.

Enterprising mind-set

Identifying opportunities and taking risks to develop outcomes relevant in society or that have an impact within an existing organisation.

Communication and active listening

Managing communication processes and the flow of information to ensure that teams work effectively and that there is a shared understanding.

Motivation

Understanding how you or others are motivated, using this understanding to help achieve a collective goal or aim.

Awareness of group dynamics and collaboration

Observing and understanding how others behave and interact; using individuals' different approaches and perspectives to benefit the team; and working with others to achieve a collective goal or aim.

Strategic mind-set

Contributing to effective leadership, enabling a team to achieve its collective goals or aims.

Critical self-analysis/self-evaluation

Considering personal strengths and opportunities for self-improvement, presenting a case or argument to justify behaviour or personal development.

Social conscience

Being conscious of how your values or ethos impacts the application of your expert skills, knowledge and experience and how your behaviour can affect others.

Recognising opportunities

Seizing and exploiting opportunities to further develop yourself.

Global mind-set

Appreciating broad social, cultural or international contexts and adapting behaviours and approaches in a range of diverse situations, showing self-awareness and empathy.

Glossary of terms

Activities	An activity is a source of personal experiences. It provides the context for your experiences. Independently engaging in an activity means that you were personally and directly involved in doing the activity.
Attributes	An attribute is personal characteristic, acquired because your transformative experience(s) have changed the way you think and, subsequently, act. The Imperial Award covers 12 attributes.
Award Criteria	The criteria used by the assessor's when assessing student submissions, as shown in the Student Guide.
Descriptive writing	A style of writing only describing what you did and how you did it. In the context of the Imperial Award you should only use descriptive writing to provide context for your reflective writing.
Evaluation	You examine complex issues using your high-level cognitive skills. More focussed than a review. Leads to a solution, conclusion or recommendation.
Experiences	An experience is anything that has had impact upon you during your engagement in an activity.
Impact	The difference it makes to self, others or a situation. The difference between how things were before, and how things are now.
Life events	Experiences of handling challenges or opportunities in your life. Includes health, money, personal responsibilities, legal situations, etc.
Mapping	Mapping means correlating, findings matches/gaps between your experiences and the attributes. The online Portfolio contains a mapping tool.
Matrix	Automatically generated by the online portfolio, to summarise the links and gaps in your evidence for the 12 Award attributes.
Other activities	A catch-all category, in case we missed something.
Part-time work	Any type: does not have to be professional or degree-related

Personal development	Personal, as opposed to purely academic or professional, development of attributes
Portfolio (diary/journal)	Collecting your experiences into one document (folio). Add past experiences and then top-up regularly with new experiences.
Reflection	Looking back on your experiences; sifting for significant moments, transformative of the way you think and act. More information in our Reflection Guide.
Reflective Writing	Writing that reveals your deep, thoughtful reflection about the significance of your experiences in your personal development of the attributes.
Streams	Attributes are split into three different streams, each with a different emphasis. See Stream descriptors to understand the differences.
Transformation	Change in you which is probably irreversible. Evidence of transformation can be experiences with such a strong impact that they change the way you think and act.
Volunteering	Any volunteering could give you transformative experiences. Community, educational, health, engineering, medicine, environmental, Imperial College Union roles, STEMM ambassadors, etc.
