Imperial College London

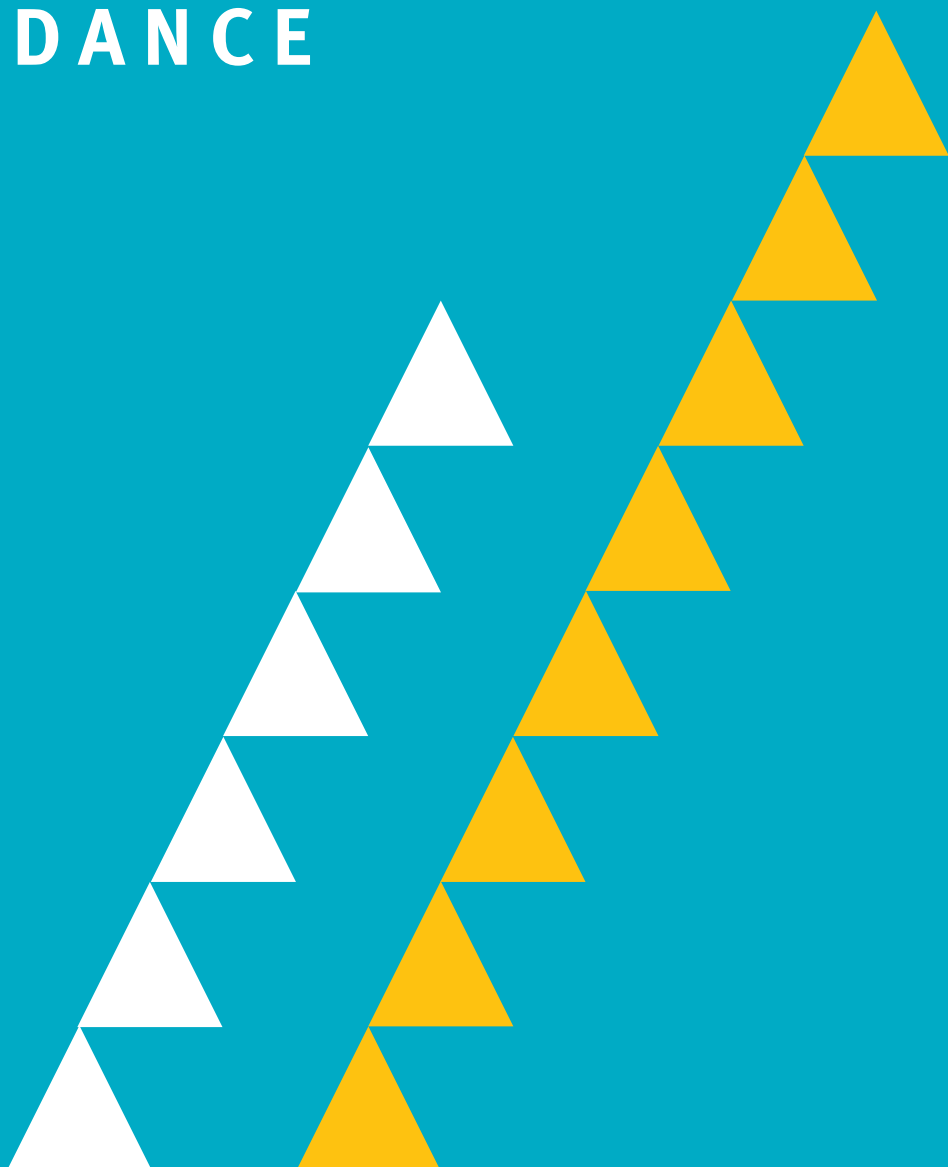## imperial college union

IMPERIAL AWARD SCHEME STUDENT GUIDANCE

> **Imperial students don't wait until graduation to start making an impact**

I am continually struck by the exceptional ability and motivation of Imperial students. We expect you to become professionals with deep, fundamental knowledge of their chosen discipline but you are all professionals and the leaders of tomorrow.

We also know that Imperial students don't wait until graduation to start making an impact. The Imperial Award has been designed to recognise your achievements and the personal transformation associated with studying at Imperial.

The Award provides an opportunity for you to build a portfolio of activities and experiences, enabling you to record and reflect upon the skills and attributes developed throughout your time at Imperial.

Imperial College Union and the College are delighted to be working together to recognise your development through the Imperial Award.

Simone Buitendijk
Vice-Provost
(Education)

The benefits

- The Imperial Award expands the support for your personal development. Your department, the Union and the College each deliver different aspects of the Award;

- It carries official weight. Success in one or more streams of the Award earns you extra lines on your College graduation transcript;

- Registering for the Imperial Award gives you our Award-specific online tools and student guide, including a portfolio builder;

- Building your portfolio and mapping your attributes will help you upgrade your CV immediately, even before attempting the Award;

- Analysing your own non-technical attributes is very employer-friendly and interview-savvy;

- The online tools let you map your experiences against the twelve Imperial Award attributes, so you know when you're ready to attempt any part of the Award;

- It is not academic. Your academic performance does not influence the Award assessors (they won't even know) so this is a new arena for gaining extra recognition from Imperial;

- Feedback makes the Award developmental from start to finish: from using online tools, from your tutor, during workshops and, if you submit a short reflective statement for an Imperial Award stream, from the assessor panel;

- It is rigorous but not onerous, earned not won, a one-page statement is the only thing submitted to each assessor panel.

What is the Imperial Award?
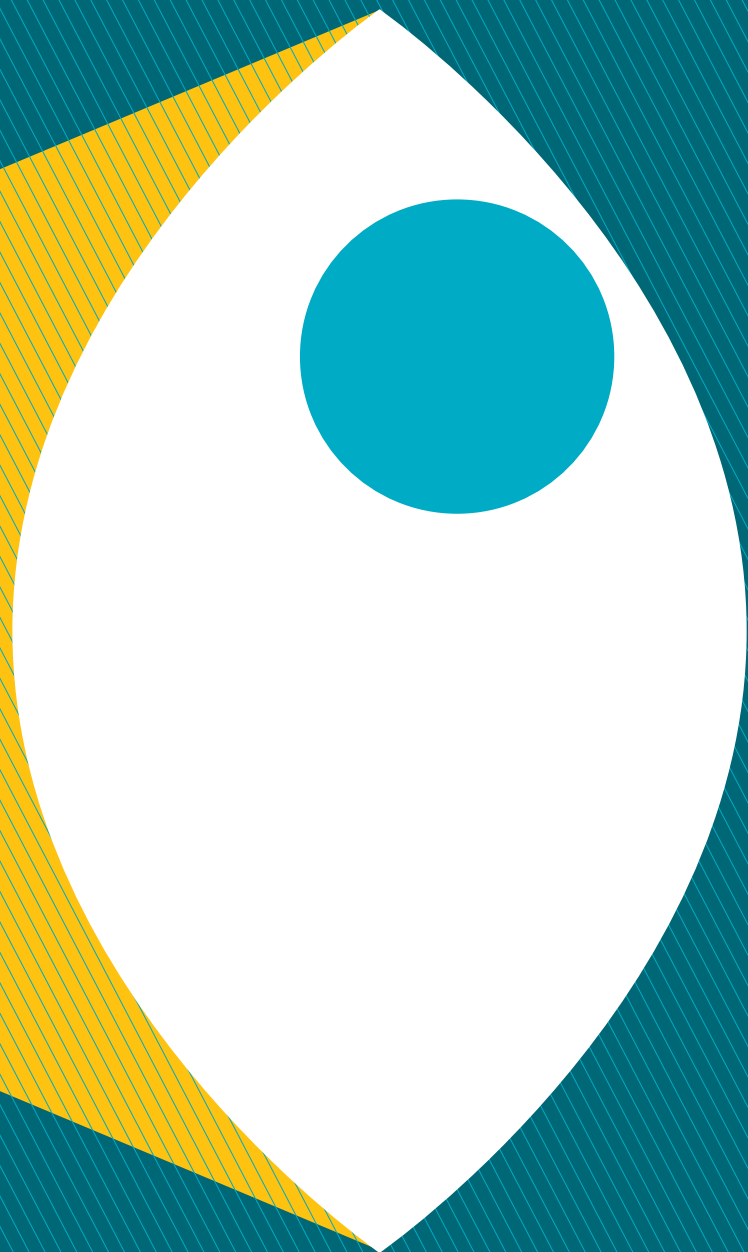
The Imperial Award recognises your development of specific personal attributes, valued by society and employers.

The Award is earned by reflecting upon, and writing up, the transformative impact of your activities on you. It is not about rewarding academic success or the volume of the activities you engage in, but addresses your own personal development.

Through reflection, you are encouraged and will be supported to: understand the attributes required for the award, interpret your own experiences gained from your activities outside and inside your degree, correlate them and consider filling any gaps in your development.

The Imperial Award will shape some of your Personal Tutor meetings, helping you to get the most out of them. The criteria used by the assessor panel will help you to prioritise reflection over description, argument over assertion, and ensure that the assessment, though small, is rigorous and provides you with feedback.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE IMPERIAL AWARD?

The Award recognises students who evidence the transformative impact of their engagement in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. It requires students to demonstrate critical reflection upon how their activities have transformed their understanding, attitudes and skills in relation to key graduate attributes.

Working towards the Imperial Award you will need to:

▲ Capture and record your activities and experiences;

▲ Map and evidence your experiences against the Imperial Award attributes;

▲ Reflect upon the significance of each attribute;

▲ Write a short reflective statement critically considering how you meet the Imperial Award criteria;

▲ Utilise feedback from various sources throughout the process ▲

The structure

Gaining the Imperial Award

The Imperial Award consists of three streams, each containing four attributes. Each stream requires you to submit a separate, short reflective statement to demonstrate how you meet the criteria for each attribute in that stream. You do not need to submit statements for each stream at the same time.

After registration, you will receive advice including key dates. There are multiple chances to submit statements, each year.

To prepare your statement, you will be supported to recall, discuss and reflect upon your independent activities in relation to the Award criteria.

To achieve a stream, you must persuade the Imperial Award assessors panel that you have met the Award criteria for each attribute within that stream. You will be formally recognised on your official College Transcript for each stream attained.

If you gain all three streams, you 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 14.

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

○ **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

Discuss and plan your progress with your Personal Tutor or mentor

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

Attend workshops run by the Union to help you reflect and write reflectively

Decide that you're ready and then write your short reflective statement

Submit your short reflective statement(s) claiming development of the attributes

Receive feedback from the assessor panel(s) either as to your success or what to fix next time or, possibly, to attend a meeting to rectify or clarify a gap in your claim

○ **Each successful stream is acknowledged on your graduation transcript, but a complete set of three streams will be acknowledged as earning 'The Imperial Award'**

The process

PORTFOLIO

AWARD SUBMISSION

RECORD ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCE

You can capture and record anything in your online portfolio, it's entirely up to you and no one else can see it. It will come to help you when you decide to write your statement(s) and later on when writing a CV, job application or cover letter.

Example activites:

Academia

Clubs, societies and projects

Life events

Part-time work

Personal development

Running an event

Volunteering

Welfare or Academic Rep network

Anything else

This list is not exhaustive and you can draw upon anything you feel is evidence of your development of the Award attributes and your own transformation.

MAP AND EVIDENCE ATTRIBUTES

In order to sufficiently enable you to reflect upon how you have developed and meet the attributes you will need to align your activities and experiences to them. Your online portfolio can be used to do this.

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

REFLECTION

Before you start to write your statement take time to think about your activities and experience in relation to the Imperial Award attributes. Use the Reflection and reflective writing guide to help you reflect.

Stream one
Independent, open-minded thought

Stream two
Effective teamwork

Stream three
Self-awareness and active self-management

WRITE AND SUBMIT A SHORT REFLECTIVE STATEMENT

Your written, short reflective statement is submitted through the Imperial Award system. You will need to submit one statement per stream. You cannot combine the streams: each stream requires a separate statement.

You must fulfil the Award criteria in relation to every attribute in a stream.

To receive the full Imperial Award you need to achieve each stream.

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

Imperial College Union support and workshops

Personal tutor / mentor support

Assessor panel

Registration and support

REGISTRATION

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

The Imperial Award team will activate your access to the Imperial Award portfolio to begin mapping and evidencing your activities and experiences.

You will be added to our Imperial Award contact list. Your Department liaison officer will be informed. Every term you will be invited to briefing sessions, as well as support workshops.

We will contact and brief your Personal Tutor too. If your Personal Tutor is unable to support you through the Award, we can allocate you a mentor.

SUPPORT

Your Personal Tutor or mentor will meet with you 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.

Your department may give you advice on how/when to meet with your Personal Tutor. Ideally, the Imperial Award fits within the usual discussions you have with your personal tutor about your personal development. We recommend meeting with your Personal Tutor or mentor at least once per term so that you can track and discuss your development. Negotiate and book meetings with them in advance.

If your Personal Tutor or mentor is away or unavailable, contact the Imperial Award team who can help support you by connecting you to a mentor.

To provide you with tips for reflection and producing your reflective statement, we produced a guide on 'Reflection and Reflective Writing', which you can access online. Support workshops 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

After your registration for the Imperial Award is approved, you can access the online portfolio.

This practical tool is designed to help you record your activities and experiences and then categorise them against the Award attributes. Your portfolio is intended entirely for you, and you can utilise it however you find it works best.

Your online tools include the portfolio and a matrix, where you map your activities against each attribute. The matrix shows you where you have gaps in an Imperial Award 'stream' of attribute(s), and where you have the most experiences in support of a particular Award stream ▲

PORTFOLIO

MATRIX

Statements

Your written, short reflective statement is submitted through the Imperial Award system.

Each statement must be no more than 4000 characters, which is about one A4 page. You will need to submit one statement per stream. You cannot combine the streams, each stream requires a separate statement. Do not be tempted to re-use parts of statements across streams.

You can discuss, but not copy, the work of others. The Award requires your own personal reflection.

First year undergraduates can sign-up for the Imperial Award but cannot submit for the Award until the summer of their second year, allowing time to develop and reflect.

HOW DO I SUBMIT MY STATEMENT FOR A STREAM?
Your written, short reflective statement is submitted through the Imperial Award system. All submission deadlines are communicated by email and can be found online imperialcollegeunion.org/imperial-award ▴

Imperial Award criteria and framework

WHAT DO ASSESSORS CONSIDER WHEN THEY REVIEW MY STATEMENT?
The assessor panel will convene to review your written submission against the Award criteria.

The assessors will judge your statement to have met, partially met or not met the necessary criteria:

MET
This means that you will be awarded that stream. The panel will congratulate you and alert Registry to add the appropriate line to your transcript.

PARTIALLY MET
Partially met means that the panel may invite you to meet with them if they suspect that you might meet the Award criteria for each attribute if only you had been more explicit about your evidence. This is about fixing minor problems. After this meeting, if the assessors are satisfied you have met the Award criteria, you will be awarded the stream and the panel will alert Registry to this add to your transcript.

If not, the panel will return your statement to you with advice on improvements to be made for a future submission.

NOT MET
The panel will give you feedback, so that you can submit again in the future, after working on how you communicate the evidence for each Imperial Award attribute. Discuss the feedback with your Personal Tutor or mentor and the improvements or adjustments that could be made.

THE IMPERIAL AWARD CRITERIA AND FRAMEWORK
The framework contains two elements: the definitions of Streams and Attributes (what to claim) and the Award criteria (how to claim).

PLAGIARISM
All statements submitted for the Imperial Award will be submitted through the plagiarism detection software Turnitin.

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

IMPERIAL AWARD CRITERIA

NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET	MET
The assessor will regard the attribute as not met if:	The assessor will regard the attribute as partially met if:	The assessor will regard the attribute as met if:
▲ The attribute is not discussed ▲ The attribute is merely described (not discussed) ▲ The attribute is only indicated by a mere example (not discussed) ▲ The attribute is only implicit (instead of explicit) ▲ The discussion lacks reflection upon how the attribute was transformative (had personal developmental impact on the student) ▲ The student does not demonstrate independent engagement in the activity	▲ The student has written a statement which explicitly reflected upon the attribute *and* ▲ The student demonstrates independent engagement in the activity *but* ▲ The student has not yet claimed and demonstrated transformation, impact or personal development *and/or* ▲ The student has not made links between the activity, impact, and the attribute	▲ The attribute is explicitly reflected upon *and* ▲ The attribute is integrated into a critically considered argument *and* ▲ The argument 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

You can find out more information about plagiarism on the Registry webpages: imperial.ac.uk/student-records-and-data/for-current-students/undergraduate-and-taught-postgraduate/exams-assessments-and-regulations/

COMPLAINTS
If you encounter any issues concerning the Imperial Award, we encourage you to contact the Training and Development Manager by emailing them detailing the nature of the problem.

They will be able to advise on the next steps: imperialaward@imperial.ac.uk

imperialaward@imperial.ac.uk ▲

Carefully read the Imperial Award Framework to see the wording of the attributes and the Award criteria: the assessor panel uses the Imperial Award framework (not this Student Guide)

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. Situations requiring independent thinking may have involved risks and no guarantee of success, and yet these situations can be highly transformative for you and others.

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.

Innovative approach	You have applied your scientific or research knowledge and/or skills to improve an existing thing or to develop/identify/establish something new.
Creativity	You have generated ideas and applied them in developing an initiative, solving a problem, instigating a course of action, or bringing value to an individual, situation, or process.
Practical, intelligent problem-solving	A solution has been identified and justified with intelligent reasoning.
Enterprising mind-set	Having an enterprising mindset enables you to identify opportunity(s) and take risks in order to develop outcomes that can be diffused into society (being a social entrepreneur or business entrepreneur) or have impact within an organisation (being an intrapreneur).

Stream two
Effective teamwork

Imperial students have a strong tradition of group activities, but progressing beyond mere group work to effective teamwork requires an effort to understand teams, develop relevant teamwork skills and apply them to enhance the team's activities. Students will use this stream to reflect on their evidence of transformation into an effective contributor to a team, showing impact upon how the team operated as well as contributing to the team's achievements.

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	How you or others are motivated is understood, with tactics deployed to achieve an aim.
Awareness of group dynamics and collaboration	The way in which others behave and interact is observed and understood, using individual's traits for the benefit of the group and working together and achieve a collective goal/aim.
Strategic mind-set	Having a strategic mindset contributes to effective leadership, enabling a team to achieve its goals.

Stream three
Self-awareness and active self-management

Imperial students enjoy the reputation of people who can handle intense academic challenges. Many also enjoy a reputation for their effort to create societal benefits: for being achievers who can identify opportunities and have 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.

Critical self-analysis/self-evaluation	Consideration of your strengths and your opportunities for self-improvement, presenting a case/argument to justify behaviour or personal development.
Social conscience	Awareness of how your values/ethos impacts the application of your expert skills, knowledge and experience, and how your behaviour can impact upon others.
Recognising opportunities	Critical moments have been seized and exploited to further develop self.
Global mind-set	Having a global mindset lets you appreciate the broader social, cultural and/or international context(s), showing self-awareness, empathy, and an ability to adapt your behaviour and/or your approach to diverse situations.

Glossary of terms

Activities
Actions taken whilst at Imperial, which have a personal developmental impact on you.

Attributes
Listed in the Imperial Award Framework.
Four attributes make up a stream of attributes.

Co-curricular
Learning/project/developmental activity, which is not inside your degree but is closely related. Examples: studying a language with Imperial's CLCC; extending a project beyond your degree into independent research/development; implementing an idea initially developed as a classroom exercise; and so on….

Criteria
Assessor's guide as to what to look for in your statement per attribute and your guide of what you will need to ensure is included in your submissions. See Imperial Award Framework.

Departmental liaison officer
The academic/administrative lead on Imperial Award in a department.

Description
Listing of factual detail. Listing what, when, where, who, how much but not 'significance' for you/others.

Evaluation
An examination of complex issues requiring high-level cognitive skills that is more focused and detailed than a review, providing a solution, conclusion or recommendation.

Experience
One activity may give you many experiences: volunteering on a project to design a device to assist a disabled person might require creativity for the design, enterprising mind-set to fund the prototype, motivational/leadership skills to keep volunteers engaged communication and active listening to respond to feedback from the enduser. Experiences give you evidence of the attributes required for a stream.

Extra-curricular
Activity wholly outside of your degree, for example: choir, non-professional work, clubs/societies, life events.

Focus group
A group of participants brought together to arrive at a consensus (focus), providing evaluation data.

Impact
The difference it makes to self, others, or a situation.

Imperial Award team
The staff looking after the Imperial Award scheme, drawn from academic, admin and Imperial College Union staff.

Life events
Life throws difficulties in our paths, forcing us to respond and transforming us in the process. e.g. a student whose parent is diagnosed with chronic disease must balance competing, compelling demands on time/energy.

Mapping
The action of looking for the intersections/overlaps between the attributes you are trying to demonstrate and your evidence (the experiences gained from your activities): usually done with a matrix (or table).

Matrix
A table where your list of experiences (rows) can be plotted against the columns of attributes. Diagnostic tool.

Measurement
Finding indicators of qualitative or quantitative impact; having a way to gauge impact.

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, across all attributes.

Portfolio
Bringing all your experiences together in one folio (document); an *aide-mémoire*.

Reflection
Looking back on your experiences; sifting for significant moments, transformative of the way you think and act.

Streams
The 12 attributes are grouped in three streams: four attributes per stream. See Imperial Award Framework.

Transformation
Change which is probably irreversible. A process of expanding critical awareness; old self-views changing into new self-views.

Volunteering
Social, community, educational, health, engineering, environmental: all volunteering can transform you.