

Procedures for the Approval and Review of Split PhDs

1. Introduction

- 1.1. It is not possible to obtain a PhD degree from Imperial College wholly on an external basis. The overwhelming majority of research students who obtain their PhD at Imperial College follow a programme of study involving attendance on a full-time basis or on a part-time basis.
- 1.2. The College occasionally permits students to carry out some of the research for a PhD abroad under approved conditions. Arrangements are normally confined to institutions overseas with which the College has established links and/or connections and in cases where the research problem requires local fieldwork, for example, the study of a particular aspect of geology or biology.
- 1.3. All applications for split PhD programmes are considered on their individual merits. Not all Departments¹ in the College will necessarily entertain applications for a split PhD.
- 1.4. If a split PhD arrangement is approved, the student is required to be in physical attendance at Imperial College for a minimum of 12 months out of the normal 36 months duration of a PhD programme. Sometimes a minimum attendance in excess of 12 months may be prescribed where there is evidence that the successful completion of the PhD requires it.
- 1.5. Generally, the objective of the split PhD scheme is to enable projects of particular relevance to the PhD student's country to be conducted through in-country research combined with work at Imperial.
- 1.6. The College's policy on student intellectual property shall apply to all outputs generated by an applicant whilst engaged with research.

2. Procedure for the Approval of Split PhDs

- 2.1. A proportionate approach will be taken by the College when considering proposals for split PhDs. In all cases, applicants will be considered individually regardless of whether or not they are applying for a split PhD at an institution where an existing student has already been approved under the split PhD scheme. Additionally, local supervisors will always be required to provide a copy of their CV to the Imperial Department.
- 2.2. In the first instance, prospective students wishing to apply for a split PhD are advised to discuss this with their potential Imperial Department at the admissions stage. A covering note should be submitted with their application explaining why it would be advantageous not to pursue their proposed

¹ Any reference to "Departmental" or "Department" may include Imperial College Schools, Institutions, Centres or Divisions, as appropriate.

research wholly at Imperial, together with a copy of their local supervisor's CV.

- 2.3. If the Imperial Department is willing to accept the student on a split PhD arrangement, they should complete the [Split PhD Registration Form](#) (Appendix A), arrange for it to be signed by the Head of Department at the alternative site, and then return it to the relevant Admissions Team at the time of sending through the offer decision. The Admissions Team will then send the completed Split PhD Registration Form to the Registry's Quality Assurance Team who will co-ordinate due diligence checks. Subject to a satisfactory outcome the Admissions team will communicate the offer decision to the prospective student.
- 2.4. Should issues be identified, the form will be sent to the Director of the Graduate School (or their alternate where applications involve the same Department to which the Director of the Graduate School belongs) and the Academic Registrar for consideration and discussion with the Head of the Imperial Department concerned. If no potential conflicts of issues are found or matters which could bring the College into disrepute, the Quality Assurance Team will confirm approval of the alternate site to the relevant Admissions Team who will then confirm the offer decision to the prospective student and alert the Imperial Department.
- 2.5. Once a split PhD student enrolls at Imperial, the [Study Leave procedures](#) should be followed and the Imperial Department should submit the completed [IC/D form](#) to the Registry's Student Records Team.
- 2.6. The Split PhD Registration Form itself serves as the agreement between the alternative institution and the College. However, it is recognised that the College may have major long-standing arrangements for split PhDs. These partnerships would normally require a more detailed written agreement in place of the Split PhD Registration Form and the approval and review procedures for such arrangements may deviate from what is detailed in this procedure therefore.

3. Review of Split PhDs

- 3.1. Often, there may only be one student undertaking their research at the alternative institution and therefore, once the student's period of registration is complete, the agreement and partnership would normally terminate unless a there is long-standing arrangement between the College and the alternate institution for the provision of Split PhDs. Where such long-standing arrangements are in place, Split PhDs will normally be reviewed internally as part of the Department's [Collaborative Research Degree Precept Review](#) and as part of a Department's external periodic review (please see the [Procedures for the Review of Departmental Research Degree Provision](#)).

Approved by Senate
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