Informatics Graduate School Induction

Session Schedule

10.30am  Tea and Coffee served in the Forum atrium

11.00 – 11.10am  Welcome to the School of Informatics from the Deputy Head of School
- Prof Frank Keller

11.10 – 11.25am  Welcome to Informatics from the Director of the Graduate School
- Prof Nigel Topham

11.25 – 11.45am  Welcome to Informatics from the Deputy Director of the Graduate School
- Dr Mary Cryan

12.00 - 1.00pm  Lunch served in the Forum Atrium

1.15 – 1.30pm  Introduction to the IAD – Louise McKay

1.30 – 1.50pm  Overview of PGR Supervisor role and responsibilities – Prof Phil Wadler

1.50 - 2.10pm  Overview of University Teaching opportunities
- Prof Björn Franke (Director of Teaching)

2.10 – 2:30pm  Student Internships - Opportunity and Experience
- Ondrej Bohdal (Data Science PhD Student)

2:30 – 3.00pm  Student Q&A session
Introduction to the Informatics Graduate School

Prof Nigel Topham
Director of IGS

Dr Mary Cryan
Deputy Director of IGS
What is the Informatics Graduate School (IGS)?

- Large cohort of postgraduate research students
- Degrees: MScR, MPhil, PhD
- Academic and administrative staff (ISS)
- Information sources for postgraduate student

http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs
Our Community of PG Research Students

574 research students registered on INF PGR programmes; 93% PhD, 7% MScR/MPhil

Our community is:

- Spread across 6 Institutes and 5 CDTs
- from 67 different nationalities
- 98% full time, 2% part time
- 23% female, 74% male, 3% undisclosed,
- 23% UK, 34% EU, 43% International

- 79 new PGRs started their research degrees in Sem 1, with another 10+ expected to start in Sem 2.

- 38 of our new PGR students enrolled on one of our CDT programmes
  - 13 in Natural Language Processing (NLP)
  - 12 in Biomedical Artificial Intelligence
  - 6 in Robotics & Autonomous Systems (7 more at Heriot-Watt)

- Successful students selected from over 1100 applicants.
Exciting Informatics!

- World-leading academic staff (140+), post-docs (150+), support teams (130+), and you!
- Specialised labs, including manipulating, flying, rolling, and walking robots
- 100s of GPUs, access to 1000+ CPU machines
- 6 Research Institutes with main focus on:
  - Theory (LFCS),
  - Communication (ILCC),
  - AI (AIAI),
  - Learning (IANC),
  - Systems (ICSA),
  - Robotics (IPAB)
- Seminars, visitors, conferences
- 50+ taught courses that you can access
- Commercialisation support (top startup department in UK)
Graduate School staff and their roles

▪ Director (Nigel Topham)
  – Recruitment, selection, funding & scholarships (with Institute Selectors)
  – Graduate School policy
  – College and University representation

▪ Deputy Director (Mary Cryan)
  – Advice and on course programme support - interruptions, suspensions, extensions, annual reviews, research relationships, student experience
  – Networking events, transferable skills and research training courses

▪ Personal Tutors, PGR (John Longley, Murray Cole and Laura Sevilla-Lara)
  – Mentoring and pastoral advice, advice with supervisor challenges

▪ IGS administrative team - Lindsey Fox (Manager), Patrick Hudson, Jonathan McBride, Margaret Blake and Agapi Stylianidou, plus the CDT Administration team.
  – Administration queries e.g. changes, requests.
  – Funding and stipend administration
  – Programme regulations and policy advice
  – Wellbeing and support, including community building activities and mental health support
Doctoral College

- University of Edinburgh Doctoral College

The Doctoral College supports and enhances the postgraduate research student experience in a number of different ways.

- It brings together staff from across the University who work with PGR students to work collaboratively and share practice
- They coordinate training, support, events and opportunities for PGRs across the University
- They represent PGR at University–level committees and groups
- They support and enhance the PGR student representation structures and make sure your voice is heard.
- Various social events running, follow @UoE_Doc for notifications

Webpage - https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/doctoral-college
Sharepoint - https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/DoctoralCollege
Twitter - https://twitter.com/uoe_doc?lang=en
Starting your PhD...

- Be Bold – choose an exciting, challenging topic
- Get advice from your supervisor!
- Develop your skills in parallel with your research:
  - IAD courses (e.g., How to do an Informatics PhD, Research Ethics)
  - Get to know other PhD students (Institute / CDT meetings and seminars)
  - We want to plan other ways to help students connect. *Ideas for us?*
  - Seek outside interests - work/life balance.
- Supervisors are human – work with them
- "Setting expectations" form (before your 1st meeting with supervisor)
- Think about your future career, and plan ahead.
Be an effective PhD student ...

- PhD time is precious – manage it carefully
- Address problems; don’t let them fester
- Read extensively, widely and continuously
- Write early and often
- Plan your research around paper submissions
- Define small, measurable goals
- Get feedback from supervisors and colleagues about your plans
- Be rigorous in your work
- Learn from the best role models in research
- Take control of your own destiny…
- Read the Researchers’ Handbook (Bundy et al.)
  http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/phd/training-development/researchers-handbook
- “Code” for Supervisors and Research Students!

MSc Res students

- MSc Res is 1 year research degree, assessed entirely by thesis
- Some of you are MRes+PhD students, on the RAS or Biomed CDT programmes.
  - Your CDT will manage the MSc Res (alongside some courses)
  - Your MRes may feed into "progression" for the 3-year PhD
- For 2022/23 we are expecting 5 standalone "MSc Res" students, spread among institutes. Welcome!
  - Your thesis submission, examination comes much sooner than for other research students: please familiarize yourselves with procedures at the MRes section of the Informatics Graduate School webpages
  - Ask your supervisor to introduce you to other research students in the group (or related groups).

(these things are also relevant for PhD, MPhil students, but less condensed)
University Services

- **University Libraries**
  - DiscoverEd
    - Search the Library’s collections – books, e-books, subscription content & journals.
    - Sign in to access all online content, manage your searches, loans and requests.
    - Help includes Academic Support Librarians
  - Study Space
  - Inter-library loan service / request a book service
  - Training and help in reference management - Endnote, Zotero and Mendeley via IAD

- **LinkedIn Learning**
  - online courses in Technology, Programming, Data Science, Business, Career Development
  - Access these from your MyEd account, from Resources -> Professional development

- **Careers service**
  - Rebecca Clacy-Jones – Careers Consultant for Informatics (appointments available)
  - Self help, job options, career planning, job vacancies
  - Talks, events and workshops specific for PGR students, career fairs
  - [https://www.ed.ac.uk/careers/students/postgraduates/phd-students](https://www.ed.ac.uk/careers/students/postgraduates/phd-students)

- **Institute of Academic Development (IAD)**
  - All the details from Louise McKay later on in the day.
Health and Wellbeing

- **Health and Wellbeing Service**
  - University NHS GP practice / pharmacy in Bristo Square
  - [https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-centre](https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-centre)

- **The University Counselling Service**
  - Supporting the mental health of students, using short-term counselling (face to face and email). You can "self-refer" and priority is early intervention.
  - Drop-in sessions and lifelong learning
  - Referral to other services
  - Self-help links and links to online apps
    - Big White Wall
    - Free access to the Feeling Good App
    - Silver cloud (online mental health treatments/CBT)
  - Crisis support

- **University Disability Service**
  - Needs assessments and schedule of adjustments

The Wellbeing Centre houses the Student Counselling and Disability Services, the University Medical Centre and the University Pharmacy.
Here to help....

- **The Advice Place (EUSA)**
  - The Advice Place is home to Edinburgh University Students' Association's professional advice team offering students free, impartial and confidential information on everything and anything that you might need help with.
  - They provide advice to students on everything from getting grades appealed, dealing with landlord issues, to managing personal issues and much more.

- **Student School Liaison Committee (SSLC)**
  - Quarterly meetings with Deputy Director and IGS
  - Suggestions for community / cohort building activities
  - Resolution of issues impacting the PGR community in Inf
  - Each Institute and CDT is represented by a PGR rep and you can feedback ideas and suggestions to them.
In case of problems

https://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/phd/resolving-problems

Points of contact depend on the kind of issue (and who it may involve)

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<td>Your Principal Supervisor</td>
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<td>Your Assistant Supervisor(s)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Your Institute or CDT Director, or CDT tutor</td>
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<td>Head of Graduate School</td>
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<td>• Nigel Topham</td>
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<td>Personal Tutors for Research Students</td>
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<td>• John Longley</td>
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<td>• Murray Cole</td>
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<td>• Laura Sevilla</td>
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<td>Deputy Director of Graduate School - Mary Cryan</td>
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<td>Head of School (Jane Hillston)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>College Dean of PGR Students (Anthony Maciocia)</td>
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Normal points of contact are for general guidance

If you have a sensitive issue to discuss you can contact any of the above, but we recommend talking first to Deputy Head of Graduate School or a Personal Tutor
Personal Tutors

- The CDTs have “pastoral support” tutors (Bjorn Ross for NLP, Michael Herrmann for RAS, Ian Simpson and Diego Oyarzun for Biomed-AI).

- For all PhD students, we have PGR tutors - John Longley, Murray Cole and Laura Sevilla (you'll get to meet them at lunch!).
  - Independent academic advisors who can be consulted in case of difficulties that cannot be resolved through normal supervisory mechanism
  - Can offer advice on certain issues that students may not want / be able to discuss with their supervisor
  - Liaison with the Deputy Director of the Informatics Graduate School (Mary)

- Students may request a consultation with either male or female Personal Tutor if they have a gender preference

- May point students to various forms of non-academic support, such as the wellbeing centre/advisors, student counselling service, disability service.
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Informatics has a lot of variety: different nationalities, cultures, religions, genders, sexualities, races, abilities, etc
- We treat all equally, and with dignity and respect
- It may have been different where you come from, but now you are here.
- “No means No” (Harassment is treated seriously)
- Enjoy your freedom and give it generously to others
- Try the 15min “Unconscious Bias” course on the University Respect site.
- Language is tricky, and misunderstandings do not mean conflict or disagreement:
  - British English: ‘take a class’ = be a teacher
  - American English: take a class’ = be a student
- Ask if you are unsure

https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/respect
Important Programme Admin – Our “Handbook” webpages

The IGS Intranet webpages are our version of a Student Handbook – they have a lot of information and guidance in them.....please take time to look at the information!

Timelines to help guide your progress milestones

Processes for making changes to programmes (e.g. interruptions etc)

Annual Review guidance

Training courses

Information on funding

Etc etc
Important Programme Admin – Matriculating

You must have a status of “fully matriculated” before we can pay you your stipends

- Registration (all)
- Confirmation of attendance (all) – in person for new students, the IGS office is open (if you are not here, you must have an approved LoA in your EUCLID student record….)
- International check in (if applicable)

Student Immigration Service and International check-in

- Student Immigration Service here to help with all queries/issues relating to student immigration
  - All new students sponsored on a student visa (or other relevant visa) must complete the international check-in process once they are in the UK. This is an in-person process and you need to book an appointment if you haven’t already.

Matriculating and confirming attendance is a YEARLY admin task

- If you fail to matriculate and confirm attendance each year, you will be withdrawn from your programme.
- Reminders will be sent by IGS team; expect to have to visit the office in person at the appropriate time each year.
Important Programme Admin – Money

Stipend payment process – new University finance system & processes (PAM)

Submit the FORM 98 to IGS

IGS then submit a supplier request to Finance Helpline

We wait for the supplier number to be provided

Then we submit a one-off payment request to Finance Helpline for the 3-month bulk payment

We also then submit a reoccurring payment request to Finance Helpline for the monthly payments from month 4 onwards

Accounts Payable team then process the one-off payment via P&M

Accounts Payable team then set up the monthly payment via P&M
- 28 Nov (for Dec) for Sept starts
- 21 Dec (for Jan) for Oct starts
Building access, desks and collecting equipment

- **Building accesses – Informatics Forum, Bayes and Wilkie**
  - The Informatics Forum, Bayes Centre and Wilkie make up the Informatics estate and you will be required to complete the necessary building inductions before swipe card access will be added to your student card.
  - A shared office will be allocated to you on completion of the building induction and once you have paid a £20 refundable deposit though the key deposit is not required for all offices.

- **Computing Equipment**
  - All new PhD students will be sent a computing request form, where you will advise IGS of what computing equipment you require. Standard provision is issue of a laptop, to facilitate shared space provision and allow flexible working between office / home / other University study spaces.
  - Collection of School laptops will be from the IGS office (though CDT students will have alternative arrangements).
  - The School’s Computing Support team have created a LEARN course for all new students to help you familiarise yourself with using Informatics equipment and systems (information on how to access this will be provided on collection of the equipment)
PGR new student social events

PGR First Year Social Events

- **First Year Board Games Night**
  - Friday 7th October at 6pm in MF1

- **Arthur Seat Walk**
  - Saturday 8th October at 10am. Meet outside the Informatics Forum

- **First Year Art Space Session**
  - Wednesday 12th October at 5pm in MF1

- **Upcoming events / future plans**
  - We are planning a schedule of other social events to take place over the rest of the year.