



Session recording

The Informatics Graduate School Induction session (Tue 14 Sept 2021) will be recorded and so we are required to inform you of the following:

a) What the recording is for and how it will be used - The recording is taking place to allow all new students commencing their PGR programme with us in 2021/22 to revisit and review the information covered in the presentation. We will use it for the purpose of inducting new PGR students who commence at other times of the 2021/22 academic year

b) Who will have access to it - The recording will be uploaded to the Informatics Graduate School webpage here: <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/new-students>

c) How long the recording will be kept - We will keep this recording for one year, at which point it will be deleted.

Confirmation of Attendance

[For the purpose of completing Confirmation of Attendance, please write your UUN and your full name in the Chat.](#)

Those starting programme officially in October, you will complete Confirmation of Attendance in person by visiting the Graduate School office in the Forum.

IGS Contact Details

igs@inf.ed.ac.uk

Session Schedule

09.45am Session opens for arrivals

10.00 – 10.10am (10 mins) - Welcome to the School of Informatics from the Head of School - Jane Hillston (Head of School, PGR Personal Tutor)

10.10 – 10.25am (15 mins) Welcome to Informatics from the Director of the Graduate School - Nigel Topham (Director of IGS)

10.25 – 10.45am (20 mins) Welcome to Informatics from the Deputy Director of the Graduate School - Mary Cryan (Deputy Director of IGS)

10:45 – 11.00am (15 mins) Introduction to the IAD – Louise McKay

11.00 – 11.20am (20 mins) Overview of Supervisor role and responsibilities - Michael O'Boyle (PGR Supervisor)

11.20-11.40am (20 mins) Overview of University Teaching opportunities – Björn Franke (Director of Teaching)

11.40 – 12:00pm (20 mins) Student Internships - Opportunity and Experience

12:00 – 12:15pm Student Q&A session



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
informatics

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)?

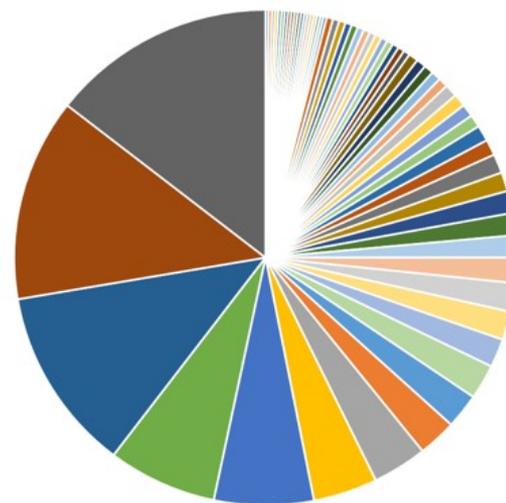
- Large cohort of postgraduate research students
- Degrees: MScR, MPhil, PhD
- Academic and administrative staff (ISS)
- Information sources for postgraduate student

<http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs>



Our Community of Research Students

- **573** research students registered on INF PGR programmes
 - from **57** different nationalities (25% UK, 35% EU, 40% Overseas/International)
 - Spread across 6 Institutes and 5 CDTs
- **98** new PGRs have either started (or will start) research degrees this academic session. Successful students selected from over 1300 applicants;
 - 98% full time, 2% part time
 - 20% female, 78% male, 2% undisclosed,
 - 38% Home, 62% International
- **71** new PGR students will commence (or are due to commence) on Institute-led research programmes
- And **37** new PGR students are to enrol on one of our CDT programmes
 - 14 in Natural Language Processing (NLP)
 - 7 in Robotics & Autonomous Systems (4 more at Heriot-Watt)
 - 12 in Biomedical Artificial Intelligence



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 (Jane Hillston, John Longley, Murray Cole)
 - Mentoring and pastoral advice, advice with supervisor challenges
- IGS administrative team members - Lindsey Fox, Patrick Hudson, Jonathan McBride, Margaret Blake and Agapi Stylianidou (plus your CDT Admins)
 - <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/contact>
 - Administration queries e.g. changes, requests.
 - Funding and stipend administration
 - Programme regulations clarification
 - Team members are **MHFA** trained

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

A welcome talk from the [University of Edinburgh Doctoral College](#) for all new postgraduate researchers will take place on [Thursday 16th September at 1:00pm-1.45pm](#). Register online.

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 (Piazza, Institute/CDT meetings)
 - 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.

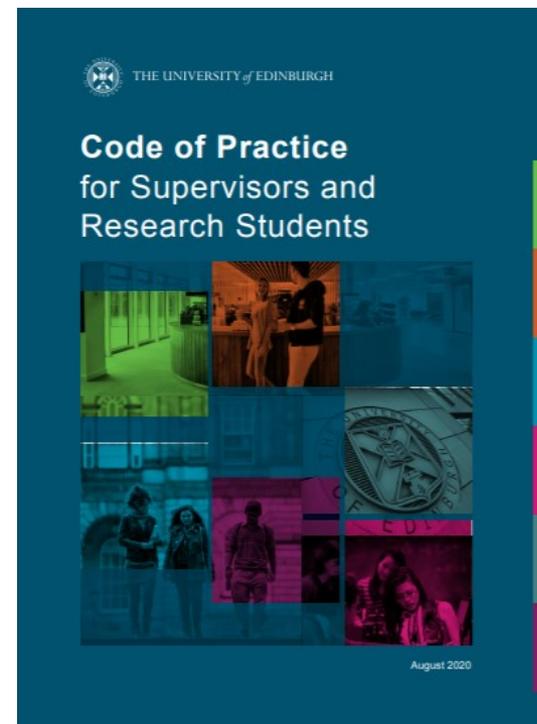
Thesis
Thesis
Thesis

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!



<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf>

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
 - About 10 of you are standalone "MSc Res" students, spread among institutes:
 - Welcome! This is an increase in the number of research-only MSc students for Informatics.
 - 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)*

COVID-19

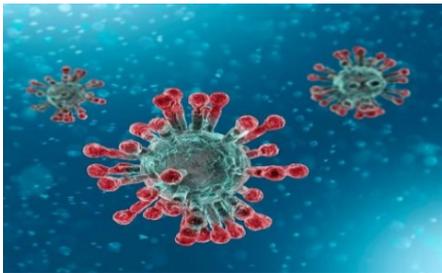
- Our priority is to keep student and staff safe; please read University, School COVID communications which will be sent to your [University](#) email account.
- [Most faculty](#) will try to offer both in-person meetings. Some faculty may have medical concerns limiting their face-to-face contact – be understanding (but please speak up if you are not getting enough support, access to labs)
- We expect all PGRs to be vigilant and behave in accordance with H&S measures:
 - All students are to wear masks indoors, the only exception for PGRs is when sitting at an office desk / meeting room and when $\geq 1\text{m}$ distance from others can be maintained or if there is a physical barrier.
 - Use the one-way systems where required and respect the individual capacities of spaces (e.g. lifts, common areas, pantries, toilets etc).
 - Wash/sanitise hands regularly
 - Open windows and maintain ventilation at all times

§ Do not come to the building if at all unwell (including non-COVID illnesses)

§ www.ed.ac.uk/covid-19

Covid-19 Support Service

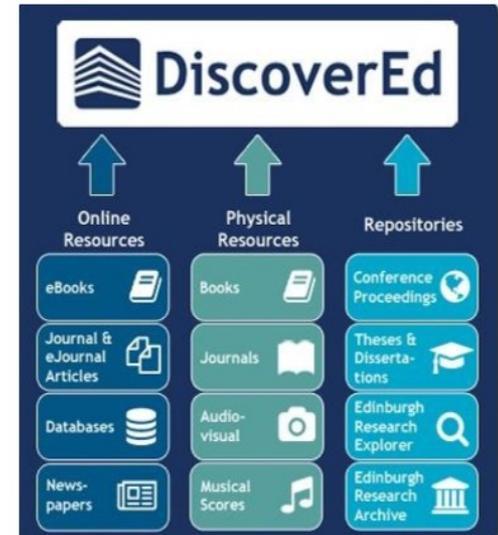
- § There is a drop-in vaccination centre at Pollock Halls for students to receive first and second vaccinations – first two weeks of semester (maybe longer if there is demand)
- § Take part in regular COVID testing:
 - TestEd is available in the Forum
 - The University has a Covid Support Service for students living in private accommodation: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/living-in-edinburgh/covid-support-service>
 - There is a form to fill in if you are self-isolating, to obtain help with food, practical matters, during self-isolation (a small number of relevant people in the School will be notified of your status).



University Support 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

- Kyla Atkinson – 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://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/careers_support_for_phd_students.docx

• Institute of Academic Development (IAD)

- All the details later from Louise McKay.

Health and Wellbeing



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

■ Health and Wellbeing Service

- University NHS GP practice / pharmacy in Bristo Square
- <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-centre>
- “Let’s talk” podcasts include a “Lockdown Life” series

■ The University Counselling Service

- Supporting the mental health of students, using short-term counselling (face to face and email)
- 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

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

<http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/phd/student-support/resolving-problems>

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

1. Your Principal Supervisor
2. Your Assistant Supervisor(s)

Normal Point of Contact for Academic Issues

3. Your Institute or CDT Director, or CDT tutor

Degree Programme Issues

4. Head of Graduate School
 - Nigel Topham

Admissions or Studentship Issues

5. Personal Tutors for Research Students
 - John Longley
 - Jane Hillston (Head of School)
 - Murray Cole

Any Other Issues

6. Deputy Director of Graduate School - Mary Cryan
7. Head of School ([Jane Hillston](#))
8. Dean of Students ([Anthony Maciocia](#))

Escalating Unresolved Issues

- 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 (Mirella Lapata for NLP, Michael Herrmann for RAS, Ian Simpson and Meriem El Karoui for Biomed-AI).
- For all PhD students, we have general postgraduate research tutors (Jane Hillston, John Longley and Murray Cole).
- **Independent academic advisors** who can be consulted in case of difficulties that cannot be resolved through normal supervisory mechanisms
- Can offer advice on certain issues that students may not want / be able to discuss with their supervisors
- 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 counselling**

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...(Lindsey)

- **You must have a status of “fully matriculated” before we can pay you your stipends**
 - Registration (all)
 - Confirmation of attendance (all)
 - International check in (if applicable)
- **We can only pay into UK BACS compliant bank accounts**
 - UK bank account advice (some are facilitating virtual account opening during COVID)
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/new-students/ready-university/top-6-tasks/fees-finances/banking>
- **Important finance admin tasks!**
 - For detailed information, see the IGS Getting Started guidance (Section 1.8)
 - Submit your bank mandate form and your starters checklist ASAP
 - Remember to input your UK bank account details into MyEd (link below!)
 - We can't arrange your initial stipend payment until all three of this tasks have been done!
<https://edin.ac/finance-student-bank-details>
- **Student Immigration Service and International check-in – polite reminder**
 - 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
 - <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/while-you-are-here/international-check-in>

Important Programme Admin...(Patrick)

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). Most equipment will not be available for collection until the 21st September
- 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)