

Advice for incoming students

We understand that beginning a PhD at a new institution and perhaps in a new city, especially in the current circumstances, may be unsettling. We know that you have been in touch with your supervisors to discuss your project and arrangements for your start at the ICR. We hope this has reassured you and that you are looking forward to joining us to start this exciting next step in your career.

Whilst it remains an uncertain time due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope that the information provided below will further assist in helping you prepare for your time at the ICR and what that experience might look like. Please note these may change in the coming weeks and we will communicate any major changes to you as early as possible. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate [to contact us](#). If you have a question about your project or arrangements within your new team, your supervisor will be best placed to answer these.

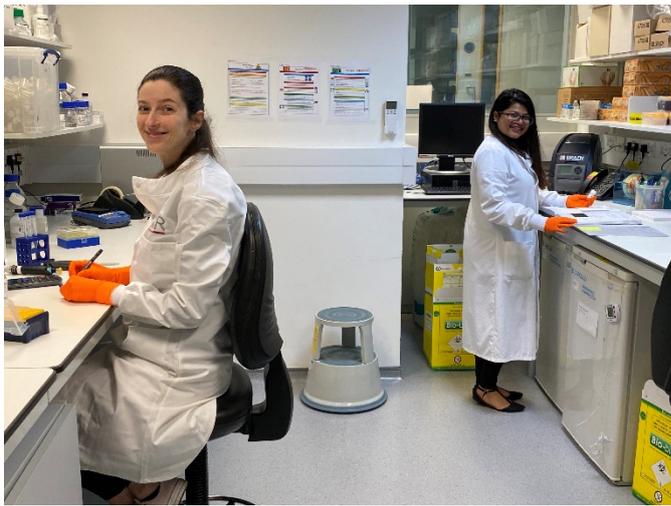
Keeping you safe

The ICR is committed to finding solutions to support everyone to work and study safely. The return to our sites is being carefully controlled through safety measures including physical distancing.

We are implementing new patterns of work, including work in shifts to limit numbers on site; we have introduced measures to support physical distancing such as one-way systems, signage and floor markings; and we have increased targeted cleaning regimes. At the moment, staff and students only come in only for work that has to be done on-site, and are asked to work at home at other times.

We have face coverings available for those who want to wear them on-site, or need them for public transport.

The ICR also demands strict adherence to self-isolation in the event that someone tests positive for COVID-19 or shows relevant symptoms.



Learning experience

As above, arrangements are in place to ensure safety for those on-site and that will mean that if you can work from home, you may be asked to do so for some of the time, for the time being. You will have discussed this with your supervisor along with any varying patterns of work on-site which will allow labs to run at safe capacity.

This will mean that your learning experience may be a combination of in-person and online for the initial period. Registration will be partly conducted remotely, as well as induction and mandatory training. In order to complete the registration process and therefore receive your stipend payment, you will need to come onto site. Registry will be in touch with specific instructions about registration and induction in due course.

Your academic and welfare support mechanisms remain the same. You will be able to meet with your supervisor(s) following safety procedures. The Registry team will be available for you to contact during office hours via email or phone, and your assigned senior tutor will also be available if you need any additional support. All new students have a meeting within the first few months to introduce them to their senior tutor. If current restrictions persist, this may be conducted via Zoom.

Our excellent researcher development programme is still available to support you develop a range of skills and prepare you for major milestones but has moved to a largely online / virtual provision.

Student experience

Whilst the current physical distancing restrictions will mean your initial experience will undoubtedly look different than it might have otherwise, the ICR including the Student Committee is working hard to ensure that you have plenty of opportunities to connect with colleagues and fellow students. Your supervisor may already have talked to you about how members of your new team are staying in touch with each other.

Registry will be sending you the contact details of your 'buddy', who is a current student available to chat about their experience at the ICR and to help you find the answers to any questions you may still have. You will have separately received the link to the student Facebook page where you can connect with all students – new and current – to connect and chat to find accommodation, ask questions and find out about the social events that the Student Committee will be running.

There are also a range of welfare support services in place which are all accessible online or on the phone.

London

Much of London that has been in lockdown is now reawakening. Many restaurants, bars, pubs, museums, galleries, lidos, swimming pools and gyms are beginning to reopen. [More details can be found here.](#)

The Mayor of London has recorded a special message for students due to study at colleges of the University of London. [You can view it here.](#)

Transport:

Although public transport is running, it is recommend that you cycle, walk or drive to site where possible. As above, varied work patterns, including staggered or flexible start times, may have been discussed with your supervisor in order to assist you in getting to site safely as well as managing numbers on site. Some parking is available at the Sutton site but, as usual, there is no parking facility at Chelsea except by special arrangement for those with a particular need.

Face coverings should be worn on public transport to meet Transport for London requirements, and supplementary face-coverings are available at ICR receptions. Additional bike storage is available at both sites.

For those who may need to travel between ICR sites, our shuttle buses continue to run but operate with reduced capacity to allow for social distancing.

You can find the latest advice on public transport on the [Transport for London website](#).

Accommodation:

We encourage you to consider the need to minimise the use of public transport when choosing accommodation. You can now use virtual viewings (360-degree tours, live video tours via WhatsApp, FaceTime, or Skype) before visiting properties in person. The student Facebook group is a good source to find out about accommodation. [Our accommodation guide](#) also gives you an overview of the different areas around the ICR sites, as well as tips to aid your search.

All viewings should take place by appointment and only involve members of a single household.

For more general information about life at the ICR, please see our [Postgraduate Life pages](#).

Students from outside of the UK

If you will be arriving from abroad, we ask that you continue to check the advice in the country you are travelling from as well as the restrictions in place for travelling into the UK. The most up to date advice from the UK government [can be found here](#). Please take into account the 14-day self-isolation period that you will need to adhere to following arrival from some countries. Countries exempt from this [are listed here](#). If you need advice on managing an isolation period, [please contact us](#).

If you require a Tier 4 visa and are arriving in October, the ICR Admissions Team will have already been in touch about your application. They are best placed to assist with any queries you have. There will be also be a contact amongst the current students who has been through the application process and can share their experience with you.

The [UKCISA website](#) is a great source of advice for international students and they have a helpful section about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic as well, [available here](#).

The impact of Brexit:

The UK left the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020. We are now in a transition/implementation period. This is a period of time (likely to continue until 31 December 2020, but which might be extended) during which EU citizens and their family members can come to, or remain in, the UK on the same basis they could before 31 January 2020. If you are an EU citizen arriving in the UK before 31 December 2020, you can apply for immigration permission to continue living in the UK under a scheme designed by the UK government known as the [EU Settlement Scheme](#). You will have until 30 June 2021 to do this.

Those intending to come to the UK from January 2021 will need to apply under the relevant category of the immigration rules in place at that time when a new immigration system may be in place.

The ICR's Registry will inform you of any further requirements once known and will support you to apply to any new scheme.

Some further detail can be found [on the ICR website](#), as well as on [the UK government's website](#) and [the UKCISA website](#) has helpful guidance which is also updated regularly.

We look forward to welcoming you all to the ICR.