

Basin Research Group (BRG) - Code of Conduct

Overview

We value the participation of every member of our community and want to ensure everyone has an enjoyable and fulfilling experience, both professionally and personally. Accordingly, all members of the Basins Research Group (BRG) are expected to show respect and courtesy to others at all times. We create our culture and our culture is inclusive.

Please note that this code of conduct is not a legal document, supplementing, but not trumping, Department- and/or College-level policies for your level of employment or study.

Inclusivity and diversity

Enjoyable, high-quality research can only be conducted when you feel safe, secure, and supported. All group members are thus dedicated to a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, and/or religion. We do not tolerate harassment by and/or of members of our group in any form, and we ask all members of the community to conform to the following Code of Conduct:

- All communication, be it online or in person, should be appropriate for a professional audience, and be considerate of people from different cultural backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate at any time.
- Be kind to others and do not insult or put down other group members.
- Behave professionally. Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary jokes are not appropriate.
- Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of discussions, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.
- Contribute to discussions in meetings with a constructive, positive approach
- Be mindful of talking over others when discussing in groups, and be willing to hear out the ideas of others.

In addition to making group members feel safe and secure, diversity and inclusivity has numerous benefits to us all. Put simply, the greater the mix of people in our group, the greater the mix of skills, experiences, perspectives, and ideas we can collectively draw on. But the benefits of diversity and equality cannot be fully achieved without creating an inclusive environment.

Chris will discuss the Code of Conduct with lab members who violate these rules, no matter how much they contribute to the BRG, or how specialised or needed their skill set. If inappropriate behaviour persists after this initial discussion, formal processes, in line with Imperial College's work practise policies, will commence. To report an issue, please contact Chris Jackson; all communication will be treated as confidential. If you do not feel comfortable contacting Chris

directly, please feel free to contact a member of the Postgraduate Research Committee (Saskia Goes, Sam Krevor, Rebecca Bell or Stephen Neethling).

Mental Health

There is increasing evidence that certain attributes of academic research, including PhD-level studies, may challenge your mental health. Specific factors driving this include:

- Low pay and quality-of-life issues, particularly as a function of living in an expensive city as London
- Feelings of isolation in your research; e.g. everyone has their own topic and it can often feel as if you are working on your own
- Uncertainty in your research, although it should be noted that, in research of all kinds, it is not just the outcomes that are uncertain, but the questions themselves!
- Uncertainty in your post-PhD career
- So-called “negative results”; i.e. at some point in your research it is likely that certain questions will be more challenging to answer than anticipated, or that you will feel you have spent days/months/years toiling with little to show
- Burnout; i.e. feeling the need to work endless hours to make up for the above issues, and the subsequent exhaustion

All PhD students come across most of these issues at some level. I strongly encourage everyone in the group to take an active and pre-emptive approach towards the maintenance of their mental health. We assure you that you have the time and resources needed for a highly successful PhD. If there is anything that is placing undue stress, or preventing you from performing at your potential, please do not hesitate to let me or any of the postgraduate tutors in the department know how we can help. You should also be familiar with resources on campus: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health/>. Every effort will be made to help you access the right support networks.

Outputs, publication expectations and standards, and open science

Where possible, all research outputs (e.g. papers) will be published ‘Open Access’ (OA) (preferably Gold or Diamond OA; for definitions, please see the Open Research Glossary), with manuscripts also uploaded to a relevant pre-print server (e.g. EarthArXiv, ESSOAr) prior to journal submission, review, and (hopefully) publication. Where Gold or Diamond OA is not possible, the manuscript should be made publically available via Green OA, and must be placed in the Imperial College’s ‘Symplectic’ system within three months of acceptance. For details on submission to Symplectic, or to discuss publishing options, please let me know. Please also note that, as signatories to the Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA), Imperial College are committed to: (i) eliminating the use of journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, in funding, appointment, and promotion considerations; and (ii) assessing research on its own merits, rather than on the basis of the journal in which the research is published. I am personally committed to the principles of DORA, thus I encourage you to think broadly about your choice of publication venue. It is my personal view that the key guiding principle for choosing a journal is that it is thematically appropriate for the work you wish to publish.

Authorship on any manuscript or presentation will be openly discussed in group meetings and should, if possible, include everyone who has made a significant contribution to the work. A “significant contribution” can include but is not limited to, interpretations of primary data and

development of ideas presented in the work; it need not include data curation or financial contribution to the work undertaken. The order of authors on a manuscript or presentation should be dictated by the relative contribution made by each author (see [here](#) for further information); in the case these contributions are equal, authors should be listed alphabetically by surname. Where conflict arises, Chris Jackson will facilitate discussion to help resolve this. I encourage an open dialogue about this matter, ideally via authorship 'check-ins' that will likely occur several times over the lifetime of the study. To help inform Editors, reviewers, and readers of our papers, we will include an [author contribution statement](#) as part of a paper.

Papers must be shown to and receive formal approval from **all co-authors (both inside and outside of Imperial College) prior to submission**; this is consistent with guidance provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), who state that all authors must approve submission of work bearing their names. Please give co-authors at least two weeks to comment on paper drafts; at busy times of the year, they may need longer. We also strongly suggest that the paper receives reviews from at least two colleagues prior to submission to your supervisors; this will help improve the final product, as well as providing a training opportunity. Also note that many BRG members are using confidential, company-provided datasets; our confidentiality agreements clearly state we must obtain permission from these companies to publish their data, and that they must have at least 28 days to provide approval. Explicit permission must be sought for **every** paper; i.e. images approved for use in one paper may not be approved for a different paper. If you require any guidance regarding paper submission, please speak to Rebecca Bell or Chris Jackson. Upon acceptance (or rejection) of your paper, you must inform **all** coauthors of the outcome as soon as possible and ensure **all** co-authors get a chance to look at and comment on page proofs (N.B. many errors can be introduced into manuscripts by the journal at this stage). Note that after paper acceptance, final text and graphics files must be sent, in raw format (e.g. .docx, .ai.) to **all** co-authors for their records/use **within 14 days**, with an accepted version (the so-called 'Author Accepted Manuscript' or 'AAM') uploaded to college's Symplectic system and an appropriate online archive (e.g. EarthArXiv, ESSOAr).

All computers should be backed up, daily, to at least two locations external to your main PC (e.g. a PC-attached USB hard drive, in addition to the 'Basins' network drive, which is located offsite and administered by ICT). In addition, at-least weekly backups can be made to an off-site, 'cloud'-based storage system such as [Google Drive](#) or [Imperial Box](#).

Upon completion of a project and where data confidentiality allows, all data should be placed on an appropriate repository with a DOI; in the case of publication, these data should be published alongside the manuscript on a repository such as [figshare](#). A curated version of all datasets used during a project should be provided to made available on the Basins drive (\\ic.ac.uk\\san\\Basins; contact Chris and Becky for access to this space), in addition to being provided to Chris Jackson on a hard drive; the quality of the curation should be verified with Chris Jackson. All group members must also adhere to Imperial College's [Research Data Management Policy](#).

The group operates numerous ICT resources (e.g. shared drives). These shared resources should be respected and not abused, and if you need more computation resource then please discuss your individual requirements with Chris Jackson.

Conferences

Logistics

You will be supported (financially and otherwise) to attend and participate in conferences related to your PhD research. You can either pay conference and travel fees and be reimbursed, or direct me towards any bookings you need. In either case, you are expected to register for the conference as a student and in advance to obtain discounted registration fees. When possible, you will fly economy class and book the cheapest accommodation possible. You are expected to share hotel rooms if travelling with colleagues, even if they are from outside of BRG. You must book no later than 1 month in advance of the conference, and preferably earlier to obtain the lowest cost travel costs and accommodations.

Some conferences that we regularly attend are below (this is by no means exhaustive, and other more specifically, ad-hoc meetings will likely arise):

Autumn:

American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) International Convention and Exhibition

Winter:

British Sedimentology Research Group (BSRG)

Tectonics Studies Group (TSG)

American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting

Spring:

American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) Annual Convention and Exhibition

European Geophysical Union (EGU) Spring Meeting

Note that we will typically aim to attend conferences ‘*en masse*’, such that accommodation costs can be shared and, based on an experience, a more significant group ‘impact’ can be achieved. Exceptions can of course be made for conferences specific to your area of study and/or interest.

Expectations and requirements

Conference abstracts must be shown to **all co-authors (both inside and outside of Imperial College) at least one week before the abstract deadline**. Upon acceptance (or rejection) of your abstract, you must inform **all** coauthors of the outcome as soon as possible. You must also send a final draft of your presentation or poster to **all co-authors (both inside and outside of Imperial College) at least one week before the date of presentation**. Ideally, a near-final draft should be completed two-weeks before the date of presentation, so that it can be presented at a BRG weekly seminar; in this way, you will be able to receive feedback from your colleagues. Presentation and publishing ethics, both of which are at least partly captured by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), state that all authors must approve submission and presentation of work bearing their names. The same applies to papers (see above). Note that after material has been presented at a conference, this must be sent, in raw format (e.g. .ppt, .ai) to **all** co-authors and data providers for their records/use **within 14 days**; if appropriate, this material can be uploaded to an appropriate online archive (e.g. FigShare, EarthArXiv, ESSOAr) where it will be assigned a DOI, and will be useable and citable by the scientific community.

Working hours

I recognise that many of you have personal responsibilities and obligations in addition to your PhD studies. I appreciate that, at times, it can be difficult to balance those demands, and that a classic '9-to-5' day may not be optimal. Because of this, the exact hours you choose to work is up to you. Being on campus between 1000 and 1600 most days may, however, help facilitate collaborative working and, we hope, lead to a more fulfilling research experience. Where possible, meetings and events will not be arranged outside these hours to allow participation by all BRG members.

Meetings

Group meetings: Group meetings are typically held at 1530 in G38 on Wednesday's; all group members are expected to attend if they are not otherwise engaged in other research-related activities (e.g. at conference, attending training or a lecture, etc). The BRG meeting is an excellent forum for updating colleagues on project progress, developing research skills, and widening our collective understanding. Meetings provide a forum for the presentation of results, such as 'dry-runs' of conference talks, and more informal discussions around research topics arising. As part of your professional training, you will be expected to lead a group discussion on a topic of your choice at least once per term.

Individual meetings: These will occur on an ad-hoc basis as personal situations require. These will give you an opportunity to discuss your progress and any administrative issues that you need addressed. You are encouraged to send a short agenda ahead of and to come fully prepared for individual meetings; in this way, discussions can be focused such that all concerns are addressed. Individual meetings should be supported by twice-monthly updates to your principal supervisors. These can be short (e.g. 5-10 PowerPoint), but should ideally contain an overview of: (i) what your plans were for the last two weeks; (ii) work undertaken; (iii) issues arising; and (iv) a forward plan for the next two weeks. Such reports are an important way to self-monitor your progress, as well as keeping your supervisor(s) informed of both positive and negative developments. They are particularly important for those who have supervisors based in other institutions.

Please inform Chris Jackson of holidays or notable absences in advance. Permission for holiday is very rarely required, but please respect key deadlines within the calendar year and the fact we work in a research group. It is important to take holiday, respect weekends (or time in lieu) and establish a sustainable work-life balance. It is also important to respect the time and efforts of others, and the contribution of funders, and to note that effective working will improve the quality of your research. Where there are key time pressures, it is important to prioritise work. If you struggle with establishing a sustainable work life balance, please discuss this with Chris Jackson at an early stage.

Communication

Where possible, avoid sending work-related email outside of 0800 and 1800. Outlook provides functionality for saving an email as a draft, such that it can be sent within the hours stated above. Please give consideration to the timing of the email with respect to what the recipient needs to do; for example, try not to send an email at 1759 for something that is required for a 1000 meeting the next day. . However, prompt replies to emails, within these times, is helpful. If you experience any challenges related to flexible working within the BRG, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Jackson. All communication will be treated as confidential.

To help with inter-group communication, you should be a member of the basins@imperial.ac.uk Outlook group. Please remember this group has a large subscriber base, and that emails to the group should be polite, informative and respectful.

Social media

In your work-related life, you may wish to engage with social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). Please be considerate of others when using these platforms, and respectful for how others may wish to use them. For instance Chris uses Twitter in a personal and professional nature, and his account has a wide audience (including the Head of Department, prospective students, funders, and other academics); you must therefore bear in mind the very public nature of interactions on social media, and that many people (who may not be on a specific platform) will read and hear of online correspondence. We are not compelled to engage with any social media, use any such media for work-related purposes, and we will never pressure each other to 'friend' or 'follow' each other.

Journals

You should be familiar with recently published material relevant to your PhD project. Below are some academic journals that may be of interest:

AAPG Bulletin; Basin Research; The Depositional Record; Earth-Science Reviews; Earth and Planetary Science Letters; EGU Solid Earth; Frontiers of Earth Sciences; Geology; Geological Society of American Bulletin; Geophysical Research Letters; Geosphere; Interpretation; Journal of the Geological Society; Journal of Sedimentary Research; Journal of Structural Geology; Lithosphere; Petroleum Geoscience; Sedimentary Geology; Sedimentology; Tectonics; Terra Nova; Marine Geology; Marine and Petroleum Geology; Nature Geosciences

Signing-up to 'mail alerts' from specific journals and more general publication 'feeds' (e.g. Google Scholar) are highly recommended; by doing this, you can be kept informed of newly published literature related to your studies.

Holidays

You are expected to take c. 25 days per year, beyond bank holidays and the college closure at Christmas. I strongly encourage you to take this time so you can relax, visit family and friends, and generally unwind from the rigours of PhD study. Although not a formal requirement, it is helpful to inform Chris Jackson in advance when you plan to take holidays or if you will not be present at BRG weekly meetings.

Demonstrating

Demonstrating is an important part of your professional training; for example, it allows you to pass on your academic knowledge to other students, as well as equipping you with pedagogic skills that may prove useful when giving presentations at conferences. Whether demonstrating is to be delivered in the lab or in the field, I will always encourage and support you. Department- and college-policy states PhD students can do up to 6 hours of demonstrating per-week during term time. I am more-than-happy to be flexible on this, so long as you are progressing well in your PhD. I do request that you let me know of your substantial commitments as soon as they are established.

Please feel free to check ESESIS, etc, for undergraduate or MSc classes that may be of interest, and please let me know if you plan to spend a significant chunk of time with a particular class (i.e. a week participating on a field trip).

Thanks, and please enjoy your time in the BRG!

This Code of Conduct (CoC) borrows heavily and is modified from three open source CoCs: (i) BahlaiLab CoC (Christine Bahlai); (ii) WhitakerLab (Kirstie Whitaker); (iii) Hill Lab (Jon Hill); (iv) Krevorlab (Sam Krevor); and (v) MicroMicEng (Ben Britton).

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