

Guidance on how to contact potential supervisors

Identifying a PhD/MD supervisor

Choosing to undertake graduate research is a big decision and it is extremely important that you identify a research project that really excites you. Identifying the right supervisor is critical as this relationship provides you with invaluable support and guidance from a leading academic in your field.

How to identify a suitable supervisor at IGH

- Thoroughly research your options by looking through the list of IGH Research Degrees Supervisors found [here](#) and click on their name to view their staff profile on UCL's Institutional Research Information System ([IRIS](#))
- Look directly on UCL's Institutional Research Information System ([IRIS](#)) where you can search for relevant academic units and potential supervisors by keyword, although not all academics are listed in IRIS.
- Search the UCL online research repository ([UCL Discovery](#)) where all UCL's research papers are published, subject to approvals. If you identify a research paper that particularly interests you it is likely that one of the authors would be a suitable research supervisor.
- Make contact with the specific academic you are interested in working with to explore research opportunities in more depth.

This process helps define your interests and aspirations, contributes to making your application successful, and also serves to ensure the identification of the best possible supervisor for your needs.

How to make a research enquiry

Academic members of staff are extremely busy people and receive a lot of research enquiries. In a recent survey 67% of staff said they receive research enquiries that do not relate to their interests. It is extremely important to research supervisor's interests thoroughly before you contact them. If they do not think your enquiry is related to their research they may not have time to respond to you.

Here are some tips for contacting academic staff to explore research opportunities:

- Take time over your email and make sure you highlight your strengths clearly
- Make sure your English is as good as possible
- Do not use the same email template to contact different academics. Enquiries should be tailored to the academic's area of interest and refer to their current work

You should include the following information:

- A 3-4 page research proposal (see Guidance for writing a research proposal) which is closely related to research recently conducted by the supervisor
- Funding status (secured funding, self-funded, will apply for a scholarship, applying for a specific advertised position etc).
- Whether you are a UK, overseas or EU student.
- Whether you want to conduct your research full time or part time.
- A CV demonstrating your interest and experience in their area of specialisation, as well as a brief note on why you are interested in joining their research team in particular.