The European Geoscience Union General Assembly brings together scientists from around the world involved in a broad range of disciplines and facilitates a simulative environment for knowledge exchange. The topics covered ranged from sediments to distance planets and back to climate change. It was very beneficial to see what, and to discuss first-hand with, others in the community are researching and provided an enhanced understanding of the current specific key research challenges being addressed. This experience will help guide my current research to ensure that it is applicable in a wider international setting so helping ensure that the skills and knowledge I acquire will provide additional value post PhD.

During the meeting various short courses were on offer aimed at personal professional development. Such course included a panel discussion on how to best supervise students (both undergraduate and postgraduate), providing a valuable insight into the difficulties and challenges of such responsibility and highlighting the importance of taking a flexible and dynamic approach to each individual student. Further to the advice being given it was valuable to hear the negative experiences of the panel and how they were dealt with. These important lessons will stand me in good stead when I myself am in a supervisory role. Another valuable course focused on experimental design and helping ensure that data to be obtained will be sufficient to address the question being asked. This is critically valuable for me and I will be applying the vigorous thought process to upcoming experiments; hopefully helping to ensure relevant and applicable information is gained.

Attendance of this international meeting was my first experience of such an event on such a large scale during my PhD. This has provided a valuable insight into the mechanics of such an event and how best to approach attendance of such meetings in the future; for example, I gained experience of how to maximise poster exposure and to facilitate useful scientific discussion around my research.

I am grateful to CAPOD for providing funds which enabled me to attend this conference and allowing me to gain all the benefits and knowledge that were associated with that attendance.