

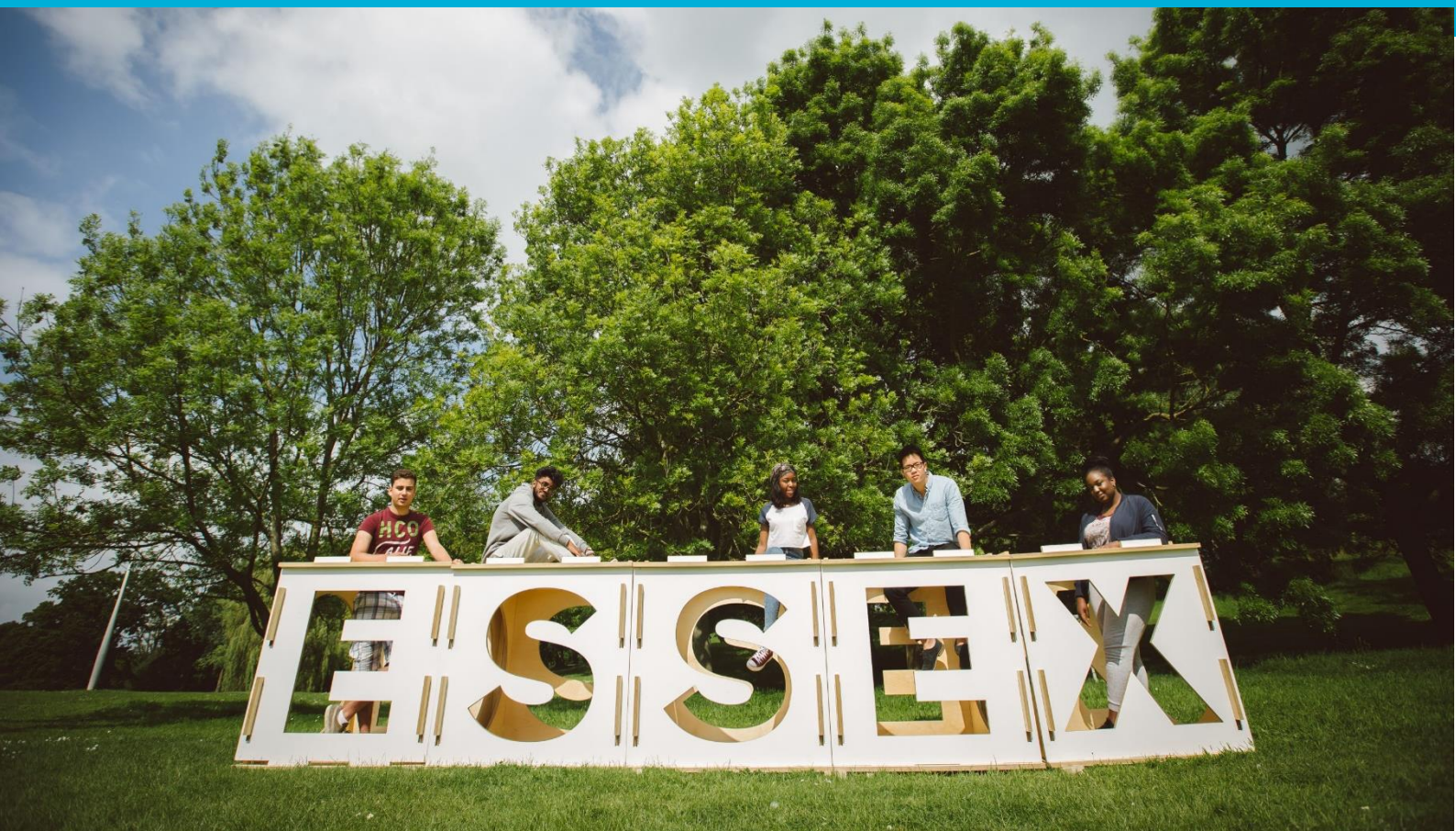


University of Essex

**Your studies**

**Department of Language  
and Linguistics**

**Postgraduate Research  
Student Handbook 2023-24**



## Welcome



Welcome to the Department of Language and Linguistics!

Congratulations on all the work that has led you here and thank you for choosing to study with us. We are really looking forward to working with you and to helping you fulfil your personal and academic ambitions. We hope your time in the Department will be a very happy, inspiring and exciting one and that you take full advantage of all that the Department and the University more broadly have to offer you.

This handbook is an essential guide for you and outlines the various things you will need to know about the Department. It contains lots of really useful and important information, so please read it and be sure to keep a copy of it so that you can refer to it as and when you need to.

Make sure you bookmark our departmental website, too, and the central University module directory – both of which you can find via the University's student webpage at: [www.essex.ac.uk/students](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students).

Don't forget all our helpful and friendly departmental staff members are here to help you and further details are outlined in this handbook.

We are excited to get started and to sharing our interest and enthusiasm for Language and Linguistics with you, and we thank you in advance for all the fantastic contributions you will be making to the Department!

**Dr Tracey Costley**  
**Head of Department**  
**Department of Language and Linguistics**

# Contents

Welcome .....	i
Introduction.....	6
Practicalities and Getting Started.....	7
Registration (New Students) .....	7
Registration (Returning Students).....	7
Right to Study.....	8
Students with sponsored immigration permission.....	8
Explore your Campus.....	8
Get connected .....	8
Your IT account.....	8
Campus wifi.....	9
Essex Apps .....	9
MyEssex.....	9
PocketEssex .....	9
Find Your Way .....	9
Zoom .....	10
Working while studying .....	10
Your personal belongings .....	10
The Essex Experience .....	11
Embracing our Values.....	11
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion .....	11
Student communities.....	12
Environmental Sustainability .....	12
Essex Sport.....	12
Students' Union .....	13
Get involved! .....	13
Chart My Path .....	13
Essex spirit, social media and what's on? .....	14
About Language and Linguistics.....	15
Meet the team .....	15
Academic staff.....	15
Professional Services.....	16
Your supervisor .....	17
Supervision of research students during periods of leave .....	17
The Supervisory Panel (SP) and Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB) .....	18
Staff research interests .....	18
Departmental resources and facilities.....	19
Department of Language and Linguistics Social Space .....	19

Postgraduate (Research) Study Room .....	19
Postgraduate Lockers (if applicable).....	19
Postgraduate Training.....	19
Printing, photocopying and scanning .....	20
Noticeboards .....	20
Social Media.....	20
Learning and Teaching .....	21
Student Staff Partnership.....	21
The academic year.....	23
My programme of study .....	24
Making changes to your study .....	24
Thinking of leaving or taking a break? .....	25
Periods of study .....	25
Library & Cultural Services.....	25
Art Exchange.....	26
Lakeside Theatre .....	27
Study Abroad .....	27
Peer Review with the Essex Student Journal .....	28
University and departmental training events.....	28
Departmental support or funding for attending conferences/other events.....	29
Assessment and Academic Integrity .....	30
Ethics in research.....	30
Risk assessments in research .....	30
Academic Integrity and Academic Offences .....	31
Referencing .....	31
Academic Skills Support .....	32
Departmental Support.....	32
Proofreading services .....	32
Language classes .....	33
Academic English Support.....	33
General English Classes for Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced Learners (GEC).....	33
Learning a Language .....	34
Extenuating Circumstances .....	34
Submission of Thesis .....	35
Thesis Submission Pre-Examination .....	35
Thesis Submission for Award.....	35
Thesis Deposit and Retention.....	35
Examiners and the Viva .....	36
Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only).....	36
Appeals .....	36
Taught Modules .....	37

Professional Doctorate Rules of Assessment.....	37
Referencing in coursework.....	37
Exam stress.....	37
The Board of Examiners .....	38
Failure to pass.....	38
Student Voice.....	40
Student Representatives.....	40
Student Voice Groups.....	40
Student Surveys.....	40
You Matter.....	41
Student Services Hub .....	41
Support for disabilities and additional needs .....	41
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP).....	42
Essex Access Forum .....	42
Seeing a Doctor .....	42
Counselling services .....	42
Wellbeing drop in .....	42
UK Immigration Advice and Guidance.....	43
Money management .....	43
Funding Opportunities.....	43
Students' Union Advice .....	43
Residence Life .....	44
Religion, faith and beliefs.....	44
Harassment support.....	44
Health and safety on campus.....	44
Making a Complaint .....	45
Your information.....	45
Changes to your information.....	45
Your personal information .....	46
Student Development.....	47
Careers Services.....	47
CareerHub.....	47
Get experience .....	47
Volunteering .....	47
You Are Essex .....	48
Your Award Certificate .....	48
Graduation ceremonies.....	48
GradIntelligence .....	48
References.....	49
Requesting references from members of staff.....	49

---

Copies of references .....	49
Alumni .....	49



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## Introduction

Your Student Handbook will tell you everything you need to know about your department, the University its academic policies and procedures, and all of the resources that are available to you.

At Essex we put the success of our students at the heart of everything we do, and want to support you to achieve outstanding outcomes. We are absolutely determined to provide you with the best Essex education and student experience we can, while safeguarding your health and wellbeing.

We celebrate diversity and challenge inequality. We are a truly diverse community where differences are celebrated, and individuality is valued. Your contribution is welcomed and encouraged based on your own thoughts and experiences. As part of our community you will have the freedom to explore, experiment, challenge your discipline and have your ideas shaped by peer and professional knowledge from all over the world. Essex is about more than just getting a degree: we have so much to offer our students!

Things might have to change and adapt over the year, so make sure that you're checking online and keeping in touch with your department for the latest updates. The [Student Directory](#) contains a wealth of other helpful sources of information which you may also find useful.

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## Practicalities and Getting Started

You've made it to Essex! We've outlined below the most important things you need to make sure you do as soon as possible to get your time at Essex started.

### Registration (New Students)

As a new student, you must complete the [registration process](#) in order to begin your studies with us. Registration is not only a formal procedure of enrolling you into the University, but also connects you to a number of vital systems which allow you to access your online Welcome and Induction information and start your studies. Because of this, you'll be asked to complete compulsory steps, such as activating your Essex IT account, provide key information about you as part of Online Registration (including payment of fees where required), attend an in-person Right to Study Check on campus and collect your Student Registration Card. Once you've completed these steps, you'll be able to begin attending teaching and engage with your course.

You should ensure you have completed the [registration process, including payment of your fees \(where required\) by the published Latest Registration Deadline](#) for your course. If you do not do this, you may not be allowed to register and begin your course with us.

### Registration (Returning Students)

As a returning student, you will need to ensure you complete [Online Registration and pay your fees \(if required to do so\)](#) at the start of each academic year to be able to continue your studies with us. It is essential that you complete all required steps, by the published [Latest Registration Deadline](#), otherwise you may not be allowed to continue your studies with us.

If you are a student undertaking studies with us with a form of immigration permission, in some instances you may be required to undertake an additional Right to Study Check, before being permitted to re-register. This may be the case if one or more of your documents have expired, or your immigration status has changed. You will be contacted by our International Services Team if you need to complete an additional check.



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## Right to Study

The University must ensure all students have the right to study at the University of Essex for the whole duration of their course. If you aren't a UK or Irish national, your [immigration permission](#) to study in the UK will be checked via the online Right to Study system, when you first register on your course, and as necessary thereafter. Students have a duty to maintain valid UK immigration permission that allows study for the duration of their course, failure to do so may lead to withdrawal from the University under the [University's General Regulations](#).

## Students with sponsored immigration permission

The University is a Student Sponsor with a track record of compliance and must ensure we remain compliant to retain our sponsor status. Students with a Student visa have [additional responsibilities](#) to the University and the Home Office. There will be conditions attached to your visa that restrict what you can do in the UK, breaking any of the conditions may mean you can't remain in the UK and complete your course. You are expected to attend in-person meetings with your Supervisor every month and this will be monitored throughout your course. If your [attendance and engagement](#) fall below expected levels or you are absent without permission for a period of time this is likely to impact on the University's ability to continue to sponsor your Student immigration permission. The International Services Team can provide [immigration information and advice](#) throughout your studies.

## Explore your Campus

There is a broad range of [facilities](#) across each of our campuses to support your experience at Essex, whether in person or virtually. For the latest information, see the updates on [services on campus](#).

## Get connected

### Your IT account

You will need to activate [your Essex IT account](#). Once you're set up, you can access your Essex email, log in to [Moodle](#), access lab computers and Library services, [print for free](#) (subject to our fair usage policy) on campus, connect to campus wifi, and much more. When you activate your account, you will need to register an external email address and passphrase so that if you [forget your password](#), you can also reset it

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using these details. If you have forgotten those, you should contact the [IT Helpdesk](#). Make sure you keep your password safe and do not share it with others. For a quick rundown of what you need when you first start, head to the [Getting Started with IT](#) guide on the Student Directory.

### **Campus wifi**

If you are studying on any of our campuses, connect to our wifi by finding the eduroam network on your device. Use your Essex email and password to join.

### **Essex Apps**

The University has a variety of online systems and platforms designed to enhance your learning and help make processes, such as submitting coursework, easier. We have rounded up the top platforms, portals and apps that you need to know about!

#### **MyEssex**

[MyEssex](#) is your online account and can only be accessed via an internet browser. This is different to your applicant portal – you can use MyEssex to view your timetable, update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, monitor your course progress.

#### **PocketEssex**

[Pocket Essex](#) is the University's official app for students that can be downloaded on your phone or tablet for free. It acts as a portal through to a variety of areas and resources that will be useful for you throughout your studies. PocketEssex links to many areas that MyEssex does, but also takes you through to other key resources, such as the Students' Union, FindYourWay and the Library.

#### **Find Your Way**

When on campus, we know that finding your way can be challenging to start with. Our Colchester campus in particular can be difficult to navigate with a historically complex room numbering system! [FindYourWay](#) is our interactive campus map app designed to get you from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions. You can download this app on your phone or tablet for free!

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## **Zoom**

Zoom is the principal delivery mechanism used by the University for online meetings, presenting, teaching and training. This quick [start guide](#) gives you an introduction to the essentials of joining and participating in a Zoom webinar or meeting.

## **Working while studying**

Many students choose to work part-time to supplement their income. Working during your course can also give you excellent skills and experience to boost your CV. Our [Student Services Hub](#) can help you find part-time work. There are also many opportunities to [work in paid jobs on campus](#).

You can access recommendations on working hours, as well as guidance on rates of pay and National Insurance contributions on the [Careers Services webpages](#).

If you have a Student visa, please read our information on [working in the UK for international students](#) before you start looking for a job. The country you are from and your visa type will determine whether or not you can work in the UK. If you can work, the type of work you are allowed to undertake and the number of hours you can work will be restricted.

## **Your personal belongings**

The University does not cover costs for personal damage or loss of possessions; only in instances where the University has been negligent would a claim be viable for compensation for personal belongings. Therefore, you are strongly advised to take out personal insurance cover for your possessions. This is especially important for valuable items, such as laptops, phones and tablets.

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## The Essex Experience

We are proud of our inclusive and international community. Our campuses are places where every single person can feel they belong and where you can find the world in one place. We have created a [Student Charter](#) as a pledge that every student signs up to when they join us. By signing up, you promise to uphold our values and to behave in ways that strengthen and support our community. We promise to support you at every stage of your journey with us.

### Embracing our Values

We are different at Essex. We are brave, we are bold, and we embrace challenges and drive change. Our values are underpinned by this very culture. While we encourage you to challenge the status quo and explore the unknown, we expect all of our students do so respectfully, intelligently and act as true ambassadors for the University. Our [Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines the rules and regulations that help us maintain our high standards of behaviour.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University recognises the value of diversity and is committed to providing equal opportunities for both students and staff. Our students and staff are treated with dignity and respect on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, while still having the relevant impact and implications associated with race, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic background, family circumstances, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, or any other identity-forming characteristics, taken into consideration as necessary to ensure equal opportunity.

The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this [policy](#) is fully effective.

The Department of Language and Linguistics has obtained a Bronze award for the Athena Swan Charter in 2019, and is currently working towards its Silver Award, for its work on gender equality and equity.

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## **Student communities**

We pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive community. We recognise the value of diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity within the University.

We offer a wide range of support to individuals and [groups of student members](#) – our student communities - who may have specific requirements, interests or responsibilities to help fulfil your potential. Whether you are an international student, a mature student, a BAME student or have any other requirements or needs, we want to welcome you with open arms. The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this [policy](#) is fully effective.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

We have made commitments as a University to reduce our impacts on the environment, including reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2035. In December 2020 we declared a [climate and ecological emergency](#) and developed a [sustainability strategy](#) that sets out our ambitions up to 2026. Our Sustainability team works on a range of projects from energy efficiency to extracurricular activities to help everyone at Essex live, study and work in environmentally-friendly ways. Everyone is encouraged to do their bit, and there are simple steps you can take as a student: remember to bring a reusable cup for takeaway drinks, and a bottle that you can refill at one of our many water fountains. If you live on campus, switch off electrical items that aren't in use, and be sure to keep windows closed in colder months when the heating is on. For more information, contact the Sustainability team – [sustainability@essex.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@essex.ac.uk).

## **Essex Sport**

Learning doesn't just happen in the classroom. Keeping active during your studies is a great way to meet new people, help relieve stress, maintain good physical and mental wellbeing, increase productivity, and improve your employability.

[Join](#) Essex Sport and be part of something bigger. We're a community of like-minded individuals who are dedicated to enriching your experience at University of Essex. By fuelling your passion for all things active we help you make new friends, find new interests and be the best you. Whatever your sport, whatever your level, from fan to [professional athlete](#), we've got a place for you.

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Visit the [Essex Sport](#) website or [download the app](#) to discover all the ways you can keep active during your time at Essex. In order to ensure the welfare of our community there may be changes to opening hours or what's available, so do check on the website and our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) for the latest information.

## **Students' Union**

We're famous for our [Students' Union at Essex](#), and for good reason. Here you're not just a member of a normal Students' Union; you're part of a family. We work hard to support our PGR community, and are here from day one to the moment you graduate to support you in any way we can.

The Students' Union is run by students for students, and you have the ability to shape what we do. From deciding who leads the SU by electing our entire Student Leadership team including the PGT officer, to shaping your own experiences at Essex, we are here to represent your views and work with you to make amazing things happen.

### **Get involved!**

There are opportunities to join [Sports Clubs](#), and get involved with competitive sports in our [BUCS teams](#) or if you don't want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our [Just Play](#) programme.

We have over [120 Societies](#) where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or if you can't find what you are looking for- [Start your own](#).

We also train, recruit and support hundreds of student reps each year. These reps gather feedback to share student viewpoints on academic experiences. You can find out more about student reps including how to sign up and getting trained [here](#).

We also have our very own lettings agency ([SUHomes](#)), to offer help and support to students to find off campus accommodation.

## **Chart My Path**

Use Chart My Path to discover over 200 extracurricular activities offered at Essex, and get recommendations personalised to you. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.



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## Essex spirit, social media and what's on?

Keep up to date with important news, events and offers from across the University with our Essex spirit newsletter, delivered directly to your Essex email address.

Follow us on social media:



/uniofessex



/uniessex



/Uni\_of\_Essex



/uniofessex



/uniessex



/@uniessexonline



Our [Events calendar](#) brings together all the events happening across our three campuses, so you can make the most of your time at Essex.


## About Language and Linguistics

### Meet the team

A full list of all staff can be found on <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/language-and-linguistics/people>. Below is a summary of the roles of staff that can help you with a variety of areas during your time at Essex.





### Academic staff


	<p><a href="#">Dr Laurel Lawyer</a> <i>Director of Research Students</i></p>	<p>The Director of Research Students is responsible to the Head of Department for the departmental arrangements for postgraduate supervision and for liaising with, and reporting as necessary, to the Dean of Postgraduate Research and Education and/or the Deputy Dean (Education).</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:l.lawyer@essex.ac.uk">l.lawyer@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Rebecca Cliff</a> <i>Departmental Disability Liaison and Evacuation Chair Coordinator</i></p>	<p>The <b>Summer and Autumn Terms</b> DDLO acts as a link between Support Services, the department and students with additional support requirements due to a disability, medical condition or mental health issues, to ensure we meet our legal obligations. <i>Please note: the DDLO during the Spring Term will be Claire Delle Luche (Email: c.delleluche@essex.ac.uk)</i></p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:rclift@essex.ac.uk">rclift@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Dounia Bissar</a> <i>Departmental Disability Liaison and Evacuation Chair Coordinator</i></p>	<p>The DDLO acts as a link between Support Services, the department and students with additional support requirements due to a disability, medical condition or mental health issues, to ensure we meet our legal obligations.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:dbissar@essex.ac.uk">dbissar@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Claire Delle Luche</a> <i>Departmental Disability Liaison and Evacuation Chair Coordinator</i></p>	<p>The <b>Spring Term</b> DDLO acts as a link between Support Services, the department and students with additional support requirements due to a disability, medical condition or mental health issues, to ensure we meet our legal obligations. <i>Please note: the DDLO during the Autumn and Summer Terms will be Rebecca Cliff (Email: rclift@essex.ac.uk)</i></p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:c.delleluche@essex.ac.uk">c.delleluche@essex.ac.uk</a></p>

	<p><a href="#">Teresa Torres</a></p> <p><i>Senior Tutor</i></p>	<p>Senior Tutors act as a link between the department and student support services. Responsibilities include the personal tutor system, overseeing peer mentoring, and acting as the under-18's coordinator.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:tormi@ess.ex.ac.uk">tormi@ess.ex.ac.uk</a></p>
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### Professional Services

The professional services team in the department are your first port of call for any non-academic matters. If they are unable to help directly, they will be able to point you in the right direction.

	<p><a href="#">Samantha Durling</a></p> <p><i>Department Manager</i></p>	<p>The Department Manager is accountable to the Head of Department and delivers strategic and leadership support. They are responsible for the management of academic quality assurance processes and the administrative structures in the department.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:langdm@ess.ex.ac.uk">langdm@ess.ex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Karolina Dylewska</a></p> <p><i>Deputy Department Manager</i></p>	<p>The Deputy Department Manager supports the Department Manager and deputises in their absence. They have specific responsibility for the student services function and is responsible for managing and developing the student administration team.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:lalddm@essex.ac.uk">lalddm@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Victoria Wheeler</a></p> <p><i>Student Administrator</i></p>	<p>The Student Administrators are responsible for providing excellent customer service to students and visitors to the department, and high-quality professional support services to programme directors and other academic staff. Victoria specialises in Postgraduate administration.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:lalpgadmin@essex.ac.uk">lalpgadmin@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Zoe Coyne</a></p> <p><i>Student Administrator</i></p>	<p>The Student Administrators are responsible for providing excellent customer service to students and visitors to the department, and high-quality professional support services to programme directors and other academic staff. Zoe specialises in undergraduate administration.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:lalugadmin@essex.ac.uk">lalugadmin@essex.ac.uk</a></p>

	<p><a href="#">Colin Emms</a></p> <p><i>Finance and Operations Coordinator</i></p>	<p>The Finance and Operations Coordinator provides administrative and financial administration support to the department's senior management team, and general support to facilitate the day-to-day operations, including facilities, equipment, web and social media.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:lalopc@essex.ac.uk">lalopc@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
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## Your supervisor

A supervisor will have been appointed for you during the admissions process. You are expected to have regular contact with your supervisor during your studies and they should be the first port of call for any concerns/problems. We recommend that you consider attending the '[Making the most of your supervisor](#)' training course, provided through Proficio.

If you have a disability, long term medical condition and/or Specific Learning Difference and have not registered with Student Wellbeing & Inclusivity Service, to discuss your support needs, please email [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

## Supervision of research students during periods of leave

Academic staff serving as supervisors of postgraduate research students will, on occasion, take periods of research leave for research purposes. During some periods of research leave, supervisors may not be in residence at the University. It is incumbent upon the supervisor, with the approval of the Graduate Director, to develop a plan for the continuing supervision of students during periods of research leave. In making such arrangements, it is the policy of the department that:

- a) Members of staff are expected to continue to carry out their role as supervisor during periods of research leave.
- b) Members of staff on research leave are not expected to attend Supervisory Panels but are expected to provide a written assessment of progress.
- c) Members of staff on research leave should make arrangements for continuing contact with their supervisees, whether through face-to-face meetings, or through some form of remote communication,
- d) In cases where a member of staff plans to be out-of-residence for an extended period during their research leave, an alternate member of staff should be named (by the Graduate Director in consultation with the supervisor) as a local contact for

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the supervisee student. The local contact is not meant to act as a substitute supervisor (see point (A) above) but to serve as a designated point of contact in the Department during the period when the supervisor is out-of-residence.

### **The Supervisory Panel (SP) and Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)**

These are the formal committee meetings at which an individual student's work, training/skills development, and progress are reviewed against the published milestones. Progress decisions are considered by the SP with a recommendation being made to the RSPB. This includes Confirmation of Status and entry to the next stage of study or period of completion, along with extensions, downgrading and discontinuation. The final RSPB decisions and/or recommendations are reported to the relevant Faculty Dean (Postgraduate).

Your Supervisory Panel is composed of you, at least one of your supervisors and one other academic who acts as Chair. In exceptional circumstances where the sole supervisor is on study leave, an acting supervisor may attend.

The RSPB comprises senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the Graduate Director or Head of Department/School. It reviews the progress of every student through to the award of a degree, withdrawal or failure, on the basis of the reports from the Supervisory Panel, including the written report from the student.

[Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Professional Doctorate rules of assessment](#)

### **Staff research interests**

Staff in the department have a wide range of research interests. We examine the complexities of language from the perspectives of theory, application and experimentation. We tackle diverse topics such as how children and adults learn languages, how the human brain processes language, how identity is encoded in the way a person speaks, multilingualism, language contact and variation in structures found in languages across the world, including Africa languages and languages of the Middle East. Our department is home to one research centre, nine research clusters and hosts to two national research networks.

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## **Departmental resources and facilities**

A wide range of facilities and resources are available for all students to access and use as part of their study at Essex. Each department and school also have a selection for the exclusive use of their students. Below is a summary of the facilities and resources that are likely to be most useful to you.

### **Department of Language and Linguistics Social Space**

The Department of Language and Linguistics Social Space is located in room 4.305A and is for the use of all students. The room has a kettle, water cooler, fridge and TV amongst other facilities. It is a great space to meet up with other students from your course or to study.

### **Postgraduate (Research) Study Room**

We try to offer every student in their first or subsequent years of supervised research the possibility of having a desk in a PhD Study Room. Further information is available from the Department of Language and Linguistics Operations Coordinator [lalopc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:lalopc@essex.ac.uk).

### **Postgraduate Lockers (if applicable)**

Lockers are available in the Department of Language and Linguistics Social Space for postgraduate students. These are allocated on a first-come first-served basis. Please speak to the Finance and Operations Coordinator ([lalopc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:lalopc@essex.ac.uk)) if you are interested in using a locker.

### **Postgraduate Training**

PGR students all have access to Proficio; our innovative professional development scheme, unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and we give you funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and conferences.

As a postgraduate research student, you will be registered on the Proficio system. You will need to complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) on Moodle in order to unlock your Proficio funding account. The enrolment key is 'PGRstudent'.

In addition to the centralised training provision, students can also access a wide range of postgraduate taught modules that either explore particular fields and concepts, or



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offer specific training in research methods and skills. Students should peruse the modules available and discuss with their supervisor which of these modules would be suitable.

### **Printing, photocopying and scanning**

All students can [print, copy and scan for free at Essex](#) subject to our fair use policy. You can even print from your mobile by sending your file to [mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk](mailto:mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk) using your Essex email.

Once you've located a device, simply log in using your Essex login and password, or tap with your student card to print. Whilst printing is free for all students, please think of your carbon footprint, only print if necessary and check your available quota.

Please note that there are strict laws about infringement of [copyright](#); more information can be found on the [library website](#) which explains what and how much you are permitted to copy. Usage is monitored and subject to a fair use policy.

### **Noticeboards**

Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. To ensure all the students have equal access to the information available this information is available on our [Moodle](#) noticeboard. In addition to this we also have physical noticeboards outside the Departmental Office (4.305).

### **Social Media**

Keep up to date with important information, news and events from the Department of Language and Linguistics:



Website: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/language-and-linguistics>



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lalessex>



Twitter: [https://twitter.com/EssexLang\\_Ling](https://twitter.com/EssexLang_Ling)

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## Learning and Teaching

The University is committed to providing equal opportunities for all our students regardless of where or how you study. Our diverse student population is taken into account when developing the resources, services and facilities on and off campus, when we create our courses, write publications and course materials, and set our policies and regulations.

### Student Staff Partnership

As a Postgraduate Research student, you have a responsibility to:

- Read the documentation provided, including the [regulations](#) for your degree, the [Code of Practice](#) and details of the departmental supervisory arrangements.
- Attend meetings with your supervisors and Supervisory Panels as arranged, and prepare adequately for them, notifying your supervisor in the event of unavoidable absence.
- Keep in regular contact with your supervisor. Students and supervisors are required to communicate, whether face-to-face or by electronic means, to engage in discussion/review of the student's work and progress at least once a month (and bi-monthly for part-time students).
- Provide updates on progress as outlined in the [Progress and Appeals Procedures for Research Degree Students](#)
- Carry out, as far as possible, the work agreed with your supervisor and submit written work as agreed so that you meet the required milestones.
- Familiarise yourself with the departmental [milestones](#) for your degree and the requirements for your chosen thesis format. The milestones are designed to help you submit your thesis by the deadline and are used to assess your progress during your period of study. The milestones will be considered at your RSPB which takes place twice a year (or equivalent for part-time students). It's important that you review your milestones regularly to ensure you'll be ready to submit your thesis by the required date.
- Familiarise yourself with University and subject-specific guidelines on ethical research, including data protection matters, and with health and safety and intellectual property regulations and obtain ethical approval as appropriate.
- Familiarise yourself with the expectations and conventions regarding academic

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referencing other people's work.

- Attend any research training and generic skills courses as agreed with your supervisor.
- As requested, submit reports on progress to professional practice and research supervisors, Supervisory Panels, or the departmental Research Students' Progress Board.
- Keep a record of your personal progress, including a copy of agreed training needs, courses that need to be attended and when they are attended. This may take the form of a logbook or research portfolio to be signed off by your supervisor.
- Inform the relevant supervisor promptly if there are any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect your work. Notify the Supervisory Panel/Research Students' Progress Board in writing of any extenuating circumstances that you believe have significantly affected your performance.
- Discuss any supervisory problems with your supervisor or the Head of Department. Alternatively, if you feel unable to talk to a member of the departmental staff, please contact the [Postgraduate Research Education Team](#) to discuss the concerns. Any discussions will remain confidential if requested. Students may request a change of supervisor but should note that it may not always be possible for suitable alternative arrangements to be made.
- You must present your thesis for examination by the end of the final term of your standard period, or by the end of the prescribed completion period.
  - A request for an extension of up to two weeks to the submission deadline may be made. Requests must be made to the Postgraduate Research Education Team in advance of the deadline. If granted an extension, you will not be expected to register or pay the prescribed fee for that two-week period.
- If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.
- Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.
- Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process, and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

In addition to the above requirements, Professional Doctorate students should:

- Attend lectures and seminars for taught modules where applicable and attend meetings with your professional practice supervisor. For more information on this, please refer to the section on [taught modules](#) in this handbook.
- Complete the work required for your taught modules.
- Maintain a professional practice portfolio which forms part of the assessment for the degree.

### **The academic year**

Postgraduate Research students are expected to work on their theses throughout the calendar year, and are not subject to the same academic year term structures as that of taught students. As a reference point, the academic year uses a week numbering system that covers the 52 weeks of a calendar year but corresponds to typical term dates. So, the start of the academic year is week 1, which is Welcome week, with teaching commencing in week 2.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Week numbers</b>
Autumn	2-11
Spring	16-25
Summer	30-39

You can view the University's week numbers with the equivalent dates in the week by week [calendar](#). The University's [key dates](#) include an overview of the start and end of each term and exam periods.

Some programmes have slightly different term dates. However, you will find that all campus activities and events make reference to the standard academic year terms and schedule noted above.

You are expected to be available during term time to attend teaching events where applicable, and unless otherwise advised by your Department.

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## My programme of study

Each programme of study at the University has its own syllabus, full details of which, including the aims and learning outcomes, can be found in the University's [Programme Specifications Catalogue](#).

Your own programme structure, including your specific programme specification, can be found in the MyStudy section of your [MyEssex](#) homepage.

## Making changes to your study

If you feel as though your research has changed direction and that it would be appropriate to change your degree title, please discuss this with your supervisor, as they'll be best placed to advise on the most suitable option. You may also feel it appropriate to change to a differing degree type (from PhD to MSD for example), again please discuss this with your supervisor in the first instance.

Once you have decided that you want to change your degree title, you will need to make a formal request using the online [Change of Course/Degree title form](#).

Until the final term of your standard period, you may request a **transfer from one mode of study** to another, for example from full-time to part-time, including distance learning, or vice-versa. You should discuss any proposed change with your supervisor.

If you are a **sponsored student**, you should discuss any proposed change with your funding body and/or check its terms and conditions. If you are a UK Research and Innovation funded student, you should contact the Postgraduate Research Education team to discuss your request to change your mode of study. Students with a Student visa may not be able to change their course without first obtaining a new visa from overseas, if eligible.

Once you have decided you want to change your mode of study, you will need to make a formal request, using the online [Change of Mode of Study form](#), which will need to be approved by your department and the Dean.

If your request is approved your period of study will be adjusted pro-rata.

## Thinking of leaving or taking a break?

You may experience doubts at some point during your studies. If you're thinking about leaving Essex, we're here to support you and give you the advice you need to help you make an informed choice. You can contact your department, supervisor or Student Services Hub to speak in confidence about your concerns, and also the [different options available to you](#) and the impact they may have.

You should also be aware of how your funding may be impacted if you choose to take a break. You can do this by contacting the Funding Team – [funding@essex.ac.uk](mailto:funding@essex.ac.uk).

## Periods of study

Research degree	Mode	Standard Period	Completion Period
Masters by Dissertation ( <i>MA or MSc by dissertation</i> )	FT	One year	Up to one year
	PT	Two years	Up to one year
Master of Philosophy ( <i>MPhil</i> )	FT	Two years	Up to one year
	PT	Four years	Up to one year
Doctor of Medicine ( <i>MD</i> )	PT only	Two years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy ( <i>PhD</i> )	FT	Three years	Up to one year
	PT	Six years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy Integrated ( <i>PhD</i> )	FT	Four years	Up to one year
	PT	Eight years	Up to one year
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes

## Library & Cultural Services

The Library provides access to an extensive digital library of books, journals, databases and more to support your research. As well as a team of specialist Academic Liaison Librarians who can advise on appropriate resources for your area, there is also a Research Support team, who can advise on a variety of topics including open access, online research profiles, and how/where to publish and promote your work. Online support in these areas can be found in the Library's Research Support



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guide. A range of workshops and training sessions are also held throughout the year through Newcomers, a collaborative network run by Library & Cultural Services and the Research Enterprise Office that aims to support researchers, and offer training across the research lifecycle. Signing up to the Newcomers mailing list is the best way to keep up to date with the latest training and development opportunities, and it also provides a platform to network with fellow early career researchers. If you have any questions about Library services, there are a range of ways you can get in touch with the team.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 has a variety of study spaces, including a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room that is open 24/7. You'll need your student card to access this space, so be sure to bring it with you during your visit. The Library offers in-person assistance at the Helpdesk in the ground floor foyer, as well as email, telephone, and live chat support. They also provide the opportunity to book appointments with specialist staff, who can help you through your studies and into whatever you choose to do after graduation.

See the [Library website](#) for the latest information on all our libraries and the services available, including opening hours.

### **Art Exchange**

Placing students at its core, [Art Exchange](#) is a place where art, artists and the campus community come together. Our programme of exhibitions and activities are here to get you inspired, make new friends – or simply to chill while having fun making art.

We show international art by established and emerging artists throughout the year, building up a dynamic programme by working closely with the campus community, as the art on our walls is co-created by students and responds to what matters to them.

Alongside exhibitions, our exciting programme of events and art classes are free for students. Led by professional artists, they support students' creativity, confidence and wellbeing - as well as being great fun!

We want everyone to get involved and enjoy great art.

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## Lakeside Theatre

The [Lakeside Theatre](#) provides a warm, welcoming social hub of creativity at the heart of the University to foster the living learning community.

We produce a programme of diverse, dynamic and accessible live performances of theatre, music, comedy, dance, workshops, artist development and live art for audiences on and off campus. It is a learning and social experience for students that will deliver key life skills to enable them to respond to a rapidly changing world with creativity and personal and cultural confidence. Students' wellbeing remains at the forefront of what we do which is why we provide opportunities for enjoyment, inspiration and creativity.

The theatre and technical facilities are kept up to date, for student use in education and further skill building in modern practices nationally and internationally.

## Study Abroad

As a postgraduate student there are a variety of opportunities through Essex Abroad to have an international experience. Providing you with the chance to enhance employability, gain valuable transferable skills and develop as individuals.

[Essex Abroad](#) have a wide range of [summer programmes](#) suitable for postgraduate students including summer schools abroad, volunteering programmes, international internships and research abroad opportunities which are open to all Essex students. These programmes vary in duration, location and cost. [Find out more](#) about Essex Abroad opportunities. For information regarding your funding during a study abroad, you should liaise with the Funding Team – [funding@essex.ac.uk](mailto:funding@essex.ac.uk). Students with disabilities should also liaise with the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service – [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

The University of Essex is a founding member of the YUFE Alliance. YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) is a collaboration of 10 different European institutions, providing you with the opportunity to study across multiple partners virtually or physically; as part of your degree or in addition to it. YUFE aims to be a leading model of a young, student-centred, non-elitist, open and inclusive European University.

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As a University of Essex student, you can obtain an international experience through YUFE, taking anything from academic to language courses, or even entrepreneurship courses; allowing you to go the extra mile and stand out from the crowd. Find out more about YUFE and how to apply on our dedicated section on the [Essex Abroad YUFE webpage](#) and through the [YUFE Virtual Campus](#).

### **Peer Review with the Essex Student Journal**

If you are interested developing the vital skill of peer reviewing academic papers, the Essex Student Journal provides the ideal opportunity to do so, with training, guidance, and support to help you become a proficient peer reviewer.

This invaluable experience will enhance your expertise as an early career researcher, developing your understanding of the academic publishing process. Peer reviewing is typically expected of researchers at all stages of their academic careers, so starting in our supportive environment will ensure you feel confident moving forward. The analytical skills you develop are transferrable to a wide variety of other professions too.

Not all universities have a Student Journal, making this a unique opportunity for you and the authors. Our multi-disciplinary journal, run by students, for students, showcases the hard work of our undergraduates and PGTs and, through a double-blind peer review process, supports them to develop their writing skills and produce high quality outputs.

If you are interested in developing your skills and helping others to do the same, find out more about joining our vibrant community of peer reviewers at the Essex Student Journal and embark on your academic peer reviewing journey with confidence.

If you have any questions, get in touch with the Journal Team via [journal@essex.ac.uk](mailto:journal@essex.ac.uk).

### **University and departmental training events**

All research students are also expected to participate in the PGR course on professional development (LG595). Students are expected to attend a minimum of two of the three workshops offered throughout the academic year as part of LG595. Typical topics include onboarding sessions like 'PhD options: manuscript and by-article' and

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'Understanding the UK academic context', research topics such as 'Qualitative data coding' and 'Descriptive statistics', writing skills such as 'How to write an abstract', and academic advice including 'Giving a talk', 'Developing an academic CV', and 'Grants and funding'.

Details of the workshops will be provided at the induction meeting with the Director of Postgraduate Research Students during Welcome Week. Attendance at any professional development courses or events should be recorded on Supervisory Panel report forms and will be monitored at Supervisory Panel meetings.

### **Departmental support or funding for attending conferences/other events**

Attending conferences in your field may benefit your research and your future academic career. Usually, it is possible for the Department to provide limited financial support for research students presenting papers at prestigious national or international conferences (though not normally at student conferences). The amount of money available for this purpose varies from year to year, and in some years there may be none at all. In order for a particular case to be eligible for consideration for support, a number of criteria must be satisfied:

- a) you must be within your minimum period of registration;
- b) you must have had a paper accepted for presentation;
- c) your case for financial assistance must be supported in writing by your supervisor;
- d) your application must be made and authorised in advance of the conference taking place.

Note that the Departmental contribution will typically cover only a portion of the full cost of attending a conference, and students may only apply for departmental support one time during any University financial year (1 August to 31 July). If you wish to be considered for such support, you should complete the 'Research Funding: Application for Departmental Support' form and pass a hard copy signed by your supervisor to the Director of Postgraduate Research Students for approval.

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## Assessment and Academic Integrity

Undertaking a research degree varies for each person. Some are predominantly lab based, others require significant library research, and some must undertake taught modules. All schools and departments at the University employ a variety of assessment methods, and these will be tailored based on your research area and the course you're on.

## Ethics in research

All research involving human participants and animal subjects, whether undertaken by the University's staff or students, **must** undergo an ethics [review](#) by an appropriate body and ethical approval **must** be obtained before it commences. You should first read the [Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Subjects](#) or [Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Animals](#) and then submit an Ethical Approval application form via [ERAMS](#). You should be aware that ethical approval cannot be granted retrospectively so it is very important that you make your application before you start to recruit participants or collect data from them.

**Research involving the NHS may require and research involving human tissue or adults lacking capacity to consent will require Health Research Authority and / or NHS Research Ethics Committee approval. You should contact the REO Research Governance Team ([reo-governance@essex.ac.uk](mailto:reo-governance@essex.ac.uk)) at an early stage.**

Research involving vulnerable groups may require a DBS check if you are engaging in regulated activity. More information about the DBS check process can be found on the [University's DBS webpages](#).

## Risk assessments in research

If the research you are undertaking could potentially harm participants, researchers or the University (e.g. risks to physical or mental health, safeguarding or reputational, legal or financial risks) you will need to carry out a risk assessment, which you may be asked to provide as part of the ethics approval process. Your academic supervisor will be able to advise you on this.

You can book onto [Research Risk Assessment training](#) online, where there is also further information about risk assessment and managing health and safety risks.

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If you are planning to carry out research abroad it is important that you research your destination, so that you are aware of [security, safety or culture issues](#) that may affect you or your research. The University has comprehensive travel insurance, which you will be able to arrange by completing the online [Travel Insurance Application Form](#).

### **Academic Integrity and Academic Offences**

The University expects students to complete all assessment with honesty and integrity and to follow our [conventions for academic writing](#) (including appropriate referencing of sources) and ethical considerations. If you don't meet these expectations, then you may be charged with having committed an [academic offence](#), a matter the University takes very seriously.

It is your responsibility to make yourself aware of the regulations governing examinations and how to correctly prepare your work. An academic offence can take place even if you didn't mean to commit one, and examples include plagiarism, falsifying data or evidence, and communicating with another candidate in an examination.

### **Referencing**

Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the UK. Referencing is how you acknowledge all sources used within a piece of work. You must reference all work used whether cited directly (quotes), or indirectly (paraphrasing and summarising).

Referencing allows you to give credit to other's ideas, work, research, theories, concepts, outcomes and results, and demonstrates your breadth of reading and knowledge on a subject. If you do not reference properly, this could amount to [plagiarism](#), which is an [academic offence](#).

There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is APA. You must use this referencing style. Guidance on your referencing style is available [online](#), including an [interactive referencing tutorial](#). You can also take the [Academic Integrity course on Moodle](#).



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## Academic Skills Support

There are a variety of skills and training opportunities available for postgraduate research students from [Skills for Success](#), covering a range of aspects across the research and thesis writing process. We also run a dedicated English language support class for international PhD students.

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their postgraduate research, and are here to help all year round, providing support, resources, [workshops](#) and [1:1s](#) on:

- [Academic writing](#)
- [Maths and stats](#)
- [Digital Skills](#)
- [Research](#) and [referencing](#)
- [English language](#)
- [Exam revision](#)

Some of these services are open to all students at the university, whilst others are specially tailored to research students. All are designed to help you develop your academic and language skills no matter what department you are attached to, or what stage you are at.

All services are free, and have no limits on the number of bookings you can make.

## Departmental Support

Depending on the support you may need, you should always reach out to your supervisor who will be able to advise you on a number of aspects of your study. They will also be able to signpost you to relevant University services for any other support.

## Proofreading services

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their supervisor(s). Many students seek 'proofreading' services at some point during their studies, but different types of editing can occur under this name which may not be appropriate in an academic context where work is assessed and

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could potentially qualify as an [academic offence](#). The University is keen to ensure as far as possible that students understand what [proofreading work should entail](#) and the acceptable boundaries to which any proofreading or editing must adhere to.

All students should ensure that any agreement entered into with a proofreader conforms to the [University's policy and guidance on proofreading](#).

## **Language classes**

### **Academic English Support**

Skills for Success run a dedicated [PhD Language Support](#) module throughout the year, to help you develop your writing skills, presentation skills and confidence. They also run a range of [Academic English Support classes](#) which are available throughout the year. Modules include Academic Writing, Speaking, Reading, Grammar Review, and Exam Preparation and Writing Skills. Bookable [workshops](#) and [1:1 support](#) are also available.

### **General English Classes for Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced Learners (GEC)**

The [Department of Language and Linguistics](#) offers the wider University of Essex community the chance to improve their English language skills through our General English Classes. These classes are available to:

- Dependants and close family members of students and staff at the University of Essex
- International staff at Essex who may want to work on their general English and fluency skills
- International students currently studying at UEIC Kaplan
- International students currently studying at both UG and PG level at Essex who wish to develop their language skills
- Refugees and asylum seekers who hold an ARC card, or a letter granting them Immigration Bail

The classes, which take place at the Colchester Campus, will enable you to meet people from other countries and cultures and will help you develop your language skills. These classes are free and are taught at three basic levels: Beginner (A1/A2), Intermediate (B1/B2) and Advanced (C1/C2) and will focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing. Throughout the year, you will have a unique opportunity to

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develop your conversation skills, by reflecting on real-life examples of how language is used in context.

### **Learning a Language**

Learn a language at Essex to increase your global and cultural awareness. Language learning can give you the confidence to work and travel internationally, expand your options for studying abroad, and get a competitive edge when you're looking for a job. There are a number of ways to do it, so [look online](#) to discover the best option for you.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

[Extenuating circumstances](#) are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform less well during your studies than you might have expected or to miss an assessment or milestone. In general, valid extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or personal nature that affect you for any significant period of time and/or during assessment.

Your department will review your claim at your Supervisory Panel and RSPB and determine an appropriate course of action to take into account your extenuating circumstances, if appropriate.

If you do need to make an extenuating circumstances claim, you should first read the guidance very carefully and seek advice from [SU Advice](#) or the [Student Services Hub](#). Please be prepared that you may need to include supporting evidence with your claim. Extenuating circumstance claims must be submitted to your Graduate Administrator in your department/school by no later than two weeks before the meeting of the Supervisory Panel, or by the deadline published by the department/school if different. It cannot be guaranteed that forms submitted after this date will be referred to the Panel/RSPB. You should also ensure that you record at least a brief summary of your extenuating circumstances on your Supervisory Panel report form.

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## Submission of Thesis

### Thesis Submission Pre-Examination

All candidates for a Masters by Dissertation (MAD or MSD), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Professional Doctorate must submit an electronic copy of their thesis for examination.

The electronic copy should take the format of one PDF document containing all chapters, references and appendices.

All registration fees and debts must be paid before the thesis can be accepted for submission.

You should submit the following as attachments via email to: [pgrsubmission@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pgrsubmission@essex.ac.uk):

- a) A single PDF copy of your entire thesis; and
- b) A submission form (RD1) completed and signed by yourself.

### Thesis Submission for Award

Following the completion of the examination process, the candidate will be notified via email that in order to gain their award they must submit one electronic version of their thesis to the online [Research Repository](#). Following the receipt of this deposit, the candidate will be awarded their postgraduate research degree.

### Thesis Deposit and Retention

Your thesis will be made open access when deposited in the online Research Repository. Students wishing to [place a restriction or embargo](#) on their thesis must do so via the [Approval of Title \(intention to submit\) form](#) prior to the submission of their thesis for examination.

When depositing your thesis in the [online Repository](#) you will be required to read and accept the conditions stipulated in the Thesis Deposit Agreement. The Thesis Deposit Agreement outlines the availability of the thesis and how it will be stored in the Repository.

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## **Examiners and the Viva**

Your supervisor will not normally be present during **your viva** and will not normally have any contact with your examiners other than to arrange their appointment. [More information on the examination process](#) and viva can be found on the Student Directory.

## **Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)**

If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, or the examiners feel that the thesis has not met the requirements for the Professional Doctorate, they may be eligible to receive an exit award or lower award, as appropriate for the course. Details of the available exit/lower awards can be found in the [Code of Practice: Professional Doctorates](#).

## **Appeals**

PGR students wishing to [appeal](#) against either a progress decision (a recommendation made by the Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)) or an examination decision (an outcome decided upon by the examiners following a viva voce) should follow the [Appeals Procedure](#).

Please note that research students on the first year of an Integrated PhD (a 4-year programme) or a research student on a Professional Doctorate programme who wish to appeal against a progress decision of the RSPB (e.g. being downgraded or discontinued) should do so in accordance with the above procedure. However, students who wish to appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners' consideration/decision of their taught marks should appeal in accordance with the Academic Appeals Procedures for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes of Study.

Students thinking about making an appeal are strongly advised to contact the [SU Advice Centre](#).

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## Taught Modules

Most PGR students won't be required to undertake taught modules. For those students who do undertake taught modules as part of their course (i.e. students on an integrated PhD course), please refer to the Postgraduate Taught Handbook 2023-24 during the first year of study.

## Professional Doctorate Rules of Assessment

The [Rules of Assessment](#) are used to calculate the results for Professional Doctorates.

Each module you will take will have a credit value which you are awarded if you successfully complete the module. You need to obtain a certain amount of credits to be awarded your degree, and the [Rules of Assessment](#) give you more information about this.

## Referencing in coursework

Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the UK. Referencing is how you acknowledge all sources used within a piece of work. You must reference all work used whether cited directly (quotes), or indirectly (paraphrasing and summarising).

Referencing allows you to give credit to other's ideas, work, research, theories, concepts, outcomes and results, and demonstrates your breadth of reading and knowledge on a subject. If you do not reference properly, this could amount to [plagiarism](#), which is an [academic offence](#).

There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is APA. You must use this referencing style. Guidance on your referencing style is available [online](#) and you can also take the [Academic Integrity course on Moodle](#).

## Exam stress

[Exams create stress](#) for most people, but there is a lot that you can do to prepare for them and help manage the levels of stress associated with exams. The University's Skills for Success Team offers a series of [Exam Workshops](#) which are run by specialist staff. These sessions cover revision planning and techniques, as well as sessions on

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relaxation and how to cope with stress. Staff in the [Student Services Hub](#) can also provide sessions on stress management if required.

### **The Board of Examiners**

Assessment for the taught and professional components/competencies (i.e. for integrated PhD students) will be considered by an annual Board of Examiners meeting that determine whether a student can progress to the next year.

Assessment for progress in the research thesis will be considered by an annual Supervisory Panel meeting that determine whether a student can progress to the next year.

The outcome of either the Board of Examiners or the Supervisory Panel is reported to the Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB). The RSPB then makes a recommendation for final approval by the Dean of whether the student can progress to the next year.

An External Examiner will be appointed for the Professional Doctorate and will not normally act as the external for the research thesis. For research-only Professional Doctorates, where research methods is the only taught module for the course, the marks can be approved by the Board of Examiners for the appropriate Masters course and no course level External Examiner is required to be appointed.

Students may need to move into a completion period, subject to Dean's approval, if they are not ready to submit their thesis by the end of their standard period of study. This is only possible when they have successfully completed all of their assignments and a substantial proportion of the thesis is in draft. This would include completion of all data collection and analysis.

The research thesis is assessed in accordance with the normal arrangements for research degrees, as outlined in the [Principal regulations for research degrees](#) and Codes of practice relating to research degrees.

### **Failure to pass**

The following is only a summary of the key points. You should read the rules and make sure you understand them. If you need advice, ask your personal tutor or supervisor, departmental administrators, or SU Advice.

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The pass mark for the required taught modules and the professional components/competencies (if required) is 50.

In order to be awarded the Professional Doctorate a candidate must:

- a) Pass all pieces of assessment of the taught component of the programme
- b) Pass the assessment of professional competencies if they are a part of the programme (these are normally assessed on a pass/fail basis)
- c) Pass the research thesis.

In order to progress between years the student must have passed the taught module assignments and/or assessment of professional components/competencies. If appropriate to that year, the student must have also made satisfactory progress on their research.

The research thesis can be submitted before all of the required taught and professional practice components/competencies are completed but the degree will not be conferred until all components are completed and passed.

If you **fail your dissertation** you may be permitted by the Board of Examiners to resubmit your work, provided you meet the criteria as set out in the Rules of Assessment for Postgraduate Research Programmes. Alternatively, if you have obtained enough credits in your taught modules, you may be eligible for another exit award.



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## Student Voice

At the University of Essex, the views, ideas and feedback of our students are at the heart of what the University does. The time students take to offer feedback is hugely appreciated and this feedback, both positive and developmental, is used to help make short and longer-term improvements, both to the experience of current students, but also for Essex students of the future. You can do this in a number of ways at Essex through your [Student Voice](#).

### Student Representatives

You can contact or volunteer to be a [student representative](#) who represent the voice of fellow students in departmental Student Voice Groups (SVG) and other University level committees.

### Student Voice Groups

[Student Voice Groups](#) (SVGs) are made up of [student representatives](#) and members of staff. SVGs typically meet once per term and provide an accessible arena for students to discuss with staff issues connected to teaching, learning and student support. They also provide an opportunity for the department or school to consult with students and receive feedback on new proposals. Such proposals are recorded in SVG logs, where specific details are requested in order to facilitate the feedback.

### Student Surveys

[Student satisfaction surveys](#) enable the University to gauge overall satisfaction amongst students. When the results have been reviewed and analysed, the University can then enhance your experience of learning at Essex by closing the feedback loop.

The University runs a PGR Student Voice Survey. If eligible, you will be invited to participate via email.

If you have some feedback but don't know who to tell, email: [studentvoice@essex.ac.uk](mailto:studentvoice@essex.ac.uk)

Your Department will also welcome your feedback. They will have a range of quick feedback mechanism for you to use. Contact your departmental office if you are not sure what these are.

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## You Matter

We know university life can throw up all kinds of concerns and questions. Everyone has [mental health](#) – sometimes your mental health may be good, other times it may be not so good. It could be stress related to deadlines, general worries or concerns about friends and family members. Whatever is worrying you, if you need some information, advice or support, the University offer a wide range of services and support to help you.

### Student Services Hub

If you need practical advice, a confidential conversation, or general information and guidance on University life, no matter what the issue is, the [Student Services Hub](#) is the place to go. You can find out about health and wellbeing, accommodation, careers services, money matters and much more. Your questions matter and you'll get answers from our team of experts.

**To Contact the Student Services Hub please use this link to access our web pages and talk to us on Live Chat: [Ask the Hub](#)**

### Support for disabilities and additional needs

We encourage all new students with a disability, long term medical condition, specific learning difference or mental health condition to disclose and register with the [Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service \(SWIS\)](#) so that we can plan how best to [support you in your studies](#).

If you are care experienced, estranged from your family, primary carer and/or University of Sanctuary student please contact the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) for [further information](#) about support that may be available to you. You may also be eligible for one of our [bursaries](#) that is available to provide additional funding.

UK students may be eligible for a [Disabled Students' Allowance grant](#). If you are not a UK student and you have a disability, you may be eligible for [other grants and funding](#). We would recommend that you [contact the Student Services Hub](#) to discuss all the options that may be available to you, as well as for general advice, support and information on health and wellbeing issues.

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## Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

If you have a permanent or temporary disability that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\)](#).

## Essex Access Forum

The [Essex Access Forum](#) is a university-wide discussion and advocacy forum and consultation body working to support excellence in all aspects of physical and non-physical access at Essex (student education, staff employment and visitor experience). Membership is open to both staff and students, with and without disabilities.

## Seeing a Doctor

If you're studying on a course for more than six months, you're required to register with a local doctor. Our Colchester Campus has its own [health centre](#) or you can use the [NHS Choices postcode](#) finder to find your nearest doctor. If you require emergency medical or mental health services, there are a [number of options available](#) both through the NHS and also the University, regardless which campus you are studying at.

## Counselling services

Our University offers a wide [range of services and resources](#) to support all of our students. with a variety of counselling opportunities.

If you feel you would benefit from support, including counselling, please [contact your Student Services Hub](#). You can find more information, including the full range of counselling services available to you.

## Wellbeing drop in

The Wellbeing Assessors provide support to students with anything affecting their wellbeing, mental health and/or disability. You can speak to a Wellbeing Assessor for support and advice at our wellbeing [drop-in sessions](#) in person. If you would feel more comfortable with a telephone or Zoom appointment, you can still request this via our [online appointment form](#).

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## **UK Immigration Advice and Guidance**

[Immigration advice and guidance](#) is regulated in the UK by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and can only be given by those that are authorised to do so. We publish lots of information and guidance on our website for students and you can contact one of our authorised advice services via the '[ask us a question](#)' section for further advice about the UK's student Immigration Rules.

## **Money management**

Financial Support Officers in our [Student Services Hub](#) and our independent [Students' Union Advice](#) can provide [money management and budgeting advice](#) and can talk through any financial issues that you may be experiencing and how best to tackle them. You can also ensure that you keep your finances on track by working through some free online money management modules offered by [Blackbullion](#).

If you get into financial difficulty, you should get help and talk to someone **as soon as possible**. The sooner your problem is identified, the sooner it can be solved. You may be eligible to [apply for financial support](#) to assist you with short-term unexpected and unforeseen costs while studying at Essex.

## **Funding Opportunities**

There are lots of funding opportunities available to UK, EU and International students offered by the University and by external companies and organisations. This may be in the form of a student loan, a scholarship or a studentship. You can find out more information, including what you may be eligible for on the [PGR Scholarships and Funding webpage](#) or your [Department page](#).

## **Students' Union Advice**

Our [SU Advice](#) service also offers free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on many issues that might be affecting you. Our friendly, trained staff are on hand to support you throughout your time at Essex. You can speak to us about Academic processes and procedures, representation at University meetings, Student/Tier 4 visa extensions, housing, complaints, welfare and consumer issues.

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**Colchester students** – [suadvice@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@essex.ac.uk); 01206 874034

**Southend students** – [suacsou@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suacsou@essex.ac.uk); 01702 328235 (term time only)

**Loughton students** – [suaclou@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suaclou@essex.ac.uk); 01206 874034

We also have our very own letting agency [SU Homes](#) designed to offer help and support for students to find off campus accommodation.

## **Residence Life**

Our [Residence Life team](#) is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each Residents' Assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you, provide advice and support with any wellbeing issues and organise a range of social activities to help you connect with others. Find your RAs contact details on your flat kitchen poster if you live on campus. You can find out about all our exciting events by following us on [Facebook](#) or by checking out the University [Events page](#).

## **Religion, faith and beliefs**

We're proud of our vibrant and diverse [multicultural community](#) and welcome everyone, of all faiths and none. The calm, friendly and supportive atmosphere in our Faith Centre is a welcoming place for staff, students and the wider community to meet, interact and engage with each other.

## **Harassment support**

We are Essex. We pride ourselves on being a [welcoming and inclusive student community](#). We offer a wide [range of support](#) to individuals and groups of student members who may have specific requirements, interests or responsibilities – to help you fulfil your potential.

We encourage a culture of dignity and respect. We're committed to upholding an environment that's free from any form of harassment or bullying. Though rare, these incidents can occur and if they do our [Report and Support Service](#) of trained Harassment Support Workers are on hand to help.

## **Health and safety on campus**

Our campuses are generally very [safe environments](#). We want to ensure that things stay this way. In order to achieve this, we work closely with local agencies including

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the police and borough councils. Take a look at our website for [general information and advice](#).

Please familiarise yourself with [fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures](#) for your accommodation, work or study location. If you have a permanent or temporary disability that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\)](#).

Please take note of our [advice on the safe use of electrical items and prohibited electrical items](#) in residential and non-residential areas.

All students residing on campus **must** complete the Moodle [Fire Safety Course for Residents training](#).

If you have any health and safety concerns or need to report an incident, please use the [University's reporting service](#) to notify us.

### **Making a Complaint**

The University is a large community engaged in many activities of both an academic and non-academic nature. From time to time, you may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of your dealings with the University and, when that happens, it is important that the issue is dealt with constructively and as quickly as possible without risk of disadvantage or recrimination.

The University aims to resolve complaints quickly and informally in accordance with the [Student concerns and complaints procedure](#) which can be found on our website.

## **Your information**

### **Changes to your information**

During your period of study at Essex, you may wish to be known by a preferred name or update your legal name on our student record database (ESIS) if your circumstances change. It is important you keep your information up to date, which you can [manage and update online](#).

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## **Your personal information**

We collect and hold lots of information about you, your course, and your progress so that we know who you are, what you're doing, and how you are getting on. This means we can support you and also improve our services to reflect the need of our students.

All information about you is kept securely, and access to your information is only given to staff who need it in order to do their job. You have a [right to ask for copies of information](#) we hold about you.

To find out more about what information we collect, what we do with it, who gets to see it, and your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018, read our [Privacy Notice for students](#).

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## Student Development

### Careers Services

The [Career Services](#) team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through events, workshops and one-to-one sessions. With teams dedicated to supporting work-based learning, placements, internships and professional development, we'll provide the information and support you need to thrive.

### CareerHub

Find hundreds of part-time jobs, internships and graduate vacancies, book on to careers events and workshops, take career assessments, practice your interview skills, build your CV, and connect with employers on [CareerHub](#), the online Essex careers and jobs portal. Login with your Essex username and password.

### Get experience

Develop your skills and showcase your potential through our extracurricular offer:

- Find the right activity for you with **Chart My Path**, and to get recognised on your HEAR for your extracurricular achievements with the **Big Essex Award**. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.
- Discover paid internships with local businesses that have been exclusively designed for Essex Students – sign up to [Essex Interns](#) to find out more.
- Apply for [Career Mentoring](#) and be matched with an industry expert to expand your network, learn from their experience and explore options for your future.
- Calling our Black students! Unlock your academic potential and cultivate research skills through our digital **Black Researchers' Hub**. Explore on [GradIntelligence](#) today.

### Volunteering

Join the [vTeam](#) and be the difference. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer during your time at Essex. The [vTeam](#), run by the Students Union, is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, make friends, give something to the local community, and gain valuable skills.



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## You Are Essex

### Your Award Certificate

Upon conferral of your award, all graduates will receive both an electronic and hard copy Award Certificate. Your electronic Certificate will be available on your [GradIntelligence](#) account within 5 working days of your conferral and your hard copy Certificate will be posted to you within 10 working days of being printed. You will be contacted to ask for confirmation of the most suitable address to use, or you may opt to collect this at a Graduation ceremony if preferred.

If you undertook taught elements as part of your studies and require a transcript, you can request this by contacting the Graduation and Awards team at [award-docs@essex.ac.uk](mailto:award-docs@essex.ac.uk).

### Graduation ceremonies

The culmination of all your hard work! [Graduation](#) ceremonies take place at our Colchester Campus in the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall with a departmental Reception held afterwards on campus. All eligible students studying at our Colchester, Loughton and Southend Campuses will be invited to attend their course's ceremony at the next available Graduation. Confirmed dates for future graduation ceremonies are [published online](#).

We hold two Graduations per year: one in Spring and one in Summer. More information on the dates and ceremonies held for each Graduation, including eligibility and how and when to book your place at Graduation, will be published at the start of each academic year on the [Graduation webpages](#).

### GradIntelligence

If you studied an undergraduate degree with us at Essex, you would have had access to your [Higher Education Achievement Report \(HEAR\)](#) record which would also show any awards or additional achievements you have received formal recognition for. However, this is currently only available for undergraduate and postgraduate taught awards; postgraduate research students can instead use [GradIntel](#) to record any extra-curricular activities or achievements during your studies, such as the [Big Essex Award](#).

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If you undertook taught elements as part of your studies and require a transcript, you can request this by contacting the Graduation and Awards team at [award-docs@essex.ac.uk](mailto:award-docs@essex.ac.uk).

## References

### Requesting references from members of staff

If you require a personal reference, always ask permission from a member of staff before giving their name as a referee. You should consider from whom it is most appropriate to request a reference and who will be best equipped to evidence your character and performance in the subject.

For example, final year project supervisors, year organisers, and core course supervisors are likely to be more suitable than lecturers that have taught you on a first-year option course. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet a request for reference for a student who has undertaken study within our Department. Requests received from students who have graduated from the University within the last three years will be prioritised. Requests received outside of this period may, of course, be met if a member of staff is equipped with the necessary information and is willing to provide a reference.

It is always helpful if you can provide the member of staff with details about the course or job you have applied for and, if relevant, a CV or other summary of your qualifications and experience. Please try to ask for references in good time – it is not always possible for a member of staff to write a reference immediately.

### Copies of references

A copy of any reference provided will be retained within our department for no longer than three years for taught students.

## Alumni

Essex is forever and although your time here will fly by, you'll be part of the Essex family for life. When you graduate, you'll get an alumni card and join a community of over 100,000 fellow graduates around the world. We'd love to keep in touch and invite you to our alumni events, networking and volunteering opportunities, as well as offer you special alumni benefits. Want to know more? Visit [our website](#).

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We will be here for you wherever life takes you next. You might know the path you wish to take, but if you need help to reach your goals, our Careers Services Team offer information, guidance and advice on your different options after graduation. Careers support is for life as an Essex graduate and we'll be with you every step of the way. We are proud of our world-class research at Essex and your invitation to contribute is lifelong. As an Essex graduate, you can also take advantage of [generous discounts](#) on further [postgraduate study](#) and [postgraduate research degrees](#).

Whatever you choose to do, please stay in touch. We'd love to hear where your Essex degree has taken you.