



University of Essex



Regulations relating to Academic Affairs

2025 - 2026

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Regulations relating to Academic Affairs

Administration of teaching

6.1.

Lectures and classes will begin on the hour. To enable students to move from one to the next, lectures and classes shall end not later than ten minutes to any hour.

6.2.

Availability of optional modules may be subject to student demand and timetabling constraints. Every effort is made to timetable optional modules in such a way that clashes are minimised. However, where a student is enrolled for two modules with a timetable clash between lectures, the student is required to change one of the conflicting modules. Students may request special permission from the Executive Dean or their deputy to be exempted from this requirement. Each request will be judged on its merits.

Administration of examinations

6.3.

Examinations shall take place at times determined by the relevant Programme of Study. Publication of examination dates and times will be published by the Academic Registrar in a timely manner and in such a way that gives adequate notice to staff and students.

6.4.

Students must comply with the requirements of the Examinations Office in relation to examination entry. Alterations to examination entry after the published deadline will be made at the discretion of the Registrar and Secretary and may be subject to a fine.

6.5

The result of any examination taken by a student who is in debt to the University will not normally receive formal recognition by the University where that debt relates to the fees of their course or ancillary academic costs, unless otherwise determined by the Registrar and Secretary after consideration of individual circumstances.

6.6.

Attendance at all examinations associated with the approved programme of study is compulsory and any student who fails to present themselves for such an examination at the time and place published by the Registrar and Secretary, except when prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause, will be deemed to have failed in that part of the examination. Misreading of the examination timetable will not be regarded as 'sufficient cause'.

6.7.

Invigilators shall have the power to remove any candidate from the examination room for good cause.

6.8.

No candidate will be admitted to the examination room later than 55 minutes after the start of any examination of more than one hour's duration. No candidate will be permitted to leave the examination room permanently during the first 55 minutes or during the last 30 minutes of an examination of more than one hour's duration. For examinations with a duration of up to one hour candidates will be admitted to the examination room up to 10 minutes after the start of the examination and will be permitted to leave the examination room permanently only with the permission of the invigilator.

6.9.

Where a candidate is unable for good cause to attend a written examination in the place arranged for the examination permission may be given by the Registrar and Secretary for the examination to be held elsewhere, provided that it is simultaneous and invigilated.

6.10.

Project or other work which is part of an examination must be submitted by the required date, otherwise such work may be left out of account in the assessment of the examination result.

Assessment

6.11.

Modules may be assessed by coursework or by examination or by a combination of both. Coursework may include class tests, project work, field work and laboratory work and other appropriate forms of assessment. The detailed methods and rules of assessment for individual modules are available from Departmental Offices or their equivalent.

6.12.

Students are examined at the end of each year of their course and must satisfy the examiners before being permitted to proceed. Examinations for groups of students on specified modules or courses may take place at times other than the main examination period in May/June.

6.13.

Students who do not satisfy the examiners in the examinations may be permitted to re-sit specified examinations, to undertake a repeat period of study, full-time or part-time, or be required to leave the University.

6.14.

In degree courses of three years' duration, the final class of degree will normally be based upon the assessment of the second and final years of study. In degree courses of four years' duration, the assessment of the third year of study may be taken into account in assessing the final class of degree. The detailed rules of assessment for the award of first degrees are approved by the Senate and are available from the Student Services Hub.

6.15.

Students are required to be regular and punctual in their attendance at such instruction as may be prescribed by the relevant department in relation to individual modules.

6.16.

Students are required to see members of academic or professional services staff to discuss their attendance, conduct and progress when required to do so.

6.17.

A student who is absent from teaching for more than one week during term shall inform the Head of Department as soon as possible, in writing, giving the reason for their absence. A student who is absent for more than two consecutive weeks during term must provide medical evidence in the case of illness, or appropriate corroboration where there are other reasons for absence, at the earliest opportunity.

Academic progress

6.18.

Students will be permitted to proceed with their programmes of study only if their progress is satisfactory.

6.19.

The progress of each student shall be reviewed at regular intervals during the academic year by academic departments. Boards of Examiners may also require a student whose progress is unsatisfactory to withdraw from the University. A student who is required to withdraw from the University on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress has the right of appeal in accordance with the procedures approved by the Senate.

6.20.

A student who is prevented by ill health or other serious impediment from meeting the normal requirements of their programme of study for more than six consecutive weeks, may not, except with the permission of the Executive Dean or their deputy, count that term as part of the requirements of the programme of study for which they are registered.

Cheating

6.21.

The University, the Students' Union and the University's Partner Institutions expect all students:

- to behave with honesty and integrity in relation to coursework, examinations and other assessed work;
- to be familiar and act in accordance with the conventions of academic writing (including appropriate referencing of sources and acknowledgement of assistance);
- to show understanding of ethical considerations and be compliant with the relevant University Procedures.

A student suspected of not complying with any of these requirements shall be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the University's Academic Offences Procedures.

6.22.

A student suspected of helping another student commit an academic offence may be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the University's Code of Student Conduct.

Award and conferment of Degrees

6.23.

A candidate who has fulfilled the requirements of the prescribed programme of study and has satisfied the examiners for the degree of Foundation Degree in Arts or Foundation Degree in Science shall be eligible for conferment of the degree in one of the following classes:

Pass

Merit

Distinction

6.24.

A candidate who has fulfilled the requirements of the prescribed programme of study and has satisfied the examiners for the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Engineering or Bachelor of Laws (Ordinary) shall be eligible for conferment of the degree. These awards are unclassified.

6.25.

A candidate who has fulfilled the requirements of the prescribed programme of study and has satisfied the examiners for the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Engineering or Bachelor of Laws or Bachelor of Business Administration with Honours shall be eligible for conferment of the degree in one of the following classes:

Class I

Class II Division i

Class II Division ii

Class III

6.26.

Candidates who do not satisfy the examiners in the final examinations of the final year of study for the degree may be re-assessed in accordance with the rules of assessment for Undergraduate awards. Marks will be capped excepted where a candidate is repeating the year. Candidates will be required to undertake the appropriate registration and pay the fee determined by the University. Students who are not fully registered shall not be permitted in the intervening year to receive instruction or supervision at the University of Essex. Students who are given the opportunity to be re-assessed shall be subject to the Statutes, Ordinances, and Regulations of the University at any time they are present in the University.

6.27.

In the case of illness or other sufficient cause affecting a candidate an honours degree and occurring after the Sunday of the sixth week of the Spring term (ie week 21) of the candidate's final year course of study but before the end of the final examinations, the candidate may on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners concerned and at least one external examiner be eligible for conferment of an aegrotat degree. Candidates who were required to be examined during the January examination period in their final year, and who were affected by illness or other sufficient cause which occurred during this period, and which was not an ongoing problem, may also be considered for an aegrotat degree. Candidates who have conferred on them an aegrotat degree may present themselves for examination for the honours degree at the next available opportunity which will normally be within one year. Such candidates shall be required to register partially and to pay an appropriate fee as determined from time to time by the University. They shall be subject to the Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations of the

University at any time they are present in the University. It shall be open to the examiners to recommend conferment of an Honours degree under conditions prescribed in Regulation 6.25. to candidates who present themselves for examination under this Regulation.

6.28.

- (a) The Chair of a Board of Examiners may suspend any particular decision of the Board where:
 - i. the decision contravenes either a University regulation, policy, or procedure
 - ii. the decision, in the judgement of the Chair, leads to unfairness or inconsistency
- (b) In signing the grids at the conclusion of the Board meeting, the Chair shall indicate next to their signature that they have not approved the decision relating to the relevant candidate number(s).
- (c) The Chair shall then refer the decision to a sub-Committee of Senate by notifying the Vice-Chancellor's Office. The sub-committee shall be chaired by the Vice-Chancellor or nominee, and shall consist of not fewer than three further members of Senate who are also senior members of academic staff. Where possible, the members should be chosen from disciplines cognate with that in the case under consideration. The sub-committee shall review the facts of the case and taken an independent and final decision. Any decision open to the original Board of Examiners shall be available to the sub-Committee. The sub-committee may wish to view the grids of other students in order to ensure consistency.
- (d) The decision of the sub-committee shall not require the agreement of external examiners but the external examiner shall be informed of the decisions.

6.29.

- (a) For a taught award, in the event of a candidate's death, the Board of Examiners may confer the award of a degree, diploma or certificate post obitum provided that it is satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the candidate would have successfully completed the intended award and that the candidate had successfully completed at least two-thirds of the programme of study.
- (b) (For a research award, in the event of a candidate's death, the Chair of the relevant Faculty Education Committee or nominee may confer the award of a research degree listed in the Principal Regulations for Research Degrees post obitum provided that, following the report from the examiners, they are satisfied that; the work submitted is the candidate's own; that the standard, quantity and originality of the research work completed has been judged to be that normally required to submit for examination for the proposed award; and that enough of the research has been completed and written-up to allow a proper assessment to be made of the thesis.

6.30.

No student, past student, or other person may represent themselves as a graduate of the University of Essex until such time as a degree of the University has been conferred.

6.31.

Except with the special permission of the Registrar and Secretary, no degree of the University shall be conferred upon, or certificate or diploma of the University granted to, a person who is in debt to the University in respect of education fees related to that qualification (see also Regulation 6.5). Normally, no student in any type of unauthorised debt to the University or its companies may attend graduation or other similar event nor receive services of the University or its companies until said debt is cleared.

6.32.

Students who are eligible for conferment of degrees may have them conferred upon them either at a congregation for the conferment of degrees or in absentia.

6.33.

Students attending a congregation of the University for the conferment of a degree or otherwise shall be required to wear dress suitable to the occasion.

Intellectual Property Rights

6.34.

Intellectual property rights generated by a student in the course of their study lie with the student, except in specific cases relating to commercial exploitation where agreement has been reached between the University and the student or where otherwise covered by an existing agreement between the student and their sponsoring body.

Assessment by Dissertation (immigration control)

6.35.

Any undergraduate or post-graduate taught student subject to immigration control who enters a dissertation period where that dissertation represents the totality of education during that time (regardless of 'term time' or otherwise) is required to continue to engage with their studies by being present on campus on a regular (full time) basis.

6.36.

Either the student should meet with their supervisor on at least a monthly basis and, where appropriate, a full plan of the research to be undertaken and the approach will be agreed by the supervisor and the supervisee which outlines expected progress during the period. Departments may require students to

present themselves on a regular basis in order to confirm attendance at the University. Any prolonged period away from campus may prevent the University from being able to sponsor the student's visa and result in their withdrawal from the University.

Work-placement and study abroad (immigration control)

6.37.

Students subject to immigration control on a full time work placement or study/work abroad activity are required to attend on a full time basis and adhere to relevant local requirements; failure to do so could result in the student being withdrawn from the University and the cancellation of their visa sponsorship.

6.38.

Students on an Essex Abroad (or work experience abroad) programme or placement who are subject to immigration control may not re-enter the United Kingdom without first notifying the Essex Abroad office except at the end of each (host university) term (returning at the beginning of the next) or the end of the academic year as appropriate. If they leave the programme they must notify the Essex Abroad office immediately. Failure to do so could result in the student being withdrawn from the University and the cancellation of their visa sponsorship.

6.39.

If a decision taken in accordance with University student progress or assessment regulations conflicts with the University's legal or compliance obligations then the matter shall be referred to the Registrar and Secretary who shall decide upon a course of action.

6.40.

A student may appeal that decision to the Vice-Chancellor, in writing, within five days of the Registrar and Secretary's decision on the grounds of:

- (a) Substantive factual error; and/or
- (b) Extraordinary circumstances where the student was physically unable to support the University in discharging its compliance obligations.

6.41.

The Vice-Chancellor will accept or reject the appeal within ten days and their decision is final; there is no further right of appeal.

6.42.

Where the Vice-Chancellor is unavailable to review the appeal within the timescale, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor(s) may consider the appeal.

Force majeure

6.43.

The Chair of Senate will determine when there are circumstances which would be classed as a Force Majeure, and will notify the Senate. In the case of a Force Majeure, the following range of actions may be considered to ensure that wherever possible, students can continue their studies and gain awards without experiencing significant delays to their studies. Any action taken will ensure the quality and standards of the courses, modules and credits awarded are protected.

6.44.

Where any such decisions are taken, the Academic Registrar shall be responsible for bringing those decisions to the attention of the Senate.

6.45.

Decisions taken under Force Majeure are based on academic assessment and progress. However, all outcomes offered that require a student's continued registration at the University are subject to their ability to maintain a valid UK immigration status and provide proof of their right to study with the University for the duration of their programme of study. Therefore, any decision taken as a result of an action under Force Majeure that may affect a student's immigration status must be referred for consideration in accordance with the University's General Regulations and the relevant UK Immigration rules and guidance.

Alternative forms of assessment

For all taught students

Relevant to Assessment Policies

- (a) Where the approved form of assessment cannot be offered, alternative forms will be found wherever possible (subject to requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements).
- (b) Where an alternative is found (for example where a take-home exam is held in place of an unseen, invigilated examination), the classification of the alternative form of assessment as either exam or coursework under the relevant assessment policy will be agreed by the Faculty Dean Undergraduate or alternative senior academic member of the University (nominees to be approved by the PVC (Education)).

- (c) The new form of assessment and its classification as either coursework or exam will normally be subject to marking and moderation as set out in the Marking Policy.
- (d) Departments can also adjust assessment deadlines (to move to a later date) with careful consideration of the impact and notification to students.

Extenuating circumstances

Relevant to Extenuating Circumstances Policy

For all taught students

- (e) Where appropriate, the duration for which students can self-certify under the Extenuating Circumstances policy may be extended. Any extensions will be agreed by the Academic Registrar (or nominee).
- (f) Subject to the approval of the Academic Registrar, in the case of a Force Majeure that impacts students' ability to undertake assessment, students may automatically be offered an uncapped reassessment attempt. Claims made in these circumstances will not normally need to be considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

Students unable to complete the requirements of their programme of study

For all taught students

- (g) Where, for reasons of a Force Majeure, a Board of Examiners does not have sufficient information despite candidates presenting themselves for examination or where for the same Force Majeure reason examinations or other forms of assessment were not possible, the Board may temporarily confer an alternative award to students in the final year of their course. This would only apply to courses with a non-protected title (including professional body regulated courses).
- (h) The award conferred would be the highest level award for which the student met the requirements.
- (i) (Candidates who have conferred on them an alternative award under these circumstances may be offered the choice of undertaking assessment needed to meet the requirements of their original award at the next available opportunity (which will normally be within one year). They shall be subject to the Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations of the University at any time they are studying at the University.

Study abroad

Relevant to Rules of Assessment

For all taught students

- (j) If there is a situation relating to Force Majeure which prevents a student studying abroad to complete their period abroad, students will be able to remain on a 4 year programme variant “[subject] (including Study Abroad)”, with the verified marks received from the Partner Institution for the study they have completed being recognised by Essex.

Exceptional progression decisions

For all taught students

- (k) Any of the following options may be activated in the case of a Force Majeure, subject to the approval of the PVC Education or nominee.

Relevant to Rules of Assessment

- (l) An amendment to approved rules of assessment, including an approved variation to the rules, for example to ensure requirements of professional, regulatory or statutory bodies continue to be met.
- (m) Exceptionally permit students who are not in their final year of study to trail up to 30 failed credits into the subsequent year. This option would only be available for non-core modules and where the arithmetic average of known total module results is above the pass mark for the course. Reassessment of the failed credits will take place during their subsequent year. Students would still need to meet the requirements for their course as set out in the Rules of Assessment. Any student offered this opportunity will be given information about the implications of failing to complete assessment in the subsequent year.
- (n) Offer reassessment in up to a maximum of the total volume of credits undertaken during the year to be completed before the start of the following academic year (subject to any course or award specific requirements, including approved variations which would prevent this from being possible).

Undergraduate

- (o) Offer students who have achieved a year mark of less than 20 the opportunity to continue their studies by repeating the year. This would count as an attempt at assessment and towards the maximum period of study and number of attempts.

- (p) Offer students who have not attempted any of the required reassessment another reassessment opportunity.

Postgraduate

- (q) Waive the requirement for postgraduate students to pass the minimum number of credits at first attempt as set out in the Rules of Assessment.

For all research students

Relevant to Code of Practice: Postgraduate Research Degrees; Professional Doctorates

- (r) For students with a Tier 4 visa, waive the requirement that the majority of contact should be face-to-face and allow supervisory meetings to take place via video link.
- (s) For new students who are unable to attend their induction in person, an alternative induction will be arranged.

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