



University of Essex

# **Essex Alumni Reunion Guide**

# How to host an Essex reunion

We are so pleased that you're considering organising an Essex alumni reunion. Getting back in touch and catching up with former classmates and friends from your time at Essex is so exciting, and we would love to support you along the way.

This guide will give you some tips on how to plan a reunion – whether it's in person or online.

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# How we can help

We have recently seen an increase in alumni looking to reconnect and host reunions. We're really excited to be able to help. We can:

- Email your former classmates and friends on your behalf (if we are able to contact them subject to current Data Protection laws)
- Manage the guest list via our online booking page
- Provide Essex-branded goodies for your reunion\*subject to availability
- Set up a Zoom meeting link (if your reunion is virtual)
- Share your reunion story on social media to inspire others to follow in your footsteps

## Your role:

- Act as Reunion Leader and the key contact to work with our team
- Let us know who you would like us to invite
- Decide a date, time and venue
- Consider how you might be able to share the invite with anyone who we don't have current contact details for e.g. Whatsapp group/inviting via Facebook
- Facilitate conversations on the day (see the suggestions later in this guide)
- Register all guests and pass these details over to the Alumni Relations Team within a week of your reunion

Let's get started!

# Deciding the details

Complete the Reunion Request Form below to let us know as much as possible about your reunion so that we can support you with the planning process. If you do not know all the details now, that's not a problem, we can help you with the plans.

Please return the form to [alumni@essex.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@essex.ac.uk) with at least 10 weeks' notice before your proposed reunion. This allows us to give your fellow graduates plenty of notice, as well as giving us time to prepare and send invitations on your behalf.

We also offer a Friend Finder service to help you get back in touch with classmates and long lost friends so be sure to let us know as much information as you can so that we can contact them on your behalf.

Your name:	
Your graduation year and subject studied:	
Your email address/phone number:	
Who would you like to invite to the reunion:  (please provide as much detail as possible e.g. graduates of Sociology, class of 1995. If you would like to mention specific alumni please list as much information as possible about them – name/ subject studied/ year of graduation/ date of birth. Please note we are only able to contact alumni who have given us their permission to do so due to current GDPR laws.)	
Proposed date of the reunion:	
Time:	
Venue (in-person or held virtually):	

# Letting your friends know

Once we've received your Reunion Request Form, we will be in touch with you to run through the details and share a suggested timeline with you. We'll let you know when we plan on sending invitations so that you can encourage your friends to book.

Once invitations have been sent, we will start taking bookings via our online system. We encourage you at this point to promote your event through social media networks. Our Facebook and LinkedIn groups can be a great way to spread word of your reunion quickly. You may also like to consider setting up a WhatsApp group to share details.

## Planning your reunion

### Venue

If you're planning a reunion on one of our campuses, did you know that you can hire LTB, a classroom or conference room to host your reunion? Or get the full works and go for one of our Event Packages which include refreshments, lunch, technical support and a co-ordinator. Alumni can get a 10% discount on these Event Packages with our Event Essex team. Contact them to find out more on 01206 872358 or [EventEssex@essex.ac.uk](mailto:EventEssex@essex.ac.uk)

Please remember to check your local Government guidelines as well as the [University's current guidelines for visitors on campus](#).

If you're planning a virtual reunion, we recommend using Zoom and would be happy to set up a meeting link on your behalf.

### Accommodation

Relive your time in student digs and stay over in our student accommodation on the Colchester campus. Available between July-September and you can hire accommodation on a self-catering, B&B or half-board basis. Alumni can get a 10% discount on all accommodation packages bookable via our Event Essex team.

Or how about staying in our luxury 4\* hotel on campus? Wivenhoe House re-opened after refurbishment in 2012 and has since gone on to be awarded two AA rosettes for fine dining as well as boasting 16 luxury bedrooms including 9 suites and the contemporary garden wing has a further 24 executive bedrooms. It's also the first hotel school of its kind in the UK, with hospitality students in every department learning the professional skills they need to graduate from a world class university. Contact them on 01206 863666 or [reservations@wivenhoe.co.uk](mailto:reservations@wivenhoe.co.uk)

## Alumni Card

Whether you're planning a reunion on a large scale or you just want to meet up with friends in the SU bar again - don't forget to apply for an Alumni Card before you arrive. Your card will provide you with identification that you are a member of the University. We can either post it to you in advance or you can collect it on the day. For more details, please contact us [alumni@essex.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@essex.ac.uk).

# Tips for using Zoom

## On a desktop computer or laptop

- Install [Zoom Client for Meetings](#).
- Have a pair of headphones or speakers ready.

## On a mobile device

Alternatively, you can use the Zoom mobile app on iOS and Android devices. For help with using the mobile app, visit the Mobile section of the [Zoom Help Centre](#).

## Join a Zoom event

- Go to your event reminder email and click the event join link provided by the host
- Make sure your profile includes your full name to help peers recognise you
- Check your Audio Settings (in the lower left of your screen) are correct.

You can also join webinars and meetings using the Zoom mobile app. For help with using Zoom on iOS and Android devices, visit the Mobile section of the [Zoom Help Centre](#).

## Interacting in the event

- Make sure your camera and microphone are turned on so that you can see and talk to other attendees – you will be prompted to do this when you join the event
- If needed, you can use the mute buttons within Zoom to deactivate your own microphone or camera as required
- You can raise your hand at any time to indicate to the host that you'd like to speak – just click the raise hand button, be sure to lower it once you have finished speaking
- 'Chat' is a text-based messaging feature which runs alongside the video call and is controlled by the event host. Click the Chat button to open the chat panel. To send a message, just type it in the Text box at the bottom of the panel. Press Enter to send your message
- Breakout rooms are another feature controlled by the event host. You may be put into a smaller group to help you network and catch up properly. This would happen automatically so you don't need to do anything.

## Leave the event

- Click the X in the upper-right corner of the window to exit the event.
- Click the Leave Meeting button.

## Help

- [Live training and video tutorials](#) are available
- [Zoom help and support pages](#)

# Reunion Attendee Form

Please remember to complete your Reunion Attendee Form and return it to us within one week of your event taking place.

We would also love to see any photos of your time together and are always open to any feedback or suggestions you may have as a result of the planning process and the reunion itself.

Full name	Subject of study	Attended?

The Advancement Office (Alumni Relations and Philanthropy) supports the University of Essex by managing communication with, and providing services for, alumni, donors and volunteers, supporters of the University and students. We hold all data securely and follow data protection regulations, and we never sell your data to third party organisations. We are committed to maintaining a high standard of data – you can update your personal information or your communication preferences at any time online or by email ([advancement@essex.ac.uk](mailto:advancement@essex.ac.uk)). You can read our full data and privacy policy on our website.