

**Your studies**

# Department of Mathematical Sciences

**Postgraduate taught  
January Start**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
2022-23



University of Essex

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## **Welcome**

**Welcome to the Department of Mathematical Sciences and thank you for choosing to study with us.**

The Department of Mathematical Sciences is committed to high standards in both research and teaching. It is host to some internationally renowned researchers and research groups. Its research outputs can be found in many learned scientific journals and popular textbooks. We are confident that you will derive great benefit from working and studying in such an environment.

The Department will need to keep in touch with you during the year, and you are expected to check your email on working days (Monday-Friday) during term time. It is extremely important that we have an up-to-date address for you – any changes can be made in MyEssex.

Please read this handbook carefully. In particular, please note that it is your responsibility to know about the key dates in each term and the University rules on academic offences.

Finally, a request: we very much want to maintain the quality of our teaching and the good atmosphere in which students and staff work together. You can help us achieve this goal in a number of ways but, especially, by becoming a representative on the Student Voice Group or in the Departmental Meeting. Only by hearing from students can we respond to their concerns. Please consider whether you could take on one of these roles.

I hope you will have an interesting, educational and enjoyable time here, and I look forward to meeting you. The Department wishes you success in your studies and great benefit from your time at the University of Essex..

**Professor Abdel Salhi**  
**Director of Graduate Studies**

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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. Make sure that you keep up to date with what we all need to do to continue [keeping safe as a community](#).

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**

Whether a new or returning student, you will need to [officially register and pay your fees \(if required to do so\)](#) at the start of each academic year and prior to the published latest Registration date. 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. As part of this process, you will need to activate your Essex IT account, register online (including payment of fees where required) and, once you arrive on campus, undertake a Right to Study check and collect your student registration card.

Students that start in January are here over two academic years, so you will need to register again before the October term starts to be able to proceed with your dissertation

### **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 when you first arrive on campus 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 in order 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.

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You are expected to attend your in-person teaching events 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.

### **Choosing your modules**

You may have module options to select as part of your course structure. If you do, you must select the modules you wish to enrol on before the academic year begins. You can view and choose your specific options through the [eNROL system](#). New students can do so from the end of August and returning students can from the April preceding the next academic year. Early module enrolment ensures that timetables can be scheduled effectively. We'll talk more about how you might decide which modules to take in the [Learning and Teaching](#) section of this Handbook.

### **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 campus [services on campus](#) and make sure that you're aware of the [guidance](#) for those coming onto 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 on campus, connect to campus wi-fi, and much more. When you activate your account, you should register an external e-mail address and passphrase so that if you [forget your password](#), you can also reset it using these details. If you have forgotten those also, you should either visit the IT Helpdesk or call 01206 872345. Make sure you keep your password safe and do not share it with others!

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## Campus Wi-fi

If you are studying on any of our campuses, connect to our Wi-Fi by simply finding the 'eduroam' network on your device and use the same log in details as your IT account to connect up!

## 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, let us know if you'll miss a lecture or class, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

### 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 to 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!

## 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](#).

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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're 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 was awarded a Bronze Department Athena Swan award in November 2018. We are also committed to the [London Mathematical Society Good Practice Scheme](#). The scheme identifies five key principles of good practice for gender equality in mathematics departments in Universities.

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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](#), such as our [postgraduate students](#) – 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.

## **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

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. The Students' Union is run by students for students, and they're here for you from the day you arrive, to the moment you graduate. The SU are here to represent your views and work with you to make amazing things happen and shape your experience at Essex.

## **Get involved!**

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

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Throughout the year we run specific events aimed at postgraduate students. There are also plenty of opportunities to join [Sports Clubs](#), get involved with our [BUCS teams](#), or just try a sport with our [Just Play](#) programme if you don't want to commit to a regular team or would rather not play competitively.

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](#).

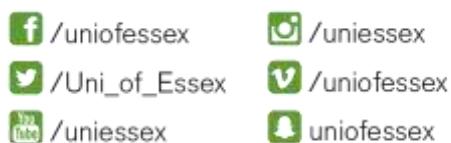
We also have our very own letting agency [SU Homes](#) designed to offer help and support for students to find off campus accommodation.

There's also a huge range of extra-curricular and voluntary opportunities available to you at Essex, [Chart My Path](#) is your personal development navigation tool to help you find them. Find activities to inspire and develop you in your life, your studies and for your future and gain recognition for your achievements on your digital transcript the Higher Education Achievement Report (**HEAR**), through the [Big Essex Award](#).

### **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:



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 the Department of Mathematical Sciences

### Meet the team

### Meet the team

A full list of all staff can be found at

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/mathematical-sciences/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:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Role</b>
Professor Hongsheng Dai	hdaia	Head of Department
Professor Peter Higgins	peteh	Senior Personal Tutor
Professor Chris Saker	cjsake	Director of Education
Professor Abdel Salhi	as	Postgraduate Taught Director

#### Professional Services Staff

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Mrs Karen Litterick	Student Administrator
Mrs Jo Lynn	Student Administrator
Mr Jamie Adkins	Student Administrator
Ms Fran Elliott	Student Administrator
Ms Nina Simmons	Student Administrator
Ms Julie Peirson	Deputy Department Manager

You can contact your year administrator at [maths@essex.ac.uk](mailto:maths@essex.ac.uk)

The Department's Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO) is Professor Peter Higgins. The DDLO is a direct link for you between the Student Services Hub and your department. They can help make sure that the Disability Service know about any adjustments you need. More information about the role of the DDLO can be found at <https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/access-and-disability/ddlo>

### Teaching staff and support

All teaching staff hold regular weekly academic support hours during term time. This is a time when you can meet with them about anything to do with your modules, from difficulties you might be having with your seminar readings, to discussions about feedback on your coursework.

The Department operates an open door policy which should allow you to get help whenever you need it, provided the lecturer is available. All meetings will take place



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via Zoom and you should contact the member of staff by email to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Please note that academic staff do not hold regular academic support hours during the vacations, and may, on occasions, be away from the University on research trips and visits. Therefore, if you need to get in touch with them during the vacation periods, you should e-mail them in the first instance.

### **Module Tutors**

There are dedicated Module Tutors to support students for each module. The module tutor for each module can be found on Moodle.

### **Your Personal Tutor**

All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students have a Personal Tutor who will meet you soon after you arrive, and regularly throughout your course. Your Personal Tutor will be a member of academic staff and is someone you talk to about your course or any difficulties that may encounter. They can recommend and direct you to other support services that might be able to further help and support you. You can find out who your Personal Tutor is through [MyEssex](#).

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).

### **Staff research interests**

We're an interdisciplinary department with impact on a diverse range of areas from social policy to insurance risks, and human technology interaction to mathematical physics.

Research in our department is organised into mathematics, and data science. Both groups reflect the major fields of mathematical research undertaken by our staff and contain subgroups representing specific subject areas. All members of staff are associated with at least one group.

#### **Data science**

Data science, also known as data-driven science, is an interdisciplinary field about scientific methods, processes and systems to extract knowledge or insights from data in various forms.

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As a concept that unifies statistics, data analysis and their related methods in order to understand and analyse actual phenomena. Data science employs techniques and theories drawn from many fields within the broad areas of mathematics, statistics, information science and computer science.

## **Mathematics**

Research in mathematics is undertaken in the context of an interdisciplinary structure that recognises mathematics (including what can be abstract mathematics) is an essential part of research in many other disciplines. Our staff are also linked with research groups in other departments at Essex.

## **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 has 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.

## **Postgraduate Training**

Postgraduate Taught students are provided with structured training throughout their scheme of study. The Department offers a wide range of postgraduate taught modules that either explore particular fields and concepts or offer specific training in research methods and skills. Students should peruse the modules available and discuss with the Graduate Director Taught 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 attachment to [mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk](mailto:mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk) using your university email on Outlook.

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.

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 and check on your available quota.

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## Premium printing

Premium services for printing and finishing, including binding your documents for presentational purposes, are available at [The Copy Centre](#) (Square 4, Colchester Campus). These services are chargeable.

## Noticeboards

Every department and school has their own noticeboard providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. The Departmental noticeboard is located just outside the entry to the Department on floor 5 of the STEM Centre.

## Departmental prizes

Each year we are pleased to award prizes signifying excellence. The following prizes are available for award to postgraduate taught students:

### **Townsend MSc Dissertation Prize** (awarded to one student annually)

The Department awards the Townsend MSc Dissertation Prize to the student with the best MSc dissertation mark. In the event that there are students with the same dissertation mark, the prize will be split. The value of the prize is £100.

## Communications

The University will predominantly use e-mail for routine communication between staff and students. Your Essex e-mail address will have been added to the relevant e-mail groups specific to your department or school, course and modules to ensure that you receive the essential information relevant to you. It is recommended that you check your Essex e-mail each day to ensure you do not miss any important updates to classes and assessment.

You will also automatically be subscribed to a small number of opt-out lists, again, based on your course. You can always [opt in or out](#) of these communications online.

## Social Media

The Department uses several social networking sites; follow us on:

Twitter: @EssexMaths

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UoEMaths](http://www.facebook.com/UoEMaths)

Instagram: @essexmaths

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## **The use of personal devices**

You can use laptops and tablet PCs during teaching classes for purposes related to the class you are attending. You should refrain from using your mobile phone during all teaching events, except in cases where a lecturer uses a programme which requires these devices to be switched on for participation.

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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 considered 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.

### The academic year

The academic year uses a week numbering system that covers the 52 weeks of a calendar year but corresponds to typical term dates. You will start in week 15, which is Welcome week, with teaching commencing in week 16.

Term	Week numbers
Spring	15-25 (including Welcome week)
Summer	30-37
Autumn	38-52, 1-11*

\*Summer vacation dates will be confirmed in due course

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 courses 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, unless otherwise advised by your Department.

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## **My Course**

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

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

## **Credits**

Your course will be made up of a certain [number of credits](#), depending on your level of study and specific postgraduate course. Each year of study will hold a credit value, with credits allocated to each module. You will need to meet the required learning outcomes and assessments to be awarded credits.

## **Learning outcomes**

Each course has learning outcomes which need to be met in order to progress. Course learning outcomes are categorised into knowledge, intellectual, practical and key skills, and are also defined more specifically at a modular level. Having this information means that you can measure your progress against the outcomes, for example when reviewing coursework feedback.

## **Grade boundaries**

On most Masters degrees, an overall mark of 50 is a pass. An overall mark of 60 is classed as a pass with merit, and an overall mark of 70 is classed as a pass with distinction. Methods for calculating your final postgraduate award classification vary across awards and may depend on other factors. Full details are set out in the [Rules of Assessment](#).

## **Module enrolment**

Most modules taught reflect the individual research interests of members of our academic staff. New modules are regularly explored, researched and developed in collaboration with the University's Quality and Academic Development Team to expand our transformative educational offering at Essex.

The University provide [further guidance](#) on choosing modules, and meetings for first and second-year students will be held by your department where students can discuss

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their choices with their Personal Tutor. Your preferred choices must be submitted prior to the start of term through the [eNROL](#) system.

A full list of modules available can be found on this [webpage](#).

### **Changing Modules**

In instances where you need to make a change to your module choice, you may do so up until the second week of the Spring Term. If you wish to change an optional module after the deadline, you should seek advice from the Department or School Office that runs the particular module that you may wish to change to.

Late changes may be permitted but will be subject to the approval of the department that runs the module and the relevant Dean. Late changes of modules that run for one term or less will not usually be permitted. Students may not change modules that are core or compulsory for the course for which they are registered.

If there is a module that you would like to study that isn't available as an option on your course, then you can ask for a change to your syllabus to be made by submitting a [special syllabus](#) request. Special syllabus requests are not automatically available and require approval. It is a good idea to talk to your Department or School responsible for your course, as well as the Department that teach the module if it is an outside option.

### **Module Directors**

Module Directors are responsible for individual modules. They design, teach and examine them. They monitor student progress and can also talk to students about any related academic issues.

### **Employability Modules**

Dr Spyros Vrontos is the Departmental Employability Development Director. You should also be aware of the Employability and Careers Centre website [www.essex.ac.uk/careers](http://www.essex.ac.uk/careers). The Departmental Employability team will be able to tell you about contacts in the Centre, and will inform students from time to time of forthcoming careers events. You should be aware that most of you will have to look for jobs eventually, and that it is highly desirable to at least start thinking about this early in your degree. The Research Skills and Employability module (MA199) should help you do this.

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## Study Abroad

As a postgraduate student there are a variety of opportunities at Essex to have an international experience through one of our Essex Abroad programmes.

[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. Students with disabilities should also liaise with the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service – [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

## Work Placements

There are a variety of opportunities to undertake work-based learning and placements either during or as part of your studies.

If undertaking a placement, it is your responsibility to find a work placement, however, the Industry Engagement and Placements Team can help prepare and support you and will advertise relevant placements. If you are interested in undertaking a work placement, or other work-based opportunities that may be available to you and your course, contact the [Industry Engagement and Placements team](#). If you have a student visa, please be aware that the immigration rules restrict the length of placements and the type of work you can do.

Upon successfully securing a placement you need to inform the Industry Engagement and Placements team by completing a [secured placement form](#). This is required in order to begin the placement approval process, please note without approval from the Industry Engagement and Placement team you will be unauthorised to commence placement.

For extra-curricular opportunities we recommend that you take a look at [Essex CareerHub](#), where you can not only find details of paid part-time, seasonal jobs and internships and graduate jobs but also more information on Essex Interns, Chart My Path and the Big Essex Award where you can discover other opportunities that are available to you to enhance your experience.



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## DBS Checks for Placements

Some placements may require a DBS check where you are engaging in regulated activity with vulnerable groups. This may include placements that are core, compulsory or optional, depending on the relevant module. Some activities may be carried out on an ad hoc basis for research purposes only, which are not required to meet the learning outcomes of the module or course, but will help inform your learning. More information about the DBS check process can be found on the [University's DBS webpages](#).

## Module Materials

Online reading lists for your modules can be found via the module Moodle page alongside other information and module materials.

## Teaching timetable

Every student has a [personal timetable](#) published at the start of term which shows when and where your teaching is taking place, and zoom links if teaching online. You can access your timetable on most mobile devices, including smart phones and tablets. You will need to have registered and activated your University of Essex log-in and selected all of your modules (if applicable) before you will be able to access your teaching timetable.

If you wish to report a timetable clash or request a class change, you should do so via the [online timetable](#).

During Welcome Week (week 15) you may find that your timetable is blank as teaching normally commences week 16. **Please be aware that there may be changes to the location of teaching during the year, so regularly check your personal [online timetable and Essex e-mail](#) for up to date teaching information.**

Information about teaching timetables, including requesting a class change, reporting a timetable issue and accessing your individual timetable can be found on the [University's website](#).

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## **Recording your attendance**

We [monitor your attendance](#) at teaching sessions on campus using your [student card](#) and an electronic recording system called [Count-Me-In](#). Your attendance at online teaching sessions is monitored by reviewing your logins to sessions on Zoom. You're expected to attend all of your mandatory sessions on [your individual timetable](#) and [report an absence](#) if you are unable to do so. If you have a student visa, please be aware that poor attendance and engagement may mean we have to withdraw our sponsorship and your visa would be cancelled by the Home Office.

It is your responsibility to remember your student registration card. [Lost or faulty cards](#) can be replaced at the [Student Services Hub](#).

Please contact your Personal Tutor, department staff or the [Student Services Hub](#) for advice and support, particularly if you are going to be absent for several weeks.

## **Making changes to your study**

### **Changing your course**

If you are thinking about changing course, you will need to do so by a [certain date](#) and should first speak to your department and personal tutor. They will be able to advise of the [things you should be thinking about](#) before changing your course.

### **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, Personal Tutor 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.

## **Library & Cultural Services**

The library aims to provide all of the resources you will need to succeed in your course, via online reading lists and access to extensive collections of books and journals both on our shelves and online. The library team can help you learn how to search effectively so you can find appropriate resources for your assignments. They can also provide advice on referencing, academic integrity, evaluating sources, and more. Our

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Skills at Library guide provides a [range of online support](#) in these areas and our [subject guides](#) for each department provide subject-specific guidance and resource recommendations. In addition, the library offers '[On Track for your Masters](#)', an annual programme of workshops delivered in collaboration with other professional services teams to help you with a whole range of research skills.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 has a variety of study spaces, including individual and group work areas. The Library offers a wide range of learning resources, online and in print, with a dedicated Helpdesk, live chat and the opportunity to book appointments with your Academic Liaison Librarian to help you through your studies and beyond. There is also a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room on the ground floor that is open 24/7. Make sure you remember your student card to access this room..

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

### **Art Exchange**

Placing art at its core, [Art Exchange](#) is a space where art, artists and audiences get together. Our programme of exhibitions, talks and events creates a platform for ideas to be exchanged and connections to be made.

We show international art by established and emerging artists throughout the year, while our artist-in-residence programme allows us to commission new work that respond to the world around us. We work with students in creating their own exhibitions and events, as we showcase what issues and debates are important to them.

Sited at the University of Essex in Colchester, we are inspired by our intellectually curious audience that makes up the campus community, while the research and study around us feeds into our programme of talks, films and debate.

Combined with art classes and workshops, we offer ways for everyone to get involved and enjoy great art.

### **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.

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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.

## **Academic Skills Support**

Skills for Success are here to support you with everything that you need to do well in your studies that is not directly related to your course content – in other words, the skills that you need to be successful. We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their academic study and achieve their potential on their course, and provide a range of embedded teaching, [workshops](#) and 1:1s on:

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

For more information, please contact [skills@essex.ac.uk](mailto:skills@essex.ac.uk).

## **Proofreading services**

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their personal tutors. 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 could potentially qualify as an [academic offence](#). The University is keen to ensure as

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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 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.

### **English classes for dependants**

The [Department of Language and Linguistics](#) offers dependants of international students and staff at the chance to improve their English language, through our [ECDIS](#) programme, at no extra cost. Classes are taught at the Colchester Campus at three basic levels: Elementary (A1/A2), Intermediate (B1/B2) and Advanced (C1/C2) and will focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **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.

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## Assessment and Academic Integrity

All schools and departments at the University employ a variety of assessment methods designed to ensure that the learning outcomes of each module, and course, have been successfully met by the student.

### Rules of Assessment

The [Rules of Assessment](#) are used to calculate your results. There is a main set of rules for [Masters](#) and other [postgraduate award courses](#), but some departments also have [additional variations](#) which can be found alongside the Rules of Assessment for your year of entry.

In the Department of Mathematical Sciences we do not have a variation to the Rules of Assessment:

Each module you take has 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 and the Framework for undergraduate courses give you more information about this.

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, departmental administrators, or SU Advice.

## Core, compulsory and optional modules

To understand the requirements to pass your course, you need to know the status of the modules that you are taking. You can find details of the status of your modules in Section C of your programme specification via [My Essex](#).

<b>Core</b>	You must take this module	Must pass this module. No failure can be permitted.
<b>Compulsory</b>	You must take this module	There might be limited opportunities to continue on the course/be eligible for the degree if you fail it.
<b>Optional</b>	You can choose which module to study	There might be limited opportunities to continue on the course/be eligible for the degree if you fail it.

Most modules in each year must be passed, with only a small number of credits, if any, being allowed to be failed in the degree.

## 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 coursework. 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.

## Methods of Assessment in the Department of Mathematical Sciences

Whether a module is core, compulsory or optional, all methods of assessment are compulsory. If you do not complete coursework or attend examinations, and do not have extenuating circumstances to support your non-submission or absence, then you are at risk of being withdrawn from the University.

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In the Department of Mathematical Sciences we do not have a variation to the Rules of Assessment:

Each module you take has 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 and the Framework for undergraduate courses give you more information about this.

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, departmental administrators, or [SU Advice](#).

### **Coursework**

Coursework is compulsory in all modules and failure to participate in coursework is interpreted as evidence of lack of academic progress. Your academic progress is monitored throughout the year. In severe cases, students with poor academic progress can be required to withdraw from the University (even before the final examinations).

### **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 others' 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 the Vancouver referencing system. 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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## Submission of coursework

You should submit all coursework online via [FASER](#) – the University’s online submission system. You are encouraged to log on to FASER at the start of the year so that you understand how it works before you reach your first deadline. There is a trial module and deadline available for you to use as a practice submission, as well as helpful guidance on [how to use FASER](#).

You can upload as many draft versions of your work as you like and are encouraged to use this as a safe and secure area to store your coursework. This can help to avoid the problem of your computer crashing at the last minute and your important files being lost. In cases where multiple versions are uploaded you will **need to make any which you do NOT want to be included in the final submission a ‘draft’** otherwise just the most recently uploaded file will be taken as the final version. The maximum file upload size is **50MB**.

## Problems with FASER

If you have technical difficulties: Please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#) as soon as possible to find out if this is a system issue or whether it may be a problem with your computer. This will count towards your claim when submitting a late coursework extenuating circumstance form should you need to.

If you are confused or unsure how to upload or are having any non-technical difficulties, you should contact your Postgraduate Administrator.

## Late submission of coursework

We have a [single policy](#) at the University of Essex for the late submission of coursework in postgraduate taught courses: all coursework submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of **zero**. No extensions will be granted. The policy states that the mark of zero shall stand unless you submit satisfactory evidence of extenuating circumstances that indicate that you were unable to submit the work by the deadline.

Where a student is unable to undertake the assessment by the deadline, and it is deemed impossible to consider a late submission request due to the nature of the assessment (e.g. absence from in-class tests, practical assignments and

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presentations), an [extenuating circumstances](#) form should be submitted which will be considered by the Board of Examiners.

### **Dissertation Extensions**

Postgraduate taught dissertations (or equivalent) are not counted as coursework and are therefore not covered by the policy on the late submission of coursework. Students can request an extension for their postgraduate dissertation if they find that, due to extenuating circumstances, they will be unable to submit the dissertation by the published deadline. Students can request an informal extension of up to four weeks from the department. Where a longer extension is required, an application for an extension to a postgraduate taught dissertation can be completed via the [online form on the ESF SharePoint website](#), for consideration by the relevant Deputy Dean (Education).

### **Return of coursework**

Students will be given the opportunity to view their marked coursework in different ways. You may be given your assignment in the next teaching session, or you could view it online. Each module lecturer will provide details at the start of the term. All second and final year coursework must be retained by the Department in order for it to be audited by the External Examiner.

### **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 Participants or Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Animal Subjects](#) 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.**

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## Examinations

From 2022-23, examinations will either be remote via FASER, Moodle or Perception, or on campus in an invigilated setting. To find out whether your exam is in-person or remote, you can check the [module directory](#). Your personal exam timetable, when available, also has this information.

### Exam timetable

The University [publishes the dates for exam periods](#) at the start of each year, including the date on which your personal exam timetable will be issued for each period. A link to your personalised exam timetable will be sent to your Essex account when it is ready to view.

### Attending an in-person exam

You must bring your registration card and exam entry form to any invigilated exams on campus. You may not be allowed entry without these. You will be able to download and print your exam entry form when you view your personal exam timetable.

For exams that are more than 1 hour long, you will not be allowed to enter the examination room if you arrive later than 55 minutes after the start of the exam. If your exam is only 1 hour long, you will only be admitted up to 10 minutes after the start of the exam. You will be able to download and print your exam entry form when you view your personal exam timetable.

Attendance at examinations, whether remote or in-person, is compulsory and if you do not attend them and do not have extenuating circumstances then you are at risk of being withdrawn.

### Calculators in Examinations

If you are allowed to use a calculator in your examinations, the only models you are permitted to use in invigilated exams are the Casio FX-83GT X, Casio FX-85GT X, Casio FX-83GT PLUS or the Casio FX-85GT PLUS.

The only exception is for certain **Finance** exams that require a **financial** calculator, in which case you may use the **Hewlett Packard 12c** (all variants) or the **Texas Instruments BAII Plus** (including the BAII Plus Professional).

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## Open and closed-book exams

You should check the module directory to see whether your exam is open or closed-book. Your department will provide further guidance on how to prepare for your exams and on what materials can be taken into an open-book exam. You should also check the information published on the exam web pages.

## Sample and past papers

Past exam papers are available on each module Moodle site. In addition, some module supervisors provide sample or practice papers, which will also be available on Moodle.

## Revision classes

Revision sessions are timetabled for the summer term. Autumn term modules have revision lectures in week 30 and Spring term modules in week 31.

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

## Access to your exam script

If you want to see your script for an invigilated exam, you should make the request to the department responsible for the module within four weeks of the exam. The department should either: let you see the script in the presence of one of the staff responsible for teaching the module *or* give you a copy or summary of the examiners' comments on your performance. If you need to undertake an exam as part of reassessment on a module, your department will provide you with written feedback on any elements being reassessed.

**Feedback on your exam script will not include a discussion of the mark. The marks will have been approved by external examiners and ratified by the Board of Examiners.**

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## Moderation and marking

The [University's Marking Policy](#) can be found online and includes our policy and procedure on the moderation of work.

### Marking

All student work is marked in line with the University's Marking Policy. If your assessment is worth up to and including 40% of your module mark, it will be marked by one member of academic staff. If it is worth more 40%, then it will also be moderated. If the assessment is worth 30 credits or more, it will be marked by two members of academic staff. The full procedure and assessment marking requirements can be found in the [Marking Policy](#) – there is a useful flowchart in Appendix C to visually represent the requirements, and detailed definitions of marking and moderation within the policy itself.

### Moderation

Moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides additional assurance that the assessment criteria has been applied appropriately. When work is moderated, it means that a second member of academic staff takes a random sample of the work for a particular assessment and reviews the marks given.

### External Examiners

External Examiners are academics from other universities, but may also be from industry, business or the relevant profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that modules and courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education.

### Re-marking of coursework

You may, under certain circumstances, have the right to [request a re-mark](#) of your coursework. Should you feel that your work needs to be reviewed and potentially re-marked, you should first contact your department to advise you accordingly and assess whether you meet the criteria to be able to submit a request for re-marking.

If a request for a re-mark is accepted, your marks are **not guaranteed** to increase, however, **the mark awarded after re-marking will override your original mark.**

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Therefore, please be aware that in all incidences where coursework is re-marked, it is possible that your marks could go down as well as up.

## Appeals

[Appeals on academic grounds](#) can be made following the meeting of the Board of Examiners and the publication of your results. There are limited grounds available to appeal on and strict deadlines to adhere to. As such, we strongly advise all students thinking about making an appeal to contact the [SU Advice Centre](#).

## Feedback

Feedback on coursework is provided in various ways, depending on the type of coursework. This will be provided within 20 working days of submission.

If you need to undertake any reassessment on a module, the Department will provide you with written feedback on any elements being reassessed. This could be in the form of cohort or individual feedback.

## The Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners meet at the end of the Summer Term to consider marks for taught modules and final boards meet in the Autumn, and use the Rules of Assessment to determine whether:

- you have passed the modules you have studied and can be awarded credit
- you have met the requirements to progress to the next year of your course (*if you are on a course which lasts more than one year*)
- you have met the requirements to pass your course and what classification you will receive for each module
- you are eligible to receive a merit or distinction

If it determined that you have not passed sufficient credits to progress to the next stage of study, or, for final year students, to graduate, the Board of Examiners will also determine:

- what reassessment you could be offered and when you can take it<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Board of Examiners will not be aware of any student's immigration status. As a result, some reassessment options may be offered that are not compatible with individual student visa rules. All options should be considered in conjunction with applicable visa restrictions.

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## Publication of results

The publication schedule for results can be [found on the website](#). You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published online.

## 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, departmental administrators, or SU Advice.

If you **fail your course**, you are not able to repeat it. The [Rules of Assessment for Postgraduate Taught Awards](#) only allow reassessment for up to a maximum of 60 credits worth of modules for taught masters degrees. The Board of Examiners will inform you if you are eligible for reassessment once it has considered your marks.

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 Taught Awards](#). Alternatively, if you have obtained enough credits in your taught modules, you may be eligible for another award such as a postgraduate diploma or certificate.

## Credit accumulation

You can decide if you want to [accumulate credit](#) by taking individual modules with the aim of achieving a postgraduate award; this is called [Modular study](#). The Rules of Assessment are different when you study individual modules. There are opportunities to achieve postgraduate awards through credit accumulation study in an increasing number of departments, as an alternative to standard full or part-time study.

## Reassessment

You may only undertake reassessment if the Board of Examiners says that you may do so.

If you have to take compulsory reassessment, whether coursework or examination, it is really important that you do this. If you do not, it is likely that you will be unable to progress with your studies at the University. The Board of Examiners will not consider permitting you to proceed carrying fails if you have not attempted the reassessment.

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Reassessed modules are normally capped at the pass mark of 50% unless you have extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Exam Board. Please be aware that reassessment in examinations and coursework carries a fee.

The Reassessment Strategy for most modules in the Department of Mathematical Sciences is that if a module is failed, students will be required to undertake reassessment in the components they failed. There are exceptions to this and all details can be found in the [Module Directory](#) and on the Module Moodle site.

### **Resit exams**

[Resit exams](#) are usually scheduled in late August and early September or 'out of residence' in the summer of the following year. A considerable amount of useful revision material for each module is available on Moodle. Students can contact staff, particularly Module Supervisors for the modules they are resitting if they need help with revision or specific queries (do not leave this until the last minute as staff availability will be reduced throughout the summer). Staff can give individual feedback on summer exam performance, if requested.

### **Exit Awards**

If you decide to withdraw from your course before you finish, or you fail too many credits to be awarded your degree, you may be awarded a qualification at a lower level, if appropriate and applicable.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

[Extenuating circumstances](#) are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform less well in your assessment than you might have expected, or in some instances, may prevent you from submitting coursework or attending an exam entirely. 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.

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 via MyEssex by the [appropriate deadline](#) noted.



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Your department will review your claim at an Extenuating Circumstances Committee and determine whether it will be accepted or rejected. The [Board of Examiners](#) will determine an appropriate course of action, such as permitting further reassessment opportunities for uncapped marks. Please note that extra marks **cannot** be given in light of extenuating circumstances.

## **Computers, Learning Technologies and your Information**

### **Computers**

#### **Using a campus computer**

If you [need to use a computer on campus](#) our computer labs are the perfect place to study or work. We also have group study pods which are ideal for group projects. Many labs stay open until late and some are open 24/7. Labs may be booked for teaching, and so it is best to check availability first.

#### **IT Help and Guidance**

You can search the [Student Directory](#) for more IT information, including [software available](#) to students, how-to guides, answers to frequently asked questions, and links to video screencasts.

If you can't find what you're looking for, or if you need to talk to someone, then the [IT Helpdesk team](#) are here to assist you further.

### **Learning Technologies and Systems**

#### **Learner Engagement Activity Portal (LEAP)**

[LEAP](#) is our student centred, personalised engagement tool. LEAP displays [your engagement](#) with university resources and an algorithm within LEAP combines your use of these resources and activities to produce an overall engagement indicator.

There are 5 engagement indicators (high, good, partial, low and very low) which will help you map and better understand your engagement pattern over time based on your class attendance, utilisation of Moodle etc.. Full details on the resources included in LEAP, the engagement ratings and how LEAP uses your data can be found on the [LEAP webpage](#).

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By providing you with a more holistic view of your studying experience, LEAP offers you the opportunity to take control of your own learning and make more informed choices about your studies, enabling you to:

- Reflect on your academic activities and overall engagement to make informed decisions about your academic studies
- Review the notes created in LEAP from meetings with Tutors or other university staff
- Check your attendance and ensure the information is correct

Tutors and other university staff may use the information in LEAP to:

- Suggest ways you could achieve better outcomes
- Check that all is well and offer information, advice and guidance
- Help you in areas of your studies that you find challenging

The University has a Student [Engagement](#) Policy which provides a structured approach based on support and mutual decision-making to maximise the success and achievement of every student.

### **Moodle**

[Moodle](#) is our online learning environment. It holds key course and module materials, discussion forums, chat facilities, quizzes, surveys, glossaries and wikis released by your lecturers..

### **FASER**

[FASER](#) is our **online coursework submission and feedback system**. Use it to check coursework deadlines, upload coursework and receive electronic feedback all in one place.

### **Online reading lists**

Reading lists can be accessed [online](#). Use this service to find out the details of each week's reading and to access resources through the library.

### **Listen Again**

Did you miss something? Our [Listen Again](#) digital recording service lets you listen again to lectures so you grasp every detail. It's available in teaching rooms or lecture

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theatres where you see the sign. Lecture videos are normally uploaded on Listen Again 24 hours after the lecture.

## **Zoom**

You can use Zoom to join online lectures delivered by the University or attend online meetings and tutorials. If your lecture or class is going to be online the link to join will be available in your [individual timetable 48 hours before the class](#).

This [quick start guide](#) gives you an introduction to the essentials of joining and participating in a Zoom webinar or meeting.

For a quick rundown of what you need when you first start, head to the [Getting Started with IT](#) guide on the Student Directory.

## **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](#).

### **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. Where possible, we will ask you for your permission to share.

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 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.

## **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.

## **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)**

The [Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey \(PTES\)](#) is the only UK higher education sector-wide survey to gain insight from postgraduate taught students about their learning and teaching experience.

The PTES gives you the opportunity to provide open and honest feedback on your experience of study at Essex, your course and your department. It considers your motivations for studying your chosen programme and your experience, where relevant, of undertaking a major project/dissertation.

If you're eligible to complete the survey, we will contact you to invite you to take part.

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## **Student Module Feedback**

Every year, we will ask you to complete [Student Module Feedback](#) (previously known as Student Assessment of Module and Teaching, or SAMT). This survey allows you to feedback on each of the modules you have studied. Receiving feedback at this level is critical for the University to understand what works well, and what could be improved, from the perspective of students. All feedback will be summarised and discussed by SVGs and will inform reports written for central University committees as part of our quality assurance processes.

There are also many [other satisfaction surveys](#) taking place, to ensure students are happy with the services the University of Essex provides. From time to time you will be invited to participate via an 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](#) can help. 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 students with disabilities or additional needs**

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

## **Funding opportunities**

UK students may be eligible for a [Disabled Students' Allowance grant](#). If you are not a UK student, you may be eligible for [other grants and funding](#). We would recommend you [contacting 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.

## **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 \(PEEP\)](#).

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## **Essex Accessibility 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.](#)

## **Drop In/Wellbeing Appointments**

The Wellbeing Assessors provide support to students with anything affecting their wellbeing, mental health and/or disability through pre-booked appointments (whilst remote working) or face to face appointments within the Silberrad Centre. [To book an appointment please find further information on the website and scroll down to "enquiry form"](#).

## **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

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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**

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. Further details regarding money-management and sources of financial support can be found [here](#). Advisers in our [Student Services Hub](#) and our independent [Students' Union Advice](#) can listen and talk you through the issues you are experiencing.

### **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 UK visa extensions, housing, complaints, welfare and consumer issues.

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

### **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. During term-time, our friendly RAs are available for a virtual chat via Zoom every day from 7pm – 8pm use Zoom Meeting ID: 920 1237 9049, all Essex students are welcome to drop in. You can find out about all our exciting events by following us on [Facebook](#) or by checking out the University [Events page](#).



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## **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 [Harassment Report and Support Service](#) of trained Harassment Support Workers are on hand to help.

## **COVID-19 (Coronavirus)**

The health and wellbeing of our students is our priority. This means we are constantly monitoring advice from the UK Government, Public Health England, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the World Health Organisation, and updating our guidance on students in line with their advice.

Our [guidance to students on protecting yourself and others from COVID-19](#) is updated regularly. It is advisable to check the page frequently to be sure you are up to date with the latest guidance and information from the University.

## **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 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

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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.

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## Student Development

### Careers Services

The Career Services team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through various events, workshops and one- to- one sessions. We also have teams dedicated to Work Based Learning, Placements and Internships that can provide information and support as needed. [Find out more about the Career Services.](#)

### 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.

### Your Personal Development at Essex

Activate your [Gradintelligence](#) account to discover the broad range of extra-curricular and voluntary opportunities available to you at Essex using [Chart My Path](#), your personal development navigation tool. Be sure to update your profile as well to be matched with a range of opportunities that can help you to enhance your employability from job opportunities to workshops and events. Find activities to inspire and develop you in your life, your studies and for your future. You can achieve the **Big Essex Award** through the activities that you complete during your time at Essex and gain University recognition on your digital transcript, the Higher Education Achievement Report (**HEAR**).

Join the [Career Mentoring Programme](#) to be matched with an experienced professional based on your individual needs and aspirations. Your mentor can not only share industry expertise, but will be there to listen, talk through your plans, fears, and dreams, empower you, and give you the time and space you need to make decisions that are right for you.

### 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

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opportunity to meet new people, make friends, give something to the local community, and gain valuable skills.

### **Get Work Experience**

[Frontrunners](#) is the University's in-house internship programme, offering valuable, structured opportunities to students with little or no employment experience. With a wide range of part-time paid internships across university departments, this is your opportunity to gain valuable skills, knowledge and experience employers are looking for.

[Essex Interns](#) create paid internships exclusively for you as an Essex student. They're flexible too; part time during term time or full time in vacations. Sign up for Essex Interns to kick-start your career.

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## You Are Essex

### Graduation and Awards

Once your exam board has met, it can take between 7-10 working days for your results to be published. The University's [exam board and publication of results schedule](#) is updated in the summer term, and you will be notified once this information is available online. As soon as your results are ready, you will be sent an email and directed to a password protected web page. You will be able to see your marks obtained and any decisions that you must make in order to progress to the next stage of study.

You will be able to access your full academic transcript electronically via your [Higher Education Achievement Record \(HEAR\)](#).

Upon conferral of your award, all graduates will receive both an electronic and hard copy parchment award certificate. Your electronic Certificate will be available on your [GradIntelligence account](#) within 5 working days of your conferral and your hard copy parchment 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.

### 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](#).

Students with exam boards held in Autumn term will be invited to attend our Spring Graduation ceremony where these are held; students with exam boards held in Spring or Summer term will be invited to attend our Summer Graduation ceremony in July.

### HEAR

When you study at Essex, you graduate with far more than just a degree. Your [Higher Education Achievement Report \(HEAR\)](#) not only showcases a full record of your academic achievements, but also any activities you have undertaken and logged

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through the Big Essex Award, and any other awards and prizes that you may have received.

Your HEAR will be updated within 5 working days of results being release following ratification at a Board of Examiners.

When you graduate, you will have full electronic access to your HEAR and award certificate for free for life. You will be able to share this with employers and other universities by providing them with a University-certified record of your achievements. You will receive an e-mail from GradIntelligence to enable you to activate your account log-in. As soon as you do this you can start accessing your HEAR.

If you completed your undergraduate degree at Essex, you will be able to view both your undergraduate and postgraduate HEAR and award certificates through your GradIntelligence account as separate documents.

## **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.

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## 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](#).

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.