

Your studies

Department of Psychology

Postgraduate research

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2020-21



University of Essex

Welcome

A very warm WELCOME to the Department of Psychology, and thank you for choosing to study a Postgraduate Research Degree with us at the University of Essex.

We are especially pleased to greet those of you who are new to the country, and have chosen the UK, the University of Essex and the Department of Psychology to continue your studies. Wherever you are from, we hope that you will enjoy your studies with us, and that you take every opportunity to get the most out of university life. As you will discover, the Department provides a vibrant and dynamic place in which to study. As a Department we have an excellent reputation in providing training and supervision for research students. Our track record shows that most of our students complete on time and that their research is successful, leading to conference presentations, publications, and notable postdoctoral careers. Of course, a successful outcome will require hard work on your part and, occasionally, some frustration. The Department will always support you in your efforts. As student members of the department, you will play a vital role in contributing to our thriving research environment. You will invest time, effort, intelligence, creativity and scholarship into your research project work, and under expert supervision, you will contribute to some truly ground-breaking research. Indeed, Psychology at Essex was ranked 13th out of all UK Psychology departments for the overall quality of our research in the latest Research Excellence Framework report (REF2014), and postgraduate research contributed enormously to advances in our knowledge and contributed to our excellent research publications (our publications were rated 8th in the UK in the REF2014). You are entering a highly stimulating research environment, in which you will encounter many new ideas. We want you to make the most of this environment, to take the opportunity of learning as much as you can from it, and to enjoy the experience of being part of it. Whether you are taking a Masters by Dissertation, and will be here for one year, or a PhD student (three years full-time, or six years, part-time), we very much hope that you will enjoy your time with us and that your research efforts will be fruitful.

Of course, everything is a bit different right now. The global pandemic which we find ourselves in the midst of creates many challenges, but also forces new ways of thinking about the world, and how we interact – the study of human behaviour has never been more relevant. Current research in our department has considered the impact of face-coverings for communication with people who have hearing difficulties or deafness, the effect of lockdown on romantic relationships and even examined the pros and cons of boredom during lockdown (turns out that doing nothing is not always a bad thing!).

Some of these changes mean you will learn some new skills, such as running psychology experiments online, and working remotely in teams, that will be of great value in your future study and career. As it becomes safe to do so, we are reopening our research labs and other spaces. Until then, we are maintaining our commitment to excellence in research, and finding new ways of doing this.

Professor Paul Hibbard, Head of the Department of Psychology

Welcome to the Department of Psychology at the University of Essex! I am your Personal Tutor throughout your course of study. I will be here to give you continuous guidance and academic advice throughout the time you study with us, over and above the advice that you will receive from your supervisors, the administrators, and everybody else in the Department. I will be the one who reminds you of the milestones that you have to achieve, and I will encourage you to develop your own research profile. I will want you to present your work at conferences, get published in high-end journals, to submit grants, and to land a job in a respectable institution. I am available to meet and discuss these and other topics with you. We want you to be successful and I am here to help you with that!

Dr Silvia Rigato, Graduate Tutor

Contents

Welcome	i
Introduction.....	7
Practicalities and Getting Started.....	8
Right to Study.....	8
Student visas.....	8
Explore your Campus.....	8
Get connected.....	9
Working while studying	10
Your personal belongings	10
The Essex Experience	11
Embrace the Essex Values	11
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	11
Student communities.....	11
Essex Sport.....	12
Students' Union.....	12
Get involved!	12
Essex Spirit, social media and What's on?	13
About the Department of Psychology	14
Meet the team	14
The Technical Services Team	14
Your Supervisor	14
Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)	15
Staff research interests	15
Departmental resources and facilities.....	15
The Laboratories	15
Room booking - Fair usage policy.....	16
SmartHub Booking System.....	17
The Psychometric Store.....	17
Software	17

Printing, photocopying and scanning	17
Noticeboards	18
Pigeon holes.....	18
Common spaces	18
HEROES: Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects.....	18
Social Media.....	18
Learning and Teaching	18
Student Staff Partnership	19
Supervisory Arrangements for Research Degrees	20
The academic year.....	23
My Course	23
Credits	24
Learning outcomes.....	24
Teaching timetable	24
Taught Modules	24
Course structure.....	25
Submissions	25
Making changes to your study	26
Thinking of leaving or taking a break?	26
Periods of study	27
Course materials	27
Library Services	27
Research Skills Development	28
Proficio	28
University and departmental training events.....	28
Departmental Personal Budget.....	28
Booking conferences and travel.....	28
Assessment and Academic Integrity	29
Ethics in research.....	29
Risk assessments in research	29
Safety during research	30

Late and lone working	30
Summoning Help	30
Bringing participants into the building	30
Keeping buildings and equipment safe	30
Treatment of participants	31
DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)	31
Participant waiting area	31
Academic Integrity and Academic Offences	31
Referencing	32
Academic Skills and Support	32
Proofreading services	32
Language classes English classes for dependants	33
Learning a Language	33
Extenuating Circumstances	33
Submission of Thesis	33
Thesis Submission Pre-Examination	33
Thesis Submission for Award.....	34
Thesis Deposit and Retention.....	34
Examiners and the Viva	34
Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)	36
Appeals	36
Taught Modules	36
Teaching timetable	36
Marking criteria.....	37
Categorical Marking Scheme.....	37
Professional Doctorate Rules of Assessment.....	38
Core, compulsory and optional modules.....	38
Methods of Assessment.....	38
Guidelines for Progress for PhD students.....	38
Research Students' Progress Committee.....	39
Methods of Assessment – Taught Modules.....	40

Coursework	40
Return of coursework	40
Preparation of assignments	40
Samples of coursework	40
Referencing in coursework.....	41
Submission of coursework	41
Problems with FASER.....	41
Late submission of coursework.....	41
Examinations.....	42
Exam timetable	42
Sample and past papers	42
Revision classes	42
Exam stress.....	42
Access to your exam script	42
Moderation and marking	43
Marking.....	43
Moderation	43
External Examiners	43
Re-marking of coursework	43
Appeals	43
Feedback.....	44
Extenuating Circumstances for taught modules	44
The Board of Examiners	44
Failure to pass.....	45
Publication of Results.....	45
Year and Degree Marks.....	46
Student Voice.....	47
Student Representatives.....	47
Student Voice Groups	47
Student Surveys.....	47
You Matter.....	48

Student Services Hub	48
Support for disabilities and conditions	48
Funding opportunities.....	48
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP).....	48
Seeing a Doctor	48
Counselling services	49
UK Immigration Advice and Guidance	49
Money management	49
Students' Union Advice	49
Residence Life	49
Religion, faith and beliefs	50
Harassment support.....	50
COVID-19 (Coronavirus).....	50
Health and safety on campus.....	50
Making a Complaint	51
Student Development.....	52
Careers Services.....	52
CareerHub.....	52
Big Essex Award	52
Volunteering	52
Essex Interns	52
You Are Essex	53
Your Award Certificate	53
Graduation.....	53
GradIntelligence	53
References.....	53
Alumni	54
What comes next?	54

Introduction

All Schools and Departments at Essex create a Student Handbook each year. These are designed to be useful tools for you to find out what you need to know about your department, the University and its academic policies and procedures, and all of the resources available to you.

We know things might be a little different this year, but we remain 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 [keep safe as a community](#).

At Essex we celebrate diversity and challenge inequality. You are welcomed to 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.

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](#) at the start of each academic year. 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 and, once you arrive on campus, undertake a Right to Study check and collect your student registration card.

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 require [immigration permission](#) to study in the UK, this will be checked when you first register on your course and as necessary thereafter. Students have a duty to maintain valid UK immigration permission that allows study for the duration of their course, failure to do so may lead to withdrawal from the University under the [University's General Regulations](#).

Student visas

The University has [many duties](#) as a Tier 4 sponsor and must ensure we remain compliant in order to retain our Tier 4 sponsor status. Students with a Tier 4 or Short-term student visa have 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. Please be aware that changes to your course, whether due to academic failure or choice, must be considered against the Immigration rules and guidance in place at the time, this can mean that some academic options may not be available to you.

If you are coming to the UK on or after 1 January 2021 to study, you may be applying for a visa under the new immigration rules that the UK government intend to introduce. These rules will also apply to European and Swiss nationals who do not already have EU settled status or UK immigration permission. The government aim to release the new rules in the autumn of 2020, we'll publish more information on our [immigration web pages](#) after they have been published and considered.

Explore your Campus

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

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. 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; its interface of icons act as a portal through to a variety of areas and resources. 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 designed to get you from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions.

Zoom

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

Working while studying

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

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

If you have a student visa, please read our information on [working in the UK for international students](#) before you start looking for a job. The country you'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.

The Essex Experience

The University of Essex is proud of its inclusivity and its international community. Our campuses and our University are places that are welcoming, where every single person can feel they have a place where they belong and where you can find the world in one place. As part of our ongoing commitment we have created a [Student Charter](#) as a pledge that every student becomes a part of when they join us. With the Student Charter you agree to support our community and we promise to provide you with a transformational educational experience.

Embrace the Essex 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 full heartedly encourage students to challenge the status quo and explore the unknown, we expect that students do so respectfully, intelligently and act as true ambassadors for the University. The University has a [Code of Student Conduct](#) that 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 equality of opportunity within the University. It therefore aims to create the conditions whereby students and staff are treated with dignity and respect, and solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of 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 irrelevant distinction.

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

The Department of Psychology has achieved a Silver Departmental Athena SWAN Award. Everyone is welcome to join our monthly Athena Swan open lunches and contribute to discussions on equality and inclusivity.

Student communities

We pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive student community. The University recognises the value of diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity within the University. We aim to create an environment whereby students and staff are treated with dignity and respect, and solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential regardless of their background whether that is race, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or any other distinction.

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 here at Essex 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.

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 for the latest information.

Students' Union

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

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

Get involved!

There are opportunities to join 45 [Sports Clubs](#), to get involved with our [BUCS teams](#) which offer the opportunity to play competitively in a wide range of sports across the year. If you just want to try a sport, don't want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our [Just Play](#) programme.

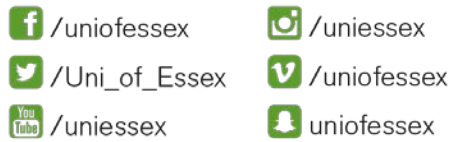
We have [120 Societies](#) where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or, if you can't find what you're looking for, [start your own!](#)

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

Essex Spirit, social media and What's on?

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

Follow us on social media:



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 Psychology

Meet the team

A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the Department of Psychology can be found on our website at: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/psychology/people> Below is a summary of the roles of staff that you are likely to be in contact with most frequently.

Departmental Role	Name	Email address
Graduate Director	Dr Silvia Rigato	psypgrqueries@essex.ac.uk
PGR Tutor	Dr Pascal Vrticka	psypgrqueries@essex.ac.uk
Psychology Technical Services		psysupport@essex.ac.uk 01206 873750, 01206 873736

The Technical Services Team

The Technical Services office is open from 10:00am-1:00pm, Monday to Friday for equipment collection and return, and doorkey loans only. For all other enquires and support email psysupport@essex.ac.uk

Your Supervisor

A supervisor will have been appointed for you during the admissions process. You are expected to have regular contact with your supervisor during your studies and they should be the first port of call for any concerns/problems.

Supervision of research students during periods of leave

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

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

Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

The RSPB is made up of senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the Head of Department. It "reviews the progress of every student through to the award of a degree, withdrawal or failure, on the basis of the reports from the supervisory board, including the written report from the student. Where no supervisory board has taken place, for instance because a student is carrying out research abroad, the supervisor and the student must each submit a progress report. A decision/recommendation for discontinuation, downgrading or upgrading or to confirm PhD status or change to MPhil, to permit entry into completion, or to extend the minimum period can only be made by the RSPB."

<https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr/assess-rules.aspx>

Professional Doctorate rules of assessment: <https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr/assess-rules.aspx>

Staff research interests

You can find out more about the areas the Department researches here:

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/psychology/research>

Departmental resources and facilities

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

The Laboratories

The Department has excellent learning resources and facilities for our students. We have custom-built laboratories and first class equipment. The laboratories are on Floors 1 and 2 of the Psychology Department. They house a large number of computers, each supporting word processing, internet, statistics, spreadsheet, presentation and psychology experiment building tools.

For the convenience of others and yourself please be aware that there are a few rules relating to Lab use:

- No food, drink or chewing gum.
- Please do not prop the door open.
- Save your work regularly onto your M drive. (File saved to the desktop or hard drive will be removed)
- Do not install anything onto any computer.
- Please report faults to the Technicians (room 2.712).

USB memory sticks are available from the Copy Shop Counter, located on Square 4.

Room booking - Fair usage policy

The Department of Psychology has excellent research facilities. Lab space can take different forms ranging from standard research cubicles (also called booths) to more specialized labs (often kitted out with sensitive specialist equipment). The department has a total of approximately 45 standard booths and 10+ specialized labs available as bookable research space. A list of rooms is available [here](#) via the Smart Hub. In principle, lab space is available for booking to all members of the department, including staff, post-doctoral researchers and PhD students. A number of rooms are also available for PG and UG students (see user list in the information sheet).

The fair usage policy recognizes that different research projects often have different needs in terms of lab space requirements (lab set-up, duration, required sample size, etc.). Still, there is an understanding that this is a **shared resource** and thus users should be collegial and considerate in using these research facilities. This policy does not intend to be prescriptive in what consists of “fair usage”, but generally speaking room booking should be proportionate to the needs of your research and proportionate to the needs of others.

Specifically, users are asked to keep the following in mind:

Some rooms are centrally timetabled for teaching but can also be used for other events, including research. These rooms have priority for teaching in term time.

Certain times in the year are considered ‘peak’ times, including (but not limited to) the start of the academic year (when credits are available), and the spring term (for third year UG projects, PS300). During these peak times researchers are asked to restrain their usage, by only booking what they need, and by taking the needs of others into account.

Generally speaking, all rooms are bookable. However, a small number of rooms have been furnished with a particular set-up or specialist equipment (such as the EEG labs, TMS labs, babylab, and sex lab). If you are running a study that does NOT require any specialist equipment or set-up, please consider booking other labs more suitable to your needs.

Users are encouraged to be proactive and *think* about the needs of others when booking lab space. If in doubt, *talk* with other users about their needs for lab space.

If you experience issues to access research space, you may wish to find a solution by considering the following actions (in turn):

Try to **resolve** the issue by speaking directly with the other parties involved or contact the chief technician.

If you are a student, speak with your supervisor, who should also reconsider the point above.

SmartHub Booking System

The Department operates an online booking system called SmartHub. SmartHub is our main source for staff and students to book labs, psychometric tests and small equipment to support research. Small items of equipment are available to loan for a maximum of two weeks.

To register an account to use the SmartHub system, please go to <https://psysex.siso.co/> and click on 'Account Registration'. Once complete, your registration will be directed through to the technical team to ensure users have the right level of access. Once approved, you will receive an email notification and be able to start using the system. Please allow one full working day for the approval.

A user guide is available for getting started with the SmartHub system. This can be requested from the technical team.

The Psychometric Store

The Psychometric Store is in Room 2.711A on Floor 2 of the Psychology building and is administered by the Technical Services team in Room 2.712. You may borrow items from the Psychometric Store only with permission from your lab tutor or project supervisor. The store contains a wide range of equipment, headphones, questionnaires and psychometric tests, voice recorders and stop watches.

Most items in the store are available on a two-week loan basis. Requests to renew the loan period must be made by contacting the Technical Services team. Please e-mail the team (psysupport@essex.ac.uk) at least five working days before you require extending a loan in case the item needs to be recalled. Requests for loan of equipment, laptops, IT and AV equipment should be addressed directly to the Technicians in room 2.712 (psysupport@essex.ac.uk).

Software

The University provides a number of software applications that are free to use whilst you are a student (Microsoft Office, SPSS, Matlab etc.) A full list of applications can be found and installed from the central software hub (<https://software.essex.ac.uk>).

Printing, photocopying and scanning

All students can [print, copy and scan for free at Essex!](#) You can even [print from your mobile](#) by sending your attachment to mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk.

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 and 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.

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(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. The main noticeboards can be found outside of the student administration office (3.702).

Pigeon holes

You will be allocated a shared pigeon hole in the CBS Post Room and an e-mail account on arrival. This e-mail account may be used for corresponding with other students, and with members of staff within the University. Please ensure you always check your email.

Common spaces

There are kitchen facilities in the department in the CBS Foyer and rooms 4.720 and 3.713 in the main Psychology building. Research students and staff are also welcome to use the CBS Foyer as a common space to socialise when it is not being used for departmental events. These shared spaces will be subject to COVID 19 safety regulations.

HEROES: Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects

HEROES is a group of empirical minded PhD students. HEROES stands for Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects.

Social Media

The Department has Facebook and Twitter pages, which can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/PsychologyatEssex>

<https://twitter.com/EssexPsychology>

Learning and Teaching

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

Student Staff Partnership

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

- Read the documentation provided, including the [regulations](#) for your degree, the [Code of Practice](#) and details of the departmental supervisory arrangements.
- Attend meetings with your supervisors and Supervisory Panels as arranged, and prepare adequately for them, notifying your supervisor in the event of unavoidable absence.
- Keep in regular contact with your supervisor. Students and supervisors are required to communicate, whether face-to-face or by electronic means, to engage in discussion/review of the student's work and progress at least once a month (and bi-monthly for part-time students).
- Provide updates on progress as outlined in the [Progress and Appeals Procedures for Research Degree Students](#)
- Carry out, as far as possible, the work agreed with your supervisor and submit written work as agreed so that you meet the required milestones.
- Familiarise yourself with the departmental [milestones](#) for your degree and the requirements for your chosen thesis format. The milestones are designed to help you submit your thesis by the deadline and are used to assess your progress during your period of study. The milestones will be considered at your RSPB which takes place twice a year (or equivalent for part-time students). It's important that you review your milestones regularly to ensure you'll be ready to submit your thesis by the required date.
- Familiarise yourself with University and subject-specific guidelines on ethical research, including data protection matters, and with health and safety and intellectual property regulations and obtain ethical approval as appropriate.
- Familiarise yourself with the expectations and conventions regarding academic referencing other people's work.
- Attend any research training and generic skills courses as agreed with your supervisor.
- As requested, submit reports on progress to professional practice and research supervisors, Supervisory Panels, or the departmental Research Students' Progress Board.
- Keep a record of your personal progress, including a copy of agreed training needs, courses that need to be attended and when they are attended. This may take the form of a logbook or research portfolio to be signed off by your supervisor.
- Inform the relevant supervisor promptly if there are any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect your work. Notify the Supervisory Panel/Research Students' Progress Board in writing of any extenuating circumstances that you believe have significantly affected your performance.
- Discuss any supervisory problems with your supervisor or the Head of Department. Alternatively, if you feel unable to talk to a member of the departmental staff, please contact the [Postgraduate Research Education Team](#) to discuss the concerns. Any discussions will remain confidential if requested. Students may request a change of supervisor but should note that it may not always be possible for suitable alternative arrangements to be made.
- You must present your thesis for examination by the end of the final term of your standard period, or by the end of the prescribed completion period.
 - A request for an extension of up to two weeks to the submission deadline may be made. Requests must be made to the Postgraduate Research Education Team in advance of the deadline. If granted an extension, you will not be expected to register or pay the prescribed fee for that two-week period.
- If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.
- Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.
- Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process,

and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

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

- Attend lectures and seminars for taught modules and attend meetings with your professional practice supervisor.
- Complete the work required for your taught modules.
- Maintain a professional practice portfolio which forms part of the assessment for the degree.

You can find information on your Milestones here: <https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr/milestones.aspx>

Supervisory Arrangements for Research Degrees

The University publishes a broad statement of its policy in the document Code of Practice: Postgraduate Research Degrees. Below are the supervisory arrangements currently in force in the Department of Psychology.

Responsibilities of Primary Supervisor

- Become familiar with the University's Code of Practice: Postgraduate Research Degrees, and with the Department's Postgraduate Research Students' Handbook.
- Provide expert advice and assistance as necessary to enable the student to make good progress;
- Guide the direction and extent of research to permit its successful completion within the period set down in the University regulations;
- Meet with the student on a regular basis and at a suitable frequency and keep records of all such meetings, as required by the University guidelines. It is recommended that such meetings take place fortnightly under normal circumstances. It is permissible for meetings to be held less frequently (when progress is good and the supervisors input is not required), but only with the agreement of the student;
- Inform the student of any lengthy periods of absence during the vacation and periods of study leave;
- Attend the meetings of the student's Supervisory Panel and submit a written report on the student's progress to the Panel request oral presentations and written work in addition to Departmental requirements if appropriate, and to comment on all such work within a reasonable time;
- Inform the student where work is not of the appropriate standard, and suggest actions to remedy the situation;
- Facilitate meetings between the student and other researchers in the field (e.g. by encouraging attendance and participation at appropriate conferences);
- Inform the Graduate Tutor in writing if the student is not likely to reach the appropriate standard;
- Ensure that meetings are arranged (at least one per term) that include the second supervisor.

Responsibilities of Secondary Supervisor

- Become familiar with the University's Code of Practice: Postgraduate Research Degrees, and with the Department's Postgraduate Research Students' Handbook.
- Offer additional academic advice and support to both the student and the primary supervisor, as appropriate;
- Attend occasional supervision meetings with the primary supervisor and the student to monitor progress. These meetings will take place at least once per term; Attend the meetings of the Supervisory Panel and submit a written report on the student's progress to the Panel.

Responsibilities of Research Students

- Ensure you maintain a high standard of work for successful completion within the period agreed;
- Maintain regular contact with the Department and update your myEssex with any change of address. Students must inform their supervisor if there are any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work;
- Meet regularly with their primary supervisor;
- Keep their own records of the supervisory meetings and any actions agreed upon at those meetings.
- Attend the meetings of the Supervisory Panel and submit a written report on progress and supervision to the Panel, by the published deadline.

PhD students only, submit to their supervisor (via FASER) by the date agreed each year the following:

- a detailed written report (10,000 words) of work carried out during the year (Annual report: years 1 and 2 only);
- a timetabled account of work completed and proposed (timetable: all years);
- an anticipated list of chapter headings for the completion of the thesis (thesis plan: years 2 and 3 only);

PhD students only:

All students give an oral presentation of work in progress as requested by the Graduate Tutor (usually this will be a presentation at the annual Postgraduate Conference).

All students are expected to attend the departmental research seminars as part of their training provision as required by the Graduate Tutor.

Responsibilities of Chair of Supervisory Board

- Convene the Supervisory Board twice per year at the prescribed times, and at other times if requested by the Graduate Tutor;
- Receive and consider reports on supervision and progress from the primary supervisor, the secondary supervisor, and the student;
- Receive and note the production of required work (Annual report, timetable, thesis plan) at the end of each year of study;
- Check that supervision is being carried out in accordance with Departmental guidelines;
- Check that the records of meetings are satisfactory;
- Note any disputes between student and supervisor concerning supervision or progress;
- Report to the Research Students' Progress Board on a standard form decisions and recommendations concerning supervision and progress.

Guidelines for Progress for PhD students (PhD Only)

These guidelines apply to all research postgraduates, but where a schedule of progress is indicated, this applies specifically to full-time students with an honours degree at registration. For these students the minimum period of study will normally be nine terms. This schedule should be modified as appropriate for part-time students.

- Students should discuss with their supervisor the work involved before initial registration;
- By the end of the first year, PhD students should have written a draft literature review as well as carried out and written up at least one substantial (e.g. publishable) piece of empirical research;
- By the end of the second year, the Supervisory Panel should ensure that at least 60% of the projected programme has been completed;
- All empirical work must be completed before the end of the third year in order to complete your thesis within your minimum period;

- The complete draft of the thesis should be ready by the beginning of the third term of the final year of the minimum period. The completed thesis should be submitted by the end of the third term in the final year;
- Supervisors should expect to meet their PhD students sufficiently often to ensure progress is being achieved. The form and duration of supervisory meetings will probably vary according to the stage the student has reached. Recommendations are given below;
- An explicit agreement concerning the frequency and duration of supervisory meetings should be made at the beginning of each academic year. Normally we would expect supervisory meetings to take place fortnightly.
- A record of dates of meetings, decisions taken and work submitted (this will include the date of submission and the date of response) will be kept by the primary supervisor. Students should keep their own records.

Research Students' Progress Committee

Progress will be reviewed after each set of Supervisory Panels by the Research Students' Progress Board, which will consist of Head of Department, Graduate Tutor and the Deputy Director of Research. This Board will review the progress of all research students in the Department, and monitor the quality of training offered to the student.

The Research Students' Progress Board will base its decision on:

- the written reports submitted by the Supervisory Panels, including the reports of the student and primary supervisor, secondary supervisor and the Panels Chair;
- the completion of required work by the student, which will be received, approved and notified by the Supervisory Panel;
- the Annual Report (Years 1 and 2 only);
- the timetable;
- the thesis plan (Years 2 and 3 only);
- in the case of students who are undergoing a training programme, on the reports of progress made on the various components of the programme.

The Research Students' Progress Board in some circumstances may request that the student, supervisors, and the Chair of the Supervisory Panel attend. In such cases, the student will be asked to withdraw while a decision is reached. This will be notified in advance of the meeting.

The Research Students' Progress Board will recommend to the Deputy Dean (Postgraduate Research Education) in each case one of the following:

- the student be allowed to proceed, subject to a further review at a specified date if appropriate;
- the student's studies be discontinued;
- the student's status be altered (e.g. upgraded from a MPhil to a PhD, downgraded etc.);
- a decision may be deferred until a later meeting, at which time the student will be requested to provide further evidence of progress, as specified by the Progress Board.

The Research Students' Progress Board may attach such conditions to its recommendations as it deems necessary. The Research Students' Progress Board shall also be convened at any other time at the request of the Graduate Tutor or Deputy Dean.

Course costs in addition to Tuition fees

Potential additional costs for your course could include:

- Participant Payments
- Conference fees (could be covered by Proficio)
- Travel for Conferences and Research
- Accommodation during Conferences
- Conference Posters
- Publication Fees
- Submission of Thesis (if printed on campus)
- Training (could be covered by Proficio)

Some of these costs will vary, depending on your course of study, and might be covered by your stipend, if you have secured one.

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. So, the start of the academic year is week 1, which is Welcome week, with teaching commencing in week 2.

Term	Week numbers
Autumn	2-11
Spring	16-25
Summer	30-39

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

Some 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.

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.

Teaching timetable

Most PGR students won't be required to undertake taught modules, and so a teaching timetable isn't applicable. For those students who do undertake taught modules as part of their course, you'll have a personal timetable, this shows you when your teaching is taking place, as well as who is teaching you. Check your personal [online timetable](#) regularly 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 [here](#).

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/timetables/your-timetable>

You can find the location of your teaching rooms using the interactive campus map, Find Your Way, you can get directions quickly and easily

Taught Modules

If you have not completed an MSc in Research Methods, or equivalent, you may need to attend and pass PS946-7-FY (Fundamental Statistics for Research) & PS947-7-FY (Advanced Statistics for Research). This is to ensure you have all the skills you need in order to successfully obtain your PhD.

You will already have been informed if you are required to undertake these modules and they will show on your Timetable.

We also encourage first year Research students to audit PS912-7-AU (Research Management) to help prepare for academic research. This module will not be formally assessed.

Course structure

PhD & MsD	
Week 1	Friday 9 th October. 10:00am: PGR Welcome Conference via Zoom. (You will be sent details of this when you join). 1.30pm: Department Welcome via Zoom (Meeting ID: 926 0214 4987).
Week 6	Draw up specialist skills programme – deadline Thursday 12 th November (PhD only)
Weeks 9 & 10	Supervisory Panels
Week 11	Research Students' Progress Board
Week 32	Postgraduate Conference, Thursday 13 th May
Week 33	10,000 word Annual Report electronically submitted – deadline
Week 36 & 37	Supervisory Panels
Week 38	Research Students' Progress Board

Each course at the University has its own syllabus, full details of which can be found in the University's Programme Specifications Catalogue at:

<https://www1.essex.ac.uk/programmespecs/>

Programme specifications provide key information, including the aims and learning outcomes of your course. Your own course structure, including your specific programme specification, can be found in the MyStudy section of your MyEssex homepage.

<https://www1.essex.ac.uk/myessex/>

Submissions

PhD Students are expected to submit the following to their supervisor by the date agreed each year:

- a detailed written report (10,000 words) of work carried out during the year (years 1 and 2 only);
- a timetabled account of work completed and proposed (all years);
- an anticipated list of chapter headings for the completion of the thesis (years 2 and 3 only);

All students must also give an oral presentation of work in progress as requested by the Graduate Director (usually this will be a presentation at the annual Postgraduate Conference).

Making changes to your study

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

Once you have decided that you want to change your degree title, you will need to make a formal request using the online Change of Course/Degree title form (available here: www.essex.ac.uk/esf/).

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

If you are a **sponsored student**, you should discuss any proposed change with your funding body and/or check its terms and conditions. If you are a UK Research and Innovation funded student, you should contact the Postgraduate Research Education team to discuss your request to change your mode of study.

Once you have decided you want to change your mode of study, you will need to make a formal request, using the online **Change of Mode of Study form**, which will need to be approved by your department and the Dean. You can find the form at: www.essex.ac.uk/esf/

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

Thinking of leaving or taking a break?

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

Periods of study

		<i>Students first registered between 2008-09 to 2017-18</i>		Students first registered from 2018-19 onwards	
Research degree	Mode	Minimum	Maximum	Standard	Completion
Masters by Dissertation (<i>MA or MSc by dissertation</i>)	FT	One year	Two years	One year	Up to one year
	PT	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
Master of Philosophy (<i>MPhil</i>)	FT	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
	PT	Four years	Five years	Four years	Up to one year
Doctor of Medicine (<i>MD</i>)	PT only	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Three years	Four years	Three years	Up to one year
	PT	Six years	Seven years	Six years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy Integrated (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Four years	Five years	Four years	Up to one year
	PT	Eight years	Nine years	Eight years	Up to one year
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes	See individual programmes	See individual programmes

Course materials

Online reading lists for your modules can be found via the module Moodle page alongside other information and module materials. You can find the Department of Psychology Moodle [here](#).

Library Services

The library provides access to an extensive digital library of books and journals to support your research. As well as a team of specialist Academic Liaison Librarians who can advise on appropriate resources for your area, there is also a Scholarly Communications and Research Support team, who can advise on a variety of topics including open access and how/where to publish your work. Online support in these areas can be found in the [Library's Research Support guide](#). A range of workshops and training sessions are also held throughout the year through [Newcomers](#), a collaborative network run by Library Services, the Research Enterprise Office, and the UK Data Archive that aims to support researchers, and offer training across the research lifecycle.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 is open for long hours and has a variety of study spaces, including a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room. The Library offers a dedicated Helpdesk, live chat and the opportunity to book appointments with specialist staff to help you through your studies and beyond.

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

Research Skills Development

Proficio

Proficio is our innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, and it's unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and so we credit your Proficio account with funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and for conference attendance. You can find out more information via:

<https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/research.aspx>. You can contact the Proficio team at: proficio@essex.ac.uk

University and departmental training events

All PGR Students will receive guidance on training from their supervisors. In addition all students should attend the following:

Department Seminar Series

Students are required to attend a series of seminars given by internal and outside invited speakers on a wide range of topics. The aim is to put you in touch with research at the cutting edge across a broad front and to provide a stimulating intellectual environment. You will receive emails each week about the time and topic of each seminar.

Postgraduate Conference. Term 3

All students, including part-time students, will make a short presentation to the Department reviewing their recent research achievements and outlining plans for future work. The conference is attended by all academic staff. **The presentation is part of the annual progress assessment and is compulsory.**

Departmental Personal Budget

You are given a personal budget of £500 each year of your minimum period of study. This can be used for attending conferences, participant payments and other expenses related to your studies. Currently, all expenditure in the department has to follow an authorisation process so you will need to send the finance administrator an email about the expense(s) you wish to purchase in advance.

Booking conferences and travel

If you wish to book Conferences and Travel using your Departmental Research Allowance, Proficio funds or your grant contact the Academic Administrator via email (please cc the Finance Administrator), which should include the following details so that a booking may be made on your behalf:

- Destination
- Reason for the request
- Travel dates (outbound and inbound)

- Ideal hotel (if you have chosen one)
- Ideal flights/ trains (if you have chosen some)

Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

Ethics in research

All research involving human participants, 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](#) 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.

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

Dr Keith May is Departmental Ethics Officer and can be contacted for any issues regarding ethics applications. You should work with your supervisor when preparing your ethics application.

Risk assessments in research

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

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

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

Safety during research

It is very important that you are always safe when conducting your research.

Remember the emergency number on campus is 2222.

When conducting research you must adhere to the following safety guidelines:

Late and lone working

You may only use the building out of hours with the permission of your supervisor. Normal working hours are 9am to 5pm on weekdays, extended to 7pm with permission from your supervisor or a senior member of the Technical Team.

If you use the facilities outside these times you need to sign the Late Working Register which is just inside the main door to the Square 1 building. This will tell you who else is around. Make yourself known to others in the building and tell others where you are.

For more information on how to stay safe when working alone, please reference the Suzy Lamplugh Trust: <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/>

Summoning Help

Always note where your nearest phone is and have these numbers with you and have it programmed into your phone.

Emergency number = 2222 (equivalent to 999)

Non- Emergency help = **2125** (security, non-emergency first aid, other concerns)

Personal alarms are bookable through the Technical staff if required.

Bringing participants into the building

For your own safety, always try to meet participants within normal working hours, while other people are around. If you must bring participants in outside normal hours you must have the permission of your supervisor and the Departmental Safety Officer (Steven Brewer). You should not be alone with a participant unless they are known and trusted by you, otherwise always bring a colleague with you. At the beginning and end of the testing session at least these two people should be informed by phone or by e-mail.

Keeping buildings and equipment safe

Even during normal working hours, if more than one participant is attending, or if they are bringing children or other visitors with them, you will need an additional supervisor for each additional person.

You have responsibility for the equipment, yourself, participants, visitors and the building. Do not allow visitors to roam around the building or touch any equipment. Collect and escort visitors out of the building, especially if you are outside normal hours.

Treatment of participants

It is essential that your conduct is ethical at all times. Consult the British Psychological Society guidelines for detail.

- Participants should be treated with respect at all times.
- Participants have the right to withdraw for any reason at any time, and should be aware that they have this right.
- Participants should be fully debriefed at the end of the study so that they understand its purpose.
- All data are confidential so names and performance data should never be disclosed.
- Every study requires ethical approval- speak to your supervisor for more details.
- Every study requires that participants sign a consent form- speak to your supervisor for more details.

Be aware that the Department has specific guidelines for the use of:

- Neuromodulation Techniques
- EEG and nIRs
- The Babylab
- Field trips

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

If you are working with children or vulnerable groups you will need a (DBS) check to be completed before starting your research. Please contact the Staffing and Academic Administrator (Lesley Monk) to get this process started.

Participant waiting area

When contacting participants please let them know they should wait to be collected from the seating area near the front door near the 3rd Floor Entrance on the day of the study. Please ensure you check their name and confirm which research they are here to participate in as we have multiple experiments happening at the same time.

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.

Referencing

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

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

There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is APA style. 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](#).

Academic Skills and Support

Every student arrives at Essex with the same spirit of determination but different experiences of education and levels of academic readiness. Skills for Success can help you identify your talents and strengthen those areas you need to develop.

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, which is why [Skills for Success team](#) is available to help by providing support, resources and workshops on:

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

The Skills for Success team can also provide further [learning and study skills information and support](#) for disabled students.

Proofreading services

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their supervisor(s). Many students seek 'proofreading' services at some point during their studies, but different types of editing can occur under this name which may not be appropriate in an academic context where work is assessed and could potentially qualify as an [academic offence](#). The University is keen to ensure as far as possible that students understand what [proofreading work should entail](#) and the acceptable boundaries to which any proofreading or editing must adhere to.

The University maintains a list of [local freelance proofreaders](#) who offer services to students and staff at Essex that have read and agreed to abide by the [University's policy and guidance on proofreading](#).

Language classes

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.

Extenuating Circumstances

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

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

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

Submission of Thesis

Thesis Submission Pre-Examination

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

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

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

You should submit the following as attachments via email to: pgrsubmission@essex.ac.uk:

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

Thesis Submission for Award

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

Thesis Deposit and Retention

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

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

Examiners and the Viva

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

Your supervisor will not normally be present during **your viva** and will not normally have any contact with your examiners other than to arrange their appointment.

VIVA Workflow

❖ Final Supervisory Panel is held; Chair, Supervisors and Student agree that the Student can 'Proceed to Completion/Submission'
❖ 3 months before submission of the Thesis, the student fills out the 'Approval of Thesis Title Form' (found here; http://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/exams/postgrad.aspx) and has form signed by 1 st Supervisor, and then submits the form to the PGR Tutor
❖ The PGR Tutor/Head of Department signs the form and submits the Thesis Title form to the PGRE Team pgresearch@essex.ac.uk .
❖ PGRE Team acknowledges and approves the Thesis Title via email. They then send the student a personalised 'RD1' form. This must be completed by the student and physically given in with the final Thesis. Without the RD1 form, the Thesis will not be accepted.
❖ While the RD1 form is being organised, the Supervisor will contact a suitable External Academic to ask informally if they would like to be the External Examiner for this Student (based on the research being examined).
❖ An email from PGRE Team is sent to the Student, Supervisors and PGR Tutor to say the Title has been received and approved. Supervisor should then contact the PGR Support to confirm the details of the Internal and Externals examiners.
❖ The PGR Support contacts internal examiner for details of their eligibility and uses the online portal to submit their details and emails the automatically generated link to external examiner so their details can be uploaded. An independent chair may be required if the internal examiner has not had sufficient experience.
❖ Once all examiner details are confirmed the PGR Support sends this information through to the Head of Department via the online portal. Once signed by the Head of Department, the PGRE team receive information for final approval.
❖ PGRE Team email Internal and External with 'External Examiner's Initial Report' form, (RD.2), 'Internal Examiner's Initial Report' form, Joint Examiner Form, Thesis and instructions.
❖ Internal arranges date for VIVA with Student & External. (VIVA needs to take place no more than 3 months after the Thesis has been handed in). Once decided, Internal examiner emails this to the PGR Support, also asking for catering, hotels and room bookings to be made where necessary.
❖ Internal and External send their initial reports (RD.3 forms) back to PGRE Team pgresearch@essex.ac.uk . PGRE Team then send each examiner the other examiners report.
❖ Internal and External examiners meet/discuss the Thesis before the VIVA takes place (can be before the VIVA date or on the actual day).
❖ VIVA! The Joint Report Form (RD.4) is completed during the VIVA and signed by both Internal and External examiners.
❖ Internal Examiner gives all documents from VIVA (Joint Report form, corrections list and expense claims) to the PGR Support to send over to the PGRE Team.
❖ PGRE Team email student informing them they have passed or when their corrections are due. If

corrections are needed, the time starts when the student receives the email confirming everything from the PGRE team.
❖ Student sends Internal Examiner corrections, which they sign off using the Approval of Editorial Revisions Form, which is then emailed directly to the Progress Team, copying in their PGR Support and PGR Tutor.
❖ Dean and Progress Team sign off corrections and email Student notifying them they have passed and to submit their amended thesis to the library for binding by a set date.
❖ Graduation!!

Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)

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

Appeals

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

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

Taught Modules

Teaching timetable

Most PGR students won't be required to undertake taught modules, and so a teaching timetable isn't applicable. For those students who do undertake taught modules as part of their course, you'll have a personal timetable, this shows you when your teaching is taking place, as well as who is teaching you. Check your personal [online timetable](#) regularly for up to date teaching information. You will need to have registered and activated your University of Essex log-in before you will be able to access your teaching timetable.

Information about teaching timetables, including accessing your individual timetable can be found [here](#). If you wish to report a timetable clash or request a class change, you should do so via the [online timetable](#) or from the [Pocket Essex mobile app](#).

You can find the location of your teaching rooms and get directions quickly and easily using the interactive campus map, [Find Your Way](#).

Marking criteria

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

Marking criteria are designed to help students so that they know what it is they are being assessed on and what is expected from them. The marking will vary depending on what you are studying.

Categorical Marking Scheme

Instead of writing a number on your assessed work, the marker will write a letter.

The meaning of the letters is as follows:

A+++	95%	Distinction
A++	90%	
A+	85%	
A	80%	
A-	75%	
B+	68%	Merit
B	65%	
B-	62%	
C+	58%	Pass
C	55%	
C-	52%	
D+	48%	Fail
D	45%	
D-	42%	
E5	36%	Uncompensatable Fail
E4	30%	
E3	24%	
E2	12%	
E1	0%	

A categorical marking scheme means that the marker can only give one out of a limited set of marks to each individual piece of work. For example, five marks are permissible within the MSc distinction category (95%, 90%, 85%, 80%, 75%), and three marks are permissible within the MSc pass level (58%, 55%, 52%). Please remember that only A, B and C grades indicate an acceptable passing standard for the MSc degree. There are five possible failing marks (36%, 30%, 24%, 12%, 0%). When two markers give different marks, they must agree a categorical mark as the final mark.

Professional Doctorate Rules of Assessment

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

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

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](#).

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

Methods of Assessment

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.

Guidelines for Progress for PhD students

These guidelines apply to all research postgraduates, but where a schedule of progress is indicated, this applies specifically to full-time students with an honours degree at registration. For these students the minimum period of study will normally be nine terms. This schedule should be modified as appropriate for part-time students.

- Students should discuss with their supervisor the work involved before initial registration;
- By the end of the first year, PhD students should have written a 10,000 word report as well as carried out and written up at least one substantial (e.g. publishable) piece of empirical research;
- By the end of the second year, the Supervisory Panel should ensure that at least 60% of the projected programme has been completed;
- All empirical work must be completed before the end of the third year in order to complete your thesis within your minimum period;

- The complete draft of the thesis should be ready by the beginning of the third term of the final year of the minimum period. The completed thesis should be submitted by the end of the third term in the final year;
- Supervisors should expect to meet their PhD students sufficiently often to ensure progress is being achieved. The form and duration of supervisory meetings will probably vary according to the stage the student has reached. Recommendations are given below;
- An explicit agreement concerning the frequency and duration of supervisory meetings should be made at the beginning of each academic year. Normally we would expect supervisory meetings to take place fortnightly.
- A record of dates of meetings, decisions taken and work submitted (this will include the date of submission and the date of response) will be kept by the primary supervisor. Students should keep their own records.

Research Students' Progress Committee

Progress will be reviewed after each set of Supervisory Panels by the Research Students' Progress Board, which will consist of Head of Department, Graduate Tutor and the Deputy Director of Research. This Board will review the progress of all research students in the Department, and monitor the quality of training offered to the student;

The Research Students' Progress Board will base its decision on:

- the written reports submitted by the Supervisory Panels, including the reports of the student and primary supervisor, secondary supervisor and the Panels Chair;
- the completion of required work by the student, which will be received, approved and notified by the Supervisory Panel;
- the Annual Report (Years 1 and 2 only);
- the timetable;
- the thesis plan (Years 2 and 3 only);
- in the case of students who are undergoing a training programme, on the reports of progress made on the various components of the programme.

The Research Students' Progress Board in some circumstances may request that the student, supervisors, and the Chair of the Supervisory Panel attend. In such cases, the student will be asked to withdraw while a decision is reached. This will be notified in advance of the meeting.

The Research Students' Progress Board will recommend to the Deputy Dean (Postgraduate Research Education) in each case one of the following:

- the student be allowed to proceed, subject to a further review at a specified date if appropriate;
- the student's studies be discontinued;

- the student's status be altered (e.g., upgraded from a MPhil to a PhD, downgraded etc.);
- a decision may be deferred until a later meeting, at which time the student will be requested to provide further evidence of progress, as specified by the Progress Board.

The Research Students' Progress Board may attach such conditions to its recommendations as it deems necessary. The Research Students' Progress Board shall also be convened at any other time at the request of the Graduate Tutor or Deputy Dean.

Methods of Assessment – Taught Modules

Assignment and essay length

Marking penalties may be applied to projects, essays or laboratory reports that exceed the designated length. Therefore, the word count should always be considered a maximum number of words. Note that the word count is for the main body of the text and does **not** include coversheet, abstract or references. There is no mark penalty for pieces of coursework that are too short, but bear in mind that a very short piece of coursework is unlikely to contain all of the points that the assessor is looking for.

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.

Return of coursework

Your coursework should be returned to you with a mark, the initials of the marker, and feedback. If your work is being marked and returned electronically you will receive an e-mail when it is ready to view.

This is important because (a) you can get timely feedback that may help improve other assignments, (b) you can get a gauge as early as possible as to the quality of work that you are submitting, (c) you can gain additional feedback from the marker, if necessary, and finally (d) you may appeal against your coursework mark, but only within two weeks of the work being available for collection.

Preparation of assignments

You must follow the instructions given by the module coordinator (usually also available on the module Moodle page) in order to prepare your assignment. All coursework is submitted online with a cover sheet.

Samples of coursework

Where possible, sample of coursework are provided within the module.

Referencing in coursework

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

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

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

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 onto the server 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 [FASER Help centre](#) as soon as possible to find out if this is a University issue or whether it may be a problem with your computer. This will count towards your claim when submitting a late coursework form should you need to. You can also contact IT Services helpdesk on it.helpdesk@essex.ac.uk

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

Examinations

Attendance at examinations is **compulsory** and if you do not attend them and do not have [extenuating circumstances](#) then you are at risk of being withdrawn.

Exam timetable

The University [publishes the dates for exam periods](#) at the start of each year. You will receive your personalised [exam timetable online](#) and will be sent an email to your Essex account when it is available to view.

Sample and past papers

Where possible, sample of past papers are provided within the module.

Revision classes

Module coordinators might decide to have a revision class at the end of term to help you prepare for the exam or coursework. If this is the case, this should appear on your personal timetable.

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.

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 than 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**. 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

Your coursework marks will be returned electronically and you will receive an e-mail when it is ready to view. For certain assessments, your coursework may be marked in hard copy, but you will receive your mark electronically. You should also collect your hard copy so that you can see your feedback.

This is important because (a) you can get timely feedback that may help improve other assignments, (b) you can get a gauge as early as possible as to the quality of work that you are submitting, (c) you can gain additional feedback from the marker, if necessary.

Feedback and marks are provided routinely for coursework (but not for exams or dissertations). The Department is strongly committed to provide students with feedback and marks in a timely manner. Typically, feedback and marks for coursework are provided within 20 working days (during term time) of the original submission date.

If you need to undertake any reassessment on a module, your department will provide you with written feedback on any elements being reassessed

Extenuating Circumstances for taught modules

[Extenuating circumstances](#) are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform to less of a standard 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.

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 and the corresponding methods, such as permitting further reassessment opportunities for uncapped marks. Please note that extra marks **cannot** be given in light of extenuating circumstances.

The Board of Examiners

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

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

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

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

Students can move into a completion period on the course when they have successfully completed all their assignments and a substantial proportion of the thesis is in draft. This would include completion of all data collection and analysis.

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

Failure to pass

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Publication of Results

You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published. You can find the [publication schedule](#) online.

Year and Degree Marks

As your studies draw to a close, and once your exam board has met, it takes up to five working days for your results to be confirmed. You will be sent an email to inform you when the results are live on 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.

When in your final year of study, graduating students will receive a [degree certificate](#) at Graduation which gives details of all marks obtained during their studies.

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.

A new PGR Student Voice Survey will be launching in 2021, designed by students for students, details of which will be emailed to all students nearer the time.

You Matter

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

Student Services Hub

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

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

Support for disabilities and conditions

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 \(PEEP\)](#).

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.](#)

UK Immigration Advice and Guidance

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

Money management

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. 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, Tier 4 UK visa extensions, housing, complaints, welfare and consumer issues.

Colchester students – suadvice@essex.ac.uk; 01206 874034

Southend students – suacsou@essex.ac.uk; 01702 328235 (term time only)

Loughton students – 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 and organise a range of social activities. Plus, they can help if you've got any concerns or complaints. Residence Life operates outside of office hours when other University support services are closed.

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 for 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 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 should 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.

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 available to you here: <https://www1.essex.ac.uk/careers/>

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.

careerhub.essex.ac.uk/students/login

Big Essex Award

The Big Essex Award is a way to get recognition for the extra-curricular and voluntary activities that you complete during your time at Essex, both on and off campus. All verified activities will be included on your university transcript, the Further Achievement Report (FAR). Postgraduate students can use GradIntelligence to record any extra-curricular activities you may be involved in through the Big Essex Award.

<https://gradintel.com/index.php/en/account-support/recover/students>

Volunteering

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

www.essex.su/vteam

Essex Interns

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.

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships

You Are Essex

Your Award Certificate

Once your exam board has met, it can take between 7-10 working days for your results to be confirmed and 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.

Upon graduating from your studies, you will receive a [degree certificate](#) and a copy of your academic transcript. You will also be invited to attend the next Graduation ceremony available to you.

Graduation

The culmination of all your hard work, [Graduation](#) ceremonies take place at our Colchester Campus each July in the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall. All eligible students studying at our Colchester, Loughton and Southend Campuses will be invited to attend.

Students with exam boards held in Autumn term will be invited to attend our Winter 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.

GradIntelligence

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

References

Requesting references from members of staff

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

For example, final year project supervisors, year organisers, and core course supervisors are likely to be more suitable than lecturers that have taught you on a first-year option course. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet a request for reference for a student who has undertaken study within our Department. Requests received from students who have graduated from the University within the last

three years will be prioritised. Requests received outside of this period may, of course, be met if a member of staff is equipped with the necessary information and is willing to provide a reference.

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

Copies of references

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

Alumni

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

What comes next?

The world is your oyster! The options and opportunities open to you as a graduate can be overwhelming. You may know the exact path and next steps that you wish to take, or you might not, and this is okay. Our Careers Services can offer information, guidance and advice on your different options after graduation and you can return to Essex for these services at any time.

One road leads to a career in academia. Most academic jobs are advertised on [jobs.ac.uk](#). If you are considering a post-doctoral place, then you are likely to need to match your research skills to the individual jobs that are on offer. With this in mind, it is worth trying to develop as broad a range of research skills as you can during your PhD – both methodological and statistical. From the start of your PhD, **you should be talking to your supervisors about how to develop this broad range of research skills.**

Ultimately, if you seek a long-term career in academia, you will need to apply for lecturing posts. At research-intensive universities, obtaining such posts will depend in large part on your publication record: that is the number of research articles you have published in high Impact Factor journals. Again, you need to be thinking about publications during your PhD. **You should be talking to your supervisors about your publication strategy** (i.e., how to turn that data from your PhD into 'attractive' publications).

The other road leads away from academia. It is crucial you are aware that a PhD in experimental psychology equips you with the intellectual and personal skills to excel in a wide range of interesting and rewarding careers. To give some examples, by the time you finish your PhD you will have:

Excellent writing skills – writing-up psychological research is hugely demanding. You must be able to communicate complex ideas in a succinct and clear way.

Excellent mathematical skills – you will have a wide range of statistic skill. Perhaps even more importantly, you will have the ability ‘to work with numbers’, a skill that many postgraduates in the arts and humanities lack.

The ability to assimilate information from a complex literature and to engage in critical, evidence-based, analysis.

The ability to present complex information in a range of ways – written articles, posters and orally.

The study of our own species will enhance your emotional intelligence. Of course as research psychologists we know that we do not have ‘all the answers’. Nevertheless, years spent studying the human mind does help you to reflect on and understand the thinking and behaviour of others.

The capacity to work independently and to persevere with a really demanding task. When you complete your PhD, you demonstrate very clearly your capacity to do this!

You have all the transferrable skills you need. Further advice on careers outside of academia can be obtained from Careers and Employability on Square 2 and from the following websites:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/phd-study/your-phd-what-next>

www.totaljobs.com

www.indeed.co.uk

www.monster.co.uk

www.jobs.ac.uk/

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>

Whatever you chose to do, please stay in touch! Keep us up to date with your achievements and explore the variety of ways through which you can give back to Essex too.