

**Your studies**



# East 15 Acting School

**Postgraduate research**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
2020-21



University of Essex

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## Welcome

Ranked number 1 for Drama in both the 2019 Times Good University Guide and the Guardian League Table 2020, East 15 is one of a leading group of UK conservatoires and is a member of the Federation of Drama Schools. We are now one of the largest specialist theatre schools in the UK, with a distinguished international teaching staff and over 850 students representing over 20 countries. Taught courses at East 15 provide rigorous training for students seeking a career in stage, TV, film and radio, as well as undergraduate courses in acting, performance skills and approaches, we also offer undergraduate training in stage production and creative producing.

East 15 Acting School is part of the University of Essex, one of the UK's leading academic institutions ([www.essex.ac.uk](http://www.essex.ac.uk)) and benefits from a strong relationship with the Colchester campus, which offers additional training, resources, and facilities. PhD students at East 15 benefit from a research environment which offers the best of conservatoire training and academic scholarship.

PhD study gives you the opportunity to engage with an area of drama, theatre, or performance in depth and at an advanced level. You will develop your work in a facilitative environment, sharing the outcomes of your research with peers. You will present aspects of your work within a collegial and supportive environment and at the successful conclusion of your study you will have produced original research that is worthy of publication in appropriate formats and media.

As part of your course you will be offered training session in specific and relevant research methods geared towards the demands of your own area of enquiry. Our staff have expertise across a wide range of areas of study and are expert in the links to be drawn between exploratory practice and advanced conceptualising, process and product, making and articulating. We have extensive connections with all sectors of the theatre industry and because we are the most international drama school in England, we have a range of developed international links as well.

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## 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,.

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## Practicalities and Getting Started

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

### Registration

Whether a new or returning student, you will need to [officially register](#) 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.

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## 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.



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## 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.

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## 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.

### 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:

 /uniofessex

 /uniessex

 /Uni\_of\_Essex

 /uniofessex

 /uniessex

 uniofessex

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

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## About East 15

### Meet the team

A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the East 15 Acting School can be found on our website at: [www.east15.ac.uk/staff](http://www.east15.ac.uk/staff). Below is a summary of the roles of staff that you are likely to be in contact with most frequently.

The postgraduate administrator for East 15 is Hayley Milner, who is based on the fifth floor in the Gateway Building at Southend. Beyond your supervisors, Hayley is the point of contact for any queries you may have relating to department policies, room bookings, and support.

Hayley Milner, Student Administrator  
Email: [hm20477@essex.ac.uk](mailto:hm20477@essex.ac.uk)

East 15's Director for Postgraduate Research is Dr Holly Maples; Holly is the point of contact for queries relating to academic support, training, and progression.

Dr Holly Maples,  
Email: [hm19531@essex.ac.uk](mailto:hm19531@essex.ac.uk)

In addition to departmental administration, East 15 Phd students are supported by the University's Postgraduate Research Education Team.

Postgraduate Research Education Team  
Phone: 0120687634  
Email: [pgresearch@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pgresearch@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 the supervisor, with the approval of the Graduate Director of Research, 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 Panel but are expected to provide a written assessment of progress.
- c) Members of staff on research leave should make arrangements for continuing contact with their supervisees, whether through face-to-face meetings, or through some form of remote communication,

- d) In cases where a member of staff plans to be out-of-residence for an extended period during their research leave, an alternate member of staff should be named (by the Graduate Director of Research, 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.

## Supervisory Panels

In all cases, PhD students will be co-supervised by team of two supervisors; if one staff member leaves, the remaining co-supervisor will continue to supervise the student and a replacement co-supervisor will be appointed. In addition to monthly meetings with supervisors, as per the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Students, students will meet with a Supervisory Panel twice a year consisting of their supervisors and one other member of staff from East 15 or LiFTS

**For each Supervisory Panel, the postgraduate researcher is required to produce the following materials:**

- A Research Progress report (one page)
- Outline of thesis structure (one page)
- A piece of written work including bibliography and references the nature of which is decided upon by the supervisor in consultation with the researcher and guided by the course milestones.
- An updated CV (required for the first Supervisory Panel in the third year of your studies)

In the first year, one of the papers submitted should be an annotated bibliography, i.e. a critical review of the literature in the field, which makes clear the postgraduate researcher's own position regarding the existing literature, and the approach you intend to use. In the second and third years, a draft (or polished) chapter is an appropriate paper.

## Supervisory Panel Reports: Progression and criteria

All Supervisory Panel report forms up to the Completion Period require comments to be entered under the following set of criteria:

- Report on discussion of submitted work (identifying strengths and weaknesses)
- Outline of the student's achievements and skills enhanced to date
- Recommendations for work before next Panel
- How many times in the last term did the supervisor and student have contact (email, face-to-face, etc.)?

Additional criteria are, however, required at two stages of the candidate's progression:

### **(1) Confirmation of PhD Status (at the end of the first year of study)**

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Description of total work seen to date by supervisor, including number of words and number of draft chapters written

Has the student a clear plan of work for the next research phase?

**(2) At the end of the Standard/Minimum Period (3 years full-time, 6 years parttime)**

In order for a student to progress beyond the Standard/Minimum Period into a Completion Period (if necessary) the Panel will be asked to answer three questions:

- Has a substantial portion of the thesis been written in draft and is it of a satisfactory quality?
- How many completed chapters exist in draft (e.g. 4/7)?
- What is the anticipated submission date?

Please note, the Supervisory Panel and the Research Students' Progress Board will only permit students to enter a completion period if they have completed all their milestones for their third year of study. This includes **completing all research**. Completion period will only be granted to students as a writing up period. If students have not completed their research, the Supervisory Panel and the Research Students' Progress Board will look to extend the students' Minimum/Standard period instead (this would require students to pay a higher fee than completion period fees).

List of Supervisory Panels:

First Supervisory Panel: End of Term 1 (Term 2 Part-Time)

Confirmation Board: End of Term 3 (Term 6 Part-Time)

Third Supervisory Panel: End of Term 4 (Term 8 Part-Time)

Fourth Supervisory Panel: End of Term 6 (Term 12 Part-Time)

Fifth Supervisory Panel: End of Term 7 (Term 14 Part-Time)

Sixth Supervisory Panel: End of Term 8 (Term 16 Part-Time)

## Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

The RSPB is made up of senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the Graduate Director, PGR. It "reviews the progress of every student through to the award of a degree, withdrawal or failure, on the basis of the reports from the Supervisory Panel, including the written report from the student. Where no Supervisory Panel 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."

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Principal Regulations for Research Degrees: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/principal-regulations-research-degrees.pdf>

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

## Staff research interests

Research at East 15 champions a spirit of radical curiosity and rigorous experimentation. Our research staff celebrate contemporary theatre practice and challenge established definitions of genre, identity, and tradition. Informed by theoretical and historical perspectives, we aim to illuminate the key processes by which innovative performance is formed, performed, produced, consumed and valued in contemporary society. This aim extends East 15's long-recognised emphasis on industry engagement and professional practice into the domain of research.

We are a vibrant and ambitious research community committed to interdisciplinary and partnership working with positive political, social, cultural, and intercultural significance. We promote a collaborative and inclusive research environment, and our staff work with each other, with industry specialists, and with external partners to generate research with real-world relevance and industry impact.

East 15 research takes many forms including practice as research, practice-based, and text-based enquiry, and we encourage the exploration of new and progressive research methodologies. In addition to individual areas of expertise, our research team shares specialist knowledge in actor-training, theatre-directing, immersive and participatory theatre, embodiment, and intercultural practices.

A full list of staff research interests are available on their online profiles:

Dr Christina Kapadocha [www.essex.ac.uk/people/KAPAD39300/christina-kapadocha](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/KAPAD39300/christina-kapadocha)

Dr Eirini Kartsaki [www.essex.ac.uk/people/KARTS15106/eirini-kartsaki](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/KARTS15106/eirini-kartsaki)

Prof Rosie Klich [www.essex.ac.uk/people/NAPIE49004/rosemary-klich](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/NAPIE49004/rosemary-klich)

Dr Tara McAllister-Viel [www.essex.ac.uk/people/VIELT61803/tara-mcallister-viel](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/VIELT61803/tara-mcallister-viel)

Dr Holly Maples [www.essex.ac.uk/people/MAPLE57409/holly-maples](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/MAPLE57409/holly-maples)

Dr Leon Rubin [www.essex.ac.uk/people/RUBIN74409/leon-rubin](http://www.essex.ac.uk/people/RUBIN74409/leon-rubin)

## 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.

Postgraduate (Research) Study Room / Lab

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In the Gateway building at the Southend Campus, there is a designated university PhD room (GB.3.48/49). The room is for all PhD students and you'll be able to work alongside PhD students from other departments on the Southend Campus.

### Postgraduate Training

Postgraduate Taught students are provided with structured training throughout their scheme of study. The Department offers a wide range of postgraduate training sessions such as seminars, training sessions, writing workshops and symposia. Training largely focuses on introductory topics in the first-year, with second and third-year students invited to attend writing workshops and bespoke methodology sessions.

### 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](mailto: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. In Southend, there are student noticeboards on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor adjacent to the lift lobby. At Loughton Campus, noticeboards are located opposite the main reception in Hatfields House and the Café at Roding House. Both campuses utilise electronic screens as a means of ensuring students access current information

### Social Media

Keep up-to-date with graduate and alumni news via our Social Media channels:

Instagram: @east15actingschool  
Facebook: @ east15actingschool  
Twitter: @E15actingschool  
          @East15Research

You can also watch live-streamed performances of our Season productions via our YouTube channel – 'East 15 Acting School'.



## 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

Students will use monthly supervisory meetings and East 15 Postgraduate Seminars to develop the scope and structure of their research project as driven by a particular research question or problem. Students should accurately document their discussion with their supervisors in their monthly supervisory meetings. It is good practice to email your supervisor following a supervisory session to confirm that both supervisor and student are on the same page as to the key take-away points of the meeting, and to document this feedback in writing.

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.

## 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	14-24
Summer	27-42

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. Please refer to the term dates available on the East 15 website for full details.

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](#).

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

### 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.

### 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 Practice-as Research to PhD by thesis), 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/](http://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/](http://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>		<b>Students first registered from 2018-19 onwards</b>	
<b>Research degree</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Completion</b>
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

## Timetable of study

A typical timetable would look like this:

First Year (first half)	Planning, conceptualisation, reading writing a critical review of the secondary literature in your field establishing your position regarding it, and identifying the sources you intend to use. You should keep a critical bibliography of the material you are reading.
First Year (second half)	You should now be working on the primary materials of your thesis, writing draft chapter as soon as possible.
Second Year	The process of investigation and writing continues.
Third Year (first half)	The completion of draft chapters
Third Year (second half)	Revision of your thesis into a final version ready for submission, inclusive of the notes, bibliography and an abstract.

This is a broad description of a typical pattern of progression from first to third year of the thesis.

Standard Milestones for East 15 PhD Programmes

**Thesis and by Practice-as-Research:**

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Criteria for progress</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
M1: Confirmation and Progress to Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students)	A: Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training Needs Analysis to be completed.</li> <li>▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Supervisory Panel (Term 1 for full-time students; Term 2 for part-time students).</li> <li>▪ By Confirmation Board (end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students)</li> </ul>
	B: Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research.	<p>Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify central research problem/questions to be answered.</li> <li>▪ Develop PaR methodology to address research topic.</li> <li>▪ Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access and ethical considerations</li> <li>▪ Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage.</li> </ul>	By Confirmation Board
	C: Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Critical Literature Review</li> <li>▪ Critical Review of Relevant Practice</li> </ul>	By Confirmation Board
	D: Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the three year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing and language skills. Submit 6,000 words in good draft.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate that practice is of artistic and methodological sophistication as appropriate to PhD level and that candidate has requisite capacity to produce planned practice. This may</li> </ul>	By Confirmation Board

		involve undertaking scoping workshops, presenting a 'work-in-progress showing', or undertaking a proportion of the overall PaR output (eg. presented the first of a three-part output).	
	E: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2.</li> <li>▪ Produce supervisory board report written in a clear and self-reflective style</li> </ul>	By Confirmation Board
M2: Progress from Year 2 to Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students)	A: Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed.</li> <li>▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Third Supervisory Panel</li> <li>▪ Fourth Supervisory Panel (end of Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students)</li> </ul>
	B: Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Produce another 6,000 words in good draft.</li> <li>▪ Report on research undertaken to date demonstrating that practice-as-research is at least 50% complete.</li> </ul>	Fourth Supervisory Panel
	C: Review significance and impact of research and articulate output.	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deliver workshop</li> <li>▪ Present research to students and staff at seminars, conference or festival.</li> <li>▪ Write journal article</li> </ul>	Fourth Supervisory Panel
	D: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 3, which demonstrates the ability to complete within the three year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students).</li> <li>▪ Produce supervisory board report written in a clear and self-reflective style</li> </ul>	Fourth Supervisory Panel

M3: Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students)	A: Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training Needs Analysis reviewed</li> </ul>	Fifth Supervisory Panel (Term 7 full-time students; Term 14 for part-time students)
	B: Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PaR completed and evaluation undertaken.</li> <li>▪ Produce main body of the thesis in draft form.</li> </ul>	Sixth Supervisory panel (End of Term 8; Term 16 for Part-Time Students)
	C: Clear evidence of progress towards submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/ supervisory board comment</li> <li>▪ Completed documentation of PaR output/s for supervisor(s)/ supervisory board comment.</li> </ul>	Submitted to Supervisors Term 9 (Term 18 Part-Time)
	D: Subject-specific milestones	Produce an effective CV presenting one's skills, personal attributes and achievements.	Sixth Supervisory panel
If required: M4: Request to enter Completion period	A: Clear plan to submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeline of work needing to take place before submission</li> <li>• Submission date agreed</li> </ul>	Timeline agreed by Supervisory Panel.

## 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.

Our Southend Campus Library & Learning Hub is located within **The Forum** and offers a variety of silent and group study areas as well as access to all the resources you need for your research, either on the shelves of the Library or online via the Library website. You can access computers in the Learning Hub, which is a pleasant and safe environment that is open for long hours, with specialist help available from the InfoPoint and via live chat. You can also request books from our libraries at

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Colchester and Loughton - and your library card gives you access to all public libraries in the SELMS consortium of libraries in the south east of England.

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



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# 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](mailto:proficio@essex.ac.uk)

## University and departmental training events

First year PHD students are required to attend training session through terms 1 and 2. The training sessions cover elements such as research methodologies, developing a literature review, gathering sources, and honing your research question. Second and third-year students are invited to attend writing workshops and retreats, and may require topic-specific training on a bespoke basis.

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

Each 15 students are able to claim up to £300 during their course that can be used to fund attendance at conferences and other events.

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## Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

### Ethics in research

All research involving human participants, 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](#).**

### 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](#).

### 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.

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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 Harvard. 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.

## Departmental Support

Each year students are invited to attend the East 15 PG conference where they will be given the opportunity to present their work and receive feedback.

## Travel

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All East 15 postgraduate research students are officially based at the Southend campus, as this is where the majority of East 15 research staff are based, where the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Research are based, and where students are able to take advantage of shared university facilities as well as East 15-specific resources. However all students are able to access facilities on all three campuses.

### Seminars

Throughout the year there will be opportunities to attend research seminars, talks, round-table events and workshops hosted by East 15 and centred around key areas of research interest across the School. These research events bring together leading external scholars, academic staff and research students and you are strongly encouraged to attend. You will be introduced to the work of leading scholars, have opportunities to network with industry and academic contacts, gain new perspectives on your research, and contribute to the growth and energy of the research environment at East 15. All research events are well advertised.

Throughout the second and third-terms, PhD students are asked to engage with our East 15 PhD Presentations series; these seminars are an opportunity for you to present key concepts of your thesis, show elements of your practice and receive feedback from other students and research staff. You will receive information about arrangements for this series from the Director of Graduate Studies later in the year.

### 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

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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](mailto:pgrsubmission@essex.ac.uk):

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

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## 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.

## 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.

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## Student Voice

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

### Student Representatives

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

### Student Voice Groups

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

### Student Surveys

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

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.

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## You Matter

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

### Student Services Hub

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

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

### Support for disabilities and 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.



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## 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](mailto:suadvice@essex.ac.uk); 01206 874034

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

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

## Residence Life

Our [Residence Life team](#) is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each residents' assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you 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.

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## Religion, faith and beliefs

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

## Harassment support

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

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

## COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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

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## Making a Complaint

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

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

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# Student Development

## Careers Services

The Career Services team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through various events, workshops and one- to- one sessions. We also have teams dedicated to Work Based Learning, Placements and Internships that can provide information and support as needed. Find out more about the Career Services 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](https://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](http://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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships)

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# 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

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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.

Whatever you choose 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.