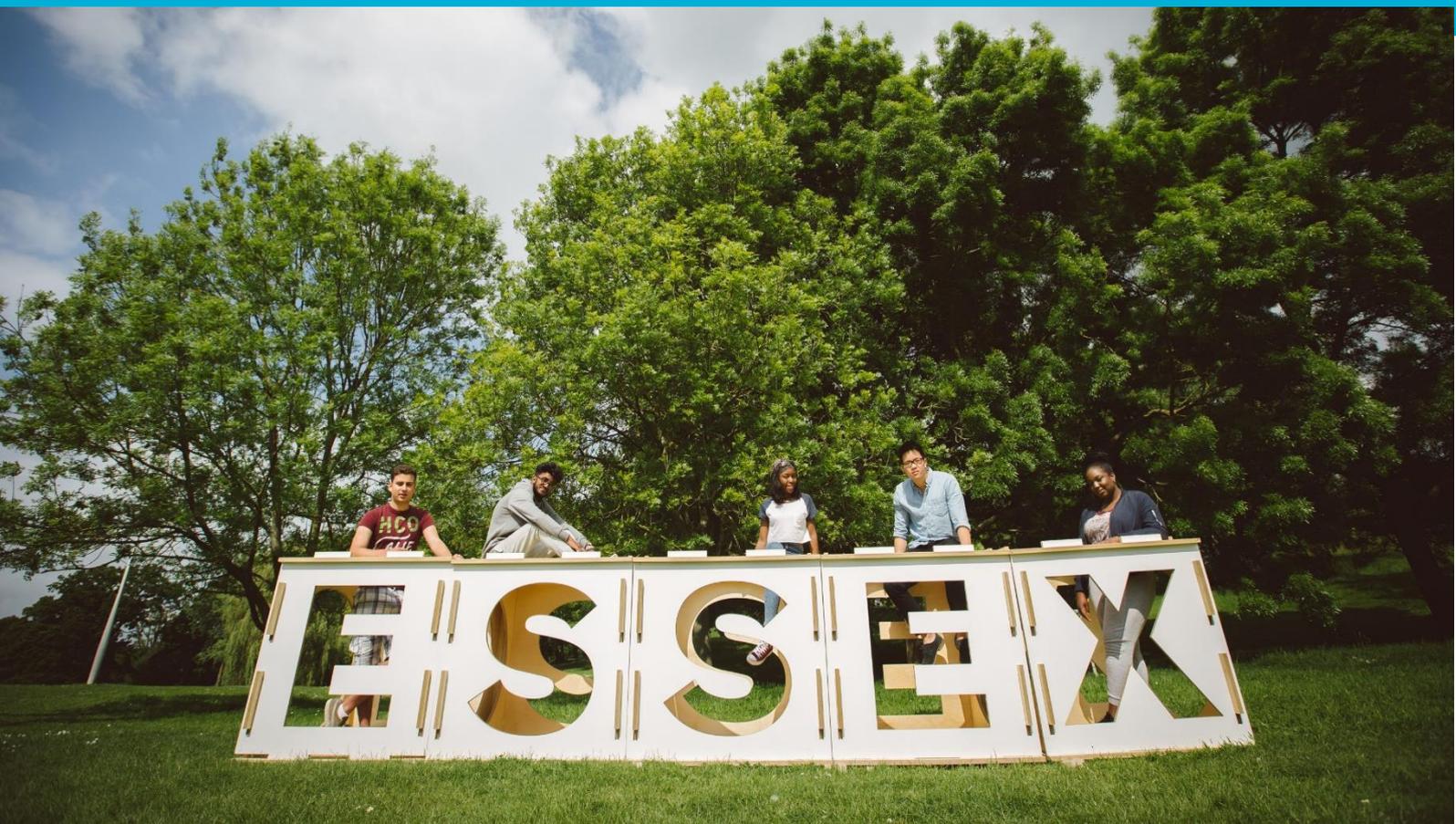




University of Essex

**Your studies**

**Essex Business School  
Postgraduate Research  
Student Handbook 2023-24  
Colchester Campus**



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## Welcome

### Welcome from Professor Claudia Girardone

Welcome to Essex Business School and thank you for choosing to study with us. A warm welcome to those of you who are new to the Department, and warm welcome back to everyone else!

Whatever your background, we're here to help you be successful and fulfil your potential. This handbook should list all the information that you need about your course, Essex Business School and the University of Essex. We want you to become an active member of our living and learning community. Please talk to us about anything that is affecting your studies. Members of the administrative/technical team are also available to assist with any questions that you might have. They can guide you to the right support—either inside or outside of the Department.

EBS is the largest department at the University, but our students are always more than just a number to us. Our size means we have also had the opportunity to develop a unique package of support that is tailored to the needs of business students. In addition to the information you can find here, I would encourage you to seek out the Student Services Team and Learning Team as early as you can. Make good use of them during your time with us!

Good luck with your studies and I look forward to meeting you over the coming year.

**Professor Claudia Girardone**  
**Dean of Essex Business School**



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## Introduction

Your Student Handbook will tell you everything you need to know about your department, the University its academic policies and procedures, and all of the resources that are available to you.

At Essex we put the success of our students at the heart of everything we do, and want to support you to achieve outstanding outcomes. We are absolutely determined to provide you with the best Essex education and student experience we can, while safeguarding your health and wellbeing.

We celebrate diversity and challenge inequality. We are a truly diverse community where differences are celebrated, and individuality is valued. Your contribution is welcomed and encouraged based on your own thoughts and experiences. As part of our community you will have the freedom to explore, experiment, challenge your discipline and have your ideas shaped by peer and professional knowledge from all over the world. Essex is about more than just getting a degree: we have so much to offer our students!

Things might have to change and adapt over the year, so make sure that you're checking online and keeping in touch with your department for the latest updates. The [Student Directory](#) contains a wealth of other helpful sources of information which you may also find useful.

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## Practicalities and Getting Started

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

### Registration (New Students)

As a new student, you must complete the [registration process](#) in order to begin your studies with us. 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. Because of this, you'll be asked to complete compulsory steps, such as activating your Essex IT account, provide key information about you as part of Online Registration (including payment of fees where required), attend an in-person Right to Study Check on campus and collect your Student Registration Card. Once you've completed these steps, you'll be able to begin attending teaching and engage with your course.

You should ensure you have completed the [registration process, including payment of your fees \(where required\) by the published Latest Registration Deadline](#) for your course. If you do not do this, you may not be allowed to register and begin your course with us.

### Registration (Returning Students)

As a returning student, you will need to ensure you complete [Online Registration and pay your fees \(if required to do so\)](#) at the start of each academic year to be able to continue your studies with us. It is essential that you complete all required steps, by the published [Latest Registration Deadline](#), otherwise you may not be allowed to continue your studies with us.

If you are a student undertaking studies with us with a form of immigration permission, in some instances you may be required to undertake an additional Right to Study Check, before being permitted to re-register. This may be the case if one or more of your documents have expired, or your immigration status has changed. You will be contacted by our International Services Team if you need to complete an additional check.

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## Right to Study

The University must ensure all students have the right to study at the University of Essex for the whole duration of their course. If you aren't a UK or Irish national, your [immigration permission](#) to study in the UK will be checked via the online Right to Study system, 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](#).

## Students with sponsored immigration permission

The University is a Student Sponsor with a track record of compliance and must ensure we remain compliant to retain our sponsor status. Students with a Student visa have [additional responsibilities](#) to the University and the Home Office. There will be conditions attached to your visa that restrict what you can do in the UK, breaking any of the conditions may mean you can't remain in the UK and complete your course. You are expected to attend in-person meetings with your Supervisor every month and this will be monitored throughout your course. If your [attendance and engagement](#) fall below expected levels or you are absent without permission for a period of time this is likely to impact on the University's ability to continue to sponsor your Student immigration permission. The International Services Team can provide [immigration information and advice](#) throughout your studies.

## 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](#).

## 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](#) (subject to our fair usage policy) on campus, connect to campus wifi, and much more. When you activate your account, you will need to register an external email address and passphrase so that if you [forget your password](#), you can also reset it

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using these details. If you have forgotten those, you should contact the [IT Helpdesk](#). Make sure you keep your password safe and do not share it with others. For a quick rundown of what you need when you first start, head to the [Getting Started with IT](#) guide on the Student Directory.

### **Campus wifi**

If you are studying on any of our campuses, connect to our wifi by finding the eduroam network on your device. Use your Essex email and password to join.

### **Essex Apps**

The University has a variety of online systems and platforms designed to enhance your learning and help make processes, such as submitting coursework, easier. We have rounded up the top platforms, portals and apps that you need to know about!

#### **MyEssex**

[MyEssex](#) is your online account and can only be accessed via an internet browser. This is different to your applicant portal – you can use MyEssex to view your timetable, update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, monitor your course progress, let us know if you'll miss a lecture or class, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

#### **PocketEssex**

[Pocket Essex](#) is the University's official app for students that can be downloaded on your phone or tablet for free. It acts as a portal through to a variety of areas and resources that will be useful for you throughout your studies. PocketEssex links to many areas that MyEssex does, but also takes you through to other key resources, such as the Students' Union, FindYourWay and the Library.

#### **Find Your Way**

When on campus, we know that finding your way can be challenging to start with. Our Colchester campus in particular can be difficult to navigate with a historically complex room numbering system! [FindYourWay](#) is our interactive campus map app designed to get you from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions. You can download this app on your phone or tablet for free!

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## 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 are from and your visa type will determine whether or not you can work in the UK. If you can work, the type of work you are allowed to undertake and the number of hours you can work will be restricted.

## Your personal belongings

The University does not cover costs for personal damage or loss of possessions; only in instances where the University has been negligent would a claim be viable for compensation for personal belongings. Therefore, you are strongly advised to take out personal insurance cover for your possessions. This is especially important for valuable items, such as laptops, phones and tablets.

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## The Essex Experience

We are proud of our inclusive and international community. Our campuses are places where every single person can feel they belong and where you can find the world in one place. We have created a [Student Charter](#) as a pledge that every student signs up to when they join us. By signing up, you promise to uphold our values and to behave in ways that strengthen and support our community. We promise to support you at every stage of your journey with us.

### Embracing our Values

We are different at Essex. We are brave, we are bold, and we embrace challenges and drive change. Our values are underpinned by this very culture. While we encourage you to challenge the status quo and explore the unknown, we expect all of our students do so respectfully, intelligently and act as true ambassadors for the University. Our [Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines the rules and regulations that help us maintain our high standards of behaviour.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University recognises the value of diversity and is committed to providing equal opportunities for both students and staff. Our students and staff are treated with dignity and respect on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, while still having the relevant impact and implications associated with race, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic background, family circumstances, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, or any other identity-forming characteristics, taken into consideration as necessary to ensure equal opportunity.

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

Essex Business School is a place where staff and students recognise each other as valued members of our department and wider community.

We work together with mutual respect and integrity. We value a working and learning environment in which people are free to be themselves. The School respects the multi-dimensional lives of all its members and is committed to creating and supporting a

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learning and working environment in which staff and students can flourish in all aspects of their work and lives.

Essex Business School is Athena SWAN Bronze award accredited and we are working towards the Athena SWAN Silver Departmental Award.

The application will drive structural and cultural progress towards ensuring that Essex Business School is a gender equal working and learning environment for all staff, students and visitors.

As part of the application process, we have drawn up an action plan to ensure that championing gender equality is at the heart of our research, teaching and professional practice.

### **Student communities**

We pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive community. We recognise the value of diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity within the University.

We offer a wide range of support to individuals and [groups of student members](#) – our student communities - who may have specific requirements, interests or responsibilities to help fulfil your potential. Whether you are an international student, a mature student, a BAME student or have any other requirements or needs, we want to welcome you with open arms. The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this [policy](#) is fully effective.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

We have made commitments as a University to reduce our impacts on the environment, including reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2035. In December 2020 we declared a [climate and ecological emergency](#) and developed a [sustainability strategy](#) that sets out our ambitions up to 2026. Our Sustainability team works on a range of projects from energy efficiency to extracurricular activities to help everyone at Essex live, study and work in environmentally-friendly ways. Everyone is encouraged to do their bit, and there are simple steps you can take as a student: remember to bring a reusable cup for takeaway drinks, and a bottle that you can refill at one of our many water fountains. If you live on campus, switch off electrical items that aren't in use, and be sure to keep windows closed in colder months when the

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heating is on. For more information, contact the Sustainability team – [sustainability@essex.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@essex.ac.uk).

## **Essex Sport**

Learning doesn't just happen in the classroom. Keeping active during your studies is a great way to meet new people, help relieve stress, maintain good physical and mental wellbeing, increase productivity, and improve your employability.

[Join](#) Essex Sport and be part of something bigger. We're a community of like-minded individuals who are dedicated to enriching your experience at University of Essex. By fuelling your passion for all things active we help you make new friends, find new interests and be the best you. Whatever your sport, whatever your level, from fan to [professional athlete](#), we've got a place for you.

Visit the [Essex Sport](#) website or [download the app](#) to discover all the ways you can keep active during your time at Essex. In order to ensure the welfare of our community there may be changes to opening hours or what's available, so do check on the website and our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) for the latest information.

## **Students' Union**

We're famous for our [Students' Union at Essex](#), and for good reason. 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 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 PGT 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 [Sports Clubs](#), and get involved with competitive sports in our [BUCS teams](#) or if you don't want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our [Just Play](#) programme.-

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

We also train, recruit and support hundreds of student reps each year. These reps gather feedback to share student viewpoints on academic experiences. You can find out more about student reps including how to sign up and getting trained [here](#).

We also have our very own lettings agency ([SUHomes](#)), to offer help and support to students to find off campus accommodation.

### **Chart My Path**

Use Chart My Path to discover over 200 extracurricular activities offered at Essex, and get recommendations personalised to you. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.

### **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



/@uniessexonline

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 Essex Business School (EBS)

### Meet the team

A full list of all staff can be found on the [EBS webpages](#). Below is a summary of the roles of staff that can help you with a variety of areas during your time at Essex.<sup>1</sup>

### EBS Student Services Team

Are available to help you with any question or concern you have about your programme or university life. You can visit the EBS Student Services Team in the EBS building or [email](#) them via [ebshelp-col@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ebshelp-col@essex.ac.uk).

### EBS Learning Team

Our EBS Learning Team are here to support you all the way through your journey at EBS and work closely with academics and professional services staff to ensure the best possible learning experience. Contact them on: [ebsllearn@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ebsllearn@essex.ac.uk)

They also have a useful Moodle page [–EBS Student Resources](#).

### EBS Academic Services Team

Are responsible for the administrative procedures that allow your modules to run smoothly. They mostly liaise with academics. They will contact you regarding your marks or academic issues. You are unlikely to liaise with this team directly – unless they contact you. If you have a question contact the EBS Student Services Team in the first instance, via [ebshelp-col@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ebshelp-col@essex.ac.uk).

### Departmental Disability Liaison Officer

The DDLO in EBS Colchester is [Dr Hugh Kilmister](#). His role is to act as a direct link for you between the Student Services Hub and EBS. He can help make sure that the Disability Service know about any adjustments you may need.

If you have a disability, long term medical condition and/or Specific Learning Difference and have not registered with Student Wellbeing & Inclusivity Service, to discuss your support needs, please email [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

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<sup>1</sup> Department/school information in this Handbook is correct at time of publication but there may be role changes within the department/school throughout the Academic Year. Students should consult staffing details held online for the most up-to-date information.

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## **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. We recommend that you consider attending the '[Making the most of your supervisor](#)' training course, provided through Proficio.

If you have a disability, long term medical condition and/or Specific Learning Difference and have not registered with Student Wellbeing & Inclusivity Service, to discuss your support needs, please email [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

## **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 PGR 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 an extended period during their research leave, an alternate member of staff should be named (by the PGR 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.

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## **The Supervisory Panel (SP) and Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)**

These are the formal committee meetings at which an individual student's work, training/skills development, and progress are reviewed against the published milestones. Progress decisions are considered by the SP with a recommendation being made to the RSPB. This includes Confirmation of Status and entry to the next stage of study or period of completion, along with extensions, downgrading and discontinuation. The final RSPB decisions and/or recommendations are reported to the relevant Faculty Dean (Postgraduate).

Your Supervisory Panel is composed of you, at least one of your supervisors and one other academic who acts as Chair. In exceptional circumstances where the sole supervisor is on study leave, an acting supervisor may attend.

The RSPB comprises senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the PGR Director or Head of Department/School. 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.

[Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Professional Doctorate rules of assessment](#)

### **Staff research interests**

You can find out about academic's research interests on individual staff profiles on the [EBS webpages](#).

The University of Essex is a 'dual intensive' university gold rated for teaching excellence (TEF 2017) and top 20 for research power for business and management (REF 2021). Our mission in EBS is to offer a transformative education and research excellence that has a positive impact on business and society. Within the School, research is organised around five subject groups.

### **Accounting**

Accounting at Essex is about accountability –not just to financiers and investors, but increasingly to a wider range of stakeholders and to sustainability concerns. Our

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teaching and research are grounded in how accounting is practised globally in all of its multiplicity, whether in commercial, public sector or not-for-profit settings. Our accounting programmes are accredited by the major professional bodies. We aim to inspire a business-minded and socially driven Essex accounting graduate.

### **Finance**

Our teaching and research reflects the breadth of contemporary banking, finance and economic issues facing organisations today. We focus on training our students to become skilled finance practitioners, informed by our expert academic and consultancy work and supported by our industry standard facilities. Our work is internationally oriented and professionally accredited.

### **Management and Marketing**

Management and marketing at Essex is not just about driving profit for big business. We want our students to understand the role of the consumer, the value of the employee and the importance of responsible management practices. Our aim is that students learn to become independent thinkers and drivers of change, creating a positive impact not just on the bottom line but on the world around them.

### **Organisational Studies and Human Resource Management**

Our teaching and research considers the relationship between work, organisation and society in order to understand the nature of contemporary working life. In addition to drawing on traditional approaches to business, our perspective is enriched by cultural studies, history, literary theory and philosophy. This enables our colleagues and students to think critically about business and its role in today's global society.

### **Strategy, Operations and Entrepreneurship**

Our expertise in quantitative management science includes data analytics, supply chain management and international business. Alongside this we aim to use our research and teaching to support small and medium enterprises, to explore the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and to consider the disruptive potential of intrapreneurship.

### **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

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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.

### **EBS Common Room**

Whilst the Business School building may not have a specific common room space, the building boasts a café, large foyer, winter garden and areas suitable for study, group work and social gatherings. There are dedicated study spaces for EBS PGR students in EBS 1.10. A hot desk system is in operation within the room. Personal belongings will be removed if left unattended on the desk/floor. Please make use of locker space provided.

### **Postgraduate Lockers (if applicable)**

Lockers are available in EBS Colchester EBS 1.10 for PGR and MBA students. These are allocated on a first-come first-served basis. If you are allocated a locker it will be necessary for you to pay a £5 key deposit to the Student Services Desk. Please speak to the Student Services Team if you are interested in using a locker.

### **Postgraduate Training**

PGR students all have access to Proficio; our innovative professional development scheme, unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and we give you funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and conferences.

As a postgraduate research student, you will be registered on the Proficio system. You will need to complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) on Moodle in order to unlock your Proficio funding account. The enrolment key is 'PGRstudent'.

In addition to the centralised training provision, students can also access a wide range of postgraduate taught modules that either explore particular fields and concepts, or offer specific training in research methods and skills. Students should peruse the modules available and discuss with their supervisor which of these modules would be suitable. Postgraduate Research Students in Year 1 (or FTE) will be expected to undertake postgraduate training modules from level 7 masters modules. Assessment or auditing is required with an assessment mark of >60 in order to meet milestones for progression to year 2.

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## Printing, photocopying and scanning

All students can [print, copy and scan for free at Essex](#) subject to our fair use policy. You can even print from your mobile by sending your file to [mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk](mailto:mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk) using your Essex email.

Once you've located a device, simply log in using your Essex login and password, or tap with your student card to print. Whilst printing is free for all students, please think of your carbon footprint, only print if necessary and check your available quota.

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.

## Noticeboards

Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. You will find our noticeboards in the foyer of the EBS building. We also post announcements on our PGR Moodle pages.

## Social Media

You can follow Essex Business School on social media to keep up to date with student events, news and announcements throughout the academic year:



[@essexeps](#)



[@EssexBusinessSchool](#)



[@essex-business-school](#)



[@Essex\\_EBS](#)

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## Learning and Teaching

The University is committed to providing equal opportunities for all our students regardless of where or how you study. Our diverse student population is 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.

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- 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 where applicable and attend meetings with your professional practice supervisor. For more information on this, please refer to the section on [taught modules](#) in this handbook.
- Complete the work required for your taught modules.
- Maintain a professional practice portfolio which forms part of the assessment for the degree.

### **The academic year**

Postgraduate Research students are expected to work on their theses throughout the calendar year, and are not subject to the same academic year term structures as that of taught students. As a reference point, 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.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Week numbers</b>
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 programmes 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 where applicable, and unless otherwise advised by your Department.

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## My programme of study

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

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

## 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](#).

Until the final term of your standard period, 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. Students with a Student visa may not be able to change their course without first obtaining a new visa from overseas, if eligible.

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.

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.

You should also be aware of how your funding may be impacted if you choose to take a break. You can do this by contacting the Funding Team – [funding@essex.ac.uk](mailto:funding@essex.ac.uk).

## Periods of study

Research degree	Mode	Standard Period	Completion Period
Masters by Dissertation ( <i>MA or MSc by dissertation</i> )	FT	One year	Up to one year
	PT	Two years	Up to one year
Master of Philosophy ( <i>MPhil</i> )	FT	Two years	Up to one year
	PT	Four years	Up to one year
Doctor of Medicine ( <i>MD</i> )	PT only	Two years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy ( <i>PhD</i> )	FT	Three years	Up to one year
	PT	Six years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy Integrated ( <i>PhD</i> )	FT	Four years	Up to one year
	PT	Eight years	Up to one year
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes

## Library & Cultural Services

The Library provides access to an extensive digital library of books, journals, databases and more 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 Research Support team, who can advise on a variety of topics including open access, online research profiles, and how/where to publish and promote your work. Online support in these areas can be found in the Library's Research Support

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guide. A range of workshops and training sessions are also held throughout the year through Newcomers, a collaborative network run by Library & Cultural Services and the Research Enterprise Office that aims to support researchers, and offer training across the research lifecycle. Signing up to the Newcomers mailing list is the best way to keep up to date with the latest training and development opportunities, and it also provides a platform to network with fellow early career researchers. If you have any questions about Library services, there are a range of ways you can get in touch with the team.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 has a variety of study spaces, including a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room that is open 24/7. You'll need your student card to access this space, so be sure to bring it with you during your visit. The Library offers in-person assistance at the Helpdesk in the ground floor foyer, as well as email, telephone, and live chat support. They also provide the opportunity to book appointments with specialist staff, who can help you through your studies and into whatever you choose to do after graduation.

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

#### Art Exchange

Placing students at its core, [Art Exchange](#) is a place where art, artists and the campus community come together. Our programme of exhibitions and activities are here to get you inspired, make new friends – or simply to chill while having fun making art.

We show international art by established and emerging artists throughout the year, building up a dynamic programme by working closely with the campus community, as the art on our walls is co-created by students and responds to what matters to them.

Alongside exhibitions, our exciting programme of events and art classes are free for students. Led by professional artists, they support students' creativity, confidence and wellbeing - as well as being great fun!

We want everyone to get involved and enjoy great art.

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## Lakeside Theatre

The [Lakeside Theatre](#) provides a warm, welcoming social hub of creativity at the heart of the University to foster the living learning community.

We produce a programme of diverse, dynamic and accessible live performances of theatre, music, comedy, dance, workshops, artist development and live art for audiences on and off campus. It is a learning and social experience for students that will deliver key life skills to enable them to respond to a rapidly changing world with creativity and personal and cultural confidence. Students' wellbeing remains at the forefront of what we do which is why we provide opportunities for enjoyment, inspiration and creativity.

The theatre and technical facilities are kept up to date, for student use in education and further skill building in modern practices nationally and internationally.

## Study Abroad

As a postgraduate student there are a variety of opportunities through Essex Abroad to have an international experience. Providing you with the chance to enhance employability, gain valuable transferable skills and develop as individuals.

[Essex Abroad](#) have a wide range of [summer programmes](#) suitable for postgraduate students including summer schools abroad, volunteering programmes, international internships and research abroad opportunities which are open to all Essex students. These programmes vary in duration, location and cost. [Find out more](#) about Essex Abroad opportunities. For information regarding your funding during a study abroad, you should liaise with the Funding Team – [funding@essex.ac.uk](mailto:funding@essex.ac.uk). Students with disabilities should also liaise with the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service – [include@essex.ac.uk](mailto:include@essex.ac.uk).

The University of Essex is a founding member of the YUFE Alliance. YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) is a collaboration of 10 different European institutions, providing you with the opportunity to study across multiple partners virtually or physically; as part of your degree or in addition to it. YUFE aims to be a leading model of a young, student-centred, non-elitist, open and inclusive European University.

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As a University of Essex student, you can obtain an international experience through YUFE, taking anything from academic to language courses, or even entrepreneurship courses; allowing you to go the extra mile and stand out from the crowd. Find out more about YUFE and how to apply on our dedicated section on the [Essex Abroad YUFE webpage](#) and through the [YUFE Virtual Campus](#).

### **Peer Review with the Essex Student Journal**

If you are interested developing the vital skill of peer reviewing academic papers, the Essex Student Journal provides the ideal opportunity to do so, with training, guidance, and support to help you become a proficient peer reviewer.

This invaluable experience will enhance your expertise as an early career researcher, developing your understanding of the academic publishing process. Peer reviewing is typically expected of researchers at all stages of their academic careers, so starting in our supportive environment will ensure you feel confident moving forward. The analytical skills you develop are transferrable to a wide variety of other professions too.

Not all universities have a Student Journal, making this a unique opportunity for you and the authors. Our multi-disciplinary journal, run by students, for students, showcases the hard work of our undergraduates and PGTs and, through a double-blind peer review process, supports them to develop their writing skills and produce high quality outputs.

If you are interested in developing your skills and helping others to do the same, find out more about joining our vibrant community of peer reviewers at the Essex Student Journal and embark on your academic peer reviewing journey with confidence.

If you have any questions, get in touch with the Journal Team via [journal@essex.ac.uk](mailto:journal@essex.ac.uk).

### **University and departmental training events**

#### **Attendance and Assessment**

Attendance is compulsory for BE961 Insite workshop. Attendance and assessment is compulsory in at least two of the following; BE950 Research Evaluation, BE951 Research Methods in Accounting, BE968 Philosophies of Research and Advanced

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Qualitative Research Methods. This is subject to discussion with your supervisor and completion of a training plan.

### **MPhD Organisation Studies and Human Resource Management**

Attendance is compulsory for BE961 Insite workshop. Attendance and assessment is compulsory in at least two of the following: BE950 Research Evaluation, BE966 Research Methods in Organisational Studies and Human Resource Management Marketing, BE968 Philosophies of Research and Advanced Qualitative Research Methods. This is subject to discussion with your supervisor and completion of a training plan.

### **MPhD Management**

Attendance is compulsory for BE961 Insite workshop. Attendance and assessment is compulsory in at least two of the following: BE950 Research Evaluation, BE965 Research Methods in Marketing, BE968 Philosophies of Research and Advanced Qualitative Research Methods and BE969 Research Methods in Management. This is subject to discussion with your supervisor and completion of a training plan.

### **MPhD Finance**

Attendance is compulsory for BE961 Insite workshop. Attendance and assessment is compulsory in at least two of the following: BE352 Asset Pricing, BE356 Financial Modelling, BE368 Finance Research Techniques using Matlab, BE369 Data Analysis: Cross Sectional, Panel and Qualitative Data Methods, BE953 Research Methods in Finance and BE990 Research Methods in Financial Econometrics. This is subject to discussion with your supervisor and completion of a training plan.

**\*The exception to the above being if students have already undertaken these modules with assessment in previous masters study).** You *must* complete these details in your training plans and make sure you complete the relevant module enrolment forms. If you are required to attend other modules by your supervisor, attendance is compulsory (although assessment may not be). You must also attend weekly departmental seminars relevant to your area of study. **Training plans MUST**

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**be completed and returned to the Student Services Team by the end of week 1 of the Autumn term or week 1 of the Spring term for January starters.**

### **Doctoral-level Training - "BE961 InSite Workshops" (both campuses)**

Essex Business School has training specifically for doctoral students to help you successfully complete your PhD as well as gain a broader knowledge of key approaches and debates within Business and Management. These sessions will include a morning workshop (from 10-12) on a particular methodology or approach, followed by a weekly seminar given by the academic study group. Sessions will take place on both the Southend and Colchester campus. Whilst each sub group of the School will lead on one workshop per term, all workshops can be attended by students of all groups. Schedule details will be posted on Moodle and you will be notified via email. You should also discuss attendance at Proficio training events with your supervisor.

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

Presentation of papers at conferences gives you the opportunity to meet other researchers in your field and to develop your ideas further.

The School *may* fund at their discretion, presentations of papers, usually by third year students accepted to conferences of up to a *maximum* of £800 per year. You must apply one term in advance and have written approval from your supervisor/s before submitting your form to the PGR Director. Note that conferences often have a reduced 'doctoral' registration fee.

Funds up to a maximum of £200.00 per year per student *may* be provided for first and second year students to attend training workshops or seminars within the UK. Approval must be in writing from your Supervisor and approved by the PGR Director prior to booking or attending any training/workshops. Forms for Conference Funding are available from the Student Services Team or on the PGR Moodle page. It is usually policy that third and completion year students *may be* allowed up to a maximum of

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£800 in any one year. Should supervisors wish to make a case for more funding, then this must be discussed in the first instance with the PGR Director and is subject to approval by the Dean of EBS and the Faculty of Social Sciences Accountant

### **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 and animal subjects, whether undertaken by the University's staff or students, **must** undergo an ethics [review](#) by an appropriate body and ethical approval **must** be obtained before it commences. You should first read the [Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Subjects](#) or [Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Animals](#) 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. You should contact the REO Research Governance Team ([reo-governance@essex.ac.uk](mailto:reo-governance@essex.ac.uk)) at an early stage.**

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

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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.

It is your responsibility to make yourself aware of the regulations governing examinations and how to correctly prepare your work. 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

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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 Support**

There are a variety of skills and training opportunities available for postgraduate research students from [Skills for Success](#), covering a range of aspects across the research and thesis writing process. We also run a dedicated English language support class for international PhD students.

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their postgraduate research, and are here to help all year round, providing support, resources, [workshops](#) and [1:1s](#) on:

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

Some of these services are open to all students at the university, whilst others are specially tailored to research students. All are designed to help you develop your academic and language skills no matter what department you are attached to, or what stage you are at.

All services are free, and have no limits on the number of bookings you can make.

## **Departmental Support**

Our [EBS Learning Team](#) are here to support you all the way through your journey at EBS and work closely with academics and professional services staff to ensure the best possible learning experience.

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## **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.

All students should ensure that any agreement entered into with a proofreader conforms to the [University's policy and guidance on proofreading](#).

## **Language classes**

### **Academic English Support**

Skills for Success run a dedicated [PhD Language Support](#) module throughout the year, to help you develop your writing skills, presentation skills and confidence. They also run a range of [Academic English Support classes](#) which are available throughout the year. Modules include Academic Writing, Speaking, Reading, Grammar Review, and Exam Preparation and Writing Skills. Bookable [workshops](#) and [1:1 support](#) are also available.

### **General English classes for beginner/intermediate/advanced learners (GEC)**

The [Department of Language and Linguistics](#) offers the wider University of Essex community the chance to improve their English language skills through our General English Classes. These classes are available to:

- Dependants and close family members of students and staff at the University of Essex
- International staff at Essex who may want to work on their general English and fluency skills
- International students currently studying at UEIC Kaplan
- International students currently studying at both UG and PG level at Essex who wish to develop their language skills

- Refugees and asylum seekers who hold an ARC card, or a letter granting them Immigration Bail

The classes, which take place at the Colchester Campus, will enable you to meet people from other countries and cultures and will help you develop your language skills. These classes are free and are taught at three basic levels: Beginner (A1/A2), Intermediate (B1/B2) and Advanced (C1/C2) and will focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing. Throughout the year, you will have a unique opportunity to develop your conversation skills, by reflecting on real-life examples of how language is used in context.

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](#).

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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 EBS 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.

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## 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.

### 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.

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## **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 wish 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.

Students thinking about making an appeal are strongly advised to contact the [SU Advice Centre](#).

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## 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](#).

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.

### 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](#).

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

## 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.

Methods of assessment for coursework include essays, in-class or computer-based online tests, group work, presentations and reflective documents.

## 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.

## Preparation of assignments

### Guidelines on How to Write Assignments

In order to help you to develop your skills in writing assignments we have summarised below some of the key points underlying effective academic writing. The points mentioned below will help you to answer your assignment and exam questions appropriately and also to refine your communication skills to advance your career after graduating.

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### 1. Read the question carefully

Make sure you understand exactly what the question is asking you to do. Pay attention to requirements like 'assess', 'describe' and 'compare'. Clarify all the key terms and concepts used, and note the scope of the question. It is a good idea to underline the key words to constantly remind you what the assignment is about. As you develop your answer, keep returning to the underlined words and ask yourself, "Have I answered the question"? "Does my answer relate to the question"? If not, then review what you are doing.

### 2. Take time in constructing your answer

Your central aim in answering any question is to bring together what you see as the key points and issues in a clear and coherent way. So it is worth spending time identifying these and then linking them together as effectively as possible. Try noting down your ideas and then ordering them in what you see as the most logical way. You need an overall plan before starting the essay. Without a plan your essay will end up being a jumbled collection of random sentences and will not get good marks.

### 3. Indicate the theories which you think are relevant

Throughout each module you study you will be introduced to the views of a variety of authors who are experts in their fields. Frequently, they will have competing views. One reason for this is that they see the world differently. It will be helpful to indicate in your work how you see things before moving on to any detailed analysis, arguments and evidence. Of course, you know how you see things and what ideas you find attractive, but the examiners and markers do not know this. You need to tell them so that they can see things from your perspective(s). The theories which you choose to mention should be drawn from the ideas introduced on the module and elsewhere.

### 4. Wherever possible support your ideas with well-chosen examples

Be selective and only choose illustrative examples that are relevant to your points. Limit the amount of scene setting and background to case studies, unless such background is asked for specifically in the question. As a general rule, try not to let your examples 'take over' the whole essay. Try to support your points with more than one example. We do not expect you to cover every relevant example, but it is important

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not to focus on single examples which could lead to sweeping generalisations. It is better to use a range of examples (two or three, say) to provide more solid support for your argument. Try to use examples from a range of sources and module components. Make full use of the module material, additional reading and relevant stories in the news (if you have not previously started a file of current news, now is a good time to do so). We hope you will also draw on your own experience and on other sources, although this is not essential.

#### 5. Give some thought to matters of general presentation

Check that you have communicated your ideas effectively. This means thinking about sentence construction and grammar. Make sure that your sentences are simple and easy to follow. This means using paragraphs to mark changes in focus and not simply as arbitrary divisions. It also means linking together your paragraphs so that the reader can follow your line of argument. Remember that anything which makes the reader stop or go back over part of the assignment risks breaking up its

‘flow’.

All good answers should have a clear structure. At the very least, they must include an introduction, discussion and conclusion. The first and the last are both key elements of any answer and serve a range of functions. The introduction should be used to clarify and define the scope of the question, and to set out your plans. You should indicate how your answer is organised. The conclusion provides an opportunity to draw together and summarise your arguments in a way that directly addresses the question. It also gives you a chance to reach a clear conclusion of your own, if you have not done so already. Your answers should always be analytical – i.e., analysing the debates and issues in terms of concepts and theories and the contribution they make to our understanding of the world –not just descriptive. We are not asking you to say who said what and when, although you might produce short quotations from relevant authors to support your analytical point.

A good essay also engages with counterarguments. So, give some thought to what critiques and criticisms may be made against your conclusions, evidence and theories. Briefly indicate the way you might respond to your critics.

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Have a look at the structure of the papers written by academics. Articles can be found in numerous journals in the library. Many will be on your reading lists. Take a look and note how they have been put together.

Assignments should include a complete list of references. All quotations should include page numbers and be attributed to works in the list of references. You should check that your written work meets this key criteria:

- Answering the question
- Producing a coherent, clear argument and analysis
- Clearly demonstrating knowledge, reading and evidence
- Clearly demonstrating a critical ability
- Writing coherently
- Providing clear frameworks, structures and signposts

Support is available to help you develop your essay writing skills from the EBS Learning Team you can contact them on: [ebsllearn@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ebsllearn@essex.ac.uk)

We also have a useful Moodle page [–EBS Student Resources.](#)

### 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 HARVARD. You must use this

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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 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**.

**Only Microsoft word or PDF files should be uploaded to FASER unless otherwise specified.** Occasionally, certain modules may require you to submit your coursework to the relevant PG Administrator via email rather than on FASER.

### **Problems with FASER**

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

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

### **Late submission of coursework**

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

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extenuating circumstances that indicate that you were unable to submit the work by the deadline but have been able to within the relevant Late Submission timeframe.

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.

### **Return of coursework**

Your marked coursework will be available on FASER. Students will be emailed by a member of the Academic Services team when their marked coursework is released. It is the aim of the Essex Business School to return coursework and test marks to students within four weeks (not including bank holidays and religious festivals, or periods when the University is closed) of the date of submission. Note: In case of any delays, academic staff will advise students via Moodle or email.

### **Examinations**

In 2023-24, examinations will either be remote via FASER, Moodle or Perception, or on campus in an invigilated setting. To find out whether your exam is in-person or remote, you can check the [module directory](#). Your personal exam timetable, when available, also has this information.

### **Exam timetable**

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

### **Attending an in-person exam**

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

For exams that are more than 1 hour long, you will not be allowed to enter the examination room if you arrive later than 55 minutes after the start of the exam. If your

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exam is only 1 hour long, you will only be admitted up to 10 minutes after the start of the exam.

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

### Calculators in Examinations

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

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

### Open and closed-book exams

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

### Revision classes

Revision classes will be timetabled at the beginning of the summer term, in weeks 30 and 31.

### Exam stress

[Exams create stress](#) for most people, but there is a lot that you can do to prepare for them and help manage the levels of stress associated with exams. The University's Skills for Success Team offers a series of [Exam Workshops](#) which are run by specialist staff. These sessions cover revision planning and techniques, as well as sessions on relaxation and how to cope with stress. Staff in the [Student Services Hub](#) can also provide sessions on stress management if required.

### Access to your exam script

If you want to see your script for an invigilated exam, you should make the request to the department responsible for the module within four weeks of the exam. The

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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 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

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across UK higher education. You can find more information about the role of External Examiners on our [External Examiner roles and responsibilities webpage](#).

### **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.

### **Feedback**

Written feedback is provided to students in the form of an individual feedback sheet, relevant annotations on coursework (except exams and in-class tests), and generic feedback on Moodle. Students who have a query about a particular mark should consult all forms of feedback carefully in the first instance. If the student remains unclear, s/he should consult with the Module Leader for further feedback and clarification

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

### **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.

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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 may need to move into a completion period, subject to Dean's approval, if they are not ready to submit their thesis by the end of their standard period of study. This is only possible when they have successfully completed all of their assignments and a substantial proportion of the thesis is in draft. This would include completion of all data collection and analysis.

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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 research 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 administrators, or SU Advice.

The pass mark for the required taught modules and the professional components/competencies (if required) is 50. **Please refer to relevant Rules of Assessment and milestones for your programme of study as pass mark for modules may vary.**

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.

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## **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 Board of Examiners 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.

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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. Such proposals are recorded in SVG logs, where specific details are requested in order to facilitate the feedback.

### 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 by closing the feedback loop.

The University runs a PGR Student Voice Survey. If eligible, you will be invited to participate via email.

If you have some feedback but don't know who to tell, email: [studentvoice@essex.ac.uk](mailto:studentvoice@essex.ac.uk)

Your Department will also welcome your feedback. They will have a range of quick feedback mechanism for you to use. Contact your departmental office if you are not sure what these are.

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## You Matter

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

### Student Services Hub

If you need practical advice, a confidential conversation, or general information and guidance on University life, no matter what the issue is, the [Student Services Hub](#) 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 additional needs

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

If you are [care experienced, estranged from your family, primary carer and/or University of Sanctuary](#) student please contact the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) for further information about support that may be available to you. You may also be eligible for one of our [bursaries](#) that is available to provide additional funding.

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

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

## Essex Access Forum

The [Essex Access Forum](#) is a university-wide discussion and advocacy forum and consultation body working to support excellence in all aspects of physical and non-physical access at Essex (student education, staff employment and visitor experience). Membership is open to both staff and students, with and without disabilities.

## Seeing a Doctor

If you're studying on a course for more than six months, you're required to register with a local doctor. Our Colchester Campus has its own [health centre](#) or you can use the [NHS Choices postcode](#) finder to find your nearest doctor. If you require emergency medical or mental health services, there are a [number of options available](#) both through the NHS and also the University, regardless which campus you are studying at.

## Counselling services

Our University offers a wide [range of services and resources](#) to support all of our students. with a variety of counselling opportunities.

If you feel you would benefit from support, including counselling, please [contact your Student Services Hub](#). You can find more information, including the full range of counselling services available to you.

## Wellbeing drop in

The Wellbeing Assessors provide support to students with anything affecting their wellbeing, mental health and/or disability. You can speak to a Wellbeing Assessor for support and advice at our wellbeing [drop-in sessions](#) in person. If you would feel more comfortable with a telephone or Zoom appointment, you can still request this via our [online appointment form](#).

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## **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**

Financial Support Officers in our [Student Services Hub](#) and our independent [Students' Union Advice](#) can provide [money management and budgeting advice](#) and can talk through any financial issues that you may be experiencing and how best to tackle them. You can also ensure that you keep your finances on track by working through some free online money management modules offered by [Blackbullion](#).

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 while studying at Essex.

## **Funding Opportunities**

There are lots of funding opportunities available to UK, EU and International students offered by the University and by external companies and organisations. This may be in the form of a student loan, a scholarship or a studentship. You can find out more information, including what you may be eligible for on the [PGR Scholarships and Funding webpage](#) or your [Department page](#).

## **Students' Union Advice**

Our [SU Advice](#) service also offers free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on many issues that might be affecting you. Our friendly, trained staff are on hand to support you throughout your time at Essex. You can speak to us about Academic processes and procedures, representation at University meetings, Student/Tier 4 visa extensions, housing, complaints, welfare and consumer issues.

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

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

## **Residence Life**

Our [Residence Life team](#) is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each Residents' Assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you, provide advice and support with any wellbeing issues and organise a range of social activities to help you connect with others. Find your RAs contact details on your flat kitchen poster if you live on campus. You can find out about all our exciting events by following us on [Facebook](#) or by checking out the University [Events page](#).

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

## **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

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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 **must** complete the Moodle [Fire Safety Course for Residents training](#).

If you have any health and safety concerns or need to report an incident, please use the [University's reporting service](#) to notify us.

### **Making a Complaint**

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

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

## **Your information**

### **Changes to your information**

During your period of study at Essex, you may wish to be known by a preferred name or update your legal name on our student record database (ESIS) if your circumstances change. It is important you keep your information up to date, which you can [manage and update online](#).

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## **Your personal information**

We collect and hold lots of information about you, your course, and your progress so that we know who you are, what you're doing, and how you are getting on. This means we can support you and also improve our services to reflect the need of our students.

All information about you is kept securely, and access to your information is only given to staff who need it in order to do their job. You have a [right to ask for copies of information](#) we hold about you.

To find out more about what information we collect, what we do with it, who gets to see it, and your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018, read our [Privacy Notice for students](#).

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## Student Development

### Careers Services

The [Career Services](#) team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through events, workshops and one-to-one sessions. With teams dedicated to supporting work-based learning, placements, internships and professional development, we'll provide the information and support you need to thrive.

### 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.

### Get experience

Develop your skills and showcase your potential through our extracurricular offer:

- Find the right activity for you with **Chart My Path**, and to get recognised on your HEAR for your extracurricular achievements with the **Big Essex Award**. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.
- Discover paid internships with local businesses that have been exclusively designed for Essex Students – sign up to [Essex Interns](#) to find out more.
- Apply for [Career Mentoring](#) and be matched with an industry expert to expand your network, learn from their experience and explore options for your future.
- Calling our Black students! Unlock your academic potential and cultivate research skills through our digital **Black Researchers' Hub**. Explore on [GradIntelligence](#) today.

### 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.

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## You Are Essex

### Your Award Certificate

Upon conferral of your award, all graduates will receive both an electronic and hard copy Award Certificate. Your electronic Certificate will be available on your [GradIntelligence](#) account within 5 working days of your conferral and your hard copy Certificate will be posted to you within 10 working days of being printed. You will be contacted to ask for confirmation of the most suitable address to use, or you may opt to collect this at a Graduation ceremony if preferred.

If you undertook taught elements as part of your studies and require a transcript, you can request this by contacting the Graduation and Awards team at [award-docs@essex.ac.uk](mailto:award-docs@essex.ac.uk).

### Graduation ceremonies

The culmination of all your hard work! [Graduation](#) ceremonies take place at our Colchester Campus in the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall with a departmental Reception held afterwards on campus. All eligible students studying at our Colchester, Loughton and Southend Campuses will be invited to attend their course's ceremony at the next available Graduation. Confirmed dates for future graduation ceremonies are [published online](#).

We hold two Graduations per year: one in Spring and one in Summer. More information on the dates and ceremonies held for each Graduation, including eligibility and how and when to book your place at Graduation, will be published at the start of each academic year on the [Graduation webpages](#).

### 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 and postgraduate taught awards; postgraduate research students can instead use [GradIntel](#) to record any extra-curricular activities or achievements during your studies, such as the [Big Essex Award](#).

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If you undertook taught elements as part of your studies and require a transcript, you can request this by contacting the Graduation and Awards team at [award-docs@essex.ac.uk](mailto:award-docs@essex.ac.uk).

## 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](#).

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We will be here for you wherever life takes you next. You might know the path you wish to take, but if you need help to reach your goals, our Careers Services Team offer information, guidance and advice on your different options after graduation. Careers support is for life as an Essex graduate and we'll be with you every step of the way. We are proud of our world-class research at Essex and your invitation to contribute is lifelong. As an Essex graduate, you can also take advantage of [generous discounts](#) on further [postgraduate study](#) and [postgraduate research degrees](#).

Whatever you choose to do, please stay in touch. We'd love to hear where your Essex degree has taken you.