School of Law
Postgraduate research
Welcome

Welcome to the School of Law and Human Rights Centre. We hope that you will settle in smoothly as you move into the next steps in your academic development - it should be challenging, but very rewarding as you focus on your own special areas of interest. This year we have adapted our teaching and extra-curricular activities to suit your needs, and ensure that Covid-19 does not impede the same fulfilling experience of studying law that we are proud to offer.

The aim of this handbook is to provide you with information, which will be useful and answer some of the questions you might have.

If you have any problems or queries during the next few weeks, do not be reluctant to ask for help. Some issues can be resolved in the School; for others please see the following suggestions to ensure you receive more specialised advice:

- Administrative enquiries and questions about individual courses – ask one of the administrative staff in the Law General Office;
- Problems with accommodation – contact the Accommodation Office in the first instance;
- Significant personal or emotional issues – you can make an appointment with the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service at the Silberrad Centre.

And remember, your personal tutor is also available to give advice, or point you in the direction of someone who can help you.

Dr Matthew Stone
Head of School

Caveat

The information included in this handbook is correct at the time of publication, however, it is possible that changes do occur and sometimes at very short notice. In such cases, the School of Law including the Human Rights Centre reserve the right to update, modify or even withdraw specific courses/modules or staffing arrangements or methods of assessment where academic developments or unexpected contingencies render such action necessary or expedient in the judgement of the Head of the School. If there are any discrepancies between this document and the University or School documents, then official University or School documents take precedence.
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All Schools and Departments at Essex create a Student Handbook each year. These are designed to be useful tools for you to find out what you need to know about your School, the University and its academic policies and procedures, and all of the resources available to you.

We know things might be a little different this year, but we remain absolutely determined to provide you with the best Essex education and student experience we can while safeguarding your health and wellbeing. Make sure that you keep up to date with what we all need to do to keep safe as a community.

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

Things might have to change and adapt over the year, so make sure that you’re checking online and keeping in touch with your School for the latest updates. The Student Directory contains a wealth of other helpful sources of information which you may also find useful.
Practicalities and Getting Started

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

Registration

Whether a new or returning student, you will need to officially register at the start of each academic year. Registration is not only a formal procedure of enrolling you into the University, but also connects you to a number of vital systems which allow you to access your online Welcome and Induction information and start your studies. As part of this process, you will need to activate your Essex IT account, register online and, once you arrive on campus, undertake a Right to Study check and collect your student registration card.

Right to Study

The University must ensure all students have the right to study at the University of Essex for the whole duration of their course. If you require immigration permission to study in the UK, this will be checked when you first register on your course and as necessary thereafter. Students have a duty to maintain valid UK immigration permission that allows study for the duration of their course, failure to do so may lead to withdrawal from the University under the University’s General Regulations.

Student visas

The University has many duties as a Tier 4 sponsor and must ensure we remain compliant in order to retain our Tier 4 sponsor status. Students with a Tier 4 or Short-term student visa have responsibilities to the University and the Home Office. There will be conditions attached to your visa that restrict what you can do in the UK, breaking any of the conditions may mean you can’t remain in the UK and complete your course. Please be aware that changes to your course, whether due to academic failure or choice, must be considered against the Immigration rules and guidance in place at the time, this can mean that some academic options may not be available to you.

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

Explore your Campus

There is a broad range of facilities across each of our campuses to support your experience at Essex, whether in person or virtually. For the latest information, see the updates on services on campus and make sure that you’re aware of the guidance for those coming onto campus.
Get connected

Your IT account
You will need to activate your Essex IT account. Once you’re set up, you can access your Essex email, log in to Moodle, access lab computers and library services, print for free on campus, connect to campus wi-fi, and much more. When you activate your account, you should register an external email address and passphrase so that if you forget your password, you can also reset it using these details. If you have forgotten those also, you should either visit the IT Helpdesk or call 01206 872345. Make sure you keep your password safe and do not share it with others!

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

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

MyEssex
MyEssex is your online account. This is different to your applicant portal – you can use MyEssex to view your timetable, update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, monitor your course progress, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

PocketEssex
Pocket Essex is the University’s official app for students; its interface of icons act as a portal through to a variety of areas and resources. PocketEssex links to many areas that MyEssex does, but also takes you through to other key resources, such as the Students’ Union, FindYourWay and the Library.

Find Your Way
When on campus, we know that finding your way can be challenging to start with. Our Colchester campus in particular can be difficult to navigate with a historically complex room numbering system! FindYourWay is our interactive campus map designed to get you from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions.

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

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

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

If you have a student visa, please read our information on working in the UK for international students before you start looking for a job. The country you’re from and your visa type will determine whether or not you can work in the UK. If you can work, the type of work you are allowed to undertake and the number of hours you can work will be restricted.

Your personal belongings

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

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

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

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
The University recognises the value of diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity within the University. It therefore aims to create the conditions whereby students and staff are treated with dignity and respect, and solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic background, family circumstances, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, or any other irrelevant distinction.

The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy is fully effective.

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

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

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

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

**Students’ Union**

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

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

**Get involved!**

There are opportunities to join 45 Sports Clubs, to get involved with our BUCS teams which offer the opportunity to play competitively in a wide range of sports across the year. If you just want to try a sport, don’t want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our Just Play programme. We have 120 Societies where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or, if you can’t find what you’re looking for, start your own!

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

**Essex Spirit, social media and What’s on?**

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

Follow us on social media:

- Facebook: /uniofessex
- Twitter: @uniofessex
- Instagram: /uniofessex
- YouTube: /uni_of_essex
- TikTok: @uniofessex

Our Events calendar brings together all the events happening across our three campuses, so you can make the most of your time at Essex.
About the School of Law and the Human Rights Centre

The School of Law

At Essex we teach the law that matters. Consistent with our founding ethos, we are ‘freer, more daring and more experimental’ than a traditional law school. Your legal education has to be relevant and responsive to the needs of a changing society, so our approach is global in outlook, based on justice, and engaged with real-world problems.

The Human Rights Centre

The Human Rights Centre is housed within the School of Law and run by core staff supported by other members from across different departments at the University. All members of the Human Rights Centre research and teach in the field of human rights, and many pursue activities linked to human rights-based litigation, international organisations, international and national nongovernmental organisations, research networks and other academics courses.

Meet the team

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gus Waschefort</td>
<td>Co-Director of Research Students</td>
<td><a href="mailto:g.waschefort@essex.ac.uk">g.waschefort@essex.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Stephen Turner</td>
<td>Co-Director of Research Students</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.j.turner@essex.ac.uk">s.j.turner@essex.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Oriola Sallavaci</td>
<td>Research Ethics Officer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:o.sallavaci@essex.ac.uk">o.sallavaci@essex.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
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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.

Supervision of research students during periods of leave

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

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

**Research Students’ Progress Board (RSPB)**

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

Principal Regulations for Research Degrees: [https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/principal-regulations-research-degrees.pdf](https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/principal-regulations-research-degrees.pdf)

Professional Doctorate rules of assessment: [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr/assess-rules.aspx](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr/assess-rules.aspx)

**Staff research interests**

Our staff have a wide range of research interests which go beyond the clusters of commercial law, human rights and public law. See our individual academic staff profiles for full lists of research interests in the School.

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/law/people](https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/law/people)

**School resources and facilities**

A wide range of facilities and resources are available for all students to access and use as part of their study at Essex. Each department and school also have a selection for the exclusive use of their students. Below is a summary of the facilities and resources that are likely to be most useful to you.
The Law Common Room
The Law Common Room (5S.6.17) is located on level 6 of the Law School and is for the use of all students and staff in the Law and Human Rights. This is a quiet study and social space, which cannot be booked out for meetings and is therefore an open space. Please be considerate to other people using the space.

The University will increase its cleaning rota and the common room will be ventilated with hand sanitisers available. Students will be expected to follow social distancing rules.

Administrative Support
If you have general questions about your programme of study, such as, how to select modules, or where to find certain information, please check out the Law and Human Rights PGR Moodle page in the first place. It contains a wealth of information and many of your questions may be answered here. If your query is more specific, contact this email address in the first place: lawpgradadmin@essex.ac.uk you can usually expect a response within five working days. Please note that response times may be longer at very busy times of the year.

The majority of issues can be resolved by email, but if you wish to have a meeting, feel free to request a ZOOM appointment.

Unfortunately, we will not have an in-person Helpdesk at this time. This is reviewed periodically and if this changes, you will be informed immediately.

The departments working hours are Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17:00 and you can expect a response via email within 5 working days.

Contact Details
Email: lawpgradadmin@essex.ac.uk

Postgraduate (Research) Study Room / Lab
The Postgraduate Study room is available for all research students in 5S.4.9. These desks are currently allocated to individual students, and desk space is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. There is a very limited amount of space available, so please consider whether you will be regularly using this space before you request it, and notify the PGR administrator if you no longer wish to use it so that it can be reallocated.

If you are allocated one of these desks, you will need a key to enter the room for which you will need to give a £5 deposit to the Finance Administrator, located in the Law General Office. This will be refunded upon return of the key when you no longer require the space. If you are not able to obtain a space in the PhD room, there are PC Labs available across campus and a Postgraduate Study room located on the ground floor of the library.
The School of Law and Human Rights Centre asks all Postgraduate Researches to keep the room in a good order. A desk in the PhD study room is not a store room for your personal belongings, and please consider the other students who share the room with you.

**Printing, photocopying and scanning**

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

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

Please note that there are strict laws about infringement of copyright; more information can be found on the library website which explains what and how much you are permitted to copy. Usage is monitored and subject to a fair use policy.

**Premium printing**

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

**Noticeboards**

Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. The School of Law noticeboards are located throughout the corridor on level 5.

**HEROES: Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects**

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

**Social Media**

Our social media channels are a good source of information on what is happening in the School of Law and Human Rights Centre. Please do not contact these pages asking for information about your course; you should contact the PGR administrator directly via email.

- School of Law Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/UOELAW/
- School of Law Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/EssexLawSchool/
- Human Rights Centre Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/EssexHRC/
- Human Rights Centre Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/essexhrc/
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

It is important from the outset to be pro-active in the management of your project. The work is, after all, your responsibility and not that of your supervisor, and ultimately both you and your supervisor have to certify that the thesis is entirely your own work. Supervisors will try their best to give you advice and support you as your work develops.

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

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

  
  ▪  If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.

  
  ▪  Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.

  
  ▪  Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process, and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

The academic year

The academic year uses a week numbering system that covers the 52 weeks of a calendar year but corresponds to typical term dates. So, the start of the academic year is week 1, which is Welcome week, with teaching commencing in week 2.

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<td>Spring</td>
<td>16-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Some courses have slightly different term dates, but this does not apply to our research degrees in the School of Law and Human Rights Centre. However, you will find that all campus activities and events make reference to the standard academic year terms and schedule noted above.

My Course

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

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

Making changes to your study

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Thinking of leaving or taking a break?**

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

**Periods of study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research degree</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters by Dissertation (MA or MSc by dissertation)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>One year</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>One year</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Philosophy (MPhil)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Six years</td>
<td>Seven years</td>
<td>Six years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy Integrated (PhD)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Eight years</td>
<td>Nine years</td>
<td>Eight years</td>
<td>Up to one year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course materials

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

Library Services

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

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

See the Library website for the latest information on all our libraries and the services available, including opening hours.

Research Skills Development

Proficio

Proficio is our innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, and it's unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and so we credit your Proficio account with funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and for conference attendance. You can find out more information via: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/research.aspx

You can contact the Proficio team at: proficio@essex.ac.uk

University and departmental training events

Attending Modules in the School of Law

A supervisor may recommend that you attend a module to help you with your research. You will not usually be expected to comply with the assessment rules of such a module. Even where attendance of a module was not recommended by the supervisor, you may sit in on any modules offered by the School, so long as you receive the module director’s permission. Details of modules can be obtained from the postgraduate students’ handbook or the undergraduate handbook. Both can be viewed on: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/resources/student-handbooks It is not advisable to audit so many modules that this becomes a distraction from working on your thesis.
School of Law research events

Research activities in the School of Law are largely organised around our research clusters. We have a research cluster in public law, commercial law, human rights, criminal justice and digital law. All of these areas are defined very broadly. Research students are encouraged to join the research cluster most closely linked to their area of research and invitations for cluster events will be sent to research students whenever relevant. If you have any questions about which cluster would be most suitable for you, please discuss this with your supervisor or the cluster coordinators.

PGR Conference

In your first year you will be required to give a presentation on your proposed research at the Post-Graduate Research Conference, provisionally scheduled for the Summer term. All research students are encouraged to attend and present their research at this conference every year throughout their studies.

Departmental support or funding for attending conferences/other events

£300 Fund Allocation

In addition to Proficio funding, full-time students may apply to the School for additional support up to £300 per financial year, £150 for part-time students. The financial year runs from 1st August to 31st July the following year.

Support may be provided for the costs of attending events which enhance the student’s research and development such as conferences, seminars and workshops. This funding is discretionary and applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

To apply, the student should e-mail their supervisor asking for their agreement that the event is relevant to their PhD and beneficial to their research. The student should then forward their supervisor’s confirmation to lawfinance@essex.ac.uk with a request for reimbursement of the costs. Copies of receipts/booking confirmations should be attached to the e-mail and bank details should also be provided.
Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

Ethics in research

All research involving human participants, whether undertaken by the University’s staff or students, must undergo an ethics review by an appropriate body and ethical approval must be obtained before it commences. You should first read the Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants and then submit an Ethical Approval application form via ERAMS. You should be aware that ethical approval cannot be granted retrospectively so it is very important that you make your application before you start to recruit participants or collect data from them.

Research involving the NHS may require and research involving human tissue or adults lacking capacity to consent will require Health Research Authority and / or NHS Research Ethics Committee approval.

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

Please contact the PGR administrator with any further queries relating to Ethics. You can also contact the departmental Ethics Officer, Dr Meagan Wong.

Risk assessments in research

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

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

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

Academic Integrity and Academic Offences

The University expects students to complete all assessment with honesty and integrity and to follow our conventions for academic writing (including appropriate referencing of sources) and ethical
considerations. If you don’t meet these expectations, then you may be charged with having committed an **academic offence**, a matter the University takes very seriously.

It is your responsibility to make yourself aware of the regulations governing examinations and how to correctly prepare your coursework. An academic offence can take place even if you didn’t mean to commit one, and examples include plagiarism, falsifying data or evidence, and communicating with another candidate in an examination.

**Referencing**

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

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

There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is OSCOLA. You must use this referencing style. Guidance on your referencing style is available online, including an interactive referencing tutorial. You can also take the Academic Integrity course on Moodle.

**Academic Skills and Support**

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

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their academic study and achieve their potential on their course, which is why Skills for Success team is available to help by providing support, resources and workshops on:

- Academic writing
- Maths and stats
- Digital Skills
- Research and referencing
- English language
- Exam revision

The Skills for Success team can also provide further learning and study skills information and support for disabled students.

**Departmental Support**

Each department has a Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO). This is a member of staff in your department who you can talk with confidentially about any disability or accessibility support needs or concerns relating to your academic studies. They can:
• provide advice about the University’s specialist support services
• act as a link between the department and the Student Services Hub
• can liaise with supervisors or the graduate team if you are worried, or embarrassed, about talking to them about disability related difficulties
• can assist if you feel the reasonable adjustments recommended are not being implemented by the department
• can provide advice if you are experiencing problems with your academic progress as a result of a permanent or temporary disability, medical condition or specific learning difficulty and who will be able to find out about the options available to you

Our DDLO for Postgraduate students is Mohammed Alshaleel.

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

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

Language classes

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

Learning a Language
Learn a language at Essex to increase your global and cultural awareness. Language learning can give you the confidence to work and travel internationally, expand your options for studying abroad, and get a competitive edge when you’re looking for a job. There are a number of ways to do it, so look online to discover the best option for you.

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

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

Submission of Thesis

Thesis Submission Pre-Examination

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

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

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

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

a) A single PDF copy of your entire thesis; and

b) A submission form (RD1) completed and signed by yourself.

Thesis Submission for Award

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

Thesis Deposit and Retention

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

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

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

Appeals

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

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

The Board of Examiners

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

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

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

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

The research thesis is assessed in accordance with the normal arrangements for research degrees, as outlined in the Principal regulations for research degrees and Codes of practice relating to higher degrees.
**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 represents the voice of fellow students in departmental Student Voice Groups (SVG) and other University level committees.

**Student Voice Groups**

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

**Student Surveys**

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

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

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

Student Services Hub

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

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

Support for disabilities and conditions

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

Funding opportunities

UK students may be eligible for a Disabled Students’ Allowance grant. If you are not a UK student, you may be eligible for other grants and funding. We would recommend you contacting the Student Services Hub to discuss all the options that may be available to you, as well as for general advice, support and information on health and wellbeing issues.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

If you have a permanent or temporary disability that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

Seeing a Doctor

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

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

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

UK Immigration Advice and Guidance

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

Money management

If you get into financial difficulty you should get help and talk to someone as soon as possible. The sooner your problem is identified, the sooner it can be solved. You may be eligible to apply for financial support to assist you with short-term unexpected and unforeseen costs. Advisers in our Student Services Hub and our independent Students’ Union Advice can listen and talk you through the issues you are experiencing.

Students’ Union Advice

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

Colchester students – suadvice@essex.ac.uk; 01206 874034
Southend students – suacsou@essex.ac.uk; 01702 328235 (term time only)
Loughton students – suaclou@essex.ac.uk; 01206 874034

Residence Life

Our Residence Life team is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each residents’ assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you and organise a range of social activities. Plus, they can help if you’ve got any concerns or complaints. Residence Life operates outside of office hours when other University support services are closed.
Religion, faith and beliefs
We’re proud of our vibrant and diverse multicultural community and welcome everyone, of all faiths and none. The calm, friendly and supportive atmosphere in our Faith Centre is a welcoming place for staff, students and the wider community to meet, interact and engage with each other.

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

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

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
The health and wellbeing of our students is our priority. This means we are constantly monitoring advice from the UK Government, Public Health England, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the World Health Organisation, and updating our guidance for students in line with their advice.

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

Health and safety on campus
Our campuses are generally very safe environments. We want to ensure that things stay this way. In order to achieve this, we work closely with local agencies including the police and borough councils. Take a look at our website for general information and advice.

Please familiarise yourself with fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures for your accommodation, work or study location. If you have a permanent or temporary disability that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

Please take note of our advice on the safe use of electrical items and prohibited electrical items in residential and non-residential areas.

All students residing on campus should complete the Moodle Fire Safety Course for Residents training.

If you have any health and safety concerns or need to report an incident, please use the University’s reporting service to notify us.
Making a Complaint

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

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

Careers Services
The Career Services team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through various events, workshops and one-to-one sessions. We also have teams dedicated to Work Based Learning, Placements and Internships that can provide information and support as needed. Find out more about the Career Services available to you here: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/careers/

CareerHub
Find hundreds of part-time jobs, internships and graduate vacancies, book on to careers events and workshops, take career assessments, practice your interview skills, build your CV, and connect with employers on CareerHub, the online Essex careers and jobs portal. Login with your Essex username and password.

careerhub.essex.ac.uk/students/login

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


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

www.essex.su/vteam

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

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships
You Are Essex

Your Award Certificate

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

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

Graduation

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

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

GradIntelligence

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

References

Requesting references from members of staff

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

For example, final year project supervisors, year organisers, and core course supervisors are likely to be more suitable than lecturers that have taught you on a first-year option course. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet a request for reference for a student who has undertaken study within our Department. Requests received from students who have graduated from the University within the last
three years will be prioritised. Requests received outside of this period may, of course, be met if a member of staff is equipped with the necessary information and is willing to provide a reference.

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

**Copies of references**

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

**Alumni**

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

**What comes next?**

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

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

Viva and End of Studies

1. Where can I find information about how my finished Thesis should look, and how can I submit my thesis?

The university guidelines on this are available here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/thesis-format usually you would be expected to submit two physical bound copies of your thesis to the Silberrad Student Centre. However, currently the University is accepting only electronic copies of theses. It is important to note that you must have submitted your thesis title form (available here under ‘your thesis’: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-examination-policy), at least 2 months before you submit your thesis. You will not be able to submit your thesis until this has been accepted, so please bear this in mind, especially if you are planning to submit at the very end of your standard or completion period. Please also note that the ‘intended date of submission’ is only advisory – as long as you stay within your standard or completion period (before your studies officially end), you do not need to resubmit this form. Therefore, please give your best estimate for when you hope to submit, and let your Research Student Administrator know if you later need to amend this.

2. I am at the end of my studies and have realised that I need to go over my word count of 80,000 words. Can I do this?

You should try to stick to the word count as far as possible. Where you feel it is essential for you to go over your word count, please do speak to your supervisor/s in the first instance. If they are in agreement, you can request from the central university to allow you to go over your word count. Simply email pgresearch@essex.ac.uk with your request and state what you would like your new word count to be. This will then go to the deputy dean who will consider your request and let you know if it is approved. Do consider that requests for large increases may be subject to scrutiny by the central university.

3. I have submitted my thesis and am now either awaiting my Viva or am completing my corrections. Am I still a student?

Yes. You are still a student and are still entitled to all the benefits of being a student, including library access, a student card (ask the Silberrad Student Centre or email askthehub@essex.ac.uk about getting a new registration card), and council tax exemption. You do not stop being a student until you are officially sent your award letter (at which point the University will let you know how much longer you will remain registered), or in the case that you are withdrawn or withdraw from studies for any reason.
4. I have heard that some students had an ‘independent chair’ at their Viva. What is this and why did they have it others do not?

An ‘independent chair’ is usually required where the Internal examiner is new, or relatively new, to examining PhDs at Essex. There are other circumstances where they might be appointed, but this is the most common. The independent chair is appointed simply to check that the internal examiner runs the Viva according to Essex regulations, such as scheduled breaks where they are needed, and to ensure questions are fair (it is policy that questions should not be designed to ‘catch you out for example). You can find more information about both the Independent Chair policy and the Viva Guidelines here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-examination-policy.

5. How are Vivas being conducted under current (Covid-19) circumstances?

Vivas are currently taking place via Zoom meeting. This practice will carry on indefinitely until circumstances allow face-to-face Vivas to resume. However, if you need to have your Viva via video call even after this general policy has ended, this can be arranged. Contact your Research Student Administrator if you need more information about this.

General questions:

6. I am in international student on a Tier 4 Visa. Does this mean I cannot have an intermission?

For international students, intermission requests have the added complication that, unfortunately, the University is unable to sponsor Tier 4 students on an intermission as they are considered to be no longer ‘studying’. This is a home office regulation and not something we are able to change. This means that international students usually must return to their home country for the duration of any intermission terms, and would have to apply for a new visa while there. However, due to the exceptional circumstances of Covid-19, there have been some temporary changes to policy from the Home Office. If you think this might affect or apply to you, please do speak to International services (international@essex.ac.uk). Only international services can advise you on how this might apply to you and your Visa situation, or give any advice on Tier 4 in general.

7. I don’t know where to find my milestones?

Milestones are available here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-progress
The ones that are applicable to you are based on the year you started studying your PhD with is. For example if you started in October 2019, the 2019 – 2020 Milestones apply to you. If you started in April 2018, the 2017-18 milestones apply to you. However if you are confused or unsure which ones you should be using please contact your Research Student Administrator.