

Your studies

The School of Life Sciences

Postgraduate taught

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2020-21



University of Essex

Welcome

Welcome to the School of Life Sciences and thank you for choosing to study with us.



Welcome to the School of Life Sciences. The School is a rich community of research, teaching, technical, and administrative staff, and postgraduate and undergraduate students, working together to provide learning, research and scholarship opportunities. You join in this community through your study, your participation in lectures/seminars and through your daily interaction with staff. We hope that your experience here will confirm the reputation of the School as a friendly, informal but supportive place in which to work and study, and that you will contribute positively to that atmosphere.

Undertaking a degree course is a major and important step in life, both in terms of personal development and in career planning. Studying for a degree is also a very complex activity, and science degrees in particular are very busy, because of the practical components. You may have concerns and questions about the organisation of your degree course, what is expected of you as a postgraduate student, what is the structure of the degree, what facilities are available, who to see, how is your work assessed etc.

The Postgraduate Taught Student Handbook should provide answers to many of your questions and clarify much about the organisation of the MSc Courses and the School. We hope that your time here will be stimulating and rewarding, and that you will use the opportunities and facilities of the University and School to the full, to achieve your goals.

Professor Leonard Schalkwyk
Head of School



I am pleased to welcome you on your degree course for an exciting year of learning. Although the coronavirus pandemic has brought some uncertainty, our staff are going to deliver teaching using a mixture of approaches that include online learning and limited face-to-face engagements. Our aim is to provide an experience that brings out the best in you and facilitates suitable cohort activities and networking opportunities. You should stay inquisitive and utilise the opportunities that a postgraduate learning experience offers to you – we are here to assist you on this journey.

Dr Michael Steinke
Graduate Director (Taught)

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Introduction

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

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

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

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

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 arrive on campus and as necessary thereafter. Students have a duty to maintain valid UK immigration permission that allows study for the duration of their course, failure to do so may lead to withdrawal from the University under the [University's General Regulations](#).

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.

Choosing your modules

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

Explore your Campus

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

Get connected

Your IT account

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

Campus Wi-fi

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

Essex Apps

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

MyEssex

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

PocketEssex

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

Find Your Way

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

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.

Support for Female Students

The School of Life Sciences has a large and vibrant community of female scientists working at all levels in research, teaching, management and outreach. The University was awarded the Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award in November 2013 in recognition of its continuing work to support women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and the School of Life Sciences achieved an Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental Award in November 2014 and April 2017. The School has a webpage on Equality and Inclusion with a range of information and resources for staff and students: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences/equality-and-inclusion>.

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 PGT 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](#), 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.

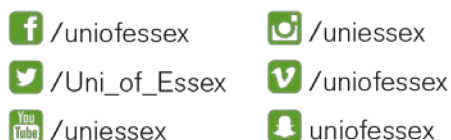
We have [120 Societies](#) where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or, if you can't find what you're looking for, [start your own!](#)

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:



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 Our School




Meet the Team




A full list of all staff can be found on: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences>. Below is a summary of the roles of staff that can help you with a variety of areas during your time at Essex.

For a list of key contact details please also refer to Information for Current Students on Moodle <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Academic Staff

<p>Dr Michael Steinke Postgraduate Taught Director /MSc Tropical Marine Biology Course Director.</p> 	<p>Dr Michael Steinke is the Postgraduate Taught Director. He oversees the management of all aspects postgraduate teaching in the School. Dr Steinke can also advise on Board of Examiners' outcomes and appeals and matters relating to the PGT Student Voice Group.</p> <p>Dr Michael Steinke is also the MSc Tropical Marine Biology Course Director. You can contact him regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval.</p> <p>Link to Research Area: https://www.essex.ac.uk/people/stein81600/michaelsteinke</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.10 E-mail: msteinke@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 3318</p>
<p>Dr Vassiliy Bavro MSc Molecular Medicine Course Director</p> 	<p>Dr Vassiliy Bavro is the MSc Molecular Medicine Course Director. You can contact him regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval.</p> <p>Link to Research Area: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/bs/staff/profile.aspx?ID=5017</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.19 E-mail: vb16181@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 2243</p>



<p>Dr Michael Hough MSc Biotechnology Course Director</p> 	<p>Dr Michael Hough is the MSc Biotechnology Course Director. You can contact him regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval.</p> <p>Link to Research Area: https://www.essex.ac.uk/people/hough20300/mikehough</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.15B E-mail: mahough@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 3317</p>
<p>Dr Andrea Mohr MSc Cancer Biology Course Director</p> 	<p>Dr Andrea Mohr is the MSc Cancer Biology Course Director. You can contact her regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval.</p> <p>Link to Research Area: https://www.essex.ac.uk/people/mohra32204/andrea-mohr</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.15 E-mail: amohr@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 2036</p>
<p>Dr Antonio Marco MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics Course Director</p> 	<p>Dr Antonio Marco is the MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics Course Director. You can contact him regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval.</p> <p>Link to Research Area: https://www.essex.ac.uk/people/marco50904/antonio-marco</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.3.06 E-mail: amarco@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 3339</p>

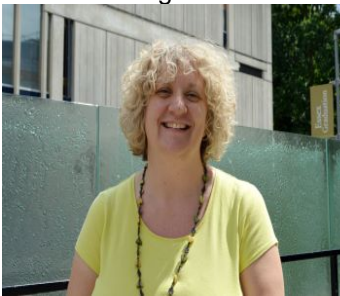

<p>Dr Leanne Hepburn Director of Education</p> 	<p>Dr Leanne Hepburn is the Director of Education for the School.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.6.17 Email: l.hepburn@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 2752</p>
<p>Dr Louise Beard Senior Tutor</p> 	<p>Dr Louise Beard is the Senior Tutor for the School. She provides pastoral support and advice to students who have issues that are affecting their studies. Louise can also be a point of contact if you do not want to approach your MSc Course Director.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.09 Email: lbeard@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 4048</p>
<p>Dr Phil Reeves Disability Liaison Officer</p> 	<p>Phil is the School's Disability Liaison Officer (SDLO) If you have a disability, medical condition, specific learning difficulty or mental health difficulty Phil is the School representative who can help you to access your studies.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.31 Email: preeves@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 3763</p>

Professional Services

Professional Services Staff

The School Administrative Offices are open 9am – 1pm and 2pm – 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm on Friday.

<p>Nicola Reason Postgraduate Taught Administrator</p> 	<p>Nicola handles all matters relating to the administration of postgraduate taught students and is your first point of call for general and administrative enquires and matters relating to postgraduate coursework submission. She is also secretary to the PGT Student Voice Group meetings.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.00A Email: n.reason@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 2051</p>
<p>Vickie Banks Timetabling and Operations Administrator Works part-time Office Hours: (Monday 9.15-3.45, Tuesday 9.15-3.45, Thursday 9.15- 1.15 & Friday 9.15-1.15)</p> 	<p>You should contact Vickie with any issues you experience with your timetable.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.00 Email: bstimetb@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 6380</p>

<p>Maz Brook School Manager</p> 	<p>Maz is the Professional Services Lead, with responsibility for managing educational, technical and research support in the School.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.02 Email: maz@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 2248</p>
<p>Kerry Alban School Office Administrator</p> 	<p>Kerry is secretary to the School Undergraduate Progress Committee and provides support to the School's Plagiarism Officer.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.30 (School Office) Email: kerrya@essex.ac.uk Tel: 01206 87 4074</p>

Teaching staff and support

Typically, most academic staff work from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday during term-time. However, current restrictions due to the pandemic and working schedules adjusted to working-from-home routines mean that working hours may differ. Staff tend to have busy schedules so you should email or telephone first if you need an appointment. Their availability in the vacations will normally be much more limited as they may be undertaking research or on holiday. You cannot generally expect to receive a prompt response to any emails that you send to teaching staff during vacations. If you have an urgent query during the vacations, you can contact the Postgraduate Office.

All teaching staff hold regular weekly academic support hours during term time. This is a time when you can meet with them about anything to do with your modules, from difficulties you might be having with your seminar readings, to discussions about feedback on your coursework. Students will be advised of the MSc Course Directors/Postgraduate Taught Director academic support hours by e-mail at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

Module Supervisors

There are dedicated Module Supervisors to support students for each module. If you have a specific study question the relevant module, the module supervisor for each module can be found on Moodle. <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Your Personal Tutor

All postgraduate taught students have a Personal Tutor who will meet you soon after you arrive, and regularly throughout your course. Your Personal Tutor will be a member of academic staff and is someone you can talk to about your course or any difficulties you may encounter. They can recommend and direct you to other support services that might be able to further help and support you. You Students studying on the MSc Tropical Marine Biology course will be allocated a Personal Tutor (this will be an academic member of staff from the School). They will be advised of their Tutor's

name at the beginning of the Autumn Term and will be notified of their contact details by e-mail.
Staff Research

Staff research interests

Research in the School is organised into four main groups: Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology, Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease, and Plant Productivity. Please see our research page for more information:
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences/research>

School Seminars

All postgraduate taught students are welcome to attend the School Seminar Programme which is held on Thursdays between 1-2pm. Details are published on the School Facebook page and circulated via email.

Departmental resources and facilities

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

School Common Room

The School of Life Sciences Common Room 4.11 is located on Level 4 of the School of Life Sciences Building and is for the use of all postgraduate students. It has tea and coffee-making facilities, a microwave, fridge and a seating area. There may be restrictions on using this facility due to coronavirus pandemic and you should follow guidance and advice provided at the entrance to the Common Room.

Postgraduate Training

Postgraduate Taught students are provided with structured training throughout their scheme of study. You will receive information on your chosen degree scheme and modules you should be taking when starting your studies.

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 have their own noticeboard providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities
The Postgraduate Taught Noticeboard is located outside the School Postgraduate Office (Room 4.00A).

Departmental prizes

Each year we are pleased to award prizes signifying excellence. The School has several endowed postgraduate prizes which are awarded annually. The award of a School prize is noted on student transcripts. Postgraduate prizes are awarded at the Degree Day Reception.

The following prizes are available for award to postgraduate taught students:-

The Biotechnology Prize – Awarded for the most outstanding performance by an MSc Biotechnology student

The Cancer Biology Prize – Awarded for the most outstanding performance by an MSc Cancer Biology student

The Molecular Medicine Prize – Awarded for the most outstanding performance by an MSc Molecular Medicine student

The Marine Biology Prize – Awarded for the most outstanding performance by an MSc Tropical Marine Biology student

Communications

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

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

Social Media

Additional information not directly related to your studies may be communicated via the School Facebook Page: [School of Life Sciences](#), [the Cancer Biology Essex Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/cancerbiology.essex.1>](#), and [the Tropical Marine Biology Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/jacques.cousteau.9210/>](#)

The use of personal devices

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

Learning and Teaching

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

The academic year

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

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

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

Some courses/modules have slightly different term dates. However, you will find that all campus activities and events make reference to the standard academic year terms and schedule noted above.

You are expected to be available during term time to attend teaching events, unless otherwise advised by the School.

My Course

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

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

Credits

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

Learning outcomes

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

Grade boundaries

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

Module enrolment

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

The University provides [further guidance](#) on choosing modules, and meetings for first and second-year students will be held by your department where students can discuss their choices with their Personal Tutor. Your preferred choices must be submitted prior to the start of term through the [eNROL](#) system.

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

Changing Modules

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

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

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

Module Directors

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

Employability Modules

The BS985-7-AP (Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences) module for MSc Biotechnology, MSc Cancer Biology, MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics and MSc Molecular Medicine students will gain insight into the functioning of Biotechnology and Bio-Pharmaceutical industries and have an introduction to some of the most timely and contentious topics in Biotechnology, Cancer Biology, Data Analytics in Health Genomics and Molecular Medicine and related subject areas. This will be underpinned by the development of transferable professional and research skills to enhance students' chances of success when seeking employment in the field. The ability to critically analyse, integrate and communicate in a multidisciplinary research environment provides the foundation for students' successful careers.

The BS708-7-AP (Professional Skills in Tropical Marine Biology) module will equip students with an ability to utilise modern learning technologies, secure employment, and to plan, integrate and communicate in a multidisciplinary research environment. Students will build a portfolio of professional skills that assist with finding employment along various career paths after postgraduate education. A combination of seminars and workshops is provided to include CV and application clinics, facilitate expedition planning, introduce health-and safety aspects of practical work, and increase numeracy skills.

Study Abroad

As a postgraduate student there are a variety of opportunities at Essex to study abroad. If you are interested in undertaking an international experience, you should contact the [Essex Abroad Team](#) for more information.

Work Placements

There are a variety of opportunities to undertake work-based learning and placements either during or as part of your studies. Our primary concern is for the safety and wellbeing of our students and we want to ensure that students are not put at undue risk. We also want to ensure that students get the best possible placement experience. In many cases placements planned for the Academic year 2020/21 will go ahead - these are being approved on a case-by-case basis. For further information or to discuss your own placement circumstances, you should contact the Placements Team (placements@essex.ac.uk) or the Academic Supervisor in your department. Students expecting to undertake clinical placements should contact their academic placement/module supervisor or your Personal Tutor if they have any outstanding questions or concerns.

If undertaking a placement, it is your responsibility to find a work placement, however, the Placements Team can help prepare and support you and will advertise relevant placements. If you are interested in undertaking a work placement, or other work-based opportunities that may be available to you and your course, contact the Placements Team. Some work placements may require a DBS check where you are engaging in regulated activity with vulnerable groups. More information about the DBS check process can be found on the [University's DBS webpages](#).

Work-based Learning Research Project

An alternative Work-based learning Research Project may be available for PGT Students. This would include an 8 to 12 week placement. Work-based projects will be shared with students if available. These are not guaranteed and will vary according to the research needs of the placement provider. Students interested in these projects may need to participate in a selection process. Students are also able to identify their own work-based projects. These would need to be approved by the academic supervisor and Placements Team before the placement can start.

Module Materials

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

Teaching timetable

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

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

During Welcome Week (week 1) you may find that your timetable is blank as teaching normally commences week 2. **Please be aware that there may be changes to the location of teaching during the year, so regularly check your personal [online timetable and Essex e-mail](#) for up to date teaching information.**

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

Recording your attendance

We [monitor your attendance](#) at teaching sessions on campus using your [student card](#) and an electronic recording system called [Count-Me-In](#). Your attendance at online teaching sessions is monitored by reviewing your logins to sessions on Zoom. You're expected to attend all of your mandatory sessions on [your individual timetable](#) and [report an absence](#) if you are unable to do so. Please be aware that for Tier 4 students, **poor attendance may affect your visa status**.

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

Making changes to your study

Changing your course

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

Thinking of leaving or taking a break?

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

Library Services

The library aims to provide all of the resources you will need to succeed in your course, via online reading lists and access to extensive digital collections of books and journals. The library team can help you learn how to search effectively so you can find appropriate resources for your assignments. They can also provide advice on referencing, academic integrity, using reference management software and evaluating sources. A range of online support in these areas is also available via the library website, including [subject guides](#) for each department, and support in developing [search skills](#). In addition, the library offers 'On Track for your Masters', an annual programme of workshops delivered in collaboration with other professional services teams to help you with a whole range of research skills.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 is open for long hours and has a variety of study spaces, including individual and group-work areas. The Library offers a wide range of learning resources, online and in print, with a dedicated Helpdesk, live chat and the opportunity to book appointments with your Academic Liaison Librarian to help you through your studies and beyond. There is also a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room on the ground floor.

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

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

If you require extra support to develop your academic skills, you should discuss your needs with the relevant Module Supervisor, your Personal Tutor or the Course Director.

Proofreading services

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their personal tutors. Many students seek 'proofreading' services at some point during their studies, but different types of editing can occur under this name which may not be appropriate in an academic context where work is assessed and could potentially qualify as an [academic offence](#). The University is keen to ensure as 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 maintain 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.

Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

Rules of Assessment

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

In the **School of Life Sciences** we do not have a variation to the Rules of Assessment:

Each module you take has a credit value which you are awarded if you successfully complete the module. You need to obtain a certain amount of credits to be awarded your degree, and the Rules of Assessment and the Framework for undergraduate courses give you more information about this.

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

Core, compulsory and optional modules

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

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

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

Academic Integrity and Academic Offences

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

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

Methods of Assessment in School of Life Sciences

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

A variety of types of assessment are used in the School. The two categories are:

Coursework, including:-

- Essays
- Worksheets, data analysis and interpretation (DAI) exercises
- Practical field or lab reports: including SPF (Scientific Paper Format) reports
- Posters
- Oral presentations
- Web-based, pod or vodcast productions
- Writing summaries, popular scientific articles
- In class tests
- Exams: A written exam, including short questions and longer essay questions. **This applies to MSc Biotechnology, MSc Cancer Biology, MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics and Molecular Medicine students only. The exam is held in January (Week 15 during the Christmas Vacation Exam Period).**

The details of assessments are given in the Module Handbooks. We use defined marks criteria to mark all assessments (see 'Marking' section). You should study the marks criteria carefully to fully understand what is expected of you for each assignment. The marks criteria will also be provided in the Module Handbook on Moodle.

Assignment and Essay Length

Part of your training in writing assignments is to produce a piece of work by a given deadline and conforming to a specified length. The work should be clear, comprehensive and concise and should answer the question. Significantly exceeding the word limit is a way of seeking an unfair advantage. When a word limit is set all students are expected to submit work **within** the limit and provide a **word count** on the title page. The word count should **include** all the main text but **exclude** figures, tables and the reference list.

Staff will pay strict attention to word limits. If you have a particular problem with the word limit, you should discuss your difficulties with the member of staff who set the work.

If your work exceeds the word limit it may not be concise or well-focussed on the question and will require editing. If your work is significantly (>10%) below the word limit it is likely that you will not have covered the material in sufficient depth and you may receive a lower mark as a consequence.

Coursework

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

Preparation of assignments

You will be informed of assignment deadlines in the module handbooks and should manage the preparation and timely submission of your assignments. In some cases, specific teaching events are provided to discuss your progress and give you the opportunity to ask questions and discuss your approach.

Academic Writing Support

How to Approach Writing an Essay

An essay should be a well-structured and well-reasoned written argument answering a particular question. It should not only help others to assess how much you understand about a particular topic, but also act as a piece of creative work that enables you to explain your point of view about a subject area or helps you explore or develop your widening knowledge base.

When you are asked to write an essay, the first step is to read the title carefully and identify what exactly it is you are being asked to write. You should identify the key words in the question and properly understand what the question is asking and how you should write the essay.

The definitions of common 'process' words used in essay questions are listed below:

Compare

Look for and explain similarities and differences between arguments/approaches, and reach a conclusion about which is preferable.

Contrast

Set different ideas or concepts in opposition in order to bring out and discuss differences.

Criticise

Give your reasoned and well-informed judgement or opinion about the merit of theories, concepts or accepted truths, discussing the evidence.

Define

Set down the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept or idea; in some cases, explain how the distinctions and assumptions implied in the definition are necessary.

Describe

Give a detailed account of.

Discuss

Explore an issue by reasoned argument, debate and give reasons for and against.

Enumerate

Write in a list or outline form, giving points consistently one by one.

Evaluate

Make an appraisal of the worth of something, which can include your own well-informed opinion.

Explain

Clarify, make plain, interpret or account for; in some cases, give reasons for differences of opinion or for results, and try to analyse causes.

Illustrate

Use a figure, diagram or examples to explain or clarify an issue.

Interpret

Clarify the meaning of: make clear and explicit, also usually giving your judgement.

Justify

Show and explain adequate grounds or evidence for decisions, or examples.

List

As in 'Enumerate', write an itemised series of concise statements.

Outline

Organise a description under main points and subordinate points, omitting minor details and stressing the arrangement or classification of things.

Prove

Establish that something is entirely accurate by citing factual evidence or giving clear, logical reasons.

Relate

Show how things are related to, or connected with, each other or how one causes another, correlates with another, or is like another.

Review

Make a survey of a point or idea, examining the subject critically.

State

Present the main points in brief, clear sequence, usually omitting details, illustrations or examples.

Summarise

Give a brief account of the chief points or substance of a matter.

Source: Wye College External Programme

Organising Your Thinking

Organise your thoughts by producing a scheme or plan of the essay topic. There are many ways of arranging your ideas on paper, but what is important is that it helps you clarify the interrelationships, ideas, concepts, and examples you will be writing about. This will also be something concrete to which you can refer as you write, keeping your ideas and arguments progressing in a logical and ordered way.

One way of putting your initial thoughts down on paper is in the form of a spider diagram, mind map, or network, which clusters and links ideas together (see below).

Alternatively, a hierarchy is a more ordered, structured way of organising information under different headings and subheadings. Try to experiment with a number of techniques before deciding which is best for you.

Preparation always requires time, but it is a mistake to start writing before you have a definite plan and before you have thought matters out. Be selective about the information you provide.

The Mind Map Method

Unlike conventional linear notes which work down the page, this method involves starting in the middle of the page and working outwards. The title/main idea/topic is written in a box or bubble in the centre of a plain sheet of paper.

Then, major points/themes are written along lines radiating out from the centre. Subsidiary points branch off from these main branches.

A key word or phrase is used to encapsulate each point - the rationale being that if the word/phrase can be summoned up, the whole point will return to mind, in more detail.

Dotted lines/arrows can be added in, to bring out links and connections; different coloured pens used, to highlight main points, and so on. Around these basic guidelines you develop your own system.

From: Wye College External Programme

Essay Structure

Your essay should be well structured. There should be:

- A clear *introduction*, which should state briefly the material you are going to cover and act as a lead into the subject of the essay.
- A *middle section*, which forms the discussion or main body of your essay.
- A *conclusion*, which very concisely rounds off your writing.

Your prepared plan outlining what you intend to cover in each part of the essay will give you something to refer to as you write. It will also help you maintain a clear, unified and precise piece of writing. Note, however, that there is never only one way of writing to produce a sound and relevant answer.

Your writing should be composed of paragraphs, which together clearly convey to the reader the content, structure and thread of your argument.

You should, as you write, be aiming for clarity of expression and, as the essay may have a word limit, you should make sure that every word you write counts (see George Orwell's six rules below).

George Orwell's Six Elementary Rules for Good Writing

1. Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech that you are not used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut out a word, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a scientific word or jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

Also try to avoid verbose or long-winded language or expression. What matters about an essay is quality of writing rather than sheer quantity of words.

Your essay should also be clearly referenced (see guidance below) and you are advised to be familiar with and closely follow the advice given in this handbook avoiding cheating and plagiarism).

Style of Writing

Use the third person (this means not using 'I'). You will be expected to use the third person as it enables you to show that you are being objective. You could try using:

'This essay discusses the importance of ...'

'This research shows that ...'

When you have thought about what you are going to write, you should ideally produce a first draft of your work in one sitting. It is true that many new ideas tend to occur whilst you are actually writing. Interrupting your writing might cause you to produce a piece of work that is stilted or less thorough than it might otherwise have been.

After completing your first draft, it is a good idea to put your work to one side and come back to it after a day or two to re-read what you have written and check it for errors. Whilst you review your essay draft you should be asking yourself whether you have kept to the main themes, as suggested by the essay question or title; if each paragraph is a natural and logical unit; if you have included an adequate number of relevant examples; and if the general effect of your writing is what you intended.

You might find it useful to ask somebody else to review your work and to offer some constructive criticism, and to spot flaws and weaknesses. It is also useful to remember that diagrams and tables can often convey ideas in a concise and immediate form.

The entire process of writing an essay, then, should follow this basic pattern:

- Read the question carefully
- Think about the question
- Order your thoughts and ideas, produce a plan, gather source material
- Write a draft essay
- Review your work
- Correct and redraft your work
- Produce a final copy

The main things to bear in mind to achieve a good essay are:

- Logical, well-reasoned argument
- Relevance of examples, diagram and argument
- Effective use of source material
- Clear and easily understood presentation

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 people'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 EndNote referencing style is 'Harvard at Essex'. 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.

Submission of coursework

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

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

Problems with FASER

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

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

Late submission of coursework

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

Where a student is unable to undertake the assessment by the deadline, and it is deemed impossible to consider a late submission request due to the nature of the assessment (e.g. absence from in-class tests, practical assignments and presentations), an [extenuating circumstances](#) form should be submitted which will be considered by the Board of Examiners.

Dissertation Extensions (PGT Only)

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

Return of coursework

Marked work is normally returned within four weeks of submission.

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.

Examinations

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

Exam timetable

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

The BS934-7-AP (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) Exam for MSc Biotechnology, MSc Cancer Biology, MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics and MSc Molecular Medicine students will be scheduled in Week 15 (week commencing 11th January 2021).

Attendance at this exam is compulsory and you should be aware that Week 15 is the week before the start of the spring term. Please do not book any holidays or trips during Week 15.

Attending an exam

You must bring your registration card and [exam entry form](#) to all invigilated exams where these take place. You will not be allowed entry without them. Remember to check your exam entry form carefully and email the Examinations Office (exams@essex.ac.uk) if there are any errors.

For exams that are more than 1 hour long, you will not be allowed to enter the examination room if you arrive later than 55 minutes after the start of the exam. If your exam is only 1 hour long, you will only be admitted up to 10 minutes after the start of the exam.

Calculators in Examinations

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

A limited number of Casio calculators will be available to borrow **on the day of your exam** from the Exams Office on a first-come, first-served basis, on production of your registration card. Please note financial calculators will not be available.

Dictionaries

Dictionaries are not allowed during invigilated exams. If you take any kind of dictionary into an invigilated exam, even if English is not your first language, this will be considered and reported as an [academic offence](#).

Sample and past papers

Students can access sample and past exam papers on Moodle :- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Revision classes

Revision classes for the BS934-7-AP (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) exam which is undertaken by the MSc Biotechnology, MSc Cancer Biology, MSc Data Analytics and Health Genomics and MSc Molecular Medicine students will be undertaken in the BS934-7-AP (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) lectures.

Exam stress

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

Access to your exam script

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

Students must not attempt to engage the member of staff in discussions about whether the work has been marked correctly (but see section on Moderation and Marking). The marks will have been approved by the external examiners and ratified by the examination board. A student who wishes to view an examination script or project should the Postgraduate Taught Administrator, Nicola Reason in the Postgraduate Office.

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 a relevant profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that modules and courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education.

Re-marking of coursework

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

If a request for a re-mark is accepted, your marks are **not guaranteed** to increase, however, **the mark awarded after re-marking will override your original mark**. Therefore, please be aware that in all incidences where coursework is re-marked, it is possible that your marks could go down, as well as up.

Appeals

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

Feedback

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

A very important part of our teaching and your learning is the feedback that we give you on all assessed coursework; this may be comments written directly on your work, or on marks criteria grids, or it may be more general feedback included when the work is returned. You should review carefully and learn from all these sources of feedback. Whilst staff may give general feedback on the coursework assignments, you will not receive feedback on the BS934-7-AP January Exam (for MSc Biotechnology, MSc Cancer Biology, MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics and MSc Molecular Medicine students), unless you specifically request it.

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.

The Board of Examiners

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

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

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

- what reassessment you could be offered and when you can take it

Publication of results

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

Failure to pass

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

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

If you **fail your dissertation** you may be permitted by the Board of Examiners to resubmit your work, provided you meet the criteria as set out in the [Rules of Assessment for Postgraduate Taught Awards](#). Alternatively, if you have obtained enough credits in your taught modules, you may be eligible for another award such as a postgraduate diploma or certificate.

Credit accumulation

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

Reassessment

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

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

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

In the School of Life Sciences, reassessment is conducted through coursework (and examinations for those students undertaking the BS934-7-AP Module Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology).

Resit exams

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

Exit Awards

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

Extenuating Circumstances

[Extenuating circumstances](#) are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform less well in your assessment than you might have expected, or in some instances, may prevent you from submitting coursework or attending an exam entirely. In general, valid extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or personal nature that affect you for any significant period of time and/or during assessment.

If you do need to make an extenuating circumstance claim, you should first read the guidance very carefully and seek advice from [SU Advice](#) or the [Student Services Hub](#). Please be prepared that you may need to include supporting evidence with your claim. Extenuating circumstance claims must be submitted via MyEssex by the [appropriate deadline](#) noted.

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

Computers, Learning Technologies and your Information

Computers

Using a campus computer

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

IT Help and Guidance

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

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

Learning Technologies and Systems

Learner Engagement Activity Portal (LEAP)

[LEAP](#) is our student-centred, personalised engagement tool. LEAP displays your engagement with university resources and an algorithm within LEAP combines your use of these resources and activities to produce an overall engagement indicator. There are 5 engagement indicators (high, good, partial, low and very low) which will help you map and better understand your engagement pattern over time. Full details on the resources included in LEAP, the engagement ratings and how LEAP uses your data can be found on the [LEAP webpage](#).

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

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

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

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

Moodle

We use [Moodle](#) as our online learning environment. It holds key course and module materials, discussion forums, chat facilities, quizzes, surveys, glossaries and wikis.

FASER

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

Online reading lists

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

Listen Again

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

Zoom

You can use Zoom to join online lectures delivered by the University or attend online meetings and tutorials. If your lecture or class is going to be online, we will let you know in advance and the link to join will be in your timetable or emails.

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

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 if your circumstances change. It is important you keep your information up to date, which you can [manage and update online](#).

Your personal information

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

All information about you is kept securely, and access to your information is only given to staff who need it in order to do their job. Where possible, we will ask you for your permission to share.

You have a [right to ask for copies of information](#) we hold about you. To find out more about what information we collect, what we do with it, who gets to see it, and your rights under the data Protection Act 2018, read our [Privacy Notice for students](#).

Student Voice

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

Student Representatives

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

Student Voice Groups

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

Student Surveys

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

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

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

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

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

Student Module Feedback

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

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

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

You Matter

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

Student Services Hub

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

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

Support for 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](#).

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

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 on students in line with their advice.

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

Health and safety on campus

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

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

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

All students residing on campus should complete the Moodle [Fire Safety Course for Residents training](#).

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

Making a Complaint

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

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

Student Development

Careers Services

The Career Services team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through various events, workshops and one- to- one sessions. We also have teams dedicated to Work Based Learning, Placements and Internships that can provide information and support as needed.

Find out more about the Career Services available to you here: <https://www1.essex.ac.uk/careers/>

CareerHub

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

careerhub.essex.ac.uk/students/login

Big Essex Award

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

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

Volunteering

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

www.essex.su/vteam

Essex Interns

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

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships

You Are Essex

Year and Degree Marks

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, project supervisors, personal tutors and course directors are likely to be the most suitable source of a letter of reference. 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 school 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.

Spread your wings graduand; but you can always come back! As an alumnus of Essex, you can take advantage of [generous discounts](#) on further [postgraduate study](#) and [postgraduate research degrees](#).

We are proud of our world-class research at Essex and your invitation to contribute is lifelong. If you do decide to stay on for further study with us, you'll develop extensive knowledge in your chosen area and learn from some of the top academics in the field. You can explore our [incredible range of courses](#) online.

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.

Please note that the individual MSc Course Structures are attached as Appendices at the end of this handbook.

Appendix 1: MSc Biotechnology Course Structure

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core/Compulsory for Masters:
BS934-7-AP	GENE TECHNOLOGY AND SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY	30	Compulsory
BS982-7-AU	GENOMICS	15	Compulsory
BS983-7-AP	PROTEIN TECHNOLOGIES	15	Compulsory
BS937-7-SP	INDUSTRIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY: ENZYMES, BIOCHEMICALS AND BIOMATERIALS	15	Compulsory
BS985-7-AP	PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND THE BUSINESS OF BIOSCIENCES	15	Compulsory
BS984-7-PS	RESEARCH PROJECT: MSC BIOTECHNOLOGY	90	Core
Total		180	

The course extends over a full year with taught modules scheduled during the Autumn (AU) and Spring (SP) Terms (until Easter), over the Autumn and Spring Term (AP) and Spring and Summer Terms (PS). The preparatory work for the research project is initiated during the Easter vacation, with a Research Project to be completed by early September.

The taught modules are comprised of five compulsory modules. The Research Project is a core module, meaning it must be passed with a mark of 50 or higher.

The Research Project involves a research project proposal (research plan), stand-alone literature review, safety assessments, research practical work, poster and elevator pitch which is presented at a student organised conference, conference participation and research project report.

Core/Compulsory Modules

MSc Biotechnology students take module BS934 (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) as well as BS983 (Protein Technologies) in the Autumn and Spring Term, along with the other compulsory modules BS982 (Genomics) and BS985 (Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences) which is an autumn and spring term module.

Students then take the specialist module BS937 (Industrial Biotechnology: Enzymes, Biochemicals and Biomaterials) in the spring term.

The compulsory/core modules provide a rigorous theoretical background to the key techniques in Biotechnology. These modules run as a thread through the first two terms and provide the foundation of the degree. The compulsory modules complement each other to provide a solid platform from which to approach the Research Project.

The difference between core and non-core (compulsory) modules is that a fail mark between 40 and 50 can be condoned in up to 40 credits worth of non-core modules. Core modules must be passed with a mark of 50 or above in order to pass the Masters degree.

Students who do not pass sufficient credits to be awarded a Masters may receive a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). Students must obtain 60 credits for the award of PGCert.

Links to the Module Directory to view further information about the modules can be found here:-

BS934-7-AP Gene Technology & Synthetic Biology

[Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology](#)

BS982-7-AU Introduction to Genomics

[Genomics](#)

BS983-7-AP Protein Technologies

[Protein Technologies](#)

BS937-7-SP Industrial Biotechnology: Enzymes, Biochemicals and Biomaterials

[Industrial Biotechnology: Enzymes, Biochemicals and Biomaterials](#)

BS985-7-AP Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences

[Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences](#)

BS984-7-PS Research Project: MSc Biotechnology

[Research Project: MSc Biotechnology](#)

Further information on the modules including lecture content, details of assessment, deadlines and reading lists is listed in the Module Handbooks which are available via Moodle:- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Appendix 2: MSc Cancer Biology Course Structure

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core/Compulsory for Masters:
BS934-7-AP	GENE TECHNOLOGY AND SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY	30	Compulsory
BS982-7-AU	GENOMICS	15	Compulsory
BS983-7-AP	PROTEIN TECHNOLOGIES	15	Compulsory
BS932-7-SP	ADVANCED CANCER BIOLOGY	15	Compulsory
BS985-7-AP	PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND THE BUSINESS OF BIOSCIENCES	15	Compulsory
BS987-7-PS	RESEARCH PROJECT: MSC CANCER BIOLOGY	90	Core
Total		180	

The course extends over a full year with taught modules scheduled during the Autumn (AU) and Spring (SP) Terms (until Easter), over the Autumn and Spring Term (AP) and Spring and Summer Terms (PS). The preparatory work for the research project is initiated during the Easter vacation, with a Research Project to be completed by early September.

The taught modules are comprised of five compulsory modules. The Research Project is a core module, meaning it must be passed with a mark of 50 or higher.

The Research Project involves a research project proposal (research plan), stand-alone literature review, safety assessments, research practical work, poster and elevator pitch which is presented at a student organised conference, conference participation and research project report.

Core/Compulsory Modules

MSc Cancer Biology students take module BS934 (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) as well as BS983 (Protein Technologies) in the Autumn and Spring Term, along with the other compulsory modules BS982 (Genomics) and BS985 (Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences) which is an autumn and spring term module.

Students then take the specialist module BS932 (Advanced Cancer Biology) in the spring term.

The compulsory/core modules provide a rigorous theoretical background to the key techniques in Cancer Biology. These modules run as a thread through the first two terms and provide the foundation of the degree. The compulsory modules complement each other to provide a solid platform from which to approach the Research Project.

The difference between core and non-core (compulsory) modules is that a fail mark between 40 and 50 can be condoned in up to 40 credits worth of non-core modules. Core modules must be passed with a mark of 50 or above in order to pass the Masters degree.

Students who do not pass sufficient credits to be awarded a Masters may receive a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). Students must obtain 60 credits for the award of PGCert.

Links to the Module Directory to view further information about the modules can be found here:-

BS934-7-AP Gene Technology & Synthetic Biology

[Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology](#)

BS982-7-AU Introduction to Genomics

[Genomics](#)

BS983-7-AP Protein Technologies

[Protein Technologies](#)

BS932-7-SP Advanced Cancer Biology

[Advanced Cancer Biology](#)

BS985-7-AP Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences

[Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences](#)

BS987-7-PS Research Project: MSc Cancer Biology

[Research Project: MSc Cancer Biology](#)

Further information on the modules including lecture content, details of assessment, deadlines and reading lists is listed in the Module Handbooks which are available via Moodle:- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Appendix 3: MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics Course Structure

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core/Compulsory/Optional for Masters:
BS934-7-AP	GENE TECHNOLOGY AND SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY	30	Compulsory
BS982-7-AU	GENOMICS	15	Compulsory
BS985-7-AP	PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND THE BUSINESS OF BIOSCIENCES	15	Compulsory
BS939-7-SP	ANALYSIS OF GENOMIC DATA	30	Compulsory
BS996-7-PS	RESEARCH PROJECT: MSC DATA ANALYSIS IN HEALTH GENOMICS	90	Core
Total		180	

The course extends over a full year with taught modules scheduled during the Autumn (AU) and Spring (SP) Terms (until Easter), over the Autumn and Spring Term (AP) and Spring and Summer Terms (PS). The preparatory work for the research project is initiated during the Easter vacation, with a Research Project to be completed by early September.

The taught modules are comprised of four compulsory modules. The Research Project is a core module, meaning it must be passed with a mark of 50 or higher.

The Research Project involves a research project proposal (research plan), stand-alone literature review, safety assessments, research practical work, poster and elevator pitch which is presented at a student organised conference, conference participation and research project report.

Core/Compulsory Modules

MSc Data Analysis in Health Genomics students take module BS934 (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) in the Autumn and Spring Term, along with the other compulsory module BS982 (Genomics) and BS985 (Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences) which is an autumn and spring term module.

Students then take the specialist module BS939 (Analysis of Genomic Data) in the spring term.

The compulsory/core modules provide a rigorous theoretical background to the key techniques in modern molecular biology and their applications to normal and pathological processes in cells and organisms. These modules run as a thread through the first two terms and provide the foundation of the degree. The compulsory modules complement each other to provide a solid platform from which to approach the Research Project.

The difference between core and non-core (compulsory) modules is that a fail mark between 40 and 50 can be condoned in up to 40 credits worth of non-core modules. Core modules must be passed with a mark of 50 or above in order to pass the Masters degree.

Students who do not pass sufficient credits to be awarded a Masters may receive a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). Students must obtain 60 credits for the award of PGCert.

Links to the Module Directory to view further information about the modules can be found here:-

BS934-7-AP Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology

[Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology](#)

BS982-7-AU Genomics

[Genomics](#)

BS985-7-AP Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences

[Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences](#)

BS939-7-SP Analysis of Genomic Data

[Analysis of Genomic Data](#)

BS996-7-PS Research Project: MSc Data Analytics in Health Genomics

[Research Project - Health Genomics](#)

Further information on the modules including lecture content, details of assessment, deadlines and reading lists is listed in the Module Handbooks which are available via Moodle:- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk>

Appendix 4: MSc Molecular Medicine Course Structure

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Core/Compulsory/Optional for Masters:
BS934-7-AP	GENE TECHNOLOGY AND SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY	30	Compulsory
BS982-7-AU	GENOMICS	15	Compulsory
BS983-7-AP	PROTEIN TECHNOLOGIES	15	Compulsory
BS985-7-AP	PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND THE BUSINESS OF BIOSCIENCES	15	Compulsory
BS938-7-SP	MOLECULAR MECHANISMS OF DISEASE	15	Compulsory
BS986-7-PS	RESEARCH PROJECT: MSC MOLECULAR MEDICINE	90	Core
Total		180	

The course extends over a full year with taught modules scheduled during the Autumn (AU) and Spring (SP) Terms (until Easter), over the Autumn and Spring Term (AP) and Spring and Summer Terms (PS). The preparatory work for the research project is initiated during the Easter vacation, with a Research Project to be completed by early September.

The taught modules are comprised of five compulsory modules. The Research Project is a core module, meaning it must be passed with a mark of 50 or higher.

The Research Project involves a research project proposal (research plan), stand-alone literature review, safety assessments, research practical work, poster and elevator pitch which is presented at a student organised conference, conference participation and research project report.

Core/Compulsory Modules

MSc Molecular Medicine students take module BS934 (Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology) as well as BS983 (Protein Technologies) in the Autumn and Spring Term, along with the other compulsory modules BS982 (Genomics) and BS985 (Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences) which is an autumn and spring term module.

Students then take the specialist module BS938 (Molecular Mechanisms of Disease) in the spring term.

The compulsory/core modules provide a rigorous theoretical background to the key techniques in modern molecular biology and their applications to normal and pathological processes in cells and organisms. These modules run as a thread through the first two terms and provide the foundation of the degree. The compulsory modules complement each other to provide a solid platform from which to approach the Research Project.

The difference between core and non-core (compulsory) modules is that a fail mark between 40 and 50 can be condoned in up to 40 credits worth of non-core modules. Core modules must be passed with a mark of 50 or above in order to pass the Masters degree.

Students who do not pass sufficient credits to be awarded a Masters may receive a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). Students must obtain 60 credits for the award of PGCert.

Links to the Module Directory to view further information about the modules can be found here:-

BS934-7-AP Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology

[Gene Technology and Synthetic Biology](#)

BS982-7-AU Genomics

[Genomics](#)

BS983-7-AP Protein Technologies

[Protein Technologies](#)

BS938-7-SP Molecular Mechanisms of Disease

[Molecular Mechanisms of Disease](#)

BS985-7-AP Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences

[Professional Skills and the Business of Biosciences](#)

BS986-7-PS Research Project: MSc Molecular Medicine

[Research Project: MSc Molecular Medicine](#)

Further information on the modules including lecture content, details of assessment, deadlines and reading lists is listed in the Module Handbooks which are available via Moodle:- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>

Appendix 5: MSc Tropical Marine Biology Course Structure

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value	Indicate Core/Compulsory/Optional for:		
			Masters	PG Dip	PG Cert
BS705-7-SP	Tropical Marine Resources	15	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
BS706-7-AU	Tropical Marine Systems	15	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
BS707-7-AP	Methods in Tropical Marine Biology	15	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
BS708-7---AP	Professional Skills in Tropical Marine Biology	15	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
BS709-7-SP	Data Analysis and Visualisation	15	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
BS710-7-AP	Coral Reef Biodiversity and Management Field Trip	15	Optional	Optional	Optional
BS711-7-AP	Data Analysis or Voluntary Placement Programme (Work-based Learning)	15	Optional	Optional	Optional
BS782-7-PS	Research Project: MSc Tropical Marine Biology	90	Core	Compulsory	Not Applicable
Total		180			

The course extends over a full year with taught modules during the Autumn and Spring Terms (until Easter), followed by a Research Project to be completed during the Spring and Summer Term. The course contains a programme of five Thematic Modules (BS705, BS706, BS707 (a Practical-based module) BS708 and BS709), all of which are compulsory, as well as a choice of one optional modules (BS710 and BS711) and the Research Project (BS782). The difference between core and non-core (compulsory) modules is that a fail mark between 40 and 50 can be condoned in up to 40 credits worth of non-core modules, whereas core modules must be passed with a mark of 50 or above in order to pass the Masters degree.

Students who do not pass sufficient credits to be awarded a Masters may receive a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert). Students must obtain 60 credits for the award of PGCert.

Compulsory Modules

Thematic Modules (BS705, BS706, BS707, BS708 and BS709)

There are five compulsory *Thematic Modules*. The Thematic Units are Tropical Marine Resources (BS705), Tropical Marine Systems (BS706), Professional Skills in Tropical Marine Biology (BS708), Data Analysis and Visualisation (BS709) and Methods in Tropical Marine Biology (BS707), a more practical-based module which supports the other, theoretical modules. A wide range of assessment techniques is employed – please see the individual Module Handbooks for these modules to obtain further information on the assessments.

The Thematic Modules are designed to provide the fundamental knowledge and tools required to deal with marine biological issues and problems, and to increase graduates' knowledge base across a broad range of tropical marine biology topics.

Optional Modules

Students have the opportunity to select one of two optional modules:

- BS710-7-AP Coral Reef Biodiversity and Management Field Trip
- BS711-7-AP Data Analysis or Voluntary Placement Programme (Work-based Learning)

Information on both modules will be provided early in the autumn term so that a suitable selection can be made, and the required planning of the field trip, work placement or data analysis can commence.

Links to the Module Directory to view further information about the modules can be found here:-

BS705-7-SP Tropical Marine Resources

[Tropical Marine Resources](#)

BS706-7-AU Tropical Marine Systems

[Tropical Marine Systems](#)

BS707-7-AP Methods in Tropical Marine Biology

[Methods in Tropical Marine Biology](#)

BS708-7-AP Professional Skills in Tropical Marine Biology

[Professional Skills in Tropical Marine Biology](#)

BS709-7-SP Data Analysis and Visualisation

[Data Analysis and Visualisation](#)

BS710-7-AP Coral Reef Biodiversity and Management Field Trip

[Coral Reef Biodiversity and Management Field Trip](#)

BS711-7-AP Data Analysis or Voluntary Placement Programme (Work-based Learning)

[Data Analysis or Voluntary Placement Programme \(Work Based Learning\)](#)

BS782-7-PS Research Project: MSc Tropical Marine Biology

[Research Project: MSc Tropical Marine Biology](#)

Further information on the modules including lecture content, details of assessment, deadlines and reading lists is listed in the Module Handbooks which are available via Moodle:- <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>