Welcome

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

The School is a rich community of administrative, research, teaching and technical 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, tutorials, seminars, practicals and field courses, 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 an undergraduate student, what is the structure of the degree, what facilities are available, who to see, how is your work assessed etc. This Undergraduate Handbook should provide answers to many of your questions, encouragement and advice, and clarify much about the organisation of the degree courses and the School. It is also available on the ‘current students’ section of the School webpage and in the ‘Resources’ section on Moodle. The version on the webpage will be updated yearly and any changes to advice, procedures, rules and regulations in subsequent years will be flagged to you each year, normally by email. 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 Phil Mullineaux
School of Life Sciences
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Introduction

This Handbook is designed to provide you with an overview of all the essential information about the University and the School of Life Sciences. Your Student Handbooks provides details of your department, including staff and contact details, facilities and ways to communicate and receive updates, as well as information relating to your course of study at Essex, including Rules of Assessment and the related policies, prizes awarded by the department each year, student feedback and meetings, and University regulations regarding progress, appeals and extenuating circumstances.

At our three uniquely intimate campuses we celebrate diversity and challenge inequality. Whatever your background, race or sexual orientation, you are part of a vibrant community that lives, learns and plays together.

Essex is about more than just getting a degree: we have so much to offer our students! This Student Handbook contains information on your Essex Experience, including the Students’ Union, sports clubs and societies, Essex Sport, Careers Services, campus information, IT support and services and our extensive range of student support and services.

The Student Directory contains a wealth of other helpful sources of information which can be found at https://www.essex.ac.uk/student.
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 set up and started at Essex.

Complete your Registration

Whilst you have accepted your offer and made your way to Essex, you still need to officially register yourself. At the start of each academic year, all new and returning students are required to register at the University. Registration is not only a formal procedure of enrolling you into the University, but it also connects you up to a number of vital systems you will need access to, including your IT account. As part of this process, you will need to complete online pre-arrival, physically attend a registration event on campus, and also activate your IT account.

To begin your registration, use one of the links below:

New students: https://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/registration

Returning students: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/registration/returner-registration

Enrol

You may have to select options to select as part of your course structure. If you do, you must choose the options that you wish to enrol on before the academic year begins. New students will access the system from the end of August. Returning students will access the system from the April preceding the next academic year. Departments will approve your selections within a few weeks of them being made, and timetables will take module enrolment into account when planning for the next academic year. Early module enrolment will ensure that you know which modules to attend and where the lectures and classes are ready for the start of term. You can view and choose your specific options through the Enrol system.

Explore your Campus

There is a broad range of facilities across each of our campuses to support your living and learning experience at Essex. We provide study-based services, like the IT helpdesk and group study pods, but also various food and drink venues and leisure facilities. The Students’ Union also runs a wide range of facilities, bars and general stores. Full details on all on-campus facilities feature on our student webpages and in the campus guide you received with your welcome information when you joined us as a student member.

https://www.essex.ac.uk/life/student-facilities

Get connected

Your IT account

You will need to set up your IT account and create a password through the University website www.essex.ac.uk/it/getaccount. You will need to register an external email address and passphrase to set up your account. Once you’re set up, you can access your email, log on to lab computers, connect to campus wi-fi, and much more.

You must change your password within four weeks of your account being created, and then once every four months after that. You should receive email notifications to change your password shortly before it is due to expire. The easiest way to change your password is online.
at: [www.essex.ac.uk/password](http://www.essex.ac.uk/password). If you have forgotten your password, you can also reset it through this link using your external email address and passphrase. 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**

Wi-fi is available across all campuses. Simply find 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. You can use it to see your timetable, keep your personal details up-to-date, request replacement registration cards or supporting documents, such as council tax exemption certificates, see how you’re doing on your course, 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, giving you access to comprehensive information about living and learning at Essex. The app provides an interface of icons that act as a portal through to a variety of useful links, areas and resources. PocketEssex links to many areas that MyEssex does in a handy app form, but also takes you through to many other key contacts and resources, such as the Students’ Union, FindYourWay and the Library.

**Find Your Way**

We know that finding your way from one room to another can be challenging to start with. Our Colchester campus in particular can be difficult to navigate with a historically complex room numbering system that leaves even our final year students still baffled! FindYourWay is our interactive campus map that can either be accessed via PocketEssex, downloaded as its own app, or via web browser. It is designed to help you get from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions. [http://findyourway.essex.ac.uk/](http://findyourway.essex.ac.uk/)

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/myessex/](https://www.essex.ac.uk/myessex/)

**Your personal belongings**

University insurance cover is very limited for the belongings of students using graduate study rooms. Therefore, you are strongly advised to take out personal insurance cover for your possessions. This is especially important for items of particular value, such as personal electronic devices (i.e., laptops, phones and tablets). The University does not cover costs for personal damage or loss of your possessions; only in instances where the University has been negligent would a claim be viable for compensation for personal belongings.

**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(s). If you require immigration permission to study in the UK, this will be checked when you first register on your course and as necessary thereafter.

For Tier 4 sponsored students, you will have conditions attached to your leave restricting study and work; some nationals are required to register with the Police. You are expected to have the finances
in place to pay your tuition fees and living costs throughout your course and do not have access to state housing or benefits.

The Tier 4 rules and guidance include restrictions relating to the length of time you can spend studying in the UK and academic progress; this may mean you are unable to take an academic option offered to you or that we can’t continue to sponsor you under Tier 4. The University has many duties as a Tier 4 sponsor and must ensure we remain compliant in order to retain our Tier 4 licence. Find out more on the University’s website: [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/immigration/](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/immigration/) and [https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations](https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations)

If you would like to get additional support with your English language skills, you can find helpful information and a range of resources here: [https://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/international-students](https://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/international-students)

**English classes for the dependants of international students and staff (ECDIS)**

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

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/language-and-linguistics](https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/language-and-linguistics)

ecdis@essex.ac.uk
The Essex Experience

The University and the Students' Union have developed our Student Charter as a part of our ongoing commitment to create an outstanding environment that offers the highest standards of teaching, research and support in an international and multi-cultural community. The Student Charter reiterates that you are a member of the University of Essex community, not just while you are a student or recent graduate here, but for life. You can read the full Student Charter at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/charter

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, and challenge your discipline and have your ideas shaped by peer and professional knowledge from all over the world.

Your time at Essex will be an experience beyond the classroom; there is so much available to all students so you can make the most of your time at Essex and have a truly unforgettable Essex Experience.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

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. You can find out more information on the University’s policy, and get in touch with any comments or questions, here:

https://www.essex.ac.uk/information/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity-policy-and-strategy

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's Code of Student Conduct can be found on the website: www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations

Essex Spirit, social media and events

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.

http://www.essex.ac.uk/events

**International Students**

We are proud to be a global community and we recognise that living and studying in the UK may be very different from your own country.

Essex has a wide range of support covering academic and health and wellbeing issues. Our friendly and professional staff will be able to guide, give advice and assist you during your time at Essex.

You can find helpful information here –

https://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/international-students and http://www.essex.ac.uk/student/student-communities/international

**Mature and part-time students**

We appreciate that studying as a mature student can present challenges. This is particularly true if this is your first experience of higher education and you have other commitments and responsibilities to meet, such as work and family. We want you to be aware of the support available so that you can make the most of your time at Essex.

You can find more information here: www.essex.ac.uk/students/groups/mature-students.aspx

**Student Ambassadors**

Be a Student Ambassador, make a difference to others and also make a difference on your CV! Student Ambassadors help to promote the University and higher education. You’ll be a valued part of the Student Recruitment and Outreach teams. Keep an eye out for Student Ambassador vacancies on CareerHub+ in January.

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/job_hunting/on_campus

**Essex Sport**

Be active at Essex! Learning doesn’t just happen in the classroom. Keeping active during your studies can help relieve stress, increase productivity, provide a sense of community and improve your employability.

Essex Sport offers a great range of sport courses, social active sessions, over 300 fitness classes a month and a state-of-the-art gym, so there’s something for everyone!

Visit the Essex Sport website or download the app to discover all the ways you can keep active during your time at Essex.

www.essex.ac.uk/sport

https://download.mobilepro.uk.com/a/1CJ8?p=4?pv=1
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’re here to cheer you on as you walk into exams and to help you absolutely destroy the competition in interviews and land your dream job. The Students’ Union is run by students for students, and you have the ability to shape what we do. From suggesting what we serve in our venues, to changing aspects of your course, we are here to represent you and work with you to make amazing things happen. There are opportunities to join 45 different Sports Clubs, to get involved with our BUCS teams which offer a wide individual championships programme of activities taking place across the year and lots of competitions take place on Wednesdays and weekends, or if you don’t want to commit to a regular team check out our Just Play programme of activities.

https://www.essexstudent.com

Get involved

We have 120 existing 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 society!

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

https://www.essex.ac.uk/life/colchester-campus/get-involved
About the School of Life sciences
The Undergraduate Office (3SW.4.00) and School Office (3SW.4.30) are open from 9am –1pm and 2pm – 5pm.

The School is open weekdays from 8am – 6pm. Access to the School outside these hours is not permitted without special permission.

Meet the team
A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the School of Life Sciences can be found on our website at: https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences. Most academic staff work from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday during term-time. However, they 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 Undergraduate Office.

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

Your Module Tutor
All teaching staff hold regular weekly academic support hours during term time. This is a time when you can go and see 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. These academic support hours operate on a ‘drop-in’ basis - this means that you do not need to book an appointment; you can just turn up during the time advertised. Details of academic support hours are posted on office doors and on the main School of Life Science’s noticeboard. If you cannot make the advertised time for any reason, you can e-mail your tutor to make an appointment.

Please note that academic staff do not hold regular academic support hours during the vacations, and may, on occasions, be away from the University on research trips and visits. Therefore, if you need to get in touch with them during the vacation periods, you should e-mail them in the first instance.

Your Personal Tutor
All undergraduate 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 the academic staff from within the School of Life Sciences and is there to help you feel connected to your department. Your Personal Tutor is someone who you can talk to if you have questions about your course or encounter any difficulties that may affect your studies, and can recommend and direct you to other support services on campus that might be able to further help and support you. You can find out who your Personal Tutor is through MyEssex, and the contact details of all staff can be found on our website: https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences

If you’re unsure who your personal tutor is, please ask a member of the administrative staff in the School. You’ll also have timetabled tutorial sessions with your personal tutor which will form part of the BS141 Scientific and Transferable Skills for Biosciences module. Your tutor’s name will also appear on these events - check your online personal timetable.

Your Peer Mentor
All first-year students are assigned a Peer Mentor. The School of Life Sciences Peer Mentoring
Programme aims to provide assistance and guidance to Year 1 students. All Year 1 students are allocated a mentor from Year 2 or the Final year. Mentors act primarily to signpost Year 1 students to information and support mechanisms as appropriate. Notification of the allocation of mentors will take place by email and on notice boards during Welcome Week.

The frequency of meetings is left up to the mentor and mentees. You are encouraged to benefit from the experience your mentor has to offer and to meet on a monthly basis so that any issues or concerns can be discussed. However, you may prefer to do this via e-mail. You should be aware that the role of the mentor is not to replace your Personal Tutor or Year Organiser and you should not save up problems and expect your mentor to resolve them. The mentor programme finishes at Easter to allow all students time for revision and examinations.

Further information on mentoring at Essex role can be found here:

http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/mentoring/peer-mentoring/default.aspx

**Become a Mentor**

If you are in second or final-year and are interested in becoming a Peer Mentor, a call for mentor applications is usually circulated in the Spring term. If you have any questions in the meantime, you can contact lhbeard@essex.ac.uk for further details.

**Support from GLAs**

In your practicals you and the Lecturer will usually be supported by Graduate Laboratory Assistants (GLAs). These may be technicians, postgraduate students or research staff from the School. The postgraduate students are trained and briefed before each practical. They are not there to carry out the work for you or to provide you with the answers, but they are there to help, to answer technical and scientific questions, and to check and aid your understanding. They will also check that you have tidied up your bench space before you leave the laboratory.

GLAs may mark some of your practical work. They receive training in marking and are given model answers and marks schemes to ensure consistency. The Lecturer retains overall control of the marking process and moderates the final marks. If you have concerns about the GLAs, either relating to their marking and feedback on your work or in the practicals, you should contact the Module Supervisor in the first instance.

**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. 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

**Staff research interests**

Research in the School is organised into five main groups: Cancer and Stem Cell Biology, Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology, Protein Structure and Function and Plant Productivity. Academic staff are actively engaged in research on topics across a wide spectrum, including: agricultural sustainability; coral reef ecology; virology and immunology; molecular complications of diabetes; oxidative stress; photosynthetic metabolism and plant responses to environmental stresses.
If you are interested in finding out more see: https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences/research

**School seminars**
All undergraduate 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. Some seminars will be more suited to final year students, but there may be other seminars of general interest.

**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 of Life Sciences Common Room**
The School common room (room 3SW.4.11) is a recreational area for staff and students. It has tea and coffee making facilities, a microwave, fridge and a seating area. Marked hard copy Year 1 coursework is returned to students in the pigeon holes near the entrance to the common room.

**Printing, photocopying and scanning**
All students can print, copy and scan for free at Essex! There are over 100+ multi-function devices that can be used at various locations across our three Campuses, including in the following areas:

- All IT labs
- Silberrad Student Centre
- Albert Sloman Library
- Orangery
- Limehouse
- Roding House and Unit 4 (Loughton)
- Gateway Building (Southend)
- The Forum (Southend)

Simply log in to the devices using your Essex login and password, or tap with your student card. These devices can also scan to email and feature mobile printing. Whilst printing is free for all students, please think of your carbon footprint and only print if necessary.

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

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.

https://library.essex.ac.uk/copyright

**Noticeboards**
Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. Year 1, 2 and Final Year noticeboards are located on the 4th floor, just around the corner from the main entrance and coral reef aquarium. Further along this corridor there are also noticeboards for events, outreach and career opportunities.
Departmental prizes
Each year, the School of Life Sciences awards a selection of formal Prizes to students. The award of a prize is noted on student’s Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) and is announced at the School’s Graduation reception. The below prizes are awarded each year:

- **The John Shire Memorial Prize**: Awarded to the most outstanding student in the final year.
- **The David Whytock Memorial and Syngenta Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding overall final year performance in a Biochemistry-based course.
- **The Biotechnology Project Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding performance on a final year research project in Molecular, Biochemistry and Biomedical-based courses.
- **The Glaxo Smith Kline Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on BSc Biomedical Science.
- **The John Gorrod Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding project in Biomedical Science.
- **The IBMS President’s Prize**: Awarded for the best overall degree mark by an IBMS student member on a Biomedical Science course.
- **The John Shire Prize for Biology**: Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on BSc Life Sciences.
- **Royal Society of Biology Student Award**: Awarded for the highest year mark in the final year on a Biology-based course.
- **The Environmental and Conservation Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on an Environmental and Conservation-based course.
- **The Abel-Imray Project Prize**: Awarded for the most outstanding final year project on an Environmental and Conservation-based course.
- **The Pearson Life Science Award**: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest mark in Pearson’s ‘Mastering Biology’ assessments (used for Year 1 modules).
- **The OUP Achievement in Biosciences Prize**: Awarded to the Year 1 student with the top year mark.

Communication
It is important to keep up to date with information relating to your school and course. This section also summarises how the department/school will communicate updates with you and provides some guidance on communicating with University staff.

By email
The University’s departments and schools 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 department or school, course and modules to ensure that you receive the essential information, updates and general communication related to your study and issues that may affect you. It is therefore vital that you check your Essex email regularly. It is recommended that you check your Essex email each day to ensure you do not miss any important updates to classes and assessment.
If you are elected to a Student Representative position, work as a Student Ambassador, or volunteer in another form or means, it is even more important to regularly check your Essex email as should other students and staff need to get in touch, they will do so via your Essex email.

You will also automatically be subscribed to a small number of opt-out lists, again, based on your course. These will be used to send useful information and, while some of this may be about events, marketing or other opportunities, we try to avoid sending too much. To opt in or out of such lists, please visit:

https://www1.essex.ac.uk/it/services/forms/default.aspx

How you should communicate
While email can be a quick and easy means of communicating, you should still consider how you structure and write each email to ensure it is appropriate when contacting members of staff at the University. How you communicate is a reflection on your professional and academic self, and so we have provided some useful tips to consider when constructing an email for different purposes. These are also useful when contacting professionals and academics outside of the University and are widely recognised as a matter of courtesy in the United Kingdom.

The level of formality

- If you are writing to your lecturer for the first time, it is good practice to use a relatively formal manner and use their correct title, for example, ‘Dear Dr Bercow’ or ‘Dear Professor Hammond’.

- If your lecturer signs their reply using their first name, then it is generally acceptable to reply using just their first name in your response; if not, continue to address them with their full, formal name.
  If you are unsure of your lecturer’s title, you can find their full details here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences/people/academic. If no title is noted, then you should use the member of staff’s full name.

Identify yourself

- In the first few weeks of term, academic staff will be busy getting to know all of their students. Therefore, it is important that you begin by introducing and identifying yourself to them as they will not know every student right away. For example, ‘I am taking module AB123 and was at your lecture on Research Methods on Tuesday morning…’

- You should always use your Essex email as your full name will appear to the member of staff you are emailing, but still remember to sign off your email with your name, including your preferred name if this is different to your official legal name on your record and account.

Consider your question

- You should always check that who you are contacting is the most appropriate person to answer your query. The useful department contact list provided earlier in this section should help you determine who will be able to help you on a range of different queries.

- Before emailing the member of staff, you should make sure that you have checked the resources provided, including the University website, Student Directory, Departmental Moodle pages and this Student Handbook in case the answer to your question can be found in one of these.

If your question is particularly long or complex, it may be quicker and more useful to see someone in person. Your department office is open daily and all staff hold academic support hours when you can just drop in. If you cannot make the advertised support hours, or wish to notify the member of staff
before you drop in, you can always email them beforehand to arrange an alternative time or make them aware you will be coming along.

**Our website**
Each department and school has its own section of the University website. This is an important source of information and news about all aspects of your studies. You can find the School of Life Science’s website here:

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences](https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences)

**MyEssex**
Your MyEssex student portal will alert you to updates about modules and other aspects of your course and studies. It is important that you check your MyEssex regularly, as well as email, to ensure you have the most up to date information.

**By telephone**
You will only be contacted via phone in emergencies, or when it is otherwise necessary to receive an immediate response, but you should ensure that you provide the University with a contact number with your personal details.

**By text message**
In instances where a last minute change has been made, and the department or school need to communicate this with short notice, you may receive a text message to communicate the change, such as a lecture or class cancellation. You should ensure that you provide the University with a contact number with your personal details.

**By letter**
Letters may be attached to your Essex email or posted to your term-time address, so please make sure the University has got your current contact details. Your address and contact details can be updated via the MyEssex portal.
Learning and Teaching

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

The School aims to:

1. Deliver an education in the chosen subject of high academic standard set in a framework of procedures to monitor and improve quality;
2. Offer coherent, modular undergraduate degree courses, shaped by the research strengths of the School, allowing specialisation in relevant disciplines and accessible to our diverse student population;
3. Provide a choice of undergraduate degree courses with curricula designed: (a) to promote the progressive development of subject knowledge and understanding and of practical and key skills; (b) to encourage the development of independence in learning; (c) for 4 year courses, to give experience in an appropriate work environment or Study Abroad;
4. Deploy a range of teaching, learning and assessment modes structured to meet the requirements of the curriculum in a well-resourced environment, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate to support individual student needs;
5. Stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for the chosen subject and encourage students to realise their academic potential;
6. Help students by providing a friendly, supportive environment and clear, comprehensive information relating to degree organisation, year structure, module content and assessment methods;
7. Produce graduates who can proceed either to postgraduate study particularly in appropriate subject areas, or to a range of careers, using the key skills acquired during their study.

The Student Staff Partnership

The School uses a range of teaching methods depending upon the level of the module and the type of material that is being dealt with:

- Lectures play a key role in all years, conveying knowledge and facilitating understanding.
- Directed learning is associated with lecture modules in Years 1 and 2 and is designed to develop your independence. Some material, identified in the Module Handbook, is not included in the lectures. Instead you are given guidance about how to study this material and a class is organised to deal with any problems you encounter.
- Practical classes in Years 1 and 2 are used to develop laboratory and key skills, and to augment knowledge and understanding of the lecture material. Practical classes are supported by technicians and by trained Graduate Lab Assistants.
- Project work develops skills in planning, problem solving and research methodology. It begins in the Year 2 summer module, may be developed in Year 2 practicals, and culminates with the final year research project.
- Web-based material is used to support teaching and learning.
- Team work skills are developed through coursework in Years 1 and 2.
- Students develop oral presentation skills in key modules in each year, and as part of the Final Year project.
- Outside formal contact hours, you will undertake student managed learning (e.g. studying lecture material, preparing coursework assignments, revising for exams). The academic year comprises 30 weeks of work and you are expected to work a 40 hour week. The formal timetable comprises a relatively small fraction of this. You are responsible for organising your time in an effective way. Module Handbooks give guidance on the amount of time you should be spending on study. Independent learning is developed by systematically increasing the proportion of time available for student-managed learning over the three years.

**Teaching and learning expectations**

You can expect that we will:

- Work to achieve our aims;
- Provide clear and comprehensive documentation for all modules;
- Provide teaching sessions which (a) are well prepared and delivered, (b) are supported by sufficient materials and equipment and (c) for practical work, are safe;
- Notify you as far in advance as is possible of any changes to the teaching timetable;
- Return assessed work within 4 term time weeks, with clear and helpful feedback and marked in accordance with the marks classification in this handbook, on a coversheet where appropriate;
- Deal with queries you may have relating to modules within a reasonable timescale.

We expect that you will:

- Make the best use of the educational opportunities and resources available and work to achieve the stated objectives and to realise your academic potential;
- Familiarise yourself with the contents of this handbook and the documentation which accompanies each module and follow the guidance, procedures and rules described;
- Attend prescribed instruction of all types and where absence is unavoidable notify the relevant person;
- Regularly consult noticeboards and your email and keep your address updated so that you do not miss important information;
- Prepare adequately for and participate actively in teaching sessions;
- Support your formal tuition with an appropriate level and intensity of student managed learning;
- Submit assessed work in the appropriate form and by the published deadlines;
- Use feedback on written work constructively, both to build on your strengths and to identify and remedy your weaknesses;
- Regularly review your academic progress (marks) and take appropriate action where and when necessary;
- Contribute to the development and improvement of the student learning experience by providing accurate and considered feedback on modules when required, and by participating in the student staff liaison process;
- Abide by the various rules and regulations in the School and University that have evolved in order to provide safe, fair and effective teaching and learning support for all students.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Week numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>2-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>16-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The official University teaching day runs from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday and you are expected to be available during these times in term time to attend teaching events.

Module enrolment

You may have had to select some optional modules as part of your course structure. If this is the case, you should have done this prior to the start of term. More information on how to do this can be found in the ‘Getting Started’ section of this handbook.

Teaching timetable

Once you have chosen all of your modules (if applicable) and received confirmation, they will appear on your personal timetable. Each student has a personal timetable, this shows you when and where you teaching is taking place, as well as who is teaching you. Check your personal online timetable regularly for up to date teaching information. You can access your timetable on most mobile devices, including smart phones and tablets.

You may find that the first week of your timetable is blank if you do not have any course commitments during Welcome Week (week 1). Due to unforeseen, unavoidable circumstances, there may be some room changes during the year; therefore it is vital that you regularly check your timetable and Essex email where any changes will be communicated immediately.

Information about teaching timetables, including requesting a class change, reporting a timetable issue and accessing your individual timetable can be found AT:
Course structure
We offer a wide range of carefully structured and innovative courses that give you a thorough and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the subject. All of our courses are taught by staff who are experts in their fields and actively involved in research of international standing.

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

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

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

Appendices 1-3 provide the full course structure for 1st, 2nd and final-year students.

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

Learning Outcomes
Each course has learning outcomes, as outlined in the Programme Specifications. Course learning outcomes are categorised into knowledge, intellectual, practical and key skills, and are also defined more specifically at a modular level highlighting the particular aims, learning outcomes and methods of assessment for each module. Having this information means that you can measure your progress against the outcomes, for example when reviewing coursework feedback, and they can be used to guide you when undertaking independent study.

Credits
You will take 360 credits worth of modules in total during your course at Essex. This is divided into 120 credits per each year of study and each undergraduate module is assigned a number of ‘workload credits’, which indicate the proportion of the academic year’s work that is devoted to the module. In our School, individual modules are assigned either 15, 30 or 45 credits. Each credit is equivalent to 10 hours work.

Module information
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.

Module choice
In the summer term, the department/school produces a Module and Enrolment information booklet with details of modules running in the following academic year. Meetings for first and second-year students will be held where students can discuss their choices with their Personal Tutor.

Changing Modules
Where you must make a choice as to which optional modules you undertake, you should make every effort to research the module and discuss with your Personal Tutor and department before selecting them. 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.

**Module Directors**

Module Directors are responsible for the individual modules, which make up courses. They design the modules, teach them and examine them. They monitor student progress and talk to students about any academic issues related to their particular module.

**Module Materials**

Please refer to individual module pages on our Moodle site at: [http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/](http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/) for details on reading lists and any other items required for each module that you are enrolled on.

**External requirements**

BSc Biomedical Science is accredited by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS). In addition, the BSc Applied Biomedical Science (NHS placement) programme is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). It is important for students on either course to understand the respective roles of the HCPC and the IBMS.

**HCPC**

The HCPC is the UK statutory regulator for 16 professions including Biomedical Scientists. The HCPC sets standards of professional training, performance and conduct for all these professions. The main aim of the HCPC is to protect the health and well-being of those using the services of the health professionals registered with them. For further information please visit the HCPC website at: [www.hcpc.org.uk](http://www.hcpc.org.uk)

**IBMS**

The IBMS is the UK professional body for Biomedical Scientists and is concerned with the promotion and development of both Biomedical Science and Biomedical Scientists. The IBMS offers student membership to those on BSc Biomedical Science programmes. You can find further information on our IBMS notice board and on the IBMS website at: [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org).

The School Professional Suitability Group meets annually to consider whether BSc Biomedical Science (Integrated) students meet the requirements for professional suitability.

**Fitness to practise**

Fitness to practise is only applicable to students on certain professional courses. In the School of Life Sciences, (such as biomedical science). Fitness to practise is designed to ensure and regulate that a student is suitable for engagement in the relevant profession. Students are notified at the point of enrolment if their course of study is subject to the terms of this procedure.

Students enrolled on courses where a practical professional placement is required have additional responsibilities placed upon them regarding not only their conduct but also their professional suitability as outlined in relevant regulatory and/or professional body codes of practice. Failure to meet these responsibilities can lead to the Breach of Professional Conduct with the Fitness to Practice and Termination of Training Procedure being invoked. You can find the full Fitness to Practise procedure online at: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg)
Study Abroad

Some courses within the School may also be taken as four-year courses, to include a year studying at a University abroad. You may have applied for and been accepted on a course with a Year Abroad. If you have not, but are interested in undertaking a Year Abroad or other international experience, you can get in contact with the Essex Abroad Team here:

https://www.essex.ac.uk/study-abroad

Students currently in the School studying Biological Sciences, Marine Biology, Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Genetics or Genetics and Genomics may undertake a four-year version of their course, including a Year Abroad.

There are opportunities for eligible students to undertake a full year of study abroad in countries such as the United States (including Hawaii), Australia, Canada, Europe, Hong Kong, Japan, Latin America, the Middle East, New Zealand or Russia. The University has exchange agreements with a wide variety of universities and can help students to select the most appropriate destination. Study abroad can enhance your C.V. and it gives you valuable experience of another culture and way of life. Spending an extended period of time in another country provides an unparalleled opportunity to see a side of life which tourists never encounter. International experience is also highly valued by employers in today’s global economy.

The marks from the year of study abroad are only used to improve a student’s degree classification. Calculation of degree classification at the Final Year Examination Board is therefore undertaken both with and without the year abroad. There are usually no tuition charges other than what you normally pay to Essex. Also, in many cases, the cost of living elsewhere is lower than in Colchester, so you should not assume that study abroad is an expensive proposition.

The School’s Outgoing Study Abroad Officer is Dr Radu Zabet (nzabet@esse.ac.uk). In conjunction with the Essex Abroad Office, Radu will be running an induction early in the Autumn term. Further information on study abroad, particularly in relation to insurance, accommodation, language and finance can also be found online: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad/ or through the Essex Abroad Office.

How do I spend a year studying abroad?

1. Attend the study abroad meetings which are scheduled at the start of the autumn term every year (details will be communicated by email).

2. Speak to the Study Abroad Officer, Dr Radu Zabet, and the Essex Abroad Office as early as possible, but no later than the first few weeks of the autumn term in Year 2.

3. Transfer on to the study abroad version of your course.

Please note that places are still not guaranteed even if you have met all the criteria.

Work Placements

Some course within the School course may also be taken as four-year courses, to include a Placement Year. It is your responsibility to find a work placement year, however, the Industry and Placements Team can help prepare and support you in finding placements and will advertise relevant placements available to Essex students. If you are interested in undertaking a Placement Year, or other work-based opportunities that may be available to you and your course, you can find more information, including who to contact, here:
Students currently in the School studying Biological Sciences, Marine Biology, Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Genetics or Genetics and Genomics may undertake a four-year version of their course, including a Placement Year.

Gaining relevant work experience through voluntary or paid work in vacations is extremely valuable. You can combine this with your studies, by doing a placement year. If you would like to transfer to a placement version of your course please contact Dr Corinne Whitby (cwhitby@essex.ac.uk) for advice.

**NHS Placements**
During Year 2 BSc Biomedical Science students can also apply to complete an NHS placement in their third year of study. If you are interested in this opportunity you should contact Dr Selwa Alsam (salsam@essex.ac.uk).

**Assessment of placement years**
Placement years in the School of Life Sciences are assessed for credit purposes only and do not contribute to your degree outcome. See Model 1 in the relevant Rules of Assessment.

Students due to go on placement as part of their degree course will be issued with a specific placement handbook which will contain further detailed information.

**Employability modules**
Employability and career development is embedded in all our degree courses, in particular as part of our Year 1 and Year 2 Skills modules: BS143 Transferable Skills for Life Sciences, BS211 Enterprise and Employability for the Biosciences, BS214 Biomedical Science: Practice and Employability and BS257 Professional Skills for Ecological and Marine Scientists. Employability is also embedded into the Final Year Research Project Modules.

**Summer vacation studentship awards**
There are sometimes opportunities for undergraduates (usually Year 2 students) to apply for a competitive studentship (awarded by external organisations such as the Society for General Microbiology, the Nuffield Foundation and the Wellcome Trust). Studentships provide a small bursary for students to work in the School's research laboratories over the summer vacation, usually for 8 to 10 weeks. Details of how to apply are issued by individual members of staff who place advertisements on the undergraduate notice boards, and/or by email. Also look out for University of Essex awards as part of the UROP (University Research Opportunities) scheme.

**Additional costs for fieldwork**
Marine Biology students have a compulsory field course module and additional field course options are available to Marine Biologists and Biological Scientists. All field courses are heavily subsidised by the University, however contributions are required from students to cover part of the costs of tuition, accommodation and subsistence or travel, depending on the module. Approximate costs are given below but these may be subject to change and will be confirmed by the Module Supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field course</th>
<th>Module Supervisor</th>
<th>Available to students</th>
<th>Estimated student contribution 2017-18</th>
<th>Scheduling (to be confirmed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS114 Marine Biology Field</td>
<td>Dr Michael Steinke</td>
<td>Compulsory BSc Marine</td>
<td>Costs for travel with a</td>
<td>Spring term Thursday 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to secure a field course place students are required to attend all meetings, pay deposits as requested and provide any relevant information requested by the School in good time.

**Items you will need**

**Text books**
You will need to purchase the key text books for your course. Year 1 students are given a key online text book with access to learning resources (see Year 1 guide in the appendix of this handbook) but others are an unavoidable expense. You cannot rely on the Library to have sufficient copies of these texts. You may be able to find second hand copies online, but take care not to buy an out-of-date edition unless you have been told it is suitable by your Module Supervisor. A new purchase may be necessary to obtain an access code for online content and assessments. Please refer to individual module pages on our Moodle site at: [http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/](http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/) for details on reading lists.

**Calculators**
A pocket calculator is essential for coursework, practicals and exams. A model with logs, square roots, trigonometry and statistical functions and a memory is essential. Please note that calculators with text storing capabilities are not permitted in University exams. Specific details can be found in the Exams section of this Handbook.

**Laboratory coats and safety glasses**
You must wear an appropriate, clean, protective laboratory coat in the laboratory. It is compulsory to bring your laboratory coat with you to all practicals. Laboratory staff cannot supply spare laboratory coats. Failure to bring your laboratory coat after Monday of Week 4 may result in you being excluded from the practical. You must not wear your laboratory coat outside the laboratory. Safety glasses must be worn at all times in the laboratory (except when the practical schedule or the member of staff running the practical states otherwise). Laboratory coats and safety glasses will be provided as part of a package of essential equipment during School Registration.

**Other items required in practicals**
Ensure that you bring a sharp H grade pencil, an eraser and a ruler to all practical classes.

**Laboratory books**
A laboratory book is essential for taking notes and recording data during all first and second year practicals. You will be provided with a laboratory book in Welcome Week. Please bring it to every practical.

**Field work**
You will need a pair of wellington boots and a clipboard for all fieldwork.
Library Services
At our Colchester Campus, the Albert Sloman Library on Square 5 is open 24/7 and has a variety of study spaces over six floors, 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 Subject Librarian to help you through your studies and beyond.

library.essex.ac.uk

The library has a team of Subject Librarians who can help you to find appropriate resources for your assignments and show you how to search effectively. They can also provide advice on referencing and academic integrity, using reference management software, and evaluating sources. Find out who your subject Librarian is and get help with your subject area at library.essex.ac.uk/studyres

Skills for Success
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. Whether you need support with researching, assignment writing, mathematics and statistics, digital skills, or English language for academic purposes, support is available to help you succeed during your time at University. Reach your potential and enhance your chances of success with classes, workshops, drop-in clinics and on-line resources. Find out more at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/tdc/

The use of proofreading services
Many students seek ‘proofreading’ services at some point during their studies, but different editing practices at times go on in this name that may not be appropriate in an academic context, and could potentially qualify as an academic offence. In a context where work is to be assessed, 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. The University’s full policy and guidance can be found along with the list of local freelance proofreaders on the website:

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/academic-skills/proofreading

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their personal tutors.

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.

www.essex.ac.uk/study/why/languages

Attendance Monitoring (Count me in)
Recording attendance
You’ll need to record your attendance at all teaching events using the electronic reader in the teaching room. Just ‘tap in’ for every timetabled teaching event you attend.
Your attendance at lectures and classes has a significant impact on how successful you are in your studies. At Essex, we monitor attendance so we can identify students who may need extra guidance and support.

**You should not tap in and then immediately leave the teaching event; you should not tap in for someone who is not attending the class.** These are recognised by the University as a formal academic offence and may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

**Recording an absence**
If you are unable to attend a teaching event, you must report your absence in your MyEssex portal.

Your department consider the reasons and may record it as an authorised absence. Accepted reasons for absence from teaching include extenuating circumstances (such as illness), participation in certain events (such as a significant extra-curricular University or SU Society event or Jury Service). Examples of reasons that will not be accepted include oversleeping, or missing the bus or train. Be prepared that you may need to provide evidence, including medical evidence, if relevant.

**If you need to report an absence from an examination or class test, you must report your absence in your MyEssex portal and submit an extenuating circumstances form.** You can find out how to do this in the Extenuating Circumstances section of this Handbook.

Please contact your Personal Tutor, department staff or the Student Services Hub for advice and support, particularly if you are going to be absent for several weeks.

**Lost or faulty cards**
If you lose your card or it is faulty, please go to the Student Services Hub to get a new card and have your attendance record updated (a fee may be applicable).

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-colchester](https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-colchester)
[https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-loughton](https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-loughton)
[https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-southend](https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support/ssh-southend)

**Fitness to practise**
Fitness to practise is only applicable to students on certain professional courses (such as nursing or social work) and is designed to ensure and regulate that a student is suitable for engagement in the relevant profession. Students are notified at the point of enrolment if their course of study is subject to the terms of this procedure. Students enrolled on courses where a practical professional placement is required have additional responsibilities placed upon them regarding not only their conduct but also their professional suitability as outlined in relevant regulatory and/or professional body codes of practice. Failure to meet these responsibilities can lead to the Breach of Professional Conduct with the Fitness to Practice and Termination of Training Procedure being invoked. If this applies to you, you will have been told by your department. You can find the full Fitness to Practise procedure online at: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg)

**Making changes to your study**

**Changing your course**
If you are thinking about changing course, we recommend that you speak to someone in your school/department as soon as possible. They will be able to advise you if there are any specific requirements for the course you are looking to change to. If the course you are looking to change to is within a different school/department, then you should also speak to someone in that department. If
you are thinking of undertaking a placement year or year abroad, you should check the requirements for these programmes and contact the Industry and Placements Team or Essex Abroad Team.

There are deadlines in place for when you need to change course by, so please make sure you are aware of these deadlines before requesting to change. Further details on changing course and the relevant deadlines can be found at www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/-changing-course.aspx or by visiting your Student Services Hub.

You should investigate your potential new course by looking at course information on the department’s web pages, talking to students on the course and speaking to tutors. You should also look at our Rules of Assessment for the new course to check whether there are any course-specific requirements.

**Maximum period of study**
Undergraduate students have a maximum period in which to complete their studies. This is set at the point at which you register, and is normally the length of your programme plus two additional years. This is to allow some flexibility in cases where you find you must intermit, or you fail a stage of study and must repeat it, or you want to transfer to a new course and must retake a stage of study.

**Thinking of leaving or taking a break from your studies?**
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.

**Intermission** is a temporary withdrawal or leave of absence from the University and provides you with the opportunity to take a break from your studies. Normally, this is for reasons beyond your control (e.g. health or personal problems) although other reasons are permitted. Intermission must be approved by the University first, so if you are thinking about intermitting, we strongly advise you to contact your department and your Student Services Hub to talk to one of our advisers.

You should also read our guidance on intermitting very carefully at www.essex.ac.uk/see/intermit. If your intermission is agreed to, we will also give you the advice and support you need to help you carry on with your studies.

**Withdrawing** is the formal process for permanently leaving your programme of study and the University. If you are thinking of withdrawing, you should seek advice from your Department or the Student Services Hub at the earliest opportunity. It is very important that you discuss your circumstances with the University and follow the formal procedure for withdrawing. If the university is not formally notified, then you may risk continuing to incur further tuition or accommodation fees. More advice and information is available at www.essex.ac.uk/see/withdraw.

**The use of personal devices in teaching**
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.
Assessment and Good Practice

All schools and departments at the University should 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.

The Regulations relating to Academic Affairs which govern assessment at the University can be found online:

www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations

Rules of Assessment

The Rules of Assessment are used to calculate your results. There is a main set of rules for 3 year and 4 year courses, but some departments also have additional variations which can be found in the Variation to the Rules of Assessment.

https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/ug/default.aspx

In the School of Life Sciences we do have a variation to the Rules of Assessment which can be found here: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/documents/roa/17-18v2/ug-app-a-16v8.pdf.

Each module you will take will have a credit value which you are awarded if you successfully complete the module. You need to obtain a certain amount of credits to be awarded your degree, and the Rules of Assessment 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.

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

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.

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 can find our Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants here - https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/research-governance/ethical-approval-resources-for-
applicants along with a link to the online Ethical Approval application form in ERAMS (https://erams.essex.ac.uk/do/essex-login/login).

‘Human participants’ are defined as including living human beings, human beings who have recently died (cadavers, human remains and body parts), embryos and foetuses, human tissue and bodily fluids, and personal data and records (such as, but not restricted to medical, genetic, financial, personnel, criminal or administrative records and test results including scholastic achievements). Research involving the NHS may require and research involving human tissue or adults lacking capacity to consent will require Health Research Authority approval.

**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.

If you aren’t sure what the conventions are, particularly in relation to referencing, you should ask your department and contact Skills for Success via the Student Services Hub.

More information about academic offences and getting support can be found at:

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/academic-offences.aspx.

**Methods of Assessment in Life Sciences**

A wide range of different types of coursework and formal exams are used for assessment. The criteria we use for marking each type of assessed work are stated clearly in the School of Life Sciences Assessment Guide and are given on coursework feedback grids. 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 MCQ exams, you will not receive feedback on the summer exams, unless you specifically request it.

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.

**Reading lists**

The nature of the reading associated with modules changes progressively. In Year 1, one or two recommended text books are the primary source. In Year 2, the reading list may include review articles and original papers. Final year modules rely heavily on more advanced texts and research papers. You can find the details of reading lists through Talis Aspire.

https://essex.rl.talis.com/index.html
Coursework
A variety of types of assessment are used in the School:

- 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;
- A detailed written extended SPF Report for the Final Year Research Project;
- In class tests;
- Log books, portfolios and diaries particularly for work placements;

Please refer to your separate School of Life Sciences Undergraduate Assessment Guide for guidance on writing, presentation, referencing and assessment of coursework.

Data Analysis and Interpretation (DAI) questions
DAI questions are an important part of our teaching and assessment and they are regularly commended by our External Examiners. The purpose of DAI questions is to test your understanding of a topic rather than testing simple factual recall. You should apply your understanding to analyse and interpret a set of information (‘data’) that you will not have previously encountered. The ‘data’ in the question could be quantitative (e.g. numbers in tables, graphs, images) or qualitative (e.g. descriptive phrases, hypotheses, attitudes, figures, photos). Broadly, analysis is the identification and description of the major features of the data. It may include a critical assessment of the quality of the data (e.g. correctness of the method used to collect it, appropriateness of experimental design) and of any associated statistical tests. Interpretation involves discussing possible reasons for the features identified which may relate to issues such as the underlying biological processes and/or limitations of the methodology. The questions will give guidance about what aspects of analysis is expected.

You will be given training in how to deal with DAI questions appropriate to the module subject. This may be through examples of DAI in lectures, or through DAI being set as all or part of the coursework. A worked example of a final year DAI exam question will be provided for each module 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.

Referencing in coursework
Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the UK.
The University takes academic offences very seriously. You should read the sections of this handbook which refer to referencing, coursework and examinations very carefully.

Referencing is a key academic/scientific skill. It is how you will acknowledge all sources used within a piece of work. You must reference all works used directly (quotes) and indirectly (paraphrasing and summarising).

Referencing allows you to give credit to authors/researchers' concepts and ideas/ideas and results, demonstrate your breadth of reading and knowledge on a subject, direct readers to your sources, and avoid plagiarism.

You should always use the best available sources of evidence, such as peer reviewed journals and recognised books.

To find out about your departmental referencing style and for help with referencing, visit the library website: library.essex.ac.uk/referencing, or take the Academic Integrity Moodle course: https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=5844

**Submitting hard copies of your work**

Any work which you are asked to submit in hardcopy format should be placed in the labelled boxes outside the Undergraduate Office at the entrance of the School. Twenty-four hours before the deadline one of these boxes will be labelled with the name of the staff member and a description of the piece of work. You should deposit your work into the appropriate box. The box will be emptied after the deadline and any work submitted after this will be deemed to be late. Work cannot be handed in to individual members of staff. The only exception is where you are asked to hand in work at the end of a practical. Please also read the course deadline policy below.

Work must be submitted in a plastic binder with a clear front, so that your name and signed coversheet can be seen. The pages must be held securely by their left-hand edge. Year 1 students will be provided with a set of coloured coursework folders, specific to their course, at School Registration.

**Late submission of coursework**

We have a single policy at the University of Essex for the late submission of coursework in undergraduate courses: all coursework submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of zero. No extensions will be granted. A student submitting coursework late will have the University’s and Department’s arrangements for late submission drawn to their attention. 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.

The University’s full Late Submission policy and further information can be found on the website: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/late-submission.aspx

**Return of marked coursework**

Marked work may be returned:
1. in student pigeonholes in the Common Room. You will receive an email from the Undergraduate Office to advise you when your work is ready for collection. Please collect your work promptly.
2. directly to students in a feedback class or tutorial.
3. electronically via FASER. You will receive an email notification alert when your marked work is available.

Marked work is normally returned within four weeks of submission

**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.

You can find your personalised exam timetable online at: [www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes/) The exam timetable will be published on the date shown at [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/dates-and-timetables.aspx](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/dates-and-timetables.aspx) and you will receive an email to your Essex account when it is available to view.

**You must bring your registration card and exam entry form with you to the exam.** 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](mailto:exams@essex.ac.uk)) if there are any errors.

Two types of examination assessment are used in the School

- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) papers.
- Written exams, including short questions and longer essay questions.

The main exam period takes place from Weeks 33-36. Exam scheduling can include Saturdays and Bank Holidays.

Some exams will be scheduled outside of the main exam period. Multiple Choice Exams (MCQs) for Year 1 modules will be scheduled in Week 15 (week commencing 7 January 2019) and Week 30 (first week of the summer term). Attendance at the MCQs is compulsory and you should be aware that **Week 15 is the week before the start of the spring term.**

Year 2 Biomedical Science Students will also have some MCQs and exams in **Week 15 (week before the start of the spring term) and week 32.**

Please do not book any holidays or trips during the MCQ exam weeks.

If you are absent from the University during teaching weeks or if you miss any scheduled events outside of term-time, you should follow the procedure outlined in section 4.2.

For exams that are more than an 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 an hour long, you will only be admitted up to ten minutes after the start of the exam.

You can download a guide to examinations and watch a short video at: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/default.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/default.aspx)

**Help to prepare for exams**

The Exams Office aims to ensure that no student has more than three hours of exams on a single day, but otherwise it can make no guarantees that exams will be spread out. You should not rely on having enough time after one exam to prepare for the next. You should plan to have completed your
revision for all your exams before the exam period starts, with gaps between exams reserved for
some relaxation and for quickly refreshing your memory of what you already know. This requires you
to organise your time so that you study the material as each module progresses, consolidating and
extending your knowledge and understanding. In allocating your study time, bear in mind that exams
are weighted heavily and do not spend excessive amounts of time on coursework if it carries much
less weight.

Module Handbooks
Module Handbooks are an important learning tool because they provide detailed documentation of
what you should know for each module. The learning outcomes define what you should be able to do
on successful completion of a module, and the detailed learning objectives specify how you will be
assessed to see if you have met those outcomes. Note in particular which terms are used – to meet a
learning objective that specifies “Discuss …” would usually require much more work in preparation
than one which is “Define…” or “List…”.

Sample and past papers
Sample exam papers are available for Year 1 modules on Moodle, specially devised to help you
prepare for your summer exam. Past exam papers for Year 2 and Final Year modules are available
on Moodle. Final Year past exam papers will not include the DAI question but a suitable sample DAI
question will be provided. Bear in mind that the detailed content of a module can change from year to
year, so papers from previous years may contain questions no longer relevant.

Revision classes
Revision classes will be timetabled at the beginning of the summer term.

Common Terms Used in Exam Questions
Below are some of the terms commonly used in exam questions. Make sure you tailor your exam
answers to the term used. For example, do not write a long description for a ‘List…’ question and note
that you will get very few marks for writing a single line in answer to a question stating “Discuss…..”

Define - Give the definition, but do not elaborate or explain. A typical answer will be a phrase or a
single sentence.

State or Give - Answers will be a phrase, a short sentence or other single item of information e.g.
state the first law of thermodynamics, give the formula for the standard error or a chemical compound.
You should not be elaborating on this by describing or explaining it. The answer requires factual
recall.

List - Do just that. Your answer should be a list of single words, phrases or (rarely) short sentences.
Do not elaborate by describing or explaining items on the list. Typically ‘List’ is used for Year 1 short
questions. The answer requires factual recall.

Calculate - Manipulate figures and/or formulæ provided to obtain an answer.

Outline - Describe briefly (i.e. the main points) or give an overview. Much less detail required than for
‘Describe’ (see below). This is typically a Year 1 question.

Describe - Give an account of the material/topic/area (e.g. a structure, process, data or theory), using
examples if appropriate. Labelled diagram(s) may be included. The answer requires predominantly
factual recall.

Derive (= prove) - Show how a conclusion is obtained from a given set of premises by a series of
logically or mathematically valid steps.
**Suggest** - Typically this will occur as a Data Analysis and Interpretation (DAI) question, where you are being asked to put forward possible reasons for the features of a set of data. You might also be asked to 'Explain' (see below) why your suggestions are appropriate.

**Compare** - As for ‘Describe’ but there must be an explicit identification and account of those points where there are similarities or differences.

**Explain** - Present the relevant information to show knowledge and understanding, using examples and diagrams if appropriate. The answer requires some degree of analysis of the relationships/connections/comparisons between sets of information (e.g. structure and function, theory and evidence) and an ability to integrate this information. The answer requires factual recall, understanding and the ability to present the relevant information logically and clearly in continuous prose (i.e. not in note form).

**Discuss** - As for ‘Explain’ but, in addition, information must be selected, critically examined and evaluated, for example, discrepancies between facts and theories or between conflicting sets of facts should be examined and where possible resolved to produce a balanced answer. The answer requires factual recall, understanding, critical evaluation of information and integration.

Good answers to questions using Describe, Suggest, Compare, Explain, Discuss should include evidence of reading. Even ‘Define’ or ‘State’-type questions could give evidence of reading by, for example, quoting the author of a definition. In Year 1 this ‘evidence of reading’ may be text books, but in Year 2 and the final year more extensive reading is required. Reviews and specialist texts form the bulk of the Year 2 reading. In the final year students are expected to read selected original papers as well as reviews.

**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.

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

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

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**
Please note that dictionaries are not allowed during exams. If you take a dictionary into an exam, you will be reported on suspicion of committing an academic offence. Even if English is not your first language, you are still not entitled to use a translation dictionary or any other kind of dictionary.
Moderation and marking
The University’s Marking Policy can be found online and includes our policy and procedure on the moderation of work.
https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/examination_and_assessment/marking_policy/default.asp

Moderation
Moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides 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. In instances where the moderator feels marks may not be entirely appropriate, the moderator would not change individual marks for the work, but would liaise with the first marker to agree whether marks should be reviewed across the particular piece of assessment or module. Should a review of marks be agreed, this may lead to marks being adjusted accordingly.

External Examiners
External Examiners are typically academics from other universities, but may also be from industry, business or the relevant profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education. External Examiners write reports on the courses and modules they are responsible for which are made available to you via your department. Unless the External Examiner has been specifically sent work to arbitrate on a dispute between internal markers, the External Examiner's role in assessment will be as a moderator. You can find the name and institution of the External Examiner for your course and modules by looking on the Programme Specifications Catalogue and the Module Directory.

You can find out more about how the University uses External Examiners here:
www.essex.ac.uk/quality/external_examiners/default.asp

Please note: you may not contact External Examiners directly under any circumstances. If you have any concerns about the quality and standards of your course, please contact your Student Representative, your Head of Department, or the Students’ Union.

Second marking
Second marking is where a second marker marks the work but has access to the first marker’s marks and/or comments. Where two members of staff are involved in marking a piece of work, the markers should make every effort to agree a mark, rather than merely averaging the two marks. Departments keep a full record of both individual and agreed marks for all work which is second marked.

Anonymous marking
Anonymous marking is when your work is marked anonymously, i.e. your name is not attached to the piece of work for marking.

In the School of Life Sciences work submitted as hard copies will not be marked anonymously.

Work submitted online via FASER will all be marked anonymously where it is practical to do so. Exceptions include presentations and other performance-related work, tutorial and employability assessments and final year research projects.

All formal examinations at the University of Essex are marked anonymously. You will be provided with a candidate number on your exam entry form. This will be in large print in the centre of the page. This is the number you should write on your examination scripts. It is important that you do this so we can, once the paper has been marked, allocate the marks to your record correctly.
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.

The re-marking of work is included within the University’s Marking Policy can be found here: www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/examination_and_assessment/marketing_policy.

In order to make a request, you will need to complete a form. By submitting your work for re-marking, your marks are not guaranteed to increase, but 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.

More information about appeals, including the deadlines and forms to complete, can be found online at: www.essex.ac.uk/see/appeals

Extenuating Circumstances
Extenuating circumstances are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform to less of a standard in your coursework or examinations 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.

Your department will review your claim at an Extenuating Circumstances Committee and determine whether it will be accepted or rejected. The Board of Examiners will determine an appropriate course of action and the corresponding methods, , to take into account your extenuating circumstances, if appropriate, such as permitting further reassessment opportunities for uncapped marks. Please note that extra marks cannot be given in light of extenuating circumstances.

If you do need to make an extenuating circumstances claim, you should first read the guidance very carefully and seek advice from SU Advice (www.essex.su/advice) or the Student Services Hub (www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/default.aspx). 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. https://www1.essex.ac.uk/myessex/ExtenuatingCircumstancesHome.aspx

Further information and the full Extenuating Circumstances Policy can be found on the website: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ.aspx

Feedback
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 MCQ exams, you will not receive feedback on the summer exams, unless you specifically request it.
The Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners meet at the end of the Summer Term 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
- you have met the requirements to pass your course and what classification you will receive for each module
- how your module marks are used to calculate your degree classification
- 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
- whether you must withdraw from your course, with or without an exit award

Examination results

You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published. You can find the publication schedule at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/schedule.aspx

Access to exam scripts

If you want to see your exam script, you should normally make the request within four weeks after the exam to the department which is responsible for that module. 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. 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 contact their Undergraduate Administrator. You can find further information about Assessment Policies at: www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies

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 40% unless you have extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Exam Board. Please be aware that reassessment in examinations and coursework carries a fee.

Resit exams

Resit exams are scheduled in early September or ‘out of residence’ in the summer of the following year. A considerable amount of useful revision material 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. You can find information relating to resitting exams at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/resits.aspx

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

Exit Awards
If you decide to withdraw from your course before you finish, or you fail too many credits to be awarded a Bachelor’s degree, you may be awarded a qualification at a lower level, if appropriate.
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. You can find a full list of computers available to use on our website: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/it/labs/usage/. 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.

As part of your IT account at Essex, all students have full access to:

- **Office 365**
  Office 365 is an online version of the Microsoft Office suite of programmes. You can access these by logging into your account from anywhere, which means you can use Microsoft programmes from at home too.

- **1TB of OneDrive cloud storage space**
  OneDrive lets you create, edit, and share documents online so you can access them from anywhere in the world and from any device.

- **1 GB of local storage**
  This is known as your M: drive. You can only access this when logged onto a lab computer on campus. Go to ‘This PC’ and select the M: drive network. If you want to access documents saved here from your personal laptop, you will need to either save them in your OneDrive or transfer the documents in another secure method, such as via USB.

Information on other software available to students and general IT matters is available here: www.essex.ac.uk/it/services/computers-and-software/default.aspx?tab=3

IT Help and Guidance

You can search the Student Directory for more IT information, including how-to guides, answers to frequently asked questions, and links to video screencasts.

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student

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. The contact details for your campus Helpdesk can be found online along with the opening times: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/it-services/it-helpdesk

Learning Technologies and Systems

eNROL

The eNROL system is an online tool to review and select available modules specific to a particular course and year of study. All new and returning students should use the online system prior to the start of each academic year.

eNROL: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/enrol/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2Fenrol%2F
**Learner Engagement Activity Portal (LEAP)**

LEAP is our student centered, personalised engagement tool. LEAP displays your engagement with university resources (Moodle, FASER, Listen Again, the Library and university computers usage as well as attendance).

An algorithm within LEAP combines your engagement with university 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.

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 activates and overall engagement to make informed decisions about your academic studies
- Discover who your Personal Tutor is
- 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 their studies that you are finding a challenge

https://leap.essex.ac.uk/login

**Moodle**

We use Moodle as our online learning environment, to enhance face-to-face teaching. It lets you get to course materials, and has built-in features to enhance learning such as discussion forums, chat facilities, quizzes, surveys, glossaries and wikis.

https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/

**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.

faser.essex.ac.uk

**Talis Aspire**

Talis Aspire is our online reading list system. Use it to find out the details of each week’s reading and to access resources through the library.

https://essex.rl.talis.com/index.html

**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 sign.

listenagain.essex.ac.uk
Your information

Changes to your information
During your period of study at Essex, you wish to be known by a preferred name or update your legal name on our student record database (ESIS) if your circumstances change. It is important you keep your information up to date. Information about updating your name on your student record is available at: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/default.aspx

Keep your information up to date
During your period of study at Essex, your details may change, including your name. It is really important that your information on our student record database (ESIS) is accurate, so make absolutely sure that if your circumstances change that you let us know. Equally, you may wish to be known by a preferred name. You can add this to your record for staff to use, and find more information about updating your name on your student record at: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/default.aspx

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.
www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/request

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.
https://www1.essex.ac.uk/records_management/policies/students.aspx
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. 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.

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.

http://www.essexstudent.com/representation
http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/student_rep.asp

Every year, we will ask you to complete the Student Assessment of Module and Teaching (SAMT). This survey will be summarised and discussed by SSLCs and will inform reports written by us for central University committees as part of our quality assurance processes.

Student Voice Groups

Student Voice Groups (SVGs), formerly known as Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), are made up of elected 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 academic department/school/centre to consult with students and receive feedback on new proposals.

https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/SVGs.asp

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.

National Student Survey

The National Student Survey (NSS) is an independent survey commissioned by the Office for Students aimed mainly at final-year undergraduate students. The survey provides students the opportunity to provide feedback on their University course and experience. The feedback you provide will be used to help shape the future for your fellow students, and published on the Unistats website to help prospective students make informed decisions about where and what they want to study.

https://www.thestudentsurvey.com

Student Assessment of Module and Teaching

Every year, we will ask you to complete the Student Assessment of Module and Teaching (SAMT). 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 from SAMT 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: studentexperience@essex.ac.uk

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/feedback/student-voice
**You Matter**

We know university life can throw up all kinds of concerns and questions - if you need some information, advice or support to succeed, stay healthy and happy, we’ve got it covered.

**Student Services Hub**

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

Colchester: askthehub@essex.ac.uk / 01206 874000  
Southend: askthehub-sc@essex.ac.uk / 01702 328444  
Loughton: askthehub-lc@essex.ac.uk / 020 8508 5983

**Health Centre**

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.

www.rowhedgesurgery.co.uk  
www.nhs.uk

**Disability and emotional wellbeing**

We would 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.

You can find out about the support we offer here:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/help.aspx

UK students may be eligible for a Disabled Students’ Allowance grant. See our webpages for more information, including application forms and key changes:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/disability/funding.aspx

Your Student Services Hub provides advice, information and support on a range of health and wellbeing issues.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/health

**Counselling services**

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

**Validium**

The University works in partnership with an organisation called Validium to offer short-term counselling to help you explore and work through problems and difficulties that are causing distress and interfering with your life at University.
You might be worried, depressed, confused or feeling bad about yourself. There might be a problem in your family, friendships or with your partner, or you might be experiencing difficulties with your work and exams. Counselling can provide a safe space for you to talk through and explore your feelings.

You can also contact the Validium 24-hour Student Wellbeing Support Line. You will be able to have an initial chat, in confidence, about the difficulties you’re experiencing and the support available to you.

Call 0800 970 5020 or +44 141 271 7168.

**Chat with Charlie**
Chat with Charlie offers online mental health support every evening between 6pm – 10pm. You can get support with exam stress, relationships, low mood, anxiety or anything else which may be troubling you, however big or small it may seem.

Log on just to chat or find out how to get additional support. For more information, contact wellbeing@essex.ac.uk.

https://mnessexmind.org/chat-with-charlie/

**Nightline**
Established at Essex in 1970, Nightline is a friendly help and support service run by students, for students. We work under strict confidentiality ensuring complete anonymity, and we’re always willing to listen. From tea and toast to camp beds, whether you’re waiting for a taxi, need a revision break, or just want to chat, pop in or call us.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing/nightline.aspx

If you feel you would benefit from support, including counselling, please contact your Student Services Hub. You can find more information, including the full range of counselling services available to you, on the website; https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/mental-and-emotional-health/counselling

**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. Advisers in our Student Services Hub and our independent SU Advice can listen and talk you through the issues you are experiencing.

www.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/money/

**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.

www.essex.su/advice

Colchester students - suadvice@essex.ac.uk, 01206 874034

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

Loughton students – suaclou@essex.ac.uk, 01206 874034
Residence Life
Our Residence Life team is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each residents’ assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you and organise a range of social activities. Plus they can help if you’ve got any concerns or complaints. Residence Life operates outside of office hours when other University support services are closed.

https://www.essex.ac.uk/life/accommodation/living-on-campus/residence-life

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.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/mfc

Harassment support
We are Essex. 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.

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/report/report-harassment
https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/equality-and-diversity
https://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome

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.

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/student-communities
https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/access-and-disability

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 advice and information:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/safety.aspx

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).

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/emergencies/fire-emergency-action

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/fire-safety/peep

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

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/health-and-safety/electrical-safety

You will find further health and safety information connected with your studies and life on our campuses in the Student Directory under health, safety and wellbeing.
If you have any health and safety concerns or need to report an incident, please do get in touch:

https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/report

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.

https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/complaints.aspx
Student Development

Careers Services
Get valuable, one-to-one advice from careers specialists throughout your time at Essex and beyond. You can access our services via the Student Services Hub or log in to CareerHub+ whether you have one hundred questions or just don’t know where to start! We offer one-to-one advice and guidance, job-hunting workshops, CV and job application reviews, and online services for creating CVs, interview preparation and job vacancies. [www.essex.ac.uk/careers](http://www.essex.ac.uk/careers) You can also undertake many courses that include a Placement year – for more information, see your department handbook and email [placements@essex.ac.uk](mailto:placements@essex.ac.uk).

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](http://careerhub.essex.ac.uk/students/login)

Big Essex Award
The University's Big Essex Award gives you recognition for all your extra-curricular achievements. All of your Big Essex Award activities go onto your Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). Get involved and get ahead of the game. Activate your HEAR and get started. [www.essex.ac.uk/careers/bige](http://www.essex.ac.uk/careers/bige)

Frontrunners
Challenge yourself. Frontrunners is Essex’s unique on-campus work placement scheme for students. You’ll get the chance to work on real projects in real workplaces and develop real skills for you to enhance your CV. You’ll get fully trained in your role and you’ll get paid for it. [www.essex.ac.uk/frontrunners](http://www.essex.ac.uk/frontrunners)

Volunteering
Join the vTeam and be the difference. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer during your time at Essex. The vTeam, run by the Students Union, is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, make friends, give something to the local community, and gain valuable skills. [www.essex.su/vteam](http://www.essex.su/vteam)

Essex Interns
Essex interns create paid internships exclusively for you as an Essex student. They're flexible too; part time during term time or full time in vacations. You can even take part up to three years after you graduate, as part of our Essex graduates support package. Sign up for Essex Interns to kick-start your career. [www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships](http://www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships)
You Are Essex

Year and Degree Marks
As your studies draw to a close, and once your exam board has met, it takes up to five working days for your results to be confirmed. You will be sent an email to inform you when the results are live on a password protected web page. You will be able to see your marks obtained and any decisions that you must make in order to progress to the next stage of study.

When in your final year of study, graduating students will receive a degree certificate at Graduation and graduating undergraduate students also be able to access their electronic HEAR; which gives details of all marks obtained during their studies.

Further information can be found at:
www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/award-documents/default.aspx

HEAR
When you study at Essex, you graduate with far more than just a degree. Along with showcasing your academic achievements, the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) records any activities you have undertaken and logged through the Big Essex Award, and any other awards and prizes that you may have received.

When you graduate, you will have full electronic access to your HEAR for free for life. You will be able to share this with employers and other universities by providing them with a University-certified record of your achievements. To start making the most of your HEAR, visit our website to activate your account:
https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/awards-and-achievements/hear

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. For more information visit our graduation pages:
www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/default.aspx

Job References

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

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

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

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

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

**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. Whether it is discussing different career paths, bringing your CV or LinkedIn profile up to date, or prepping for that interview you have worked all year for, the Student Development Team are here to support you.

Spread your wings graduand; but you can always come back! As an alumnus of Essex, you can take advantage of generous discounts on postgraduate qualifications and degrees if you chose to return to study at Essex as a postgraduate student.

[https://www1.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/masters/loyalty/](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/masters/loyalty/)

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 incredibly range of courses online.

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

[www.essex.ac.uk/masters](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160523002547/https://www.essex.ac.uk/masters)

[www.essex.ac.uk/coursefinder](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160523002547/https://www.essex.ac.uk/coursefinder)
Appendix 1: Guide for First Year Students

The first year of a degree course is an important time of adjustment to the demands of University study and forms the foundation for your remaining years of study. Careful management of your time is critical to a successful year. If you keep on top of your work you should have a very enjoyable time. You are expected to spend 1.5 hours of time in private study for every hour attending taught components (lectures, practicals, tutorials, classes) with academic staff. You should therefore expect to spend approximately 40 hours a week on taught work with academic staff and your private study.

Some students feel that as they only have to pass all modules in the first year, they do not need to try to get good marks. This is completely wrong: good performance in the first year lays the foundation to good achievements in the second and final year and therefore to a good degree classification. There are also minimum thresholds for Placement and Year Abroad courses. Remember that while Year 1 marks do not contribute to your degree classification, they will appear on your transcript.

During term-time the Year Organiser, Dr Gareth D. Jones, will be available in his office between 1-2pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Students may email for an appointment at other times, but if you need to speak to him urgently ask the Undergraduate Office. Other members of staff that may be able to help you are your Personal Tutor, the Senior Tutor and Course Directors.

Important Information about Year 1
Each module consists of 24 lectures, up to 4 × 3 hour practical sessions (or equivalent), 1 hour of directed learning based on 1 or 2 module objectives, and 2 revision sessions, one at the end of the module and one early in the summer term. Generally, Year 1 modules are assessed by 33% coursework and 67% exam. The exceptions to this are BS141 which is assessed by coursework (50%) and MCQ (50%) and BS114 which is assessed purely by coursework. Details of the assessments for these modules are in the Module Handbooks. To proceed to the second year, you must obtain a pass (40%) in all modules (there are additional requirements on some degree courses – see the according Rules of Assessment).

Exams
For most modules, the exam mark is derived from the summer exam mark (worth 50%) and the MCQ (multiple choice question) mark (worth 50%). MCQs are 50 minute exams, held in weeks 15 and 30. Each MCQ will comprise questions covering all the material of the module. These are designed to assess your retention of module material and your grasp of fundamental concepts. They also give you and staff a rapid assessment of your performance during the term. Each correct answer will be worth one mark. Incorrect or unanswered questions score zero. These MCQs will be carried out online. At the end of the summer term all modules except BS114 and BS141 will be examined by a series of formal one hour exams, composed of a series of compulsory short questions and a single long-answer (essay) section.

Lectures
Lectures will provide you with the basic information but you should not expect your lecture notes always to provide you with a complete, understandable account of the subject. You should be prepared to supplement them by reading recommended textbooks and scientific articles and working this information into the framework that the lecturer has given. Evidence of additional reading will help you to obtain high exam marks. Lecturers do not necessarily follow textbooks closely, so it is only by going to lectures that you can obtain the framework for the course. Lectures give a framework of material and of explanations of a topic and should stimulate your interest. They are not expected to include all material or to give complete understanding. Material needs to be consolidated by additional
reading/additional notes (this is part of what we call 'student managed learning'). Exam answers require factual recall and understanding and evidence of reading.

**Requirements of a Good Set of Notes**

Lecture notes should provide a comprehensive, comprehensible and inviting guide for future private study/revision. In conjunction with module objectives they should tell you: what you need to know, what level of detail is required, what particular themes, comparisons, connections are important, where you have particular difficulties/weaknesses and where you may need to concentrate your study. Your notes should be sufficiently well organised that you can find your way round them/understand them at some later date. So, in lectures take NOTE (i.e. listen, be selective, think) as well as taking notes. Concentrate on points being emphasised, principles/themes being described/explored and on following the thread of arguments. Factual details are easily obtained later.

Make the process as active as possible; put your stamp on the material. Use headings, so you can see how the lecture is constructed and so it is easy to find your way around material. Use colour, use abbreviations. Develop system of shorthand signs to mark material e.g. ?? don't understand; + told to read about this; λ missed something; → to indicate connections; and underline to indicate something stressed as important. Write on one side of the page only so there is a blank page opposite to add in relevant extra material. The key to efficient use of lecture notes is to get actively involved with them on several different time scales. Stashing them away until two weeks before the exam is not a good strategy and neither is a passive copying up of your notes in neat form.

As soon as possible after a lecture:

1) Read through notes while still fresh in your mind e.g. the same day.
2) Add headings, define abbreviations, insert symbols as above to clarify your notes.
3) What did I learn from this lecture? Summarise in writing at the end the key points covered, use a list of key words or a flow diagram which shows the structure of the lecture.
4) Try and sort out which objectives have been covered and note them down at the start or end of your notes. This need only take 5-10 mins but actively involves you in the information which helps your memory and gives you an overview of where this lecture was going, how it relates to the last and to the next lecture.

Before the next lecture:

1) Try to sort out (at least in outline) any major points you have not understood in the previous lecture. The next lecture may assume an understanding/knowledge of the previous one.
2) Read a simple account in the textbook of the point(s) involved, possibly adding useful key points to your notes in the correct place on the blank sheet opposite.
3) Take your last lecture notes to the next lecture and read your summary before the lecture starts.
4) Compose any questions that you might have to the lecturer teaching the course.

Sometime later e.g. during weekends/vacations:

1) Systematically work through your notes consolidating material and adding to or expanding on notes on the blank sheet opposite. Use the textbook to fill in details or for alternative ways of explaining points/expressing ideas.
2) Make summaries of topics in words or flow diagrams. Make mind-maps (spider diagrams) to show connections and to highlight themes, comparisons etc. Add these to your notes. Insert any relevant ideas, facts from practical work.
3) Cross reference lecture material to course objectives, checking off whether you think you can meet the objectives.

4) Explore connections between modules. Modules are not stand alone and are integrated at various different levels.

Practicals
For practicals where you are sub-divided into groups please ensure that you stay within the group number that you are allocated and check the timetable to ensure that you attend the correct practical sessions. Practicals are designed to complement and supplement the lectures. They may be used to illustrate or explore a topic covered in a lecture, to familiarise you with a particular practical technique, or both. They are also used to develop your skills in accurate observation, clear recording of data, presentation of results in an appropriate fashion and the interpretation of these results in the form of a written report. The problems of the design of experiments and of sampling programmes will be introduced and there will be considerable emphasis on the use of statistics in the analysis of data. Statistical analysis of data can be carried out in computer labs on the University campus.

In most module handbooks there is a schedule of instructions for each practical within that module. Read it before the session so that you know what you are doing and why you are doing it. A clear idea of the basic rationale can save a great deal of time and reduce errors during the actual practical.

You will be expected to produce a report of your practical work and/or complete a worksheet either during/after the practical. Also, completion of the assessment associated with a practical may require completion of a set of questions using the EVS ‘clicker’ units that you have been issued with or logging onto a Moodle ‘quiz’ test where you complete a set of questions using data and information relevant to that practical. The schedule should make it clear how the coursework associated with each practical is assessed. Briefly, you should write up the practical as it proceeds with all data, drawings and observations recorded in their final form during the practical. Do not make ‘rough’ notes, sketches, etc., to be copied up later; you may find that you cannot understand them or have forgotten essential details and that there is no one around to ask. For reports in ‘scientific paper format’ the written interpretation and discussion of your results can be done after the practical although it makes sense to think about it during the practical, when help is available. Once again, complete this part of each practical while the details are still fresh in your mind.

Tutorials
A tutorial consists of a small group of students with a member of staff. The aim of the tutorial programme is to develop intellectual, study and transferable skills using biological or biochemical material as a context. Tutorials provide valuable instruction and are a critical part of your preparation for the second and third years. Details of the tutorial programme are given in the BS143 Module Handbook. Tutorials enable students to develop a relationship with their personal tutor which will be maintained during their years of study and allow personalised advice, support and academic references to be provided. Do not waste this opportunity by failing to attend.

Text Books
All first year texts have been classified as ‘essential’ or ‘additional’. You should acquire copies of the essential texts (or share with a friend) and you may consider acquiring some of the additional texts. All recommended books are available from the University Library and multiple copies of the essential texts are held in both the short loan and open sections of the library. Remember that you may not get immediate access to these books at times when there is great demand for them, such as just before a deadline for handing in work or at exam time.
You will be given electronic access to Campbell BIOLOGY 10th edition by Reece JB, Urry LA, Cain ML, Wasserman SA, Minorsky PV, Jackson RB, Campbell NA. (2015) Pearson, USA,

Biomedical Science students will be given electronic access to Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology 10th Ed (global) with Mastering A&P, Martini FH, Nath JL and Bartholomew EF

Further essential general texts will be needed, depending on your degree course.

Module-Specific texts:
Each module handbook contains details of key module-specific texts, all of which are available in the University Library. Generally essential module-specific texts are of value to more than one module and will be used in the second year. You do not need to buy the additional texts, but you should refer to them and you may want to buy the ones that are relevant for your chosen second year degree course.

If you are considering buying additional or alternative textbooks, especially if they are costly, we advise you to speak to your module lecturer first; some texts are unsuitable, unreliable or outdated. Second-hand copies of textbooks can sometimes be purchased from Second and Third-Year students. However, if you are buying second-hand books, check that they are not old editions – some subjects progress quickly and information soon becomes out of date. A syndicate of students can often buy an expensive text, sharing the cost.

Year one structure
For detailed information on the structure of your course in year one please refer to the structure charts found on Moodle under the Information for Current Students page. 
https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=7107
Appendix 2: Guide for Second Year Students

General Information
This year is important not only because the marks count towards your final degree class but also because the knowledge and understanding of the subject material which you gain will form an essential basis for your third year modules. In addition, developing and improving your key skills and study skills this year will yield great benefits in your final year and future career.

In the second year you will find that you have fewer contact hours in lectures and practicals. This is because you are expected to spend more time in private study to complement your lectures and in completing the coursework for each module. You will not be able to do this work to an acceptable standard if you spend less than 40 hours per week on your studies.

Private study comprises the student managed learning which you will find referred to in module handbooks. It includes reading to consolidate, understand and extend lecture material in preparation for the summer exams, directed learning, preparing and producing assessed coursework, reading through practical details before the practical, writing up practical work, preparing for classes and revision for exams. Evidence of additional reading as directed by your Module Supervisor is essential if you wish to obtain good marks in essays and exams.

To be successful this year you will need to organise, plan and prioritise your work. Deadlines for all practical and other coursework associated with each module will be found in each module handbook. In allocating your time to different components of your work you should bear in mind their assessment value (see individual modules’ handbooks) and plan to use your time in the most efficient way. An important point here relates to the end of year exams, which, for the majority of modules are the single most important component in terms of assessment. A common fault is to spend too much time on preparing assessed coursework and practical reports during the year and thus leaving preparation for the exams until it is too late. Staff regularly complain that exam answers show evidence of patchy revision and lack of detail!

Professional Skills and Career Development
All students undertake practical work to develop their subject-related skills (for example laboratory or field work) which is completed at the end of the spring or summer term of Year 1 or during the summer vacation. Additional career development and professional skills learning will be undertaken either as part of the same module, or a separate module during Year 2. These modules are assessed by coursework only.

Subject Modules
Just as in your first year, lectures in second year are an important place for you to learn about the subject. You should note that there is a strong, positive correlation between lecture attendance and exam performance, so you should make sure that you attend lectures. However lecture notes alone will not be enough to enable you to do well in coursework and exams because, in second year, there is an increased emphasis on independent learning by you. One of the aims of the second year is to encourage you to develop the ability to study and learn on your own. To achieve this, each module will have some material designated for directed learning, that is, material which you have to seek out, study and learn.

Directed learning
Details will be given in the module handbook and part of a lecture may be given over to explaining what you have to do. You should be provided with a list of the relevant objectives and an outline of the topic(s) to be studied, along with guidance which should include sources of relevant information. The directed learning component of each module should be supported by a one hour class in one of the timetabled slots; this class can be used to resolve any problems with the material that you have encountered. This directed learning component is a vital preparation for your third year, where there is even more emphasis on independent learning; there, lectures tend to give the outline of the topic and you will be expected to read widely and research the detail. In the context of exams, material dealt with in the directed learning component is treated in exactly the same way as normal lecture material.

Data analysis and interpretation
The ability to analyse and interpret scientific data, especially in a quantitative manner, is an essential part of your scientific training and there is a compulsory question involving these skills in all second year exams. To prepare you for this all modules will include data analysis examples; these may form part of the formal lectures, the directed learning or the assessed coursework. There may also be classes to discuss these examples. As well as preparing you for the examination questions, working through these examples will give you a deeper understanding of the underlying theoretical basis of the subject.

Practical sessions
Practical sessions are an integral part of each module and aim to provide you with training in a range of techniques relevant to that module. Practicals also serve to illustrate or to elaborate on important biological ideas and to develop a range of key skills in, for example, data presentation, analysis and interpretation, numeracy, and communication. Practicals are assessed as part of the module coursework.

When in the lab you should keep a record of your lab work (i.e. what you did, modifications to schedule, results, etc.) in a lab book. It is good laboratory practice to do this and an important training for your final year project.

Coursework
Most subject modules (except BS211, BS214, BS221, BS231, BS256, BS257 and BS281) have assessed practical work and coursework, which combined constitute 50% of the mark for the module, while the remaining 50% are awarded by the exam mark. This work should encourage you to study course material during the course, enable you to monitor your progress throughout the year (particularly in relation to your understanding and grasp of the module material). The marks count towards your overall year mark. The details of what is involved should be made clear to you in the module handbook but clearly, the exact mix of the different types of coursework which you will do depends on your course and your choice of modules. You should study the Objectives Assessed, Assessment Criteria and Marks Classification on the coversheet to understand and implement the requirements for the desired mark.

Your marked coursework is stored safely on FASER. Use it to:

(a) Improve your performance by giving careful attention to the feedback provided

(b) check, when you are e-mailed your marks by the Undergraduate Office, that these have been correctly entered into the University system.

(c) help with revision.
(d) University regulations state you should keep your work until six months after you graduate, in case you want to appeal against your final degree result.

External Examiners
One of the roles of the External Examiners is to comment generally on the standards of marking and performance. To facilitate their work, coursework will be scrutinised on FASER.

Exam Paper Format
The paper for each module will be a 2 hour paper consisting of two sections each carrying equal marks:

- Section A (weight: 50%). Short questions, which may cover the breadth of the module, and may involve description, explanation, calculation or the analysis and interpretation of data. Short questions are not required to carry equal weight and will not exceed five in number BUT AT LEAST 20% of this section will be allocated to questions involving the analysis and interpretation of data.

- Section B (weight: 50%). Essays: Choice of one question out of three.

A limited number of modules may have a slightly modified exam format. Further information and sample papers will be made available during the year for those students affected.

Importance of Year 2 Marks
Your performance in your Year 2 modules counts towards your degree. The overall second year mark you obtain (usually weighted at 40%) is combined with your overall third year mark (weighted at 60%) to give a degree mark. It is therefore essential that you do not become complacent in Year 2 and that you appreciate the importance of doing well in all your Year 2 modules in order to give yourself the best opportunity to obtain a good degree. For a full explanation of how award classifications are calculated you should refer to the Rules of Assessment.

Field courses
Students doing a degree in Marine Biology have a compulsory field course (BS303, optional for Biological Science students), based in Essex at the end of the summer term in year 2. In addition there are optional field courses: BS256 in the Easter vacation of year 2 and BS307 in September before the start of final year. Details of the organisation and timetabling of these modules will be made available nearer the time. Please do not book any holidays or trips away from campus until you have been told the exact dates of these courses.

Final Year Projects (BS832 only)
Students on BSc Marine Biology or Biological Science courses may be allowed to undertake part or all of their final year research project practical work during the summer between second and final year. To do this you would need to show that (a) the project involves field work (or work at an external organisation) that needs to be undertaken over the summer (b) you have a member of University of Essex academic staff willing to act as a supervisor (c) you have a clear plan and timetable of how and when the work will be undertaken, and the required risk assessments, all of which have been approved by the project supervisor. All of these issues have to be addressed by week 29, so if you wish to do project work over the summer then you will need to think about it well in advance. A meeting will be scheduled in week 16 to go through some of the logistics relating to arranging to undertake summer project work. For further information contact the BS832 Module Supervisor, Dr Michael Steinke.
Year Two structure
For detailed information on the structure of your course in year two please refer to the structure charts found on Moodle under the Information for Current Students page.
https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=7107
Appendix 3: Guide for Final Year Students

Final year makes the largest contribution to your degree class and it is important to perform well to achieve the outcome that reflects your ability. Some students will aim to maintain the high standards they achieved in second year while others may be attempting to improve on their results. In some cases a strong performance in final year may be able to raise your outcome to a higher degree class. You may want to familiarise yourself with the Rules of Assessment to calculate your likely result.

Research Project
Crucial to your success will be your individual research project. Because your research project does not appear on your timetable (with the exception of compulsory seminars through the year) it may appear that you have a lot of ‘free time’. Clearly this is not the case, and you are expected to take more personal responsibility to organise your reading and study for all modules, as well as spend time planning your project work, analysing data and writing your report. Ensure you prepare well for every meeting with your supervisor and before each session of lab work so you can get the maximum out of these opportunities. Remember you may be asking your supervisor to write references for you so you will want to demonstrate qualities that employers value.

Issues, Field Course and Coursework Only Modules
These coursework only modules require you to organise other work around your research project commitments. Remember that final year assessments demand a greater level of independent research, originality and critical analysis than was expected in previous years. The assessments are highly weighted and you must spend sufficient time researching, planning, drafting and rewriting to do well.

Lecture Modules
Final year lecture modules are usually assessed by examination only. However, there are a few exceptions. Final year examination papers are sat in the summer exam period. Three questions must be answered, including a compulsory data analysis and interpretation question and two essay-style questions (from a choice of four in total). The three questions have equal weighting. In final year examinations students are expected to show a greater depth of knowledge and understanding than in previous years. To achieve the highest marks complete answers showing accuracy, detail and evidence of additional reading are expected. This cannot be left until after your project work is completed! You need to keep up with background reading and study throughout the year.

Students would not normally take more than one lecture module assessed by coursework only during final year. It is challenging to complete the assessments during the year while also giving sufficient attention and time to research project work. Planning and organisation are key to balancing these commitments without compromising your results. Students should be aware that these modules are designed to be as challenging as other lecture modules and should not have unrealistic expectations of their likely results based on coursework marks achieved in second year.

Modules based in other Departments may have additional types of assessment.

Planning for your Future
At the start of your final year you should take time to reflect on your plans for further study, training or employment when you graduate. Set yourself targets during this year to help you to achieve your goals for the next stage of your career. For example, you might need to incorporate deadlines for applications to graduate training programmes, or closing dates for PhD studentship applications. Make good use of the advice offered by your supervisor and the Employability and Careers Centre.

Final Year structure
For detailed information on the structure of your course in the final year please refer to the structure charts found on Moodle under the Information for Current Students page.
https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=7107