

Your studies

**School of
Philosophy
and Art History**

**Interdisciplinary
Studies Centre**

Postgraduate research

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-22



University of Essex

Welcome from the Director of Graduate Studies



I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all graduate research students entering the School of Philosophy and Art History.

Essex Art History has a well-established international reputation and a long tradition of graduate training in almost all areas of European art and architecture from 1300 to the present, and in the art and architecture of Latin America and of the United States. We have achieved excellent results in recent student surveys and were ranked in the Top Ten in the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF), which measures research performance nationally. Staff are research active and supervise both MA and PhD students. There is a large and lively graduate community at Essex with conferences organised by PhD students, along with an exciting postgraduate research journal, re•bus.

Essex Philosophy has an equally well-established international reputation with a distinctive orientation towards modern European as well as moral and political philosophy, with special emphasis on phenomenology, critical theory, German idealism, the philosophy of religion, and medical humanities. Across these fields we tend to focus on 'existential' issues, fundamental questions about human existence. In the past few years we have enjoyed a string of successes: we were among the Top Ten Philosophy submissions in the last REF; we had high ratings in the last National Student Satisfaction Survey (NSS); and we have been awarded a series of externally funded research grants, including large grants for the *Essex Autonomy Project*, the *Ethics of Powerlessness* and the *Competition and Competitiveness Project*. Those successes are a reflection of the distinctive character of Philosophy at Essex: intensive, close-knit, original, focused.

Study at graduate level can be a demanding and challenging enterprise, which requires personal determination and commitment in addition to a well-trained intellect and a lively and productive imagination. We aim to provide the best environment we can in which to conduct study and research, and we urge you to take advantage of all the events and facilities available. You are warmly encouraged to attend our School Research Seminars, which are usually held at 3pm every Thursday during the autumn and spring terms and provide an occasion to hear both external visiting speakers and internal speakers from the faculty and the graduate community. There are additionally various guest lectures, in addition to other relevant activities throughout the University, and annual Essex Lecture Series in both Philosophy and Art History. On the Philosophy side of the School we also offer various research seminars, informal reading groups, and three research colloquia.

Finally, this booklet provides information about the Faculty of Humanities, the Postgraduate Research Education (PGRE) Team, the School, details about assessment procedures and guidelines for writing and submitting a thesis. To obtain comprehensive information about regulations relevant to graduate students please look on the University website.

Your comments on School arrangements are important as we are constantly alert to the need to accommodate students' changing interests within a responsible educational programme. This involves ensuring that we maintain the optimal content and format for our programmes, and your input, both formal and informal, is a vital part of the process. Please make your views known.

We all hope that you will have a happy and fruitful time here at Essex and we shall do our best to ensure that you do.

Professor Béatrice Han-Pile, Director of Graduate Studies

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Introduction

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

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

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

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

Practicalities and Getting Started

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

Registration

Whether a new or returning student, you will need to [officially register](#) and pay your fees (if required to do so) at the start of each academic year and prior to the published latest Registration date.

Registration is not only a formal procedure of enrolling you into the University, but also connects you to a number of vital systems which allow you to access your online Welcome and Induction information and start your studies. As part of this process, you will need to activate your Essex IT account, register online (including payment of fees where required) and, once you arrive on campus, undertake a Right to Study check and collect your student registration card.

Right to Study

The University must ensure all students have the right to study at the University of Essex for the whole duration of their course. If you aren't a UK or Irish national, your [immigration permission](#) to study in the UK will be checked when you first register on your course and as necessary thereafter. Students have a duty to maintain valid UK immigration permission that allows study for the duration of their course, failure to do so may lead to withdrawal from the University under the [University's General Regulations](#).

Student visas

The University has [many duties](#) as a Student Sponsor and must ensure we remain compliant in order to retain our sponsor status. Students with a student visa have responsibilities to the University and the Home Office. There will be conditions attached to your visa that restrict what you can do in the UK, breaking any of the conditions may mean you can't remain in the UK and complete your course. Please be aware that changes to your course, whether due to academic failure or choice, must be considered against the Immigration Rules and guidance in place at the time, this can mean that some academic options may not be available to you. The Board of Examiners are not aware of a student's UK immigration status, it is each student's responsibility to check what impact any option offered would have on their student immigration status, before making a choice. Continued or future sponsorship is not guaranteed.

Explore your Campus

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

Get connected

Your IT account

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

Campus Wi-fi

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

Essex Apps

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

MyEssex

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

PocketEssex

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

Find Your Way

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

Zoom

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

Working while studying

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

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

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

Your personal belongings

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

The Essex Experience

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

Embrace the Essex Values

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

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University recognises the value of diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity. All of our 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.

SPAH Women's Officer and local SWIP branch

Whether you are an Art History, Philosophy or ISC student, if you want to speak confidentially to a female member of staff, we have a dedicated Women's Officer for this very purpose. In 2021-22, this will be [Dr Ellisif Wasmuth](#) (Autumn term) and [Dr Lorna Finlayson](#) (Spring/Summer term). They can also tell you more about the local branch of the [Society for Women in Philosophy](#) (SWIP).

SPAH Policy on Equality

The School of Philosophy and Art History aims to treat all staff and students who are part of the School, and also visitors to the School, equally in all relevant respects. We acknowledge that historically women and minorities have been disadvantaged in many aspects of university and academic life, through both conscious and unconscious assumptions, biases, and prejudices, and through unfavourable practical arrangements. We are committed to changing this situation. We believe that the School in general will benefit academically, intellectually, and socially from an energetic commitment to promoting equality.

-
1. This commitment entails that all students and staff of the School should strive to be conscious of ways in which their behaviour may be disrespectful, detrimental or damaging to the activities and equal status of women and other underrepresented groups.
 2. It is part of the responsibility of everyone in the School to maintain an atmosphere for work and study in which equality is the norm. On occasions, this may require us to bring contrary behaviour to the attention of the person concerned, as well as to accept appropriate criticism of our own behaviour.
 3. Within the School our commitment to equality involves consideration of the following (non-exhaustive) list of issues:
 - a) Ensuring a female presence on committees and decision-making bodies within the School.
 - b) Ensuring female participation in selection processes (e.g. regarding applications for PGT and PGT studentships, regarding posts – academic and administrative – within the School).
 - c) Giving consideration to the representation of female and minority thinkers, writers, and artists on the syllabi for modules within the School.
 - d) Taking measures to allow female and underrepresented voices to be adequately heard during seminars, discussions, question and answer sessions, etc.
 4. In terms of broader professional activities, our commitment to equality involves consideration of the following (non-exhaustive) list of issues:
 - a) Invitation of female and minority speakers when setting up conferences.
 - b) Inclusion of female and minority authors when editing collections of articles.
 - c) Inclusion of female and minority representation on editorial/advisory boards.
 - d) Awareness of possible implicit bias when refereeing/assessing non-anonymised work.

What is Implicit Bias?

Controlled research studies demonstrate that people typically hold unconscious assumptions about groups of people that influence their judgments about members of those groups in negative ways. This is particularly true for traditionally discriminated-against groups like women, minorities, and disabled people. All people display these biases, including those who belong to the discriminated-against groups. Counteracting these biases requires us to become aware of the ways they might be affecting our assessments of our colleagues, teachers, and students.

Examples of Implicit Bias:

- Recommendation letters for women tend to be shorter, provide 'minimal assurances' rather than solid recommendation, raise more doubts, portray women as students rather than professionals, and mention their personal lives more (Trix and Psenka 2003).
- Job applicants with "white-sounding" names are more likely to be interviewed for open positions than equally qualified applicants with "African-American-sounding" names (Bertrand & Sendhil 2004)
- When the *same* CV is randomly assigned a female or a male name, both male and female assessors rate male applicants better in terms of teaching, research, and service experience, and are more likely to hire them (Steinpreis et al 1999).
- Female post-doc applicants to the Medical Research Council of Sweden needed substantially more publications to achieve the same rating as male applicants (Wenneras & Wold 1997).

Counteracting Implicit Bias:

Remember that you are not immune. For example, a recent meta-analysis of 122 research reports (involving a total of 14,900 subjects) revealed that implicit bias scores better predict stereotyping and prejudice than explicit self-reports (Greenwald et al 2009.).

Promote diversity

Research shows that assumptions are more likely to negatively affect evaluation of women and minorities when they represent a small proportion (less than 25%) of the relevant group. Exposure to "positive" exemplars (e.g. Martin Luther King in history class) decreased implicit bias against Blacks (Dasgupta & Greenwald 2001).

Work on your own prejudice:

Awareness of statistical discrepancies between the ideal of impartiality and actual performance – coupled with a commitment to that ideal – helps counteract implicit bias.

E.g. in one study, a mental imagery exercise of imagining a professional business woman decreased implicit stereotypes of women (Blair et al 2001).

E.g. contact with female professors and deans decreased implicit bias against women for college-aged women (Dasgupta & Asgari 2004)

Student communities

We offer a wide range of support to individuals and [groups of student members](#), such as our [postgraduate students](#) – our student communities - who may have specific requirements, interests or responsibilities- to help fulfil your potential. Whether you are an international student, a mature student, a BAME student or have any other requirements or needs, we want to welcome you with open arms.

Essex Sport

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

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

Students' Union

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

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

Get involved!

There are opportunities to join 45 [Sports Clubs](#), to get involved with our [BUCS teams](#) which offer the opportunity to play competitively in a wide range of sports across the year. If you just want to try a sport, don't want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our [Just Play](#) programme.

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

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

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

Essex spirit, social media and what's on?

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

Follow us on social media:



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

About the School of Philosophy and Art History, and Interdisciplinary Studies Centre

Our Address: **School of Philosophy and Art History/Interdisciplinary Studies Centre**
General Office, Room 6.130
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester CO4 3SQ

Meet the team

A full list of all staff profiles can be found on the [SPAH](#) and [ISC webpages](#).

Below is a summary of the roles of staff that can help you with a variety of areas during your time at Essex.

Professional Services Team

We pride ourselves with a welcoming and friendly Professional Services Team, where their priority is making sure you are making the most of your time at Essex and have everything you need to succeed. From deadlines to dissertations, they are always on hand to offer help, advice or point you in the right direction for other services so please do get in touch.



Hannah Whiting
School Manager

Hannah is responsible for the day-to-day smooth running of the School and Centre on the administrative side and assists the Head of School and GTA Director. She can provide you with general information on the School and Centre and deals with queries relating to course structures, timetabling, and examinations.

Contact Details

Email: spahsm@essex.ac.uk
Tel: 01206 87 2703
Office: 6.122



Sarah Crowther
Deputy School Manager

Sarah is responsible for all matters relating to student administration and the smooth running of our student facing operation. Sarah can provide you with general information on the School and Centre, and she deals with queries relating to undergraduate course structures and module enrolment.

Contact Details

Email: spahdsm@essex.ac.uk
Tel: 01206 87 3845
Office: 6.132



Abby Connell
Senior Student Services Administrator
(SPAH and ISC PG)

Abby is the first point of contact for matters relating to postgraduate study for SPAH and ISC, including queries about courses. She is responsible for the administration of our PG Student Voice Meeting. Abby works closely with the Director of Graduate Studies and PGT Directors and can point you in the right direction for other support and help within and outside the School regarding postgraduate queries.

Contact Details

Email: spahpg@essex.ac.uk
 Tel: 01206 87 2705
 Office: 6.130



Katherine Bailey
Senior Operations Administrator

Katherine is responsible for looking after the finances for the School and Centre and can advise on many areas including claiming expenses, reimbursement for gallery trips and study trips abroad.

Contact Details

Email: spahfin@essex.ac.uk
 Tel: 01206 87 2688
 Office: 6.132

Key Academic Contacts

Name and Title	Email Address (...@essex.ac.uk)	Internal Extension*
Head of School Dr Diana Bullen Presciutti	dbpres	2998
Director of Education Dr Jörg Schaub	jschaub	4678
Director of Graduate Studies Professor Béatrice Han-Pile	beatrice	2532
Director of Research and Impact Dr Dan Watts	dpwatts	2706
Disability Liaison Officer Dr Fiona Hughes (Autumn) Dr Steve Gormley (Spring & Summer)	ljfinl segorm	3002 2709
Ethics Officer Dr Paola Di Giuseppantonio Di Franco	pd17425	2716
Women's Officer & Inclusivity Lead Dr Ellisif Wasmuth (Autumn) Dr Lorna Finlayson (Spring & Summer)	ellisif.wasmuth ljfinl	2622 3002

**01206 87 needs to be added to the extension numbers if calling externally.*

Your supervisor

A supervisor will have been appointed for you during the admissions process. You are expected to have regular contact with your supervisor during your studies and they should be the first port of call for any concerns/problems.

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

Supervision of research students during periods of leave

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

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

Staff research interests

You can find out all about the research interests of our staff on their profile pages: [SPAH](#) and [ISC](#).

Investigating issues through philosophy and art

Our School fosters a distinctive research ethos: collaborative, transdisciplinary, cutting edge.

Philosophers and Art Historians at Essex have long been internationally renowned for first-rate research that challenges traditional academic boundaries and canons. Throughout our work, we emphasise issues of autonomy, agency, dissent, and the contestation of the public realm.

Our transdisciplinary approach facilitates critical engagement beyond the traditional canons of philosophy and art history, enabling us to deliver research which is both impactful and relevant.

Departmental resources and facilities

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

SPAH Common Room

The SPAH Common Room (6.143) is located on the 6th Floor in the School of Philosophy and Art History, and is for the use of our students. Please see the [Philosophy and Art History – Information for Current Students](#) Moodle area for further details on the restrictions in place for 2021-22.

5B.116: Postgraduate Study Room

The Postgraduate Study room is available for all graduate students in the School. 5B.116 is a Graduate Study Room, which can be used by all graduate students in the School. This room contains tables, bookshelves, connections to the University's computing network, review copies of books kindly provided by the 28journal *Inquiry* (which may be signed out by students and staff affiliated with the School. Please see the [Philosophy and Art History – Information for Current Students](#) Moodle area for further details on the restrictions in place for 2021-22.

Postgraduate Lockers

Lockers are available in 5B.116 for postgraduate students. These are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are allocated a locker it will be necessary for you to supply your own padlock. Please speak to Abby Connell in 6.130 if you are interested in using a locker. A returnable deposit of £5 is payable.

Printing, photocopying and scanning

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

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

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

Premium printing

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

Noticeboards

Every department and school have their own noticeboard providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. Our noticeboard is located outside our General Office on the 6th Floor (6.130). Further down the corridor, and also in the Philosophy corridor on 5B, you will find notice boards announcing seminars and conferences, both at Essex and at other universities, and a variety of other information. We will also post important information on the Moodle announcement areas.

Social Media

Philosophy

Facebook: [Philosophy at Essex](#)

Twitter: [@EssexPhilosophy](#)

Art History

Facebook: [Essex Art History](#)

Twitter: [@EssexArtHistory](#)

Instagram: [@arthistoryessex](#)

ISC

Facebook: [Essex Interdisciplinary Studies Centre - ISC](#)

Twitter: [@ISC_Essex](#)

Learning and Teaching

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

Student Staff Partnership

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

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

the deadline. If granted an extension, you will not be expected to register or pay the prescribed fee for that two-week period.

- If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.
- Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.
- Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process, and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

In addition to the above requirements, Professional Doctorate students should:

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

The academic year

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

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

You can view the University's week numbers with the equivalent dates in the week by week [calendar](#).

The University's [key dates](#) include an overview of the start and end of each term and exam periods.

You are expected to be available during term time to attend teaching events where applicable, and unless otherwise advised by your Department.

My programme of study

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

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

Making changes to your study

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

Once you have decided that you want to change your degree title, you will need to make a formal request using the online [Change of Course/Degree title form](#).

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

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

Once you have decided you want to change your mode of study, you will need to make a formal request, using the online [Change of Mode of Study form](#), which will need to be approved by your department and the Dean.

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

Thinking of leaving or taking a break?

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

Periods of study

A typical timetable would look like this:

First year (first term of your research)	Planning, conceptualisation, reading, writing a critical review of the secondary literature in your field, establishing your position regarding it, and identifying the sources you intend to use. You should keep a critical bibliography of the material you are reading.
First year (second term of your research)	You should now be working on the primary materials of your thesis, writing draft chapters as soon as possible.
	At the end of your first year (end of second year for part timers) your second Supervisory Panel will be the Confirmation of PhD Status Panel. The Panel will review the evidence to confirm whether your progress and work is at PhD level.

Second Year	The process of investigation and writing continues.
	At the end of the second year for part-timers the Supervisory Panel in summer will be the Confirmation Panel. The Panel will review the evidence to confirm whether your progress and work is at PhD level.
Third year (first term)	The completion of draft chapters
Third year (second term)	Revision of your thesis into a final version ready for submission, inclusive of the notes, bibliography and an abstract.

		<i>Students first registered between 2008-09 to 2017-18</i>		Students first registered from 2018-19 onwards	
Research degree	Mode	Minimum	Maximum	Standard	Completion
Masters by Dissertation (<i>MA or MSc by dissertation</i>)	FT	One year	Two years	One year	Up to one year
	PT	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
Master of Philosophy (<i>MPhil</i>)	FT	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
	PT	Four years	Five years	Four years	Up to one year
Doctor of Medicine (<i>MD</i>)	PT only	Two years	Three years	Two years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Three years	Four years	Three years	Up to one year
	PT	Six years	Seven years	Six years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy Integrated (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Four years	Five years	Four years	Up to one year
	PT	Eight years	Nine years	Eight years	Up to one year
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes	See individual programmes	See individual

Postgraduate Research progress and milestones

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the departmental [milestones](#) for your degree and the requirements for your chosen thesis format. The milestones are designed to help you submit your thesis by the deadline and are used to assess your progress during your period of study. The milestones will be considered at your Supervisory Panels and RSPB which take place throughout your degree.

You should review your [milestones](#) regularly to ensure you'll be ready to submit your thesis by the required date.

Supervisory Panels

The Supervisory Panel and responsibilities:

The Supervisory Panel is responsible for formally monitoring students' progress and reports to the School's Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB).

Departments set up a Supervisory Panel for every student being examined by thesis or dissertation only whether registered for a PhD, MPhil, or MA by Dissertation.

The system of Supervisory Panels is designed to give you fresh perspectives on your work, and the benefit of the research experience of qualified staff other than your supervisor. It is also designed to guide you in keeping to the timetable of work agreed as well as to provide you with experience of defending your work.

At the meeting, which will last for one hour, the panel will critically (but constructively) discuss your submission and ask questions about past and future work on the thesis. Panel meetings complement and should not replace or repeat normal supervision.

At each meeting in the year, the panel will make a recommendation to the RSPB that you be allowed to continue, or that you be required to discontinue with your studies, or that you alter your status.

Supervisory Panel members

The panel is composed of the supervisor(s) and one or two other members of academic staff. The latter are chosen on the basis of their competence to comment on the empirical or thematic substance of a student's work, or to comment on structural or procedural issues.

The Supervisory Panel should be chaired by a panel member who is not supervising the student who will write up the Supervisory Panel report and circulate to all members to sign and verify. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to nominate the members of the Supervisory Panel, and for the Director of Graduate Studies to ratify the composition of the panel.

During the final twelve months before submission of your thesis, no member of staff who is nominated as your internal examiner may comment on drafts of the thesis or offer a judgement as to the overall quality of the thesis.

Supervisory Panel reports: progression and criteria

After each panel meeting, the chair of the Supervisory Panel will be required to complete a short report which is considered by the Department's Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB). The report may make suggestions for improvement.

You must sign the Supervisory Panel report to show that you have read it and send it back to the Senior Student Services Administrator (spahpg@essex.ac.uk) by the date given in the email sent to you.

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

- Record of supervisory contact and meetings since last Panel and supervisor's comments on current progress
- Report on discussion of submitted work (identifying strengths and weaknesses)
- Outline of the student's achievements and skills enhanced to date
- Outline of Milestones met for current year of study
- Recommendations for work before the next Panel

- A discussion of the extenuating circumstances presented to the panel (if applicable)
- Confirmation and discussion of ethical approval (if applicable)

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

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

Doctoral researchers will be registered for a Standard/Minimum period (three years for full-time students; six years for part-time students) with an initial registration status as an MPhil/PhD student. Students are supervised as PhD students but PhD status will need to be confirmed at the end of their first year of study.

In the first year, towards the end of the third term of study (end of the second year for part-timers), the second Supervisory Panel of the year will be the Confirmation Panel. The panel will review the evidence to confirm whether progress and work is at PhD level.

In order to decide whether to confirm PhD status, the Supervisory Panel will apply the following criteria:

- The student has completed a review of the secondary literature in the field, established a critical position in relation to it, and identified the major primary and secondary sources to be used.
- The student is advanced in examining secondary sources, has demonstrated this in a substantial draft chapter outlining the conceptual framework of the thesis, and has begun to examine primary sources.
- The student has adequately formulated the topic and produced a clear outline of the thesis, together with a plan of work for the remainder of the minimum period.
- The quality and quantity of work so far produced indicates the student has an original thesis that can be completed on time. The expectation is that the student has produced 15,000 words of quality research writing in total (material that has been submitted to the first Supervisory Panel can count as part of this total, as does other quality writing such as an annotated bibliography or literature review, transcribed interview or rewritten project proposal).

If a student does not meet the confirmation criteria at their summer term Panel, they will have to present their work at a further Panel to be held in August/September. If they are still unable to meet the criteria, they will be downgraded to MPhil status. The Confirmation Panel can make the following recommendations to the RSPB:

- Confirm PhD status
- Defer the decision regarding PhD status to the next Panel (this deferral can only happen once).
- Another Supervisory Panel will be held before the start of the next academic year for the Research
- Students' Progress Board to make a final decision on a student's progress
- Change status to MPhil
- Discontinuation

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

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

- Has a substantial portion of the thesis been written in draft and is it of a satisfactory quality?
- Has all research been completed?
- Confirmation of the anticipated submission date. Confirmation that the student has a clear plan of work for the completion period in order to submit their thesis at the end of this period

Please note, the Supervisory Panel and the Research Students' Progress Board will only permit students to enter a completion period if they have completed all their milestones for their third year of study. This includes completing all research. Completion period will only be granted to students as a writing up period.

If students have not completed their research, the Supervisory Panel and the Research Students' Progress Board will look to extend the students' Minimum/Standard period instead (this would require students to pay a higher fee than completion period fees).

Confirmation of PhD status

When PhD status has been confirmed by the Research Students' Progress Board the student will be sent an email indicating that their formal registration status has been changed to PhD instead of MPhil/PhD. The Standard/Minimum Period will be unchanged. Students will continue to have two Supervisory Panels each year (and at least one for part-timers) and the full range of decisions regarding progress will remain open to the panel.

This means that confirmation is not a guarantee that a subsequent recommendation of downgrading or discontinuation could not be made if good progress did not continue.

If the first Confirmation Panel does not recommend that a student's PhD status should be confirmed the student will continue as an MPhil/PhD student until a second Confirmation Panel is held around three months later before the start of the next academic year. If, however, a student accepts the assessment that their status be downgraded or discontinued, then this change will take place immediately. In such cases, the student does not have a right of appeal. A student who is downgraded to MPhil will have revised Minimum and Maximum dates.

If the decision regarding PhD status is deferred to a second Confirmation Panel, or a student decides not to accept the recommendation of the first Confirmation Panel of downgrading or discontinuation, then a second Confirmation Panel will be held just before the start of the second year (beginning of the third year for part-timers).

If, following the second Confirmation Panel, PhD status is not confirmed, then the panel will recommend to the Research Students' Progress Board either downgrading to MPhil or discontinuation. At this point, a student has a right of appeal against that decision. The RSPB's recommendation is made to the Deputy Dean of Postgraduate Research and Education (Faculty of Humanities).

Supervisory Panel arrangements

Supervisory Panel meetings will be arranged directly by the Senior Student Services Administrator who will email out reminders of this. Students will then need to discuss arrangements with the chair and supervisor/s to arrange a time to suit everyone.

Timeline of the Supervisory Panel

A Supervisory Panel must formally meet with a full-time student twice every year including in the completion and referral period (in January and May/June in the first year, and thereafter normally in November/December and May/June), and with a part-time student at least once a year (normally in May/June) including in the completion and referral period.

For the 2021-22 academic year, Supervisory Panels will be held in the following weeks:

WEEKS	KEY DATES	STUDENTS EXPECTED TO SUBMIT
6	Paperwork due: Mon 8 Nov 21	All full-time students (except students starting in October 2021). Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by January 2022
8	Supervisory Panels: W/c 22 Nov 21	Students whose completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in January 2022 Students who are in their first term of completion period from October 2021 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis by January 2022
19	Paperwork due: Mon 7 Feb 22	All full-time students who started in October 2021. Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by April 2022
21	Supervisory Panels: W/c 21 Feb 22	Students whose completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in April 2022 Students who are in their first term of completion period from January 2022 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis by April 2022
34	Paperwork due: Mon 23 May 22	Full time students who started in October 2021 and are coming to the end of their 1 st year All full and part-time students including students who started in January 2022.
36	Supervisory Panels: W/c 6 Jun 22	Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by October 2022 Students whose completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in October 2022 Students who are in their first term of completion period from April 2022 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis by October 2022
45	Paperwork due: Mon 8 Aug 22	Students who started in April 2022 Students whose progress decision was deferred at the Summer Research Students' Progress Board.
47	Supervisory Panels: W/c 22 Aug 22	

Submission of work to the Supervisory Panel

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

- A Research Progress report (one page) (template will be sent in advance)
- Outline of thesis structure (one page) (template will be sent in advance)
- A piece of written work including bibliography and references (approximately 25 pages), the nature of which is decided upon by the supervisor in consultation with the researcher
- An updated CV (required for the first Supervisory Panel in the third year of your studies)
- For the first Supervisory Panel in the first year, the paper submitted should be an annotated bibliography, i.e. a critical review of the literature in the field, which makes clear the postgraduate researcher's own position regarding the existing literature, and the approach you intend to use.

Please see the relevant [milestones](#) for more information.

For the second Panel in the first year and Panels in the second and third years, a draft (or polished) chapter is an appropriate paper.

Please send your Panel submission electronically to the Senior Student Services Administrator by email attachment only (spahpg@essex.ac.uk) by the deadlines stated above.

The Senior Student Services Administrator will circulate your submission to the Panel members ahead of the Supervisory Panel meeting.

Extenuating Circumstances

If you have extenuating circumstances that you wish to make your Supervisory Panel and the Research Progress Students' Board aware of, you will need to contact the Senior Student Services Administrator for the relevant form to complete. You must submit this form and supporting evidence with your work by the dates above.

You will need to indicate on the form whether you give permission for all decision-making staff (i.e. your Supervisory Panel and the Research Students' Progress Board) to have access to the form and evidence.

Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

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

[Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Professional Doctorate rules of assessment](#)

Library Services

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

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

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

Study Abroad

[Essex Abroad](#) have a wide range of [summer programmes](#) suitable for postgraduate students including summer schools abroad, volunteering programmes, international internships and research abroad opportunities which are open to all Essex students. These programmes vary in duration, location and cost. [Find out more](#) about Essex Abroad opportunities.

Research Skills Development

Proficio

[Proficio](#) is our innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, and it's unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and so we credit your Proficio account with funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and for conference attendance.

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

SPAH Courses

As Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Béatrice Han-Pile will run three Proficio courses this year. These are tailored mainly to Philosophy doctoral students, but Art History doctoral students are also welcome to attend.

Doctoral Research Seminar

This will be run online in the Spring term. Closer to the time, all PGR students will be contacted by email by the Director of Graduate Studies with a set of proposed dates. The Doctoral Research Seminar is meant to acclimatise first year Philosophy PhD students to doctoral study and will provide core training in the following skills:

- **Reading skills:** we will engage in close readings of sample texts to practice flagging and argument mapping. We will also think about key differences between primary and secondary literature and the way they ought to be used in one's research.
- **Writing skills:** we will learn about writing with interest and clarity. We will discuss different approaches to strategy, structure, and editing.
- **Presentation Skills:** we will discuss how to approach the format and style of one's presentation, as well as strategies for handling the Q&A.

Publication Workshop

This will be run online in the Summer term. Closer to the time, all PGR students will be contacted by email by the Director of Graduate Studies with proposed dates. Although it is mainly targeted at second year Philosophy PhD students, the Publication Workshop is open to students from other years. We will look at sample published articles and discuss their writing and problem-setting style. We will canvass the philosophy journals and book publishers available and consider suitability of venue for different pieces of writing. We will discuss the publishing timeline from submission to completion and examine how best to approach revisions in light of referee reports.

Philosophy Placement Workshop

This will be run online in the Summer term. Closer to the time, all PGR students will be contacted by email by the Director of Graduate Studies with proposed dates. This workshop will provide essential employability training to philosophy PhD students who are in completion. We will work on producing CVs, writing samples, cover letters, research statements, and teaching portfolios. We will discuss job hunt strategy and look closely at sample applications, thereby providing information tailored to the job market in academic philosophy.

Essex Student Journal

[The Essex Student Journal](#) offers all PhD students a chance to volunteer as a peer reviewer. The Essex Student Journal is a multi-disciplinary diamond open access journal that publishes essays, case studies, and research papers written by University of Essex Undergraduate and Masters students. You can [sign up to be a peer reviewer on our website](#). If you have any further questions, do get in touch with journal@essex.ac.uk.

Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

Ethics in research

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

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

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

Risk assessments in research

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

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

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

Academic Integrity and Academic Offences

The University expects students to complete all assessment with honesty and integrity and to follow our [conventions for academic writing](#) (including appropriate referencing of sources) and ethical

considerations. If you don't meet these expectations, then you may be charged with having committed an [academic offence](#), a matter the University takes very seriously.

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

Referencing

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

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

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

Academic Skills Support

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

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their academic study and achieve their potential on their course, which is why the [Skills for Success team](#) is available to help by providing support, resources, workshops and 1:1s on:

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

Proofreading services

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

is keen to ensure as far as possible that students understand what [proofreading work should entail](#) and the acceptable boundaries to which any proofreading or editing must adhere to.

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

Language classes

English classes for dependants

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

Learning a Language

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

Extenuating Circumstances

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

Your department will review your claim at your Supervisory Panel and RSPB and determine an appropriate course of action to take into account your extenuating circumstances, if appropriate.

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

Submission of Thesis

Thesis Submission Pre-Examination

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

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

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

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

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

Thesis Submission for Award

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

Thesis Deposit and Retention

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

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

Examiners and the Viva

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

Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)

If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, or the examiners feel that the thesis has not met the requirements for the Professional Doctorate, they may

be eligible to receive an exit award or lower award, as appropriate for the course. Details of the available exit/lower awards can be found in the [Code of Practice: Professional Doctorates](#).

Appeals

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

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

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

Student Voice

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

Student Representatives

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

Student Voice Groups

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

Student Surveys

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

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

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

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

You Matter

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

Student Services Hub

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

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

Support for disabilities and additional needs

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

Funding opportunities

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

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

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

Essex Accessibility Forum

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

Seeing a Doctor

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

Counselling services

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

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

Drop In/Wellbeing Appointments

The Wellbeing Assessors provide support to students with anything affecting their wellbeing, mental health and/or disability through pre-booked appointments (whilst remote working) or face to face appointments within the Silberrad Centre. To book an appointment please find further information on [this webpage](#) and scroll down to 'enquiry form'.

UK Immigration Advice and Guidance

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

Money management

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

Students' Union Advice

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

Colchester students – suadvice@essex.ac.uk; 01206 874034

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

Loughton students – suaclou@essex.ac.uk; 01206 874034

Residence Life

Our [Residence Life team](#) is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each residents' assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you, provide advice and support with any wellbeing issues and organise a range of social activities to help you connect with others. Find your RAs contact details on your flat kitchen poster if you live on campus. During term-time, our friendly RAs are available for a virtual chat via Zoom every day from 7pm – 8pm use Zoom Meeting ID: 920 1237 9049, all Essex students are welcome to drop in. You can find out about all our exciting events by following us on [Facebook](#) or by checking out the University [Events page](#).

Religion, faith and beliefs

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

Harassment support

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

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

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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

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

The University offers lateral flow testing on all its campuses at our [Asymptomatic Testing Clinic](#) and require students to test twice weekly when studying on campus.

Health and safety on campus

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

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

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

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

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

Making a Complaint

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

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

Student Development

Careers Services

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

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.

Your personal development at Essex

Activate your [Gradintelligence account](#) to discover the broad range of extra-curricular and voluntary opportunities available to you at Essex using Chart My Path, your personal development navigation tool. Find activities to inspire and develop you in your life, your studies and for your future. You can achieve Big Essex Awards through the activities that you complete during your time at Essex and gain University recognition on your Further Achievement Report (FAR).

Join the Career Mentoring Programme and get matched with a mentor who can share their industry expertise, empower you, listen, talk through your plans, fears, and aspirations, and give you the time and space you need to make decisions that are right for you.

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.

Essex Interns

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

You Are Essex

Your Award Certificate

Upon conferral of your award, all graduates will receive both an electronic and hard copy parchment award certificate. [Your electronic Certificate will be available on your GradIntelligence account within 5 working days of your conferral and your hard copy parchment](#) will be available to collect at graduation. If you are unable to attend graduation, the Graduation and Awards team will post this to your home address.

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

Graduation ceremonies

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

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

GradIntelligence

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

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

References

Requesting references from members of staff

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

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

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

Copies of references

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

Alumni

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

The world is your oyster. The options and opportunities open to you as a graduate can sometimes be overwhelming. You might know the path that you wish to take, but if you need help to reach your graduate goals, our Careers Services Team offer information, guidance and advice on your different options after graduation. We offer careers support for life, so we'll always be here for you.

We know you'll go on to do great things but remember you can always come back! As an Essex graduate, you can take advantage of [generous discounts](#) on further [postgraduate study](#) and [postgraduate research degrees](#).

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

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