

University of Essex
Statement on Qualification Reform – October 2019 entry

The University of Essex has considered the recent reforms to UK qualifications in relation to our undergraduate Admissions Policy and our entry requirements. We recognise that schools and colleges are facing challenges in relation to the qualifications they offer their students over the next few years; as a result, we will continue to be flexible in our offer-making and have not made any major changes to our standard conditional offer levels since the introduction of reformed qualifications.

We continue to consider applications in an individual and holistic way. As we do not currently use AS-levels as the sole predictor of whether to make an offer of admission, we will continue to take all aspects of the UCAS application into consideration, in line with our admissions policy – this includes GCSE performance, AS-level results if taken, predicted grades for any pending level-three qualifications, personal statement and reference. We will not, therefore, discriminate against applicants who do not take certain subjects at AS-level. We understand that there will be a transitional phase where applicants are taking a mixture of both existing and reformed A-levels, and we do not plan to change our offer levels or entry requirements for students taking both the old and new-style A-level qualifications. Where possible, we encourage referees to provide a link in the UCAS reference to the information on their school or college's policy in respect of what qualifications and subject areas they are offering.

Our offers continue to be expressed in three A-level grades, for example BBB, although we are happy to consider applications from students who may have taken two A-levels and 2 AS-levels. We also continue to consider applications from students who have taken either the reformed or unformed BTEC qualifications for entry to the majority of our degree courses, either on their own or in combination with A-levels (or in combination with other qualifications).

For 2019 entry, we continue to ask for BBB at A-level (or equivalent) for entry to the majority of our degree courses. A small number of subject areas may be slightly different to this level, and some will require A-levels in specific subjects, for example for entry to some science courses. Please refer to our Course Finder for detailed information.

www.essex.ac.uk/coursefinder

Re-sits

The University of Essex is happy to consider applications from students who have taken re-sits, and will not penalise students who have not achieved all their final examination results in one sitting.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

We consider the EPQ qualification as an excellent preparation for entry to higher education; although the EPQ will not normally form part of an offer (where three A-levels are being taken), we consider this qualification as equivalent to an AS-level.

Core Maths

Although Core Maths will not typically form part of any offer made by the University of Essex, we welcome the introduction of this qualification. We believe that it provides valuable preparation for university study, particularly those wishing to study courses which involve the use of statistical data such as the social sciences.

GCSE Requirements

As part of our general entry requirements we ask for a minimum of five GCSEs at grade C / 4 or above, including English. With the introduction of the new GCSE marking scheme, we equate a mark of 4 to grade C, and a mark of 5 to grade B.

The University of Essex will continue to monitor and review the impact of the qualification reforms, and may update our admissions policy accordingly in the future.

If you would like further advice about specific qualifications and whether they will be considered by the University of Essex, please do contact us.

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