

Your studies

Department of Psychology

Postgraduate research

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-22



University of Essex

Welcome

A very warm WELCOME to the Department of Psychology! We are happy that you have chosen to study a Postgraduate Research Degree with us and trust that you will enjoy your time here at Essex. Make sure to take up the different opportunities provided to get the most out of university life. It often all goes by so quickly.

As a Department, we have an excellent reputation in providing training and supervision for research students. Our students present at national and international conferences, start publishing in peer-reviewed, high quality journals and many go on to pursue postdoctoral careers in academia. Naturally, pursuing a PhD comes with hard work on your part and not everything will run smoothly. It can also be an isolating experience (just talk to our academic staff, they will all have a story to share on that one!). However, we are here to guide and support you throughout. Your fellow PhD students will share some of the pains but, crucially, will also be there when you have a big success to celebrate!

As student members of the department, you will play a vital role in contributing to our vibrant and dynamic research environment. We pride ourselves in our close-knit community that shares the vision of making Psychology at Essex stand out. You will invest time, effort, intelligence, creativity and scholarship into your research project work, and under expert supervision, you will contribute to some truly ground-breaking research.

Psychology at Essex was ranked 13th out of all UK Psychology departments for the overall quality of our research in the latest Research Excellence Framework report (REF2014), and postgraduate research contributed enormously to advances in our knowledge and contributed to our excellent research publications. We want you to make the most of this environment, to take the opportunity of learning as much as you can from it, and to enjoy the experience of being part of it.

Whether we like it or not, the world on and off campus is still different to what it used to be. The global pandemic has created many challenges. Yet, we can also use it to think, interact, and experience things differently. Psychology has the potential to help us understand our place in the world. And you can play your part in contributing to all of it. Let's face it; the study of human behaviour has never been more relevant.

Many of our students and staff have learned new skills throughout the pandemic, including how to run psychology experiments online, working remotely in teams, or learning more about meta-analyses when collecting our own data was not possible. These newly acquired skills will be of great value in the future. Despite our ability to adapt quickly to a changing environment, we are also thrilled that we have slowly started to reopen research labs and other spaces. It may still be while until everything gets back to "normal", but until then, we are maintaining our commitment to excellence in research, and finding new ways of doing this.

Professor Silke Paulmann, Head of the Department of Psychology

Welcome to the Department of Psychology at the University of Essex. I am the department's Director for Postgraduate Research. Like you, I am new to this role though I have been a supervisor for many years and have worked with many postgraduate students. In my role, I oversee the postgraduate research in the department. I shape the pathways for MSD and PhD study in the department, review the milestones that you meet to progress through your degree and oversee progress reviews. I also advocate for postgraduate research students in the department and the university. I am here if you have difficulties in your studies and need to talk confidentially or seek support beyond your supervisory team. I want to hear feedback about what we do and don't do well. I will be looking to ensure that we help you in developing your career, whether that is directed toward research in academia or industry, or a different direction. I want most of all to see you succeed.

I am available to meet and discuss these and other topics with you. We want you to be successful and I am here to help you with that.

Dr Rick O'Gorman, Director for Postgraduate Research



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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 are not 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. As 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 view your timetable, update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, monitor your course progress, let us know if you'll miss a lecture or class, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

PocketEssex

[Pocket Essex](#) is the University's official app for students; its interface of icons acts 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

Essex Values

The University of Essex is [proud of its values](#) of inclusivity and internationalism. Our campuses are places that are welcoming, where everyone can feel they belong and where you can find the world in one place.

[Our Student Charter](#) is a pledge that every member of our learning community signs up to when they join us, but in exchange you'll receive support and encouragement and a transformational education to achieve great things.

Our [Code of Student Conduct](#) 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.

The Department of Psychology has achieved a Silver Departmental Athena SWAN Award. Everyone is welcome to join our monthly Athena Swan open lunches and contribute to discussions on equality and inclusivity.

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.

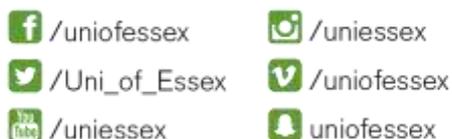
We have [120 Societies](#) where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or, if you can't find what you're looking for, [start your own!](#)

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 Department of Psychology

Meet the team

A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the Department of Psychology can be found on our [website](#). Below is a summary of the roles of staff that you are likely to be in contact with most frequently:

Departmental Role	Name	Email address
Director for Postgraduate Research	Dr Rick O’Gorman	rogorman@essex.ac.uk
PGR Administrator	Trudi Day	psypgrqueries@essex.ac.uk
Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO)	Dr Tracy Robinson	tracy@essex.ac.uk
Psychology Technical Services		psysupport@essex.ac.uk 01206 873750, 01206 873736

The Technical Services Team

The Technical Services office is open from 09:30am-1:00pm, Monday to Friday for equipment collection, returns and door key loans only. For all other enquires and support email psysupport@essex.ac.uk

Departmental Disability Liaison Officer

The Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO) for Psychology is Dr Tracy Robinson. You can contact Dr Tracy Robinson on tracy@essex.ac.uk. The Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO) is a direct link for you between the Student Services Hub and your department. They can help make sure that the Disability Service know about any adjustments you need.

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 for Postgraduate Research, to develop a plan for the continuing supervision of students during periods of research leave. In making such arrangements, it is the policy of the department that:

- a) Members of staff are expected to continue to carry out their role as supervisor during periods of research leave.
- b) Members of staff on research leave are not expected to attend Supervisory 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 Postgraduate Research, in consultation with the supervisor) as a local contact for the supervisee student. The local contact is not meant to act as a substitute supervisor (see point (A) above) but to serve as a designated point of contact in the Department during the period when the supervisor is out-of-residence.

Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

The RSPB is made up of senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the Director of Postgraduate Research. 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](#)

Staff research interests

You can find out more about the department's research areas [here](#).

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.

The Laboratories

The Department has excellent learning resources and facilities for our students. We have custom-built laboratories and first class equipment. The laboratories are on Floors 1 and 2 of the Psychology Department. They house a large number of computers, each supporting word processing, internet, statistics, spreadsheet, presentation and psychology experiment building tools.

For the convenience of others and yourself please be aware that there are a few rules relating to Lab use:

- No food, drink or chewing gum.
- Please do not prop the door open.
- Save your work regularly onto your M drive. (File saved to the desktop or hard drive will be removed)
- Do not install anything onto any computer.
- Please report any faults to the Technicians (room 2.712).

Room booking - Fair Usage Policy

The Department of Psychology has excellent research facilities. Lab space can take different forms ranging from standard research cubicles (also called booths) to more specialized labs (often kitted out with sensitive specialist equipment). The department has a total of approximately 45 standard booths and 10+ specialized labs available as bookable research space. A list of rooms is available [here](#) via the Smart Hub. In principle, lab space is available for booking to all members of the department, including staff, post-doctoral researchers and PhD students. A number of rooms are also available for PG and UG students (see user list in the information sheet).

The fair usage policy recognizes that different research projects often have different needs in terms of lab space requirements (lab set-up, duration, required sample size, etc.). Still, there is an understanding that this is a **shared resource** and thus users should be collegial and considerate in using these research facilities. This policy does not intend to be prescriptive in what consists of “fair usage”, but generally speaking room booking should be proportionate to the needs of your research and proportionate to the needs of others.

Specifically, users are asked to keep the following in mind:

Some rooms are centrally timetabled for teaching but can also be used for other events, including research. These rooms have priority for teaching in term time.

Certain times in the year are considered ‘peak’ times, including (but not limited to) the start of the academic year (when credits are available), and the spring term (for third year UG projects, PS300). During these peak times researchers are asked to restrain their usage, by only booking what they need, and by taking the needs of others into account.

Generally speaking, all rooms are bookable. However, a small number of rooms have been furnished with a particular set-up or specialist equipment (such as the EEG labs, TMS labs, babylab, and sex lab). If you are running a study that does NOT require any specialist equipment or set-up, please consider booking other labs more suitable to your needs.

Users are encouraged to be proactive and *think* about the needs of others when booking lab space. If in doubt, *talk* with other users about their needs for lab space.

If you experience issues to access research space, you may wish to find a solution by considering the following actions (in turn):

Try to **resolve** the issue by speaking directly with the other parties involved or contact the chief technician.

If you are a student, speak with your supervisor, who should also reconsider the point above.

SmartHub Booking System

The Department operates an online booking system called SmartHub. SmartHub is our main source for staff and students to book labs, psychometric tests and small equipment to support research. Small items of equipment are available to loan for a maximum of two weeks.

To register an account to use the SmartHub system, please go to <https://psysex.essex.ac.uk/> and click on 'Account Registration'. Once complete, your registration will be directed through to the technical team to ensure users have the right level of access. Once approved, you will receive an email notification and be able to start using the system. Please allow one full working day for the approval.

A user guide is available for getting started with the SmartHub system. This can be requested from the technical team.

The Psychometric Store

The Psychometric Store is in Room 2.711A on Floor 2 of the Psychology building and is administered by the Technical Services team in Room 2.712. You may borrow items from the Psychometric Store only with permission from your lab tutor or project supervisor. The store contains a wide range of equipment, headphones, questionnaires and psychometric tests, voice recorders and stop watches.

Most items in the store are available on a two-week loan basis. Requests to renew the loan period must be made by contacting the Technical Services team. Please e-mail the team (psysupport@essex.ac.uk) at least five working days before you require extending a loan in case the item needs to be recalled. Requests for loan of equipment, laptops, IT and AV equipment should be addressed directly to the Technicians in room 2.712 (psysupport@essex.ac.uk).

Software

The University provides a number of software applications that are free to use whilst you are a student (Microsoft Office, SPSS, Matlab etc.) A full list of applications can be found and installed from the central software hub (<https://software.essex.ac.uk>).

Common Spaces

There are kitchen facilities in the department in the CBS Foyer and rooms 4.720 and 3.713 in the main Psychology building. Research students and staff are also welcome to use the CBS Foyer as a common space to socialise when it is not being used for departmental events. The kitchens are shared and therefore everyone should tidy up after themselves, keep an eye on any food they leave in the fridges (for spoilage), respect the limited spaces, and return items when done. These shared spaces will also be subject to COVID 19 safety regulations.

Printing, photocopying and scanning

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

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

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

Premium printing

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

Noticeboards

Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. The main noticeboards can be found outside of the student administration office (3.702).

Post-boxes

You will be allocated a shared postbox in the CBS Post Room and an e-mail account on arrival. This e-mail account may be used for corresponding with other students, and with members of staff within the University. Please ensure you always check your email.

HEROES: Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects

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

Social Media

The Department has Facebook and Twitter pages, which can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/PsychologyatEssex>

<https://twitter.com/EssexPsychology>

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 supervisory team, if possible. If necessary, you can also talk with the Director of Postgraduate Research 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.

The academic year

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

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

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

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

You are expected to be available during term time to attend teaching events 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.

Taught Modules

If you have not completed an MSc in Research Methods, or equivalent, you may need to attend and pass PS946-7-FY (Fundamental Statistics for Research) & PS947-7-FY (Advanced Statistics for Research). This is to ensure you have all the skills you need in order to successfully obtain your PhD.

You will already have been informed if you are required to undertake these modules and they will show on your Timetable.

We also encourage first year research students to audit PS912-7-AU (Research Management) to help prepare for academic research. This module will not be formally assessed.

Course structure

PhD & MSD	
Week 1	PGR Welcome Conference via Zoom. Date: Tuesday 5 th October 2021 Time: 10am to 12pm Location: https://essex-university.zoom.us/j/96596007483
Weeks 9 & 10	Supervisory Panels
Week 11	Research Students' Progress Board
Week 32	Postgraduate Conference, Thursday 12 th May 2022
Week 34	10,000 word Annual Report deadline
Week 36 & 37	Supervisory Panels
Week 38	Research Students' Progress Board

Submissions

PhD Students are expected to submit the following to their supervisor by the date agreed each year:

- a detailed written report (10,000 words) of work carried out during the year (years 1 and 2 only);
- a timetabled account of work completed and proposed (all years);
- an anticipated list of chapter headings for the completion of the thesis (years 2 and 3 only).

All students must also give an oral presentation of work in progress as requested by the Director of Postgraduate Research (usually this will be a presentation at the annual Postgraduate Conference).

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 will 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

		<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 programmes

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

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.

Research Allowance

All PhD students will be issued with a separate PGR Finance Handbook, which will provide you with details regarding your departmental research allowance. If your allowance originates from the Department, it can be used for attending conferences, participant re-imbursement and other expenses related to your studies. If your research allowance originates from another source (e.g. SenSS), then you will need to work within their terms and conditions. All students will be provided with individual advice and support on their research allowance from the Finance Administrator. Currently, all expenditure in the department has to follow an authorisation process so you will need to discuss your plans with your supervisor, and then send the Finance Administrator an email about the expense(s) you wish to purchase in advance (more details on this process can be found in the PGR Finance Handbook). It is important that you keep track of your budget and do not over-spend, or your supervisor will become liable.

Booking conferences and travel

If you wish to book Conferences and Travel using your Departmental Research Allowance, Proficio funds or your grant contact the Academic Administrators via email Sarah Brewer (sarah.brewer@essex.ac.uk) and Gail Howell g.howell@essex.ac.uk (please cc the Finance Administrator – Jennifer Davies jennyd@essex.ac.uk), which should include the following details so that a booking may be made on your behalf:

- Destination
- Reason for the request
- Travel dates (outbound and inbound)

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 (including children) 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 APA 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). Some 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 proof-reader conforms to the [University's policy and guidance on proofreading](#).

Language classes

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.

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.

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.

VIVA Workflow

- | |
|--|
| ❖ Final Supervisory Panel is held; Chair, Supervisors and Student agree that the student can 'Proceed to Completion/Submission' |
| ❖ 3 months before submission of the thesis, the student fills out the 'Approval of Thesis Title Form' (found here) and has form signed by the first supervisor, and then submits the form to the PGR Administrator. |
| ❖ The Director of Postgraduate Research or Head of Department signs the form and submits the Thesis Title form to the PGRE Team pgresearch@essex.ac.uk . |
| ❖ PGRE Team acknowledges and approves the Thesis Title via email. They then send the student a personalised ' RD1 ' form. This must be completed by the student and physically given in with the final thesis. Without the RD1 form, the thesis will not be accepted. |
| ❖ While the RD1 form is being organised, the first supervisor will contact a suitable external academic to ask informally if they would like to be the External Examiner for this Student (based on the research being examined). |
| ❖ An email from PGRE Team is sent to the Student, Supervisors and the Director of Postgraduate Research to say the Title has been received and approved. Supervisor should then contact the PGR Administrator to confirm the details of the Internal and External examiners. |
| ❖ The PGR Administrator contacts internal examiner for details of their eligibility and uses the online portal to submit their details and emails the automatically generated link to external examiner so their details can be uploaded. An independent chair may be required if the internal examiner has not had sufficient experience. |
| ❖ Once all examiner details are confirmed the PGR Administrator sends this information through to the Head of Department via the online portal. Once approved by the Head of Department, the PGRE team receive information for final approval. |
| ❖ PGRE Team email Internal and External with 'External Examiner's Initial Report' form, (RD.2), 'Internal Examiner's Initial Report' form, Joint Examiner Form, Thesis and instructions. |
| ❖ Internal arranges date for VIVA with Student & External. (VIVA needs to take place no more than 2 months after the Thesis has been handed in). Once decided, Internal examiner emails this to the PGR Administrator, also asking for catering, hotels and room bookings to be made where necessary. |
| ❖ Internal and External send their initial reports (RD.3 forms) back to PGRE Team pgresearch@essex.ac.uk . PGRE Team then send each examiner the other examiners report. |
| ❖ Internal and External examiners meet/discuss the Thesis before the VIVA takes place (can be before the VIVA date or on the actual day). |
| ❖ VIVA! The Joint Report Form (RD.4) is completed during the VIVA and signed by both Internal and External examiners. |

❖ Internal Examiner gives all documents from VIVA (Joint Report form, corrections list and expense claims) to the PGR Administrator to send over to the PGRE Team.
❖ PGRE Team email student informing them if they have passed and when their corrections are due. If corrections are needed, the time starts when the student receives the email confirming everything from the PGRE team.
❖ Student sends Internal Examiner the corrections, which they sign off using the Approval of Editorial Revisions Form, which is emailed directly to the Progress Team, copying in the PGR Administrator and Director of Postgraduate Research.
❖ Dean and Progress Team sign off corrections and email Student notifying them they have passed and that they have to upload their final thesis to the research repository within two weeks.
❖ Graduation!!

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](#).

Taught Modules

Teaching timetable

Most PGR students won't be required to undertake taught modules, and so a teaching timetable isn't applicable. For those students who do undertake taught modules as part of their course, you'll have a personal timetable, this shows you when your teaching is taking place, as well as who is teaching you. Check your personal [online timetable](#) regularly for up to date teaching information. You will need to have registered and activated your University of Essex log-in before you will be able to access your teaching timetable.

Information about teaching timetables, including accessing your individual timetable can be found [here](#). If you wish to report a timetable clash or request a class change, you should do so via the [online timetable](#).

You can find the location of your teaching rooms and get directions quickly and easily using the interactive campus map, [Find Your Way](#).

Core, compulsory and optional modules

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

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

Methods of Assessment

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

Coursework

Coursework is compulsory in all modules and failure to participate in coursework is interpreted as evidence of lack of academic progress. Your academic progress is monitored throughout the year.

Preparation of assignments

You must follow the instructions given by the module coordinator (usually also available on the module Moodle page) in order to prepare your assignment. All coursework is submitted online with a cover sheet.

Samples of coursework

Where possible, samples of coursework are provided within the module.

Referencing in coursework

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

Referencing allows you to give credit to other'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 APA style. You must use this referencing style. Guidance on your referencing style is available [online](#) and you can also take the [Academic Integrity course on Moodle](#).

Submission of coursework

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

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

Problems with FASER

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

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

Late submission of coursework

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

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

Return of coursework

Your coursework should be returned to you with a mark, the initials of the marker, and feedback. If your work is being marked and returned electronically you will receive an e-mail when it is ready to view.

This is important because (a) you can get timely feedback that may help improve other assignments, (b) you can get a gauge as early as possible as to the quality of work that you are submitting, (c) you can gain additional feedback from the marker, if necessary, and finally (d) you may appeal against your coursework mark, but only within two weeks of the work being available for collection.

Examinations

Attendance at examinations is **compulsory** and if you do not attend them and do not have [extenuating circumstances](#) then you are at risk of being withdrawn. In 2021-22, most exams will be run online, using FASER or Moodle. You will quickly become familiar with these platforms, if you are not already, as FASER is also used for coursework submissions and Moodle is often used to hold module materials. The Exams team will send you links to information about the different IT platforms and how they are used for exams when they publish your exam timetable.

Exam timetable

The University [publishes the dates for exam periods](#) at the start of each year. A link to your personalised exam timetable will be sent to your Essex account when it is ready to view

Calculators in Examinations

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

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

Dictionaries

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

Sample and past papers

Where possible, sample of past papers are provided within the module.

Revision classes

Module coordinators might decide to have a revision class at the end of term to help you prepare for the exam or coursework. If this is the case, this should appear on your personal timetable.

Exam stress

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

Access to your exam script

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

Feedback on your exam script will not include a discussion of the mark. The marks will have been approved by external examiners and ratified by the Board of Examiners.

Marking & Moderation

The [University's Marking Policy](#) can be found online and includes our policy and procedure on the moderation of work.

Marking criteria are designed to help students so that they know what it is they are being assessed on and what is expected from them. The marking will vary depending on what you are studying.

Marking

All student work is marked in line with the University's Marking Policy. If your assessment is worth up to and including 40% of your module mark, it will be marked by one member of academic staff. If it is worth more than 40%, then it will also be moderated. If the assessment is worth 30 credits or more, it will be marked by two members of academic staff. The full procedure and assessment marking requirements can be found in the [Marking Policy](#) – there is a useful flowchart in Appendix C to visually represent the requirements, and detailed definitions of marking and moderation within the policy itself. The PGT Assessment Guides can be found [here](#).

Feedback

Your coursework marks will be returned electronically and you will receive an e-mail when it is ready to view. For certain assessments, your coursework may be marked in hard copy, but you will receive your mark electronically. You should also collect your hard copy so that you can see your feedback.

This is important because (a) you can get timely feedback that may help improve other assignments, (b) you can get a gauge as early as possible as to the quality of work that you are submitting, (c) you can gain additional feedback from the marker, if necessary.

Feedback and marks are provided routinely for coursework (but not for exams or dissertations). The Department is strongly committed to provide students with feedback and marks in a timely manner. Typically, feedback and marks for coursework are provided within 20 working days (during term time) of the original submission date.

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

Extenuating Circumstances for taught modules

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

If you do need to make an extenuating 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 via MyEssex by the [appropriate deadline](#) noted.

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

The Board of Examiners

Assessment for the taught and professional components/competencies will be considered by an annual Board of Examiners meeting that determine whether a student can progress to the next year.

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

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

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

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

The research thesis is assessed in accordance with the normal arrangements for research degrees, as outlined in the [Principal regulations for research degrees](#) and Codes of practice relating to higher degrees.

Failure to pass

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

The pass mark for the required taught modules and the professional components/competencies (if required) is 50%.

In order to be awarded the Professional Doctorate a candidate must:

- a) Pass all pieces of assessment of the taught component of the programme
- b) Pass the assessment of professional competencies if they are a part of the programme (these are normally assessed on a pass/fail basis)
- c) Pass the research thesis.

In order to progress between years the student must have passed the taught module assignments and/or assessment of professional components/competencies. If appropriate to that year, the student must have also made satisfactory progress on their research.

The research thesis can be submitted before all of the required taught and professional practice components/competencies are completed but the degree will not be conferred until all components are completed and passed.

If you **fail your dissertation** you may be permitted by the Board of Examiners to resubmit your work, provided you meet the criteria as set out in the Rules of Assessment for Postgraduate Research Programmes. Alternatively, if you have obtained enough credits in your taught modules, you may be eligible for another exit award.

Publication of Results

You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published. You can find the [publication schedule](#) online.

Year and Degree Marks

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

When in your final year of study, graduating students will receive a [degree certificate](#) at Graduation which gives details of all marks obtained during their studies.

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 there, 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.