

**Your studies**

**School of  
Health and  
Social Care**

**Postgraduate research**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
2021-22



University of Essex

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## Welcome



A very warm welcome to the School of Health and Social Care. I am so delighted that you have chosen to come and study with us, and particularly at this current time. We are experiencing a very challenging period, but as a School, and University, we continue to prioritise YOU as our student, both your education, and importantly, your health and wellbeing. The situation we are in has underlined, at a national level, the critical and essential role of health and social care practitioners, and with us, you will learn the knowledge, skills and expertise to deal with all eventualities, and this will equip you for any future direction you take in your chosen career and will ensure you are a strong competitor in the job market.

The School of Health Social Care, at the University of Essex, is a leader in the field of health and social care education, underpinned by world-class, innovative, socially responsive and impactful research, and strong mutually beneficial partnerships. The School is proud of its long and prestigious history in training Clinical Psychologists who work across many settings nationally and internationally. You have joined us at a very exciting time, as we expand our provision with our new Masters in Global Public Health, and the commencement of four new apprenticeship programmes in SLT, OT, PWP and Nurse Associates. The University is also launching its new Institute of Public Health and Wellbeing in February 2022 and continues to make significant investment to the promotion and study of health and wellbeing.

Our staff are health and social care practitioners and/or researchers who continue to work in and contribute to practice, and you will be exposed to the most up to date, current and evidence-based information and teaching practice. The teaching and supervision you experience will be diverse and varied, and our focus is always on empowering and developing you to become an independent and continual learner. You will learn not only from our specialist staff and our practice partners in a range of practice settings, but also from a range of service users, with whom we share a special relationship, and, importantly from your peers.

We are very proud of our graduates, who are recognised as leaders in their field, and independent and critical thinkers, who are highly sought after by employers. We in the School are committed to making a meaningful difference at a local, national and international level in health and social care, through education, research and knowledge transfer, and you will join us in making this difference in your area of clinical practice. Your programme will prepare you for an increasingly challenging and complex UK and global healthcare landscape; and will equip you to be at the forefront of planning, delivering, evaluating, and transforming health and social care provision, both nationally and internationally.

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The next few years will, in all probability, be the most exciting years of your life, and you will experience encounters which will have major and long-lasting impact on you. You will also make friendships and connections which form an integral part of your life. Thank you so much for choosing us to partner you in your exciting journey ahead. There will be times when you feel exhilarated, and that you can do it all, and other times when you feel overwhelmed and frustrated. At these times, please know that you are not alone, and ask for help, come and talk to someone, whether it is a peer, your personal tutor, programme lead or a lecturer. It is all part of the journey, so embrace it all. Be open to all the wonderful opportunities that will present themselves. Be bold, be brave, and be proud. You earned this place; you deserve it and are going to make a great success of it. So very good luck!

Wishing you an inspiring and fulfilling adventure, and I look forward to meeting you, and hearing about your accomplishments and achievements.

Warmest wishes



Victoria Joffe  
Dean, School of Health and Social Care

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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.

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## Practicalities and Getting Started

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

### Registration

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

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

### Right to Study

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

### Student visas

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

### Explore your Campus

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

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## Get connected

### Your IT account

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

### Campus Wi-fi

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

### Essex Apps

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

### MyEssex

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

### PocketEssex

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

### Find Your Way

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

### 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.

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## **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.

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## 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 School of Health and Social Care were awarded the Athena SWAN Silver Department Award in October 2017, following our success at achieving the Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental Award in October 2015. We're immensely proud to be the first department in the university to achieve this award and are now building on this work in order to achieve a Gold Award.

## The Athena SWAN Charter

The Athena SWAN Charter was established in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research. In 2015 the charter was expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law, and in professional and support roles, and for trans staff and students. It also now addresses issues of intersectionality in recognition that other characteristics, such as a person's ethnicity, impact on their gendered experience. The charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women.

"We are delighted to have achieved the [Athena SWAN Silver Award](#). This recognition of our work is an important landmark in our journey to create an inclusive environment with equal opportunities for all regardless of gender, disability, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation" - Professor Gill Green (Leader of the School's Athena Swan team)

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The School has been successful in collaboration between staff and students on various anti-racism initiatives including the facilitation of clearer reporting systems and support within the School for racism. Other initiatives include work on decolonising our curriculums and the development of anti-racism resources funded by Health Education England (HEE).

The School also has an Equality and Diversity Committee, which feeds into Student Voice Groups and other areas of programme governance and delivery.

## **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.

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

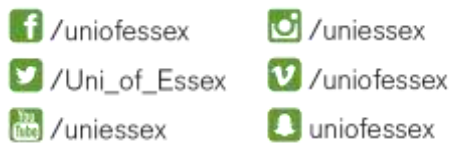
We also train, recruit and support hundreds of student reps each year. These reps gather feedback to share student viewpoints on academic experiences. You can find out more about student reps including how to sign up and getting trained [here](#)

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

### **Essex spirit, social media and what's on?**

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

Follow us on social media:



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

## About the School of Health and Social Care

### Meet the team

A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the School of Health and Social Care can be found [here](#). Below is a summary of the roles of staff that you are likely to be in contact with most frequently.

Course	Programme Lead	Administrator	Contact
Professional Doctorates	Dr Mary Kennedy	Kathryn Hills	<a href="mailto:hscpgradmin@essex.ac.uk">hscpgradmin@essex.ac.uk</a>
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology	Dr Frances Blumenfeld	Elena Sandica	<a href="mailto:dcpadmin@essex.ac.uk">dcpadmin@essex.ac.uk</a>
PhD	Dr Winifred Eboh	Kathryn Hills	<a href="mailto:hscpgradmin@essex.ac.uk">hscpgradmin@essex.ac.uk</a>

### 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](mailto: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 Graduate Director of 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 Graduate Director of 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.



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## Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

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

[Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Professional Doctorate rules of assessment](#)

## Staff research interests

The School of Health and Social Care specialises in applied, multi-disciplinary research that addresses local, national and international issues relating to health and social care policy and practice, and other related fields. The School of Health and Social Care staff have a wide range of research interests alongside their clinical and academic experience. For full details of HSC staff publications please see our [Research Repository](#) or individual [staff profiles](#).

## 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.

## Postgraduate (Research) Study Room / Lab

The Postgraduate Study room is available for all research students in the School of Health and Social Care. Please contact your administrator for access details.

## 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](mailto: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.

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## **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 School of Health and Social Care's noticeboards are located in the foyer of the Kimmy Eldridge building in Colchester and on the second floor of the Gateway building in Southend.

## **Pigeonholes**

Pigeon holes can be found on level 5 of the HSC building in the quiet study area

## **HEROES: Helping Each other with Research On Empirical Subjects**

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

## **Social Media**

Follow our department on social media for interesting news and updates:

Facebook: @EssexHSC

Twitter: @Uni\_essexhealth

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## 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

It is crucial that staff and students work together and maintain communication throughout the student's period of study. As a Postgraduate Research student, you have a responsibility to:

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

- You must present your thesis for examination by the end of the final term of your standard period, or by the end of the prescribed completion period.
  - A request for an extension of up to two weeks to the submission deadline may be made. Requests must be made to the Postgraduate Research Education Team in advance of the deadline. If granted an extension, you will not be expected to register or pay the prescribed fee for that two-week period.
- If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.
- Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.
- Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

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

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

## The academic year

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

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

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

The majority of courses in the School have slightly different term dates and these can be found in your programme handbook on Moodle. However, you will find that all 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.

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## My programme of study

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

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

## Making changes to your study

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Thinking of leaving or taking a break?

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

## Periods of study

		<i>Students first registered between 2008-09 to 2017-18</i>		<b>Students first registered from 2018-19 onwards</b>	
<b>Research degree</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Completion</b>
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.

Our Southend Campus Library & Learning Hub is located within **The Forum** and offers a variety of silent and group study areas as well as access to all the resources you need for your research, either on the shelves of the Library or online via the Library website. You can access computers in the Learning Hub, which is a pleasant and safe environment that is open for long hours, with specialist help available from the InfoPoint and via live chat. You can also request books from our libraries at Colchester and Loughton - and your library card gives you access to all public libraries in the SELMS consortium of libraries in the south east of England.

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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](mailto: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](mailto:journal@essex.ac.uk).

### **University and departmental training events**

PGR students studying in the School of Health and Social Care are expected to attend the School's annual Staff-Student Research Conference which will take place in Summer 2021. Information will be circulated to students in due course.

### **Departmental support or funding for attending conferences/other events**

Students can apply for the Facilitating Research Fund for support in attending conferences and funding research. Application forms are available on the ['Information for Current Students'](#) Moodle page.

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## Assessment and Academic Integrity

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

### Ethics in research

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

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

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

### Risk assessments in research

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

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

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



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## 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 Harvard. 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](#)

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## Proofreading services

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

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

## Language classes

### English classes for dependants

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

### Learning a Language

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

## Extenuating Circumstances

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

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

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

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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](mailto: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.

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## **Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)**

If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, or the examiners feel that the thesis has not met the requirements for the Professional Doctorate, they may be eligible to receive an exit award or lower award, as appropriate for the course. Details of the available exit/lower awards can be found in the [Code of Practice: Professional Doctorates](#).

## **Appeals**

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

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

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

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# 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](#).

## Marking criteria

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.

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

## Professional Doctorate Rules of Assessment

The [Rules of Assessment](#) are used to calculate the results for Professional Doctorates.

Each module you will take will have a credit value which you are awarded if you successfully complete the module. You need to obtain a certain amount of credits to be awarded your degree, and the [Rules of Assessment](#) give you more information about this.

## 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](#).

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

Whilst you are studying in the School you will undertake various forms of assessment, which are tailored to meet the outcomes of your programme of study. In the School you will complete written assignments such as essays, reflective accounts; we may also ask you to prepare case studies and reports. Many programmes will have practical assessments, which will test your performance in simulated and real health and social care environments. We may also use vivas and written examinations as well as multiple choice tests. The variety of assessment forms you will encounter will depend on your programme.

Whatever form of assessment we ask you to do, we will give you adequate information before you start so that you know what you have to do to pass the test.

## 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.

## 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](#).

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There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is Harvard. 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](mailto: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.

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## Return of coursework

When hard copy documents are submitted e.g. portfolios, students can collect their work following ratification from the relevant exam board. Work will be available to be collected in person from the HSC reception of the campus where the exam board took place, (i.e. Southend or Colchester campus) during standard working hours. Work will be available for a specified period (normally 2 months) after which it will be destroyed.

## Examinations

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

### Exam timetable

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

### Attending an exam

You must bring your registration card to any invigilated exams on campus. You may not be allowed entry without it.

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

### Calculators in Examinations

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

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

Sample questions will be provided during timetabled revisions sessions.



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## Revision classes

Revision classes will be timetabled for modules containing examinations run by the central Exams Office.

## 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.**

## Moderation and marking

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

### Marking

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

### Moderation

Moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides additional assurance that the assessment criteria has been applied appropriately. When work is moderated, it means that a second member of academic staff takes a random sample of the work for a particular assessment and reviews the marks given.

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## External Examiners

External Examiners are academics from other universities, but may also be from industry, business or the relevant profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that modules and courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education

## Re-marking of coursework

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

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

## Feedback

All assessed work will be returned to the student within 20 working days, considered as Monday to Friday; this period excludes Bank Holidays and the University's Christmas closure. We will always endeavour to meet the feedback deadline, but if there is any delay to release of feedback you will be advised of the reason for the delay via email by the Programme Lead in advance of the feedback date and the revised release 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

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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.

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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.

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## 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](mailto: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.

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## 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.

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## Seeing a Doctor

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

## Counselling services

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

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

## Drop In/Wellbeing Appointments

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

## UK Immigration Advice and Guidance

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

## Money management

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

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## 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](mailto:suadvice@essex.ac.uk); 01206 874034

**Southend students** – [suacsou@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suacsou@essex.ac.uk); 01702 328235 (term time only)

**Loughton students** – [suaclou@essex.ac.uk](mailto: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.



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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.

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# 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.

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# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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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.