



University of Essex

Your studies

**Department of Literature,
Film, and Theatre Studies
Postgraduate Research
Student Handbook 2023-24**



Welcome



Welcome to the Department of Literature, Film and Theatre Studies! Known as LiFTS for short, we are a vibrant, interdisciplinary department with five subject areas – literature, film, creative writing, theatre and journalism. Our teaching staff and students are storytellers as well as critical thinkers, and this heady mix of theory and creative practice is central to our approach.

Universities are places where knowledge is discovered and created through the process of research and practice. We are here to help you undertake your own research journey, and ensure you have the intellectual, creative and practical skills to make and shape your own discoveries. Together, along with our fantastic administrative staff, we are a research community.

The pandemic disrupted our community by breaking bonds, isolating us, and in many cases causing physical, mental and economic hardship which is still being felt today. We continue to build and rebuild our community throughout the ebbs and flows of society. Intelligence and knowledge are frequently characterised as something abstract that goes on in the head of the individual. But intelligence is also physical and relational, closely tied to our being and doing: that is, our experiences. Whether we are communing with dead writers through their books in the library or improvising a performance or putting in a shift in a newsroom, these relationships develop our intelligence.

We all want you to thrive. And we know that it's not always easy. An important point of contact is your doctoral supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies to whom you can talk to for advice on your research in our Department. For general queries,

please contact the LiFTS Taught Team, who are based in the General Office 5NW.6.16, which opens from 10.00am-12.00pm and 2.00pm-4.00pm Monday to Friday. Feel free to pop in, in person or virtually during their office hours, or contact them via email: liftstt@essex.ac.uk.

We also expect certain commitments from you while you are studying with us. This includes attendance at your supervisory meetings and panels and submitting work as required. The workload might seem overwhelming at times, and you might have difficulties adapting to new ways of learning and student life. If you do find that you're experiencing problems of any kind that affect your studies, please do not hesitate to reach out to your supervisor(s) or the Director of Graduate Studies for help.

In the pages of this handbook, you'll find a mine of information about the Department, along with practical guidance about your studies, opportunities to develop your career goals and support services at the University.

We want you to feel at home in the Department and that you belong to our community. The Department regularly organises poetry readings, film screenings, talks, performances at the Lakeside Theatre and exhibitions at the Art Exchange campus gallery. Come and join us! In addition, the Student Union runs over a hundred societies on topics that may pique your interest. These extracurricular activities are a great way of meeting people and developing knowledge and skills to complement your course.

We're so excited that you're joining us! We hope you'll make the most of your time at University and that you'll find the experience rewarding and exhilarating.

Warmest wishes and best of luck!

Matthew De Abaitua

Head of Department

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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.

At Essex we put the success of our students at the heart of everything we do, and want to support you to achieve outstanding outcomes. We are absolutely determined to provide you with the best Essex education and student experience we can, while safeguarding your health and wellbeing.

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 (New Students)

As a new student, you must complete the [registration process](#) in order to begin your studies with us. 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. Because of this, you'll be asked to complete compulsory steps, such as activating your Essex IT account, provide key information about you as part of Online Registration (including payment of fees where required), attend an in-person Right to Study Check on campus and collect your Student Registration Card. Once you've completed these steps, you'll be able to begin attending teaching and engage with your course.

You should ensure you have completed the [registration process, including payment of your fees \(where required\) by the published Latest Registration Deadline](#) for your course. If you do not do this, you may not be allowed to register and begin your course with us.

Registration (Returning Students)

As a returning student, you will need to ensure you complete [Online Registration and pay your fees \(if required to do so\)](#) at the start of each academic year to be able to continue your studies with us. It is essential that you complete all required steps, by the published [Latest Registration Deadline](#), otherwise you may not be allowed to continue your studies with us.

If you are a student undertaking studies with us with a form of immigration permission, in some instances you may be required to undertake an additional Right to Study Check, before being permitted to re-register. This may be the case if one or more of your documents have expired, or your immigration status has changed. You will be contacted by our International Services Team if you need to complete an additional check.

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 via the online Right to Study system, 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](#).

Students with sponsored immigration permission

The University is a Student Sponsor with a track record of compliance and must ensure we remain compliant to retain our sponsor status. Students with a Student visa have [additional 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. You are expected to attend in-person meetings with your Supervisor every month and this will be monitored throughout your course. If your [attendance and engagement](#) fall below expected levels or you are absent without permission for a period of time this is likely to impact on the University's ability to continue to sponsor your Student immigration permission. The International Services Team can provide [immigration information and advice](#) throughout your studies.

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](#).

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](#) (subject to our fair usage policy) on campus, connect to campus wifi, and much more. When you activate your account, you will need to register an external email address and passphrase so that if you [forget your password](#), you can also reset it using these details. If you have forgotten those, you should contact the [IT Helpdesk](#). Make sure you keep your password safe and do not share it with others. For a quick rundown of what you need when you first start, head to the [Getting Started with IT](#) guide on the Student Directory.

Campus wifi

If you are studying on any of our campuses, connect to our wifi by finding the eduroam network on your device. Use your Essex email and password to join.

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 and can only be accessed via an internet browser. This is different to your applicant portal – you can use MyEssex to update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

PocketEssex

[Pocket Essex](#) is the University's official app for students that can be downloaded on your phone or tablet for free. It acts as a portal through to a variety of areas and resources that will be useful for you throughout your studies. 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 app designed to get you from A to B on either the Colchester or Southend campuses with quick and easy directions. You can download this app on your phone or tablet for free!

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.

PGR Student Webpage

A vital source of information for students is the [PGR Student webpage](#). This online resource has information regarding your thesis and viva, the format of your thesis, Supervisory Panels, milestones, progression, Proficio as well as PGR events and activities. Please bookmark this page and check it regularly!

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 are 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

We are proud of our inclusive and international community. Our campuses are places where every single person can feel they belong and where you can find the world in one place. We have created a [Student Charter](#) as a pledge that every student signs up to when they join us. By signing up, you promise to uphold our values and to behave in ways that strengthen and support our community. We promise to support you at every stage of your journey with us.

Embracing our Values

We are different at Essex. We are brave, we are bold, and we embrace challenges and drive change. Our values are underpinned by this very culture. While we encourage you to challenge the status quo and explore the unknown, we expect all of our students do so respectfully, intelligently and act as true ambassadors for the University. 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 providing equal opportunities for both students and staff. Our students and staff are treated with dignity and respect on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, while still having the relevant impact and implications associated with 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 identity-forming characteristics, taken into consideration as necessary to ensure equal opportunity.

The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this [policy](#) is fully effective.

The Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies is firmly committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the delivery of all our courses, and as a community of scholars in our academic pursuits and day-to-day practices. We are working very closely with our Student Inclusion and Diversity Officer who, in consultation with our students, advises us on all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion from a student perspective. We are sensitive to the needs of our diverse group of students, we value and encourage dialogue and feedback, and constantly strive to review and adapt our teaching and research as practice to promote and ensure an inclusive community and student experience.

Student communities

We pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive community. We recognise the value of diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity within the University.

We offer a wide range of support to individuals and [groups of student members](#) – 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. The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this [policy](#) is fully effective.

Environmental Sustainability

We have made commitments as a University to reduce our impacts on the environment, including reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2035. In December 2020 we declared a [climate and ecological emergency](#) and developed a [sustainability strategy](#) that sets out our ambitions up to 2026. Our Sustainability team works on a range of projects from energy efficiency to extracurricular activities to help everyone at Essex live, study and work in environmentally-friendly ways. Everyone is encouraged to do their bit, and there are simple steps you can take as a student: remember to bring a reusable cup for takeaway drinks, and a bottle that you can refill at one of our many water fountains. If you live on campus, switch off electrical items that aren't in use, and be sure to keep windows closed in colder months when the heating is on. For more information, contact the Sustainability team – sustainability@essex.ac.uk.

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.

[Join](#) Essex Sport and be part of something bigger. We're a community of like-minded individuals who are dedicated to enriching your experience at University of Essex. By fuelling your passion for all things active we help you make new friends, find new interests and be the best you. Whatever your sport, whatever your level, from fan to [professional athlete](#), we've got a place for you.

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 and our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) 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 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 PGT 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 [Sports Clubs](#), and get involved with competitive sports in our [BUCS teams](#) or if you don't want to commit to a regular team, or would rather not play competitively, check out our [Just Play](#) programme run by the Students' Union.

We have over [120 Societies](#) where you can meet people with similar interests, challenge yourself with something new or if you can't find what you are 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 lettings agency ([SUHomes](#)), to offer help and support to students to find off campus accommodation.

Chart My Path

Use Chart My Path to discover over 200 extracurricular activities offered at Essex, and get recommendations personalised to you. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.

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:



/uniofessex



/uniessex



/Uni_of_Essex



/uniofessex



/uniessex



/@uniessexonline

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 Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies

Meet the team

A full list of all academic and professional services staff for the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies 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.

Administrative staff and responsibilities

Role	Name	Contact details	Responsibilities
Department Manager	Dr Daniela Wachsening	Office: 5NW.6.12 Email: d.wachsening@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for the leadership of the Professional Services Team and the operational management of the Department
Deputy Department Manager	Susan Hogan	Office: 5NW.6.14 Email: s.hogan@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for student administrative and pastoral issues
Senior Student Administrator	Muskaan Bose	Office: 5NW.6.16 Email: liftspg@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for all general administrative matters for postgraduate taught and doctoral research students
Student and Academic Services Administrators	Alison Bateman Hannah Langwith Comhnall Speed	Office: 5NW.6.16 Email: liftstt@essex.ac.uk Phone: 01206 872626	Responsible for all general academic and non-academic matters for all students in the Department
Academic and Operations Officer	tbc	Office: 5NW.6.14 Email:	Responsible for Journalism exams and accreditation, health and safety as well as student placements and expenses.

For any postgraduate queries, please contact liftspostgraduatequeries@essex.ac.uk in the first instance.

For any other general queries, please contact the General Office on liftstt@essex.ac.uk, telephone: 01206 872626 or visit room 5NW.6.16.

Academic staff and responsibilities

Role	Name	Contact details	Responsibilities
Head of Department	Matthew De Abaitua	Email: mjdeab@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for leading and managing the Department and for the Department's overall academic provision
Deputy Head of Department (Autumn Term)	Dr Jak Peake	Email: jrpeak@essex.ac.uk	Deputises for the Head of Department
Deputy Head of Department (Spring Term)	Professor Susan Oliver	Email: soliver@essex.ac.uk	
Deputy Head of Department (Summer Term)	Dr Joanna Rzepa	Email: joanna.rzepa@essex.ac.uk	
Director of Graduate Studies (Autumn and Spring terms)	Professor Jonathan Lichtenstein	Email: licht@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for overseeing the postgraduate research activities in the Department
Director of Graduate Studies (Summer term)	Dr Mary Mazzilli	Email: m.mazzilli@essex.ac.uk	
Employability Director (Autumn and Summer Term)	Dr Dan O'Brien	Email: d.obrien@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for the development and enhancement of employability provision for the Department
Employability Director (Spring Term)	Dr Eirini Konstantinidou	Email: ekonstb@essex.ac.uk	
Ethics Officer (Autumn Term)	Tasos Giapoutzis	Email: tasos.giapoutzis@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for all matters relating to research ethics in the Department, including ethical approval of research projects involving human participants
Ethics Officer (Spring and Summer term)	tbc		

Department Disability Liaison Officer	Dr Jordan Savage	Email: jksava@essex.ac.uk	Acts as a link between the Department and the Student Services Hub to ensure that the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Team knows about any adjustments that you need.
Academic Offences Officer	Dr Patricia Gillies	Email: pgillies@essex.ac.uk	Responsible for all matters relating to academic offences and plagiarism in the Department.
Assistant Lecturer Coordinator and CADENZA link	tbc		Can be contacted for all matters relating to assistant lecturer progress and training and is the CADENZA link within the

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. We recommend that you consider attending the '[Making the most of your supervisor](#)' training course, provided through Proficio.

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 Graduate Director, 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 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.

The Supervisory Panel (SP) and Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)

These are the formal committee meetings at which an individual student's work, training/skills development, and progress are reviewed against the published milestones. Progress decisions are considered by the SP with a recommendation being made to the RSPB. This includes Confirmation of Status and entry to the next stage of study or period of completion, along with extensions, downgrading and discontinuation. The final RSPB decisions and/or recommendations are reported to the relevant Faculty Dean (Postgraduate).

Your Supervisory Panel is composed of you, at least one of your supervisors and one other academic who acts as Chair. In exceptional circumstances where the sole supervisor is on study leave, an acting supervisor may attend.

The RSPB comprises senior members of academic staff and is chaired by the Graduate Director or Head of Department/School. 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.

[Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Professional Doctorate rules of assessment](#)

Staff research interests

Our research is at the heart of our activities and feeds directly into our teaching. We follow a distinctly comparative approach through critical and creative work in literature, drama, film, creative writing, and journalism that extends across genres and media forms. You can therefore expect the research interests of staff and students to be extremely diverse. We think this diversity is something for you to value and utilise, whatever the particular field of your own research.

We have internationally recognised expertise in world literatures and theatres, and our work covers areas from Shakespeare and transatlantic romanticism to global modernism, women's suffrage literature, science fiction, dystopias, and postcolonial literature. In film studies, our strengths are world cinema, film theory and practice, adaptation and documentary filmmaking. We are proud to have foremost scholars and practitioners of contemporary theatre and poetry among the members of our staff, and we have a rising profile in journalism studies.

For more information visit our [Research pages](#).

Our academic staff are the authors of numerous major [publications](#).

See our [academic staff profiles](#) for full lists of individual research.

Support within the Department

Any problems you may have should be discussed with your supervisor(s), but the Director of Graduate Studies is also happy to advise you on research related matters or matters relating to the University's formal requirements. Should you at any stage feel dissatisfied with the treatment you are receiving from your supervisor, you should raise the matter with the Director of Graduate Studies, who is always prepared to discuss any issues in the strictest confidence.

If your supervisor happens to be the Director of Graduate Studies, you should approach the Head of Department. If you feel unable to approach a member of the Department, you may contact the Faculty Dean Postgraduate (Humanities), Dr Lisa Smith.

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.

Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies General Office

The General Office is located on floor 6 in 5NW.6.16 (take the entrance on Square 4 and follow the signs). During term-time, our General Office is open Monday-Friday from 10.00am to 12.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

We are here to help you with every aspect of your course. Call in, email: liftstt@essex.ac.uk or liftspg@essex.ac.uk or phone 01206 872626.

Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies Common Room

You are warmly invited to use our Department's Common Room (5NW.6.1) and adjoining kitchen, both of which have tea/coffee making facilities, and are open from Monday-Friday 9.00am-5.00pm.

Postgraduate (Research) Study Rooms

A Postgraduate Study Room (5NW.5.15) and two PhD Study Rooms (5NW.5.12 and 5NW.5.14) with networked computers, desk space and shelves are available for research students' use. 5NW.5.15 and 5NW.5.12 are available 24/7 Monday to Sunday. 5NW.5.14 is available to book from 9.00am - 5.00pm, Monday-Friday. Please email liftspg@essex.ac.uk for the codes to enter 5NW.5.15 or 5NW.5.12. If you wish to book a desk in 5NW.5.14, please contact liftspg@essex.ac.uk, stating your name, and the date/s and times you wish to book a workspace in this PG study room.

As all of our rooms are shared by many people, we ask that you please fully vacate any desks and log off any PCs at the end of each visit. For health and safety reasons, we cannot allow the storage of any food items in any of our study rooms. We strongly advise that you **do not** leave any personal belongings, including any valuables, in the room/s. The University cannot be held liable for the loss of or damage to any personal belongings left unsupervised in our study rooms or social spaces.

Postgraduate Training

PGR students all have access to Proficio; our innovative professional development scheme, unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and we give you funds that can be spent on a variety of courses and conferences.

As a postgraduate research student, you will be registered on the Proficio system. You will need to complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) on Moodle in order to unlock your Proficio funding account. The enrolment key is 'PGRstudent'.

In addition to the centralised training provision, students can also access a wide range of postgraduate taught modules that either explore particular fields and concepts, or offer specific training in research methods and skills. Students should peruse the modules available and discuss with their supervisor which of these modules would be suitable.

Printing, photocopying and scanning

All students can [print, copy and scan for free at Essex](#) subject to our fair use policy. You can even print from your mobile by sending your file to mobileprinting@essex.ac.uk using your Essex email.

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, only print if necessary and check your available quota.

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.

Noticeboards

Every department and school has their own noticeboard(s) providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. Various information is displayed around the Department's noticeboards on floors 4, 5 and 6. The Graduate noticeboard is on level 6 near the General Office. The Department's 'virtual' noticeboard can be found on [Moodle](#).

Social Media

You are very much encouraged to visit, like or follow, and interact with our departmental [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages which are frequently updated with a range of news, information, reflections, anecdotes, and events taking place in and around the Department and the University. These pages contain a mix of informative, thoughtful and light-hearted entries and showcase our diversity, vibrancy and accomplishments at all levels of study and research. They are a good way of keeping in touch with what is going on in the Department and at the University as a whole.

Departmental Open Seminars

Throughout the academic year, our Department will host a series of Open Seminars and talks either on campus or remotely, centred around our various Department disciplines. These seminars and talks bring together leading external scholars, academic staff and postgraduate students in the Department, to discuss new research or work in progress. The seminars are also an opportunity for our postgraduate researchers to present key concepts of their theses. You are warmly encouraged to attend these events which will be useful to the development of your studies and allow you to gain new perspectives on current research.

The seminars are co-ordinated by [Professor Karin Littau](#) and [Dr Sean Seeger](#).

Seminars are advertised in advance via your Essex email, the [Department's webpage](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages, and, if possible, on the Graduate noticeboard and in the Common Room on level 6.

PhD Conference

A PhD conference - organised by and for doctoral researchers in the Department – is normally held every year, usually in May/June. This is an exciting opportunity for you to join doctoral researchers, academic staff and other students in the Department to present your research materials and share your ideas. There may also be an opportunity for your papers to be published. We also always encourage and look forward to your contribution to the Department's blog, writing about your experience organising and/or presenting at the Conference, or sharing your reflections on some of the proceedings.

The Department has a small budget allowance available for the organisation of the PhD conference. The budget for the agreed outline of the event is overseen by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Manager. If you would like to be involved with organising the event, please bring a proposed outline of the conference to the Senior Student Administrator for an initial discussion.

Learning and Teaching

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

The nature of doctoral studies

From the first day of your research, plan your work so that you can realistically expect to submit your thesis for examination within your standard period. While doctoral projects need to be both comprehensive and original, for any research project, it is wise to limit the scale and scope of what you do to what you can achieve in a set period of time. To work within limits allowed by the time available is part of the exercise of research itself.

A decision to pursue research implies that you are keenly motivated and interested in your chosen subject, and you have already started examining your primary sources. The opening

phase of research can be bewildering unless you devise a clear strategy from the outset. This includes the working out of a general plan of research, the initial conceptualisation of the problems likely to arise, and a preliminary review of the most relevant literature. As you move further into the subject, you may well find that the plan changes and that the problems turn out to be somewhat different from those you had initially foreseen. But after three months' work, it should be possible for you to have a very clear idea of what you are aiming for, and by this stage you should be conversant with secondary sources and examining your primary sources in depth. Your major effort at investigating these and drafting your chapters will probably come between the end of your first term and the midpoint of your third year. This leaves the second half of your third year for revising the thesis into its final version.

Completing on time

Your original research proposal should have been feasible and realistic with regard to your project aims, output and proposed timeline. If you stick to this timeline and meet all the milestones relevant for each stage of your study, you should be in a position to submit your thesis within **three years** (six years for part-time students).

MA by Dissertation students should be in a position to submit within **one year** (two years for part-time students) and MPhil students within **two years** (four years for part-time students). It is important to remember that, if you are a recipient of a scholarship for PhD studies, your funding will normally only be awarded for three years and will not cover any applicable completion period.

Sometimes unforeseen circumstances (such as illness, personal circumstances etc.) do cause delays in submission. However, there are often common problems which can be avoided:

- **Lack of planning and research** in the early stages/first year of study. You should use the feedback from your meetings with your supervisor and your Supervisory Panels in order to focus your work and agree realistic aims to meet throughout your study.
- **Poor record-keeping.** You should make sure your notes from all stages of your research are organised, indexed and referenced correctly and clearly.
- **Over-perfectionism.** You need to recognise the point at which to move on to your next stage of study/research rather than continually seek to polish and perfect the work you have already

done (particularly in the writing-up stage).

▪ **Demands on your time.** Sometimes it is necessary for students to undertake paid part-time/freelance work to support their studies. Teaching experience can be very valuable but financial and other benefits need to be weighed against the impact on your research time. Remember that full-time postgraduate research students are students for twelve months of the year.

Timetable of study

A typical timetable for PhD study would look like this:

First year (first term of your research)	Planning, conceptualisation, reading, writing a critical review of the secondary literature in your field (or creative practice equivalent as established in the milestones), establishing your position regarding it, and identifying the sources you intend to use. You should keep a critical bibliography of the material you are reading.
First year (second term of your research)	You should now be working on the primary materials of your thesis, writing draft chapters as soon as possible.
	At the end of your first year (end of second year for part-timers) your second supervisory panel will be the Confirmation of PhD Status panel. The Panel will review the evidence to confirm whether your progress and work is at PhD level.
Second year	
	At the end of the second year for part-timers the supervisory panel in summer will be the Confirmation Panel. The Panel will review the evidence to confirm whether your progress and work is at PhD level.
Third year (first term)	The completion of draft chapters.
Third year (second term)	Revision of your thesis into a final version ready for submission, inclusive of the notes, bibliography and an abstract.

This is a broad description of a typical pattern of progression from first to third year of the thesis.

Department PhD Milestones 2023-24

Postgraduate Research milestones are used to ensure you're making sufficient progress during your studies. They also keep you on track to submit within the appropriate period. PGR supervisors will talk through the relevant milestones during supervisory meetings. You should refer to them on a regular basis.

The PhD, MPhil and MA by Dissertation **2023-24** Milestones can be found [here](#).

Department PhD Milestones prior to 2023-24

PhD Milestones for students who started their studies before 2023/24 can be found on Moodle:

- Students who began their studies in **2015/16** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2016/17** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2017/18** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2018/19** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2019/20** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2020/21** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2021/22** can find the PhD Milestones [here](#)
- Students who began their studies in **2022/23** can find their PhD Milestones [here](#)

Student Staff Partnership

Your most important academic contact in the Department is your supervisor(s), who is normally appointed for the duration of your study for the PhD, MPhil or MA by Dissertation degree. Your supervisor(s) will advise you about all intellectual aspects of your research, including your research methods, your sources, and literature to be consulted. Any written work you do, including draft chapters of the thesis, will be read in the first instance by the supervisor(s).

The supervisor has overriding responsibility for the individual student, and their main responsibilities are as follows:

- Maintaining regular face-to-face contact with students at least once a month (bimonthly for part-time students) until the thesis/dissertation has

been submitted and, if this arises, during any referral period and corrections. In the case of distance learning students, supervisors must maintain regular contact with the student through electronic and/or other means such as Skype/Zoom.

- Maintaining regular contact with the student in order to provide general guidance on the research project as a whole and specific assistance on matters of detail; ensuring that the student prepares written work for discussion and criticism according to an agreed timetable.
- Familiarising themselves with the University regulations for research degrees and associated policies, the Code of Practice, and the departmental supervisory arrangements and conduct their supervision in line with the expectations set out in the above documents and as part of standard departmental practice.
- Providing guidance about the nature and standard of research work expected, including advice on attaining that standard, together with advice on academic practice in the discipline, matters of research design, ethical issues, and appropriate health and safety issues. Supervisors should make it clear to each research student that it is possible for the research and writing up to be completed within the Standard period and provide guidance on the appropriate volume of research work for the degree in question. They should also assist each research student in developing a clear timetable of work and emphasise the importance of keeping to it.
- Offering individual support to the student by helping them surmount disappointments, crises of confidence, etc.
- Requesting written work as appropriate and comment on such work within a reasonable time.
- Supervisors must encourage their students to read the Academic Offences Policy. Supervisors are encouraged to conduct formative exercises to run student's work through plagiarism detection software in their first term of study.
- Being reasonably accessible to students and advise them of any lengthy absences which will change the routine of monthly meetings. Keep each student well informed in advance about any prospective periods of leave and the planned supervisory arrangements during the leave.

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- Identifying and recording the student's training needs at the beginning of their studies and reviewing them on a regular basis and at least at every Supervisory Panel.
 - Ensuring that the student has opportunities to develop appropriate generic and research skills and that a record of course/workshop completion and attendance is kept.
 - Keeping a record of dates of formal supervisions with the student and of written work submitted, including the feedback and when it was provided, which can be produced later if necessary. In addition, when supervising a student with a Tier 4 visa, supervisors are expected to provide monthly confirmation, via the Learning and Engagement Portal (LEAP) or in response to requests from the Senior Student Administrator, of contact with the student. Reporting on each student's progress to the Supervisory Panel indicating what has been achieved, advising the Panel where they believe that the student is unlikely to reach the standard for the degree for which they are registered or where progress is slow and ensuring that the Chair of the Panel forwards a report on the Panel to the Senior Student Administrator in time for the next Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB). Warning and advising students in writing, with a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies, where work is not of the appropriate standard or is being produced too slowly, and of steps that might be taken to remedy the situation.
 - Liaising with the Director of Graduate Studies, and reporting when necessary to grant-awarding bodies on the progress of students in receipt of awards.
 - Ensuring that students understand the requirements of the degree, provide guidance on the examination process, help students to prepare for the viva voce examination, and direct the student to appropriate training.
 - The supervisor and Head of Department (or Director of Graduate Studies in their absence) are responsible for approving the proposed title for the thesis, which indicates that the thesis is close to submission. The **Approval of Title Form** should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Education Team (PGRE Team) **at least three months prior to submission** in order for the appointment of examiners process to start.

Nominating examiners for a candidate's thesis in appropriate time and by the time the student submits their thesis.

- The supervisor should not normally be present during the viva but is encouraged to be in the Department on the day or accessible to the student online to support the candidate at the conclusion of the viva. With the permission of the candidate and the examiners, the supervisor is permitted to be present when the examiners inform the candidate of the result of the viva.
- Writing references. Where appropriate, encourage students to think about their subsequent employment, and possible future career trajectories, and direct the student to suitable sources of training, advice and support.

A supervisor may recommend that their postgraduate researcher attend a particular taught course in the Department (or in another department). If a student wishes to attend such a course you must obtain the consent of your supervisor beforehand. You must also obtain the permission of the course tutor before the course begins and make yourself fully aware of the tutor's conditions of permission, especially of the level of participation the tutor requires. Any student may attend any lecture given in the University.

The supervisor and the postgraduate researcher will arrange a working timetable at the start of their relationship. The norm is one meeting a month (bi-monthly for part-time students), but meetings may be more frequent during the first months of your research, and again as the writing of the thesis nears completion.

Postgraduate Researcher Responsibilities

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

Postgraduate Research students are expected to work on their theses throughout the calendar year, and are not subject to the same academic year term structures as that of taught students. As a reference point, 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 programmes have slightly different term dates. In the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies this does not apply. 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.

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. Students with a Student visa may not be able to change their course without first obtaining a new visa from overseas, if eligible.

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.

You should also be aware of how your funding may be impacted if you choose to take a break. You can do this by contacting the Funding Team – funding@essex.ac.uk.

Periods of study

Research degree	Mode	Standard Period	Completion Period
Masters by Dissertation (<i>MA or MSc by dissertation</i>)	FT	One year	Up to one year
	PT	Two years	Up to one year
Master of Philosophy	FT	Two years	Up to one year

(<i>MPhil</i>)	PT	Four years	Up to one year
Doctor of Medicine (<i>MD</i>)	PT only	Two years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Three years	Up to one year
	PT	Six years	Up to one year
Doctor of Philosophy Integrated (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Four years	Up to one year
	PT	Eight years	Up to one year
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes

Library & Cultural Services

The Library provides access to an extensive digital library of books, journals, databases and more 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 Research Support team, who can advise on a variety of topics including open access, online research profiles, and how/where to publish and promote 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 & Cultural Services and the Research Enterprise Office that aims to support researchers, and offer training across the research lifecycle. Signing up to the Newcomers mailing list is the best way to keep up to date with the latest training and development opportunities, and it also provides a platform to network with fellow early career researchers. If you have any questions about Library services, there are a range of ways you can get in touch with the team.

At our Colchester Campus, the **Albert Sloman Library** on Square 5 has a variety of study spaces, including a dedicated Postgraduate Study Room that is open 24/7. You'll need your student card to access this space, so be sure to bring it with you during your visit. The Library offers in-person assistance at the Helpdesk in the ground floor foyer, as well as email, telephone, and live chat support. They also provide the

opportunity to book appointments with specialist staff, who can help you through your studies and into whatever you choose to do after graduation.

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

Art Exchange

Placing students at its core, [Art Exchange](#) is a place where art, artists and the campus community come together. Our programme of exhibitions and activities are here to get you inspired, make new friends – or simply to chill while having fun making art.

We show international art by established and emerging artists throughout the year, building up a dynamic programme by working closely with the campus community, as the art on our walls is co-created by students and responds to what matters to them.

Alongside exhibitions, our exciting programme of events and art classes and are free for students. Led by professional artists, they support students' creativity, confidence and wellbeing - as well as being great fun!

We want everyone to get involved and enjoy great art.

Lakeside Theatre

The [Lakeside Theatre](#) provides a warm, welcoming social hub of creativity at the heart of the University to foster the living learning community.

We produce a programme of diverse, dynamic and accessible live performances of theatre, music, comedy, dance, workshops, artist development and live art for audiences on and off campus. It is a learning and social experience for students that will deliver key life skills to enable them to respond to a rapidly changing world with creativity and personal and cultural confidence. Students' wellbeing remains at the forefront of what we do which is why we provide opportunities for enjoyment, inspiration and creativity.

The theatre and technical facilities are kept up to date, for student use in education and further skill building in modern practices nationally and internationally.

Study Abroad

As a postgraduate student there are a variety of opportunities through Essex Abroad to have an international experience. Providing you with the chance to enhance employability, gain valuable transferable skills and develop as individuals.

[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. For information regarding your funding during a study abroad, you should liaise with the Funding Team – funding@essex.ac.uk. Students with disabilities should also liaise with the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service – include@essex.ac.uk.

The University of Essex is a founding member of the YUFE Alliance. YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) is a collaboration of 10 different European institutions, providing you with the opportunity to study across multiple partners virtually or physically; as part of your degree or in addition to it. YUFE aims to be a leading model of a young, student-centred, non-elitist, open and inclusive European University.

As a University of Essex student, you can obtain an international experience through YUFE, taking anything from academic to language courses, or even entrepreneurship courses; allowing you to go the extra mile and stand out from the crowd. Find out more about YUFE and how to apply on our dedicated section on the [Essex Abroad YUFE webpage](#) and through the [YUFE Virtual Campus](#).

Peer Review with the Essex Student Journal

If you are interested developing the vital skill of peer reviewing academic papers, the Essex Student Journal provides the ideal opportunity to do so, with training, guidance, and support to help you become a proficient peer reviewer.

This invaluable experience will enhance your expertise as an early career researcher, developing your understanding of the academic publishing process. Peer reviewing is typically expected of researchers at all stages of their academic careers, so starting in our supportive environment will ensure you feel confident moving forward. The

analytical skills you develop are transferrable to a wide variety of other professions too.

Not all universities have a Student Journal, making this a unique opportunity for you and the authors. Our multi-disciplinary journal, run by students, for students, showcases the hard work of our undergraduates and PGTs and, through a double-blind peer review process, supports them to develop their writing skills and produce high quality outputs.

If you are interested in developing your skills and helping others to do the same, find out more about joining our vibrant community of peer reviewers at the Essex Student Journal and embark on your academic peer reviewing journey with confidence.

If you have any questions, get in touch with the Journal Team via journal@essex.ac.uk.

University and departmental training events

The Department encourages all its doctoral research students to make full use of Proficio, the University's innovative professional development scheme, and is also contributing bespoke courses, in response to student feedback, to this programme.

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 Subjects](#) or [Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Animals](#) 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. You should contact the REO Research Governance Team (reo-governance@essex.ac.uk) at an early stage.

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

Risk assessments in research

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

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

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

Academic Integrity and Academic Offences

The University expects students to complete all assessment with honesty and integrity and to follow our [conventions for academic writing](#) (including appropriate referencing of sources) and ethical considerations. If you don't meet these expectations, then you may be charged with having committed an [academic offence](#), a matter the University takes very seriously.

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

Referencing

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

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

There are styles of referencing which will determine exactly how you format your reference. Your departmental referencing style is **Chicago**. 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

There are a variety of skills and training opportunities available for postgraduate research students from [Skills for Success](#), covering a range of aspects across the research and thesis writing process. We also run a dedicated English language support class for international PhD students.

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their postgraduate research, and are here to help all year round, providing support, resources, [workshops](#) and [1:1s](#) on:

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

Some of these services are open to all students at the university, whilst others are specially tailored to research students. All are designed to help you develop your academic and language skills no matter what department you are attached to, or what stage you are at.

All services are free, and have no limits on the number of bookings you can make.

Departmental Support

Royal Literary Fund Fellow

The Royal Literary Fund (RLF) exists to help writers, and champion good writing. The RLF provides a resident fellow, here at Essex, to help our students with the writing of their essays, dissertations, papers, or theses, or even job and grant applications.

This year, our fellow is Ruth Dugdall, a published novelist working in the genre of crime writing. If you would like to take Ruth's advice, please book your slot by emailing ruth.dugdall@rlfeducation.org.uk. Ruth will then send you a link to access her diary and booking form. The service is entirely free, confidential, and independent of the University.

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

Academic English Support

Skills for Success run a dedicated [PhD Language Support](#) module throughout the year, to help you develop your writing skills, presentation skills and confidence. They also run a range of [Academic English Support classes](#) which are available throughout the year. Modules include Academic Writing, Speaking, Reading, Grammar Review, and Exam Preparation and Writing Skills. Bookable [workshops](#) and [1:1 support](#) are also available.

General English classes for beginner/intermediate/advanced learners (GEC)

The [Department of Language and Linguistics](#) offers the wider University of Essex community the chance to improve their English language skills through our General English Classes. These classes are available to:

- Dependants and close family members of students and staff at the University of Essex
- International staff at Essex who may want to work on their general English and fluency skills
- International students currently studying at UEIC Kaplan
- International students currently studying at both UG and PG level at Essex who wish to develop their language skills

-
- Refugees and asylum seekers who hold an ARC card, or a letter granting them Immigration Bail

The classes, which take place at the Colchester Campus, will enable you to meet people from other countries and cultures and will help you develop your language skills. These classes are free and are taught at three basic levels: Beginner (A1/A2), Intermediate (B1/B2) and Advanced (C1/C2) and will focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing. Throughout the year, you will have a unique opportunity to develop your conversation skills, by reflecting on real-life examples of how language is used in context.

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.

Submission of Thesis

Submission of thesis/dissertation

Notice of Intention to Submit (Approval of Thesis Title form)

You must submit your Approval of Thesis Title form to the Postgraduate Research Education Team **AT LEAST three months** before you are intending to submit your thesis/dissertation for examination.

Please discuss your final title with your supervisor(s) as once the form has been submitted, it **cannot** be changed once approval has been given.

You can obtain the form from the [Senior Student Administrator](#) or online [here](#). The form will need to be signed by the student and the supervisor(s) and approved by the Head of Department or Director of Graduate Studies.

The Postgraduate Research Education (PGRE) Team will contact students directly with confirmation of the approval of the title. The PGRE Team will also send students a **RD1 form** which they will need to complete and submit with their thesis or dissertation.

Format of the thesis/dissertation

The agreed Departmental standard order of the thesis/dissertation is as follows:

- Title / Submission page
- **Abstract** (up to 300 words one page in length, double spaced, no pagination)
- **Table of Contents** (includes all page references to sections, chapters, and appendices that follow - note that sub-headed sections within chapters do not need to be listed on the table of contents - this is optional)
- **List of Figures / Illustrations** (if included, can be page numbered as roman numeral i, ii, etc.)
- **Acknowledgements** (if included, these can be numbered in roman numerals as ii, iii, iv, etc.)
- Page number 1 starts on the first page of the Introduction
- Bibliography
- **Appendices** (if applicable)

Thesis Submission Pre-Examination

All candidates for a Masters by Dissertation (MAD or MSD), Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) 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.

Requirements for the Award

A thesis/dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor/Master of Philosophy or Masters by Dissertation must embody the results of research carried out during the approved period of study. In the thesis/dissertation and the viva the candidate is required to conduct and present original investigations that make a significant contribution to knowledge, to test ideas, whether the candidate's own or those of others, to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigations to a wider field of knowledge and to express themselves clearly and concisely.

In the case of a thesis/dissertation involving **original creative output**, the thesis/dissertation must embody the results of research carried out and/or output created during the approved period of study. The thesis/dissertation must contain a commentary that addresses the originality and artistic relevance of the work. Within the thesis/dissertation and viva the candidate must show evidence of the originality of the work, demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of the theme of the thesis/dissertation to a wider field of knowledge, make a significant contribution to knowledge/the genre, and must express themselves clearly and concisely.

Examiners and the Viva

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

Exit Awards (Professional Doctorate students only)

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

Appeals

PGR students wishing to [appeal](#) against either a progress decision (a recommendation made by the Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB)) or an examination decision

(an outcome decided upon by the examiners following a viva voce) should follow the [Appeals Procedure](#).

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

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

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.

PhD, MPhil and MA by Dissertation submission requirements

Each copy of the thesis/dissertation should contain a summary or abstract not exceeding **300** words.

Word limits **include** quotations but **exclude** appendices, references and footnotes (as long as the latter does not contain substantive argument).

Criteria for Award of PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) (subject to passing viva voce examination)

Critical projects in **Literature, Film, Journalism or Theatre Studies**:

- A thesis of **80,000** words.

Specification of submission materials for PhD projects involving original creative output

PhD in Creative Writing (word lengths may vary depending on genre or the kind of writing project envisaged, the following examples are indicative):

- A novel or collection of short stories (**30,000-100,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**35- 40,000** words).
- A collection of poems (**50-150** pages, the length of a standard collection of poetry, roughly **10,000- 30,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**35-40,000** words).
- A long poem (**30,000-100,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**35- 40,000** words).
- A radio ballad (**50-150** pages, the length of a standard collection of poetry, roughly **10,000-30,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**35-40,000** words).
- An experimental translation or version (indicative word count as for a collection of poems, above).
- A collection of visual poetry (**50-100** pages of visual text, **plus** critical commentary **35- 40,000** words).

PhD in Film Studies (Creative Practice):

- An original screenplay or equivalent short screenplays (**80-120** pages, equivalent to **80-100+** minutes of screen time, roughly **30,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**40,000** words)
- A full-length film or equivalent short films (**80-120** minutes screen time), sample screenplay excerpt (**10,000+** words), critical commentary (**30-40,000** words).

PhD in Theatre Studies (Playwriting):

- An original full-length play or equivalent short plays (**70-100** pages or **70–150** minutes playing time, **20- 30,000** words) **plus** critical commentary (**40,000** words).

PhD in Theatre Studies:

- **Desk-based/critical PhD projects** in Theatre Studies require a submission that is up to **80,000** words in length.
- **Practice-as-Research (PaR)** projects in Theatre Studies require a critical commentary (**40,000** words) and **equivalent submission in practice**. Depending on the specific demands of the research project (to be negotiated with the PhD candidate's supervisor(s)), the practical submission can take the form of a range of outputs; e.g. performances, recorded workshops, scripts etc.

If you are planning on submitting a creative thesis **above the commentary and/or creative word limit**, you must seek permission from the Dean for your total word count **before submitting your thesis**. Your thesis may not be accepted by the Postgraduate Research Education Team if you have not sought Dean permission. Please contact liftspg@essex.ac.uk for more information.

Criteria for Award of Master of Philosophy (subject to passing viva voce examination)

Specification of submission materials for the MPhil (**critical projects in Literature, Film, Journalism or Theatre Studies**):

- A thesis of **50,000 words**.

Practice-as-Research (PaR) projects require:

- **a critical commentary (25,000 words) and equivalent submission in practice**. Depending on the specific demands of the research project (to be negotiated with the PhD candidate's supervisor), the practical submission can take the form of a range of outputs; e.g. performances, recorded workshops, scripts etc.

Criteria for Award of Masters by Dissertation (subject to passing viva voce examination)

Specification of submission materials for the MA by Dissertation (critical projects in **Literature, Film or Theatre Studies**):

- A dissertation of **30,000 words**.

Practice-as-Research (PaR) projects require:

- **A documentation of creative practice** together with a **10,000-20,000-word critical commentary**. The practical submission can take the form of a range of outputs; e.g. performances, recorded workshops, scripts etc.

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.

Supervisory Panels

The Supervisory Panel and responsibilities

The Supervisory Panel is responsible for formally monitoring students' progress and reports to the Department's **Research Students' Progress Board**.

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

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

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

At each meeting in the year, the Panel will make a recommendation to the Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB) that you be allowed to continue, or that you be required to discontinue with your studies, or that you alter your status.

Supervisory Panel members

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

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

During the final **six months** before submission of your thesis, no member of staff who

is nominated as your internal examiner may sit on the Supervisory Panel, comment on drafts of the thesis or offer a judgement as to the overall quality of the thesis.

Supervisory panel reports: progression and criteria

After each Panel meeting, the chair of the Supervisory Panel will be required to complete a report which is considered by the Department's Research Students' Progress Board (RSPB). The report may make suggestions for improvement. The Panel will rate your progress on a scale from **1** (Excellent) to **5** (Unsatisfactory).

You must sign the Supervisory Panel report to show that you have read it and send it back to the [Senior Student Administrator](#) by the date given in the email sent to you. You have the opportunity to comment on the Panel report for the Research Students' Progress Board to consider.

All Panel reports will be uploaded to students' Electronic Student File once their progress has been confirmed.

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

- Record of supervisory contact and meetings since the last Panel and supervisors' comments on current progress
- Report on discussion of submitted work (identifying strengths and weaknesses)
- Outline of the student's achievements and skills enhanced to date
- Outline of the Milestones met for current year of study
- Recommendations for work and any training before the next Panel
- A discussion of the extenuating circumstances presented to the Panel (if applicable)
- Confirmation and discussion of ethical approval (if applicable)

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

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

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

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

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

For critical / theoretical PhDs

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

For PhDs with Creative Practice (Creative Writing; Film with Creative Practice; Theatre Studies and Playwriting)

- The student is advanced in examining and processing primary and secondary sources.
- The student demonstrates progress by providing a sample of the creative work (to be agreed with the supervisor(s)). Consistent with the demands of critical or desk-based PhDs, creative practice submitted should be the equivalent of **15,000** words of material, or the equivalent combination of critical/creative work.
- The student further provides a draft chapter of the critical/analytical commentary.
- The quality and quantity of work so far produced indicates the student has an original thesis that can be completed on time. The expectation is that the student has produced up to one third of their overall thesis.

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

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

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

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

- Has a substantial portion of the thesis been written in draft and is it of a

satisfactory quality? Has all research been completed?

- Confirmation of the anticipated submission date
- Confirmation that the student has a clear plan of work for the completion period in order to submit their thesis at the end of this period.

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

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

Confirmation of PhD status

When PhD status has been confirmed by the Research Students' Progress Board the student will be sent a letter from the Department signed by either the Head of Department or the Director of Graduate Studies indicating that their formal registration status has been changed to PhD instead of MPhil/PhD. The Standard Period will be unchanged. Students will continue to have two Supervisory Panels each year (and at least one for part-timers) and the full range of decisions regarding progress will remain open to the Panel.

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

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

If the decision regarding PhD status is deferred to a second Confirmation Panel, or a student decides not to accept the recommendation of the first Confirmation Panel of downgrading or discontinuation,

then a second Confirmation Panel will be held just before the start of the second year (beginning of the third year for part-timers).

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

Supervisory panel arrangements

Supervisory Panel meetings will normally be arranged by the Senior Student Administrator. An Outlook calendar invite will be sent to your **Essex email address** and the Panel members with a suggested date/time within the below specified weeks. Please respond to the calendar invite as promptly as possible so meetings can be arranged quickly and efficiently.

Timeline of the Supervisory Panels

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

For the 2023/24 academic year, supervisory panels will be held in the following weeks:

Weeks	Dates of Panels	Who attends?
8 and 9	20th November 2023 to 1st December 2023	All full-time students (except students starting in October 2021/22). Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by January 2024 Students whose completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in January 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from October 2023 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by January 2024

20 and 21	12th February 2024 to 23rd February 2024	All full-time students who started in October 2023 Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by April 2024 Students whose standard period, completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in April 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from January 2024 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by April 2024
36, 37 and 38	3rd -21st June 2024	All full and part-time students including students who started in January 2024. Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by October 2024 Students whose standard period, completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in October 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from April 2024 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by October 2024
46 and 47	12th-23rd August 2024	Students who started in April 2024 Students whose progress decision was deferred at the Summer Research Students' Progress Board in July 2024

Submission of work to the Supervisory Panels

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

- A Research Progress report detailing progress made, training completed and any issues that have arisen with the student's research (one page) and an outline of thesis structure including estimated word counts (one page) (templates will be sent in advance by email)
- A piece of written work or creative practice including bibliography and references (approximately 25 pages), the nature of which is decided upon by the supervisor(s) in consultation with the researcher
- An updated CV (required for the first Supervisory Panel in the third year of study only) (where appropriate, or other appropriate evidence of career development)

For PhD **supervisory panels in the first year**, the papers submitted for either panel should consist of an updated Research Proposal and a Critical Literature Review in the form of annotated bibliography; and/or equivalent piece of initial creative/critical work scoping out the field accompanied by an initial outline of thesis which makes clear the postgraduate researcher's own position regarding the existing literature, and the approach you intend to use. Please see the relevant [milestones](#) for more information.

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

Deadlines to submit work to the Supervisory Panels

Please send your panel submission electronically to the [Senior Student Administrator](#) **by email attachment only** by the following deadlines:

Week	Deadline date	Students due to submit work
6	Monday 6th November 2023 by 12 noon	All full-time students (except students starting in October 2023). Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by January 2024 Students whose completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in January 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from October 2023 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by January 2024
18	Monday 29th January 2024 by 12 noon	All full-time students who started in October 2023. Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by April 2024 Students whose standard period, completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in April 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from January 2024 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by April 2024
34	Monday 20th May 2024 by 12 noon	All full and part-time students including students who started in January 2024. Students who are due to submit OR resubmit by October 2024 Students whose standard period, completion period OR extension to maximum period ends in October 2024 Students who are in their first term of completion period from April 2024 AND/OR are planning to submit their thesis/dissertation by October 2024

45	Monday 5th August 2024 by 12 noon	Students who started in April 2024 Students whose progress decision was deferred at the Summer Research Students' Progress Board in July 2024
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The Senior Student Administrator will circulate your submission to the Panel members ahead of the Supervisory Panel meeting.

Informal extensions to submit Supervisory Panel work

Should you require a short extension to submit your Supervisory Panel work due to extenuating circumstances, you would need to discuss this with your supervisor(s) in the first instance. Please contact liftspg@essex.ac.uk no later than **two weeks before the deadline** for the relevant form to complete for the Director of Graduate Studies approval.

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.

Research Students' Progress Boards (RSPB)

The Research Students' Progress Board formally monitors the progress of all research students three/four times a year, on the basis of the first and second (and third if applicable) annual reports of the Supervisory Panel.

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."

The Research Students' Progress Board is therefore equivalent to an exam board as held for undergraduate or postgraduate taught (MA) students.

More information can be found in the [Principal Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

The Research Students' Progress Board will provisionally meet in the 2023/24 academic year on the following dates:

- 11th December 2023
- 4th March 2024
- 1st July 2024
- 28th August 2024

You will have the opportunity to comment on the reports of the Panel in writing for the Research Students' Progress Board to consider.

The Research Students' Progress Board is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies and normally includes the Head of Department, the Director of Research and other senior academic members of staff. Each students' Panel report and the recommendation from the Supervisory Panel will be considered at each meeting.

It is important to note that the Research Students' Progress Board can overturn the recommendation from the Supervisory Panel if they feel that they disagree with the outcome that the Panel has recommended.

The final recommendation regarding your progress lies with the Research Students' Progress Board.

You will be informed of the Research Students' Progress Board's decision regarding your progress by the Senior Student Administrator and/or the Postgraduate Research Education Team (depending on the decision made) in writing after each Research Students' Progress Board meeting has been held.

If a Supervisory Panel report has recommended that you discontinue or that your status be changed, you will be given the opportunity to attend the meeting of the Research Students' Progress Board reviewing the case. If the Research Students' Progress Board decides to accept such a recommendation, you will be informed in writing and you may request a review at which point the University's Guidelines for Supervisory Arrangements for Research Students come into operation and the Faculty Dean Postgraduate (Humanities) will set up a Review Committee.

Assistant Lecturer opportunities

From their second year of research, PhD students are eligible to apply to become Assistant Lecturers (ALs) in the Department, depending on available opportunities. As an Assistant Lecturer, you would be able to teach first year, or exceptionally second year, undergraduate modules and be mentored and supported in your teaching by our academic staff.

Depending on the availability of suitable opportunities, details of the application process and dates of interview for the AL role will usually be advertised in the Spring or Summer term prior to the academic year in which you will be teaching. Our Department Manager will be able to provide you with further information and will also be able to assist with any informal enquiries.

Please note that Assistant Lecturer positions, if available, are very competitive. Always

consult your supervisor first about your ambition to apply for teaching as they would be able to evaluate what impact an engagement with teaching might have on your research.

If you have been offered an opportunity to teach, you are required to obtain the CADENZA certificate in your first year of teaching and attend the University's two-day induction event for new ALs and any other courses and/or workshops as appropriate.

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. Such proposals are recorded in SVG logs, where specific details are requested in order to facilitate the feedback.

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 by closing the feedback loop.

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 difference or mental health condition to disclose and register with the [Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service \(SWIS\)](#) so that we can plan how best to [support you in your studies](#).

If you are care experienced, estranged from your family, primary carer and/or University of Sanctuary student please contact the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) for [further information](#) about support that may be available to you. You may also be eligible for one of our [bursaries](#) that is available to provide additional funding.

UK students may be eligible for a [Disabled Students' Allowance grant](#). If you are not a UK student and you have a disability, you may be eligible for [other grants and funding](#). We would recommend that you [contact 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 Access 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 non-physical access at Essex (student education, staff employment and visitor experience). Membership is open to both staff and students, with and without disabilities.

Seeing a Doctor

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

Counselling services

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

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

Wellbeing drop in

The Wellbeing Assessors provide support to students with anything affecting their wellbeing, mental health and/or disability. You can speak to a Wellbeing Assessor for support and advice at our wellbeing [drop-in sessions](#) in person. If you would feel more comfortable with a telephone or Zoom appointment, you can still request this via our [online appointment 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

Financial Support Officers in our [Student Services Hub](#) and our independent [Students' Union Advice](#) can provide [money management and budgeting advice](#) and can talk through any financial issues that you may be experiencing and how best to tackle them. You can also ensure that you keep your finances on track by working through some free online money management modules offered by [Blackbullion](#).

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 while studying at Essex.

Funding Opportunities

There are lots of funding opportunities available to UK, EU and International students offered by the University and by external companies and organisations. This may be in the form of a student loan, a scholarship or a studentship. You can find out more information, including what you may be eligible for on the [PGR Scholarships and Funding webpage](#) or your [Department page](#).

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

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

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. 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 [Report and Support Service](#) of trained Harassment Support Workers are on hand to help.

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 reprimand.

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.

Your information

Changes to your information

During your period of study at Essex, you may wish to be known by a preferred name or update your legal name on our student record database (ESIS) if your circumstances change. It is important you keep your information up to date, which you can [manage and update online](#).

Your personal information

We collect and hold lots of information about you, your course, and your progress so that we know who you are, what you're doing, and how you are getting on. This means we can support you and also improve our services to reflect the need of our students.

All information about you is kept securely, and access to your information is only given to staff who need it in order to do their job. You have a [right to ask for copies of information](#) we hold about you.

To find out more about what information we collect, what we do with it, who gets to see it, and your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018, read our [Privacy Notice for students](#).

Student Development

Careers Services

The [Career Services](#) team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through events, workshops and one-to-one sessions. With teams dedicated to supporting work-based learning, placements, internships and professional development, we'll provide the information and support you need to thrive.

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.

Get experience

Develop your skills and showcase your potential through our extracurricular offer:

- Find the right activity for you with **Chart My Path**, and to get recognised on your HEAR for your extracurricular achievements with the **Big Essex Award**. Log into [GradIntelligence](#) to get started.
- Discover paid internships with local businesses that have been exclusively designed for Essex Students – sign up to [Essex Interns](#) to find out more.
- Apply for [Career Mentoring](#) and be matched with an industry expert to expand your network, learn from their experience and explore options for your future.
- Calling our Black students! Unlock your academic potential and cultivate research skills through our digital **Black Researchers' Hub**. Explore on [GradIntelligence](#) today.

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.

You Are Essex

Your Award Certificate

Upon conferral of your award, all graduates will receive both an electronic and hard copy Award Certificate. Your electronic Certificate will be available on your [GradIntelligence](#) account within 5 working days of your conferral and your hard copy Certificate will be posted to you within 10 working days of being printed. You will be contacted to ask for confirmation of the most suitable address to use, or you may opt to collect this at a Graduation ceremony if preferred.

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](#).

We hold two Graduations per year: one in Spring and one in Summer. More information on the dates and ceremonies held for each Graduation, including eligibility and how and when to book your place at Graduation, will be published at the start of each academic year on the [Graduation webpages](#).

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](#).

We will be here for you wherever life takes you next. You might know the path you wish to take, but if you need help to reach your goals, our Careers Services Team offer information, guidance and advice on your different options after graduation. Careers support is for life as an Essex graduate and we'll be with you every step of the way. We are proud of our world-class research at Essex and your invitation to contribute is lifelong. As an Essex graduate, you can also take advantage of [generous discounts](#) on further [postgraduate study](#) and [postgraduate research degrees](#).

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

Appendix

Departmental Style Guide

This guide should be used as the stylistic basis for all coursework and dissertations submitted to the Department. It describes good practice in all the aspects of formatting, quotation, and referencing that you are likely to need to use and adheres to widely recognised standards in scholarly writing. It is based upon the Chicago style guide.

Please see the relevant Library page for information, samples of footnotes and bibliography entries and a range of support resources for [referencing](#).

There is often a good deal of nervousness regarding academic style, particularly over referencing. However, it is, for the most part, simply a case of following straightforward models, which are described in this document. Nothing outlined here is particularly complex, so following these guidelines should help you in submitting clear, well-referenced work. You should always bear in mind that good, coherent style and accurate, properly formatted references are vital research skills.

Basics

- Use 12-point font and at least 1.5 line spacing (except for footnotes, which can be 10-point and single spaced).
- Number all pages (using the page-numbering function on your word-processing package).
- Always read through your work carefully before submitting it, checking for spelling and grammatical errors. DO NOT rely on your computer's automatic spelling and grammar checking functions, and NEVER use these without reading through the essay again afterwards.

Quotations

- Always make sure that your quotations are clearly identified as another's words.
- Short quotations (fewer than 50 words) do not need to be indented from your main text.
- Prose quotations of fewer than 50 words should be run on as part of the text, in quotation marks, and separated by a comma e.g. As Bryony Trezise expands in *Performing Feelings in Cultures of Memory*, "we feel through, and as, we

touch. We feel about how we touch at the same time as we touch. In this way, we might develop feelings about feeling”.

- Two or three lines of verse should be run on with the lines separated by a forward slash: e.g. “In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo”.
- Long quotations of more than 50 words, or of several lines of verse, dialogue, etc., should be indented from the main text, single spaced, and introduced by a colon with no quotation marks e.g.:
 - As Adams, Bochner and Ellis state:

Autoethnographers recognize the innumerable ways personal experience influences the research process. For instance, a researcher decides who, what, where, when and how to research [...] consequently, autoethnography is one of the approaches that acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher’s influence on the research.
- If you wish to skip over part of a sentence you are quoting, indicate this by an ellipsis (. . .) or four dots (full stop plus ellipsis) if you run over the end of a sentence. Explanatory words added by you within quotations are indicated by square brackets.
- Make sure that you use punctuation to make your quotations fit in smoothly and logically with your own prose.
- If the quotation begins a new sentence or distinct new point, a colon or full stop is probably most appropriate: “punctuation is as vital to strong writing as the words used.”
- If the quotation continues the point, functioning as a new clause in a sentence, “then a comma should be sufficient.”
- As well as correctly citing your quotation with a footnote, identify the source in your main text, using such phrases as “as John Smith suggests”.
- Do not italicise quotations, unless the original text is italicised. If you use italics to emphasise a particular word or phrase in a quotation, make this clear in square brackets [my italics].

Footnotes and references

You must ALWAYS acknowledge the source of:

- any direct quotation from a published work;
- any idea from a published work which has significantly influenced your argument, even if you do not make a direct quotation;
- any repetition of material from another of your own essays;
- any other quoted or directly influential source, such as lecture notes, presentations, or seminar discussions.

The rule of thumb for footnotes is to be brief and clear.

Please refer to the University webpages for information on [plagiarism](#) if you are at all unclear about the definition.

Footnotes and parenthetical citations: the basics

After quotation from, or reference to, any work, indicate a footnote by a raised number, thus.¹

Footnotes should appear at the foot of the page to which they apply. Your word-processing package will allow you to enter footnotes automatically (usually 'Insert Footnote'), but pay attention to the 'Options' menu (always choose Arabic numbering) and use 'Format Style, Footnote Text' to arrange the notes in readable fashion.

Citing dramatic works

The first footnote reference should cite author, title, place, publisher, date, page number (for more detailed examples see below). Act and scene numbers should always appear in parentheses after the quotation. No further footnote is needed for the same play, though further parenthetical citations should indicate page, act, scene, and line numbers (if given) using the form (V.ii.19-22), where the sequence of upper case Roman, lower case Roman, and finally Arabic signifies act V, scene ii, lines 19-22.

Citing poetry

The first footnote should cite author, title, place, publisher, date, page number. Line numbers should always appear in parentheses after the quotation. NO further footnote is needed for the same poem, though further parenthetical citations should cite page and line number(s) (for example: p. 12, l. 12). Multiple lines of a poetic work are

signified by 'll.' (for example, p. 12, ll. 12-15). Long poems, such as *The Aeneid* or *The Faerie Queene* are referenced by their internal divisions into, for example, books and cantos and stanzas (III. x.12). Shorter poems are referenced simply by line numbers (ll. 45-53).

Citing films

The first mention of all films in an essay should immediately be followed by a parenthetical reference to the year in which it was released. For example, "In Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963), Tippi Hedren plays Melanie Daniels ..." Any direct quotation from a film does not usually need to be cited, but a complete filmography can be included in the essay.

Citing images

Creators first and last name, Title of Work, date, medium, dimensions, location, or collection (publication details in brackets for footnotes), date accessed and URL.

- Images do not usually appear in the bibliography, only the notes.
- If there is no creator or organization information then begin the citation with the title. If there is no title provided then create a descriptive title and place it within square brackets. If there is no date available use the acronym "n.d."
- If you are citing a work in its original context you should include the medium (e.g. oil on canvas).

Bibliography

Whether or not you have referred to them directly, list at the end of an essay all the books and articles you have consulted. Bibliographies are arranged in alphabetical order by author with the author's surname given first.

Filmography

Model one: After the first direct reference to a film in an essay, a footnote should appear which includes the following information: the film title, director's name, two or three of the principal players, the studio or production company that released it, and the year. Further citations are not necessary. For example: *Grease*, dir. Randal Kleiser, feat. John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John (Paramount, 1978).

Model two: Rather than a footnote, the essay can simply quote directly from the film without any references. It should, however, present a filmography at the end of the

document, which includes: the film title, director, principal players, the studio or production company, and the year of release. For example:

Guys and Dolls, dir. Joseph L. Mankiewicz, feat. Marlon Brando, Jean Simmons, Frank Sinatra (Twentieth- Century Fox, 1955).

Referencing in Creative Writing commentaries

Referencing for creative writing commentaries should be done in the same way as for essays. Creative work itself does not usually require referencing. If references are used, students are advised to follow the departmental style guide or, where this interferes with the aesthetic of the writing, to consult their tutor.

Cite them right

[Cite Them Right Online](#) is a comprehensive referencing resource. It will help you to cite and reference just about any source and to avoid plagiarism. The site also allows you to create your own references by copying the layout of a record; you can then email the example to yourself or cut and paste into a document.