



University of Essex

Your studies

School of Life Sciences Undergraduate Student Handbook 2023-24



Welcome

Welcome to the School of Life Sciences and thank you for choosing to study with us



The School is a rich community of research, teaching, technical and administrative staff, and postgraduate and undergraduate students, working together to provide learning, research and scholarship opportunities. You join in this community through your study, your participation in lectures, tutorials, seminars, practicals and field courses, and through your daily interaction with staff. We hope that your experience here will confirm the reputation of the School as a friendly, informal but supportive place in which to work and study, and that you will contribute positively to that atmosphere.

Undertaking a degree course is a major and important step in life, both in terms of personal development and in career planning. Studying for a degree is also a very complex activity, and science degrees in particular are very busy, because of the practical components. You may have concerns and questions about the organisation of your degree course, what is expected of you as an undergraduate student, what is the structure of the degree, what facilities are available, who to see, how is your work assessed. This Undergraduate Handbook should provide answers to many of your questions, encouragement and advice, and clarify much about the organisation of the degree courses and the School. We hope that your time here will be stimulating and rewarding, and that you will use the opportunities and facilities of the University and School to the full, to achieve your goals.

Professor Terence McGenity

School of Life Sciences

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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

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), complete online Right to Study checks and attend an in-person Right to Study Check on campus where you will 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 arrive on campus, 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 your in-person teaching events 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.

Choosing your modules

You may have module options to select as part of your course structure. If you do, you must select the modules you wish to enrol on before the academic year begins. You can view and choose your specific options through the [eNROL system](#). New students can do so from the end of August and returning students can from the April preceding the next academic year. Early module enrolment ensures that timetables can be scheduled effectively. We'll talk more about how you might decide which modules to take in the [Learning and Teaching](#) section of this Handbook.

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 use 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 view your timetable, update your personal details, request replacement student cards or supporting documents, monitor your course progress, let us know if you'll miss a lecture or class, contact the Student Services Hub, and much more.

PocketEssex

[Pocket Essex](#) is the University's official app for students 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!

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 that 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, and solely 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 School of Life Sciences has a large and vibrant community of scientists working at all levels in research, teaching, management and outreach. The University was awarded the Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award in November 2013 in recognition of its continuing work to support gender equality in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and the School of Life Sciences achieved an

Athena SWAN Silver Departmental Award in October 2020. We believe equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to our work, and the School has a [webpage on Equality and Inclusion](#) with a range of information and resources for staff and students.

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 are not just a member of a normal Students' Union, you are part of a family. They are here for you from the day you arrive to the moment you graduate to support you in any way they 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, to shaping your own experiences at Essex, they 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.

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:



/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 School of Life Sciences






Meet the team



A full list of all staff can be found on [the School's webpages](#). Below is a summary of the roles of staff that can help you with a variety of areas during your time at Essex.¹

Academic Staff: Dr Ralf Zwacka Director of Education		Dr Ralf Zwacka is the Director of Education for the School. Ralf oversees the management of all aspects of undergraduate teaching in the School. You might need to contact Leanne regarding attendance and progress, extenuating circumstances, requests for intermission, withdrawal and changes of course approval. He can also advise on Board of Examiners outcomes and appeals and matters relating to the UG Student Voice Group Meetings.	Office: 3SW.5.15 Email: rzwacka Tel: 2036
Dr Paul Dobbin Senior Tutor and Year 1 Organiser		Dr Paul Dobbin is the Senior Tutor for the School. He provides pastoral support and advice to students who have issues that are affecting their studies. Paul can also be a point of contact if you do not want to approach your allocated personal tutor. Dr Paul Dobbin will be able to help Year 1 students with queries about academic matters.	Office: 3SW.5.11 Email: pdobbin Tel: 4867


¹ Department/school information in this Handbook is correct at time of publication but there may be role changes within the department/school throughout the Academic Year. Students should consult staffing details held online for the most up-to-date information.





<p>Dr Angela Pine Disability Liaison Officer</p>		<p>Angela is the School's Disability Liaison Officer (SDLO) If you have a disability, medical condition, specific learning difficulty or mental health difficulty Angela is the School representative who can help you to access your studies.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.5.49 Email: acpine</p>
<p>Dr Gareth Jones Study Abroad Officer (incoming and outgoing)</p>		<p>Dr Gareth Jones will be your first point of contact in the School if you are here studying on a term or year abroad.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.08 Email: gareth Tel: 2079</p>
<p>Professor Selwa Alsam Course Director (Biomedical Science) Lead Professional – Biomedical Science</p>		<p>Professor Selwa Alsam is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biomedical Science degree course.</p> <p>Selwa is also the Lead Professional for the Biomedical Science course. Selwa will be able to advise you on undertaking a placement year in the NHS and is the academic point of contact for Biomedical Science students whilst they are away on their placement year.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.4.12 Email: salsam Tel: 3328</p>
<p>Dr Marcus Edwards Course Director (Biochemistry)</p>		<p>Dr Marcus Edwards is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biochemistry degree courses.</p>	<p>Office: 3SW.6.16 Email: m.edwards Tel: 3313</p>

Dr Michelle Taylor Course Director (Marine Biology)		Dr Michelle Taylor is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Marine Biology degree courses.	Office: 3SW.3.22 Email: michelle.taylor Tel:2310
Dr Martin Wilkes Course Director (Biological Sciences)		Dr Martin Wilkes is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biological Sciences degree courses.	Office: 3SW.5.33 Email: m.wilkes Tel: 4889
Dr Eoin O’Gorman Course Director (Ecology and Environmental Biology)		Dr Eoin O’Gorman is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Ecology and Environmental Biology degree courses.	Office: 3SW.3.14A Email: e.ogorman Tel: 6389
Dr Leanne Hepburn Course Director (Global Sustainability)		Dr Leanne Hepburn is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Global Sustainability degree courses.	Office: 3SW.6.17 Email: ljheb Tel: 2752
Dr Greg Brooke Course Director (Human Biology)		Dr Greg Brooke is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Human Biology degree courses.	Office: 3SW.5.07 Email: gbrooke Tel:3332

Dr Timothy Barrow Course Director Genetics, Genetics and Genomics		Dr Timothy Barrow is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Genetics and Genetics and Genomics degree courses.	Office: 3SW.4.32 Email: tb22524
Dr Philippe Laissue Placement Officer		Dr Philippe Laissue is the School's Industrial Placement Officer. You can contact Philippe if you have queries about securing a placement or if you are considering transferring onto a placement version of your degree course.	Office: 3SW.4.38 Email: plaissue Tel: 4403

Administrative Staff

Student Administrator (Year 1 and Final Year)		The year 1 and Final Year Administrator is your first point of call for general and administrative enquires and matters relating to Year 1/ Final Year coursework submission and marks. They are also involved in monitoring student attendance and progress.	Office:4.00 Email: lsug Tel: 3014
Angela Chan Year 2 Undergraduate Administrator		Angela is your first point of call for general and administrative enquires and matters relating to Year 2 coursework submission and marks. She is also involved in monitoring student attendance and progress. Angela also supports students who are enrolled on a placement version of our courses and is secretary to the UG Student Voice Group meetings.	Office: 4.00 Email: lsug Tel: 3320

Matt Briggs Timetabling and Operations Administrator (Part time)		You should contact Matt with any issues you experience with your timetable.	Office: 4.00 Email: bstimetb Tel: 6380
Olivia Pink Education Services Manager (Part time – Monday, Wednesday and Friday)		Olivia leads the undergraduate administrative support team in the School. She is also the School's Examinations Officer and can help with queries about exams, rules of assessment and exam results. She will also administer changes of course, special syllabus, intermission and withdrawal requests.	Office: 4.32 Email: esmbs Tel: 4459
Kathryn Hills Education Services Manager (Part time – Tuesday – Thursday)		Kathryn leads the postgraduate taught administrative team, works closely with student engagement and progress and has oversight of the School's timetable.	Office: 4.32 Email: esmbs Tel: 4756
Maz Brook School Manager		The School Manager is the Professional Services lead, with responsibility for managing educational, technical and research support in the School.	Office: 4.02 Email: maz Tel: 2248
Kerry Alban School Office Administrator		Kerry is secretary to the School undergraduate progress and late submissions committee and provides support to the School's plagiarism officer.	Office: 4.30 (School Office) Email: kerrya Tel: 4074

Teaching staff and support

All teaching staff hold regular weekly academic support hours during term time. This is a time when you can meet with them about anything to do with your modules, from difficulties you might be having with your seminar readings, to discussions about feedback on your coursework.

Most academic staff work from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday during term-time.

However, they tend to have busy schedules so you should email or telephone first if you need an appointment. Their availability in the vacations will normally be much more limited as they may be undertaking research or on holiday. You cannot generally expect to receive a prompt response to any emails that you send to teaching staff during vacations. If you have an urgent query during the vacations, you can contact the Undergraduate Office.

Please note that academic staff do not hold regular academic support hours during the vacations, and may, on occasions, be away from the University on research trips and visits. Therefore, if you need to get in touch with them during the vacation periods, you should email them in the first instance.

We have also listed some other key staff roles and how these individuals will be able to support you.

Module Tutors

There are dedicated Module Tutors to support students for each module. The module tutor for each module can be found on Moodle. If you have a specific study question the relevant module leader will be able to help.

Your Personal Tutor

All undergraduate students have a Personal Tutor who will meet you soon after you arrive, and regularly throughout your course. Your Personal Tutor will be a member of academic staff and is someone you talk to about your course or any difficulties that may encounter. They can recommend and direct you to other support services that might be able to further help and support you. You can find out who your Personal Tutor is through [MyEssex](#).

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.

Your Peer Mentor

All first-year students are assigned a [Peer Mentor](#). Peer Mentors are either a second or final-year student. They will contact you to introduce themselves and organise how you'll stay in contact.

Become a Mentor

If you are in your second or final-year and are interested in becoming a Peer Mentor, a call for mentor applications is usually circulated in the Spring term. If you have any questions in the meantime, you can contact your [Peer Mentor Coordinator](#) for further details.

Staff research interests

Research in the School is organised into four main groups:

- Genomics and Computational Biology
- Ecology and Environmental Microbiology
- Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease
- Plant Productivity.

Academic staff are actively engaged in research on topics across a wide spectrum, including: agricultural sustainability; coral reef ecology; virology and immunology; molecular complications of diabetes; oxidative stress; photosynthetic metabolism and plant responses to environmental stresses. Specific research interests for each academic staff member can also be found on their [Staff Profile page](#).

If you are interested in finding out more see the webpage detailing [our research](#).

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 has 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.

School of Life Sciences Common Room

The School Common Room (3SW.4.11) is located on floor 4 of the School (turn left past the fish tank and it is on your left further down the corridor) and is for the use of all students. It has tea and coffee making facilities, a microwave, fridge and a seating area.

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 providing information on staff, courses and classes, updates, careers, events and opportunities. Year 1, 2 and Final Year noticeboards are located on the 4th floor, just around the corner from the main entrance and coral reef aquarium. Further along this corridor there are also noticeboards for events, outreach and career opportunities. There will also be a virtual noticeboard area on Moodle.

Departmental prizes

Each year we are pleased to award prizes signifying excellence. The following prizes are available for award to undergraduate students:

- **The John Shire Memorial Prize:** Awarded to the most outstanding student in the final year.
- **The Environmental and Conservation Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding performance in an Environmental and Conservation-based course

- **The David Whytock Memorial and Syngenta Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding overall final year performance in a Biochemistry-based course.
- **The Glaxo Smith Kline Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on BSc Biomedical Science.
- **The John Gorrod Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding project in Biomedical Science.
- **The IBMS President's Prize:** Awarded for the best overall degree mark by an IBMS student member on a Biomedical Science course.
- **The John Shire Prize for Biology:** Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on BSc Life Sciences.
- **Royal Society of Biology Student Award (free Associate (AMSB) membership to the Society):** Awarded for the highest year mark in the final year on a Biology-based course.
- **The Environmental and Conservation Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding final year performance on an Environmental and Conservation-based course.
- **The Abel-Imray Project Prize:** Awarded for the most outstanding final year project on an Environmental and Conservation-based course.
- **The Pearson Life Science Award:** Awarded to the student who achieves the highest mark in Pearson's 'Mastering Biology' assessments (used for Year 1 modules).
- **The OUP Achievement in Biosciences Prize:** Awarded to the Year 1 student with the top year mark.

Dean's List for Excellence

The Dean's List for Excellence is an annual list of students within each Faculty who have achieved a high level of performance in a non-Final Year of degree level study. To be included on the Dean's List for Excellence, you must have achieved the

following, either:

(a) A Year Mark of 70 or above, or

(b) 60 Credits at 70 or above with a Year Mark of 68 or 69.

Communications

The University will predominantly use email for routine communication between staff and students. Your Essex email address will have been added to the relevant email groups specific to your department or school, course and modules to ensure that you receive the essential information relevant to you. It is recommended that you check your Essex email each day to ensure you do not miss any important updates to classes and assessment.

You will also automatically be subscribed to a small number of opt-out lists, again, based on your course. You can always [opt in or out](#) of these communications online.

Social Media

Additional information not directly related to your studies may be communicated via

Facebook: [School of Life Sciences](#)

Twitter: [EssexLifeSci](#)

Instagram: [essexlifesciences/](#)

YouTube: [@LifeSciencesEssex](#)

The use of personal devices

You can use laptops and tablet PCs during teaching classes for purposes related to the class you are attending. You should refrain from using your mobile phone during all teaching events, except in cases where a lecturer uses a programme which requires these devices to be switched on for participation.

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 considered 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 academic year

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

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

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

Some courses have slightly different term dates. In the School of Life Sciences field courses for Marine Biology and some Biological Sciences students can take place out of term time. You will be informed about the dates of these well in advance. We also have Year 1 MCQ exams which take place in week 15 (week before the start of the Spring term).

However, you will find that all activities and events make reference to the standard academic year terms and schedule noted above.

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

My Course

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

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

Credits

Your course will be made up of a certain number of credits. Generally, undergraduate degrees contain 360 credits worth of modules in total during your course at Essex. This is divided into 120 credits per each year of study, with credits allocated to each module that you take.

Learning outcomes

Each course has learning outcomes which need to be met in order to progress. Course learning outcomes are categorised into knowledge, intellectual, practical and key skills, and are also defined more specifically at a modular level. Having this information means that you can measure your progress against the outcomes, for example when reviewing coursework feedback.

Grade boundaries

Marks for undergraduate modules fall into one of the classifications set out in the table below. Bachelor degrees are usually awarded under these classifications too. The method for calculating your final award classification will take into account module marks and any other requirements - full details are set out in the [Rules of Assessment](#).

Degree mark	Class
69.5% and over	Class 1
59.5 - 69.4%	Class 2.1
49.5 - 59.4%	Class 2.2
39.5 – 49.4%	Class 3
39.4% and under	Fail

Module enrolment

Most modules taught reflect the individual research interests of members of our academic staff. New modules are regularly explored, researched and developed to expand our transformative educational offering at Essex.

The University provide [further guidance](#) on choosing modules, and meetings for first and second-year students will be held by your department where students can discuss their choices with their Personal Tutor. Your preferred choices must be submitted prior to the start of term through the [eNROL](#) system.

A full list of modules available can be found on this [webpage](#).

Changing Modules

In instances where you need to make a change to your module choice, you may do so up until the second week of the Autumn Term. If you wish to change an optional module after the deadline, you should seek advice from the Department or School Office that runs the particular module that you may wish to change to.

Late changes may be permitted but will be subject to the approval of the department that runs the module and the relevant Dean. Late changes of modules that run for one term or less will not usually be permitted. Students may not change modules that are core or compulsory for the course for which they are registered.

If there is a module that you would like to study that isn't available as an option on your course, then you can ask for a change to your syllabus to be made by submitting a [special syllabus](#) request. Special syllabus requests are not automatically available and require approval. It is a good idea to talk to your Department or School responsible for your course, as well as the Department that teach the module if it is an outside option.

Requests to study a lot of outside options, to change a core or compulsory module of your course, or to study a module at a different level of study, are unlikely to be approved.

Module Directors

Module Directors are responsible for individual modules. They design, teach and examine them. They monitor student progress and can also talk to students about any related academic issues.

Fitness to practise

[Fitness to practise](#) is only applicable to students on certain professional courses (such as Nursing or Social Work) and is designed to ensure and regulate that a student is suitable for engagement in the relevant profession.

Employability Modules

Employability and career development is embedded in all our degree courses, in particular as part of our Year 1 and Year 2 Skills modules: BS143 Transferable Skills for Life Sciences, BS211 Enterprise and Employability for the Biosciences, BS214 Biomedical Science: Practice and Employability and BS257 Professional Skills for Ecological and Marine Scientists. Employability is also embedded into the Final Year Research Project Modules.

Study Abroad

[Essex Abroad](#) provides you with the opportunity to have an international experience during your time at Essex to enhance employability, gain valuable transferable skills and develop as individuals. You can study, volunteer, intern or complete research abroad as part of our programmes. Many courses can be taken as a four-year variant to include a year studying abroad at one of our partner universities across the world, and some courses have the option to study for a term abroad as part of a three-year degree. You can [find out more about applying](#) and what you'll need to consider if you're interested in a term or year studying abroad. 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.

As well as studying abroad, we have a wide range of [summer programmes](#) available including volunteering programmes, international internships and research abroad opportunities which are open to all Essex students. These programmes vary in duration, location and cost and can be a great addition (or alternative!) to studying abroad.

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 the 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](#).

Work Placements

There are a variety of opportunities to undertake work-based learning and placements either during or as part of your studies. Many courses may also be taken as a four-year variant to include a placement year. If undertaking a placement year, it is your responsibility to find a work placement, however, the Industry Engagement and Placements Team can help prepare and support you and will advertise relevant placements. If you are interested in undertaking a placement year, or other work-based opportunities that may be available to you and your course, contact the [Industry Engagement and Placements team](#). If you have a Student visa, please be aware that the Immigration Rules restrict the length of placements and the type of work you can do.

Upon successfully securing a placement you need to inform the Industry Engagement and Placements team by completing a [secured placement form](#). This is required in order to begin the placement approval process. Please note without approval from the Industry Engagement and Placement team you will be unauthorised to commence a placement.

For extracurricular opportunities, [Careers Services](#) are here to help. Use [Chart My Path](#) to find your personalised recommendations at Essex, and check out [CareerHub](#) for part-time jobs, internships and career development support.

NHS Placements

BSc Biomedical Science students can also apply to complete an NHS placement in their third year of study. If you are interested in this opportunity you should contact Dr Selwa Alsam (salsam@essex.ac.uk).

DBS Checks for Placements

Some placements may require a DBS check where you are engaging in regulated activity with vulnerable groups. This may include placements that are core, compulsory or optional, depending on the relevant module. Some activities may be carried out on an ad hoc basis for research purposes only, which are not required to meet the learning outcomes of the module or course, but will help inform your learning. More information about the DBS check process can be found on the [University's DBS webpages](#).

Module Materials

Online reading lists for your modules can be found via the module Moodle page alongside other information and module materials.

Teaching timetable

Every student has a [personal timetable](#) published at the start of term which shows when and where your teaching is taking place, and Zoom links if teaching online. You can access your timetable on most mobile devices, including smart phones and tablets. You will need to have registered and activated your University of Essex log-in and selected all of your modules (if applicable) before you will be able to access your teaching timetable.

If you wish to report a timetable clash or request a class change, you should do so via the [online timetable](#).

During Welcome Week (week 1) you may find that your timetable is blank as teaching normally commences week 2. **Please be aware that there may be changes to the location of teaching during the year, so regularly check your personal [online timetable and Essex email](#) for up to date teaching information.**

Information about teaching timetables, including requesting a class change, reporting a timetable issue and accessing your individual timetable can be found on the [University's website](#).

Recording your attendance

We monitor your attendance at teaching sessions on campus using your [student card](#) and an electronic system of card readers. You must tap-in at a reader within 15 minutes of the teaching session start time for your attendance to be recorded accurately. Your attendance at online teaching sessions is monitored by reviewing your logins to sessions on Zoom. Once again you must log in within 15 minutes of the event start time for your attendance to be recorded. You are expected to attend all of your mandatory sessions on [your individual timetable](#) and [report an absence](#) if you are unable to do so. If you have a Student visa, you must attend all your timetabled teaching events in-person where this is available. Attendance at a teaching event via Zoom where the session was also delivered in-person will count as failure to attend. If you fall below the Home Office expectations we **must** take action, and this can include withdrawing our sponsorship.

It is your responsibility to remember your student registration card and to tap-in correctly. [Lost or faulty cards](#) can be replaced at the Student Services Hub.

Please contact your Personal Tutor, department staff or the [Student Services Hub](#) for advice and support, particularly if you are going to be absent for several weeks.

Making changes to your study

Changing your course

If you are thinking about changing course, you will need to do so by a [certain date](#) and should first speak to your department and personal tutor. They will be able to provide advice about the things you should consider before changing your course. If you are thinking of undertaking a placement year or year abroad, you should check the requirements and any potential visa implications for these programmes by contacting the [Industry and Placements Team](#) or [Essex Abroad Team](#). Students with a Student visa may not be able to change their course without first obtaining a new visa, from overseas, if eligible.

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, Personal Tutor 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.

Library & Cultural Services

Library Services

The Library aims to provide all the resources you will need to succeed in your course, via online reading lists and access to extensive collections of books, journals and a variety of other resources, both on our shelves and online. The Library team can help you learn how to search effectively so you can find appropriate resources for your assignments. They can also provide advice on [referencing](#), academic integrity, evaluating sources and more. Our [Skills at Library](#) guide provides a range of online support in these areas, and our [subject guides](#) for each department provide subject-specific guidance and resource recommendations. In addition, the Library offers a programme of ‘[Workshops at Library](#)’ sessions which cover key information and research skills, including searching for information, checking and evaluating sources and referencing. 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 individual and group work areas. The Library offers a wide range of learning resources, online and in print, with a dedicated Helpdesk, live chat and the opportunity to book appointments with experienced Library staff to 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.

Publish with the Essex Student Journal

If you are looking to develop and gain recognition for your writing skills, the Essex Student Journal provides the perfect platform for you to showcase your work and gain valuable experience in academic publishing and the peer review process.

Our multi-disciplinary journal is run by and for students at the University, publishing the hard work of our students and giving you the ability to improve your writing through feedback from peer reviewers.

Not all universities have a Student Journal - this is a unique opportunity for you to publish a paper in your name and build your academic portfolio early in your career.

We accept a wide range of submissions including essays, case studies, research papers, dissertations, and academic blog posts.

Join our community of student writers to develop new skills and the best practices in writing. Find out more about the Essex Student Journal and embark on your academic publishing journey today. If you have any questions, get in touch with the Journal Team via journal@essex.ac.uk

Academic Skills Support

Skills for Success are here to support you with everything that you need to do well in your studies that is not directly related to your course content – in other words, the skills that you need to be successful.

We are committed to ensuring that every student is able to get the most out of their academic study and achieve their potential on their course, and provide a range of embedded teaching, [workshops](#) and [1:1s](#) on:

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

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For more information, please contact skills@essex.ac.uk.

Departmental Support

All students are allocated a personal tutor who they can approach for support and guidance. Your Personal Tutor will be a member of academic staff and is someone you talk to about your course or any difficulties that may encounter. They can recommend and direct you to other support services that might be able to further help and support you. You can find out who your Personal Tutor is through [MyEssex](#).

Proofreading services

Before considering the use of proofreading services, all students should first discuss their work with their personal tutors. 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 classes

Skills for Success runs a range of [Academic English support classes](#) throughout the year, which all new students who have English as an additional language are invited to enrol on. These classes are free, voluntary and designed to help students improve their language proficiency and maximise their existing language skills in an academic context.

Options include 8 week or 4 week modules and one-off, bookable sessions. You will be emailed on registration, or can contact us at any time at skills@essex.ac.uk.

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

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- 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.

Assessment and Academic Integrity

All schools and departments at the University employ a variety of assessment methods designed to ensure that the learning outcomes of each module, and course, have been successfully met.

Rules of Assessment

The [Rules of Assessment](#) are used to calculate your results. There is a main set of rules for [Three-Year](#) and [Four-Year courses](#), but some departments also have additional variations to the rules, which must be met. These are published alongside the Rules of Assessment for your year of study.

In the School of Life Sciences we do have a [variation to the Rules of Assessment for our BSc Applied Biomedical Science \(NHS Placement\) B991](#).

Each module you take has a credit value which you are awarded if you successfully complete the module. You need to obtain a certain number of credits to be awarded your degree, and the Rules of Assessment and the Framework for undergraduate courses give you more information about this.

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

Core, compulsory and optional modules

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

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

Most modules in each year must be passed, with only a small number of credits, if any, being allowed to be failed in the degree. For the Honours Degree this is 30 non-core credits across the whole degree.

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 coursework. An academic offence can take place even if you didn't mean to commit one, and examples include plagiarism, using Artificial Intelligence such as ChatGPT to write all or part of assignment unless specifically permitted to do so, falsifying data or evidence, and communicating with another candidate in an examination.

Methods of Assessment in the School of Life Sciences

Whether a module is core, compulsory or optional, all methods of assessment are compulsory. If you do not complete coursework or attend examinations, and do not

have extenuating circumstances to support your non-submission or absence, then you are at risk of being withdrawn from the University.

A wide range of different types of coursework and formal exams are used for assessment. The criteria we use for marking each type of assessed work are stated clearly in the School of Life Sciences Assessment Guide and are given on coursework feedback grids. A very important part of our teaching and your learning is the feedback that we give you on all assessed coursework; this may be comments written directly on your work, or on marks criteria grids, or it may be more general feedback included when the work is returned. You should review carefully and learn from all these sources of feedback. Whilst staff may give general feedback on the MCQ exams, you will not receive feedback on the summer exams, unless you specifically request it.

Coursework

Coursework is compulsory in all modules and failure to participate in coursework is interpreted as evidence of lack of academic progress. Your academic progress is monitored throughout the year. In severe cases, students with poor academic progress can be required to withdraw from the University (even before the final examinations).

Preparation of assignments

A variety of types of assessment are used in the School:

- Essays
- Worksheets, data analysis and interpretation (DAI) exercises;
- Practical field or lab reports: including SPF (Scientific Paper Format) reports;
- Posters;
- Oral presentations;
- Web-based, pod or vodcast productions;
- A detailed written extended SPF Report for the Final Year Research Project;
- In class tests;
- Log books, portfolios and diaries particularly for work placements;

Please refer to your separate School of Life Sciences Undergraduate Assessment Guide for guidance on writing, presentation, referencing and assessment of coursework.

Data Analysis and Interpretation (DAI) questions

DAI questions are an important part of our teaching and assessment and they are regularly commended by our External Examiners. The purpose of DAI questions is to test your understanding of a topic rather than testing simple factual recall. You should apply your understanding to analyse and interpret a set of information ('data') that you will not have previously encountered. The 'data' in the question could be quantitative (e.g. numbers in tables, graphs, images) or qualitative (e.g. descriptive phrases, hypotheses, attitudes, figures, photos). Broadly, analysis is the identification and description of the major features of the data. It may include a critical assessment of the quality of the data (e.g. correctness of the method used to collect it, appropriateness of experimental design) and of any associated statistical tests. Interpretation involves discussing possible reasons for the features identified which may relate to issues such as the underlying biological processes and/or limitations of the methodology. The questions will give guidance about what aspects of analysis is expected.

You will be given training in how to deal with DAI questions appropriate to the module subject. This may be through examples of DAI in lectures, or through DAI being set as all or part of the coursework. A worked example of a final year DAI exam question will be provided for each module on Moodle.

Assignment and essay length

Part of your training in writing assignments is to produce a piece of work by a given deadline and conforming to a specified length. The work should be clear, comprehensive and concise and should answer the question. Significantly exceeding the word limit is a way of seeking an unfair advantage. When a word limit is set all students are expected to submit work **within** the limit and provide a **word count** on the title page. The word count should **include** all the main text but **exclude** figures, tables and the reference list.

Staff will pay strict attention to word limits. If you have a particular problem with the word limit, you should discuss your difficulties with the member of staff who set the

work. If your work exceeds the word limit it may not be concise or well-focussed on the question and will require editing. If your work is significantly (>10%) below the word limit it is likely that you will not have covered the material in sufficient depth and you may receive a lower mark as a consequence.

Referencing in coursework

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

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

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

Only Microsoft word or PDF files should be uploaded to FASER unless otherwise specified.

Submission of coursework

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

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

the most recently uploaded file will be taken as the final version. The maximum file upload size is **50MB**.

Problems with FASER

If you have technical difficulties, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#) as soon as possible to find out if this is a system issue or whether it may be a problem with your computer. This will count towards your claim when submitting a late coursework extenuating circumstance form should you need to. If you are confused or unsure how to upload, or are having any non-technical difficulties you should contact your Undergraduate Administrator.

Late submission of coursework

At the University of Essex we have a single policy for the late submission of coursework in undergraduate courses: all coursework submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of **zero**. No extensions will be granted. The policy states that the mark of zero shall stand unless you submit satisfactory evidence of extenuating circumstances that indicate that you were unable to submit the work by the deadline but have been able to within the relevant Late Submission timeframe.

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

Please note that extenuating circumstances claims are not carried forward automatically, so if your circumstances continue to affect your performance please ensure that you submit additional claim forms for any subsequent submissions.

Return of coursework

Marked work may be returned:

1. Electronically via FASER. You will receive an email notification alert when your marked work is available.

2. Very occasionally, in student pigeonholes in the Common Room. You will receive an email from the Undergraduate Office to advise you when your work is ready for collection. Please collect your work promptly.
3. Directly to students in a feedback class or tutorial.

Marked work is normally returned within four weeks of submission

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.

Examinations

In 2023-24, examinations will either be remote via FASER, Moodle or Perception, or on campus in an invigilated setting. To find out whether your exam is in-person or remote, you can check the [module directory](#). Your personal exam timetable, when available, also has this information.

Exam timetable

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

Attending an in-person exam

You must bring your registration card and exam entry form to any invigilated exams on campus. You may not be allowed entry without these. You will be able to download and print your exam entry form when you view your personal exam timetable.

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

Attendance at examinations, whether remote or in-person, is compulsory and if you do not attend them and do not have [extenuating circumstances](#) then you are at risk of being withdrawn.

Please note that extenuating circumstances claims are not carried forward automatically, so if your circumstances continue to affect your performance please ensure that you submit additional claim forms for any subsequent exam absences.

Calculators in Examinations

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

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

Open and closed-book exams

You should check the module directory to see whether your exam is open or closed-book. Your department will provide further guidance on how to prepare for your exams and on what materials can be taken into an open-book exam. You should also check the information published on the exam web pages.

Sample and past papers

Sample exam papers are available for Year 1 modules on Moodle, specially devised to help you prepare for your summer exam. Past and/or sample exam papers for Year 2 and Final Year modules are available on Moodle. Final Year past exam papers will

not include the DAI question but a suitable sample DAI question will be provided. Bear in mind that the detailed content of a module can change from year to year, so papers from previous years may contain questions no longer relevant.

Revision classes

Revision classes will be timetabled at the beginning of the summer term.

Exam stress

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

Access to your exam script

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

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

Moderation and marking

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

Marking

All student work is marked in line with the University's Marking Policy. If your assessment is worth up to and including 40% of your module mark, it will be marked by one member of academic staff. If it is worth more 40%, then it will also be moderated. If the assessment is worth 30 credits or more, it will be marked by two

members of academic staff. The full procedure and assessment marking requirements can be found in the [Marking Policy](#) – there is a useful flowchart in Appendix C to visually represent the requirements, and detailed definitions of marking and moderation within the policy itself.

Moderation

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

External Examiners

External Examiners are academics from other universities, but may also be from industry, business or the relevant profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that modules and courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education. You can find more information about the role of External Examiners on our [External Examiner roles and responsibilities webpage](#).

Re-marking of coursework

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

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

Appeals

[Appeals on academic grounds](#) can be made following the meeting of the Board of Examiners and the publication of your results. There are limited grounds available to appeal on and strict deadlines to adhere to. As such, we strongly advise all students thinking about making an appeal to contact the [SU Advice Centre](#).

Feedback

A very important part of our teaching and your learning is the feedback that we give you on all assessed coursework; this may be comments written directly on your work, or on marks criteria grids, or it may be more general feedback included when the work is returned. You should review carefully and learn from all these sources of feedback. Whilst staff may give general feedback on the MCQ exams, you will not receive feedback on the summer exams, unless you specifically request it.

The Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners meet at the end of the Summer Term and use the Rules of Assessment to determine whether:

- you have passed the modules you have studied and can be awarded credits;
- you have met the requirements to progress to the next year of your course;
- you have met the requirements to pass your course and, where you have, the classification/citation you are eligible for.

If it is determined that you have not passed sufficient credits to progress to the next stage of study, or, for final year students, to graduate, the Board of Examiners will also determine:

- what reassessment you could be offered and when you can take it²;
- whether you must withdraw from your course, and your eligibility for an exit award.

Publication of results

The publication schedule for results can be [found on the website](#). You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published online.

Reassessment

You may only undertake reassessment if the Board of Examiners says that you may do so.

² The Board of Examiners will not be aware of a student's immigration status. As a result, some reassessment options may be offered that are not compatible with individual student visa restrictions. Students should consider all options in conjunction with applicable visa restrictions.

If you must undertake compulsory reassessment, whether coursework or examination, it is really important that you do this. If you do not, it is likely that you will be unable to progress with your studies at the University. The Board of Examiners will not consider permitting you to proceed carrying or trailing fails if you have not attempted the reassessment.

Reassessed modules are normally capped at the pass mark of 40 unless you have extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Board of Examiners.

In the School of Life Sciences, where a module is assessed by coursework and exam, reassessment will be offered as follows:

- Coursework aggregate <40 and exam 40 or above and module aggregate failed – reassessment in coursework to be re-aggregated with exam mark to create a new module aggregate
- Coursework aggregate 40 or above and exam < 40 and module aggregate failed – reassessment in exam to be re-aggregated with coursework mark to create a new module aggregate
- Both coursework and exam aggregates <40 – reassessment in coursework and exam to be aggregated to create a new module aggregate

If a student requires reassessment in the exam element of a module which is assessed by both MCQ and summer exam, they will be offered reassessment in whichever (or both) elements they have failed. If they have only failed one element (e.g. the MCQ), the new mark will be integrated with the other exam element to form the new exam aggregate.

Where a module is assessed exclusively by exam, it will be reassessed exclusively by exam.

Where a module is assessed exclusively by coursework, it will be reassessed exclusively by coursework.

Coursework resubmission:

- For the majority of modules the coursework element reassessment opportunity will comprise of one item of work equivalent to the entire coursework component of

each module. This new coursework mark will be re-aggregated with the existing exam marks for a new module aggregate. However, for some modules reassessment will be offered in the relevant area(s) of failure according to the individual item(s) failed. The new mark(s) will be re-aggregated with the existing coursework marks for a new module aggregate.

Resit exams

[Resit exams](#) are usually scheduled to take place in late August and early September or 'out of residence' in the Summer of the following year. A considerable amount of useful revision material for each module is available on Moodle. Students can contact staff, particularly Module Supervisors for the modules they are resitting if they need help with revision or specific queries (do not leave this until the last minute as staff availability will be reduced throughout the summer). Staff can give individual feedback on summer exam performance, if requested.

Exit Awards

If you decide to withdraw from your course before you finish, or you do not meet the requirements to be considered for your full award, you may be awarded an exit award which may be at a lower level, if appropriate.

Extenuating Circumstances

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

If you do need to make an extenuating circumstances claim, you should first read the guidance very carefully and seek advice from [SU Advice](#) or the [Student Services Hub](#). Please be prepared that you may need to include supporting evidence with your claim. Extenuating Circumstances claims must be submitted via MyEssex by the [appropriate deadline](#).

Your department will review your claim at an Extenuating Circumstances Committee and determine whether it will be accepted or rejected. The [Board of Examiners](#) will determine an appropriate course of action, such as permitting further reassessment

opportunities for uncapped marks. Please note that the Board of Examiners cannot award extra marks even where there are serious extenuating circumstances.

Please note that extenuating circumstances claims are not carried forward automatically, so if your circumstances continue to affect your performance please ensure that you submit additional claim forms for any subsequent coursework submissions or examinations.

Computers, Learning Technologies and your Information

Computers

Using a campus computer

If you [need to use a computer on campus](#) our computer labs are the perfect place to study or work. We also have group study pods which are ideal for group projects. Many labs stay open until late and some are open 24/7. Labs may be booked for teaching so it is best to check availability first.

IT Help and Training

You can search the [Student Directory](#) for more IT information, including [software available](#) to students, help and support with your Essex account, account storage and printing.

Need some help with Word, Excel or EndNote? IT Training is available to book through CareerHub. You also have free access to [LinkedIn Learning](#), an online video training platform, using your Essex IT account.

If you can't find what you're looking for, or if you need to talk to someone, contact the [IT Helpdesk team](#) who can assist you further.

Learning Technologies and Systems

Learner Engagement Activity Portal (LEAP)

[LEAP](#) is our student centred, personalised engagement tool. LEAP displays [your engagement](#) with university resources and activities. An algorithm within LEAP gives a weighting score to each activity and combines your use of these resources and activities to produce an overall engagement indicator. There are 5 engagement

indicators (high, good, partial, low and very low) which will help you map and better understand your engagement pattern over time based on your class attendance, utilisation of Moodle etc. Full details on the resources included in LEAP, the engagement ratings and how LEAP uses your data can be found on the [LEAP webpage](#).

By providing you with a more holistic view of your studying experience, LEAP offers you the opportunity to take control of your own learning and make more informed choices about your studies, enabling you to:

- Reflect on your academic activities and overall engagement to make informed decisions about your academic studies
- Review the notes created in LEAP from meetings with Tutors or other university staff
- Check your attendance and ensure the information is correct

Tutors and other university staff may use the information in LEAP to:

- Suggest ways you could achieve better outcomes
- Check that all is well and offer information, advice and guidance
- Help you in areas of your studies that you find challenging

The University has a [Student Engagement Policy](#) which provides a structured approach based on support and mutual decision-making to maximise the success and achievement of every student.

Moodle

[Moodle](#) is our online learning environment. It holds key course and module materials, discussion forums, chat facilities, quizzes, surveys, glossaries and wikis released by your lecturers.

FASER

[FASER](#) is our **online coursework submission and feedback system**. Use it to check coursework deadlines, upload coursework and receive electronic feedback all in one place.

Online reading lists

Reading lists can be accessed [online](#). Use this service to find out the details of each week's reading and to access resources through the Library.

Listen Again

Did you miss something? Our [Listen Again](#) digital recording service lets you listen again to lectures, so you grasp every detail. It's available in teaching rooms or lecture theatres where you see the sign. Lecture videos are normally uploaded on Listen Again 24 hours after the lecture.

Zoom

You can use Zoom to join online lectures delivered by the University or attend online meetings and tutorials. If your lecture or class is going to be online, the link to join will be available in your individual timetable 48 hours before the class.

This [quick start guide](#) gives you an introduction to the essentials of joining and participating in a Zoom webinar or meeting.

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 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.

National Student Survey

The [National Student Survey \(NSS\)](#) is an independent survey commissioned by the Office for Students aimed mainly at final-year undergraduate students. The survey provides students the opportunity to provide feedback on their University course and

experience. The feedback you provide will be used to help shape the future for your fellow students and published on the [Discover Uni](#) website to help prospective students make informed decisions about where and what they want to study.

UK Engagement Survey (UKES)

The [UK Engagement Survey \(UKES\)](#) is a national survey for undergraduate students. It invites you to reflect on your time at University so far in relation to your course and wider learning experience. The survey is run each spring term and is open to first, second and some third/final year students.

We're keen to make sure students have the best possible experience while studying at the University. To do that we need to know what we are doing well and what we can do better. The survey is a chance to reflect on how you study and what might help your studies in future. The results also help the University and Students Union to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to make sure we keep doing the things that are of value to students.

If you're eligible to complete the survey, we will contact you to invite you to take part.

Student Module Feedback

Every year, we will ask you to complete [Student Module Feedback](#). This survey allows you to feedback on each of the modules you have studied. Receiving feedback at this level is critical for the University to understand what works well, and what could be improved, from the perspective of students. All feedback will be summarised and discussed by SVGs and will inform reports written for central University committees as part of our quality assurance processes.

There are also many [other satisfaction surveys](#) taking place, to ensure students are happy with the services the University of Essex provides. From time to time you will be invited to participate via an 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](#) can help. 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 students with disabilities or 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.

Financial Support for students with disabilities or additional needs

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.

We also offer bursaries for UK students who are [Care Experienced, Estranged or have Refugee status](#).

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 bursary. You can find out more information, including what you may be eligible for on the [UG Scholarships and Funding webpage](#).

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 UK 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 – suaclo@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 recrimination.

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

Student Development

Careers Services

The [Career Services](#) team offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and support through 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.
- Looking for your first paid experience in the field/sector you want to graduate into? Discover [Frontrunners](#), our on-campus internship programme.
- 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.
- Are you first-in-family to university, or from a low-income household? Join **Breaking Barriers**: the community empowering Essex students to build the future you want, no matter what your background.
- Calling our Black students! Unlock your academic potential and cultivate research skills through our digital **Black Researchers' Hub**. Explore on **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

Graduation and Awards

Once the Board of Examiners has met, it can take between 7-10 working days for your results to be published. The University's [publication of results schedule](#) can be found online and you will be notified once this information is available. As soon as your results are ready, you will be sent an email and directed to a password protected web page. You will be able to see your marks obtained and any decisions that you must make in order to progress to the next stage of study.

Award documents

You will be able to access your full academic transcript electronically via your [Higher Education Achievement Record \(HEAR\)](#). Your [Higher Education Achievement Report \(HEAR\)](#) not only showcases a full record of your academic achievements, but also any activities you have undertaken and logged through the [Big Essex Award](#), and any other awards and prizes that you may have received.

This will be updated after the successful completion of study each year, and final HEAR will be issued upon conferral of your final award.

Upon conferral of your final award, you 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 award conferral, and you will be contacted by the Graduation and Awards team regarding issue of your hard copy Certificate.

You will have full access to your GradIntelligence account for life. You will be able to share your HEAR and Certificate with employers and other universities by providing them with a University-certified record of your achievements.

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](#).

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.