

Your studies

STUDENT HANDBOOK
SCHOOL OF
BIOLOGICAL
SCIENCES

Postgraduate research student handbook

2016–2017



University of Essex

Introduction



Welcome – Professor Nelson Fernández, Graduate Director (Research),

Welcome to the School of Biological Sciences, one of the oldest and biggest schools in the University. We are happy to have you here and hope you will enjoy the university open campus and the Wivenhoe landscapes.

The programme of the graduate course you plan to take is part of our multidisciplinary research. The School's research is structured into these groups: Ecology and Environmental Microbiology; Plant Productivity; Cancer and Stem Cell Biology; Protein Structure and Function; Genomics and Computational Biology and within the Centre for Sports and Exercise Science there are two research groupings, Health, Exercise and Active Life and Sports Performance and Fatigue. Each group brings together a group of academic staff and scientists, who collaborate on projects, scholar activity and knowledge exchange.

As you may know in Britain, academic research outputs are assessed periodically by the government in a process called Research Assessment Framework (REF). In the most recent REF, 85% of our research was rated as being of internationally recognised quality. This means that the School has an optimal research environment for your personal growth as a scientist. In turn this allows the encouragement of novel ideas, critical reasoning and communication skills. Our graduate programmes are demanding and require hard work in both research and study. Our strong focus on research means that you will be supervised by some of the leading academics in your chosen fields. In the course of your project you will work closely with your supervisor and technical staff. Interaction with others is the best way of discussing ideas and techniques and for tracking the progress of your research.

We are committed to your career development in the long term and we will offer advice and resources to help you. It is essential you plan ahead and take the necessary steps to develop your career and gain the necessary transferable skills that the competitive job market demands. I look forward to seeing you in the School and wish you all the best with your programme of studies.

About this handbook

This handbook has been designed to give you essential information about your School and the University.

Other sources of information are available to help you, and are listed below at www.essex.ac.uk/myessex and www.essex.ac.uk/students. Our friendly departmental staff are here to help and you can find their contact details in this handbook.

Remember that at Essex, we don't separate our students and academic staff, or our professional services staff from our alumni. Everyone is a member of our community for life. Our three uniquely intimate campuses encourage an inter-weaving of people, ideas and disciplines. We celebrate diversity and challenge inequality. Whatever your background, race or sexual orientation, you're part of a vibrant community that lives, learns and plays together.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Welcome to the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Essex. This handbook gives you information regarding the supervision of research students by academic staff, and on the timetable and monitoring of progress. The contents of this handbook are accurate at the time of release but revisions may occur from time to time. Notification of these will be made by email.

Graduate Director for Research Students

Professor Nelson Fernández ext 3330 nelson@essex.ac.uk Room 4.30

Graduate Administrator (Research)

Emma Revill ext 3321 ecrix@essex.ac.uk Room 4.01A

START DATES FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES 2016-2017

All Postgraduate Research Degree courses run for a full calendar year, e.g. October to October, January to January or April to April depending on your registration start date.

1.1 TERM DATES

Autumn term

Thursday 6th October 2016 – Friday 16th December 2016

Spring term

Monday 16th January 2017 – Friday 24th March 2017

Summer term

Monday 24th April 2017 – Friday 30th June 2017

1.2 THE myESSEX STUDENT PORTAL

MyEssex is the University's student portal that you used during your application process. Once you're a registered student, you can also use myEssex to update your personal details and as a quick reference guide to other student webpages:

www.essex.ac.uk/dsh/myessex

2. ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

2.1 ACADEMIC STAFF

For a full list of staff biographies please visit

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/staff/Staff.aspx?type=academic>

- [Dr Selwa Alsam](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Leanne Appleby Hepburn](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry) (p/t)
- [Dr Jo Barton](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group (p/t)
- [Dr Vassiliy Bavro](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Louise Beard](#) - Year 2/3 organiser for BMS degree scheme, Peer Mentor Co-ordinator
- [Dr Ulrike Bechtold](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Plant Productivity)
- [Dr Paul Bromley](#) - Lecturer in Clinical Physiology
- [Dr Greg Brooke](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group

- [Dr Tom Cameron](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Professor Ian Colbeck](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Professor Chris E. Cooper](#) - Member of Sports Science/Molecular Cellular Biosciences Research Groups
- [Dr Paul Dobbin](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Alex Dumbrell](#) - Molecular Ecologist and Bioinformatician
- [Professor Nelson Fernández](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Paul Freeman](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group
- [Professor Richard Geider](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Valerie Gladwell](#) - Chair of HEAL research group, Year 2 Organiser (p/t)
- [Dr Murray Griffin](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group
- [Dr Florentina Hettinga](#) - Head of Sports, Performance and Fatigue Research Unit
- [Dr Mike Hough](#) - Member of Protein Structure and Function Group, Non-ionising radiation protection advisor, member of Outreach Group
- [Dr Matt Jones](#) - Photobiologist
- [Dr Gareth D. Jones](#) - Year 1 Organiser, UG admissions for Eco, MB & BS degrees, Study Abroad Officer (Incoming)
- [Dr Ben Jones](#) (p/t)
- [Professor Elena Klenova](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Tracy Lawson](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Plant Productivity)
- [Dr Julie Lloyd](#) - Director of Education
- [Dr Etienne Low-Decarie](#) - Ecology and evolution
- [Dr Pradeepa M Madapura](#)
- [Dr Antonio Marco](#) - Genomics. Seminar Organiser
- [Dr Terry McGenity](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Boyd A. McKew](#) - Member of Ecology and Environmental Microbiology Group
- [Dr Metodi Metodiev](#) - Member of Cancer and Stem Cells Biology and Genomics and Computational Biology Research Groups
- [Dr Dominic Micklewright](#) - Dean of Academic Partnerships
- [Professor Philip M Mullineaux](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Plant Productivity)
- [Dr Jordi Paps](#) - Evolutionary genomics
- [Dr Dave Parry](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group
- [Professor Jules Pretty](#) - Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- [Dr Filippo Prischi](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Professor Christine A. Raines](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Plant Productivity)
- [Dr Kate Reed](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group (Sports Performance and Fatigue) (p/t)
- [Dr Brandon Reeder](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Philip Reeves](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Professor Christopher A. Reynolds](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Gavin Sandercock](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group
- [Professor Leonard Schalkwyk](#) - Head of Genomics Research Group
- [Dr Nicola Slee](#) - Outreach and Schools Liaison Officer (p/t)

- [Professor David J. Smith](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Michael Steinke](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Dima Svistunenko](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Matthew Taylor](#) - Member of Sports Science Research Group
- [Dr Vladimir Teif](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Professor Graham J.C. Underwood](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Corinne Whitby](#) - Member of Environmental and Plant Bioscience Research Group (Ecology and Biogeochemistry)
- [Dr Jonathan Worrall](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Nicolae Radu Zabet](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group
- [Dr Ralf Zwacka](#) - Member of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Research Group

Emeritus Professors

- [Professor Neil R. Baker](#)
- [Professor Richard J. Cherry](#)
- [Professor Tim Gray](#)
- [Professor David B. Nedwell](#)
- [Professor John Norton](#) - Leverhulme Emeritus Professor
- [Professor Martin H. Sellens](#)
- [Professor Glyn Stanway](#)
- [Professor Mike T. Wilson](#)

Honorary Research Professors

- [Dr Tony Elston](#)
- [Dr Philip Murray](#)
- [Dr Bruce Sizer](#)

Honorary Senior Lecturers

- [Dr Sankaran Chandrasekharan](#)
- [Dr John Corr](#)
- [Dr Simon Marsh](#)

Visiting Academics

- [Mr Alexandru Chivu](#)
- [Dr Brian Fitzsimmons](#)
- [Dr David Heath](#)

Visiting Fellows

- [Dr Mohammed Baeshen](#)
- [Mr John Bartington](#)
- [Dr Sinan Battah](#)
- [Dr Rachel Bragg \(Hine\)](#) - Deputy Director, Essex Sustainability Institute and Senior researcher, Green Exercise Research Team (p/t)

- [Dr Nathan Davies](#)
- [Dr France Docquier](#)
- [Dr Frederick Gay](#)
- [Dr Reza Ghiladi](#)
- [Dr Richard D. Jurd](#)
- [Ms Ana Lobo Moreira](#)
- [Dr John Miller](#)
- [Dr Fong Kiew Ooi](#)
- [Dr Ross Piper](#)
- [Mrs Sushma Rai](#)
- [Dr David Rickwood](#)
- [Dr Zimei Rong](#)
- [Miss Arifa Sosan](#)
- [Dr Patrick Spencer](#)
- [Dr Edd Stockdale](#)
- [Dr Richard Unsworth](#)
- [Mr Victor Urrutia Figueroa](#)

Visiting Professors

- [Professor Steve Long](#)
- [Professor Graham Mitchell](#)

2.2 ADMINISTRATION AND LIAISON IN THE SCHOOL

The Head of School is responsible for all members of the School, academic, technical and administrative staff and students, and for the work, equipment and buildings of the School. The Head of School represents the School in discussions with the University authorities on all academic, financial and personnel matters. Appointments can be made to see the Head of School through the School Office Administrator (room 4.32).

The Graduate Director (Research) is responsible the admission and progress of research students. If you have any problems about your research you should first discuss this with your Supervisor and then your Supervisory Board but the Graduate Director (Research) is also available for consultation and discussion. Appointments can be made to see the Head of School through the Graduate Administrator (Research room 4.01).

The Graduate Administrator (Research) 4.01 is responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the Graduate Office including full administration (recruitment, registration and progress) for postgraduate research students. She supports the Graduate Director and postgraduate research students and provides guidance for completing and submitting School scholarships, travel grants and other funding opportunities. She co-ordinates and manages the scholarship training opportunities and process/manages Graduate Laboratory Assistants contracts and payments. She is the interface between students, the School and univeristy as well as external contacts and partnerships. In addition, she is responsible for maintenance and updating of the postgraduate webpages (internet and intranet)

SCHOOL MEETINGS

These are normally held once a term. All groups of staff and students are represented at the meeting. There are Postgraduate representatives and you may ask for information, or put forward items for discussion, through these representatives.

RAISING PROBLEMS

If any difficulties arise during the course of your work or supervisory arrangements it is preferable that they are raised initially with your Supervisor. If this is not possible, speak with the Graduate Administrator (Research) who will arrange an appointment for you with the Graduate Director (Research). Problems of a more general nature, applying to several postgraduate students, may be raised at the Postgraduate Research Student Staff Liaison Committee.

ABSENCES WHILST ON YOUR COURSE

You must report any absences, annual leave or sickness to the Graduate Administrator (Research). For annual leave where you will be away from the university, a request must be made online via (<https://www.essex.ac.uk/esf/>)

2.3 COMMON ROOM

The Darwin Room (Room 4.11) is the School Common Room. There are microwaves and fridges provided but please do clean after use. We hope you will co-operate to keep the room tidy and presentable for visitors.

Please remember that visitors to the School are not allowed to enter the labs without authorisation, but are welcome to use the Common Room as an informal meeting place.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH ROOM

All Postgraduate Research Students can use the facilities in the Postgraduate Research Room (Room 4.01). Final and completion year students are allocated a dedicated workstation which is permanent during this time, whilst first and second year students may access 'hot-desks' on a daily basis and are able to have a locker. A copy of the PGR Room Rules will be emailed to you and accessible online via Moodle.

POSTGRADUATE NOTICEBOARD

The Postgraduate Research noticeboard is located in the main corridor opposite room 4.30. Information relating to conferences, support and scholarships are advertised here.

PHOTOCOPYING

Photocopying facilities are available in the School, in the Library, and the Copy Shop in Square 4. The Copy Shop has a range of sophisticated equipment and provides an inexpensive binding service for Literature Reviews, Annual Reports and, eventually, your thesis copies for examination. For further information: <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/printing/>. You will be given photocopying cards of 100 units for use with the School photocopier.

INTERNET

The BS School pages on the Internet <http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/> are used to present key information about what we do, for advertising and promotional purposes. This includes:

- a) general information about degree courses (includes scheme aims and structures and brief module choices).
- b) the postgraduate training - studentships, topics, courses
- c) the research interests and activities of the staff
- d) staff lists and contact details and up to date publication lists
- e) other links and activities (e.g. meetings, seminars).

INTRANET

Teaching administrative material and other information that is for the exclusive use of Biological Sciences staff and students is mounted on the Intranet. The Intranet can be reached from the link on the Biological Sciences home page, (see 'on-line resources') or by entering the direct link: <http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/>. From this page you can link to safety information, finance claims and ordering details, undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

ORDERING AND STORES

You can obtain items (e.g. stationery, photocopying cards) from the Stores on the second floor (Room 2.07). The purchase of other materials and equipment using School order forms should be made in consultation with your supervisor or the technician in charge of your laboratory.

For up-to-date opening hours and information:

<http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/lab/admin/stores/default.htm>

USE OF EQUIPMENT

Many items of equipment are heavily used and their use must be reserved in advance on an appropriate booking sheet. Only people whose names have been approved in writing may use the autoclaves. Please inform your supervisor of any faulty equipment by email.

REPAIRS

If you find any equipment that is broken or not functioning properly you should complete a repair form on the Intranet (<http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/lab/faults/default.htm>). Failing this you should notify the technician in charge of your laboratory. **You should never try to repair equipment yourself.**

SCHOOL SAFETY

The University has published a Safety Policy which sets down the arrangements for managing health and safety as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act. This may be viewed on the Safety Web page <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/hspolicy/default.htm> together with other safety information.

The University has a Health and Safety Committee and Students' Union Officers sit on the Committee. The University is committed to ensuring that our students' study environment is safe. Students who have any concerns regarding safety should raise these with their School Safety Officer or Head of School.

Students also have a responsibility to act in a safe manner and comply with University, School and Accommodation requirements. The School's rules and procedures are available on the School Home Page under the following address: <http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/default.shtm>. Students are required to read these before signing the Safety Codes of Practice Forms.

Before undertaking any work in the School, each new graduate student is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment has been done for every experiment before work on that experiment is started. School Training Seminars cover this in the Autumn Term. Where necessary this assessment will include a COSHH [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health] assessment. You must speak to your supervisor about the risk assessments and COSHH forms and she/he must sign the assessment before you start work. Some procedures in your lab will have already been assessed, in this case you should read through the assessment carefully to ensure that you are familiar with all the risks present and the precautions which must be taken. A brief description of the assessments should be made in your laboratory notebook. Be prepared to show this to your supervisor or the safety officer if you are asked. You should also keep copies of your risk assessments. This is a School rule.

Until you have your supervisor's permission you may **not** work in the laboratories. Individual written permission is required before you carry out fieldwork, use radioisotopes, work with human blood or other human tissues or do genetic manipulation. In addition work with radioisotopes, human tissue and genetic manipulation needs a scheme of work.

You may only use equipment after you have been shown how to use it correctly either by your supervisor or the member of staff officially responsible for that equipment. Many instruments in the School are expensive, both to buy and repair. **Students are therefore required to receive proper training in their use.** If the instrument has a Programme of Study this must be filled in each time you use it.

SAFETY GLASSES

There is a School rule (supported by legislation) requiring you to wear safety glasses in all laboratories. Some areas have a risk assessment which says that glasses need not be worn, for example, when using a microscope; these areas will be made known to you when you are in the lab.

SO PLEASE NOTE – the general rule is that you must wear safety glasses in the laboratory

LATE WORKING

- a) The normal working hours of the School are **8.00 am** until **6.00pm**, Monday to Friday.
- b) Those working in the School outside working hours must have a late working pass.
- c) The late working register by the entrance door **must** be signed, with the exception of those working between 7.00am and 8.00am on weekdays. This book is checked regularly by Security Officers for persons present in the building and is particularly important in the event of a fire alarm evacuation.
- d) Researchers working after **10.00 pm** and before **7.00 am** must obtain written permission from their supervisors and notify the Technical Services Manager in advance.
- e) Such permission may only be given for periods of **7** days.
- f) Those working after **10.00 pm** should inform patrol officers at the Information Desk before 10.00 pm or starting work if this is later.
- g) After completing a session of late work, the worker should inform the Information Desk that he/she is leaving the building.

You will only be issued a late working pass when you have been fully trained in the laboratory. To obtain this a passport size photograph should be attached to the Late Working Pass Application form (<http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/documents/forms/default.shtm>). There is a photo machine outside Students Union Bar. You will also be given a copy of Late Working Pass Procedures which must be followed. Passes will be issued by David Knight, the Technical Services Manager in room 4.02, and must be carried at all times and produced when asked by a Security Officer <http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/security/default.shtm>.

2.4 SCHOOL SUPPORT

If you experience any issues whilst studying with us, it is advisable to discuss with your supervisor first. If however, you experience supervisory problems please contact the Graduate Administrator (Research) first. She will be able to advise and if necessary, arrange a meeting with the Graduate Director. In addition, more general concerns can be raised via the student-staff liaison committee meeting or through the self-assessment forms. The university offers a variety of support mechanisms to help with accommodation, visa advice, well-being and development. Full details are explained further in this handbook and found via the university website.

2.5 EMAIL USE

Important and urgent information will be distributed by e-mail and therefore you must check your e-mail daily, or you may miss essential information. This is also a way for you to

communicate with your supervisor(s) or other School staff. **We cannot email to private email addresses only Essex email accounts**

PIGEONHOLES

The pigeonholes for research postgraduate students are found in room 3.05 on the 3rd floor; they are organised alphabetically. Please remember to check your pigeonholes regularly. These pigeonholes are also used by research staff and technicians. The academic and administrative staff pigeon holes are also located in room 3.05.

ADDRESS

You will have been allocated or found satisfactory accommodation in the Colchester area. Please make sure that you keep your myEssex Student Portal updated with your current contact details (term time address, mobile phone number, external email address), so that you can always be contacted in an emergency. Also inform the Graduate Administrator (Research) of any changes.

2.6 SCHOOL TRAVEL FUND

The School is willing to consider an application to help fund your attendance to a key conference or workshop. There will be termly calls for applications. The maximum amount to be awarded is £300.00, however, in exceptional circumstances this may be increased. Forms should be completed and submitted to the Graduate Administrator (Research) and include a written statement in support from your supervisor.

The applications will be considered by the Head of School and Graduate Director and a decision on any level of support we can offer will be made within a week of the closing date.

2.7 PRIZE AWARD FOR BEST SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

The purpose of this prize is to encourage PGR students to produce manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The prize for the best article will be a certificate signed by the Head of the School and the Dean of the Faculty and a financial gift. Full details on the award will be circulated via email.

3. LEARNING AND TEACHING

3.1 POSTGRADUATE TRAINING

In addition to laboratory/field work and laboratory training directly related to your research topic, research students are also required to attend a more formal, structured training programme as follows.

THE UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME

New graduate students are required to attend the following compulsory courses in their first year:-

DOCTORAL WELCOME CONFERENCE

This is designed to introduce participants to researching at Essex and to mark the start of their doctoral journey with us.

GRADUATE LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

All new research postgraduates must complete the training course if they wish to become Graduate Laboratory Assistants in undergraduate practicals. If you are in further completion or about to enter further completion you are not allowed to undertake the role of Graduate Laboratory Assistants. You will be notified of dates for training via email. Students should discuss with their supervisor if they wish to be considered for these duties.

THE SCHOOL POSTGRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAMME

This programme starts in Week 1 and continues throughout the year. **Most of these training seminars and meetings are compulsory and progress is conditional on adequate attendance.** They cover topics of common importance to all Biological Sciences research students, and have been designated by the Research Councils as topic areas in which graduate students must receive training. There is a training programme for each year of study and include sessions on writing a Literature Review, Annual Report writing, preparation of a thesis (includes School guidelines on the preparation of a thesis), and preparing for the viva. Information on training sessions throughout the year will be emailed directly to you.

UNDERGRADUATE/POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT COURSE MODULES

Students are encouraged to attend undergraduate and/or postgraduate lectures (usually not more than 2 course units, 40 contact hours per year) to provide additional academic background necessary for their research project. You should discuss possible course choices with your supervisor.

SCHOOL SEMINARS

Research students are expected to attend the regular School Seminars held during term time. These usually take place on Thursdays from 1.00 – 2.00pm. It is important to continue to extend your general scientific education. The seminars are selected to be of wide biological interest. Full a list of seminar details please visit http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/news_and_seminars/seminars.aspx.

3.2 ONLINE RESOURCES

UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

A great deal of information about the University can be found on the University web pages (www.essex.ac.uk) including information on services such as the Computer Service, PC lab availability, Library opening hours and catalogues, searchable email address/telephone lists

and official documents etc. The University home page comes up automatically when you start the web browser in most University PC labs. You should explore and use this valuable on-line resource.

General information about the degree schemes the School offers, the postgraduate training and the research interests and activities of the staff are available at <http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/>. This includes simplified overall degree descriptions and structures.

The School has administration, teaching (undergraduate and postgraduate), research and recruitment material held on:

- a) Moodle <https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>
- b) The Internet <http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/> (externally visible)
- c) The Intranet <http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/> (only visible to BS Dept staff and students).
- d) The Module Directory <http://www.essex.ac.uk/courses/default.aspx>

MOODLE

We use **Moodle** as our online learning environment, to enhance face-to-face teaching. It lets you get to course materials, and has built-in features to enhance learning such as discussion forums, chat facilities, quizzes, surveys, glossaries and wikis. In addition, you will find useful information and various forms on this site <https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/>. The rules governing the PGR SSLC and PGR Room are located here along with the title approval form, extenuating circumstances and guidance for the submission of your thesis. In addition, we have dedicated page to Early Career Researcher Resources which contains information on career development, access to scientific societies and fellowship funding for post-docs www.essex.ac.uk/it/elearning

3.3 REGISTRATION, ENROLLING AND TRANSCRIPTS

All new and returning students must **register** at the start of each academic year. The full process for new students includes activating your student record for the academic year – which is held by our Registry team – getting your email account, gaining access to IT and library services, and enrolment on modules and confirming your contact details. As your studies draw to a close, once your exam board has met, it takes up to five working days for your results to be confirmed. The Registry will publish your results, close your record and send you an award confirmation letter. Your award certificate and academic transcript cannot be produced until the Registry has completed the above step so if you have not received your award confirmation letter, the Graduation Office cannot produce your documents. For more about registration and the Registry (NB these are two different things) visit our student webpages.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/registration.aspx

www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/award-documents/default.aspx

REGISTRATION: intermitting, changing your degree and the maximum and minimum periods of study

All new students and returning students must **register** at the start of each academic year. The full process for new students includes activating your student record for the academic year, your email account, access to IT and library services, enrolment on modules and confirming your contact details.

You should discuss **any proposed change of degree title** with your supervisor. Once you have decided you want to change your degree title, you will need to make a formal request using the online Change of Course/Degree title form (available here: www.essex.ac.uk/esf/)

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

If you are a **sponsored student**, you should discuss any proposed change with your funding body and/or check its terms and conditions. If you are a Research Council funded student you should contact the Student Services Hub to discuss your request to change your mode of study.

Once you have decided you want to change your mode of study, you will need to make a formal request, using the online **Change of Mode of Study form**, which will need to be approved by your department and the Dean. You can find the form at: www.essex.ac.uk/esf/

If your request is approved your minimum and maximum period will be adjusted pro-rata.

Please read carefully our guidance on Tier 4 and course changes here:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/studies/changes>

Maximum and Minimum periods of study from 2008-09

Research degree	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Masters by Dissertation (MA or MSc by	FT	One year	Two years
	PT	Two years	Three years
Master of Philosophy (<i>MPhil</i>)	FT	Two years	Three years
	PT	Four years	Five years
Doctor of Medicine (<i>MD</i>)	PT only	Two years	Three years
Doctor of Philosophy (<i>PhD</i>)	FT	Three years	Four years
	PT	Six years	Seven years
Doctor of Philosophy <small>Integrated (PhD)</small>	FT	Four years	Five years
	PT	Eight years	Nine years
Professional Doctorate	FT/PT	See individual programmes	See individual programmes

(Table taken from the Principal Regulations for Research Degrees – Appendix 1)

3.4 SUPERVISION AND PROGRESS

This section of the Postgraduate Handbook describes the School procedures and arrangements for supervision and monitoring progress.

LABORATORY NOTEBOOK

All PhD students receive one complimentary laboratory notebook per academic year. The laboratory notebook facilitates the keeping of a valid record of your research work. Accurate records will allow you to prove when a particular idea was generated. It will also allow you to register details of each experiment and when they were done. This Notebook belongs to the student/researcher and the supervisor or head of laboratory. The School requires that you adhere to a set of guidelines in completion of the Notebook and these will be circulated via email.

All MPhil/PhD students have a supervisor or supervisors. Your most important academic contact in the School is your supervisor. Your supervisor(s) will guide you in your studies including your training in the laboratory. Students meet with their supervisors on a regular basis. The frequency of meeting will vary with different projects and also at different stages of your studies but is likely to be weekly or fortnightly. Meetings and discussions with supervisors should be recorded in your laboratory notebook. Consultation with your supervisor is particularly important when you are writing up your thesis. The supervisor(s)

should see all chapters with time to make comments and suggest revisions before your deadline for submission.

A full description of the responsibilities of supervisor and student are described in the accompanying document "Responsibilities of Supervisor and Student" and in the Code of Conduct <http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/profdocs.shtm>. As research students you are entitled to six weeks annual leave which must be agreed with your supervisor and the Graduate Office. As detailed in the code of practice regulation 4.28 any research time conducted outside the UK must be approved by the Head of School. A form must be completed which can be obtained from the Graduate Office.

ASSESSMENT GENERAL POINTS PRINCIPAL REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES AND THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/regulations-higher;

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/codes-higher>

The Principal Regulations and the Code of Practice are extremely important documents that set out both your responsibilities, and the responsibilities of the University to you. Take time to familiarise yourself with them. They outline the roles and responsibilities of you, your supervisor, your Supervisory Panel and the Research Student Progress Board.

SUPERVISORY BOARD

All research students have a Supervisory Board; the role of the Supervisory Board is to review the student's progress. The Board consists of the supervisor(s) plus at least one other member of academic staff who should Chair the Board. The supervisor nominates the other member(s) of the Supervisory Board who should be generally familiar with the field of research so they can meaningfully review the student's progress but they are not directly involved with supervising the research project. The composition of an individual's Supervisory Board will be notified to the student before or at the time the first report is submitted i.e. towards the end of the Autumn term.

The Supervisory Board formally meets with the student at least twice a year, in December and in June (subject to your start date, please refer to the flow chart). The system of Supervisory Boards is intended to give the students a different perspective on their work and also experience of discussing and defending their work. They may also give feedback on written work such as the Annual Reports. The Supervisory Board also reviews training undertaken and further training needed.

After each meeting the Supervisory Board will agree on a report which is sent to the Graduate Administrator (Research) and the student. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the student is informed of any recommendations made by the Board. The board report form is submitted to the Research Students Progress Committee where all recommendations are approved and confirmed. A copy of all board report forms are then submitted to the Registry.

GENERAL POINTS

You will have at least two meetings each year with your Supervisory Board and you are required to produce the documents described below, depending on the stage of your programme, that will form the basis of the meeting. See the flow charts to find the deadlines for handing in these documents. Hard copies of your documents should be given to each member of the Supervisory Board and an electronic copy to the Graduate Administrator (Research).

FIRST YEAR

Interim Board:

Each student is required to produce a short written report (1000 words maximum) two months after the commencement of their programme. This will:

- briefly describe the background of the research project, including a few key references
- set out the scope and goals of the research project
- include an outline plan of the experimental programme
- training needs to be completed

Annual Board:

The documents required are: Literature Review, First Year Annual Report, plan and timetable of work for next year, relevant training courses to attend and 10 minute powerpoint presentation in preparation for the confirmation board. To help you to plan and spread out your work, the deadlines for these are different, so please see the flow charts.

Literature Review

An extensive Literature Review should be produced, discussing the background of your project and placing it in the context of previous work in the field. It is written during the first and second terms of your first year. Writing the review will introduce you to the appropriate background scientific literature for your project and, with regular updating, will form the basis of the first chapter of your thesis. There will be a seminar on the approaches to writing the Literature Review in the Autumn Term (see your Training Programme timetable). The Literature Review should:

- be thorough and logically structured
- be **5000 words** maximum in length
- be fully and correctly referenced (consult the Guidelines for Referencing below)
- have an abstract of approximately 300 words that outlines why the research area is important and summarises what major conclusions can be drawn from the review

First Year Annual Report

This should succinctly summarise progress to date. The format of this report is based on that of the doctoral thesis so that you can practice in writing clearly and logically and presenting data in the correct manner. Also, it is important that you use abbreviations, species names, etc. correctly and present references in the correct format in the text and in the reference list.

The 1st year Annual Report should be no more than **3000 words** (figures, diagrams and the reference list are in addition to this). Make sure the pages are numbered. The report must have a:

- **Title page** (title, your name, supervisor's name year of study and date).
- **Summary/Abstract** (approximately 300 words) explaining why the work is important, the purpose of the research, the methods used, summary of key results and main conclusions.
- **Introduction** which sets out the problem you are investigating, but should not be an extensive review of the literature because you have already written a Literature Review.
- **Materials/Methods section**, which should be complete with a description of all the methods used. **Results section**, which should be presented in exactly the same way as for the final thesis or for publication. Figures and tables should be numbered and figures should have legends and tables should have headings. The legends should be clear and self-explanatory and contain the key to symbols or lines used in the figure. Appropriate software packages should be used for preparing figures and tables. Microscope images, maps etc should have scale bars. Statistical analysis, if

appropriate, should be included. The results section should also have a **written description or commentary** on the data you have presented.

- **Discussion section.** In the Discussion you are addressing the general question: What do your results mean? You need to set your findings in the context of the existing body of knowledge. You should discuss any possible limitations in your methods and the reliability of your results. The report should be correctly referenced in the text and in the reference section at the end.
- **Reference list.** Correctly and consistently formatted.

With your report you must also include a **plan and timetable of work for the next year**; include an outline timetable for further experiments over the next year including more detail for the work to be done over the next 6 months. Also include a **list of training courses** attended and proposals for other courses you think may be useful. Finally, you are expected to prepare and present a **10 minute powerpoint presentation** in preparation for your confirmation board.

The Annual Report will be discussed with you at your Supervisory Board. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will then write a report summarising progress, highlighting any weaknesses, and recommending whether the student be allowed to proceed to the next stage. The report will include specific recommendations of how the Literature Review, powerpoint presentation and Annual Report can be improved, in preparation for the Confirmation Board. As described earlier these reports are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

In the September of your first year, you are expected to **attend and present a poster** on your research at the Annual Graduate Forum.

SECOND YEAR

Assessment in the second year is critical for the confirmation of your progression onto the PhD programme through a successful performance at the Confirmation Board.

Confirmation Board:

The first Board of the second year is the Confirmation Board. To this Board students will submit:

- **an updated version of the Annual Report (3000 words maximum)**, modified to take into account suggestions for improvements of the Annual Report and including new data.
- **an updated Literature Review (5000 words maximum).**
- an **outline plan** of work for the next 12 months (1 page maximum).
- a **statement of how the recommendations from the previous Supervisory Board have been addressed** (1 page maximum)
- completed **project guide** to help in the development of the research project and to help in the production of confirmation board documents
- **10 minute powerpoint presentation** on research

The format of both the Literature Review and the updated Annual Report are the same as described above for the Annual Board.

At the Confirmation Board meeting the student will also be expected to deliver orally a **10 minute PowerPoint slide presentation** to the Board members who will then ask questions relating to the presentation, Literature Review and updated Annual Report.

In recommending confirmation of PhD status the Confirmation Supervisory Board will assess:

- a) The quality of the literature review as a comprehensive and critical appraisal of the current status of the research topic.
- b) That the appropriate methodologies have been set up and have been applied for satisfactory data collection.
- c) That a sufficient amount of quality data has already been generated, adequately analysed and discussed.
- d) The quality of the oral presentation and the answers to questions asked after the presentation.

The Confirmation Board can make the following recommendations to the RSPC:

- a) Confirm continuation on PhD programme.
- b) Defer a decision to the next Supervisory Board.
- c) Continuation on MPhil programme.
- d) Discontinuation.

If the decision is deferred to the next Board, students will submit a full **updated Report** and an **updated PowerPoint presentation**. The format of the second Confirmation Board will be the same as the first Confirmation Board. Students are entitled to two attempts of the confirmation board only.

Second Annual Board:

If you were confirmed to proceed onto the PhD programme, the next Board will be the end of second year board and you must submit a report:

- **Annual Report of not more than 2000 words** summarising and discussing the results obtained since your Confirmation Board.
- **plan** and **approximate timetable** for the next year (outline the work for the next academic year in more detail and include the experiments planned for the next 3 to 6 months).
- training needs analysis to be reviewed.
- attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.
- report on chapter writing progress
- evidence that **recommendations from the confirmation board have been fulfilled** to progress into third year

The Annual Report will be discussed at your Second Annual Supervisory Board meeting. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will then write a report summarising progress, highlighting any weaknesses, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed to the next year. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry for the Dean's approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

In the September of your second year, you are expected to **attend and hold an oral presentation** on your research at the Annual Graduate Forum.

THIRD YEAR

Interim Board:

The focus is now on completing your practical work and focusing on starting to write. The documents required for this Interim Board are:

- a report (**2000 words maximum**), summarising and discussing the results obtained since your Second Annual Board.
- a plan and approximate timetable (1 page maximum) for the final part of your practical work and writing-up. Outline the work for the next 3 to 6 months in detail.
- an outline of the structure of your thesis (2 pages maximum).
- produce in **draft at least two chapters including results and discussion**
- aim at producing journal article
- training needs analysis reviewed.

The Report will be discussed at your Board meeting. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress, highlighting any weaknesses, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed. In addition, feedback will be given on draft chapters and feedback/support toward producing journal article. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry for the Dean's approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

Third Annual Board:

The documents required for this Annual Board are:

- produce in **draft at least two chapters including results and discussion**
- a detailed **Thesis Plan**
- **timetable** of the final few weeks of practical work.
- details of research completed (experimental)

The Thesis plan and Timetable will be discussed at your Annual Board. In addition, feedback will be given on draft chapters Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress, highlighting any weaknesses, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed into the Completion Year. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry for the Dean's approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

In the September of your third year, you are expected to **attend and organise** the Annual Graduate Forum.

COMPLETION YEAR

You can submit your thesis and be examined at the end of your Minimum Period. If you submit before the start of the next term then you can avoid Completion Year Fees. If you need to use the Completion Year to prepare and submit your thesis, you will have two Supervisory Board meetings.

Interim Board:

The documents required for this Annual Board are:

- completed **final draft** or **sufficient chapters for submission**
- **timetable** to thesis submission.

The documents are discussed at your Interim Supervisory Board meeting. You will receive detailed feedback on your draft final submission. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed in the Completion Year. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry for the Dean's approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

Completion Annual Board

The documents required for this Annual Board are:

- completed **final draft of thesis** or **sufficient chapters** for submission
- **timetable** to thesis submission.

The documents are discussed at your Annual Supervisory Board meeting. You will receive detailed feedback on your draft final submission. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress and suggesting how you can be helped to complete the thesis within the time limit. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPC and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Registry for the Dean's approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

THESIS SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Note that the deadline for thesis submission is 4 years. It is extremely important for your own career development that you achieve this target. It is also very important for the School, as the PhD submission rate within 4 years is a factor in research assessments of the School. The University has a strict policy about submission and there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to submit after this date. You must therefore make every effort to complete on time and must notify the School as early as possible if there are circumstances which may affect your ability to submit your thesis. In the vast majority of cases, these circumstances cannot be taken into account retrospectively.

VISA ARRANGEMENTS TIER 4

Overseas research students are sponsored until the maximum date (i.e. four years from when you start). If you submit within the normal time frame and your viva is held within 3 months of submission your visa will cover this period of time. The university does not automatically sponsor students under examination or in corrections. This is assessed on a case by case basis via the Registry. Further information can be viewed via <http://www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/>

[If you fail to attend a meeting each month with your supervisor \(or alternatively substantive communication, such as submitting a piece of written work, date etc. for students working remotely\) your supervisor is required to notify the Graduate Administrator who will inform the Graduate Director and the Tier 4 team within the Registry.](#)

RESEARCH STUDENTS' PROGRESS COMMITTEE (RSPC)

This committee formally monitors the progress of all research students on an annual basis. The RSPC is chaired by the Graduate Director (Research) and includes the Director of Research, and at least two other academics plus the Graduate Administrator (Research). Students do not attend this meeting. On the basis of the Supervisory Board reports the RSPC will make one of the following recommendations to the Dean of the Registry:

- a) that the student be allowed to proceed to the next year;
- b) that the student's progress to the PhD programme is confirmed;
- c) that the student's studies be discontinued;
- d) that the student's status be altered (e.g. upgraded or downgraded)

The Dean will receive a report from the RSPC outlining the recommendations for each individual student. If a recommendation is made for a student's status to be downgraded or their studies discontinued the student will be formally notified and given an opportunity to discuss the recommendation with the Committee. If a student requests a review of the recommendation this is considered formally as an appeal (see below).

At the end of their minimum period (three years for PhD) the RSPC may recommend that the student enters the completion period. For this the student must have completed all laboratory work/field work and written several chapters of the thesis.

APPROVAL OF TITLE FORM

Two months prior to submission this form should be completed. You should have the title of your thesis approved by your supervisor and then submit the form to the Graduate Administrator (Research) who will have it signed by Head of School and submitted to the Registry.

The Graduate Administrator (Research) will email the Approval of Title Form throughout the academic year and it is also available on the Web.

<http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/students/pgr/index.htm>

The Registry will then send you instructions for preparation of the thesis, the Thesis Submission Form and British Library Agreement Form - please keep these filed safely.

THESIS SUBMISSION FORM (RD1)

This form should be signed by you and must accompany submission of one hard copy (either spiral bound or glue bound) and one electronic copy of the thesis,. This can be found online via <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/students/pgr/index.htm>. Binding can be carried out by the Copy Shop on Square 4. One copy of the thesis is submitted to the Registry and a receipt will be given, the other copy is uploaded to the online repository . Details of the requirements with regard to presentation of the thesis, appointment of examiners and examination results are set out in Higher Degree Regulations and Procedures are listed below. You will also be emailed this information. Your supervisor is responsible for suggesting nominations for an internal and external examiner; this is done after you have submitted your Approval of Title Form. The Registry Research Office formally appoints the examiners. The expected time span from submission of thesis to the *viva* varies and may be dependent on availability of the External Examiner, however, this is usually within three months of submission. Except for unusual extenuating circumstances, students should ensure that they are available for the *viva* date agreed on by the Internal and External Examiners. The Examiners' reports will be sent to the Registry who will communicate with the student with regard to corrections, if these are necessary. When the corrections have been made and approved, an approval form, signed by the Internal Examiner, is submitted to the Registry. Following approval by the Dean of the Registry the thesis can be bound and submitted. The award letter is issued by the Registry when they receive two copies of the thesis. If the thesis is bound by the University Library, the award is made when the Registry receives receipt for the thesis from the Library.

3.5 PGR MILESTONES

Milestones	Criteria for progress	Deliverables	Deadline
M1: Progress to Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students)	A: Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training needs to be completed. ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Term 1 for full-time students; Term 2 for part-time students ▪ By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students
	B: Choose/narrow down the research topic and	Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area):	By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6

	demonstrate significance/impact of research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify central research theme and specific problem/questions to be studied. ▪ Identify the techniques and protocols to be used including feasibility and access to core facilities. ▪ Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access, Health and Safety aspects and ethical considerations ▪ Formulate project plan, outlining realistic objectives for each stage. 	for part-time students
	C: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a detailed, realistic research plan and timetable for Year 2. ▪ Produce a supervisory board report written in a clear scientific paper format and demonstrating critical reasoning. 	By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students
	D: Subject-specific milestones	<p>10 minute power point presentation at End of First year board in preparation for Confirmation Board presentation</p> <p>Graduate Forum oral presentation</p>	By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students
M2: Confirmation	A: Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce a Literature report Review (where relevant). Formulate a critique of the literature. 	By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)
	B: Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the four year maximum period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing and language skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Annual Report 	By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)
	C: Subject-specific milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Guide document (the project guide is a short questionnaire that is designed to help support the development of the research project and help in the production of confirmation board documents) • 10 minute power-point presentation • Timetable/outline plan of work for next year 	By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate Forum poster presentation 	
M3: Progress from Year 2 to Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students)	A: Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed. Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end of Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students By end of Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students
	B: Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on research undertaken to date Produce in draft at least two chapters including results and discussion 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students)
	C: Review significance and impact of research and articulate output.	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver workshop Present research to students and staff at seminars/conferences Aim at producing a journal article 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students)
	D: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 3. Produce supervisory board report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students)
	E: Subject-specific milestones		
M4: Progress from Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students) to Completion Year	A: Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Needs Analysis reviewed 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 9 for full-time students; Term 18 for part-time students)
	B: Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research completed (experimental, empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) Produce in draft at least two further chapters in addition to the results and discussion chapters. 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 9 for full-time students; Term 18 for part-time students)
	C: Demonstrate ability to complete within the maximum period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a realistic completion year plan. Produce supervisory board report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 9 for full-time students; Term 18 for part-time students)
	D: Subject-specific	<i>Department to add as appropriate.</i>	

	milestones		
M5: During Completion Year	A: Clear evidence of progress towards submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed final draft of thesis or sufficient chapters for submissions to supervisor(s). Evidence of progression to be considered at the supervisory board ▪ 	By interim Supervisory Board prior to submission/Term 2 of completion year (Term 11/12 for full-time students; Term 20/21 for part-time students)
	B: Subject-specific milestones		

3.6 INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR ALL

The School of Biological Sciences is committed to promoting a positive and inclusive working environment for our scientists. In addition, the university offers support mechanisms for our disabled students (see page 32), international students (see page 31) and part-time students (see page 31).

SUPPORT FOR FEMALE STUDENTS

The School of Biological Sciences has a large and vibrant community of female 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 women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and the School of Biological Sciences achieved its Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental Award in November 2014. The School has a Women in Biological Sciences (WIBS) webpage with a range of information and resources for female staff and students http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/about/women_in_science/default.aspx.

POSTGRADUATE MENTORING SCHEME

The University has a postgraduate mentoring scheme where you can contact two current Biological Sciences students with questions related to study and University life. You can contact the mentors via <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/mentoring/ask-pg/ask.aspx>

SCHOOL MENTORING SCHEME

The School of Biological Sciences is committed to supporting staff and research students at all stages of their careers. A School Mentoring Scheme has been established as a result of an action from the School's Athena SWAN Bronze Department Award. This voluntary scheme is open to all academic and research staff and PhD students and will **run alongside the current scheme for mentoring of probationary staff.**

Aims of Scheme

The Mentoring Scheme aims to support individuals' at various stages of their professional or personal development. Mentors will provide support, give advice and guidance on career/ personal development and provide opportunities to reflect on progress. The scheme supports both traditional mentoring with senior staff as well as peer mentoring and can be either long-term or short-term to suit individual needs. Through the establishment of the Mentoring Scheme we aim to:

- Support staff at key career transition points
- Provide guidance on career and personal development
- Enhance job satisfaction

Further details about the scheme will be circulated via email.

RESEARCH GROUPS

In addition, students will be members of one of the research groupings in the School, Health, Exercise and Active Lifestyle (HEAL), Sports Performance and Fatigue (SPF), Cancer and Stem Cell Biology, Protein Structure and Function, Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology and Plant Productivity. These groups have regular research meetings which students should attend. Laboratory groups, research workers and students supervised by individual members of staff, also have regular lab meetings.

THE GRADUATE FORUM

This is a compulsory one-day event held in September each year and **must** be attended by all research postgraduate students. First year students are required to present a poster, second years to give a 10-minute oral presentation and third years to co-ordinate the event. Students are responsible for the planning and the organisation of the Graduate Forum, including the programme for oral and poster presentations, preparation of abstract booklet, organising publicity and refreshments. There are prizes for best oral and poster presentations. There will be seminars on poster preparation and also oral presentation for second and third years respectively, in the Summer Term (see your Training Programme timetable).

3.7 STUDENT REPRESENTATION

Student feedback is a vital part of the University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement. It is important that you are given the opportunity and that you take time to feedback to the University.

You can do this in a number of ways:

1. You can contact (or be elected as) a **student representative** who represent the voice of fellow students in departmental Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) and other University level committees.
2. You can find more information on the Students' Union website www.essexstudent.com/representation/coursereprs/ and the University's policy here: [/www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/student_rep.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/student_rep.asp).
3. You can find out information about Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) here: www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/sslc.asp.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE

Everyone at Essex, from your lecturers to support staff and the Students' Union is here to make sure you love your time at Essex, but things only get better and better through the work of student representatives in every department. They act as the student voice in every part of student life, from collecting feedback from students on their course for formal departmental meetings to contributing to the review of the degrees we offer and shaping how the University might be run in the future.

You have the opportunity to become a student representative and the voice of your fellow students. At the beginning of the year, the department and Students' Union will put out an open call for student representatives. Once trained, you'll have an opportunity to be a Course Representative, who collects the views of their course mates, or a Year Representative, who collects the views of course representatives and presents them formally to the University at departmental Student-Staff Liaison Committee (see above) meetings. There may also be other departmental meetings that you can take part in such as Periodic Review, where all the courses in a department are reviewed.

Being a student representative does not need to be a big commitment and is a great opportunity to develop negotiation and communication skills. The Students' Union will also provide opportunities to have your time volunteered recognised, to put on your CV. And if

you're up to the challenge, there are limited opportunities to represent students at a faculty level and contribute to the big decisions made by the University.

Student Representatives are supported both by departments and the Students' Union and all opportunities are advertised through the Students' Union. If you would like to feedback the views of students on your course and help make the Essex experience even better, then check the Students' Union website for opportunities from the beginning of term.

The School has a postgraduate research student staff liaison committee (PGR SSLC); students are represented by one of their number in each year of research (i.e. a constituency). Meetings are held two/three times per year and items may be placed on the agenda via one of your research postgraduate representatives. Being a student representative is a valuable opportunity to develop the environment for research students in the School. It also provides good experience of decision making and communication. It is an asset to your CV and can enhance employability. To find out more about the PGR SSLC please see separate document which is located on Moodle and will also be emailed to you.

3.8 LIBRARY SERVICES

At our Colchester Campus and located on Square 5, the **Albert Sloman Library** has long opening hours, a new extension, a dedicated postgraduate research room and 24 hour access in the weeks leading up to exam time. The library has a wide range of learning resources, including books, journals, British and foreign-language newspapers, databases, microfilms and audio-visual materials. There are quiet group study areas and networked PCs on all floors.

libwww.essex.ac.uk/

4 RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

4.1 PROFICIO

Proficio is our innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, and it's unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and so we credit your Proficio account with funds that can be spent on a variety of courses. You can find out more information via www.essex.ac.uk/study/pg/research/proficio and you can contact the Proficio team at proficio@essex.ac.uk.

4.2 SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES AND CONFERENCES

It is really useful to join a scientific society and become part of the wider scientific community. In addition, societies hold conferences where you can meet key researchers and hear about new work, often before it is published. You may also have the opportunity to present your own work in a talk or poster. Some societies provide funds to students to attend these conferences. Your supervisor will be able to advise on which society or societies is appropriate for you to join. These conferences and other meetings in the UK or abroad are considered very important parts of your scientific training. If your studies are funded by a studentship or scholarship, your sponsors will probably have allocated funds for you to participate in at least one major conference. Your supervisor will keep you informed about these conferences or meetings and may be able to provide some financial support. The School may be able to help as well and a call for requests for funds to attend a meeting or conference is made each term by Email.

PRESENTING YOUR WORK

Throughout your period of study you will be expected to present your work orally to audiences, typically in the informal setting of your laboratory group meetings or in your Research Group meetings. The annual Graduate Forum (above) provides a more formal meeting structure for poster and oral presentations. Some PhD students in their third year may, in addition, be invited to present a seminar to a wider School audience, for example during the weekly School

Seminar Programme. Presentation of your results in a poster or talk and the opportunity for discussion is an important part of participating in a conference or meeting.

5 ASSESSMENT

5.1 PRINCIPLE REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/regulations-higher;
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/codes-higher>

The Principal Regulations and the Code of Practice are extremely important documents that set out both your responsibilities, and the responsibilities of the University to you. Take time to familiarise yourself with them. They outline the roles and responsibilities of you, your supervisor, your Supervisory Panel and the Research Student Progress Board.

5.2 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform less well in your work than you might have expected. In general, extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or a personal nature that affect you for any significant period of time and/or during the examination period.

If you are taking taught modules you need to submit your form by the deadline, see:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/general/assess-rules

Exceptional circumstances submissions relating to your overall postgraduate research studies should be made to the Supervisory Board and Research Student Progress Committee and you should consult your supervisor for the appropriate deadline.

Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form and evidence. Please seek advice from the Students' Union Advice Centre, www.essexstudent.com/services/advice_centre/, or the Student Services Hubs, www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/registry if you need any guidance.

Intermitting is a temporary withdrawal or leave of absence from your studies for one term, two terms or one academic year (stage). In exceptional circumstances, a period of up to two academic years away from our University may be allowed as long as it does not exceed your maximum period of study. Normally this is for reasons beyond your control such as health or personal problems. An intermission is approved for a defined period of time after which you would return to your studies. This is a formal process which needs formal approval and must be supported by your supervisor.

If you are thinking about intermitting, there are some practical things you need to consider such as academic issues, for example the impact on your maximum period of study, accommodation, financial matters (including the impact on your fees) and visas if you have a student or Tier 4 visa.

If you decide to intermit your registration will be changed to partial registration, which means that you will no longer be entitled to supervision or to attend any modules or training events. You will still have access to your Essex email account which we will use to communicate with you and some library access.

If you decide to intermit, you will need to complete the online form at www.essex.ac.uk/esf/ and you will receive an email confirming whether your request to intermit has been successful.

You should read the guidance on intermitting very carefully before submitting your form, at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/intermission.aspx. You are strongly advised to discuss intermitting with your department.

You may experience doubts about continuing on your course at some point during your studies. **Withdrawing from your course** is the formal process for permanently leaving your programme of study and the University. There are plenty of people at Essex who can provide you with information, advice, guidance and support to help you to make a decision that's right for you. For instance, you might find that taking a temporary break from your studies (intermitting) will enable you to resolve the current situation that is causing you to think about leaving. Also, please note that if you are thinking about withdrawing from the University, there are some practical things you need to consider: accommodation, financial matters including your tuition fees, visas if you have a student or Tier 4 visa, and careers advice. Who to contact for advice, the practical matters that you need to consider, your options, and the withdrawal process are all detailed here:
<http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/withdrawing.aspx>

Absences whilst on your course – you must report any absences, annual leave or sickness to the Graduate Administrator (Research). For annual leave where you will be away from the university, a request must be made online via (<https://www.essex.ac.uk/esf/>)

5.3 YOUR VIVA AND YOUR EXAMINERS

Your supervisor will not normally be present during **your viva** and will not normally have any contact with your examiners other than to arrange their appointment]

DEGREES CONFERRED

Postgraduate research students are conferred immediately after they have submitted one bound hard copy to the library and one electronic copy to the Repository.

5.4 APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND FITNESS TO PRACTISE

If the recommendation of your Research Students Progress Committee is that your degree should be downgraded or your studies discontinued, and you want to appeal, you must do so **within two weeks** of receiving the notification. You must do so in writing on the Form of Appeal which is available online at www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/pgr.

You should read carefully the Appeals Procedure against a progress decision – postgraduate research students at:

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals

You may also **appeal** against an examination decision. 'Failed' or 'referred' candidates may submit their appeal no later than **eight weeks** after the notification of the decision.

You should read carefully the Appeals Procedure against an examination decision – postgraduate research students (thesis) at:

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals.aspx#thesis

Professional doctorate students may appeal against the recommendation of a Research Students' Progress Committee that they be discontinued or downgraded **within two weeks** of receiving notification of the recommendation. You should read carefully the Appeals Procedure for professional doctorate students at

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals.aspx#doctoral

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. You can find the complaints procedure and the forms at www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/complaints

A complaint is defined as *the expression of a specific concern about matters that affect the quality of a student's learning opportunities* (this is in line with the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints). The University aims to resolve complaints quickly and informally.

Fitness to practise is only applicable to students on certain professional courses (such as nursing or social work) at:

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/documents/policies/procedures-fitness-to-practise.pdf
If this applies to you, you will have been told by your department.

5.5 ACADEMIC OFFENCES POLICY

www.essex.ac.uk/see/academic-offence

www.essex.ac.uk/see/academic-offence

All students are expected to behave with honesty and integrity in relation to coursework, examinations and other assessed work. If you do not do so, you may be found to have committed an academic offence. The University takes academic offences very seriously.

Academic offences can include plagiarism, false authorship, collusion, falsifying data or evidence, unethical research behaviour and cheating in an examination (this list is not exhaustive). Academic offences can be committed as a result of negligence, meaning that you may be found guilty of an academic offence even if you didn't intend to commit one.

It is your responsibility to make yourself aware of the Academic Offences Procedure, the regulations governing examinations, and how to correctly reference and cite the work of others. If you aren't sure what referencing system you should use, you should ask your department and also refer to **6: Referencing and good academic practice** in this handbook.

5.6 ETHICS

All research involving human participants, 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 can find our Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants here -

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/governance/human.aspx> - along with the University Ethical Approval application form.

'Human participants' are defined as including living human beings, human beings who have recently died (cadavers, human remains and body parts), embryos and fetuses, human tissue and bodily fluids, and personal data and records (such as, but not restricted to medical, genetic, financial, personnel, criminal or administrative records and test results including scholastic achievements). Research involving the NHS may require and research involving human tissue or adults lacking capacity to consent will require Health Research Authority approval.

6 REFERENCING AND GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE

6.1 Information relating to the University's procedure on academic offences

Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the keys to academic integrity, and a key value of higher education in the United Kingdom.

The Talent Development Centre provides online courses and guides to help you fully understand what is required from you. You can find out about the full range of workshops and resources that are available to you by visiting www.essex.ac.uk/see/tdc. You can also complete the online Academic Integrity course at <https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=5844>.

You should read the sections of this handbook which refer to referencing, coursework and examinations very carefully. Failure to understand the academic conventions may result in you being found to have committed an academic offence (see section **5.5 Academic Offences Procedure**).

Remember, if you have any questions about referencing you can ask our academic staff, or staff in the Talent Development Centre.

How to reference

Referencing in text: References in the text are cited as: "Smith and Jones (1989) reported that..." or "X was discovered by Smith and Jones (1989)", but not "Smith and Jones discovered X was bigger (1989)". Note that initials and titles are not used when citing in the text; if there are two or more papers by the same authors in the same year then they become 1989a, and b etc. Never write phrases such as "see the book The Molecular Biology of the Cell".

If a paper has three or more authors, use the form (Smith *et al.*, 1989) in the text, where *et al.* is an abbreviation (hence the full stop) for the Latin *et alia*, meaning 'and others'.

Secondary sources: If the information you are using was quoted by a source such as a textbook or a review as originating from somewhere else, this is then a *secondary source*. You should make every effort to read the original source, but if this is not possible, then you should cite the original authors followed by the secondary source. Therefore, if you have read about the work of Bloggs (1985) in a book by Smith (1992), and have not read the original you should cite this in the text as: "Bloggs (1985, cited in Smith 1992) showed that ..." or "It has been shown that ... (Bloggs 1985, cited in Smith 1992)". In the reference list you only give the details of Smith (1992).

Reference lists: Must be at the end of your Literature Review, report or thesis, and must be given in alphabetical order.

- a) References to papers must include the name(s) of the author(s) and their initials, the year of publication, the title of the paper, the title of the journal (*italicised*) with its volume number (**in bold font**), the initial and final page numbers *in that order*.
- b) References to books must include the name(s) of the authors or editors and their initials, the year of publication, the title of the book (*italicised*), edition number, city of publication, name of publishers, *in that order*. References to particular parts of books must give inclusive page numbers and if appropriate, the chapter title. If the chapter has different authors to those of the book as a whole, then the citation should be to the chapter authors, stating that it (the chapter title) is "In.....".
- c) References to Manuals and Schedules should include author/company, year of publication, type of document (e.g. manual, protocol), name of document, name of company or University and School/Department.

Some examples of the types of references are as follows:

To reference a book with all chapters written by same authors:

Chrispeels, M.J. and Sadava, D.E. (1994) *Plants, Genes and Agriculture*. pp 162-186. Boston. Jones and Bartlett.

To reference an edited book containing a series of articles/chapters by different authors:

Beattie, D.S. (2002) Bioenergetics and Oxidative Metabolism. In: *Textbook of Biochemistry with Clinical Correlations* (ed Devlin, T.M.) 5th edition. pp. 537-596. New York. Wiley-Liss.

To reference a journal article (or journal abstract/conference proceeding):

Stenberg, J. Ekblom, B. And R. Messin, R. (1966). Haemodynamic response to work at simulated altitude. *J. Appl. Physiol.*, 21, 1589-1594.

Be **consistent** with the format. For instance you must not use abbreviated journal names in some references in your list and full names in others.

To reference from the internet:

At a minimum, a reference of an Internet source should provide a document title or description, an address (in Internet terms, a uniform resource locator, or URL) and the date of retrieval. Whenever possible, identify the authors (or company/organisation) of a document as well.

Li, X., and Crane, N. (1996) Bibliographic formats for citing electronic information. URL <http://www.uvm.edu/~ncrane/estyles/> Last retrieved 24.08.13

Beckleheimer, J. (1994). How do you cite URL's in a bibliography? URL <http://www.nrlssc.navy.mil/meta/bibliography.html> 10.04.13

To reference a doctoral dissertation:

Crandall, C. (1993) Alterations in human baroreceptor reflex regulation of blood pressure following 15 days of simulated microgravity exposure. Doctoral Dissertation. University of North Texas HSC, Dept. of Physiology, Fort Worth, Texas.

ENDNOTE/MENDELEY

It is recommended that you use EndNote or Mendeley, or another referencing package, from the beginning of your research. This gives you the opportunity to collect and format references during your studies and make report and thesis writing easier. There will be an Endnote and Mendeley training session (details to follow) this will include installation guidance. Slides from the training session are also available via Moodle. You can also contact Chris Clow (IT) for further guidance.

6.2 PLAGARISM

Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the UK.

Plagiarism is the term used to describe the misuse of authorship. It is a serious academic offence and is treated as such by the University of Essex. These pages have been designed to develop your understanding of authorship and plagiarism so that you can adopt good academic practice. Whether unintentional or intentional, plagiarism is your responsibility. Ignorance is no excuse. Full details on the university practices can be found via <http://www.essex.ac.uk/plagiarism/>

The first year literature review will be submitted to Turnitin and instances of plagiarism will be reported to the School plagiarism officer.

6.3 THESIS LAYOUT

The Graduate Administrator (Research) will circulate guidelines on the presentation and style for the thesis layout. This is also available to view via Moodle.

6.4 PROOFREADING

The systems and protocols described in the [University policy and guidance on proofreading](#) are the result of an ongoing project to review commercial and third-party proofreading on campus, ensuring best practice in proofreading at the University in relation to student texts. Please see <http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading/> for an approved list of proofreaders.

6.5 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Copyright and intellectual property right issues fall into two broad areas: **compliance** (respecting the rights of others when we make use of their materials and intellectual output) and **exploitation/enforcement** (protecting and exploiting our own intellectual output). Full details can be viewed via <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ipr/>

You Matter: Health, Welfare, Support and Safety

7 PRACTICALITIES: GETTING STARTED AND IT MATTERS

7.1 Registration, enrolling and transcripts

All new and returning students must **register** at the start of each academic year. The full process for new students includes activating your student record for the academic year – which is held by our Postgraduate Research Education Team– getting your email account, gaining access to IT and library services, and enrolment on modules and confirming your contact details. As your studies draw to a close, once your exam board has met, it takes up to five working days for your results to be confirmed. The Postgraduate Research Education Team will publish your results, close your record and send you an award confirmation letter. Your award certificate and academic transcript cannot be produced until the Postgraduate Research Education Team has completed the above step so if you have not received your award confirmation letter, the Graduation Office cannot produce your documents. For more about registration and the Postgraduate Research Education Team, visit our student webpages.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/registration

www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/award-documents

7.2 FIND YOUR WAY AND ROOM NUMBERING SYSTEM

Find Your Way is our interactive campus map app. Download it to help you find any location on campus and get directions quickly and easily. There's also a handy web version - findyourway.essex.ac.uk/

If you're looking for a specific room, follow these rules.

If the room number has three parts and the first is alphabetical eg TC.1.20 then the room is in one of the outer buildings. The format is building.floor.room. The first part indicates the building - "TC" is the Teaching Centre and "LH" is the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall. The second part tells you the floor and the third the room number. For example, LH.1.12 is Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall, floor 1, room 12.

If the number has three parts and the first contains numbers and letters eg 5N.7.16, then the room is in square 4 or 5. The format is entrance.floor.room. The first part tells you the square and corner (eg 4S is the south corner of square 4), which matches the labels on the entrances (eg door 4NW is next to The Store). The second part is the floor and the third

part the room. For example, 5NW.6.12 is in the north-west (NW) corner of Square 5 (entrance "5NW"), floor 6, room 12.

If the number has two elements and the second element has three digits eg 4.722, the room is in the Maths/Social Studies/Rab Butler/Square 1 building area. The first number shows the floor and the last three digits show the room number.

Also... if the last three digits are 700-799 the room is off Square 1, and if the last three digits are 500-599 the room is in the Square 2 area (Computer Science). For example, 5.512 is room 512, floor 5.

www.essex.ac.uk/about/colchester/documents/location_of_teaching_rooms.pdf

7.3 IT SUPPORT, WIFI, EMAIL ACCOUNT, FREE MS OFFICE, COMPUTER LABS, M:DRIVE

Visit our website to set up your **IT account and password**. Once you're set up, you can access email, log on to lab computers, connect to eduroam wi-fi and much more.

www.essex.ac.uk/it/getaccount.

You must change your password within four weeks of starting, and then once every four months after that. The easiest way to **change your password** is online at:

www.essex.ac.uk/password.

As part of your Office 365 email account you get unlimited cloud storage space for all your documents with OneDrive. OneDrive lets you create, edit, and share documents online. You also get at least 300 MB of local storage, known as your M: drive. You can access this by going to 'My Documents' on any lab computer.

Visit the IT Services website for helpful information, including how-to guides, answers to frequently asked questions, and links to video screencasts. www.essex.ac.uk/it

If you can't find what you're looking for, or if you need to talk to someone, then you can get help from the IT Helpdesk in the Silberrad Student Centre. Open Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 6.00pm, and Friday 8.30am to 5.45pm.

You can also download Microsoft Office 365, for free. You can install it for free on up to five computers, and up to five mobile devices. www.essex.ac.uk/see/software

If you need to use a **computer on campus** our computer labs are the perfect place to study or work. Many labs stay open until late and some are open 24/7. For computer lab locations, opening hours and real-time availability visit: www.essex.ac.uk/it/computers/labs.

7.4 TIER 4 INFORMATION

If you are a citizen of a country that is not part of the European Economic Area or Switzerland it is likely that you will require a **visa** to enter or remain in the UK to study. The type of visa you need to apply for will depend on your personal circumstances, proposed study and where you are applying from. Find out more on the University's website at:

www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/

7.5 ON-CAMPUS FACILITIES

There is a broad range of **facilities** to support your living and learning experience at our Colchester Campus – including study-based services like the IT helpdesk and group study pods, but also various food and drink venues, three banks, a general store run by the Students' Union, a printing and copy centre, market stalls each Thursday, a Post Office,

launderettes, and much, much more. Full details on all on-campus facilities feature on our student webpages and in the campus guide you received with your welcome information when you joined us as a student member.

www.essex.ac.uk/students

www.essex.ac.uk/welcome

7.6 GRADUATION

The culmination of all your hard work, **Graduation** ceremonies take place at our Colchester Campus each July in the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall. All eligible students studying at our Colchester, Loughton and Southend Campuses will be invited to attend. For more information visit our graduation pages:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/default.aspx

8 SKILLS, EMPLOYABILITY AND EXPERIENCE

8.1 EMPLOYABILITY AND CAREERS CENTRE

Our careers specialists can give you valuable advice throughout your time at Essex and beyond. We offer one-to-one advice and guidance, job-hunting workshops, CV and job application reviews, and online access to graduate and part-time job vacancies.

www.essex.ac.uk/careers

8.2 LEARNING LANGUAGES AT ESSEX

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.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/study/why/languages.aspx>

8.3 TALENT DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Unleash your potential and visit our Talent Development Centre. Providing support on academic literacy, numeracy, English language, employability and IT to help you be the best you can be.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/tdc/

8.4 CAREER HUB

Browse hundreds of top jobs and graduate vacancies, sign up to exclusive careers events, book CV reviews and one-to-one careers advice, and connect with employers on CareerHub, our online jobs portal.

www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/careerhub

8.5 FRONTRUNNERS

Frontrunners is the on-campus work placement scheme, and one of the best ways to enrich Frontrunners is our unique placement scheme for students. We'll give you challenging employment opportunities on campus and help you develop the skills you need to compete for the best jobs. We'll even give you on-the-job training and pay you, too.

www.essex.ac.uk/welcome/frontrunners

8.6 STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Student Ambassadors are current students who help to promote the University and higher education. As a Student Ambassador you can get involved in a whole range of opportunities, in particular helping our Student Recruitment and Outreach teams. Student Ambassadors are normally recruited at the start of the Autumn Term.

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/job_hunting/on_campus

8.7 VOLUNTEERING

There are plenty of opportunities to **volunteer** during your time at Essex. The Students' Union runs the vTeam, which is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, make friends, give something to the local community, and gain valuable skills.

www.essex.ac.uk/vteam

8.8 BIG ESSEX AWARD

This is the University's **employability award** and will help you stand out from the crowd and get University recognition for all your extra-curricular experience.

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/bige

8.9 ESSEX INTERNS

Essex interns create paid internships exclusively for you as an Essex student. They're flexible too; part time during term time or full time in vacations. You can even take part up to three years after you graduate, as part of our Essex graduates support package

www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships

9 YOU MATTER: HEALTH, WELFARE, SUPPORT AND SAFETY

9.1 STUDENT SERVICES HUB, INCLUDING CONTACTS FOR DISABILITY, WELLBEING, COUNSELLING AND CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES

If you need practical advice, a confidential conversation, or general information and guidance on University life, no matter what the issue is, the Student Services Hub is the place to go. Want to know how and when to apply for accommodation? Having problems with your funding? Struggling with exam stress? Your questions matter and you'll get answers from our team of experts.

Colchester email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk

Southend email: askthehub-sc@essex.ac.uk

Loughton email: askthehub-lc@essex.ac.uk

www.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing

If you get into financial difficulty get help and talk to someone as soon as possible. The sooner your problem is identified, the sooner it can be solved. Advisers in our Student Services Hub and our independent SU Advice Centre can listen and talk you through the issues.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/money/>

<http://www.essexstudent.com/advice/money/>

INFORMATION FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

We would encourage all new students with a disability, long term medical condition, specific learning difficulty or mental health difficulty to disclose and register with the disability service so that we can plan how best to support you in your studies.

You can find out about the academic and learning support we offer here:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/disability/academic

UK students may be eligible for a Disabled Students' Allowance grant. Go here for more information including application forms and key changes for 2016-17

www.essex.ac.uk/students/disability/funding

INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

We are proud to be a global community and we recognise that living and studying in the UK may be very different from your own country.

Essex has a wide range of support covering academic and health and wellbeing issues. Our friendly and professional staff will be able to guide, advise and assist you during your time at Essex.

You can find helpful information here - www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/international

If you are studying on a **Tier 4 visa**, don't forget to read section **8.4 Tier 4 Information** of this handbook which has further information and links.

MATURE AND PART TIME STUDENTS

As a mature student you'll be in very good company – around 37% of our students are mature students.

We appreciate that studying as a mature student can present challenges. This is particularly true if this is your first experience of higher education and you have other commitments and responsibilities to meet such as work and family. We want you to be aware of the support available so that you can make the most of your time at Essex.

You can find more information here: www.essex.ac.uk/life/students/mature

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University of Essex, in conformity with the intention of its Charter, confirms its commitment to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities within the University. It aims to create the conditions whereby students and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, family circumstances, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction. The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy is fully effective.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/equality/default.aspx>

9.2 HARASSMENT ADVISORY NETWORK, DIGNITY AND RESPECT

We are Essex. 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 network of trained harassment advisors are on hand to help.

www.essex.ac.uk/equality

www.essex.ac.uk/equality/harassment

www.essex.ac.uk/students/new

9.3 FAITH GROUPS

We're proud of our vibrant and diverse multicultural community and we recognise and support the many different religions and beliefs on campus. The calm, friendly and supportive atmosphere in our Multi-Faith Chaplaincy is a welcoming place for staff, students and the wider community to meet, interact and engage with each other.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/mfc

9.4 NIGHTLINE

Established at Essex in 1970, Nightline is a friendly help and support service run by students, for students. We work under strict confidentiality ensuring complete anonymity, and we're always willing to listen. From tea and toast to campbeds, whether you're waiting for a taxi, need a revision break, or just want to chat, pop in or call us.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing/nightline

9.5 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 advice and information.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/safety>

Please read the emergency evacuation notice in your accommodation, work or study location for fire safety procedures. If you have a permanent or temporary disabilities that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/safety.aspx

www.essexstudent.com/services/safety_bus

www.essex.ac.uk/students/campus/emergency.aspx

www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/fireSafety/peep.htm

9.6 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 and organise a range of social activities. Plus they can help if you've got any concerns or complaints. Residence Life operates outside of office hours when other University support services are closed.

www.essex.ac.uk/accommodation/support/reslife

9.7 HEALTH CENTRE

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.

www.rowhedgesurgery.co.uk

www.nhs.uk

9.8 STUDENT'S UNION ADVICE CENTRE

Our SU advice centre offers free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on any issue that might be affecting you. Our friendly, trained staff are on hand to support you throughout your time at Essex.

www.essex.su/advice

suadvice@essex.ac.uk

01206 874034

9.9 UNIVERSITY PRIVACY STATEMENT

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, any individuals about whom the University may be holding personal data have the right to access the data that is being held about them. Full details about how this works, and how to request such information are available on the Records Management web pages, see: 'How to access your personal data'.

www.essex.ac.uk/site/privacy_policy

www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/request

10 THE ESSEX EXPERIENCE

10.1 THE ESSEX STUDENT CHARTER

Our **Student Charter** is developed by the University of Essex and our Students' Union as a part of our ongoing commitment to create an outstanding environment that offers the highest standards of teaching, research and support in an international and multi-cultural community.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/charter

10.2 FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

For regulations relating to the **Code of Student Conduct**; procedures for investigating breaches; appeals process please refer to the Terms and Conditions apply booklet all new students receive with welcome information, previously known as the Code of Student Conduct and The Rulebook. This information is on the University's website and is updated annually.

www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/handbooks

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/code-conduct.aspx

10.3 ESSEX SPIRIT, SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS

Keep up-to-date with important news, events and offers from across the University with our Essex Spirit blog. Go to our email lists to subscribe to the fortnightly e-bulletin.

<http://blogs.essex.ac.uk/essexspirit/>

www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/

We have more than 60 Facebook pages, including one for each department. We're also on Twitter.

www.facebook.com/uniofessex/

https://twitter.com/Uni_of_Essex

Our 'What's on?' calendar brings together all the events happening across our three campuses, so you can make the most of your time at Essex.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/events>

10.4 STUDENT'S UNION

We're famous for our **Students' Union** at Essex, and for good reason. Here you're not just a member of a normal Students' Union, you're part of a family. We're here to cheer you on as you walk into exams and to help you absolutely destroy the competition in interviews and land your dream job. We've given students the tools to set up over 100 societies for anything they want. And if you're into sport – we run more than 40 sports teams and unlike other Universities ours are free to join. You choose what drinks we serve in our bar and what

products we stock in our shops, just write it on the wall and we'll do our absolute best to get it in stock for you ASAP.

Say hello at essex.su

10.5 ALUMNI

Your time will fly by. But Essex is forever, not just for a few years, and you'll be part of this place for life. When you graduate, you'll get an alumni card, which gets you access to all alumni events, like our popular Sports Weekend, and allows you to keep using the gym and the library, so stay in touch.

alumni.essex.ac.uk/home

10.6 WHAT COMES NEXT? DIVERSE CAREER OPTIONS

All our students are supported to produce a personal development portfolio of their studies which acts as a training record to be given to potential employers. The strong practical components of our courses mean you have all the subject-related skills required for degree-related employment, as well as skills for any other career that you choose.

If you are thinking of becoming a researcher, scientist or specialist in the public or private sector, then [postgraduate study](#) is often a requirement. A PhD will help you to stand out from the competition and give you a deeper understanding of your chosen subject.

Careers that our graduates have gone into include the pharmaceutical, food and biotechnology industries, hospitals, research laboratories, healthcare, teaching and more.