Welcome

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

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

Undertaking a degree course is a major and important step in life, both in terms of personal development and in career planning. Studying for a degree is also a very complex activity, and science degrees in particular are very busy, because of the practical components. You may have concerns and questions about the organisation of your degree course, what is expected of you as an undergraduate student, what is the structure of the degree, what facilities are available, who to see, how is your work assessed etc. This Undergraduate Handbook should provide answers to many of your questions, encouragement and advice, and clarify much about the organisation of the degree courses and the School. It is also available on the ‘current students’ section of the School webpage and in the ‘Resources’ section on Moodle. The version on the webpage will be updated yearly and any changes to advice, procedures, rules and regulations in subsequent years will be flagged to you each year, normally by email. We hope that your time here will be stimulating and rewarding, and that you will use the opportunities and facilities of the University and School to the full, to achieve your goals.

Professor Phil Mullineaux
School of Biological Sciences
About your Student Handbook

This handbook gives you essential information about your School of Biological Sciences and the University.

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

At our three uniquely intimate campuses 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.

All information in this guide was correct at the time of printing.
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1.2 Term dates, academic week numbers and important information about attendance

Term dates

2017-2018
Autumn term  5 October 2017 – 15 December 2017
Spring term  15 January 2018 – 23 March 2018
Summer term  23 April 2018 – 29 June 2018

2018-2019
Autumn term  4 October 2018 – 14 December 2018
Spring term  14 January 2019 – 22 March 2019
Summer term  23 April 2019 – 28 June 2019

The University uses a week numbering system that covers the 52 weeks of a calendar year, beginning with Welcome Week as Week 1. Autumn term teaching takes place during Weeks 2-11, spring term teaching takes place during Weeks 16-25 and the summer term is Weeks 30-39. You can find the University week structure/calendar here: http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/timetables.aspx

The official University teaching day runs from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. You must be available during these times every week in term time.

Field Courses/Summer Schools

You will be required to attend field courses or summer schools, most of which are scheduled at the end of Year 1, between weeks 36 and 38. Marine Biology students will attend a field course at the end of the Spring term of Year 1. You will be informed well in advance exactly when these are to occur. You should not book any holidays or trips until the date of your relevant summer school/field course has been confirmed. Field courses for some Year 3 modules are also scheduled at the end of the summer term of Year 2.

Examination Dates

The main exam period takes place from Weeks 33-36. Exam scheduling can include Saturdays and Bank Holidays.

Some exams will be scheduled outside of the main exam period. Multiple Choice Exams (MCQs) for Year 1 modules will be scheduled in Week 15 (week commencing 8 January 2018) and Week 30 (first week of the summer term). Attendance at the MCQs is compulsory and you should be aware that Week 15 is the week before the start of the spring term.

Year 2 Biomedical Science Students will also have some MCQs and exams in Week 15 (week before the start of the spring term) and week 32.

Please do not book any holidays or trips during the MCQ exam weeks.

If you are absent from the University during teaching weeks or if you miss any scheduled events outside of term-time, you should follow the procedure outlined in section 4.2.
1.3 Teaching timetable
Information about teaching timetables and your individual timetable can be found at www.essex.ac.uk/students

Timetable changes are sometimes unavoidable and you should be alert for any changes, especially in the first couple of weeks of term. Your personal timetable will be updated automatically every evening. Any last minute changes will also be emailed and posted on Moodle. When changes are made at very short notice (less than 48 hours before the teaching session) changes will also be texted to students who have provided mobile phone numbers.

Requesting a class change
Students are automatically assigned to classes based on availability by the Central Timetabling Office and in the attempt to produce a clash free timetable for every student. In special circumstances students may request a change in their class allocations – for example, if you have childcare or caring commitments, work commitments, attendance on other courses of study or for medical reasons. Permission to change to an alternative class or lecture is agreed at school level and the right is reserved to refuse permission to change. The above list is not exhaustive, and we understand there may be other genuine reasons for changes. The School may ask for evidence to support your change of class request. Please note class change requests are subject to availability within other classes.

If you have any timetable difficulties you should speak to the School Manager (smbs@essex.ac.uk) in the first instance.

1.4 Link to myEssex
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/myessex
2. About our School

2.1 Academic Staff
This is a list of the academic staff that you are likely to be in contact with most frequently.

Most academic staff work from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday during term-time. However, they tend to have busy schedules so you should email or telephone first if you need an appointment. Their availability in the vacations will normally be much more limited as they may be undertaking research or on holiday. You cannot generally expect to receive a prompt response to any emails that you send to teaching staff during vacations. If you have an urgent query during the vacations, you can contact the Undergraduate Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Julie Lloyd</td>
<td>Director of Education</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Louise Beard</td>
<td>Senior Tutor, Student Peer Mentor</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Phil Reeves</td>
<td>Disability Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.5.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gareth Jones</td>
<td>Year 1 Organiser, Incoming Study Abroad Officer</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Dr Brandon Reeder** | Year 2 & Final Year Organiser (Biochemistry, Genetics, Biological Sciences – biomolecular) | Office: 3SW.6.15  
Email: reedb  
Tel: 2119 |
| **Prof Nelson Fernandez** | Year 2 & Final Year Organiser (Biomedical Science) | Office: 3SW.4.22  
Email: nelson  
Tel: 3330 |
| **Dr Tom Cameron**     | Year 2 & Final Year Organiser (Biological Sciences-ecological, Marine Biology) | Office: 3SW.4.14  
Email: tcameron  
Tel: 2552 |
| **Dr Selwa Alsam**     | Course Director (Biomedical Science) Lead Professional – Biomedical Science | Office: 3SW.4.12  
Email: salsam  
Tel: 3328 |
| **Dr Jonathan Worrall** | Course Director (Biochemistry) | Office: 3SW.5.23  
Email: jworrall  
Tel: 2095 |
| **Dr Michael Steinke** | Course Director (Marine Biology) | Office: 3SW.4.10  
Email: msteinke  
Tel: 3318 |

Dr Brandon Reeder will be able to help Year 2 and Final Year Biochemistry students with queries about academic matters.

Prof Nelson Fernandez will be able to help Year 2 and Final Year Biomedical Science students with queries about academic matters.

Dr Tom Cameron will be able to help Year 2 and Final Year students with queries about academic matters for the following courses – BSc Biological Sciences/Marine Biology.

Dr Selwa Alsam is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biomedical Science degree course.

Selwa is also the Lead Professional for the Biomedical Science course. Selwa will be able to advise you on undertaking a placement year in the NHS and is the academic point of contact for Biomedical Science students whilst they are away on their placement year.

Dr Jonathan Worrall is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biochemistry degree courses.

Dr Michael Steinke is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Marine Biology degree courses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Toni Marco</strong></td>
<td>Course Director</td>
<td>Dr Toni Marco is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Genetics and Genetics and Genomics degree courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Genetics, Genetics and Genomics</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.3.06 Email: amarco Tel: 3339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Jordi Paps</strong></td>
<td>Course Director</td>
<td>Dr Jordi Paps is responsible for the development and academic organisation of the Biological Sciences degree courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.3.14A Email: jpsm Tel: 6389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Corinne Whitby</strong></td>
<td>Placement Officer</td>
<td>Dr Corinne Whitby is the School's Industrial Placement Officer. You can contact Corinne if you have queries about securing a placement or if you are considering transferring onto a placement version of your degree course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office: 3SW.5.13 Email: cwhitby Tel: 2062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Ulrike Bechtold</strong></td>
<td>Study Abroad Officer</td>
<td>Dr Ulrike Bechtold is the School Study Abroad Officer. If you have any enquiries regarding undertaking a year abroad you can contact Ulrike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Outgoing)</td>
<td>Office: 3SW.4.40 Email: ubech Tel: 2244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full Academic Staff List: [www.essex.ac.uk/bs/staff/Staff.aspx?type=academic](http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/staff/Staff.aspx?type=academic)
## 2.2 Administrative Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Janet Cole</strong></td>
<td>Undergraduate Administrator</td>
<td>Office: 4.00, Email: bsr1yr3 Tel: 3014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anna Trafford</strong></td>
<td>Student Administrator</td>
<td>Office: 4.00, Email: bsr1yr3 Tel: 3014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Angela Chan</strong></td>
<td>Year 2 Undergraduate Administrator</td>
<td>Office: 4.00, Email: achan Tel: 3320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Olivia Pink</strong></td>
<td>Education Services Manager</td>
<td>Office: 4.32, Email: esmbs Tel: 4459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kate Hollands</strong></td>
<td>School Manager (NB. not in post until November 2017)</td>
<td>Office: 4.06, Email: smbs Tel: 2248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kerry Alban</strong></td>
<td>School Office Administrator</td>
<td>Office: 4.30 (School Office), Email: kerrya Tel: 4074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Janet is available for general and administrative enquiries. She is involved in monitoring student attendance and progress and also deals with coursework and marks administration. Janet can also help with queries about EVS handsets and tutor groups.

The Student Administrator is your first point of call for general and administrative enquiries and matters relating to Year 1/Final Year coursework submission and marks. She is also involved in monitoring student attendance and progress.

Angela is your first point of call for general and administrative enquiries and matters relating to Year 2 coursework submission and marks. She is also involved in monitoring student attendance and progress. Angela also supports students who are enrolled on a placement version of our courses and is secretary to the UG SSLC meetings.

Olivia leads the undergraduate administrative support team in the School. She is also the School’s Examinations Officer and can help with queries about exams, rules of assessment and exam results. She will also administer changes of course, special syllabus, intermission and withdrawal requests.

Kate is the Professional Services lead, with responsibility for managing educational, technical and research support in the School. She is also responsible for overseeing the timetable and can help you with timetabling queries.

Kerry is secretary to the School undergraduate progress and late submissions committee and provides support to the School’s plagiarism officer.

### 2.3 Location of school, undergraduate office, opening hours, common room, noticeboards and photocopying facilities
Our location
Colchester Campus
School of Biological Sciences
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester CO4 3SQ

Opening hours
The Undergraduate Office (3SW.4.00) and School Office (3SW.4.30) are open from 9am –1pm and 2pm – 5pm.

The School is open weekdays from 8am – 6pm. Access to the School outside these hours is not permitted without special permission.

Common room
The School common room (room 3SW.4.11) is a recreational area for staff and students. It has tea and coffee making facilities, a microwave, fridge and a seating area. Marked hard copy Year 1 coursework is returned to students in the pigeon holes near the entrance to the common room.

Noticeboards
Year 1, 2 and Final Year noticeboards are located on the 4th floor, just around the corner from the main entrance and coral reef aquarium. Further along this corridor there are also noticeboards for events, outreach and career opportunities.

Photocopying
There are photocopiers in the Library, or you can visit the Copy Shop on Square 4.

2.4 School support for students

Need to talk to your tutor?
All undergraduate students have a personal tutor who you’ll meet soon after you’ve arrived, and who you’ll meet regularly throughout your course. There are timetabled tutorials during the first year. Your personal tutor is there to help you feel connected to your School, and is someone you can talk to if you have questions about your course or encounter any difficulties which affect your studies. Your personal tutor may also recommend other support services on campus that might be able to help.

If you wish to see your tutor outside of timetabled sessions, you should phone or email first to arrange an appointment (except in cases of emergency). Details of your tutor, their email address and their office number will be posted on the Year 1 noticeboards during Welcome Week and circulated via email. If you’re unsure who your personal tutor is, please ask a member of the administrative staff in the School.

Information about Peer Mentoring in the School
The Biological Sciences Peer Mentoring Programme aims to provide assistance and guidance to Year 1 students. All Year 1 students are allocated a mentor from Year 2 or the Final year. Mentors act primarily to signpost Year 1 students to information
and support mechanisms as appropriate. Notification of the allocation of mentors will take place by email and on notice boards during Welcome Week.

The frequency of meetings is left up to the mentor and mentees. You are encouraged to benefit from the experience your mentor has to offer and to meet on a monthly basis so that any issues or concerns can be discussed. However, you may prefer to do this via e-mail. You should be aware that the role of the mentor is not to replace your Personal Tutor or Year Organiser and you should not save up problems and expect your mentor to resolve them. The mentor programme finishes at Easter to allow all students time for revision and examinations.

Further information on the mentor role can be found here:

http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/mentoring/peer-mentoring/default.aspx

There will be a call for mentor applications circulated in the Spring term. You can contact bsyr1yr3@essex.ac.uk for further details.

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 an Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental Award in November 2014. The School has a Women in Biological Sciences 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.

Staff research interests
Research in the School is organised into five main groups: Cancer and Stem Cell Biology, Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology, Protein Structure and Function and Plant Productivity. Academic staff are actively engaged in research on topics across a wide spectrum, including: agricultural sustainability; coral reef ecology; virology and immunology; molecular complications of diabetes; oxidative stress; photosynthetic metabolism and plant responses to environmental stresses.

If you are interested in finding out more see: www.essex.ac.uk/bs/research/default.aspx

School seminars
All undergraduate students are welcome to attend the School Seminar Programme which is held on Thursdays between 1-2pm. Details are published here: www.essex.ac.uk/bs/news_and_seminars/seminars.aspx and circulated via email. Some seminars will be more suited to final year students, but there may be other seminars of general interest.

2.5 Correspondence and communication
Most information is sent by email, but important documents and letters may be sent by post to your term-time or permanent home address. You must keep your contact information up-to-date through MyEssex, or you will miss important information.

You should check your University email account at least daily in term time. Moodle (the University’s e-learning environment) is also an important source of information and will be used to update you about module
and timetabling information. You should also check the student pigeon holes in the School common room at least weekly during term-time. In Year 1 this is where any coursework which you submit in hardcopy will be returned to you once it has been marked. Uncollected coursework will be removed at the end of each term. General information is also placed on the School notice boards in the corridor on level 4.

2.6 School annual prizes
The award of a prize is noted on student transcripts and is announced at the School degree day reception. The following prizes are currently awarded:

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

3.1 Teaching and learning methods

The School’s broad educational purpose is to:

1. deliver an education in the chosen subject of high academic standard set in a framework of procedures to monitor and improve quality;
2. offer coherent, modular undergraduate degree courses, shaped by the research strengths of the School, allowing specialisation in relevant disciplines and accessible to our diverse student population;
3. provide a choice of undergraduate degree courses with curricula designed: (a) to promote the progressive development of subject knowledge and understanding and of practical and key skills; (b) to encourage the development of independence in learning; (c) for 4 year courses, to give experience in an appropriate work environment or Study Abroad;
4. deploy a range of teaching, learning and assessment modes structured to meet the requirements of the curriculum in a well-resourced environment, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate to support individual student needs;
5. stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for the chosen subject and encourage students to realise their academic potential;
6. help students by providing a friendly, supportive environment and clear, comprehensive information relating to degree organisation, year structure, module content and assessment methods;
7. produce graduates who can proceed either to postgraduate study particularly in appropriate subject areas, or to a range of careers, using the key skills acquired during their study.

Successful teaching and learning involves a partnership between student and staff.

The School uses a range of teaching methods depending upon the level of the module and the type of material that is being dealt with:

- Lectures play a key role in all years, conveying knowledge and facilitating understanding.
- Directed learning is associated with lecture modules in Years 1 and 2 and is designed to develop your independence. Some material, identified in the Module Handbook, is not included in the lectures. Instead you are given guidance about how to study this material and a class is organised to deal with any problems you encounter.
- Practical classes in Years 1 and 2 are used to develop laboratory and key skills, and to augment knowledge and understanding of the lecture material. Practical classes are supported by technicians and by trained Graduate Lab Assistants.
- Project work develops skills in planning, problem solving and research methodology. It begins in the Year 2 summer module, may be developed in Year 2 practicals, and culminates with the final year research project.
- Web-based material is used to support teaching and learning.
- Team work skills are developed through coursework in Years 1 and 2.
• Students develop oral presentation skills in key modules in each year, and as part of the Final Year project.

• Outside formal contact hours, you will undertake student managed learning (e.g. studying lecture material, preparing coursework assignments, revising for exams). The academic year comprises 30 weeks of work and you are expected to work a 40 hour week. The formal timetable comprises a relatively small fraction of this. You are responsible for organising your time in an effective way. Module Handbooks give guidance on the amount of time you should be spending on study. Independent learning is developed by systematically increasing the proportion of time available for student-managed learning over the three years.

The nature of the reading associated with modules changes progressively. In Year 1, one or two recommended text books are the primary source. In Year 2, the reading list may include review articles and original papers. Final year modules rely heavily on more advanced texts and research papers.

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

Support from Graduate Laboratory Assistants (GLAs) in practicals
In your practicals you and the Lecturer will usually be supported by Graduate Laboratory Assistants (GLAs). These may be technicians, postgraduate students or research staff from the School. The postgraduate students are trained and briefed before each practical. They are not there to carry out the work for you or to provide you with the answers, but they are there to help, to answer technical and scientific questions, and to check and aid your understanding. They will also check that you have tidied up your bench space before you leave the laboratory.

GLAs may mark some of your practical work. They receive training in marking and are given model answers and marks schemes to ensure consistency. The Lecturer retains overall control of the marking process and moderates the final marks. If you have concerns about the GLAs, either relating to their marking and feedback on your work or in the practicals, you should contact the Module Supervisor in the first instance.

3.2 Teaching and learning expectations

You can expect that we will:

• Work to achieve our aims;

• Provide clear and comprehensive documentation for all modules;

• Provide teaching sessions which (a) are well prepared and delivered, (b) are supported by sufficient materials and equipment and (c) for practical work, are safe;

• Notify you as far in advance as is possible of any changes to the teaching timetable;

• Return assessed work within 4 term time weeks, with clear and helpful feedback and marked in accordance with the marks classification in this handbook, on a coversheet where appropriate;
Deal with queries you may have relating to modules within a reasonable timescale.

We expect that you will:

- Make the best use of the educational opportunities and resources available and work to achieve the stated objectives and to realise your academic potential;
- Familiarise yourself with the contents of this handbook and the documentation which accompanies each module and follow the guidance, procedures and rules described;
- Attend prescribed instruction of all types and where absence is unavoidable notify the relevant person;
- Regularly consult noticeboards and your email and keep your address updated so that you do not miss important information;
- Prepare adequately for and participate actively in teaching sessions;
- Support your formal tuition with an appropriate level and intensity of student managed learning;
- Submit assessed work in the appropriate form and by the published deadlines;
- Use feedback on written work constructively, both to build on your strengths and to identify and remedy your weaknesses;
- Regularly review your academic progress (marks) and take appropriate action where and when necessary;
- Contribute to the development and improvement of the student learning experience by providing accurate and considered feedback on modules when required, and by participating in the student staff liaison process;
- Abide by the various rules and regulations in the School and University that have evolved in order to provide safe, fair and effective teaching and learning support for all students.

3.3 Moodle and FASER

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.

FASER is our online coursework submission and feedback system. Use it to check coursework deadlines, upload coursework and receive electronic feedback all in one place.

faser.essex.ac.uk
www.essex.ac.uk/it/services/learning-technology/

Further information about using FASER is given in section 5.5.
3.4 Course structures

Undergraduate courses
We offer a wide range of carefully structured and innovative courses that give you a thorough and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the subject. All of our courses are taught by staff who are experts in their fields and actively involved in research of international standing.

Students currently in the School may be studying Biological Sciences, Marine Biology, Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Genetics or Genetics and Genomics. Three year courses and four year options with either a year abroad or a placement year are available.

Additionally we offer a 4 year Integrated Masters in Marine Biology (MMarBiol), please contact Dr Michael Steinke for further information.

You will find a table showing current optional and compulsory modules for your degree course in the relevant year guide in the appendices of this handbook.

Items you will need

**Text books:** You will need to purchase the key text books for your course. Year 1 students are given a key text book free of charge (see Year 1 guide in the appendix of this handbook) but others are an unavoidable expense. You cannot rely on the Library to have sufficient copies of these texts. You may be able to find second hand copies online, but take care not to buy an out-of-date edition unless you have been told it is suitable by your Module Supervisor. A new purchase may be necessary to obtain an access code for online content and assessments. Please refer to individual module pages on our Moodle site at: [http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/](http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/) for details on reading lists.

**Calculators:** A pocket calculator is essential for coursework, practicals and exams. A model with logs, square roots, trigonometry and statistical functions and a memory is essential. Please note that calculators with text storing capabilities are not permitted in University exams. Specific details can be found in Section 6.3.

**Laboratory coats and safety glasses:** You must wear an appropriate, clean, protective laboratory coat in the laboratory. It is compulsory to bring your laboratory coat with you to all practicals. Laboratory staff cannot supply spare laboratory coats. Failure to bring your laboratory coat after Monday of Week 4 may result in you being excluded from the practical. You must not wear your laboratory coat outside the laboratory. Safety glasses must be worn at all times in the laboratory (except when the practical schedule or the member of staff running the practical states otherwise). Laboratory coats and safety glasses will be provided as part of a package of essential equipment during School Registration.

**Other items required in practicals:** Ensure that you bring a sharp H grade pencil, an eraser and a ruler to all practical classes.

**Laboratory books:** A laboratory book is essential for taking notes and recording data during all first and second year practicals. You will be provided with a laboratory book in Welcome Week. Please bring it to every practical.

**Field work:** You will need a pair of wellington boots and a clipboard for all fieldwork.
**Additional costs for fieldwork**

Marine Biology students have a compulsory field course module and additional field course options are available to Marine Biologists and Biological Scientists. All field courses are heavily subsidised by the University, however contributions are required from students to cover part of the costs of tuition, accommodation and subsistence or travel, depending on the module. Approximate costs are given below but these may be subject to change and will be confirmed by the Module Supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field course</th>
<th>Module Supervisor</th>
<th>Available to students</th>
<th>Estimated student contribution 2017-18</th>
<th>Scheduling (to be confirmed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS114 Marine Biology Field Skills</td>
<td>Dr Leanne Appleby Hepburn</td>
<td><strong>Compulsory</strong> BSc Marine Biology</td>
<td>Costs for travel with a railcard is about £100 including transfers.</td>
<td>Spring term Thursday 8 March 2018 to Tuesday 13 March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS215 Environmental Biology and Ecophysiology Field Course</td>
<td>Dr Alex Dumbrell</td>
<td>Optional* BSc Biological Sciences</td>
<td>£TBC</td>
<td>End of summer term/vacation between year 1 and 2 TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS256 Tropical Marine Field Research Skills</td>
<td>Prof Dave Smith</td>
<td>Optional BSc Marine Biology and Biological Sciences</td>
<td>£TBC +/-1500</td>
<td>Weeks 26 – 28 Exact dates TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS307 Oceanography and Marine Conservation</td>
<td>Leanne Appleby Hepburn</td>
<td>Optional BSc Marine Biology</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>Summer Vac - Weeks 50 – 51 TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In order to secure a field course place students are required to attend all meetings, pay deposits as requested and provide any relevant information requested by the School in good time.**
Programme specifications
Programme Specifications provide key information, such as the structure and aims of your course, as well as the knowledge and skills you will develop. The learning outcomes are categorised into knowledge, intellectual, practical and key skills, and are linked to the aims, learning outcomes and assessment on the modules you take. The relevant Programme Specification for your course and stage of study will be available to you online through the MyEssex webpage or via this link: www.essex.ac.uk/programmespecs/

Full module outlines are located on the module directory: www.essex.ac.uk/modules/

Credits
The University credit-rating system for undergraduate study is based on a nationally recognised framework. The undergraduate academic year normally consists of 120 credits and each undergraduate module is assigned a number of ‘workload credits’, which indicate the proportion of the academic year’s work that is devoted to the module. In our School, individual modules are assigned either 15, 30 or 45 credits. Each credit is equivalent to 10 hours work.

Module enrolment
Students registered on programmes of study leading to a degree may have options to select as part of their course structure. The eNROL system is an online tool to review and select available modules specific to a particular course and year of study. All new and returning students should use the online system prior to the start of each academic year. Returning students will access the system from the April preceding the next academic year. New students will access the system from the end of August. Departments will approve student selections within a few weeks of eNROL use and timetables will take module enrolment into account when planning for the next academic year. Early module enrolment will ensure students know which modules to attend and where the lectures and classes are held.

All continuing students will receive information on module enrolment during the Easter vacation. Instructions on choosing your optional modules and confirming your compulsory modules will be provided nearer the time. If you need advice about your choice of modules, (for example, if you wish to take an optional module that is not normally available on your course), you should discuss this with the Module Supervisor. Your choice of optional modules may be subject to timetabling constraints. You can change your optional modules up to the end of Week 3 (for autumn term modules) and the end of Week 17 (for spring term modules). If you are not sure which modules to take you could attend lectures for several different modules before making your final choice.

External requirements
BSc Biomedical Science is accredited by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS). In addition, the BSc Biomedical Science (Integrated) programme is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). It is important for students on either course to understand the respective roles of the HCPC and the IBMS.

The HCPC is the UK statutory regulator for 16 professions including Biomedical Scientists. The HCPC sets standards of professional training, performance and conduct for all these professions. The main aim of the HCPC is to protect the health and well-being of those using the services of the health professionals registered with them. For further information please visit the HCPC website at: www.hcpc.org.uk

The IBMS is the UK professional body for Biomedical Scientists and is concerned with the promotion and development of both Biomedical Science and Biomedical Scientists. The IBMS offers student membership to
those on BSc Biomedical Science programmes. You can find further information on our IBMS notice board and on the IBMS website at: www.ibms.org.

The School Professional Suitability Group meets annually to consider whether BSc Biomedical Science (Integrated) students meet the requirements for professional suitability. Information on disciplinary matters, academic offences and other issues relating to fitness to practise is considered and students may be referred to the Head of School under the Breach of Professional Conduct, Fitness to Practise and Termination of Training Procedure. You can find the full Fitness to Practise procedure online at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg

3.5 Changing your degree and maximum period of study

If you want to change your course, you should talk to someone in the School first. If your new course is in a different department, you should also speak to someone in that department. Check the deadlines for course changes with the Student Services Hub.

Investigate your potential new course by looking at course information on the department’s web pages, talking to students on the course and speaking to tutors. You should also look at our Rules of Assessment for the new course to check whether there are any course-specific requirements.

If you are considering changing course due to academic worries with your current course, you might find it useful to seek academic support before changing. Contact the Talent Development Centre for advice: www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/tdc

If you want to make a formal request for a course change, you should do so via the online Course Change form available here: www.essex.ac.uk/ef/

Go to www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/changing-course for more information.

Undergraduate students have a maximum period in which to complete their studies. This is set at the point at which you register, and is normally the length of your programme plus two additional years. This is to allow some flexibility in cases where you find you must intermit, or you fail a stage of study and must repeat it, or you want to transfer to a new course and must retake a stage of study.

Transfers of programme are still included in the original maximum period unless they involve moving to or from a 4-year course. Full details of the maximum period of study permitted for University awards can be found in the section of the Rules of Assessment entitled, ‘Framework for University of Essex courses’.

Changes of course normally allowed at the end of Year 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW degree course</th>
<th>From current degree course</th>
<th>Additional requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>Genetics/Genetics and Genomics/Genomics</td>
<td>Only possible for students who have A-level Chemistry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biomedical Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Genetics/Genetics and Genomics/Genomics</td>
<td>Students should seek advice from Module Supervisors when selecting year 2 options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marine Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 **Listen Again**
Did you miss something? Our Listen Again digital recording service lets you listen again to lectures so you grasp every detail. It’s available in teaching rooms or lecture theatres where you see the sign. 
[listenagain.essex.ac.uk](http://listenagain.essex.ac.uk)

3.7 **Final year projects**
Students will be invited to attend course relevant project choice workshops in the Spring term of Year 2 where they will receive guidance on selecting their project choice. The deadline for selecting project choices is likely to be Friday week 35 (to be confirmed).

Final Year project handbooks will be made available on Moodle at the start of your final year and detail all the arrangements for final year projects. Further guidance for final year students can be found in Appendix 3.

3.8 **Study Abroad**
There are opportunities for eligible students to undertake a full year of study abroad in countries such as the United States (including Hawaii), Australia, Canada, Europe, Hong Kong, Japan, Latin America, the Middle East, New Zealand or Russia. The University has exchange agreements with a wide variety of universities and can help students to select the most appropriate destination. Study abroad can enhance your C.V. and it gives you valuable experience of another culture and way of life. Spending an extended period of time in another country provides an unparalleled opportunity to see a side of life which tourists never encounter. International experience is also highly valued by employers in today’s global economy.

The marks from the year of study abroad are only used to improve a student’s degree classification. Calculation of degree classification at the Final Year Examination Board is therefore undertaken both with and without the year abroad. There are usually no tuition charges other than what you normally pay to Essex. Also, in many cases, the cost of living elsewhere is lower than in Colchester, so you should not assume that study abroad is an expensive proposition.

The School's Outgoing Study Abroad Officer is Dr Ulrike Bechtold (ubech@essex.ac.uk). In conjunction with the Essex Abroad Office, Ulrike will be running an induction early in the Autumn term. Further information on study abroad, particularly in relation to insurance, accommodation, language and finance can also be found online: [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad/](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad/) or through the Essex Abroad Office.

**How do I spend a year studying abroad?**

1. Attend the study abroad meetings which are scheduled at the start of the autumn term every year (details will be communicated by email).
2. Speak to the Study Abroad Officer, Dr Ulrike Bechtold, and the Essex Abroad Office as early as possible, but no later than the first few weeks of the autumn term in Year 2.

3. Transfer on to the study abroad version of your course.

All students planning study abroad will need to obtain an overall degree mark of at least 50% in Year 1 in order to be eligible. Please note that places are still not guaranteed even if you have met all the criteria.

3.9 Placement information and employability modules

Placements
Gaining relevant work experience through voluntary or paid work in vacations is extremely valuable. You can combine this with your studies, by doing a placement year. If you would like to transfer to a placement version of your course please contact Dr Corinne Whitby (cwhitby@essex.ac.uk) for advice. Please note that there are requirements to being able to continue on a placement version of your course. **You must obtain a Year 1 year mark of 50%**.

During Year 2 BSc Biomedical Science students can also apply to complete an NHS placement in their third year of study. If you are interested in this opportunity you should contact Dr Selwa Alsam (salsam@essex.ac.uk).

You will not be required to pay tuition fees for your placement year.

Assessment of placement years
Placement years in the School of Biological Sciences are assessed for credit purposes only and do not contribute to your degree outcome. See Model 1 in the relevant Rules of Assessment.

Students due to go on placement as part of their degree course will be issued with a specific placement handbook which will contain further detailed information.

Employability modules
Employability and career development is embedded in all our degree courses, in particular as part of our Year 1 and Year 2 Skills modules: BS141 Scientific and Transferable Skills for Biosciences, BS211 Enterprise and Employability for the Biosciences, BS214 Biomedical Science: Practice and Employability and BS257 Professional Skills for Ecological and Marine Scientists. Employability is also embedded into the Final Year Research Project Modules.

Summer vacation studentship awards
There are sometimes opportunities for undergraduates (usually Year 2 students) to apply for a competitive studentship (awarded by external organisations such as the Society for General Microbiology, the Nuffield Foundation and the Wellcome Trust). Studentships provide a small bursary for students to work in the School's research laboratories over the summer vacation, usually for 8 to 10 weeks. Details of how to apply are issued by individual members of staff who place advertisements on the undergraduate notice boards, and/or by email. Also look out for University of Essex awards as part of the UROP (University Research Opportunities) scheme.

Job references: Requesting references from members of staff
If you require a personal reference, always ask permission from a member of staff before giving their name as a referee. You should consider from whom it is most appropriate to request a reference and who will be best equipped to evidence your character and performance in the subject.
For example, final year project supervisors, year organisers, or core course supervisors are likely to be more suitable than lecturers that have taught you on a first year option course. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet a request for a reference for graduates up to three years after they leave the University. Requests received outside of this timescale may, of course, be met if a member of staff is equipped with the necessary information on the student and is willing to provide a reference.

It is helpful if you can provide the member of staff with details of the course or job you have applied for and, if relevant, a CV or other summary of your qualifications and experience. Please try to ask for references in good time – it is not always possible for a member of staff to write a reference immediately.

**Copies of references**
A copy of any reference provided will be retained within our School for no longer than three years for taught students and ten years for research students. If a reference is retained beyond this timeframe, our School will seek explicit consent from the student concerned.

**3.10.1 Disability and emotional wellbeing**
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 Student Services Hub 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/contact/help.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/help.aspx)

UK students may be eligible for a Disabled Students’ Allowance grant. See our webpages for more information, including application forms and key changes: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/disability/funding.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/disability/funding.aspx)

**3.10.2 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, give advice and assist you during your time at Essex.

You can find helpful information here - [www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/international/default.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/international/default.aspx)

If you are studying on a Tier 4 visa, don’t forget to read Section 8.4 Immigration information of this handbook which has further information and links.

**3.10.3 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.
3.11 Student representation, Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC), Student Assessment of Modules and Teaching (SAMT) and student surveys

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

You can do this in a number of ways:

1. You can contact (or volunteer to be) a student representative who represents the voice of fellow students in departmental Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) and other University level committees.
3. You can find out information about SSLCs here: [www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/sslc.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/sslc.asp).

Every year, we will ask you to complete the Student Assessment of Module and Teaching (SAMT). This survey will be summarised and discussed by SSLCs and will inform reports written by us for central University committees as part of our quality assurance processes.

Student satisfaction surveys enable the University to gauge overall satisfaction amongst students. When the results have been reviewed and analysed, the University can then enhance your experience of learning at Essex. The National Student Survey (NSS) for final year students feeds into university league tables. NSS also lets us know how we’re doing and where we can make improvements. The survey is run online and you will receive a link to the survey via email. Students not eligible for NSS will be invited to complete the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) which asks about how you spend your time on your course, what kind of learning you’ve taken part in and your views on your teaching and learning experience.

3.12 Library services

At our Colchester Campus, the Albert Sloman Library on Square 5 has a variety of study spaces over six floors, including 24/7 facilities and group work areas. The Library offers a wide range of learning resources, online and in print, with a dedicated Helpdesk, overnight chat service and the opportunity to book appointments with your Subject Librarian to help you through your studies and beyond. [libwww.essex.ac.uk](http://libwww.essex.ac.uk)

The library has a team of Subject Librarians who can help you to find appropriate resources for your assignments and show you how to search effectively. They can also provide advice on referencing and how to avoid plagiarism, using reference management software, and evaluating sources. Your Subject Librarian is Greg Cadge – contact him at [greg.cadge@essex.ac.uk](mailto:greg.cadge@essex.ac.uk) or use the Book a librarian form on the Library website to get in touch.

For guidance in relation to third-party proofreading of student work: [www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading](http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading)
3.13 Attendance monitoring (Count-me-in) and absence from sessions

Your attendance at lectures and classes has a significant impact on how successful you are in your studies. At Essex, we monitor attendance so we can identify students who may need guidance and support.

You’ll need to **record your attendance** at teaching events using your registration card and the electronic reader in the teaching room. Just ‘tap in’ for every timetabled teaching event you attend. Your tap will count from 15 minutes before the start time and up to 15 minutes after the start time on your timetable.

**You should not tap in for someone who is not attending the class; and also you should not tap in if you then immediately leave the teaching event.** This may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

If you **lose your card** or it is **faulty**, go to the Student Services Hub to get a new card (a small fee is applicable for lost cards).

If you need to **report an absence** from a teaching event you should do so by completing the **notified absence form** on MyEssex. We will consider the reasons and may record it as an **authorised absence**. Be aware that you may need to **provide evidence**, including medical evidence if relevant.

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

Please note that **absence from practical sessions** will result in a mark of zero for the associated work. The School will not be able to schedule alternative assessment. Participation in a practical is confirmed by your **tap in** so it is essential you do this as soon as you enter the laboratory (via the Count-Me-In electronic reader). **Note:** if you have forgotten your card, or your tap does not flash green, you must report to the member of academic staff and complete an attendance slip. **It is your responsibility to hand in the completed attendance slip at the UG office (Room 4.00) immediately after the practical.** Failure to do so will be recorded as an absence and you will receive a mark of zero. If you cannot attend a practical due to **serious, unavoidable** circumstances (illness, a hospital appointment) contact the Module Supervisor for advice as soon as possible, before the practical if you can. If your **absence is the result of extenuating circumstances**, you should complete an Extenuating Circumstances form, in addition to the ‘**Notified Absence from Teaching form**’ for the Exam Board that meets at the end of the year. You should note that the Exam Board’s powers are limited. If, for example, you are continually absent from practicals in Year 2, the Exam Board would not normally be in a position to condone such absences as it needs to be sure that you have completed sufficient work to meet your programme outcomes. Therefore if you are routinely absent, even through no fault of your own, you should seek advice from the Senior Tutor or Director of Education.

If you are **absent from an examination**, you should complete an **Absence from Exam Notification Form**. Depending on the reason for your absence, you may also need to complete an Extenuating Circumstances Form (see 4.2).

For more information on attendance, and for links to forms and guidelines visit: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/attendance.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/attendance.aspx)
3.14 Your progress

Your engagement with your programme of study is primarily measured by attendance, and completion of, and performance in, assessments, as appropriate. We monitor attendance and will follow-up concerns about any student in accordance with the University’s Progress Procedures at:
https://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/policies

As a student, if engagement in your studies, as measured by attendance and/or submission of assessed work, is unsatisfactory you’ll be contacted and offered guidance and support. If your progress causes concerns you’ll initially be contacted by your Year Organiser, and then by the School Progress Officer. Where serious concerns persist, you may be referred to the Deputy Dean Education and your case formally considered by a Progress Committee.
4. Assessment

4.1 Rules of Assessment

The Rules of Assessment are the rules, principles and frameworks which the University uses to calculate your course progression and final results. [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/general/assess-rules.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/general/assess-rules.aspx)

Decisions about your results are made at the meeting of the Board of Examiners at the end of the Summer Term.

The rules cover:

- whether you have passed the modules you have studied and can be awarded credit
- whether you have met the requirements to move on to the next stage of your course
- whether you have met the requirements to pass your course, and what classification you will receive
- if you have not passed, what reassessment you could be offered
- if you have not passed, whether you must withdraw from your course, with or without an exit award

Marks and degree classification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Degree Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Pass/third class (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Lower second class (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Upper second class (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>First class (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Class Honours will be awarded to a candidate who has:
- Either a Degree Mark of 70 or more; or
- 120 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68.

Upper Second Class Honours will be awarded to a candidate who has:
- Either a Degree Mark of 60 or more; or
- 120 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

Lower Second Class Honours will be awarded to a candidate who has:
- Either a Degree Mark of 50 or more; or
- 120 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

Third Class Honours will be awarded to a candidate who meets the criteria for the award of an Honours degree but who does not qualify for any other class of degree.

Your final degree classification is based upon your marks in stage 2 and stage 3 (for a three year course). You must meet the requirements for stage 1 (first year) to continue on the course.

Your first year is important and your marks will appear on your transcript which future employers or education providers may ask to review.
Core, compulsory and optional modules

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

- Core – must be taken and must be passed; (All Year 1 modules taken by students in the School of Biological Sciences are core).
- Compulsory – must be taken, there might be limited opportunities to continue on the course/be eligible for the degree if you fail it.
- Optional – you have a choice of which module to take from a designated list, there might be limited opportunities to continue on the course/be eligible for the degree if you fail it.

What do I need to do to pass my course?

To understand what you need to do to pass your course you should read the Rules of Assessment webpages; look up the status of the modules you are taking; and see whether there are any additional course requirements by checking any variations for your department (Appendix A under the Rules of Assessment).

If you are thinking of undertaking a work placement you should check the requirements for these programmes.

If you are studying on a four-year course with a year abroad, unless otherwise stated in the Rules of Assessment for your course, the marks from the study abroad year should only be used to improve your degree classification. Calculation of degree classification at the Final Year Board of Examiners’ meeting will therefore be undertaken both with and without the study abroad year, and the highest classification result will be the one awarded.

Exit Awards

If you decide to withdraw from your course before you finish, or you fail too many credits to be awarded a Bachelor’s degree, you may be awarded a qualification at a lower level, if appropriate.

If you need further information, please contact the School’s Education Services Manager.

4.2 Extenuating circumstances, withdrawing and intermitting

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

You need to submit your form by the deadline, see: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ.aspx

You will not get extra marks if you hand in an extenuating circumstances form. Boards of Examiners use other methods to take into account extenuating circumstances, such as permitting further reassessment opportunities for uncapped marks.

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 Hub, www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/default.aspx, if you need any guidance.

Thinking of leaving or taking a break from your studies?

You may experience doubts at some point during your studies, if you’re thinking about leaving Essex, we’re here to support you and give you the advice you need to help you make an informed choice.

**Intermission** is a temporary withdrawal or leave of absence from the University and provides you with the opportunity to take a break from your studies. Normally, this is for reasons beyond your control (e.g. health or personal problems) although other reasons are permitted. Intermission must be approved by the University first, so if you are thinking about intermitting, we strongly advise you to contact your School and your Student Services Hub to talk to one of our advisers.

You should also read our guidance on intermitting very carefully at www.essex.ac.uk/see/intermit. If your intermission is agreed to, we will also give you the advice and support you need to help you carry on with your studies.

**Withdrawing** is the formal process for permanently leaving your programme of study and the University. If you are thinking of withdrawing, you should seek advice from your School or the Student Services Hub at the earliest opportunity. It is very important that you discuss your circumstances with the University and follow the formal procedure for withdrawing. If the university is not formally notified, then you may risk continuing to incur further tuition or accommodation fees. More advice and information is available at www.essex.ac.uk/see/withdraw.

4.3 Re-marking of coursework

All students have a right to request formal re-marking if they suspect there has been a procedural/administrative error. Please contact your Undergraduate Administrator to make this request.

When a student disagrees with a mark they may also request re-marking, unless the original was second marked or moderated, *only if*:

- The student has met with the initial marker (or suitable nominee appointed by the relevant Director of Education) to obtain further feedback on the reason for the initial mark before making a formal request for a re-mark; and
- The form to request a re-mark has been completed and submitted with the signature of the first marker (or nominee, see above) confirming that the meeting has taken place, no later than two weeks of term time from the date of the initial feedback to students.

If a request for a re-mark is approved, work will be either second or double-marked and marks must be reconciled. Students should be aware that marks can increase, decrease or remain unchanged after a request to re-mark. Please contact the Education Services Manager to request a copy of the form to request a remark.

The full University Marking Policy can be found at: www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/examination_and_assessment/marketing_policy.
4.4 Moderation, second marking policies and External Examiners

The University policy on **moderation** is part of the Marking Policy. When work is moderated, it means that a second member of academic staff takes a random sample of the work for a particular assessment and reviews the marks given. A moderator would not change individual marks for the work, but would liaise with the first marker to agree whether marks should be reviewed across the particular piece of assessment or module, which may lead to marks being adjusted.

**Second marking** is where a second marker marks the work but has access to the first marker’s marks and/or comments.

**External Examiners** are usually academics from other universities but may be from industry, business or the profession depending on the requirements of the course. They give an impartial view of the course and independent advice to ensure that courses at the University meet the academic standards expected across UK higher education. External Examiners write reports on the courses and modules they are responsible for which are made available to you via your department. You can find the name and institution of the External Examiner for your course and modules by looking on the Programme Specifications Catalogue and the Module Directory.

You can find out more about how the University uses External Examiners here: [www.essex.ac.uk/quality/external_examiners/default.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/external_examiners/default.asp)

**Please note: you may not contact External Examiners directly under any circumstances.** If you have any concerns about the quality and standards of your course, please contact your student rep, your Head of Department or the Students’ Union.

**Boards of Examiners**

The Board of Examiners meets in late June in order to consider results, progression outcomes (as determined by the Rules of Assessment) and extenuating circumstances claims. Very occasionally when there is a problem with the assessment for a module, the Exam Board may scale (increase or decrease) the marks for a whole module in order to achieve a fair result for students.

Year 2 and Final Year exam boards are attended by External Examiners as well as the Head of School, Director of Education and Course Directors.

4.5 Appeals, complaints, and fitness to practise

**Appeals on academic grounds** can be made following the meeting of the Board of Examiners and the publication of your results. Be aware that there are strict deadlines for the submission of the appeal form and your evidence.

We strongly advise all students thinking about making an appeal to contact the Students’ Union Advice Centre.

**You may not appeal against academic judgement.** This means that you can’t appeal against the marks you have been given by a Board of Examiners without evidence of extenuating circumstances or procedural irregularity.

More information about appeals, including the deadlines and forms to complete, can be found online at: [www.essex.ac.uk/see/appeals](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/appeals)

**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.

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.

You can find the complaints procedure and the forms here: www.essex.ac.uk/see/complaints

**Fitness to practise** is only applicable to students on certain professional courses (such as biomedical science). If this applies to you, you will have been told by your department. You can find the full Fitness to Practise procedure online at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg

### 4.6 Academic offences policy

The University expects students to act with honesty and integrity in relation to coursework, examinations and other assessed work, and to follow our conventions for academic writing (including appropriate referencing of sources) and ethical considerations. If you don't meet these expectations, then you may be charged with having committed an academic offence, a matter the University takes very seriously.

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

If you aren't sure what the conventions are, particularly in relation to referencing, you should ask your department, contact the Talent Development Centre, and also refer to 7: *Referencing and good academic practice* in this handbook.

More information about academic offences and getting support can be found at: www.essex.ac.uk/see/academic-offence

### 4.7 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 - [www.essex.ac.uk/reo/governance/human.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/governance/human.aspx) - along with the 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 foetuses, 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.'
5. Coursework

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

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

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

5.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation (DAI) questions

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

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

5.2 Assignment and essay length

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

Staff will pay strict attention to word limits. If you have a particular problem with the word limit, you should discuss your difficulties with the member of staff who set the work. If your work exceeds the word limit it may not be concise or well-focussed on the question and will require editing. If your work is below the word limit it is likely that you will not have covered the material in sufficient depth and you will probably receive reduced marks as a result.
5.3 Referencing
Please refer to Section 4.6: Academic Offences and Section 7: References and good academic practice for information on referencing and where to seek advice.

5.4 Coursework submission
Module handbooks and coversheets will specify deadlines and how work is to be submitted.

First Year
Students will either be asked to submit: hard copies of coursework in a folder, clearly labelled with name and accompanied by a signed coversheet posted in a labelled pigeonhole outside the UG office or handed in at the end of a practical, or electronically using the online FASER submission system.

Second year and final year
All work must be submitted electronically using FASER. Please refer to your module handbook to see if a watermarked hard copy submission (with coversheet attached) is also required.

Submitting hard copies of your work
Any work which you are asked to submit in hardcopy format should be placed in the labelled boxes outside the Undergraduate Office at the entrance of the School. Twenty-four hours before the deadline one of these boxes will be labelled with the name of the staff member and a description of the piece of work. You should deposit your work into the appropriate box. The box will be emptied after the deadline and any work submitted after this will be deemed to be late. Work cannot be handed in to individual members of staff. Please also read the course deadline policy below.

Work must be submitted in a plastic binder with a clear front, so the coversheet can be seen. The pages must be held securely by their left-hand edge. Year 1 students will be provided with a set of coloured coursework folders, specific to their course, at School Registration. You should keep an electronic or spare hard copy of any coursework that is submitted as it may be recalled for the scrutiny of the External Examiners prior to the Exam Boards in the summer term.

Online coursework submission via FASER
The online coursework submission system (FASER) can be accessed through myEssex or at this web address: http://faser.essex.ac.uk/ where you will find full instructions.

All coursework in Year 2 and Final Year, and some Year 1 coursework, must be submitted in electronic format, via FASER. The system allows you to upload a digital copy of your assignment to the web.

You are encouraged to log on to FASER at the start of the year so that you understand how it works before you reach your first deadline. There is a trial module and deadline for you to use as a practice submission. There is a helpful guidance on how to use FASER here: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/e-learning/tools/faser/Student/HelpCentre#uploading

You can upload as many draft versions of your work as you like onto the server. Indeed you are encouraged to use this as a safe and secure area to store your coursework. This can help to avoid the problem of your computer crashing at the last minute and your important files being lost. In cases where multiple versions are uploaded you will need to make any which you do NOT want to be included in the final submission to the School a ‘draft’ otherwise just the most recently uploaded file will be taken as the final version. The maximum file upload size is 50MB.
Problems with FASER:
If you have technical difficulties: Please contact the Learning Technology Team ltt@essex.ac.uk as soon as possible to find out if this is a University issue or whether it may be a problem with your computer. This will count towards your claim when submitting a late coursework form should you need to. You can also contact IT Services helpdesk on it.helpdesk@essex.ac.uk

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

5.5 Deadlines and late coursework policy
All coursework must be submitted by the published deadlines, which are set out in the relevant Module Handbooks. You should use this information to assist with planning your coursework throughout the year to ensure you are able to meet all your deadlines. Changes of deadline can only be made by the Senior Year Organiser. Any changes to deadlines will be circulated by email. It is your responsibility to check for changes to deadlines.

As far as possible, your deadlines will have been organised to avoid clashes, but inevitably some deadlines will fall on the same day, especially for students who have optional module choices. It is an important skill to learn how to prioritise tasks and manage your time. It is your responsibility to plan your work to meet your deadlines.

Apart from some Year 1 practical work which is completed within the practical, deadlines are either on a Tuesday or a Friday at 10am.

Undergraduate course deadline policy
We have a single policy at the University of Essex for the late submission of coursework in Undergraduate courses: All coursework submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of zero. No extensions will be granted. A student submitting coursework late will have the University’s and School’s arrangements for late submission drawn to their attention. The policy states that the mark of zero shall stand unless you submit satisfactory evidence of extenuating circumstances that indicate that you were unable to submit the work by the deadline. More information about extenuating circumstances relating to late submission of coursework can be found below and is available at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/default.aspx

Late work submitted within 7 days of the deadline
If you submit your work late but within 7 days of the deadline, it will be marked and you will be notified of the mark that you would have achieved, so long as the work is submitted before any model answers or other feedback have been given out. The mark recorded for the late work will be zero.

If you had a good reason for missing the deadline you may make an application to the Late Submissions Committee to request that the mark be instated. You need to submit a Late Submission of Coursework form (available from the School common room or Biological Sciences Undergraduate Student Resources Area on Moodle) and evidence to support your case, if available. Both the late work and the form must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than 7 days after the original deadline, normally by 10am on the Tuesday or Friday of the following week.

The Late Submissions Committee will meet several times during the year to consider applications for the instatement of marks for late coursework. The UG Office will normally notify you of the outcome of the decision, but it will also be your responsibility to check your marks when your coursework marks are emailed to you for checking during the year. The Late Submissions Committee may not always reach a decision and
may refer your case to the Exam Board that meets at the end of the year. All decisions taken by the Late Submissions Committee are provisional, subject to the approval of the Exam Board.

Guidelines explaining what circumstances might be taken into account by the Late Submissions Committee are available here: [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/late-submission.aspx](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/late-submission.aspx)

A submission to the Late Submissions Committee does not prevent a separate claim for extenuation on other grounds to the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

**Long-term issues/extenuating circumstances**

If you experience significant, long term extenuating circumstances that prevent you from submitting your work by the deadline or within 7 days of the deadline, you can submit your late work for feedback and you will be told what mark it would have achieved, providing the marked assignments or model answers have not already been released to students. The mark that will be recorded will be zero. Students in this position should submit an Extenuating Circumstances form to the Exam Board. Further details of the Extenuating Circumstances procedure can be found here: [http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ)

In considering how to proceed, you should seek advice from the Director of Education about the impact of your circumstances upon your ability to manage your workload, for example, it may not be in your best interests to return after a three week absence and spend all your time undertaking missed assignments.

**5.6 Anonymous marking in coursework policy**

In the School of Biological Sciences work submitted as hard copies will not be marked anonymously.

Work submitted online via FASER will all be marked anonymously with the exception of presentations and final year research projects.

Marking policy: [www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/default.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/default.asp)

If you take optional modules outside your home department, you should make sure you are aware of the policy on whether coursework is marked anonymously or not, and how to submit coursework.

**5.7 Return of marked coursework**

Marked work may be returned:

1. in student pigeonholes in the Common Room. You will receive an email from the Undergraduate Office to advise you when your work is ready for collection. Please collect your work promptly.
2. directly to students in a feedback class or tutorial.
3. electronically via FASER. You will receive an email notification alert when your marked work is available.

Marked work is normally returned within four weeks of submission.
6. Exams

Two types of examination assessment are used in the School

- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) papers.
- Written exams, including short questions and longer essay questions.

6.1 Examination regulations

The General Regulations which govern examinations can be found via the website here: [www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations](http://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations)

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

6.2 Access to exam scripts

If you want to see your exam script, you should normally make the request within four weeks after the exam to the department which is responsible for that module. The department should either: let you see the script in the presence of one of the staff responsible for teaching the module or give you a copy or summary of the examiners’ comments on your performance.

You can find further information about Assessment Policies for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Awards at: [www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies)

Students must not attempt to engage the member of staff in discussions about whether the work has been marked correctly. The marks will have been approved by the external examiners and ratified by the examination board.

A student who wishes to view an examination script or project should first contact the Education Services Manager (esmbs@essex.ac.uk).

6.3 School policy on the use of dictionaries and calculators

**Dictionaries**

Dictionaries are not permitted. If you take a dictionary to an exam where it is not permitted, you will be reported on suspicion of committing an academic offence. Even if English is not your first language you are still not entitled to use a translation dictionary.

**Calculators**

You are allowed to use a calculator in your examinations. The only models you are permitted to use are the **Casio FX-83GT PLUS** or the **Casio FX-85GT PLUS**. A limited number of the permitted calculators will be available to borrow on the day of your exam from the Exams Office on a first-come, first-served basis, on production of your registration card.
6.4 General information about summer exams and examination results
You can find your personalised exam timetable online at: www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes/

You must bring your registration card and exam entry form with you to the exam. You will not be allowed entry without them. Remember to check your exam entry form carefully and contact the Examinations Office if there are any errors.

You can download a guide to examinations at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/default.aspx and watch a short video at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/default.aspx

You will receive an email to your Essex email account as soon as your results are published. You can find the publication schedule at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/schedule.aspx

6.5 Help to prepare for your exams
Exams generally take place in the summer term (Weeks 33-36). However there are also Year 1 Multiple Choice Exams (MCQs) in weeks 15 and 30 and some Year 2 Biomedical Science exams and MCQs in weeks 15 and 32.

The Exams Office aims to ensure that no student has more than three hours of exams on a single day, but otherwise it can make no guarantees that exams will be spread out. You should not rely on having enough time after one exam to prepare for the next. You should plan to have completed your revision for all your exams before the exam period starts, with gaps between exams reserved for some relaxation and for quickly refreshing your memory of what you already know. This requires you to organise your time so that you study the material as each module progresses, consolidating and extending your knowledge and understanding. In allocating your study time, bear in mind that exams are weighted heavily and do not spend excessive amounts of time on coursework if it carries much less weight.

Module Handbooks are an important learning tool because they provide detailed documentation of what you should know for each module. The learning outcomes define what you should be able to do on successful completion of a module, and the detailed learning objectives specify how you will be assessed to see if you have met those outcomes. Note in particular which terms are used – to meet a learning objective that specifies “Discuss …” would usually require much more work in preparation than one which is “Define…” or “List…”.

Sample exam papers are available for Year 1 modules on Moodle, specially devised to help you prepare for your summer exam. Past exam papers for Year 2 and Final Year modules are available on Moodle. Final Year past exam papers will not include the DAI question but a suitable sample DAI question will be provided. Bear in mind that the detailed content of a module can change from year to year, so papers from previous years may contain questions no longer relevant.

Revision classes will be timetabled at the beginning of the summer term.
Exam stress
Exams create stress for most people. The University Talent Development Centre offers a series of Exam Workshops which are run by specialist staff. These sessions cover revision planning and techniques, as well as sessions on relaxation and how to cope with stress. Staff in the Counselling Service can also provide sessions on stress management if required.

Common Terms Used in Exam Questions
Below are some of the terms commonly used in exam questions. Make sure you tailor your exam answers to the term used. For example, do not write a long description for a 'List…' question and note that you will get very few marks for writing a single line in answer to a question stating “Discuss….”

Define - Give the definition, but do not elaborate or explain. A typical answer will be a phrase or a single sentence.

State or Give - Answers will be a phrase, a short sentence or other single item of information e.g. state the first law of thermodynamics, give the formula for the standard error or a chemical compound. You should not be elaborating on this by describing or explaining it. The answer requires factual recall.

List - Do just that. Your answer should be a list of single words, phrases or (rarely) short sentences. Do not elaborate by describing or explaining items on the list. Typically ‘List’ is used for Year 1 short questions. The answer requires factual recall.

Calculate - Manipulate figures and/or formulae provided to obtain an answer.

Outline - Describe briefly (i.e. the main points) or give an overview. Much less detail required than for ‘Describe’ (see below). This is typically a Year 1 question.

Describe - Give an account of the material/topic/area (e.g. a structure, process, data or theory), using examples if appropriate. Labelled diagram(s) may be included. The answer requires predominantly factual recall.

Derive (= prove) - Show how a conclusion is obtained from a given set of premises by a series of logically or mathematically valid steps.

Suggest - Typically this will occur as a Data Analysis and Interpretation (DAI) question, where you are being asked to put forward possible reasons for the features of a set of data. You might also be asked to ‘Explain’ (see below) why your suggestions are appropriate.

Compare - As for ‘Describe’ but there must be an explicit identification and account of those points where there are similarities or differences

Explain - Present the relevant information to show knowledge and understanding, using examples and diagrams if appropriate. The answer requires some degree of analysis of the relationships/connections/comparisons between sets of information (e.g. structure and function, theory and evidence) and an ability to integrate this information. The answer requires factual recall, understanding and the ability to present the relevant information logically and clearly in continuous prose (i.e. not in note form).

Discuss - As for ‘Explain’ but, in addition, information must be selected, critically examined and evaluated, for example, discrepancies between facts and theories or between conflicting sets of facts should be examined and where possible resolved to produce a balanced answer. The answer requires factual recall, understanding, critical evaluation of information and integration.
Good answers to questions using Describe, Suggest, Compare, Explain, Discuss should include evidence of reading. Even ‘Define’ or ‘State’-type questions could give evidence of reading by, for example, quoting the author of a definition. In Year 1 this ‘evidence of reading’ may be text books, but in Year 2 and the final year more extensive reading is required. Reviews and specialist texts form the bulk of the Year 2 reading. In the final year students are expected to read selected original papers as well as reviews.

6.6 Anonymous marking policy in examinations
All formal examinations at the University of Essex are marked anonymously. Your Exam Entry form also has your candidate number in large print in the centre of the page. This is the number you should write on your examination scripts.

6.7 Reassessment in examinations
If you fail a component of your degree, you will be offered reassessment in accordance with the Rules of Assessment. Reassessed modules are normally capped at the pass mark of 40% unless you have extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Exam Board. Remember, reassessment should not be viewed as a strategic route to get through the year.

Resit exams are scheduled in early September or ‘out of residence’ in the summer of the following year. A considerable amount of useful revision material is available on Moodle. Students can contact staff, particularly Module Supervisors for the modules they are resitting if they need help with revision or specific queries (do not leave this until the last minute as staff availability will be reduced throughout the summer). Staff can give individual feedback on summer exam performance, if requested. You can find information relating to resitting exams at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/resits.aspx.

Remember that reassessment in examinations (and coursework) carries a fee.
7. Referencing and good academic practice

7.1 Good Academic Practice
Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the United Kingdom.

The University takes academic offences very seriously. You should read the sections of this handbook which refer to referencing, coursework and examinations very carefully.

Referencing is a key academic/scientific skill. It is how you will acknowledge all sources used within a piece of work. You must reference all works used directly (quotes) and indirectly (paraphrasing and summarising).

Referencing allows you to give credit to authors'/researchers' concepts and ideas/results, demonstrate your breadth of reading and knowledge on a subject, direct readers to your sources, and avoid plagiarism.

You should always use the best available sources of evidence, such as peer reviewed journals and recognised books.

To find out about your departmental referencing style and for help with referencing see your School of Biological Sciences Undergraduate Assessment Guide or visit the library website: http://libwww.essex.ac.uk/referencing.htm

Repeated work
You may also be accused of an academic offence if you repeat work previously submitted for an assessed assignment without full acknowledgement of the extent to which that previous work has been used; in other words, if you hand in the same or a very similar essay to one that you have already submitted. You should note that it is also an offence for a student knowingly to assist another student to commit an academic offence, whether in an examination, or in any other piece of work.

Group work
Sometimes students who have been working together end up submitting almost identical work and are accused of an academic offence. While we do not want to dissuade you from working with or discussing your work with another student, you must be careful that you do not collaborate too closely, and it would be wise to seek advice from your tutors on the limits of collaboration before you submit your work.

7.2 Plagiarism
Plagiarism is to steal ideas, verbalisations or writings from another person without correct acknowledgement, presenting these as your own work. It also includes utilising your own previous assessment submissions, without correct identification of such (‘Self-plagiarism’). Any source you access
and utilise when preparing your work (book, journal article, newspaper article, internet page, podcast etc) must be referenced appropriately to avoid plagiarism – ignorance of correct referencing techniques is inexcusable.

You may also be accused of assisting plagiarism if you lend your work to another student who then copies your text. Plagiarism is indefensible and will not be tolerated in any form within the University of Essex. This Academic Offence carries severe penalties, and you may be withdrawn from your programme. All students should view the University of Essex plagiarism resources online at: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/ldev/resources/plagiarism/default.aspx to familiarise yourself with this issue. If you are concerned about plagiarism, you should talk with your tutor.

How to avoid plagiarism
To avoid plagiarism give yourself enough time to plan, draft, write, edit and proof-read your work. Make sure you print or save full details of all sources, so that you can reference them easily once you have used them. Do not copy and paste large chunks of text from the internet – look at the source, read it critically, identify the main themes, and then paraphrase or present as a direct quote. NB: paraphrasing does not mean changing the odd word within a sentence. You need to re-phrase the entire sentence in your own words, thus demonstrating your understanding.

Responsibilities relating to plagiarism

1. Plagiarism
   - Plagiarism is cheating
   - Submission of work that is plagiarised is unacceptable
   - Poor academic practice with regard to referencing, which may be considered as contributing to plagiarism, is also unacceptable

2. Students’ responsibility
   - To appraise him/herself of the nature of plagiarism
   - To appraise him/herself of the academic offences policy of the University of Essex
   - To submit work that does not contain plagiarism
   - To utilise plagiarism checking systems where available

3. Our School’s responsibility
   - To ensure that all School staff have a shared understanding of the nature of plagiarism and action to be taken in the event of plagiarism being uncovered (Head of School)
   - For ‘standalone’ modules (regardless of whether they form part of a programme) - to include within each module induction, accurate information regarding plagiarism (Module Supervisor)
   - For modules studied as components of a single programme – to include within the programme induction, accurate information regarding plagiarism and supporting information within the VLE. A record of attendance at plagiarism induction will be maintained (Course Director).
   - To include supporting information and links on our School website and on our School’s Moodle Study Skills resource (Head of School)
   - To advise all students that they should expect that submissions for assessment will be subjected to a plagiarism check (Director of Education)
University of Essex

- To refer plagiarism to the Plagiarism Officer in a transparently fair and equitable manner (all markers)
- To remind students on commencement of each term of their responsibilities regarding plagiarism (Director of Education)
- To transparently apply University Rules regarding plagiarism (Head of School)

4. The University’s responsibility

- To apply the Academic Offences Policy universally and transparently
- To provide equitable access to plagiarism checker systems

7.3 The University Academic Offence Procedure
Please see section 4.6 and remember that the Academic Offence Procedure applies to all students

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/academic-offences.aspx.
8. Practicalities: Getting Started and IT Matters

8.1  Registration, enrolling and transcripts
All new and returning students must register at the start of each academic year.

The process for new students includes activating an IT account, completing Pre-Arrival Online, and attending the University’s main registration event in the Sports Hall. New students: www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/registration.aspx

Returning students are required to complete Online Registration. In addition to this, returning students who hold Tier 4 visas are required to complete a document check in person at the University’s main registration event in the Sports Hall. Returning students: www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/registration.aspx.

Students registered on programmes of study leading to a degree may have options to select as part of their course structure. The eNROL system is an online tool to review and select available modules specific to a particular course and year of study. All new and returning students should use the online system prior to the start of each academic year. Returning students will access the system from the April preceding the next academic year. New students will access the system from the end of August. Departments will approve student selections within a few weeks of eNROL use and timetables will take module enrolment into account when planning for the next academic year. Early module enrolment will ensure students know which modules to attend and where the lectures and classes are held.

As your studies draw to a close, and once your exam board has met, it takes up to five working days for your results to be confirmed. You will be sent an email to inform you when the results are live on a password protected web page. Graduating students will receive a degree certificate and graduating undergraduate students also be able to access their electronic HEAR which gives details of all marks obtained during their studies.

Further information can be found at: www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/award-documents/default.aspx

8.2  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 - http://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.

8.3 IT support
Visit our website to set up your IT account and password, register an external email address and passphrase and request a reminder for a forgotten passphrase: www.essex.ac.uk/it/getaccount.

You must change your password within four weeks of your account being created, and then once every four months after that. The easiest way to change your password is online at: www.essex.ac.uk/password.

Once you’re set up, you can access email, log on to lab computers, connect to eduroam wi-fi and much more.

As part of your Office 365 email account you get 1TB 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.

Information on computers and software is available here: www.essex.ac.uk/it/services/computers-and-software/default.aspx?tab=3

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/services/computers-and-software/default.aspx

8.4 Immigration 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 circumstances including what passport or travel document you hold, the length of your proposed study and where you are applying from. Find out more on the University’s website at: www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/
8.5 **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, two 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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students)
[www.essex.ac.uk/welcome](http://www.essex.ac.uk/welcome)

8.6 **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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/default.aspx)

8.7 **Ordering important documents**
Please use the Student Documentation Ordering System to order academic transcripts, award confirmation letters, bank letters, Certificate of Registration, Council Tax certificates and Degree certificates. It’s online at:

[https://www.essex.ac.uk/studentdocs/](https://www.essex.ac.uk/studentdocs/)
9. Skills, Employability and Experience

9.1 Employability and Careers Centre
Get valuable, one-to-one advice from careers specialists throughout your time at Essex and beyond. Come and see us or log in to CareerHub+ whether you have one hundred questions or just don’t know where to start! We offer one-to-one advice and guidance, job-hunting workshops, CV and job application reviews, and online services for creating CVs, interview preparation and job vacancies.
www.essex.ac.uk/careers

9.2 Learning a Language
Learn a language at Essex to increase your global and cultural awareness. Language learning can give you the confidence to work and travel internationally, expand your options for studying abroad, and get a competitive edge when you're looking for a job. There are a number of ways to do it, so look online to discover the best option for you.
www.essex.ac.uk/study/why/languages

9.3 Talent Development Centre
Our specialist academic skills advisors are on hand to give you guidance on all aspects of study skills such as assignment planning; essay writing; English language and academic style; maths, numeracy and stats support. Visit us to find out how to book in for one-to-one sessions and small-group workshops.
www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/tdc/

9.4 Career Hub+
Find hundreds of part-time jobs, internships and graduate vacancies, book on to careers events and workshops, take career assessments, practice your interview skills, build your CV, and connect with employers on CareerHub+, the online Essex careers and jobs portal. Login with your Essex IT ID and password. careerhub.essex.ac.uk/students/login

9.5 Frontrunners
Challenge yourself. Frontrunners is Essex’s unique on-campus work placement scheme for students. You’ll get the chance to work on real projects in real workplaces and develop real skills for you to brag about on your CV. You'll get fully trained in your role and you'll get paid for it. www.essex.ac.uk/frontrunners

9.6 Student Ambassadors
Be a Student Ambassador and make a difference to others and make a difference on your CV! Student Ambassadors help to promote the University and higher education. You’ll be a valued part of the Student Recruitment and Outreach teams. Keep an eye out for Student Ambassador vacancies on CareerHub+ at the start of the Autumn Term. www.essex.ac.uk/careers/job_hunting/on_campus
9.7 Volunteering
Join the vTeam and be the difference. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer during your time at Essex. The vTeam, run by the Students Union, is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, make friends, give something to the local community, and gain valuable skills. www.essex.su/vteam

9.8 Big Essex Award
The University’s employability award is a guaranteed way to help you stand out from the crowd and get University recognition for all your extra-curricular experience on your Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR). Sign up and start your journey! www.essex.ac.uk/careers/bige

9.9 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. Sign up for Essex Interns to kick-start your career. www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships

9.10 Professional bodies or societies
Students are encouraged to use explore the professional societies relevant to their courses. The resources provided include news, blogs, membership, careers information and even the opportunity to apply for small grants to support summer research projects.

The Institute of Biomedical Science https://www.ibms.org/
The Genetics Society http://www.genetics.org.uk/
The Biochemical Society http://www.biochemistry.org/
The Society for Experimental Biology http://www.sebiology.org/
The Royal Society of Biology https://www.rsb.org.uk/
The Society for General Microbiology http://www.sgm.ac.uk/
Marine Conservation Society http://www.mcsuk.org/
Marine Biological Society of the UK http://www.mba.ac.uk/
British Ecological Society http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/

10.1 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, our Student Services Hub, within the Silberrad Student Centre, is the place to go. Want to know how and when to apply for accommodation? Just ask us. Having problems with your funding? We’re here to help. Struggling with exam stress? We will listen. Your question matters and you’ll get answers from our team of experts. At Colchester Campus find us on the first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre. Our helpful staff are ready to take your questions by email or phone, all you have to do is contact us; we’ll provide information and guidance to help you.

Student Services Hub Colchester email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk

Diasbility and Emotional Wellbeing:
www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/help.aspx
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 on campus can listen and talk you through the issues.
http://www.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/money/

10.2 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

10.3 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/default.aspx

10.4 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.aspx
10.5 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:

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

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

www.essexstudent.com/safetybus
www.essex.ac.uk/students/campus/emergency.aspx
www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety/fire/peep

10.6 Safety in the laboratory
The School is legally and morally obliged to ensure the safety of students and staff. However, the School expects students and staff to observe certain standards of safety for their own sakes and for those of their colleagues. You should familiarise yourself with the School Safety webpages http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/default.shtm. The information is not exhaustive but is regularly updated.

You should remember that a laboratory is a potentially hazardous place with chemicals, glassware, gas, electricity, micro-organisms, etc., within it. Nevertheless the laboratory will be a safe environment if a few simple, common-sense rules are observed, as outlined in the Practical Handbooks and Project Handbook.

Additional information relating to particular hazards associated with individual practicals can be found listed at the start of each practical schedule in the Practical Handbooks.

Please report all accidents, however minor, to the lecturer in charge of the practical session. The Technician in charge of the class laboratory is a qualified first-aider.

Tetanus
All students, on whatever course, but particularly those involved in sport, are advised to ensure that they are immunized against Tetanus. Students taking Marine Biology/Ecology -based courses are also particularly at risk as they may be involved in a substantial amount of fieldwork and may sustain cuts and grazes. Immunity for a period of 5 years can be obtained by having a course of three injections. You must begin a course of Tetanus injections when you start your degree course. Please register with a doctor at the Health Centre as soon as possible; you should have already received an invitation to do so, together with an appointment. You should arrange for a course of injections when you attend this initial appointment.

10.7 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/accomodation/support/reslife
10.8 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

10.9 Students’ 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

10.10 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/website-privacy
www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/request
11. The Essex Experience

11.1 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

11.2 Freedom of speech policy and the Code of Conduct
For regulations relating to the Code of Student Conduct, see the University's website:
www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/handbooks/default.aspx
www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations

11.3 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/news
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.
www.essex.ac.uk/events

11.4 Students’ Union
We're famous for our Students' Union at Essex, and for good reason. Here you’re not just a member of a normal Students’ Union, you’re part of a family. We’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
11.5 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.
http://alumni.essex.ac.uk/home

11.6 What comes next?
Choosing to be a postgraduate student at Essex is one of the few decisions in life that's black and white. Our research degrees include PhD, MPhil, MSc, MA and MD, and our culture of world-class research provides an outstanding and supportive environment in which to undertake your research study. If you decide to stay on for further study with us, you'll have a great opportunity to study a challenging course within a research-intensive and supportive environment. You'll develop knowledge in your chosen area and learn from some of the top academics in the field, while becoming a valued member of our postgraduate community. Explore our courses on our coursefinder, and find out more about the value of being a postgrad.
www.essex.ac.uk/masters
www.essex.ac.uk/coursefinder

School website address:
http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/

School Facebook pages:
School of Biological Sciences
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Guide for First Year Students
The first year of a degree course is an important time of adjustment to the demands of University study and forms the foundation for your remaining years of study. Careful management of your time is critical to a successful year. If you keep on top of your work you should have a very enjoyable time. You are expected to spend 1.5 hours of time in private study for every hour attending taught components (lectures, practicals, tutorials, classes) with academic staff. You should therefore expect to spend approximately 40 hours a week on taught work with academic staff and your private study.

Some students feel that as they only have to pass all modules in the first year, they do not need to try to get good marks. This is completely wrong: good performance in the first year lays the foundation to good achievements in the second and final year and therefore to a good degree classification. There are also minimum thresholds for Placement and Year Abroad courses. Remember that while Year 1 marks do not contribute to your degree classification, they will appear on your transcript.

During term-time the Year Organiser, Dr Gareth D. Jones, will be available in his office between 1-2pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Students may email for an appointment at other times, but if you need to speak to him urgently ask the Undergraduate Office or telephone (contact details available at 2.1 Academic Staff). Other members of staff that may be able to help you are your Personal Tutor, the Senior Tutor and Course Directors.

Important Information about Year 1
Each module consists of 24 lectures, up to 4 × 3 hour practical sessions (or equivalent), 1 hour of directed learning based on 1 or 2 module objectives, and 2 revision sessions, one at the end of the module and one early in the summer term. Generally, Year 1 modules are assessed by 33% coursework and 67% exam. The exceptions to this are BS141 which is assessed by coursework (50%) and MCQ (50%) and BS114 which is assessed purely by coursework. Details of the assessments for these modules are in the Module Handbooks. To proceed to the second year, you must obtain a pass (40%) in all modules (there are additional requirements on some degree courses – see Section 4.1 Rules of Assessment).

Exams
For most modules, the exam mark is derived from the summer exam mark (worth 50%) and the MCQ (multiple choice question) mark (worth 50%). MCQs are 50 minute exams, held in weeks 15 and 30. Each MCQ will comprise questions covering all the material of the module. These are designed to assess your retention of module material and your grasp of fundamental concepts. They also give you and staff a rapid assessment of your performance during the term. Each correct answer will be worth one mark. Incorrect or unanswered questions score zero. These MCQs will be carried out online. At the end of the summer term all modules except BS114 and BS141 will be examined by a series of formal one hour exams, composed of a series of compulsory short questions and a single long-answer (essay) section.

Lectures
Lectures will provide you with the basic information but you should not expect your lecture notes always to provide you with a complete, understandable account of the subject. You should be prepared to supplement them by reading recommended textbooks and scientific articles and working this information into the framework that the lecturer has given. Evidence of additional reading will help you to obtain high exam marks. Lecturers do not necessarily follow textbooks closely, so it is only by going to lectures that you can obtain the framework for the course. Lectures give a framework of material and of explanations of a topic and should stimulate your interest. They are not expected to include all material or to give complete
understanding. Material needs to be consolidated by additional reading/additional notes (this is part of what we call 'student managed learning'). Exam answers require factual recall and understanding and evidence of reading.

Requirements of a Good Set of Notes
Lecture notes should provide a comprehensive, comprehensible and inviting guide for future private study/revision. In conjunction with module objectives they should tell you: what you need to know, what level of detail is required, what particular themes, comparisons, connections are important, where you have particular difficulties/weaknesses and where you may need to concentrate your study. Your notes should be sufficiently well organised that you can find your way round them/understand them at some later date. So, in lectures take NOTE (i.e. listen, be selective, think) as well as taking notes. Concentrate on points being emphasised, principles/themes being described/explored and on following the thread of arguments. Factual details are easily obtained later.

Make the process as active as possible; put your stamp on the material. Use headings, so you can see how the lecture is constructed and so it is easy to find your way around material. Use colour, use abbreviations. Develop system of shorthand signs to mark material e.g. ?? don't understand; + told to read about this; λ missed something; → to indicate connections; and underline to indicate something stressed as important. Write on one side of the page only so there is a blank page opposite to add in relevant extra material. The key to efficient use of lecture notes is to get actively involved with them on several different time scales. Stashing them away until two weeks before the exam is not a good strategy and neither is a passive copying up of your notes in neat form.

As soon as possible after a lecture:
1) Read through notes while still fresh in your mind e.g. the same day.
2) Add headings, define abbreviations, insert symbols as above to clarify your notes.
3) What did I learn from this lecture? Summarise in writing at the end the key points covered, use a list of key words or a flow diagram which shows the structure of the lecture.
4) Try and sort out which objectives have been covered and note them down at the start or end of your notes. This need only take 5-10 mins but actively involves you in the information which helps your memory and gives you an overview of where this lecture was going, how it relates to the last and to the next lecture.

Before the next lecture:
1) Try to sort out (at least in outline) any major points you have not understood in the previous lecture. The next lecture may assume an understanding/knowledge of the previous one.
2) Read a simple account in the textbook of the point(s) involved, possibly adding useful key points to your notes in the correct place on the blank sheet opposite.
3) Take your last lecture notes to the next lecture and read your summary before the lecture starts.
4) Compose any questions that you might have to the lecturer teaching the course.

Sometime later e.g. during weekends/vacations:
1) Systematically work through your notes consolidating material and adding to or expanding on notes on the blank sheet opposite. Use the textbook to fill in details or for alternative ways of explaining points/expressing ideas.
2) Make summaries of topics in words or flow diagrams. Make mind-maps (spider diagrams) to show connections and to highlight themes, comparisons etc. Add these to your notes. Insert any relevant ideas, facts from practical work.

3) Cross reference lecture material to course objectives, checking off whether you think you can meet the objectives.

4) Explore connections between modules. Modules are not stand alone and are integrated at various different levels.

Practicals
For practicals where you are sub-divided into groups please ensure that you stay within the group number that you are allocated and check the timetable to ensure that you attend the correct practical sessions. Practical are designed to complement and supplement the lectures. They may be used to illustrate or explore a topic covered in a lecture, to familiarise you with a particular practical technique, or both. They are also used to develop your skills in accurate observation, clear recording of data, presentation of results in an appropriate fashion and the interpretation of these results in the form of a written report. The problems of the design of experiments and of sampling programmes will be introduced and there will be considerable emphasis on the use of statistics in the analysis of data. Statistical analysis of data can be carried out in computer labs on the University campus.

In most module handbooks there is a schedule of instructions for each practical within that module. Read it before the session so that you know what you are doing and why you are doing it. A clear idea of the basic rationale can save a great deal of time and reduce errors during the actual practical.

You will be expected to produce a report of your practical work and/or complete a worksheet either during/after the practical. Also, completion of the assessment associated with a practical may require completion of a set of questions using the EVS ‘clicker’ units that you have been issued with or logging onto a Moodle ‘quiz’ test where you complete a set of questions using data and information relevant to that practical. The schedule should make it clear how the coursework associated with each practical is assessed. Comprehensive guidelines for writing reports can be found in your Biological Sciences Assessment Guide and will be covered in module BS141. Briefly, you should write up the practical as it proceeds with all data, drawings and observations recorded in their final form during the practical. Do not make ‘rough’ notes, sketches, etc., to be copied up later; you may find that you cannot understand them or have forgotten essential details and that there is no one around to ask. For reports in ‘scientific paper format’ the written interpretation and discussion of your results can be done after the practical although it makes sense to think about it during the practical, when help is available. Once again, complete this part of each practical while the details are still fresh in your mind.

Tutorials
A tutorial consists of a small group of students with a member of staff. The aim of the tutorial programme is to develop intellectual, study and transferable skills using biological or biochemical material as a context. Tutorials provide valuable instruction and are a critical part of your preparation for the second and third years. Details of the tutorial programme are given in the BS141 Module Handbook. Tutorials enable students to develop a relationship with their personal tutor which will be maintained during their years of study and allow personalised advice, support and academic references to be provided. Do not waste this opportunity by failing to attend.

Text Books
All first year texts have been classified as ‘essential’ or ‘additional’. You should acquire copies of the essential texts (or share with a friend) and you may consider acquiring some of the additional texts. All recommended books are available from the University Library and multiple copies of the essential texts are held in both the short loan and open sections of the library. Remember that you may not get immediate
access to these books at times when there is great demand for them, such as just before a deadline for handing in work or at exam time.

Students will be given a new copy of Campbell BIOLOGY 10th edition by Reece JB, Urry LA, Cain ML, Wasserman SA, Minorsky PV, Jackson RB, Campbell NA. (2015) Pearson, USA,

Biomedical Science students will also receive a copy of Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology 10th Ed (global) with Mastering A&P, Martini FH, Nath JL and Bartholomew EF

Both these textbooks can be collected from Waterstones on campus.

Further essential general texts will be needed, depending on your degree course.

Module-Specific texts:
Each module handbook contains details of key module-specific texts, all of which are available in the University Library. Generally essential module-specific texts are of value to more than one module and will be used in the second year. You do not need to buy the additional texts, but you should refer to them and you may want to buy the ones that are relevant for your chosen second year degree course.

If you are considering buying additional or alternative textbooks, especially if they are costly, we advise you to speak to your module lecturer first; some texts are unsuitable, unreliable or outdated. Second-hand copies of textbooks can sometimes be purchased from Second and Third-Year students. However, if you are buying second-hand books, check that they are not old editions – some subjects progress quickly and information soon becomes out of date. A syndicate of students can often buy an expensive text, sharing the cost.
YEAR 1 STRUCTURE FOR 2017-2018

- = compulsory module
○ = optional module

All students will take a total of 120 credits in Year 1. All the modules in Year 1 are worth 15 credits except BS141 (30 credits). All Year 1 modules are core, which means that you must pass all the modules before you can progress to Year 2. The School reserves the right to change or withdraw modules as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>BCH</th>
<th>BMS</th>
<th>GEN</th>
<th>G&amp;G</th>
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Degree course codes
- BCH = Biochemistry
- BMS = Biomedical Science
- GEN = Genetics
- G&G = Genetics and Genomics
- BS = Biological Sciences
- MB = Marine Biology (includes students on the 4 year integrated Masters course)

Term codes (indicates which term/s the module is taught in)
- AU = Autumn term
- SP = Spring term
- AP = Taught across the autumn and spring terms
- FY = Taught across the full academic year
Appendix 2: Guide for Second Year Students

Year Organisers:

Dr Brandon Reeder
- Biological Sciences (BS)
- Biochemistry (BCH)
- Genetics (Gen)
- Genetics & Genomics (G&G)

Dr Tom Cameron
- Marine Biology (MB)
- Biological Sciences (BS)

Prof Nelson Fernandez
- Biomedical Science (BMS)

General Information
This year is important not only because the marks count towards your final degree class but also because the knowledge and understanding of the subject material which you gain will form an essential basis for your third year modules. In addition, developing and improving your key skills and study skills this year will yield great benefits in your final year and future career.

In the second year you will find that you have fewer contact hours in lectures and practicals. This is because you are expected to spend more time in private study to complement your lectures and in completing the coursework for each module. You will not be able to do this work to an acceptable standard if you spend less than 40 hours per week on your studies.

Private study comprises the student managed learning which you will find referred to in module handbooks. It includes reading to consolidate, understand and extend lecture material in preparation for the summer exams, directed learning, preparing and producing assessed coursework, reading through practical details before the practical, writing up practical work, preparing for classes and revision for exams. Evidence of additional reading as directed by your Module Supervisor is essential if you wish to obtain good marks in essays and exams.

To be successful this year you will need to organise, plan and prioritise your work. Deadlines for all practical and other coursework associated with each module will be found in each module handbook. In allocating your time to different components of your work you should bear in mind their assessment value (see individual modules’ handbooks) and plan to use your time in the most efficient way. An important point here relates to the end of year exams, which, for the majority of modules are the single most important component in terms of assessment. A common fault is to spend too much time on preparing assessed coursework and practical reports during the year and thus leaving preparation for the exams until it is too late. Staff regularly complain that exam answers show evidence of patchy revision and lack of detail!

Professional Skills and Career Development
All students undertake practical work to develop their subject-related skills (for example laboratory or field work) which is completed at the end of the spring or summer term of Year 1 or during the summer vacation. Additional career development and professional skills learning will be undertaken either as part of the same module, or a separate module during Year 2. These modules are assessed by coursework only.
Subject Modules
Just as in your first year, lectures in second year are an important place for you to learn about the subject. You should note that there is a strong, positive correlation between lecture attendance and exam performance, so you should make sure that you attend lectures. However lecture notes alone will not be enough to enable you to do well in coursework and exams because, in second year, there is an increased emphasis on independent learning by you. One of the aims of the second year is to encourage you to develop the ability to study and learn on your own. To achieve this, each module will have some material designated for directed learning, that is, material which you have to seek out, study and learn.

Directed learning
Details will be given in the module handbook and part of a lecture may be given over to explaining what you have to do. You should be provided with a list of the relevant objectives and an outline of the topic(s) to be studied, along with guidance which should include sources of relevant information. The directed learning component of each module should be supported by a one hour class in one of the timetabled slots; this class can be used to resolve any problems with the material that you have encountered. This directed learning component is a vital preparation for your third year, where there is even more emphasis on independent learning; there, lectures tend to give the outline of the topic and you will be expected to read widely and research the detail. In the context of exams, material dealt with in the directed learning component is treated in exactly the same way as normal lecture material.

Data analysis and interpretation
The ability to analyse and interpret scientific data, especially in a quantitative manner, is an essential part of your scientific training and there is a compulsory question involving these skills in all second year exams. To prepare you for this all modules will include data analysis examples; these may form part of the formal lectures, the directed learning or the assessed coursework. There may also be classes to discuss these examples. As well as preparing you for the examination questions, working through these examples will give you a deeper understanding of the underlying theoretical basis of the subject.

Practical sessions
Practical sessions are an integral part of each module and aim to provide you with training in a range of techniques relevant to that module. Practicals also serve to illustrate or to elaborate on important biological ideas and to develop a range of key skills in, for example, data presentation, analysis and interpretation, numeracy, and communication. Practicals are assessed as part of the module coursework. When in the lab you should keep a record of your lab work (i.e. what you did, modifications to schedule, results, etc.) in a lab book. It is good laboratory practice to do this and an important training for your final year project.

Coursework
Most subject modules (except BS211, BS214, BS215, BS221, BS231, BS256, BS257 and BS281) have assessed practical work and coursework, which combined constitute 50% of the mark for the module, while the remaining 50% are awarded by the exam mark. This work should encourage you to study course material during the course, enable you to monitor your progress throughout the year (particularly in relation to your understanding and grasp of the module material). The marks count towards your overall year mark. The details of what is involved should be made clear to you in the module handbook but clearly, the exact mix of
the different types of coursework which you will do depends on your course and your choice of modules. You should study the Objectives Assessed, Assessment Criteria and Marks Classification on the coversheet to understand and implement the requirements for the desired mark.

Your marked coursework is stored safely on FASER. Use it to:

(a) Improve your performance by giving careful attention to the feedback provided

(b) check, when you are e-mailed your marks by the Undergraduate Office, that these have been correctly entered into the University system.

(c) help with revision.

(d) University regulations state you should keep your work until six months after you graduate, in case you want to appeal against your final degree result.

External Examiners
One of the roles of the External Examiners is to comment generally on the standards of marking and performance. To facilitate their work, coursework will be scrutinised on FASER.

Exam Paper Format
The paper for each module will be a 2 hour paper consisting of two sections each carrying equal marks:

- Section A (weight: 50%). Short questions, which may cover the breadth of the module, and may involve description, explanation, calculation or the analysis and interpretation of data. Short questions are not required to carry equal weight and will not exceed five in number BUT AT LEAST 20% of this section will be allocated to questions involving the analysis and interpretation of data.

- Section B (weight: 50%). Essays: Choice of one question out of three.

A limited number of modules may have a slightly modified exam format. Further information and sample papers will be made available during the year for those students affected.

Importance of Year 2 Marks
Your performance in your Year 2 modules counts towards your degree. The overall second year mark you obtain (usually weighted at 40%) is combined with your overall third year mark (weighted at 60%) to give a degree mark. It is therefore essential that you do not become complacent in Year 2 and that you appreciate the importance of doing well in all your Year 2 modules in order to give yourself the best opportunity to obtain a good degree. For a full explanation of how award classifications are calculated you should refer to the Rules of Assessment.

Field courses
Students doing a degree in Marine Biology have a compulsory field course (BS303, optional for Biological Sciences students), based in Essex at the end of the summer term in year 2. In addition there are optional field courses: BS256 in the Easter vacation of year 2 and BS307 in September before the start of final year. Details of the organisation and timetabling of these modules will be made available nearer the time. Please do not book any holidays or trips away from campus until you have been told the exact dates of these courses.
Final Year Projects (BS832 only)

Students on BSc Marine Biology or Biological Sciences courses may be allowed to undertake part or all of their final year research project practical work during the summer between second and final year. To do this you would need to show that (a) the project involves field work (or work at an external organisation) that needs to be undertaken over the summer (b) you have a member of University of Essex academic staff willing to act as a supervisor (c) you have a clear plan and timetable of how and when the work will be undertaken, and the required risk assessments, all of which have been approved by the project supervisor. All of these issues have to be addressed by week 29, so if you wish to do project work over the summer then you will need to think about it well in advance. A meeting will be scheduled in week 16 to go through some of the logistics relating to arranging to undertake summer project work. For further information contact the BS832 Module Supervisor, Dr Alex Dumbrell.
# Year 2 Structure for 2017-2018

- **Compulsory modules**
- **Optional modules**

† Must take either BS211 or BS215 AND BS257

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Degree course codes:
- BCH = Biochemistry
- BMS = Biomedical Science
- GEN = Genetics
- G&G = Genetics and Genomics
- BS = Biological Sciences
- MB = Marine Biology (includes students on the 4 year integrated Masters course)

Term codes (indicates which term/s the module is taught in):
- AU = Autumn term
- SP = Spring term
- AP = Taught across the autumn and spring term
- FY = Taught across the full academic year
- SU = Summer term/vacation of Year 1

Number of optional modules to be chosen: 0 0 4 4 6/7† 4
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Legend: O = Optional, • = Required
Appendix 3: Guide for Final Year Students

Final year makes the largest contribution to your degree class and it is important to perform well to achieve the outcome that reflects your ability. Some students will aim to maintain the high standards they achieved in second year while others may be attempting to improve on their results. In some cases a strong performance in final year may be able to raise your outcome to a higher degree class. You may want to familiarise yourself with the Rules of Assessment to calculate your likely result.

Research Project
Crucial to your success will be your individual research project. Because your research project does not appear on your timetable (with the exception of compulsory seminars through the year) it may appear that you have a lot of ‘free time’. Clearly this is not the case, and you are expected to take more personal responsibility to organise your reading and study for all modules, as well as spend time planning your project work, analysing data and writing your report. Ensure you prepare well for every meeting with your supervisor and before each session of lab work so you can get the maximum out of these opportunities. Remember you may be asking your supervisor to write references for you so you will want to demonstrate qualities that employers value.

Issues, Field Course and Coursework Only Modules
These coursework only modules require you to organise other work around your research project commitments. Remember that final year assessments demand a greater level of independent research, originality and critical analysis than was expected in previous years. The assessments are highly weighted and you must spend sufficient time researching, planning, drafting and rewriting to do well.

Lecture Modules
Final year lecture modules are usually assessed by examination only. However, there are a few exceptions. Final year examination papers are sat in the summer exam period. Three questions must be answered, including a compulsory data analysis and interpretation question and two essay-style questions (from a choice of four in total). The three questions have equal weighting. In final year examinations students are expected to show a greater depth of knowledge and understanding than in previous years. To achieve the highest marks complete answers showing accuracy, detail and evidence of additional reading are expected. This cannot be left until after your project work is completed! You need to keep up with background reading and study throughout the year.

Students would not normally take more than one lecture module assessed by coursework only during final year. It is challenging to complete the assessments during the year while also giving sufficient attention and time to research project work. Planning and organisation are key to balancing these commitments without compromising your results. Students should be aware that these modules are designed to be as challenging as other lecture modules and should not have unrealistic expectations of their likely results based on coursework marks achieved in second year.

Modules based in other Departments may have additional types of assessment.

Planning for your Future
At the start of your final year you should take time to reflect on your plans for further study, training or employment when you graduate. Set yourself targets during this year to help you to achieve your goals for the next stage of your career. For example, you might need to incorporate deadlines for applications to graduate training programmes, or closing dates for PhD studentship applications. Make good use of the advice offered by your supervisor and the Employability and Careers Centre.
### FINAL YEAR STRUCTURE FOR 2017-2018

- **●** Compulsory modules  
- **〇** Optional modules  
- * or # Must take one of these modules  
- + or ^ May only choose one of these optional modules  
- * = must be taken in conjunction with BS830

#### Degree course codes
- BCH = Biochemistry  
- BMS = Biomedical Science  
- BS = Biological Sciences  
- GEN = Genetics  
- G&G = Genetics and Genomics  
- MB = Marine Biology

#### Term codes (indicates the term/s in which the module is taught)
- AU = Autumn term  
- SP = Spring term  
- AP = Taught across the autumn and spring terms  
- FY = Taught across the full academic year  
- SU = Summer term/vacation of Year 2

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