SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Postgraduate research
Welcome – Dr Terry McGenity, Graduate Director (Research),
A warm welcome to the School of Biological Sciences. We hope that you will enjoy your time here and make the most of the exciting opportunities available. You are now an important and integral part of the School community, contributing to its research activities, which fall into four groups: Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease, Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology and Plant Productivity. Each research group brings together several academic staff and their associated teams, who collaborate on projects, scholarly activity and knowledge exchange.

In the UK, academic research outputs are assessed periodically by the government in a process called Research Assessment Framework (REF). In the most recent REF, 85% of our research was rated as being of internationally recognised quality. This means that the School has an excellent research environment, which encourages novel ideas, critical reasoning and communication skills. Our strong focus on research means that you will be supervised by some of the leading academics in your chosen fields. You will work closely with your supervisor, technical staff, postdoctoral scientists and other postgraduate students. Our postgraduate programmes require commitment and hard work. However, the rewards for your endeavours are that you will carry out novel research, grow into highly skilled, independent research scientists, and along the way you will develop long-lasting friendships and collaborations.

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

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

Other helpful sources of information are available at www.essex.ac.uk/myessex and www.essex.ac.uk/students. Our friendly departmental 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.
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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

Graduate Director for Research Students
Dr Terry McGenity ext 2535 tjmcgen@essex.ac.uk Room 5.17

Graduate Administrator (Research)
Emma Revill ext 3321 ecrix@essex.ac.uk Room 4.01A

START DATES FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES 2018-2019
All Postgraduate Research Degree courses run for a full calendar year, e.g. October to October, January to January or April to April depending on your registration start date.

1.1 TERM DATES
Autumn term
Monday 1st October 2018 – Friday 14th December 2018

Spring term
Monday 14th January 2019 – Friday 22nd March 2019

Summer term
Monday 22nd April 2019 – Friday 28th June 2019

Information relating to the University’s term dates for students can be found at https://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/key-dates

1.2 PATTERN OF ACADEMIC YEAR
The full pattern of the academic year 2018-19 is provided in your pack of information as well as via Moodle https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3238

1.3 THE myESSEX STUDENT PORTAL
MyEssex is the University's student portal that you used during your application process. Once you’re a registered student, you can also use myEssex to update your personal details and as a quick reference guide to other student webpages: https://www1.essex.ac.uk/myessex/

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

1.5 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
As a Postgraduate Research student, you have a responsibility to:

- Read the documentation provided, including the regulations for your degree, this
Code of Practice and details of the departmental supervisory arrangements.

- Attend meetings with your supervisors and Supervisory Panels as arranged, and prepare adequately for them, notifying your supervisor in the event of unavoidable absence.
- Keep in regular contact with your supervisor. Students and supervisors are required to communicate, whether face-to-face or by electronic means, to engage in discussion review of the student's work and progress at least once a month (and bi-monthly for part-time students).
- Provide updates on progress as outlined in the Progress and Appeals Procedures for Research Degree Students.
- Carry out, as far as possible, the work agreed with your supervisor and submit written work as agreed so that you meet the required milestones.
- Familiarise yourself with the departmental milestones for your degree and the requirements for your chosen thesis format. The milestones are designed to help you submit your thesis by the deadline and are used to assess your progress during your period of study. The milestones will be considered at your RSPB which takes place twice a year (or equivalent for part-time students). It’s important you review your milestones regularly to ensure you’ll be ready to submit your thesis by the required date.
- Familiarise yourself with University and subject-specific guidelines on ethical research, including data protection matters, and with health and safety and intellectual property regulations and obtain ethical approval as appropriate.
- Familiarise yourself with the expectations and conventions regarding academic referencing other people’s work.
- Attend any research training and generic skills courses as agreed with your supervisor.
- As requested, submit reports on progress to professional practice and research supervisors, Supervisory Panels, or the departmental Research Students’ Progress Board.
- Keep a record of your personal progress, including a copy of agreed training needs, courses that need to be attended and when they are attended. This may take the form of a log book or research portfolio to be signed off by your supervisor.
- Inform the relevant supervisor promptly if there are any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect your work. Notify the Supervisory Panel/Research Students’ Progress Board in writing of any extenuating circumstances that you believe have significantly affected your performance.
- Discuss any supervisory problems with your supervisor or the Head of Department. Alternatively, if you feel unable to talk to a member of the departmental staff, please contact the Postgraduate Research Education Team to discuss the concerns. Any discussions will remain confidential if requested. Students may request a change of supervisor but should note that it may not always be possible for suitable alternative arrangements to be made.
- You must present your thesis for examination by the end of the final term of your minimum period or completion period, depending on your programme of study. A request for an extension of up to two weeks to the submission deadline may be made. Requests must be made to the Postgraduate Research Education Team in advance of the deadline. If granted an extension, you will not be expected to register or pay the prescribed fee for that two week period.
- If you fail to present your thesis for examination by the deadline, you will be deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University and from your research degree, unless you are permitted an exceptional further period of completion.
- Extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to submit your thesis by the agreed deadline will be considered by the Dean on a case-by-case basis.
- Familiarise yourself with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the
examination process, and ensure that you are prepared for your viva.

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

- Attend lectures and seminars for taught modules and attend meetings with their professional practice supervisor.
- Complete the work required for your taught modules
- Maintain a professional practice portfolio which forms part of the assessment for the degree.

2. ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

2.1 ACADEMIC STAFF

For a full list of staff biographies please visit http://www.essex.ac.uk/bs/staff/Staff.aspx?type=academic

- Dr Selwa Alsam
- Dr Vassiliy Bavro - Research Group Convenor (Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease)
- Dr Louise Beard
- Dr Ulrike Bechtold
- Dr Greg Brooke
- Dr Tom Cameron
- Professor Ian Colbeck
- Dr Paul Dobbin
- Dr Alex Dumbrell - Joint Research Group Convenor (Ecology & Environmental Microbiology)
- Professor Nelson Fernández
- Professor Richard Geider (p/t)
- Dr Lauren Headland
- Dr Leanne J. Hepburn
- Dr Mike Hough
- Dr Matt Jones
- Dr Gareth D. Jones
- Professor Elena Klenova
- Professor Tracy Lawson - Director of Impact; Research Group Convenor (Plant Productivity)
- Dr Julie Lloyd
- Dr Antonio Marco
- Dr Terry McGinity - Graduate Director (Research)
- Dr Boyd A. McKew
- Dr Metodi Metodiev
- Professor Philip M Mullineaux - Head of School
- Professor Jules Pretty - Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Dr Filippo Prischi
- Professor Christine A. Raines - Pro-Vice Chancellor
- Dr Brandon Reeder
- Dr Philip Reeves
- Professor Christopher A. Reynolds
- Professor Leonard Schalkwyk – Director of Research; Research Group Convenor (Genomics & Computational Biology)
- Dr Nicola Slee (p/t)
- Professor David J. Smith
- Dr Michael Steinke
- Dr Richard Strange
- Dr Dima Sivistunenko
- Dr Michelle Taylor
- Dr Vladimir Teif
- Dr Raj Thaker
- Professor Graham J.C. Underwood
2.2 ADMINISTRATION AND LIAISON IN THE SCHOOL

The Head of School is responsible for all members of the School, academic, technical and administrative staff and students, and for the work, equipment and buildings of the School. The Head of School represents the School in discussions with the University authorities on all academic, financial and personnel matters. Appointments can be made to see the Head of School through the School Office Administrator (room 4.30).

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

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

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

RAISING PROBLEMS
If any difficulties arise during the course of your work or supervisory arrangements it is preferable that they are raised initially with your Supervisor. If this is not possible, speak with the Graduate Administrator (Research) who will arrange an appointment for you with the Graduate Director (Research). Problems of a more general nature, applying to several postgraduate students, may be raised at the Postgraduate Research Student Staff Liaison Committee.
2.3 COMMON ROOM
The Darwin Room (Room 4.11) is the School Common Room. There are microwaves and fridges provided but please do clean after use. We hope you will co-operate to keep the room tidy and presentable for visitors. Please remember that visitors to the School are not allowed to enter the labs without authorisation, but are welcome to use the Common Room as an informal meeting place.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH ROOM
All Postgraduate Research Students can use the hot desk facilities in the Postgraduate Research Room (Room 4.01). A copy of the PGR Room Rules will be emailed to you and accessible online via Moodle.

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

PHOTOCOPYING
Photocopying facilities are available in the School, in the Library, and the Copy Shop in Square 4. The Copy Shop has a range of sophisticated equipment and provides an inexpensive binding service for Literature Reviews, Annual Reports and, eventually, your thesis copies for examination. For further information: http://www2.essex.ac.uk/printing/.

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

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

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

For up-to-date opening hours and information:
http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/lab/admin/stores/default.htm

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

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

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

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

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

2.5 SUPPORT AND SUPERVISOR
THE SUPERVISOR-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP
The supervisor-student relationship is an interactive one where communication will take place between both with the supervisor offering advice to the student throughout the PhD. The relationship will change over the period of study, from the supervisor being more prominent in the first year with the student gradually becoming more independent. Communication will take place either face-to-face or via electronic means, to engage in discussion/review of the work and progress. These meetings will be at least once a month (and bi-monthly for part-time students).

THE SUPERVISOR SHOULD:
a) introduce the student to the School and outline the induction programme as well as introduce the programme of research with the appropriate background material;
b) ensure that students working in laboratories follow safety procedures;
c) advise on the academic practice in the discipline, matters of research design, and ethical issues;
d) provide detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work with the Programme of Study. Ensure that work is completed by deadlines and the thesis submitted within the scheduled time;
e) advise the student on selection of relevant or appropriate postgraduate lecture modules;
f) identify and record the student’s training needs and review on a regular basis. Ensure opportunities for development are identified and a record maintained on course/workshop completion. Encourage the student to book courses via Proficio;
g) request written work as appropriate, and return such work with constructive criticism within 14 days;
h) arrange, as appropriate, for the student to present his/her work to lab and research group seminars;
i) ensure that the student is made aware of inadequacy of progress and/or standards of work below that of which is generally expected or is being produced too slowly, and of steps which might be taken to remedy the situation;
j) advise the student on both the practical aspects of their research to the preparation of the thesis itself; giving advice on its construction and how to prepare for their viva examination. Also provide the opportunity for a mock viva and enable students to prepare themselves sufficiently;
k) notify the student and make arrangements for transfer of supervision (for safety purposes) when absent for more than a day (14 days for theoretical or computational work). He/she to inform the Graduate Administrator (Research) of absence;
l) meet regularly with their students. The frequency of meetings will vary with different projects and also at different stages of the research studies. For laboratory-based studies this is likely to be weekly or fortnightly. The School requires a minimum of at least one face to face meeting per month unless the student or supervisor are away from the University for prolonged periods, in which case electronic contact should be made with this minimum frequency;
m) ensure that at least two supervisory boards are held each year. If the student or supervisor are absent from the University in the period when the board is due, the board will take place electronically;
n) complete and submit a report following each supervisory board meeting;
o) keep a record of dates of formal supervisions with the student and of written work submitted, including when feedback was provided;
p) where appropriate, encourage students to think about their subsequent employment, directing the student to suitable source of advice and support.

THE STUDENT (FULL TIME, UNIVERSITY-BASED) SHOULD:

a) attend the University for a minimum of five, full working days a week (i.e. 40 hr per week);
b) read and conform to the School rules regarding safety and working practice as laid out in the appropriate handbooks or on the Intranet, or in addition, by the supervisor. Read the Code of Practice, sign and return a form to certify that she/he has read the documentation and agrees to abide by it;
c) attend all prescribed taught modules, Postgraduate Training Seminars and relevant School Seminars, as detailed by the Supervisor;
d) consult fully with the supervisor concerning laboratory work and techniques and on no account conduct unauthorised experiments; consult with the supervisor on written work;
e) familiarise yourself with the University and subject-specific guidelines on ethical research including data protection, health and safety and intellectual property regulations;
f) familiarise yourself with the expectations and conventions regarding referencing other people’s work;
g) attend meetings with the supervisor and the supervisory board as arranged and prepare adequately for them and submitting work by the given deadline. Notify supervisors in the event of unavoidable absence;
h) keep in regular contact with the supervisor, whether face-to-face or via electronic means. During periods of approved study away, provide updates on progress as
i) provide required reports and documentation to their Supervisory Board by the stipulated deadlines, as set out in the Programme of Study and meet the required milestones;

j) keep a record of personal progress, including a copy of agreed training needs, courses to attend and when attended;

k) use the School Laboratory Notebook to keep a valid and accurate record of your research work, including the setting of new techniques and new protocols, record the actual data and show reproducibility of experimental set ups, record the contents and outcomes of meetings with your supervisor/s.

l) sign and agree to the terms of the School Laboratory Notebook and return a copy to the Graduate Administrator (Research);

m) maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor, including, in particular, the presentation of written drafts of the thesis, as required, in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage;

n) ensure completion of their thesis within the prescribed time period set by the University Regulations. You must not undertake any other commitments which place jeopardy in your ability to complete studies within the prescribed periods of study;

o) familiarise themselves with the guidelines on thesis submission and with the examination process, and ensure that they are prepared for the viva;

p) inform their supervisor and the Graduate Office, in writing of planned periods of absence (for holidays or meetings). The amount of annual leave permitted is six weeks per year;

q) inform their supervisor promptly if there are any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work;

r) advise their supervisor in writing of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect the work and notification of illness/sickness, submitting a medical certificate if appropriate;

s) discuss any supervisory problems with the supervisor or the Graduate Director;

t) any research time conducted outside the UK must be approved by the Head of School. A form must be completed which can be obtained from the Graduate Office;

u) If you fail to attend a meeting each month with your supervisor (or an alternative substantive communication, such as submitting a piece of written work, data etc. for those working remotely) the supervisor is required to notify the Graduate Administrator, who will then inform the Graduate Director. If the student is a Tier 4 visa holder we would also notify the International services team.

2.6 COMMUNICATION

EMAIL USE
Important and urgent information will be distributed by e-mail and therefore you must check your e-mail daily, or you may miss essential information. This is also a way for you to communicate with your supervisor(s) or other School staff. **We cannot email to private email addresses only Essex email accounts**

PIGEONHOLES
The pigeonholes for research postgraduate students are found in the Darwin Common room 4.11 on the 4th floor; they are organised alphabetically. Please remember to check your pigeonholes regularly. These pigeonholes are also used by research staff and technicians. The academic and administrative staff pigeon holes are also located in room 4.11.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL SEMINARS
Research students are expected to attend the regular School Seminars held during term time. These usually take place on Thursdays from 1.00 – 2.00pm. It is important to continue to extend your general scientific education. The seminars are selected to be of wide biological interest.

3.2 THE SUPERVISOR-Student RELATIONSHIP
The supervisor-student relationship is an interactive one where communication will take place between both with the supervisor offering advice to the student throughout the PhD. The relationship will change over the period of study, from the supervisor being more
prominent in the first year with the student gradually becoming more independent. Communication will take place either face-to-face or via electronic means, to engage in discussion/review of the work and progress. These meetings will be at least once a month (and bi-monthly for part-time students).

3.3 ONLINE RESOURCES
Our online resource bank (ORB) stores important module materials such as reading lists and past exam papers.

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 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/

3.4 REGISTRATION, INTERMITTING, CHANGES TO STUDIES
All new students and returning students must register at the start of each academic year. The full process for new students includes activating your student record for the academic year - which is held by our Postgraduate Research Education Team – getting your email account, access to IT and library services, enrolment on modules and confirming your contact details.

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

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

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

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

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

Please read carefully our guidance on Tier 4 and course changes here: http://www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/studies/changes
### Periods of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research degree</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Standard Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters by Dissertation (MA)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>One year</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Philosophy (MPhil)</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Medicine (MD)</td>
<td>PT only</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Six years</td>
<td>Seven years</td>
<td>Six years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy Integrated</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td>Four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Eight years</td>
<td>Nine years</td>
<td>Eight years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Doctorate</td>
<td>FT/PT</td>
<td>See individual programmes</td>
<td>See individual programmes</td>
<td>See individual programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.5 SUPERVISION AND PROGRESS

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

**LABORATORY NOTEBOOK**

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

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

A full description of the responsibilities of supervisor and student are described in the accompanying document “Responsibilities of Supervisor and Student” and in the Code of Conduct [https://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations](https://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations). As research students you are entitled to six weeks annual leave which must be agreed with your supervisor and the Graduate Office. As detailed in the code of practice any research time conducted outside the UK must be approved by the Head of School. A form must be completed which can be obtained from the Graduate Office.
3.6 ASSESSMENT GENERAL POINTS
PRINCIPAL REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES AND THE CODE OF
PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREES
www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/regulations-higher;
https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/codes-higher
The Principal Regulations and the Code of Practice are extremely important documents that
set out both your responsibilities, and the responsibilities of the University to you. Take time
to familiarise yourself with them. They outline the roles and responsibilities of you, your
supervisor, your Supervisory Panel and the Research Student Progress Board.

SUPERVISORY BOARD
All research students have a Supervisory Board; the role of the Supervisory Board is to
review the student’s progress. The Board consists of the supervisor(s) plus at least one
other member of academic staff who should Chair the Board. The supervisor nominates the
other member(s) of the Supervisory Board who should be generally familiar with the field of
research so they can meaningfully review the student’s progress but they are not directly
involved with supervising the research project. The composition of an individual’s
Supervisory Board will be notified to the student before or at the time the first report is
submitted i.e. towards the end of the Autumn term.
The Supervisory Board formally meets with the student at least twice a year, in December
and in June (subject to your start date, please refer to the flow chart). The system of
Supervisory Boards is intended to give the students a different perspective on their work and
also experience of discussing and defending their work. They may also give feedback on
written work such as the Annual Reports. The Supervisory Board also reviews training
undertaken and further training needed.

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

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

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

IMPORTANT POINTS
It is most important that you understand the function of, and engage fully with, the
Supervisory Boards (sometimes referred to as “Boards”), as they are designed to help you.
Some of the functions that they serve are:
• An opportunity to communicate your research, clearly articulating your aim and key
  hypotheses, both in general discussion and via presentations.
• More specifically, an opportunity to discuss your research with someone other than
  your supervisor or co-supervisor, namely the “supervisory board member”. They
  should be considered as a “critical friend”, who can provide advice on your research
with an external perspective and help if there are any supervisory issues. You should get to know your supervisory board member.

- An opportunity to reflect on progress and clarify expectations in terms of the quality and quantity of your work.
- An opportunity to get feedback on specific pieces of written work that have been set to encourage you to keep up to date, e.g., general project plans, training plans, a literature review that will serve as the Introduction to your thesis, reports in scientific paper format that migrate into draft thesis chapters and/or papers. It should be recalled that there are few jobs without deadlines. Therefore, keeping to these deadlines is an important aspect of your training and also spreads the workload, thus alleviating future stress.
- An opportunity to defend your research after questioning. Scientists must ask and address critical questions, so you should consider the Boards as training in this respect (it is not expected that you will have all the answers, but it is expected that you will reflect on the questions).
- An opportunity to ask about training needs and career opportunities.
- An opportunity to inform the Board members about any difficulties and mitigating circumstances that may have affected progress.

We have a duty to you, the University and sponsors to have formal measures to assess progress. You should not worry unduly about the Boards, as they should follow the natural progression of a hard-working postgraduate researcher rather than dictating the progress. Use the Boards to your advantage, e.g., to put in the extra hours to read and critique key papers, to analyse your data rigorously, to prepare professional figures, to think more broadly about your research, to ask whether your hypothesis is justified and is it being tested rigorously. However, you should not curtail experiments because of the Boards. If problems arise, then talking about them early and trying to resolve them will benefit everyone. You should not wait until the Boards to do so, but please do additionally discuss any issues at the Boards. Please also note that you should read and reflect on the Board reports. By signing at the end you indicate that you are content with the report.

You will have at least two meetings each year with your Supervisory Board, and you are required to produce the documents described below, depending on the stage of your programme, that will form the basis of the meeting. Please refer to the flow charts (which are in your pack and also emailed to you) to find the deadlines for handing in these documents. Electronic copies of your documents should be given to each member of the Supervisory Board and the Graduate Administrator (Research), but also ask whether the Board members would like a hard copy.

It is important that you submit documents to your supervisors in time for them to provide feedback and for you to act on it. The final documents should be sent by the specified deadline.

In addition to the information provided below, there are two documents that must be submitted before each board (at the same time as the other documents):

- Specific sections of the Board Report, such as: a check-list, an opportunity for you to comment on progress and any points that you’d like to discuss at the Boards.
- Your training document, which is a living document where you record training and, importantly, highlight your training needs.

**FIRST YEAR****

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

- briefly describe the background of the research project, including a few key references
- present the aims and hypotheses of your research project, together with an explanation of your approach (a schematic is often helpful for this)
- include an outline plan for the year ahead, with more emphasis on the first 6 months, including some experimental detail

Your report will be discussed at your Supervisory Board. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress, highlighting strengths and any shortcomings, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed to the next stage. These reports are considered at a meeting of the RSPB and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

**First Submission of the Literature Review / Introduction to your Thesis:**
You are expected to formally submit your Literature Review / Introduction to your Thesis (see below for more details) at the start of Term 2 to your supervisors, supervisory board member and Graduate Administrator. You will receive feedback by email or an informal meeting. The supervisors are primarily responsible for providing feedback, but the supervisory board member should also offer generic advice.

**First-Year Board:**
The documents required are:

- Revised Literature Review / Introduction to your Thesis (see below for guidance)
- First-Year Annual Report (see below for guidance)
- Plan and timetable of work for next year
- 10-minute presentation on your research

**Literature Review / Introduction to your Thesis**
An extensive Literature Review should be produced, discussing the background of your project and placing it in the context of previous work in the field. The Literature Review will evolve into the Introduction to your Thesis. It is essential that you become familiar with the literature in the area of your research as it will dictate your aims and hypotheses and thus your approach. Therefore, the Literature Review is regularly updated. A draft should be presented to your supervisor in the first term, and a version formally submitted at the beginning of the second term. You will receive further feedback on this version, and you are expected to submit an updated version for the First-Year Board. A good literature review will be integrative and critical, proving added value with, for example: tables compiling data from different literature sources, meta-analysis, and self-constructed conceptual figures. There will be a seminar on the approaches to writing the Literature Review in the Autumn Term (see your Training Programme timetable). The Literature Review should:

- be thorough and logically structured
- be 5000-10000 words in length
- be fully and correctly referenced (consult the Guidelines for Referencing below)
- have an abstract of approximately 300 words that outlines why the research area is important and summarises what major conclusions can be drawn from the review

**First-Year Annual Report**
This should succinctly summarise results to date. The format of this report should follow the requirements of the doctoral thesis, so that you can practise writing clearly and logically and presenting data in the correct manner. It is important that you use abbreviations, species
names, etc. correctly, and present references in the correct format in the text and in the reference list.

The First-year Annual Report should be no more than 3000 words (figures, tables and the reference list are in addition to this). Make sure the pages are numbered. The report must have the following:

- **Title page** (title, your name, supervisor’s name, year of study and date).
- **Summary/Abstract** (approximately 300 words) explaining why the work is important, the purpose of the research, the methods used, summary of key results and main conclusions.
- **Brief Introduction**, which sets out the scientific question you are investigating, but should not be an extensive review of the literature because you have already written a Literature Review.
- **Methods**, which should be complete with a description of all the methods used.
- **Results**, which should be presented in exactly the same way as for the final thesis or for publication. Figures and tables should be numbered, and figures should have legends, and tables should have headings. The legends should be clear and self-explanatory and contain the key to symbols or lines used in the figure. Microscope images, maps etc. should have scale bars. Statistical analysis, if appropriate, should be included. The results section should also have a written description or commentary on the data you have presented, highlighting key results and trends.
- **Discussion**, in which you address what your results mean. You need to set your findings in the context of the existing body of knowledge. You should discuss any possible limitations in your methods and the reliability of your results.
- **Reference list**, which must be correctly and consistently formatted.
- **Appendix**, which is optional and may contain extra experimental detail or results.

With your report you must also include a **plan and timetable of work for the next year**; include an outline timetable for further experiments over the next year, including more detail for the work to be done over the next 6 months.

Finally, you are expected to prepare and present a **10 minute powerpoint presentation** in preparation for your confirmation board.

Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will then write a report summarising progress, highlighting strengths and any shortcomings, and recommending whether you will be allowed to proceed to the next stage. The report will include specific recommendations of how the Literature Review, presentation and Annual Report can be improved, in preparation for the Confirmation Board. These reports are considered at a meeting of the RSPB, which makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

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

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

**Confirmation Board:**
The first Board of the second year is the Confirmation Board to which students submit:
- **Draft Thesis Chapter or Paper (3000 to 5000 words)**, most likely developed from the Annual Report, having taken account of suggestions for improvements of the Annual Report and including new data
• Updated Literature Review (5000 to 10000 words)
• Outline plan of work for the next 12 months (1 page maximum).
• Statement of how the recommendations from the previous Supervisory Board have been addressed (1 page maximum)
• 10-minute presentation on research

The format of both the Literature Review and the draft Thesis Chapter or Paper are the same as described above for the Annual Board. If a draft paper is submitted, then it is fine for the format to comply with that of the target journal.

At the Confirmation Board the student will be expected to deliver a 10-minute presentation to the Board members, who will then ask questions relating to the presentation, Literature Review and Draft Thesis Chapter / Paper.

In recommending confirmation of PhD status the Confirmation Supervisory Board will assess:
• The quality of the literature review as a comprehensive and critical appraisal of the current status of the research area
• That the appropriate methodologies have been used for satisfactory data collection
• That a sufficient amount of quality data has been generated, adequately analysed and discussed
• The quality of the oral presentation and the answers to questions after the presentation

The Confirmation Board can make the following recommendations to the RSPB:
• Confirm continuation on PhD programme
• Defer a decision to the next Supervisory Board
• Continuation on MPhil programme
• Discontinuation

If the decision is deferred to the next Board, students will submit an improved draft Thesis Chapter or Paper and an updated presentation. The format of the second Confirmation Board will be the same as the first Confirmation Board. Students are entitled to two attempts of the Confirmation Board.

Second-Year Annual Board (moving to Year 3 for submission):
If you were confirmed to proceed onto the PhD programme, the next Board will be the end-of-second-year board and you must submit the following:
• Complete Thesis Chapter / Paper or two Draft Thesis Chapters / Papers (complying with the length / formatting as in your Confirmation Board). Also provide a brief narrative (~10 lines) indicating the advance since the Confirmation Board. Note that these are Results chapters and not the Literature Review / Introduction.
• Chapter-by-chapter thesis outline, highlighting sections that are complete, nearly complete, ongoing and planned.
• Plan and timetable for the next year (outline the work for the next academic year in more detail and include the experiments planned for the next 3 to 6 months).

Consider how you will submit within the three-year standard PhD period

Generally, at this stage, you are working on multiple chapters simultaneously, and so there is flexibility in what you present. The overarching consideration is that you demonstrate continued progress and present your research to thesis standard. Discuss what you plan to present with your supervisors. Also, at this stage, it is important that you have a vision of your thesis in terms of how the chapters will be structured, so take the planning process seriously. The University is keen to encourage submission within the period that most
students are funded. It is recognised that some students receive funding for longer than three years. Nevertheless, it is good practice to aim for submission within the three-year standard period.

This Board Report a will summarise progress, highlighting achievements and any shortcomings, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed to the next year. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPB and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team for the Dean’s approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

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

THIRD YEAR

Interim Board (due to submit):
The focus is now on completing your practical work and on continuing to write up your thesis and any papers. Depending on your previous submissions, on-going progress, and the nature of your project, there is flexibility as to what you may submit as the first document for this Interim Board:

- You may submit two complete Chapters or two Papers that are in draft (e.g. advances of those presented at your End-of-Second-Year Board); in which case you should additionally provide a brief (~10-line) narrative indicating the advances since your last Board. Alternatively, you may prefer to present a third results Chapter (draft or complete) to the Board. In all cases comply with the formatting requested for documents at the Confirmation Board.

The remaining documents are:

- Updated chapter-by-chapter thesis outline, highlighting sections that are complete, nearly complete, ongoing and planned
- Updated plan and timetable until the submission of your thesis. Consider how you will submit within the standard three-year PhD period and outline plans for publication

Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress, highlighting strengths and any shortcomings, and recommending whether you are allowed to proceed. In addition, feedback will be given on draft chapters and feedback/support toward producing a paper for submission to a journal. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPB and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team for the Dean’s approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

Third-Year Annual Board (due to submit):
At this stage it is expected that you will have three near-complete results Chapters, with at least one of them progressing towards publication (while also recognising that theses develop in different ways). For this Board you should submit:

- One new (or heavily improved results Chapter / Paper draft
- Updated chapter-by-chapter thesis outline, highlighting sections that are complete, nearly complete, ongoing and planned.
- Updated plan and timetable up to the submission of your thesis. Consider how you will submit within the standard three-year PhD period and outline your plans for publication

You will receive feedback on the final draft of your thesis. You need to demonstrate that you have a clear timetable to submission. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write
a report summarising progress, highlighting strengths and any shortcomings, and recommending an intended submission date. If, the Board agrees that you are not ready to submit, you will enter the Completion Period. Your progress during Completion Period will then be monitored on a term-by-term basis. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPB and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team for the Dean’s approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

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

**COMPLETION PERIOD**

If you need to use the Completion Period to prepare and submit your thesis, your progress will be monitored on a term-by-term basis. For each term that you remain in the Completion Period there will be one formal meeting with your supervisors, at which progress is recorded. These meetings do not involve your supervisory board member, but you are welcome to seek their advice as normal.

**Completion Period 1:**
The documents required for this Completion Period Meeting 1 are:
- completed **final draft for submission** (or a draft that is close to submission)
- **timetable** to thesis submission

**Completion Period 2:**
The documents required for this Completion Period Meeting 2 are:
- completed **final draft for submission** (or a draft that is close to submission)
- **timetable** to thesis submission

**Completion Period 3:**
The documents required for this Completion Period Meeting 3 are:
- completed **final draft for submission**
- **timetable** to thesis submission

The documents are discussed at each of your Completion Period meetings and an agreed submission date finalised. You will receive detailed feedback on your draft final submission. Following this meeting the Supervisory Board will write a report summarising progress. The reports from the Supervisory Board are considered at a meeting of the RSPB and this committee makes recommendations on progression to the Postgraduate Research and Education team for the Dean’s approval (which includes upgrade, downgrade and discontinuation).

**RESEARCH STUDENTS’ PROGRESS BOARD (RSPB)**

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

a) that the student be allowed to proceed to the next year:
b) that the student’s progress to the PhD programme is confirmed;
c) that the student’s studies be discontinued;
d) that the student’s status be altered (e.g. upgraded or downgraded)
The Dean will receive a report from the RSPB outlining the recommendations for each individual student. If a recommendation is made for a student’s status to be downgraded or their studies discontinued the student will be formally notified and given an opportunity to discuss the recommendation with the Board. If a student requests a review of the recommendation this is considered formally as an appeal (see below). At the end of their minimum period (three years for PhD) the RSPB may recommend that the student enters the completion period. For this the student must have completed all laboratory work/field work and written several chapters of the thesis.

### 3.7 PGR MILESTONES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Criteria for progress</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **M1: Progress to Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students)** | A: Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis. | • Training needs to be completed.  
• Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate. | • Term 1 for full-time students; Term 2 for part-time students  
• By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students |
|                                                |                                                                                       | Consider Health and Safety and ethics of project                                                | • Term 1 for full-time students; Term 2 for part-time students |
|                                                |                                                                                       |                                                                                                 |                                                                          |
|                                                |                                                                                       | B: Clarify research topic and demonstrate an understanding of topic and relevant to wider research | • By end of Term 1 for full-time students; Term 2 for part-time students |
|                                                |                                                                                       | Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area):  
• A brief description of the research topic  
• Present the aims and hypotheses of your research project, together with an explanation of your approach |                                                                          |
|                                                |                                                                                       | C: Knowledge and understanding of the Literature                                               | • Start of Term 2 for full-time students; Term 4 for part-time students |
|                                                |                                                                                       | • 5000 to 10000-word Literature Review / Introduction to Thesis                               |                                                                          |
|                                                |                                                                                       |                                                                                                 | • By end of Term 3 for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time students |
|                                                |                                                                                       | D: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. |                                                                          |
|                                                |                                                                                       | • Create a detailed, realistic research plan and timetable for Year 2.  
• Produce a supervisory board report written in a clear scientific paper format and |                                                                          |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M2: Confirmation</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A: Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field.</strong></td>
<td>• 5000 to 10000-word Literature Review / Introduction to Thesis (updated from your First-year Board)</td>
<td>• By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B: Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the three year period.</strong></td>
<td>• Concise statement of how the recommendations from the previous Supervisory Board have been addressed (1 page maximum)</td>
<td>• By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing and language skills.</td>
<td>• 3000 to 5000-word Draft Thesis Chapter or Paper (developed from your First-year Annual Report)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C: Subject-specific milestones</strong></td>
<td>• 10 minute power-point presentation</td>
<td>• By Confirmation Board (Term 4 for full-time students; Term 7 for part-time students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M3: Progress from Year 2 to Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students)</strong></td>
<td><strong>A: Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis.</strong></td>
<td>• Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B: Demonstrate work of the quality and</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Complete Thesis Chapter / Paper or</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| C: Review significance and impact of research and articulate output. | For example:  
  - Present research to students and staff at seminars/conferences | By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students) |
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<td>D: Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.</td>
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</table>
  - Create a detailed realistic plan of work/timetable for Year 3 which demonstrates the ability to submit within the three year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students)  
  - Chapter-by-chapter thesis outline, highlighting sections that are complete, nearly complete, ongoing, and planned | By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students) |
| E: Subject-specific milestones |  
  - Graduate Forum oral presentation | By end of Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students |
| M4: Year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students) | A: Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project |  
  - Training Needs Analysis reviewed | By interim supervisory board prior to submission term 7/8 for full-time students; Term 15 to 16 for part-time students |
|  
  - Quantity expected at the end of Year 2  
  - two Draft Thesis Chapters / Papers (complying with the length / formatting as in your Confirmation Board; and with a brief narrative (~10 lines) indicating the advance since last Board; or, a third results Chapter (draft or complete). |  
  - Board (Term 6 for full-time students; Term 12 for part-time students) |  
  - By end of year |
| **B: Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission** | - Either two complete Chapters or two Papers that are in draft (e.g. advances of those presented at your End-of-Second-Year Board), in which case you should additionally provide a brief (~10-line) narrative indicating the advance since your last Board; or, a third results Chapter (draft or complete). | - By interim supervisory board prior to submission term 7/8 for full-time students; Term 15 to 16 for part-time students |
| **C: Clear evidence of progress towards submission** | - Updated Chapter-by-chapter thesis outline, highlighting sections that are complete, nearly complete, ongoing, and planned | - By interim supervisory Board prior to submission/Term 7/8 for full-time students; Term 15 to 16 for part-time students and by end of year Supervisory Board (Term 7 for full-time students; Term 15 for part-time students) |
| | - One new (or heavily updated / improved) results Chapter / Paper draft | |
| | - Updated plan until the submission of your thesis | - By end of year Supervisory Board (Term 8/9 for full-time students; Term 17/18 for part-time students) |
| | | - By interim supervisory Board prior to submission/Term 7/8 for full-time students; Term 15 to 16 for part-time students |
3.8 INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR ALL
The School of Biological Sciences is committed to promoting a positive and inclusive working environment for our scientists. In addition, the university offers support mechanisms for our disabled students, international students and part-time students (see under section 2).

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 (https://www1.essex.ac.uk/equality/athenaswan/default.aspx). The School of Biological Sciences first achieved its Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental Award in November 2014 and this was renewed in 2017. The Essex Women’s Network provides a forum for women to share ideas and provide mutual support and is open to all staff and postgraduate students. https://www1.essex.ac.uk/equality/forums/essex-womens-network.aspx

POSTGRADUATE MENTORING SCHEME
The University has a postgraduate mentoring scheme where you can contact two current Biological Sciences students with questions related to study and University life. You can contact the mentors via https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/mentoring/default.aspx

SCHOOL MENTORING SCHEME
The School of Biological Sciences is committed to supporting staff and research students at all stages of their careers. A School Mentoring Scheme has been established as a result of an action from the School’s Athena SWAN Bronze Department Award. This voluntary scheme is open to all academic and research staff and PhD students.
**Aims of Scheme**

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

- Support staff and students at key career transition points
- Provide guidance on career and personal development

Further information can be found on the School Mentoring Scheme Moodle page. To request a mentor or to sign up as a mentor for this scheme, please contact the Mentoring Coordinator (Dr Beverley Wilkinson, bwilk@essex.ac.uk).

**3.8.1 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 Student Support so that we can plan how best to support you in your studies.

You can find out about the 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)

**3.8.2 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/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/international/)

If you are studying on a **Tier 4 visa**, don’t forget to read section **7.4 Tier 4 Information** of this handbook which has further information and links.

**3.8.3 MATURE AND PART-TIME STUDENTS**

As a mature student you’ll be in very good company – around 25% of our students are mature students.

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

You can find more information here: [www.essex.ac.uk/students/groups/mature-students.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/groups/mature-students.aspx)

**3.9 STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

Student feedback is a vital part of the University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement. It is important that you are given the opportunity and that you take time to feedback to the University.
You can do this in a number of ways:

1. You can contact (or be elected as) a **student representative** who represent the voice of fellow students in departmental Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) and other University level committees.


3. You can find out information about Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) here: [www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/sslc.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/student_representation/sslc.asp).

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

### 3.10 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 Ai Gooch [aito@essex.ac.uk](mailto:aito@essex.ac.uk) or use the Book a librarian form on the Library website to get in touch. More information can be found at [http://libwww.essex.ac.uk/subject.htm](http://libwww.essex.ac.uk/subject.htm)

For guidance in relation to third-party proofreading of student work: [www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading](http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading)

### 4 RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

#### 4.1 PROFICIO

Proficio is our innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, and it's unique to Essex. We believe that your academic and professional development is vital to your growth as a postgraduate research student and so we credit your Proficio account with funds that can be spent on a variety of courses. You can find out more information via [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/research.aspx](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/research.aspx) and you can contact the Proficio team at [proficio@essex.ac.uk](mailto:proficio@essex.ac.uk).

#### 4.2 SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES AND CONFERENCES

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

PRESENTING YOUR WORK
Throughout your period of study you will be expected to present your work orally to audiences, typically in the informal setting of your laboratory group meetings or in your Research Group meetings. The annual Graduate Forum (above) provides a more formal meeting structure for poster and oral presentations. Some PhD students in their third year may, in addition, be invited to present a seminar to a wider School audience, for example during the weekly School Seminar Programme. Presentation of your results in a poster or talk and the opportunity for discussion is an important part of participating in a conference or meeting.

COHORT BUILDING EVENT
In 2017 the School held the first postgraduate cohort building event. The event brought together postgraduate students and postdoctoral scientists from all the diverse disciplines within the School to promote interdisciplinary knowledge and exchange of techniques. The event comprised of talks from each of the seven research groups, an interactive session on networking, an alumni presentation, a motivational lecture by an eminent guest speaker and the opportunity to attend a careers workshop to provide targeted careers advice. A similar event will be held in 2019 and registration information will be circulated via E mail.

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

RESEARCH GROUPS
Students will be members of one of the research groupings: Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease, Genomics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Environmental Microbiology and Plant Productivity. These groups have regular research meetings which students should attend. Laboratory groups, research workers and students supervised by individual members of staff, also have regular lab meetings.

5 ASSESSMENT
5.1 PRINCIPLE REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES
www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations
https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies

The Principal Regulations and the Codes of Practice are extremely important documents that set out both your responsibilities and the responsibilities of the University to you; take time to familiarise yourself with them. They outline the roles and responsibilities of you, your supervisor, your Supervisory Panel and the Research Students’ Progress Board.
5.2 Extenuating Circumstances, withdrawing and intermitting

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances beyond your control which cause your progress to be negatively impacted upon, including performing 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. Extenuating circumstances deadlines will be issued by the department ahead of the Supervisory Panel.

Professional Doctorate and Integrated PhD students need to ensure that your form is submitted by the postgraduate taught deadline given here in order for it to be considered by the Board of Examiners – [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ext-circ.aspx](https://www1.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.

You should read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form and evidence. Seek advice from the Students' Union Advice Centre ([www.essexstudent.com/services/advice_centre/](http://www.essexstudent.com/services/advice_centre/)) or the Student Services Hub ([www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/default.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/default.aspx)).

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 department and the 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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/intermit). If your intermission is approved, we will also give you the advice and support you need to help you carry on with your studies when you return.

**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 Department 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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/withdraw).

5.3 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS

**Thesis Submission Pre-Examination**
All candidates for Masters by Dissertation (MA or MSc), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Professional Doctorate must submit two copies of their thesis for examination. Candidates being examined as staff must also submit two copies of their thesis for examination.

The two copies of your thesis should be submitted for examination in an unbound format.
They **must** be adequately secured (for example in spring-back binders or comb binding and **not** in ring binders or lever arch box files). They **must not** be overfilled and to avoid all risks of coming open and jeopardising examination, two binders **must** be used, if required. All registration fees and debts must be paid before the thesis can be accepted for submission.

You should submit to the Silberrad Student Centre:

a) **Two** copies (one original and one good copy) of the thesis or dissertation.

b) A submission form (RD1) completed and signed by yourself.

*You are strongly advised to retain one good copy of the thesis or dissertation yourself.*

Please note that you **must** provide an electronic copy of your submitted thesis to the Postgraduate Research Education Team if your examiner requests an electronic version.

All submitted copies of the thesis belong to the University and shall be returned to the candidate following the viva.

**Thesis Submission For Award**

Following the completion of the examination process, the candidate will be notified via email that in order to gain their award they must submit one electronic version of their thesis to the online Research Repository. Following the receipt of this deposit, the candidate will be awarded their postgraduate research degree.

**Thesis Deposit**

Detailed thesis deposit instructions to the Repository can be found here: [http://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/repository/research-thesis.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/repository/research-thesis.aspx)

Students wishing to place a restriction on their thesis must do so in writing prior to submission of their thesis to repository@essex.ac.uk. Further information regarding restrictions can be found here: [https://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/repository/research-thesis.aspx](https://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/repository/research-thesis.aspx)

When depositing your thesis in the online Repository you will be required to read and accept the conditions stipulated in the Thesis Deposit Agreement.

**Retention**

Your thesis will be made open access when deposited in the online Research Repository. The Thesis Deposit Agreement outlines the availability of the thesis and how it will be stored in the Repository.

Full details of the requirements for thesis submission can be found at [https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/thesis-submission-deposit.pdf](https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/thesis-submission-deposit.pdf)

**5.4 EXAMINERS AND THE VIVA**

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

**5.5 APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND FITNESS TO PRACTISE**

If the recommendation of your Research Students’ Progress Board is that your degree should be downgraded or your studies discontinued, and you want to appeal, you must do so **within 10 working days** of receiving the formal notification. You must do so in writing on the Form of Appeal which is available online at [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/ppr](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg/ppr).
You may also appeal against an examination decision. 'Failed' or 'referred' candidates may submit their appeal no later than **40 working days** after the formal notification of the decision.

**You should read carefully the Progress and Appeals Procedures for research degree students at:** [www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals](http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/complaints)

**Fitness to practise** is only applicable to students on certain professional courses (such as nursing or social work). 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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg)

5.6 **ACADEMIC OFFENCES POLICY**

If the recommendation of your Research Students’ Progress Board is that your degree should be downgraded or your studies discontinued, and you want to appeal, you must do so **within 10 working days** of receiving the formal notification. You must do so in writing on the Form of Appeal which is available online at [www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg](http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/ppg).

You may also appeal against an examination decision. 'Failed' or 'referred' candidates may submit their appeal no later than **40 working days** after the formal notification of the decision.

**You should read carefully the Progress and Appeals Procedures for research degree students at:** [www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals](http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/research-progress-appeals)

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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. Also see section 6 for further details.

You can find the complaints procedure and the forms here: [www.essex.ac.uk/see/complaints](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/complaints)

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

5.7 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 - 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.’

5.8 SCHOOL SAFETY
The University’s Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, sets out the health and safety responsibilities of all University employees according to their job role. The responsibilities of employees and managers are also summarised in the Employee Guide to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Both documents can be found either on the safety notice board adjacent to the main entrance, from David Knight or by following the link at http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/default.shtm

Health and Safety Standards
The School has produced specific guidance and, where appropriate, safety standards and codes of practice for a range of activities. Further information can be found on the Biological Sciences safety intranet site, which can be found at http://bsintra.essex.ac.uk/safety/default.shtm

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

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

6 REFERENCING AND GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE
6.1 Information relating to the University’s procedure on academic offences
Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher education in the UK.

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/ideas and 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 (Harvard), and for help with referencing, visit the library website: http://libwww.essex.ac.uk/referencing.htm

6.2 How to reference

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

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

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

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

a) References to papers must include the name(s) of the author(s) and their initials, the year of publication, the title of the paper, the title of the journal (italicised) with its volume number (in bold font), the initial and final page numbers in that order.

b) References to books must include the name(s) of the authors or editors and their initials, the year of publication, the title of the book (italicised), edition number, city of publication, name of publishers, in that order. References to particular parts of books must give inclusive page numbers and if appropriate, the chapter title. If the chapter has different authors to those of the book as a whole, then the citation should be to the chapter authors, stating that it (the chapter title) is “In............”.

c) References to Manuals and Schedules should include author/company, year of publication, type of document (e.g. manual, protocol), name of document, name of company or University and School/Department.

Some examples of the types of references are as follows:

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

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

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

**Be consistent** with the format. For instance you must not use abbreviated journal names in some references in your list and full names in others.
To reference from the internet:
At a minimum, a reference of an Internet source should provide a document title or
description, an address (in Internet terms, a uniform resource locator, or URL) and the date
of retrieval. Whenever possible, identify the authors (or company/organisation) of a
document as well.
http://www.uvm.edu/~ncrane/estyles/ Last retrieved 24.08.13

To reference a doctoral dissertation:
following 15 days of simulated microgravity exposure. Doctoral Dissertation. University of
North Texas HSC, Dept. of Physiology, Fort Worth, Texas.

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

6.3 INFORMATION RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY’S PROCEDURE ON ACADEMIC
OFFENCES
Respecting authorship through good academic practice is one of the key values of higher
education in the UK.

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/ideas and
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. Also refer to section 5 of this handbook.

To find out about your departmental referencing style; (please insert department variation
here) and for help with referencing, visit the library website:
http://libwww.essex.ac.uk/referencing.htm

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

6.5 PROOFREADING
The systems and protocols described in the University policy and guidance on proofreading
are the result of an ongoing project to review commercial and third-party proofreading on
campus, ensuring best practice in proofreading at the University in relation to student texts.
Please see http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading/ for an approved list of proofreaders.
6.6 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
Copyright and intellectual property right issues fall into two broad areas: **compliance** (respecting the rights of others when we make use of their materials and intellectual output) and **exploitation/enforcement** (protecting and exploiting our own intellectual output). Full details can be viewed via https://www1.essex.ac.uk/reo/commercialisation/ip.aspx
7 PRACTICALITIES: GETTING STARTED AND IT MATTERS

7.1 REGISTRATION, ENROLLING AND TRANSCRIPTS
All new and returning students must register at the start of each academic year. The Postgraduate Research Education Team will inform you of your formal outcome following your viva and, when all necessary steps have been completed, close your record and send you an award confirmation letter. Your award certificate cannot be produced until the Postgraduate Research Education Team has completed the above step so if you have not received your award confirmation letter, the Graduation Office cannot produce your certificate. For more information about registration and award documents, visit our student webpages:
www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/registration
www.essex.ac.uk/students/graduation/award-documents

7.2 FIND YOUR WAY AND ROOM NUMBERING SYSTEM
Find Your Way is our interactive campus map app. Download it to help you find any location on campus and get directions quickly and easily. There’s also a handy web version - findyourway.essex.ac.uk/

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

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

If the number has three parts and the first contains numbers and letters eg 5N.7.16, then the room is in square 4 or 5. The format is entrance.floor.room. The first part tells you the square and corner (eg 4S is the south corner of square 4), which matches the labels on the entrances (eg door 4NW is next to The Store). The second part is the floor and the third part the room. For example, 5NW.6.12 is in the north-west (NW) corner of Square 5 (entrance "5NW"), floor 6, room 12.

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

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

7.3 IT SUPPORT AND INFORMATION
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 in Colchester. Open Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 6.00pm, and Friday 8.30am to 5.45pm.

TF.2.03, Info Point, Learning Hub in Southend. Open Monday to Friday 8.30am – 6.00pm

Library, Main House, Hatfields, Loughton. Open Monday to Friday 10.30am – 5.30pm.

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

7.4 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 University must ensure all students hold the right to study in the UK throughout their studies and there are regulations regarding your Immigration status. For Tier 4 students, the Home Office attach conditions to your Tier 4 leave that restrict study, work and access to state benefits, some nationals have to register with the Police. The University has many duties as a Tier 4 sponsor and must ensure we remain compliant in order to retain our Tier 4 licence. Find out more on the University’s website: www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/ and www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations.

7.5 ON-CAMPUS FACILITIES
There is a broad range of facilities to support your living and learning experience at our Colchester Campus – including study-based services like the IT helpdesk and group study pods, but also various food and drink venues, three banks, a general store run by the Students’ Union, a printing and copy centre, market stalls each Thursday, a Post Office, launderettes, and much, much more. Full details on all on-campus facilities feature on our student webpages and in the campus guide you received with your welcome information when you joined us as a student member.

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

8 SKILLS, EMPLOYABILITY AND EXPERIENCE
8.1 EMPLOYABILITY AND CAREERS CENTRE
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

8.2 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

English classes for the dependants of international students and staff (ECDIS)
The Department of Language and Linguistics offers dependants of international students and staff at the Colchester Campus, the chance to improve their English language, through our ECDIS programme, at no extra cost. Classes are taught at three basic levels: Elementary (A1/A2), Intermediate (B1/B2) and Advanced (C1/C2) and will focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing.
https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/language-and-linguistics
ecdis@essex.ac.uk

8.3 TALENT DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Operating on Colchester and Southend campus, the TDC offers a range of ways to help you realise your potential and improve your academic performance. Our tutors provide expert guidance on study skills; mathematics and statistics; assignment writing and English for academic purposes. Look online to find out more about our classes, workshops, drop-in clinics and on-line resources.
www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/tdc/

8.4 CAREERHUB+
Find hundreds of part-time jobs, internships and graduate vacancies, book on to careers events and workshops, take career assessments, practise 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

8.5 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
8.6 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+ in January.
www.essex.ac.uk/careers/job_hunting/on_campus

8.7 VOLUNTEERING
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+ in January.
www.essex.ac.uk/careers/job_hunting/on_campus

8.8 BIG ESSEX AWARD
The University’s employability award is a guaranteed way to help you stand out from the crowd, get recognition for all your extra-curricular activities and help you to identify and evidence your skills and experience to employers. Over 100 activities are included, so sign up and get started!
www.essex.ac.uk/careers/bige

8.9 ESSEX INTERNS
Essex interns create paid internships exclusively for you as an Essex student. They're flexible too; part time during term time or full time in vacations. You can even take part up to three years after you graduate, as part of our Essex graduates support package. Sign up for Essex Interns to kick-start your career.
www.essex.ac.uk/careers/internships

8.10 OTHER CAREER RESOURCES
The Early Career Researcher Resources Moodle page contains information on different career pathways, postdoctoral fellowships, jobs, example CVs and other careers resources for PGR students and researchers.

9 YOU MATTER: HEALTH, WELFARE, SUPPORT AND SAFETY
We know university life can throw up all kinds of concerns and questions - if you need some information, advice or support to succeed, stay healthy and happy, we've got it covered

9.1 STUDENT SERVICES HUB, INCLUDING CONTACTS FOR DISABILITY, WELLBEING, COUNSELLING AND CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES
If you need practical advice, a confidential conversation or general information, no matter what the issue is, our Student Services Hub is the place to go. Ask us about health and well-being, accommodation, money matters and much more. Your questions matter and you'll get answers from our team of experts

Colchester email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk / 01206 874000
Southend email: askthehub-sc@essex.ac.uk / 01702 328444
Loughton email: askthehub-lc@essex.ac.uk / 020 8508 5983
www.essex.ac.uk/students/contact/ and www.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing

Money management
If you get into financial difficulty get help and talk to someone as soon as possible. The sooner your problem is identified, the sooner it can be solved. Advisers in our Student Services Hub and our independent SU Advice Centre can listen and talk you through the issues.
9.2 HARASSMENT REPORT AND SUPPORT SERVICE
We are Essex. We encourage a culture of dignity and respect. We’re committed to upholding an environment that’s free from any form of harassment or bullying. Though rare, these incidents can occur and if they do our network of trained harassment advisors are on hand to help.
www.essex.ac.uk/equality
www.essex.ac.uk/equality/harassment
www.essex.ac.uk/students/new

9.3 RELIGION, FAITH AND BELIEFS
We’re proud of our vibrant and diverse multicultural community and we recognise and support the many different religions and beliefs on campus. The calm, friendly and supportive atmosphere in our Multi-Faith Chaplaincy is a welcoming place for staff, students and the wider community to meet, interact and engage with each other.
www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/mfc

9.4 NIGHTLINE
Established at Essex in 1970, Nightline is a friendly help and support service run by students, for students. We work under strict confidentiality ensuring complete anonymity, and we’re always willing to listen. From tea and toast to campbeds, whether you’re waiting for a taxi, need a revision break, or just want to chat, pop in or call us.
www.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing/nightline

9.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY ON CAMPUS
Our campuses are generally very safe environments. We want to ensure that things stay this way. In order to achieve this we work closely with local agencies including the police and borough councils. Take a look at our website for general advice and information.
www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/safety

Please read the emergency evacuation notice in your accommodation, work or study location for fire safety procedures. If you have a permanent or temporary disabilities that may mean you have difficulty in evacuating one or more areas, you can arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).
www.essexstudent.com/safetybus
www.essex.ac.uk/students/campus/emergency
www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety/fire/peep

9.6 RESIDENCE LIFE
Our Residence Life team is here to help you settle in and support you during your time living on campus. Each residents’ assistant (RA) is assigned an area and will aim to get to know you and organise a range of social activities. Plus they can help if you’ve got any concerns or complaints. Residence Life operates outside of office hours when other University support services are closed.
www.essex.ac.uk/accommodation/support/reslife

9.7 HEALTH CENTRE
If you’re studying on a course for more than six months, you’re required to register with a local doctor. Our Colchester Campus has its own health centre or you can use the NHS Choices postcode finder to find your nearest doctor.
www.rowhedgesurgery.co.uk
www.nhs.uk
9.8 STUDENTS’ UNION ADVICE CENTRE
Our SU Advice service offers free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on many issues that might be affecting you. Our friendly, trained staff are on hand to support you throughout your time at Essex. You can speak to us about Academic processes and procedures, representation at University meetings, Tier 4 UK visa extensions, housing, complaints, welfare and consumer issues.
www.essex.su/advice
Colchester students - suadvice@essex.ac.uk, 01206 874034
Southend students – suacsou@essex.ac.uk, 01702 328235
(term time only)
Loughton students – suaclou@essex.ac.uk, 01206 874034

9.9 UNIVERSITY PRIVACY STATEMENT
Under the Data Protection Act 1998, any individuals about whom the University may be holding personal data have the right to access the data that is being held about them. Full details about how this works, and how to request such information are available on the Records Management web pages, see: ‘How to access your personal data’.
www.essex.ac.uk/website-privacy
www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/policies/students.aspx
10 THE ESSEX EXPERIENCE

10.1 THE ESSEX CHARTER
Our Student Charter is developed by the University of Essex and our Students’ Union as a part of our ongoing commitment to create an outstanding environment that offers the highest standards of teaching, research and support in an international and multi-cultural community. www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/charter

10.2 FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT
For regulations relating to the Code of Student Conduct, see the University’s website: www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/handbooks/default.aspx https://www.essex.ac.uk/governance/regulations

10.3 ESSEX SPIRIT, SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS
Keep up-to-date with important news, events and offers from across the University with our Essex Spirit blog. Go to our email lists to subscribe to the fortnightly e-bulletin. http://blogs.essex.ac.uk/essexspirit/ www.essex.ac.uk/students/new/

10.4 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

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

10.6 WHAT COMES NEXT?
The Early Career Researcher Resources Moodle page contains information on different career pathways, postdoctoral fellowships, jobs, example CVs and other careers resources for PGR students and researchers.