

# Learning resources and academic support

Whether you are a taught or research postgraduate student, our learning resources and extensive support will help you get the most from your time at Sussex. Individual attention from your personal tutor, advisor or supervisors, plus other essential resources and facilities mean we offer a supportive environment in which to undertake exciting, innovative and challenging postgraduate work.

## Learning resources

We have a variety of specialist resources, both on and off campus, to help you make the most of your studies at Sussex.

For information on IT services and library services, refer to page 20 and page 21, respectively.

### Sussex Centre for Language Studies *English as a foreign language*

If English is not your first language, you may need to improve your language skills to meet University entrance requirements. The Sussex Centre for Language Studies is accredited by the British Council and provides English language support on preparation courses before you begin your studies, as well as language and study skills support during your degree programme (refer to International students at Sussex on pages 30-31).

The Sussex Centre for Language Studies also offers year-round full-time Pre-Masters courses in English language and academic study skills (refer to page 31), as well as part-time courses in English for Academic Purposes.

### Modern language open courses

These courses offer the opportunity to study a language on a weekly basis with other students, and members of the University staff. Each session lasts for one and a half hours, either in the middle of the day or in the evening. Courses are offered at a variety of levels, from beginners to advanced, in French, German, Italian and Spanish. Each year it is usually possible to run a number of classes in other languages such as Arabic • British Sign Language • Classical Latin and Greek • Czech • Japanese • Mandarin Chinese • Polish • Russian.

### The Language Learning Suite

The Sussex Centre for Language Studies runs a self-access Language Learning Suite, which provides self-study materials – course books, a digital audio library, DVDs and computer software – for students interested in practising a language independently. The Learning Suite includes digital language learning facilities, as well as self-access multimedia workstations with access to the internet and satellite television in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

### Teacher training

We offer four-week courses leading to the Trinity College London Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), in addition to one-week introductory courses in English Language Teaching.

General advice and details of courses are available from:

Sussex Centre for Language Studies,  
University of Sussex, Falmer,  
Brighton BN1 9QN, UK  
**T** +44 (0)1273 678006  
**F** +44 (0)1273 678476  
**E** [efl@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:efl@sussex.ac.uk)  
**www.sussex.ac.uk/languages**

### The University Bookshop

The University Bookshop within the Library building stocks a wide selection of academic and general interest books. Experienced staff work closely with tutors to ensure that reading lists are kept up to date and that required books are available in good time.

### Multimedia

The University's facilities include equipment for digitising visual and audio material.

### Media Services Unit

The Media Services Unit has a wide range of audiovisual and digital video equipment, and digital post-production facilities, which are available to students to enhance their work.



### Dyslexia, disability and mental health support

#### Sussex Regional Access Centre (SRAC)

SRAC offers needs assessments and training on assistive software and technology for disabled students, including those with specific learning difficulties and/or mental health difficulties – funding is usually required. The Centre is easily accessible for wheelchair users and those with visual impairments.

For more information, contact SRAC on **T** +44 (0)1273 678497, or **E** [srac@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:srac@sussex.ac.uk)  
Alternatively, visit **www.sussex.ac.uk/srac**

#### Specialist IT facilities

Many computer rooms, including IT Services Enquiries in Shawcross, are easily accessible to those with reduced mobility. A number of adapted PCs are available at various locations around the campus, providing an extended range of options for students with disabilities and specific learning needs.

For further information, contact IT Services Enquiries on **T**+44 (0)1273 678090, or **E** [support@its.sussex.ac.uk](mailto:support@its.sussex.ac.uk)

#### Facilities for visually impaired and print-disabled students

The Library has a separate room with a colour CCTV print enlarger, which incorporates a 21-inch display unit/television, and a Kurzweil Reading Edge scanner.

Access to a braille, adapted keyboards, mice and screens can be arranged through the Student Support Unit.

For further information, contact the Student Support Unit on **T**+44 (0)1273 877466, or **E** [studentsupport@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@sussex.ac.uk)

#### Facilities for hearing-impaired students

A number of lecture theatres and seminar rooms are fitted with induction loops.

For further information, contact the Student Support Unit on **T**+44 (0)1273 877466, or **E** [studentsupport@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@sussex.ac.uk)

## IT Services

- use IT facilities in the computer rooms, or bring your own laptop
- our wireless network lets you work from a wide variety of locations on campus
- access online resources such as timetables and reading lists
- get help when you need it from our friendly IT Services support team

Information technology will be an important part of your postgraduate studies at Sussex, and IT Services is on hand to provide the facilities you will need to help make your time at Sussex a success.

### Computers at Sussex

All students have access to PCs in computer rooms located across the campus. They all have the same customised desktop with a full Microsoft Office suite plus email and internet access. You can print and use your personal file storage from all of these PCs.

In addition, we provide specialist software and a small number of iMac computers. There are a number of adapted PCs for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

We encourage you to bring your own computer, ideally a laptop, so that you can make use of our wireless network. By taking advantage of the big investment Sussex is making in online learning and online information and support, you will be able to prepare your work where and when you choose. If you live on campus, you can use your own computer to access the residential network, which provides internet access to student bedrooms using a wired connection.



### Online resources

The IT Services infrastructure provides quick, reliable access to resources such as the Library catalogue and online journals. In addition, the University offers a fast, powerful link to the internet to facilitate your research.

Sussex Direct provides secure access to personal information. Postgraduates on taught degree programmes can view course information such as timetables and reading lists.

Before starting your programme you are encouraged to use Sussex Direct to complete online registration.

Many of our tutors use our technology-enhanced learning platform, Study Direct. This is your online learning environment, enabling you to access learning materials to study even when you are away from campus.

A number of our largest teaching rooms are equipped to enable digital lecture capture. This means that, when appropriate, your lectures may be made available as podcasts via Study Direct.

The University email service offers secure storage for important email communications. There is a web mail facility so that you can easily access your Sussex email when you are off campus.

### Help and advice

Our staff offer help and support via the web, by email, over the telephone and in person. There is also an extensive range of IT skills training courses including the opportunity to attend an induction to explain all the IT facilities that are specific to the University.

For more details about IT Services, visit [www.sussex.ac.uk/its](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its)

### Jing's perspective

'The University's advanced teaching facilities and Library and IT services are really enhancing my study experience here.'

'The Library has an excellent system to support borrowing, returning, renewing and requesting books online, and the self-service machines are really good.'

'The 24-hour access to the Library and IT Services computer clusters is very useful, making tasks such as printing, photocopying and scanning possible at any time. And no-one need worry about internet connections because there are good-quality wired and wireless networks provided across campus.'

'If you do ever need any IT support, it's easy to get help and advice whether it's via email, phone, or the help desk. The professional staff are quick to help.'

'Sussex is also really supportive if you need access to specialist development software. For example, through my school (Informatics) I've been able to use NetBeans, 3DMax 2011, Adobe Flash and CS5, to name but a few.'

'I'm so enjoying my time here – Sussex makes sure the study environment is very comfortable.'

Jing Zhao  
MSc in Advanced  
Computer Science





## Library services

- access to 20,000 journals and 700,000 books
- online resources make a 'virtual' library available anywhere you need it
- world-renowned Special Collections and archives
- 24-hour opening during term times

The Library building stands at the centre of campus and has impressive IT facilities and over 1,000 reader spaces. Around 15,000 new books are added each year and the Library provides access to over 20,000 journals in print or online.

The newly refurbished Library offers access to a variety of study facilities including the Sussex Research Hive, a dedicated graduate study area for doctoral students and researchers.

The Library participates in a reciprocal scheme so that if the book or journal you need is not available either in the Library or online, you can visit other university and specialist research libraries to use items and, in some cases, borrow publications from those libraries. An interlibrary request service is also available.

### Electronic Library

Much of the information you may need is now available online and the Electronic Library provides an increasingly wide range of online resources accessible to all members of the University, on or off campus.

The journal collections include online access to many quality titles comprising almost all the output from major academic publishers. The Library also provides access to many of the major databases available for academic research, including Web of Science, Scopus and many more.



### Using the Library

A web-based tutorial, InfoPlus, has been designed to demonstrate the use of Library resources and to help you find and evaluate information online. It also includes advice on referencing systems. A series of online subject guides provide an overview of resources in your research area.

The Library offers bespoke teaching sessions on using its resources effectively, including access to, and evaluation of, online material. For doctoral students, one-to-one support sessions tailored to individual research interests are available.

Teaching sessions on using the Library's Special Collections are also available.

### Special Collections

The University holds over 80 outstanding manuscript and archival collections, chiefly in the fields of 20th- and 21st-century literary, political and social history, and the history of science. These can be consulted in the Library's Special Collections.

Notable among the literary archives are manuscripts and correspondence of Virginia Woolf and Rudyard Kipling. Among archives of interest to political and social historians are the papers of the *New Statesman*, Kingsley Martin, Leonard Woolf and Geoffrey Gorer (anthropologist and colleague of Margaret Mead). Of major relevance to social historians is the Mass Observation Archive, founded in 1937 and still active today in collecting autobiographical material about everyday life in Britain.

As well as manuscript archives, the Library owns unique collections of printed material, ranging from rare early books in the Travers and Baker Books Collections to an unsurpassed collection of books, contemporary pamphlets and posters relating to the Paris Commune of 1871. Visit <http://specialcollections.lib.sussex.ac.uk> for more information and the catalogue.

For more general information about the Library, visit [www.sussex.ac.uk/library](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library)

**A PhD student is shown how to use the Library's Special Collections**

### Specialist libraries on campus

#### The Keith Pavitt Library

The joint library of SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research and CENTRIM (the University of Brighton Centre for Research in Innovation Management) specialises in resources for policy research in science, technology and innovation. The collection includes material on the economics of technological change, technology and innovation management, science and technology policies, research evaluation, policies for growth, employment and technology, chemical, biological and nuclear arms control, and energy and environment issues.

Access is available to postgraduate students in the School of Business, Management and Economics and may be extended to other users at the University on request. For more information, visit

[www.sussex.ac.uk/spru/research/kplib](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/spru/research/kplib)

#### IDS library and information services

Through its library (BLDS – British Library for Development Studies) and other online information services, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) is one of the world's leading sources of specialist information on the subject of development. BLDS hosts Europe's largest research collection on all aspects of economic and social change in developing countries, providing access to print materials from a huge variety of sources, as well as a range of electronic resources. Specialist staff can help with enquiries about finding development information, and BLDS also offers a number of online services, including BLDS updates. Membership is freely available to Sussex postgraduate students. For more information, visit [www.blds.ids.ac.uk](http://www.blds.ids.ac.uk)

IDS Knowledge Services include both broad-based services, such as the development, research and practice gateway ELDIS, and specialist services such as BRIDGE (gender), the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), and the Livelihoods Connect Network. For more information, visit [www.ids.ac.uk/go/knowledge-services](http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/knowledge-services)

# Research Hive

supported by

the natural

## why us?

‘Facilities for doctoral students such as the Research Hive make me feel I’m part of a research community.’

Unaizah Hauum Obaidellah,  
PhD in Cognitive Science





## Academic support

- personal attention from your tutor, advisor, or research degree supervisor
- our Doctoral School provides a home for researchers, integrating them into the wider University research community and enhancing local arrangements in schools of studies
- research skills training helps your academic career develop
- opportunities to get involved with research groups tackling real-world problems

### Postgraduate taught students

If you are a postgraduate taught (PGT) student at Sussex, most of your day-to-day contact and support will be provided by your school of studies. Each PGT student has a programme convenor, who may also be their personal tutor or advisor. For science taught programmes, academic support is provided by the programme convenor and the dissertation supervisor. In each school, the Director of Taught Programmes has overall responsibility for PGT students.

The University also offers dedicated careers development and support for taught post-graduates – an ideal preparation for your future career wherever you go. The innovative Postgrad Plus scheme offers help with building effective relationships, developing key skills as well as providing advice for those submitting job applications and wishing to develop a career progression plan. For more information, refer to Careers support for postgraduate taught students on page 25.

### Mike's perspective

'I'm studying for an MRes in Psychological Methods as a prelude to going on to complete a PhD in due course and I'm thoroughly enjoying the programme. Apart from the fact that I love my subject, my enjoyment has been greatly enhanced by the quality of the academic support I've received.

'Being a postgraduate student is both challenging and rewarding, both in terms of workload and critical evaluation of the subject, but my tutors are only too willing to impart their specialist knowledge and actively foster lively debate.

'Whether via email or face to face, my tutors and lecturers are always approachable and more than willing to help with queries, even outside their normal office hours, and my programme convenor is always willing to help and provide advice on any academic issues.

'The feedback I've received for draft reports on some courses, prior to formal submission, has proved precious in attaining higher marks and for improving the structure of my written work. The staff in the School really want you to succeed and they do everything they can to give you the tools and support to do so.'

**Mike Fitzgerald**  
MRes in Psychological Methods



### Postgraduate research students

As a postgraduate research (PGR) student your primary source of academic support will be your main supervisor. You will also be assigned a second supervisor and have a further member of academic staff who oversees your research programme. The overall responsibility for research students in each school of studies rests with your school's Director of Doctoral Studies.

In addition to the support of your school of studies, you are automatically enrolled as a member of the University's Doctoral School. The Doctoral School is a distinctive development at Sussex, operating alongside our schools of studies. The Doctoral School recognises that the more than 1,200 postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers at Sussex are a fundamental part of the University's intellectual vitality and seeks to enable you to feel fully integrated as a member of the wider research community of the University.

The Doctoral School provides a stimulating environment to support the skills development of our research students, helping them prepare for their future careers. This includes a programme of courses designed to meet the skills training requirements of doctoral researchers and to help you successfully complete your degree.

For more information, refer to Professional development for researchers on page 26.

For more information on the Doctoral School and the training courses available, visit [www.sussex.ac.uk/doctoralschool](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/doctoralschool)

### Tom's perspective

'I've studied at two other good universities, but Sussex offers the most supportive academic environment I've known. It's invaluable as a researcher to have the support of your entire department, not just your supervisor. You can rely on the input of your fellow researchers, and have the experience of explaining your ideas to a community that cares what you think.

'The strong interdisciplinary spirit that runs through the University helps prevent academic isolation and, as a member of the Doctoral School, you're never trapped in the bubble of your own research – everyone wants to draw on the thoughts of everyone else. That intellectual network gives you a breadth of support that most universities can't offer.

'Sussex also knows that a PhD isn't just about churning out work – it's about turning you into a researcher. The discipline-specific research workshops offer an excellent way for the staff to teach you the lessons they had to learn the hard way! A programme of weekly visiting speakers keeps you in contact with the top thinkers in the field. Not only do you get to hear the latest theories straight from the horse's mouth, you can give them a good grilling about their paper either during the seminar or afterwards at the bar.'

**Tom McClelland**  
PhD in Philosophy



The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds Alexandra Loske's research on the colour scheme in Brighton's Royal Pavilion. Her Collaborative Doctoral Award fosters collaboration between the University and the Royal Pavilion – just one of many successful local and regional partnerships