

ESSEX SUMMER SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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December 2025



❄️ Winter News ❄️

Looking ahead to an exciting 2026!

As we wrap up another busy year, we want to thank all our participants, staff, and partners for their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm. Before everyone heads off for a well-deserved festive break, we are delighted to share some important updates about the year ahead.

Our 59th Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis will be taking place from **29 June 2026 – 14 August 2026**, both online and at the beautiful University of Essex, Colchester Campus!

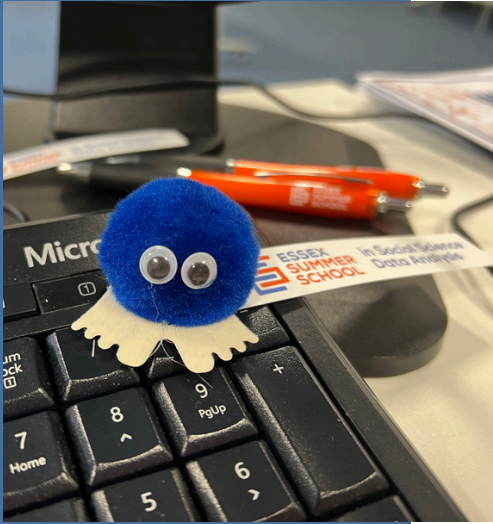
2026 Programme Dates

- Pre-sessional 1: Monday 29 June – Friday 3 July 2026
- Session 1: Monday 6 July – Friday 17 July 2026
- Pre-sessional 2: Monday 13 July – Friday 17 July 2026
- Session 2: Monday 20 July – Friday 31 July 2026
- Session 3: Monday 3 August – Friday 14 August 2026

I must thank you for a fantastic course. I found it really enjoyable and insightful – I've never taken so many notes in one week!

It was very clear too how much you've refined the course and made improvements. I picked up quite a few tips around teaching and learning, as well as the actual content.

- 'Qualitative Interviewing' participant, 2025



2026 applications are opening soon

Applications for our 2026 Summer School will open in **January 2026**.

Whether you are planning to deepen your academic interests, explore a new field, or experience an international learning environment, this is the perfect opportunity to secure your place early.

Course list, entry requirements, social programme taster and accommodation options are now available on our website.

[Read more](#)

NEW COURSES SPOTLIGHT

Alongside our established courses, we have broaden our academic offering with new and updated courses for 2026. Below is a preview at what's new:

PRE-SESSIONAL 1: MONDAY 29 JUNE – FRIDAY 3 JULY 2026

OD ONLINE
1 WK
17.5 HRS

Introduction to Python for Social Scientists

Instructor: Raymond Hicks, Columbia University

This course is designed for beginners who want to add practical coding skills to their research toolkit. Participants will learn how to work with data, create visualisations, and build reproducible workflows in Python, gaining hands-on experience they can immediately apply to social science research questions.

SESSION 1: MONDAY 6 JULY – FRIDAY 17 JULY 2026

1I HYBRID
1 WK
17.5 HRS

Applied Causal Inference with Observational Data

Instructor: Ryan T. Moore, American University

While experiments provide the soundest evidence about causality, in the social sciences, many important causal questions are not subject to experimentation. So, how can we build credible causal arguments? Learn how to strengthen your causal case from observational data using foundational and cutting-edge methods in our course.

1J HYBRID
2 WKS
35 HRS

Measurement: From simple classification to model estimation

Instructor: Xavier Fernández-i-Marín, University of Barcelona

This course teaches students how to transform raw data into meaningful social science measures using tools like Bayesian modelling, clustering, and Large Generative AI Models (LGAIMs, also known as LLMs). Participants will gain practical skills in designing measurement strategies and deriving latent variables for concepts central to empirical research.

SESSION 2: MONDAY 20 JULY – FRIDAY 31 JULY 2026

2V ONLINE
2 WKS
35 HRS

Qualitative Methods for Empirical Social Science

Instructor: Juan Masullo, University of Milan

This course equips participants with core qualitative research skills - from designing and conducting interviews and observations to evaluating evidence and combining methods. It's ideal for social scientists seeking to deepen their ability to plan, critique, and implement rigorous qualitative and quantitative research methods.

SESSION 3: MONDAY 3 AUGUST – FRIDAY 14 AUGUST 2026

3C ONLINE
2 WKS
35 HRS

Bayesian Latent Variable and Measurement Models

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Bakker, University of Essex

This course teaches participants how to apply Bayesian approaches to multilevel, latent variable, and measurement modelling, offering hands-on experience with tools like R, JAGS, and Stan. It's ideal for individuals looking to deepen their understanding of complex data structures and uncertainty in social science analysis.

3G ONLINE
2 WKS
35 HRS

Text Analysis for Social Scientists: Utilizing LLM-Assisted Coding

Instructor: Raymond Hicks, Columbia University

This course is a hands-on introduction to computational methods for social scientists. Learn how to analyze text data, build topic models, and explore the newest frontier: LLM-assisted ("vibe") coding, where large language models help guide, interpret, and accelerate data analysis. Open to students and researchers eager to combine insight with machine intelligence in the study of history.

3J ONLINE
2 WKS
35 HRS

Deconstruction and Discourse Theory as Method

Instructor: Professor Lasse Thomassen, Queen Mary University London, UK

This course introduces participants to deconstruction and discourse theory as research methods, exploring their philosophical foundations and methodological implications. Through practical examples, the course shows how these approaches can be applied to analyse texts, events, and political phenomena for concrete empirical analysis.





Scholarship Opportunities

The Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis is committed to making advanced methodological training accessible to students from diverse backgrounds.

We continue to offer two fantastic scholarship opportunities in 2026.

[Read more](#)

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Women in Political Methodology Scholarship

This scholarship is open to female students currently enrolled in Political Science PhD programmes. It provides a tuition waiver to attend one of our **2 weeks in-person** courses. This is a wonderful opportunity for female scholars to advance their research skills and network with peers and experts in the field.

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Global South Scholarship

Designed for PhD students in Political Science from the Global South, this scholarship provides advanced methodological training. The scholarship covers tuition for one of our **2 weeks intermediate or advanced courses**, which can be attended in person or virtually. Introductory courses do not qualify for the Global South scholarship.

Applications open on 1 February 2026

Application Process

To apply for these scholarships, candidates must submit the following:

- A cover letter detailing their research area, the course they intend to take, and how it will benefit their dissertation
- A current CV
- A letter of recommendation/Proof of enrolment in a relevant PhD programme

Deadline and Notifications

Applications deadline is **3 April 2026, 5 pm (BST)**

Awardees will be notified by **20 April 2026**



Summer School Office – Holiday Opening Times

Our team will be taking a short break over the festive period.

- **Office closed:** 18 December 2025 – 5 January 2026
- **Office reopens:** Monday, 5 January 2026

Emails received during the closure will be responded to as soon as possible once we return.

Wishing You a Wonderful Festive Season

Thank you for being part of our community.

We look forward to welcoming many of you - new and returning - in 2026.

Have a restful break and a joyful start to the new year.

Warm wishes,

Essex Summer School Team



**Carolina
Garriga**
Director



**Sergio
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Deputy Director



**Roxi
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Coordinator



**Vickie
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