



**School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences
Department of Mathematics
Student Handbook**

Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Mathematics, in the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS), at the University of Sussex.

This booklet concentrates on the content, teaching and assessment of those first-year modules for students of Mathematics that are the responsibility of the Department of Mathematics. This information is also available from other sources and you are particularly encouraged to make use of the Department's website. There are a number of people who will be able to help you if you have any questions including your Academic Advisor, the Senior Tutor, student mentors, the MPS School Office staff or myself. We all want you to settle in quickly and get the best out of your time here.

Professor Michael Melgaard
Head of Mathematics Department

Mathematics Department Key Contacts

Head of School	Prof Philip Harris
Head of Department	Prof Michael Melgaard
Head of Assessment	Dr Vladislav Vysotskiy
Head of Curriculum	Dr Gabriel Koch
Senior Tutor	Prof Peter Giesl
Careers Tutor	Dr Chandrasekhar Venkataraman
Mathematics Course Co-ordinator	Mr Lewis Johnson

Mathematics Lecturers

All lecturers in MPS have offices in Pevensey 2 or Pevensey 3.

For a full list please see here

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/people>

MPS School Office

The School Office is located on the ground floor of Pevensey 2 in the foyer.

NB: During Autumn 2020, the office is open Mon-Fri 10:00-15:00.

[In ordinary circumstances the office is open Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00 during term time.]

Details of office staff are listed here:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/people>

Telephone number: 01273 873254

Email: mps@sussex.ac.uk

Term Dates and assessment periods

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/term-dates>

All MPS Students Canvas site

There is lots of useful information and announcements on the All MPS Students Canvas site. Join it by following this link:

<https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/enroll/NJ3A9H>

Teaching and Learning

NB: During the current exceptional global health crisis, many of our normal procedures have been modified for at least the Autumn 2020 term, and may also persist throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. These temporary adjustments are mentioned in red below.

1. Modules

Each module has a number of lectures each week, supported by regular workshops. Some modules also make use of computing labs. The purpose of the lectures is to motivate and explain the module content. Take notes during lectures. **Each module also has either lecture notes online and/or a set book. Lecture notes are available online in Canvas: <https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/>.** Use these, any handouts and the recommended textbooks to help you tackle the worksheets distributed via Canvas. The lectures are given by the academic staff.

2. The essence

You can only become proficient at mathematics if you spend a lot of time with pen and paper working at problems.

3. Workshops

These are given by Tutors, who are mostly postgraduate Mathematics students. You should recognise that the workshops are your main opportunity to get help. Tutors will give guidance, but you are encouraged to discuss the problems with other students.

On each worksheet there will be some problems that are handed in, marked and contribute towards the final mark, as well as extra practice questions which are not marked. **To get the best out of a workshop or exercise class try the problems before you arrive there.**

In each module, there are four submission dates for worksheets. Submissions are every other week. The workshop before the submission date is to get help completing the exercises.

4. Presentations **NB: Presentations have been suspended for the Autumn 2020 term.**

[In ordinary circumstances: On one module each term (Geometry in Autumn, Linear Algebra in Spring), your workshop group will be divided into smaller groups. You will form four groups of 3-4 students and who will give presentations to the other students and your tutor on questions marked with "P" on the worksheet. Each student should present one question on the blackboard and receive a mark. Help to prepare these presentation is available from the workshop tutors and your academic advisers. The tutors will explain the process and give a sample presentation in the workshops in week 1.]

5. Handing in work

You should hand in work for every submission date, whether you think it perfect or not.

It should be submitted to the module Canvas page via the Assessments tab. This is marked by the tutors and you can view your feedback online. If you do not understand the tutor's comments, please discuss them with the tutor or lecturer.

6. Meeting with your Academic Advisor

NB: During Autumn 2020 these meetings will typically be virtual, online via Zoom. In your first semester, you will meet your Academic Advisor in a small group every 1-2 weeks, or on an individual basis to discuss various aspects of settling into academic life. The topics can range from attending lectures, studying, working on worksheets and with other students, and online learning to preparing for exams. This is also an opportunity to ask any questions you might have about studying at university in a small group setting, and to meet other students.

7. Attendance **NB: During Autumn 2020, attendance will largely be 'virtual', and monitored via online activity.**

Attendance at lectures, workshops, computing labs, and meetings with your Academic Advisor is obligatory. If you are ill or know you will be absent, please inform the MPS School Office by emailing mps@sussex.ac.uk.

8. Help

ASK when you need help! Students enter university with diverse backgrounds and should never feel afraid to confess ignorance of some notation, fact or technique.

Apart from your workshop tutors, the other main source of mathematical help is via faculty Office Hours. All faculty set aside one hour per week for each module they teach, when they are available in their offices **[NB: During Autumn 2020, office hours will typically be 'virtual' (online) via Zoom]**, to give help to any student. The individual times will be posted on the module Canvas sites and/or on Sussex Direct.

9. Progress

All your marks appear on Sussex Direct; go to <https://direct.sussex.ac.uk/mle/login.php> and log in using your IT services username and password.

10. Study skills

The University's S3 guide to study skills gives advice. Visit <http://sussex.ac.uk/S3> and make use of the resources there.

The Skill Clouds project explores the idea of using tags and tag clouds to present skills information to students in a visually appealing way. This will be useful in thinking about your future career. Visit <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tldu/studentskills/skillclouds> for more details.

11. Assessment

NB: During Autumn 2020, the following applies. For your Mathematics modules, your module mark will be divided as follows: 10% will come from four exercise sheets (2.5% each), 10% will come from the average of ten weekly quizzes (this mark will appear as 'POF' on Sussex Direct), and the remaining 80% will come from a final exam. The exams for Autumn term modules will take place in January (Mid-year assessment period), the exams for Spring term modules will take place in May/June (Year-end assessment period).

The pass mark is 40% (out of 100%). You **need to pass every first-year module to progress to Year 2**, so make sure that stay up-to-date with the material in all modules.

[In ordinary circumstances: For the six first-year modules Calculus, Numerical Analysis, Introduction to Pure Mathematics, Analysis 1, Discrete Mathematics, Mathematics in Everyday Life, it is 10% on four exercise sheets, 10% on a mid-term test (or open notes test for Mathematics in Everyday Life), and 80% on an exam.

For Linear Algebra and Geometry, it is 10% on four exercise sheets, and a presentation, 10% on a mid-term test, and 80% on an exam.

The exams for Autumn term modules will take place in January (Mid-year assessment period), the exams for Spring term modules will take place in May/June (Year-end assessment period). The mid-term tests will take place in week 7 in both Autumn term and Spring term.]

12. Progression Criteria

See section 1.4 and Appendix G of [The Examinations and Assessment Regulations Handbook pages](#).

13. Late work and Exceptional Circumstances:

See sections 1.6 and 1.7 of [The Examinations and Assessment Regulations Handbook pages](#).

14. Student Progress and Assessment Office

You can also find information on assessment on the [Student Systems and Records Office web page](#).

Degree Courses

The courses offered in the Maths Department are the following:

BSc/MMath Mathematics

MMath Mathematics with Research Placement

BSc/MMath Mathematics with Economics

BSc/MMath Mathematics with Finance

The award of a qualification in a given degree course recognizes that you have been judged to have achieved a set of specific learning outcomes. The learning outcomes for your course, as defined for your entry cohort, are published under 'course specifications' on the departmental teaching pages <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/ug/ugcourses>

As you progress through your course, you are provided with opportunities to be assessed, and demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes. You should read them at the start of your studies and reflect during the module of the course on how you are gradually acquiring them.

The modules that make up your course are also listed in the specifications. Details of the individual modules are published in the 'module directory' section of the departmental teaching pages <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/modules>. The descriptions detail the module learning outcomes and the module assessments, which are designed to demonstrate that the outcomes have been achieved.

The degree courses Mathematics, Mathematics with Economics and Mathematics with Finance are available as 3-year BSc degrees or 4-year MMath degrees.

Feedback

Towards the end of each module you will be asked to fill in an online *module evaluation questionnaire*. The link allowing you to do this will appear on your Sussex Direct page. We have used module questionnaires for many years to obtain feedback on our teaching. Student responses have led to changes in method, content and organisation. The results are displayed on the Maths Department web pages and notice boards.

Communication

We will use e-mail to send you messages always using your **University email address**. There are also pigeonholes in the Foyer of the Pevensey II Building, which you should check regularly. External mail addressed to you at "Mathematics" at Sussex will be placed in these pigeonholes. **Marked work not collected from lectures is** kept with the lecturers. For reasons of confidentiality, please do not leave work in pigeonholes. If the office is not open, there is a locked drop-box you can use on the office door. To get in touch with a member of staff use e-mail. All staff also have pigeonholes near the foyer in the Pevensey II Building. The postal address is Department of Mathematics, Pevensey II Building, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9QH.

Please visit the Maths web pages <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics>

Sussex Direct

Go to <https://direct.sussex.ac.uk/mle/page.php?realm=home> and login with your username and password. Sussex Direct contains your timetable, curriculum and module marks to date. Throughout your time at Sussex you can track your progress and results here.

Canvas

Go to <https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/> and login with your username and password. Canvas is your online resource for lecture notes and other information about the modules you are taking.

Further Documentation

You can find the syllabus for each Maths module in the on-line Module Directory, available here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/modules>

The written *module document* provided by the lecturer will give extra information:

- the lecturer's office hours;
- a book list;
- the nature and frequency of workshops;
- how the solutions to set exercises will be made available;
- information about any tests that will be set;
- the formal assessment arrangements.

Calculators and Computing

During the term, you may use any calculators or computers you like when you are learning the material, but in examinations only the following CASIO calculators: fx82, fx83, fx85, fx-991, fx115, and fx570 (all with any suffix) may be used. Students are not allowed to take instruction notes or booklets relating to their calculator into an examination or to transfer their calculator to another student. **Please note that calculators are not allowed in most 1st year exams.**

The University has an extensive network of computers; many of them are open access, 24 hours a day. Do take the opportunity this offers to become even more computer literate and proficient than you already are. You will be given an e-mail address and you should check your e-mail box frequently as this route will be used to send you messages, both individually and as a group. You will find that all lecturers will put material, such as solutions to exercises, or lecture notes, on the web sites linked to their modules.

The University's computing system supports many packages, including MATLAB and MAPLE; these enable calculations to be done efficiently and also symbolic manipulation to be performed.

Maths Society/Mathematics Staff Student Committee (MSSC)

The Maths Society aims to run social and academic events for students in the department as well as giving a forum for the Maths student reps and lecturers to meet to discuss any concerns regarding teaching and curriculum. The Maths Society Committee meets every two to three weeks during term time and aims to arrange at least one social event per term for both students and staff, including a Maths ball in the spring term. If you are interested in joining the Committee or becoming a student rep please contact the Society via the Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/SussexUniversityMathsSociety>

The MSSC is a committee made up of the student reps from each year and key faculty. To find out more about becoming a student rep please visit:

<https://www.sussexstudent.com/student-reps/become-a-student-rep/>

Help on Academic Issues: Your Academic Advisor and the Senior Tutor

You will be assigned a member of faculty who will normally be your Academic Advisor throughout your time as an undergraduate. Your Academic Advisor is likely to be the lecturer on one or more modules, but will also be a source of advice throughout your studies and after. You will probably want your Academic Advisor to act as a referee when you apply for jobs so make sure that he/she gets to know you. At the end of each term your Academic Advisor will fix a time to discuss your progress with you. It is important that you receive this feedback on your progress, to identify your strengths and weaknesses.

The Senior Tutor (Professor Peter Giesl) oversees the work of Academic Advisors and is also available to all undergraduates for consultation on academic matters.

Change of Degree Course

Your Academic Advisor will help you assess the merits of any change of degree course. The procedure for changing depends on the magnitude of the change you seek. Transfers are only available up to week 3 of each term.

- *Change of minor subject*

Arrange an interview with the Senior Tutor who will check on the feasibility and stipulate any special conditions. Such a change is usually straightforward if done early enough.

- *Change from BSc to MMath or vice versa*

The MMath degrees are aimed at students who intend either to study Mathematics beyond degree level, or who expect to use considerable technical mathematical knowledge in their career. If you think it appropriate to change, arrange an interview with the Senior Tutor.

- *Change of major to another degree course within MPS.*

To change to a different Mathematics course you should arrange to see the Senior Tutor for Mathematics (Prof Peter Giesl). To change to a Physics course you should arrange to see the Senior Tutor for Physics (Prof Iacopo Vivarelli).

- *Change of degree course to another School*

Arrange to see the Admissions Tutor of the School or Department that you wish to transfer into. He/she will explain the procedures and conditions or refer you to the appropriate person who handles transfers or admissions.

Academic misconduct

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/academicmisconduct>

- *Plagiarism*

Do not copy solutions to exercises from some website or other source. Equally, when writing essays or a dissertation, do not copy it from elsewhere.

- *Collusion*

It is permissible to work with other students on the exercise sheets handed out by the lecturers. Just copying someone else's solution is not permitted.

- *Examinations*

NB: During Autumn 2020, all exams will be conducted online, and certain outside materials such as lecture notes are allowed to be used during the exam. The academic misconduct rules related to these will be clearly explained on the School's Canvas pages.

[In ordinary circumstances: You may not cheat by taking any written or electronic material into exams.]

Plagiarism, collusion, and cheating in exams are all forms of academic misconduct which the University takes very seriously. Every year, some students commit academic misconduct unintentionally because they did not know what was expected of them. The consequences for committing academic misconduct can be severe, so it is important that you familiarise yourself with what it is and how to avoid it. The University's S3 guide to study skills gives advice on writing well, including hints and tips on how to avoid making serious mistakes. Visit: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/> and make use of the resources there. You will also find helpful guides to referencing properly and improving your critical writing skills.

If you are dealing with difficult circumstances, such as illness or bereavement, do not try to rush your work or hand in something which may be in breach of the rules. Instead you should seek confidential advice from the Student Life Centre. <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/>

The full University rules on academic misconduct are set out in the Examination and Assessment Handbook for Undergraduate Students available at:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment>

Help on non-academic issues: The Student Life Centre

The Student Life Team will be the first port of call dealing with:

- Personal Concerns
- Submission of Mitigating Evidence
- Student Funding
- Access to the Learning Fund
- All Scholarships, Bursaries and Vice Chancellors loans.
- Temporary withdrawal
- Permanent withdrawal
- Help with understanding University procedures

The Centre is located in Bramber House and is open Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm. Please use the contact details below to make an appointment to discuss any of the above issues with a student advisor:

Tel: 01273 876767

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/>

Email: studentlifecentre@sussex.ac.uk

Exceptional Circumstances

Extensions on formal assessments and submissions are not granted. If there are extenuating circumstances for late or non-submission you need to present evidence of the circumstances along with a mitigating evidence form. This should be done as early as possible and in all cases before final deadlines set by the University. For further information on exceptional circumstances and circumstances you will need to consult with the Student Life Centre:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/circumstances>

The general University student handbook can be found at

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/students/essentials/studenthandbook/> were useful information such as: University Regulations and Policy, Student Discipline, Data Protection and Record-keeping, Feedback and Student Representation, the Sussex Student Charter, Safety, Academic Matters, Examination arrangements, Marking and feedback, mitigating evidence, study abroad, graduation, support and services, student life centre, library, health centre, shops, banks, Careers and Employability Centre etc

Disclaimer

The information given in this Handbook should prove useful to all members of the Department, although it is primarily for the benefit of new undergraduate students. As far as possible, it is reasonably accurate and up-to-date but, as the contents are naturally subject to change, the accuracy cannot be guaranteed.