



MSc Mathematics

Course Handbook for Postgraduate Students

2025-26

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Introduction

Welcome to the MSc Mathematics at the University of Sussex. We hope that you will enjoy studying here and that you participate actively in the life of the University. Our aim for all students is to provide you with the opportunities to achieve your potential and obtain the best degree possible.

This document is a reference to the key points of the MSc Mathematics at the University of Sussex. It describes how the course is organised and the faculty who are your key contacts. It provides links to the online descriptions of both compulsory and specialised options modules and explains the methods of teaching and assessment we use. It also offers hints about how to make the best use of your time, outlines some of the teaching and learning resources provided on the course and at the University.

In addition to this handbook, the webpage <https://student.sussex.ac.uk/policies> provides you with University-wide information.

Dr Nick Simm (n.j.simm@sussex.ac.uk)

<https://profiles.sussex.ac.uk/p435611-nicholas-simm>

Course Convenor, MSc Mathematics

Course Information MSc Mathematics

This course has a number of optional modules common to all students on the MSc Mathematics. Four options are taken in the autumn term, four in the spring term plus the core dissertation module.

For the full details of the module content, module aims, and learning outcomes, see:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/pgcourses/2025/G1501T#modules>

Choosing your modules

You will be able to select your optional modules when you register online. If you require any help with choosing your modules, please contact the course convenor (Dr Nick Simm, n.j.simm@sussex.ac.uk) and they will be happy to assist you with choosing the options. If you are unhappy with your choice of optional modules, you can apply to change one or more of your modules. In order to do this, you must contact the School Office mps-pgtooffice@sussex.ac.uk. Please note that we cannot guarantee any module changes as these are subject to availability (i.e., number of students in the module) and timetable clashes. No module changes will be allowed after WEEK TWO of each term (Autumn/Spring).

Key Contacts

The course is managed and developed by the Department of Mathematics within the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, and the course convenor is Dr Nick Simm (n.j.simm@sussex.ac.uk).

The Department of Mathematics is based in Pevensey 2/3 buildings, and the School Office is in Pevensey 2 Building. If you have any queries about your course overall, or your module choices, you should contact the School Office in the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences:

E: mps@sussex.ac.uk

T: 01273 873254

Teaching Strategy

This course is offered as a one-year full-time course. The course begins in September in the autumn term and finishes at the beginning of September in the following year.

Term dates are available here

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

Course modules are spread across the autumn and spring terms, and are taught in lectures, seminars, workshops and practical sessions according to the requirements of the module. Over the summer period students take on a major research project for their MSc dissertation which they must hand in by the specified date in August.

Assessment Strategy

The course uses a number of different modes of assessment including unseen examinations, coursework, project work and dissertation. In order to pass a particular module you need a mark of at least 50%. This mark may be derived from a single exam or as the weighted average of several units of assessment (exam, coursework, etc.). Coursework is submitted during the period of the module and submission dates are notified to you in advance. Formal submission dates are noted on your Sussex Direct pages. Note that tutors are not allowed to provide extensions to submission deadlines.

The assessment details for each module are listed online:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/pgcourses>

Assessments and Deadlines for Formal Submissions

Full details about the assessment deadlines for each module are available on your personal Sussex Direct study pages and on Canvas.

Exams take place in three assessment periods. Term 1 modules will be examined in January, and Term 2 modules will be examined in May/June. There is also a formal period for resitting assessments in June (T1 modules)/August (T2 modules). We encourage you to regularly check your study timetable in Sussex Direct and e-mails. The MSc Dissertation is handed in on a specified date during August. Your Sussex Direct account will tell you how to submit the dissertation (usually via Canvas).

Please note you will have assessment deadlines. Each one of your core and option module assessments and deadlines for submission appears in your study timetable on the Sussex Direct web page. It is your responsibility to be aware of these deadlines.

Submitting your work

You must submit your work to the module Canvas page via the Assessments tab, unless otherwise specified on Sussex Direct. 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.

It is important that such deadlines are met; the University applies a system of penalties to assessments that are handed in late. For more details, please consult the University Examinations and Assessment Regulations:

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

The assessment of the MSc research project/dissertation includes a dissertation and, for some modules, an oral presentation. Supervisors for MSc research projects/dissertations are

allocated in due course after the conclusion of the spring term, in consultation with the relevant MSc convenor.

Feedback to students

There are a number of ways in which you will receive feedback regarding your progress:

- Marked coursework - You will get feedback each time you have a piece of coursework marked, which can be picked up in lectures or during a lecturer's feedback/office hour.
- Lecturers' feedback hours - For details, please see the Canvas page of the appropriate module. Alternatively, search Sussex web pages for the relevant staff member and their feedback hours for the week will be displayed.

Support for your learning

In addition to your MSc course convenor, you will have a dissertation supervisor. If you have any queries with a specific module, you can visit the module lecturer during their advertised feedback/office hours. For general academic support available to students at Sussex, including support for English language skills, see

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/student-life/studying/learning-support>.

You can also get valuable information, advice and support from the Student Centre:

<https://student.sussex.ac.uk/centre/>

They can help you with many issues including:

- Personal concerns affecting study progress or well-being
- Funding and finance including scholarships, bursaries and hardship funds
- Sources of help to improve academic performance – identifying obstacles to learning
- Understanding university systems and regulations in relation to assessment, services, complaints, conduct, and discipline.
- Progression, intermission and withdrawal processes - discussion and support
- Referrals to other professional services on campus
- Exceptional Circumstances

Online submissions - Canvas

Each module has its own procedure for handling coursework and the module convenor will provide detailed information to you regarding the submission of coursework.

Each module of this course will have its own Canvas webpage. You can view all of your Canvas modules by logging into <https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk>. If you need to submit your assessment through Canvas, please follow the procedure below:

- Login to Canvas and select the module you wish to submit your work to from either the 'Dashboard' or 'Modules' page.
- Select the 'Assignments' tab from the module navigation menu. Each assignment includes a Due date and time (deadline for submission) and Available until date and time (deadline for late submissions).

- Select the assignment you wish to submit to. When the page opens, you will see further information on the assessment and instructions for the submission.

For further information regarding online Canvas submission of assignments, please visit <https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/courses/14493/pages/submitting-canvas-online-assignments>. It is important that all submission deadlines are met. The University applies a system of penalties to assessments that are submitted late. For more details, please consult the University Examinations and Assessment Regulations:

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

You can make an exceptional circumstances claim if you experience something sudden, temporary and unforeseen, which could have an impact on one of your assessments. If you would like to submit an exceptional circumstances claim, please visit <https://student.sussex.ac.uk/assessment/exceptional-circumstances>.

Study Skills and Resources

Turnitin

Turnitin is an online 'text matching' tool that compares a student's work to a huge database of other files and shows where there are strong similarities. It is often referred to as plagiarism detection software.

Skills Hub

The University's Skills Hub gives advice on writing well, including hints and tips on how to avoid making serious mistakes. Visit and make use of the resources there. You will also find helpful guides to referencing properly and improving your critical writing skills.

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skills-hub/>

Referencing

These are some useful websites and places to go to for advice on how to reference essays and dissertations:

- Skills Hub website on referencing <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/skills-hub/referencing-and-academic-integrity>
- Use the resources on your Canvas pages associated with your modules.

Student Support

The Student Centre provides support for students with health or wellbeing issues, as well as support for students with disabilities. See <https://student.sussex.ac.uk/wellbeing/> and <https://student.sussex.ac.uk/disability/> for more information.

Academic Integrity and avoiding Academic Misconduct

Academic Integrity

The University of Sussex has a set of Academic Integrity Values which all students are expected to follow. These values are:

- Honesty: The work you produce for assessment is your own and where you have used other's work, this is clearly acknowledged: this is done by adding references to your assessments.
- Trust: Your tutors and fellow students can trust you to be honest about the work you produce and submit for assessment.
- Fairness: You agree that all students should be fairly treated and that you do not try to gain advantage by not producing your own work for assessment.
- Respect: You treat other members of the academic community with respect: fellow students, your tutors and the admin staff.
- Responsibility: You take responsibility for your own learning and follow the University of Sussex Academic Integrity values and assessment regulations.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is cheating. It includes

- Collusion
- Plagiarism
- Personation
- Misconduct in unseen exams
- Fabrication of results

There are strict rules on academic misconduct and penalties are severe. The University's regulations and policy on Academic Misconduct are published on the following web pages: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment>.

Practical Help and Advice

For practical help and guidance please refer to "Skills Hub", where there is a wealth of information regarding skills to avoid academic misconduct. See: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skills-hub>

Giving feedback about your course

Each module will have a feedback period, and your lecturer will explain when and how to give feedback. You can talk to your lecturers during their office hours, if you have any concerns about the course. You can also discuss this with the MSc Course Convenor (Dr Nick Simm, n.j.simm@sussex.ac.uk), or the Head of Department (Prof Peter Giesl, p.a.giesl@sussex.ac.uk). All staff contact details are available on the University web pages.

You can also give feedback to your student representative. Student reps are democratically elected to represent their peers. They enable a useful and effective communication link between staff and students. They provide helpful feedback to staff on modules and courses; raise concerns in a constructive manner; give feedback to other students on why particular decisions are made; and can help to pre-empt concerns becoming serious issues. To find the details of your student rep, please check the noticeboard in the School, or visit: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/studentreps>.