

Mathematics FAQs

1. What compulsory courses will I take in first year?

This depends on which degree you are enrolled in. For single Honours Mathematics and most joint degrees involving Mathematics, you must take MA1005 Calculus I and MA1006 Algebra in the first subsession, and MA1508 Calculus II and MA1511 Set Theory in the second subsession. If you are enrolled in a joint degree, the other subject will also have compulsory courses. [You can find the full program requirements for degrees here.](#)

2. Can I take optional courses? How many? Are there any restrictions to what I can take?

Each subsession you will take a total of 4 courses, so you can choose optional courses to fill up any spaces not occupied by compulsory courses. The optional Level 1 Mathematics courses are MA1510 Combinatorics and MA1516 Mathematics and Computation through Programming MATLAB. Students studying maths often take courses in other science subjects such as physics and computing science, but there are many other options including philosophy, economics or a foreign language. There are very few restrictions as long as there are no timetable clashes. When you are choosing your courses, you will have access to an online timetable tool that will let you check for clashes.

You can find a full list of courses in the university's [course catalogue](#).

3. What will my timetable in first year look like? How much contact time will I have with lecturers?

Normally each Mathematics course has three 1-hour lectures per week and one 1-hour tutorial. There may be some changes in how courses are delivered due to the coronavirus pandemic.

4. What are the typical first-year class sizes like?

Class sizes in Mathematics range from around 40 to 100 students. Your tutorials will be in smaller groups of around 25 students. Class sizes may be different in other subjects.

5. Are there work placements available and are they built into the degree?

We are introducing a new five-year MSci with an industrial placement year.¹ If you secure a placement then you will spend a year working in industry, after completing either Level 3 or Level 4. Students will be able to switch easily between the MSci and a regular Mathematics degree.

6. Will there be any group work/group projects?

A few of our higher-level courses involve group work. Many of our students work together informally in the Maths Common Area in the heart of our department.

7. How do tutorials work?

Lecturers assign problem sheets each week. You are expected to work on these problems before the tutorial. During the tutorial, the tutor will help students individually and/or go over solutions in front of the whole class.

8. How are my first-year courses assessed?

All our courses are assessed through a mixture of continuous assessment (usually in-class tests or take-home assignments) and final exams. There may be some changes in how courses are assessed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

9. Can I study abroad with this degree? Where can I go?

Yes, you can! The time spent abroad is usually for one semester or sometimes a full year, either in your second or third year of study. Our degree programmes have agreements for placements in Europe and the US.

10. Are there any societies that would be good to join?

Yes, we have a Maths Society. They arrange social events throughout the year and run the Maths Club, which organises talks for students on various topics in mathematics. For more details, see the [AUSA page here](#).

11. Where do I go for more information?

Try our [website](#) or email mathsenquiries@abdn.ac.uk.

¹ Subject to final confirmation.