

The Further Mathematics Support Programme

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What A levels did you study?

I studied Mathematics, English Language, and Biology at A level, along with AS History in Year 12 and AS Further Mathematics in Year 13, some units of which I taught myself.

Why did you decide to take Further Mathematics?

I took further maths because I wanted to do a degree in maths and I thought that doing further maths would benefit me by giving me more of a breadth of knowledge in the field. Looking back AS Further Mathematics, especially unit Further Pure 1 (FP1), has helped me with many aspects of the first year of my course.

What was your experience of the Further Mathematics course?

I thoroughly enjoyed it and found it to be very interesting; my main challenge was learning two units independently while continuing with 3 other A levels; however, I am very happy that I studied Further Mathematics as it has helped me with different units at degree level. For instance the concept of complex numbers is used in many units I am studying now, such as Number Systems. Also, proof by induction, a concept taught in FP1, is a frequently used method to prove a statement and by already knowing the method, it helped me to develop how to use it to more problematic questions.

Through talking to friends on the course who did Further Mathematics to A level, unit Further Pure 3 (FP3) relates closely to some units at University.

What degree course are you now studying?

I am currently studying for a BSc in Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Leeds.

How have you found the transition from A level to degree study? I have found the jump between A level and degree not as large as I was expecting. With maths you need to know the foundations thoroughly before building on it, so at the start of the year when we were started a new topic, such as limits, the tutors went over the basic principles surrounding that idea.

If someone wanted to do maths at degree level after A level I would suggest that they should go for it and keep the notes from things studied at A level, because they will want to look back on key topics.

What is it like to study for a Mathematics degree?

Studying Mathematics at University is hard, but it is utterly enjoyable and enormously interesting. I enjoy learning new ideas and developing many different proofs and ideas that earlier on in education would have taken for granted.

The lectures can be quite difficult, but there will normally be notes online and there are tutorials where you can get help with questions and concepts that you are struggling with. University education is not as scary as it may seem the lectures may seem overwhelming at first but there are many ways to get help and support from your peers.

I'm not too sure about a career path yet, I'm thinking about going into medical statistics or maybe teaching maths; I'm going to go to lots of career fairs during my second year and hopefully get further guidance to find what I really want to do when I graduate.