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# Maths Careers Fair 2011 - transcript

**Hannah Brooks, 2nd year maths student:**

Today the School of Mathematics is hosting a careers fair where lots of different companies who are specifically interested in people who have got mathematics degrees have come to talk to students. The advantage of that is that we don't just sit in lectures learning, we actually find out how our skills will be useful in the future and find jobs for when we've finished our degree.

**Brendon Bacon, College Internship Officer:**

Obviously nowadays, the graduate market is a lot more competitive. The recruiters, in a lot of cases, really have the choice to pick who they want from the students who are graduating. It's important for students to get careers advice because it well help them to, to learn how to put themselves in front of the competition. It will also give them advice on what industries are doing well, and which ones aren't doing so well, so perhaps they can have a think about which career they want to move into in the future.

**Gemma Cupples, 2nd year maths student:**

I've got no idea what I want to do. That's why I'm here, yeah, I've got no idea! [laughs]

**David Cohen, 3rd year maths student:**

I think I just wanted to find out a bit about what I could go into in the future. I, um, I'm not really sure exactly what I want to do - I know I want to go into the finance sector, so I wanna ask around all the companies around here and pretty much find out exactly whatwould be good for me and what I'd enjoy and what really just, like, appeals to me, basically.

**Doctor Chris Good, Deputy Head of School, Admissions, Marketing and Recruitment:**

My name's Chris Good and I'm Deputy Head of School for Admissions and Marketing and Recruitment here at the School of Maths, University of Birmingham. We aim to teach the broad spectrum of mathematics, right from the most abstract pure mathematics such as group theory and combinatorics, through to applied mathematics used in the real world such as fluid dynamics, optimisation of statistics. And these subjects are important, not least because they provide undergraduates with the sorts of analytic and problem-solving skills that companies want from their employees. But also, we work hard to provide students with some of the other, more generic graduate skills such as, er, presentation skills and report writing.

**Tom Johnson, PhD Student:**

One needs to develop these extra skills, er, in theis tough, er, current market climate.

**Kristy Cotton, Deloitte - University of Birmingham Maths graduate:**

In particular, the self-study that Birmingham teaches you, the importance of being able to self-study, er, was vital for doing my actuarial studies, so I've managed to, erm, do really well in my actuarial studies so far, by using those kind of skills that Birmingham's taught me, you know, the importance of self-study and the importance of being disciplined to be able to achieve well.

**Doctor Chris Good:**

So ultimately, we want our degrees to produce highly employable, confident, flexible graduates, ready for the workplace.

**Freddie Crown, Graduate Recruitment Bureau:**

The fact that this particular, um, careers fair is maths graduates - maths, IT, physics, those are the kind of, um, degrees that we have the most success placing, so yeah, it's very good that it's targeted in this way because we get to the students we can help the most.

**Ben Cox, Tessella - University of Birmingham Maths graduate:**

So I graduated from Birmingham University with, erm, well two degrees - my undergraduate degree in 2001, and then my applied maths PhD in 2006. You get lots of opportunities to present at conferences, talk about your work, erm, and interact with people as well. And those are very, very transferrable skills that have been very important in the Tessella job.

**Horatio Caine, 3rd year student on placement with IBM:**

IBM's interested in graduates of all kinds, they just want people who are interested in technology, interested in business, consulting and the various other roles that IBM have available.

**Kristy Cotton, Deloitte:**

Deloitte is a people business, it's really focussed on getting the best people in, because that's the service that we offer our clients.

**Ben Cox, Tessella:**

I think the skills that we're looking for in Maths graduates are essentially problem-solving skills. And we're looking for people who enjoy applying analytical techniques to solving what are very, very complex problems that we're working on for clients.

**Kristy Cotton, Deloitte:**

We're looking for people that are able to develop well, are also really committed to their role, um, but are also really focussed on, kind of, a business and helping their clients.

**Horatio Caine:**

Today's been a huge success because lots of students have come and they've said, 'I'm about to graduate' or, you know, 'I'm about to start applying for graduate schemes and I want more information on the company, I want more information on what I should put on my application form', all of those things. We're here to advertise to students to make sure that they know what's available.

**Doctor Simon Goodwin, lecturer in the School of Mathematics and Director of Employability:**

Later on in the term we'll also be organising a lot of, um, schools workshops to help our students through the application process, so they can get advice about writing application forms, giving interviews, going to assessment centres. And all our support in the School of Mathematics is on top of the support provided by the University's Careers and Employability Centre, who also provide a lot of support and guidance for student throughout their career planning.

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