

Gary Harper, BSc Economics | Bank of England, UK

"The UoB offered academic quality, a vibrant city life with fantastic energy and a large number of clubs and societies."

Gary Harper graduated with a BSc in Economics from the University of Birmingham in 2011. Currently employed as a Trainee Analyst with the Bank of England in London, United Kingdom, Gary is involved in analysing data, understanding how the information impacts on wider policy issues at the Bank and supporting the bank's wider objective of delivering monetary and financial stability.



My Career

After graduation, I secured my training contract as a Trainee Analyst with the Bank of England; it was vital to my job that I had an understanding of complex economic theories and problems. Through studying my BSc, I gained the essential skills of brevity and clarity, skills which are appreciated by employers and contributed to my success in obtaining my current role.

Why Birmingham Business School?

The University of Birmingham offered academic quality, a vibrant city life with fantastic energy and a large number of clubs and societies. The diversity of social activities, as well as the quality of teaching resources available, enabled me to achieve academic success whilst developing extra-curricular skills. Balancing academic and non-academic skills, something so valued by employers, was what I looked for when choosing my university and found many possibilities at the UoB.

UoB graduates have a more diverse university experience in comparison to students at other universities thanks to the varied student body. As students come to the UoB from all over the world, the spectrum of opinions on matters ranging from politics to the cheapest pub in Selly Oak greatly differ and I regularly found my opinions being challenged. This exposure encouraged me to take an interest in what was happening around the world and to broaden my opinions.

While all the modules contributed to my education, the most useful ones were those that required me to develop an argument and support my claims. I was also taught skills which are invaluable to my day-to-day work as a Trainee Analyst.

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Challenges

Having not studied maths since taking my GCSEs when I was 16, I did not know how to apply mathematical concepts to economics. The academics ensured that I was not at a disadvantage by introducing a strong focus on mathematical methods throughout the course. The willingness of lecturers to discuss queries not only gave me the support I needed but taught me how to defend my opinions and how to explain them clearly, particularly when writing my dissertation.

The Birmingham experience

I grew as a person at the University of Birmingham; the self-directed learning environment taught me to be independent and disciplined enough to ensure academic success. Participating in the athletics team 'Cool Runnings' helped me to physically push myself harder physically than ever before. Coming to university without an established social circle is a challenge but one which has given me confidence and the ability to get on with people regardless of backgrounds.

Tips and advice

A graduate should be a well-rounded individual. You need a mixture of technical and theoretical ability, a mixture of academic and non-academic skills and the aptitude to mix well with a range of people.

Pick at least one module that really challenges you and make full use of the academics to ensure you understand the concepts before you tackle it. Make full use of the extra-curricular activities available to you to show employers you can balance work and non-academic commitments.

Enjoy your time at the UoB and use it as a time to grow; most importantly, and I cannot stress this enough, when you move to Selly Oak, make sure your house is close to Sainsbury's!

Find out more

[BSc Economics \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/econ/economics-bsc.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/econ/economics-bsc.aspx)

[Department of Economics \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/departments/economics/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/departments/economics/index.aspx)