

What our students say

At the School of Physics we place a high importance on ensuring our students remain happy and sufficiently supported, maintaining a positive and productive study experience. The results of this ethos are demonstrated by the consistently high scores we achieve in each annual **National Student Survey** ([/schools/physics/undergraduate/student-survey.aspx](https://schools/physics/undergraduate/student-survey.aspx)). In the following statements some of our past and present students share their thoughts on what it's like to study Physics at Birmingham.



Emelia Galkowska, MSci Physics 'I have thoroughly enjoyed my first stint in the Physics Department at the University of Birmingham. The staff and other students made the transition from Sixth Form to undergraduate study as easy as possible. My favourite part of the weekly timetable is labs as it is a way of learning that force us to apply the physics we know to sometimes unfamiliar situations. When I joined the department I was given a scholarship for my A-Level results which I have put towards going to South Africa over the summer.'



Frederick Grover, MSci Physics with Particle Physics 'The first thing that struck me when entering the Physics department was the friendliness of both the students and the staff. The Birmingham campus is an incredible environment to learn within and makes you feel at home immediately. However my main reason for choosing Birmingham was the fact that it had the course tailored for what I wanted.'

Studying at University is a varied and fulfilling experience; a large part of this is the lectures where you are educated about the essentials of physics from special relativity to quantum mechanics. However part of what makes the education so unique at Birmingham is the small tutorial sessions. You are introduced to your tutor at the beginning of the year and organise an hourly session each week where you partake in discussions about relevant physics as well as gaining insight and evaluation of the weeks assessed problems. The tutorials also allow you to bring any issues you've had with the previous week. The second year of the course allows you to focus your degree on the modules which interest you allowing a course more tailored for you.

As well as education there is a massive amount of extra-curricular activities available to us. The guild hosts a large number of societies as well as hosting various events. The sport centre allows you to get involved in any sport at the level which suits you. There is various opportunities which arise allowing you partake in volunteer work as well as acquiring a job. My first year has been an incredible experience and I feel has greatly improved me as a person.'

Benjamin Horvath, TPAM, School Scholarship 2011 'Being a student at Birmingham is a life changing experience, after my first year i can say, that I've changed for the better! The atmosphere on campus is very welcoming for all new student whilst the facilities of the university help studying and getting out the most of your course. There is always something going on campus such as career fairs which give me ideas about how could I enhance my prospects in the job market. I get to know new like minded friends who make my days here more enjoyable. I'm a physics student and I really enjoy my course so far and I find that the workload is manageable but also demanding in the same time. When I have some free time I usually spend it with my friends to discover Birmingham which is a vibrant city. I also received a scholarship this year, which made my studies here more affordable and took some pressure off my shoulders.'



Emma Simpson, MSci Physics with International Year 'I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here at the University of Birmingham. The physics department is really friendly and welcoming, and I found the course to be both interesting and challenging, with lots of module choice in the later years. It is very easy to get involved with the University clubs and societies, and I particularly enjoyed the departmental Poynting Physical Society (PPS), as it was a great opportunity to make friends with physicists from all the different year-groups.'

One great thing about the physics department is the student rep system which enables students to raise any academic issues they may have with one of their year reps who can bring it to attention in a weekly meeting. This means that any problems experienced by students can be dealt with promptly, appropriately and anonymously, limiting any disruption to learning.

As part of my study, I spent the third year of my M.Sci. degree on exchange to the University of Auckland in New Zealand. This was a truly unique and amazing opportunity to fully experience another country's culture through an educational setting, whilst still having some time to explore and travel. I found this experience to be very rewarding, not only educationally, but also through improving both my self-confidence and organisation. I have returned with a wealth of excellent memories and also a network of wonderful friends from all around the world.



Another highlight of the physics department is the amount of information offered regarding opportunities available to undergraduate students, from internships to Ph.D. positions or job opportunities. This is a great source of knowledge and inspiration for what you can achieve during your summer break or after you complete your degree. I successfully applied for and completed an internship in Australia following an email I received from Birmingham which was another amazing experience that I would otherwise have not known about.

Following my degree at Birmingham I plan to continue in further education. I feel that this course has enabled me to approach further study as a well-rounded student with the necessary skill-set to really prepare me for the challenges of a Ph.D.'

Adam Rawcliffe, MSci Physics with International Study 'My time at Birmingham has been wonderful. The first year of the physics degree is a great foundation for rest of the course, but still includes inspirational and cutting-edge material to take further in later years; I absolutely loved the Introduction to Particle Physics module, and can't wait for more!

Being a Physics student with the Music scholarship, I find the access to the music practice rooms and lessons from Birmingham Conservatoire (my current teacher is the principle trombonist from the CBSO) has helped me to no end carrying on and further my musical pursuits.

On top of all this, it still allows you to have a vibrant and active social life – you will never run out of societies to join and get involved with within the University, places to go out to in the city, and like-minded people to meet.

I've never been busier, and never been happier!

Alexi Reynolds, MSci TPAM 'I am now in the fourth year of the TPAM degree. I have really enjoyed my time in Birmingham, so much so that I transferred to the MSci course two years ago to extend my time here. I have made good friends on the course and the subjects we study have become more interesting with each year. Being a recipient of the excellence scholarship has meant that I have not needed to look for part-time employment during term time or worry about finances. It has also given me the opportunity to travel during the summer holidays and to get research experience I might otherwise have struggled to fund.'

Austin Tomlinson, Theoretical Physics 'Choosing Theoretical Physics at Birmingham was a brilliant decision. It enabled me to explore all the really interesting parts of Physics you see on science documentaries that are too complicated to explain in just words. For example, Quantum Mechanics sounds very cool when television scientists talk about the bizarre phenomena that happens in quantum systems, but actually studying the mathematical formulation of it is incredibly profound and makes you realise why we find the Quantum World just so weird!

The options for study are broad and flexible and cover many different areas in Physics. You can study Physics from the length scale of the smallest particles known to exist in Particle Physics courses, to the length scale of the entire universe and study Cosmology. The Theoretical Physics option automatically has you taking courses in deeply mathematical areas in Physics which will ultimately lead to courses in the General Theory of Relativity and Quantum Field Theory in the fourth year. As a Theorist, you are able to take courses in all areas of Physics (just like normal Physics students), as well as courses in Applied Mathematics reserved for just Theoretical Physics students to give you a greater breadth of knowledge across Mathematical Physics than a normal Physics graduate. This can give you advantages, especially if you are considering Postgraduate research, as a high mathematical aptitude is tantamount to understanding Physics.



Being a student at the University of Birmingham gives you vast opportunities to not only explore the world of Physics, but also to try out many new things you may not have thought you could ever enjoy, with student groups for all kinds of hobbies and countless sports teams!

