

## Our approach to teaching and learning

At the University of Birmingham, we advocate an enquiry-based approach to learning. This means giving you all the support you need to become an independent and self-motivated learner, developing the qualities that are so highly sought after by employers... qualities that will give you the edge in your future career.

### Teaching methods


We use a variety of teaching methods at the University, including:

- **Lectures**, where experts in their field share their knowledge and discoveries with you in challenging and provocative ways. You'll be expected to 'read-around' the subject matter of lectures, adding to your understanding and developing your critical faculties and analytical skills. Many of our academics are global authorities on their subject, and during your time here you will have the invaluable opportunity to learn from, and work alongside, these world-leading academics.
- **Seminars**, where you present and discuss your ideas and knowledge in smaller groups, engaging in lively debate to share your interpretations and opinions with other students.
- **Tutorials**, where you meet usually in small groups to discuss your work more intensely with your tutor.
- **Workshops**, which usually involve students working in groups, led by a member of academic staff, to solve problems.
- **Laboratory based work**, your chance to gain practical experience and apply your knowledge in a laboratory setting. This mainly applies to courses in science, technology and engineering.
- **Your own research project**, an extended, in-depth piece of work produced in your final year either as a dissertation or a laboratory project.

### Learning support

The transition to a new way of learning can be a challenge, with university study differing greatly from college and school learning. Our lecturers and tutors make sure you have all the resources you need to make the transition from A-levels to the more rigorous demands of a degree:

- **Interactive resources** are on hand for you to use even before you start with us. Our **skills4study Campus** (<http://www.palgrave.com/Institutions/Birmingham.html>) resource 'preparing for academic study' and **skills4uni** (<http://www.skills4uni.bham.ac.uk>) interactive site can help you see your progress in terms of preparing for life at university. If you'd like to access mathematics and statistics resources, there are some excellent support sites available such as **mathcentre** (<http://www.mathcentre.ac.uk>) and **mathtutor** (<http://www.mathtutor.ac.uk>).
- **Your personal tutor** is assigned right at the start of your time at Birmingham. They will provide you with help and advice on any study-related issues and help you to monitor and reflect on your progress. You'll have regular contact with your tutor, and can arrange to see them anytime to discuss your academic progress or any personal issues.
- **Specialised learning support services** are available for **students with disabilities, including learning disabilities** ([/undergraduate/support/disability/index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/disability/index.aspx)).
- **Welfare tutors** based in your school or department can help you with both academic and welfare problems.
- **International students** can also contact the **International Student Advisory Services (ISAS)** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/international/index.aspx>) to discuss their learning support needs.
- **>>Progress>>** is an online resource which you can access as soon as you enroll, helping you to recognise, develop and track the skills you are learning during your studies and leisure activities.

 Victoria, BSc Chemistry "Undertaking independent study into a project at the cutting edge of research where the answer is not predetermined helped strengthen my synthetic chemistry knowledge and gave me the confidence to work in an industrial environment."

### Transition review

The Transition Review is a compulsory, formal review of your academic and personal progress that takes place during your first year. It's your chance to discuss your progress with your personal tutor, including all the sources of academic support that are available to you and possible academic and professional development opportunities.

During a 30-minute one-to-one tutor meeting, you'll:

- Discuss your academic and personal development
- Review your assessment feedback
- Discuss your achievements to date
- Consider any early career goals
- Complete a study needs analysis