



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## School of Physics & Astronomy

## Teaching and Learning

### Flexible Degrees

*Owen Turner:*

I thought it was a really balanced programme of study. A good mixing between the practical and theoretical aspects.

*Chris Flett:*

If you're not sure about what degree programme to enrol on then there's the flexibility to move between the different degree programmes.

### Course Choice

*Cara Lynch:*

One of the things that really attracted me to this programme was the possibility to do outside courses, because I don't know what I want to do, and it was great to be able to do some meteorology, astrophysics, musical acoustics and astrobiology.

*Ozioma Kamalu:*

So I learned a bit of German which was really good.

### Learning & Studying

*Neil McBlane:*

The teaching's great especially in first year. Quite interactive lectures, big group tutorials, it really helps you settle into university life and get to know everyone in your class.

*Ozioma Kamalu:*

We have maybe around 20 hours of contact a week so a mixture of lectures and tutorials and workshops. And in second semester we had labs as well.

*Rebecca Lodin:*

And then maybe as it went on in say 3rd or 4th year, it was a lot more independent work with the Masters project.

### Laboratory & Project work

*Andrew Mackie:*

I found the group projects that the university offers very good. You learn how you best work in groups, and how you can help other people work in groups and how

they can help you. It's not just reading a paper and then writing another paper. You're actually coming up here, using this telescope, learning how this telescope works, using it, collecting the star data, and then that data is yours as well.

*Rebecca Lodin:*

I think it must have been my dissertation project. I really enjoyed it and had an amazing supervisor as well. I think we're finishing it off this summer and actually publishing an article on it so, it was a great time.

## **Student Community**

*Mairi McKay:*

What I really liked about the degree was how approachable the lecturers were, and how we formed a nice community of students.

*Arnaz Khan:*

Settling in has been quite easy actually because the people here are so friendly, and it's an international community so you meet people from all sorts of places.

*Cara Lynch:*

The atmosphere even in the workshops and classes and you can just walk up to any of the other students and say, "Hey, I really need help."

## **Peer Support**

*Chris Flett:*

I was involved with the Maths Buddies, which was essentially a scheme whereby I could help first year students in their studies of mathematics for physics classes.

*Cara Lynch:*

You can see that they gain more confidence. It's a great experience for us because I sort of realised that I really like tutoring people and helping people like that, and it is really satisfying.

## **Staff support**

*Owen Turner:*

The lecturers and supervisors are really supportive when you get enthusiastic about something, so if you're enjoying a particular subject or you're doing a project in something, they recognise that and they get behind you. It's really enabling if you want to take something further there's always the support for me.

*Arnaz Khan:*

I definitely like the personal tutor system. It's been very very helpful, not just in terms of academic advice but in terms of mental and emotional support.

*Wesley Shao:*

My personal tutor really helped me a lot. Helped me settle down and get into study and life.

*Mike Walmsley:*

In my second year I was part of the Student-Staff Liaison Committee. So the School of Physics works quite hard to get the feedback and opinion of students into how they structure the courses, how courses are evaluated, feedback after exams, feedback on lecturers and how they can keep improving.

## **Entry Route**

*Mairi McKay:*

When I started university I went straight into second year. It was hard because I had to learn about living independently, and how the university works and everything. The work was hard, but I think it was worth it.

*Ozioma Kamalu:*

I didn't do further maths at A-level. I think that the maths in semester one and semester two really helped bring me up to the same level as everyone else who may have done further maths or other kind of maths.

## **Finally...**

*Neil McBlane:*

I had a really nice moment when I had a computer modelling workshop in groups where we had to write a programme, quite a complicated programme, to simulate the solar system. It's a really nice moment to press play on that simulation and see everything work as you expect it to work.