Preparation for your Degree Course – Imperial College London

Dear Applicant

I am writing to all candidates who have accepted our offer of a place in the Mathematics Department, either as a firm or insurance choice.

You may have finished your A-levels, or equivalent exams, or be just about to (congratulations!). You may already have your exam results and be enjoying a gap year. Whatever your situation is, you will need to give some thought to preparation for your university course starting this September. This letter and information is intended to help you. Even if you decide not to join Imperial, it is worth considering the advice below, as it should be useful wherever you study Mathematics.

Preparing for the course

We expect you to arrive with a strong mathematical interest and background. Thus, in addition to taking some time out to enjoy a well-deserved break after your secondary school and spending time with family and friends, we encourage you to do some mathematics over the summer, to refresh your memory of your mathematical knowledge and prepare ahead to some of the new ideas you will see at University.

You will find attached a list of basic mathematical techniques with which we would like you to be familiar with before you arrive. You should have already mastered the topics in section A, but you may not yet have met all of the topics in section B. We are well aware that A-level Mathematics syllabuses are changing and that many topics previously covered by all students at A-level are now only covered in certain modules.

You will find the start of the course a lot easier if you study anything unfamiliar on the list (both sections A and B) from any appropriate A-level Mathematics or Further Mathematics textbooks; for example:

Most students also find that the more abstract and rigorous nature of university mathematics, compared with what they have learnt at school, is unfamiliar. The work is more demanding than at secondary school, but of course, it is much more interesting! **You should expect to be challenged here even if you have found that mathematics at school was straightforward and required little in the way of real effort.**

Three excellent books, which will help you to prepare for the different style of mathematics that you will study here, are:


If you do come to Imperial, the first book is used as a supplementary text for one of the modules taught in the first term of your first year. Many recent first year students have told us how beneficial it would have been for them to read this book, or at least sections of it, prior to starting at the College, so we encourage new starters to do so.

You can find other recommended reading on our website: [http://www.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/undergraduate/degree-courses-and-admissions/recommended-reading/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/undergraduate/degree-courses-and-admissions/recommended-reading/)

If you are currently taking a gap year, you should make time (at least two months) to revise your secondary school mathematics to get up to speed again. If you are just about to embark on a gap year, please keep in mind how easy it is to forget what you have learned and make sure you set aside some time to refresh your memory during your year out.

**Start of year**

In early September, the Imperial College Mathematics Website: [http://www.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/undergraduate/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/mathematics/undergraduate/) will contain further advice and arrangements for the start of term for those accepted on to the course. Students who have met their offer conditions will also be emailed information directly from the Department. *Please save this URL as you will need to visit it for updated information prior to the start of the course.*

**SAVE THE DATE**

The orientation programme for 1st year Mathematics students at Imperial College London will start with a **compulsory** meeting at

*9.30am on Monday, 2nd October 2017*

in the Clore Lecture Theatre

The Clore is on the entrance level to the Huxley Building from 180 Queen’s Gate which can be seen in this link to a map of the South Kensington campus: [http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/south-kensington/](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/campuses/south-kensington/)
What next?

Please let UCAS know your email address if this has changed since you filled in your UCAS form. If you hold a conditional offer and obtain the A-level grades we have asked you for then you need take no further action until we request it. If you miss your offer, then your situation will automatically be reviewed during results week.

The Admissions Tutor has provided the following guidance:

If the exam patterns are similar to previous years, then we expect that there will be a small number of places spare for students who have narrowly missed their conditional offers. These students are ranked in the week of the 14th August, and the ranking is used to determine the remaining places. Most of these decisions are confirmed on the 17th August, although a small number of near-miss candidates may be held for a few extra days until we know how many students are coming to us as their Insurance choice.

In the meantime, if you have any queries about this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

For general queries about admissions (including fee status, accommodation, etc.) please email ns.admissions@ic.ac.uk.

For specific mathematics offer queries, please email: sioned.morgan@ic.ac.uk.

We hope you have a wonderful summer and look forward to meeting many of you at the start of the academic year 2017-18.

Dr Christopher Ford,

Senior Tutor ma.st@imperial.ac.uk