

Dr Brian Cugelman

Senior Scientist and Director AlterSpark (Canada)

Brian graduated from the University of Wolverhampton in 2010 with a PhD in Cybermetrics.



Why did you decide to study maths at the University of Wolverhampton?

I was working for the United Nations in Bonn, Germany, running global online campaigns and overseeing large-scale web projects, when I started looking for opportunities to complete a PhD about social change on the internet. Having evaluated numerous universities, I settled on the University of Wolverhampton, which offered a PhD in Cybermetrics, under one of the world's leading internet research groups. At the time, my field was dominated by softer sciences, which is why I felt the Statistical Cybermetrics Research Group was the right environment to carry out my research through harder scientific methods.

Did the degree live up to your expectations?

No, it exceeded my expectations by a long stretch. During my Doctorate, I was afforded a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take a deep dive into a topic I'm passionate about, with world-class support and supervision.

Which aspects of the degree did you enjoy most?

During my Doctorate, I enjoyed the opportunity for independent learning, and making my own decisions about the direction of my research. However, I would have quickly become lost, blocked, and overwhelmed if it were not for the amazing support from my supervisors. I also enjoyed the opportunity to explore a wide variety of research methods and substantive topics, which paved the way for me to undertake a statistical meta-analysis that was subsequently published in the world's top e-health journal.

What advice would you give to students thinking about studying a mathematics degree at the University of Wolverhampton?

If you're thinking of Wolverhampton for a Master's or undergraduate degree in maths, and like the sound of Cybermetrics, I can confidently say you're unlikely to find a better place in the world. For other types of maths, I can just share my personal experience. During my Doctorate, I built my maths/stats skills from the ground up, by sitting in on numerous undergraduate stats courses at the University of Wolverhampton, and also taking various maths/stats workshop at other institutions. After two years, I had learned so many statistical methods that I was able to complete a statistical meta-analysis, which is an advanced statistical method that needs a deep understanding of many different statistical methods. Thanks to the network at Wolverhampton, I was able to complete this research project that I can only describe as the toughest act of statistics in my life. However, after a project like this, all other research becomes easy. I had a great experience and, if you choose the people you study under wisely, you can too.