

# MATHS SKILLS PROGRAMS FOR FIRST YEAR SCIENCE AND STATISTICS

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## ABSTRACT

Mathematical skills are important for students studying science and statistics. The Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering at La Trobe University is attempting to design and construct academic support for quantitative literacy for students in first year of their undergraduate science degrees through its Maths Skills Programs. These are integrated programs of support for students who need to improve their mathematical skills with a multi-faceted approach, including face-to-face help sessions, worksheets, and 24/7 online activities. The programs are linked to first year subjects and have been constructed collaboratively with discipline academics. The programs cater for large cohorts in Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Statistics at the Bundoora, Albury-Wodonga and Bendigo campuses.

The program is initiated with a selection phase to ensure appropriate students participate. All students in each first year subject are invited to complete a screening test to help them, and staff, identify their need for improvement. Students are also able to join the program directly by self-nomination. Screening tests include common mathematics questions and some discipline-related maths problems to emphasise the connection with the subject. Topics for inclusion in the Maths Skills Program are chosen in consultation with discipline academics reflecting essential knowledge and troublesome concepts for students.

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