What’s Unique about Maths?

The Network is in the process of drawing together conclusions from a debate between mathematicians and leaders in teaching and learning from other disciplines intended to explore what makes mathematics ‘different’. It proved difficult to agree a common position but the lively debate generated a significant number of ideas that it is hoped will provide a basis for discussion of the uniqueness of mathematics within the STEM grouping.

Accessing MSOR Working Group

The Network supports the Accessing MSOR working group which aims to bring together expertise and interest in issues surrounding supporting MSOR students with disabilities. We are exploring how support could be continued beyond July 2012.

Ongoing Mini Projects

Validity and value of forms of assessment in mathematics at university level – Paola Iannone, University of East Anglia

Supporting students studying advance calculus using screenshots – Camilla Jordan, The Open University

What’s hard about analysis? – John Taylor, University of Brighton

Planned Activities

CETL-MSOR Conference – Preparing for Student Led Education – 5-6 September

Induction Course for Lecturers new to teaching maths and stats – 15 to 16 September

Supporting Postgraduates who Teach Workshops – various dates

MSOR Connections – 2 editions October/December

Teaching Analysis Workshop – date to be arranged

Maths Education Workshop – date to be arranged

Student Engagement Workshop – date to be arranged

Continued support for the MSOR community including our monthly e-bulletin, ‘Connect’.

STOP PRESS

The Higher Education Academy has recently announced that Dr Janet de Wilde has been appointed as the new Head of STEM.

Dr Janet de Wilde joins from the University of Edinburgh, where she is the Executive Manager of the SINAPSE (Scottish Imaging Network). This is a pan-Scotland initiative bringing together academic and clinical experts from a wide range of disciplines to develop skills in medical imaging.

She has a BSc in Physics with Medical Applications from University of London, MSc in Information Engineering from City University and PhD in MRI from the Department of Electrical Engineering at Imperial College, London.

The appointment process for the HEA discipline leads, including MSOR, is currently underway.
Resources under Development


**Plagiarism in MSOR** – development of a position paper to inform how individual institutions address possible plagiarism

‘Teaching Mathematics in Higher Education – the basics and beyond’ – development of web based resources to support the MSOR published book by Bill Cox designed to help new lecturers. Copies of this book will be distributed in the early Autumn

‘Teaching Mathematics - a guide for postgraduates and teaching assistants’ – completion of a book by Michael Grove and Bill Cox and supporting web based resources

Update and refresh of resources supporting Certificate in Teaching Statistics in HE

Development of resources to support Operational Research teaching in conjunction with the OR Society

‘Good Practice in Undergraduate Peer Support’ – a guide completed by Indra Sinka, The Open University and Stephen Kane, University of Hertfordshire as an MSOR funded mini project. This is currently in the design stage prior to printing.

Software to Support Teaching and Assessment – including STACK, statistics quiz software, r panel teaching tools and interactive web tools for teaching statistics

A summary of mini projects funded by the Network with links to appropriate resources

‘A guide to postgraduate research in mathematical sciences’ – a leaflet by Martin Greenhow. Currently being printed to be distributed in the Autumn term.

HESTEM Mathematical Sciences Curriculum Innovation

MSOR is responsible for the delivery of the Curriculum Innovation programme which is led by Peter Rowlett. The programme is funding a number of projects;

- **Developing Graduate Skills** – Jeff Waldock (Sheffield Hallam)
- **A Pilot for a Shared On-line Statistics Advisory Service** – Alun Owen (Loughborough)
- **The Internet Librarian and Curator for Mathematics Videos** – Trevor Hawkes (Coventry)
- **Development and integration of Computer aided assessment of discrete mathematics** – Martin Greenhow (Brunel)
- **Assessing student teams developing mathematical models in business and industrial mathematics** – Edmund Chadwick (Salford)
- **Supporting progression in mathematics education** – James Hind (Nottingham Trent)
- **Building on the Mayhematics Maths Café: supporting mathematics learning** – Noel-Ann Bradshaw (Greenwich)
- **Supporting Undergraduate Engagement & Achievement in STEM Disciplines** – Melissa Conlon (The University Centre at Blackburn College)
- **Enhancing the communication and speaking skills of mathematics undergraduates** – James Groves (Lancaster)

Submissions to a further funding call based on the outcomes from the successful Summit held on 12 January 2011 are in the process of being reviewed. Details of successful projects will be published in the next edition of Connections.

Key Departmental Contacts Meeting

The MSOR Network is arranging a meeting in September as part of the transition to the new Higher Education Academy arrangements for discipline specific support. We want to bring together the new MSOR Discipline Lead, departmental contacts and those who are currently involved in delivering support through the Network in order to discuss the future direction of support. As the interview process for the Discipline Lead is currently underway we are unable to identify a specific date but would ask you, or a substitute, to indicate your availability via http://www.meetomatic.com/respond.php?id=F2FJII