

From the Chief Executive**New MEI staff**

It is a great pleasure to welcome two new members to the MEI team.

Stella Dudzic, currently Head of Mathematics at Skipton Girls High School will take over responsibility for all the MEI syllabuses (MEI Structured Mathematics, MEI GCSE, FAM and AS Statistics) when she joins us in September.

Stephen Lee will join the Further Mathematics Network team but will also extend our current work providing on-line support for university mathematics service courses. Stephen is currently a research student at the University of Loughborough; he will be joining us in November.

Making appointments always involves saying "No" to a lot of people. We have had very strong fields for all recent MEI posts, meaning that some high calibre people have been disappointed. I would like to say a personal thank you to those who spent time applying and in some cases went through the trauma of coming for interview with nothing to show for it at the end.

GCSE

The new 2-tier version of our GCSE specification has now been approved by QCA for first teaching in September of this year in line with government requirements. This is an interim measure with a new double award due for first teaching in 2010. An on-going debate as to the best model for the double award was brought to a halt by the Secretary of State's announcement at an ACME conference on March 8th that there would be a "Further Mathematics" GCSE. While we welcome the principle of such a sequential model, it is clear that there is much detailed work to be done if it is going to be more fit for purpose than the present single award. You may be interested to read two papers on the subject that are now on the MEI website; Tony Gardiner and I wrote them for the ACME conference.

Centre comments on AS/A-Level papers

Thank you, on behalf of both MEI and OCR, to all those who sent in comments on the January papers. As ever, they were read by those responsible for the Award, and where appropriate, action was taken.

- The C3 paper did appear to turn out to be rather more difficult than was intended, and this was borne in mind when setting grade thresholds.
- Disquiet was expressed by some centres about question 1 in Statistics 3, and so every single answer to this question was reviewed.
- There was considerable criticism of question 1 in Numerical Methods and this was reinforced by candidates' scripts. The Awarders took this into account when determining grade thresholds.
- There will be a significant change to the Decision Mathematics 1 paper from January 2007; all answers will be written in an answer book which will contain many outline diagrams. We hope that this will allow candidates more time to focus on the mathematics. This will be close to a successful earlier style for this paper. This suggestion was contained in the comments from an MEI branch last summer.

Caution

Finally a word of warning. The legacy syllabus no longer exists. The last examinations were in January and any requests for certification based on it should have been made to OCR by now. If you have any students expecting legacy certification following the summer examinations, they will be disappointed; they should apply now to OCR for late certification.

Roger Porkess

Module summaries

Purchasers of these resources on CD will now find that in addition to each topic being offered in Publisher 2003 they are also available in a pdf file. This will enable teachers to load them onto intranet sites.

S3 has just been finished.

It is expected that M3(A), DE(A), D2(B) and DC will be available within three weeks.

Michael Ling

The MEI Conference 2006 - Making the most of new structures The University of Reading. July 10 - 12, 2006

The first brochure has now been finished and is available on the MEI website. A hard copy together with an application form will shortly be sent to all Centres.

We hope that you will have had these dates in your diary for some time now!

We continue to go through a time of change:

- The management structure of MEI is being developed due to my impending retirement and the expanding work of the Further Mathematics Network
- The new GCSE is to be introduced this September as a short term measure as the ideas for the double award are developed
- Functional Mathematics will play an integral part in the development of these ideas
- There are planned changes to the A-Level structure for the next decade

All of these matters will have a place for discussion during the conference.

The conference is traditionally the time when Principal Examiners can give feed-back to Teachers about the examinations and their experience of the students' responses. There is a workshop planned for each strand which will include discussion of student misconceptions and hints for teaching more effectively to enable your students to overcome them.

Coursework will also feature with each of the modules allocated a session where the Principal Moderator will highlight common errors in the students' assignments and Teacher assessment.

In addition there are the usual workshops and seminars to do with the delivery of mathematics at all secondary levels. Running within the conference is a one-day programme for current students on the TAM programme, a one-day programme for students who have just enrolled onto the first TFM programme and sessions for the FMN Centre managers and tutors. In addition we are pleased to announce that the Royal Statistical Society is holding a half-day conference within our programme "Building Reasoning Skills for the future".

Keynote speakers include Lord Sainsbury, David Burghes, Jane Imrie and Adam McBride.

You will find a varied programme to suit all teachers. In particular we would urge Centres to send at least one member of their department. The whole conference will be effective CPD for delegates.

Accommodation is in ensuite study bedrooms in a Hall of Residence just a few minutes walk away from the Palmer Building where the conference takes place.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Michael Ling
Professional Support Officer and Conference Organiser

The Teaching Advanced Mathematics (TAM) programme.

Applications are now coming in for course commencement this term at four universities: Manchester Metropolitan University, London South Bank University and University College Chichester, each of which will support teachers in their local area, and Warwick University which continues to support teachers from throughout the country. Successful completion of the course leads to a Postgraduate Certificate in A-Level Mathematics Pedagogy: one third of a Masters degree.

The programme is funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, with support at LSBU from The London Challenge. Course fees are a heavily subsidised £300. In addition to the university fees this also includes school/college visits from the course tutors and extensive e-mail and web support with three years access to teaching and learning resources, available only to course participants, to complement the usual MEI on-line resources.

Course participants attend the equivalent of eight university-based days during the 17 months of the course. This year there will also be a single day at the MEI conference, open to all TAM teachers, focusing on the material in AS Core. Attendance at this day, and the rest of the conference if desired, will be subsidised for teachers on the programme.

If you, or a colleague, would like to receive support in teaching A-Level or Additional Mathematics then there is still time to apply. Further information can be found on the MEI website: www.mei.org.uk

Bernard Murphy
Teaching Advanced Mathematics Project Coordinator

The Further Mathematics Network

The Further Mathematics Network continues to develop. By the end of this term we hope to have 36 Centres operational, and we are currently ahead of our target for getting the complete national Network established.

Please take a look at our website at www.fmnetwork.org.uk for more information. If you follow the link from the Network News page you will also be able to view our latest newsletter (Issue 2). This contains several articles about the exciting activities being arranged by our new Further Mathematics Centres, which include enrichment events and revision days covering Core as well as Further Mathematics modules at AS- and A-Level.

Charlie Stripp
National Further Mathematics Network Programme Leader

Online Resources

The online resources are expanding all the time. Resources are now fully available for C1-4, FP1, DE, M1, S1, S2, D1, D2, NM and Additional Maths. Resources are partly available for FP2, FP3, M2, M3, and S3. There is interactive content available for many of the modules and this is continuously being developed.

We are currently redesigning the style of the site, seeking to improve the navigation and the student record system. We have had a number of suggested improvements submitted to us and will incorporate as many of these as possible. If you have any comments about the resources please send them to: tom.button@mei.org.uk.

Tom Button
Online Learning & IT Co-ordinator

Teaching Decision Maths

We are aware that lots of you out there have developed your own bits of software to help in the delivery of DM – be it for laptop, web or electronic whiteboard. It seems to us that it would be a good idea if we could share this around.

The DM development group invites you to submit whatever you have for inclusion in this resource bank. The group undertakes to review it and either accept it, suggest further development of it, or politely decline it. Accepted items will then be made available on the MEI website – with full accreditation. Please make contact with the Professional Support Officer if you would like to help in this development. (michael.ling@mei.org.uk)

Keith Parramore
Chairman—Decision Mathematics Development group

Comprehension practice pieces

The pieces that have been offered in the past have been collated into one pack and are available on the on-line resources site. For those unable to access the site, a hard copy can be ordered from the office at a cost of £10.

A few of the past comprehension pieces have been rewritten with amended questions and mark schemes to fit the new style. Others are new pieces, and some have been written specifically for students who have not covered the whole of the common core.

Michael Ling
MEI Professional Support Officer

Branches

There have been a number of branch meetings this term with existing Branch Chairmen being willing to carry on this crucial and voluntary role. MEI is most grateful to them for their contribution.

There are still a number of areas where there are no Chairmen and in those areas there are no meetings organised. If you are in such an area and would be prepared to organise a meeting then please let me know.

There will be a meeting of the Lancashire Branch on April 27th to which the Greater Manchester area will be invited.

Michael Ling
MEI Professional Support Officer

Online Resources for Additional Mathematics

Online resources to support the study of Additional Mathematics are available. These resources cover the full specification featuring notes and examples, interactive materials and on-line assessments. They can be used to support the study of Additional Maths or as extension material for GCSE Mathematics.

Additional Mathematics is a level 3 FSMQ designed to be taken by students who have either taken Higher GCSE early or who will take it at the same time as Additional Mathematics. As an Advanced Level FSMQ it carries UCAS points. The full specification can be found on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk).

The charge for subscription is £50, which includes a teacher username and 35 student usernames. **This can be paid for with e-Learning Credits.** For more information about e-Learning credits please go to <http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk/AboutELCs/WhatareELCs.htm>

Please see www.addmaths.mei.org.uk for more details.

Past-Papers on the MEI website

Past-papers, complete with markschemes and examiners' reports, are available for A-Level and Additional Mathematics examinations on the resources section of the MEI website (<http://www.mei.org.uk/resources.shtml>).

The papers for the current A-Level specification (post 2004) and Additional Mathematics are password-protected. Please contact the office if you require a password.

The papers for the Curriculum 2000 specification are freely available in an archive. These papers are useful as revision-aids; however, they should not be taken as an indication of the style or content of any modules on the current specification.

Tom Button
Online Learning & IT Co-ordinator

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