

Media Release: Further Mathematics Support Programme launched

The Further Mathematics Network (FMN) came to an end on 31 July, but its success means that the DCSF will continue to provide funding to support Further Mathematics, despite the current deep cuts in government spending. From 1 August 2009, the FMN is replaced by the Further Mathematics Support Programme (FMSP).

The FMN rescued Further Mathematics from what looked like a terminal decline. Between 2005, when the FMN started, and 2008, entries to AS Further Mathematics rose by 125% and entries to the full A level by 59%. Further significant increases are expected when the 2009 A level results come out later this month.

When the FMN started Further Mathematics was largely unavailable to students in the state sector. Through the work of the FMN its fortunes have been transformed and Further Mathematics is now one of the fastest growing subjects, increasingly valued by universities and employers.

The FMSP will work to improve access to Further Mathematics tuition, and to increase the numbers of students taking mathematics beyond GCSE level. The FMSP also has a strong emphasis on teachers' professional development, to help meet the increasing demand from students to study Mathematics beyond GCSE level.

The FMSP will:

- Support the teaching and learning of AS/A level Further Mathematics, including providing tuition for students who cannot access Further Mathematics teaching in their own schools and colleges.
- Provide specialised professional development to teachers of AS/A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics and level 3 mathematics within diplomas, working in partnership with the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM).
- Promote mathematics and raise awareness of the benefits of studying mathematics beyond GCSE level.
- Encourage and support the teaching of Further Mathematics through consortium arrangements, where students from two or more schools and colleges can be taught together.

A major aim is to increase the number of schools and colleges that can provide Further Mathematics teaching themselves, so reducing the need for external tuition.

As well as supporting Further Mathematics, the FMSP will have a role in supporting the teaching and learning of level 3 mathematics in diplomas.

Like the FMN, the FMSP will be managed by the MEI. The FMSP is organised regionally, with a small MEI central management team and 20 Area Coordinators based across the nine government regions.

Charlie Stripp, August 2009

For more details please see www.furthermaths.org.uk or contact the Programme Leader, Charlie Stripp, 01392 435604, charliestripp@furthermaths.org.uk