

Core Mathematics

Workshop leaders Lily Tang and Iram Hussain started by asking us what we already knew about Core Mathematics and what queries we had.

This revealed that, while a few people in the room were actively involved in Core Maths teaching or about to teach it, for most people it was something for the future. There were some participants who had no knowledge of the qualification.

We were given an overview of who the qualification is aimed at and the variation in specifications. We were strongly advised to read all the specifications in detail to ensure that the best one is chosen for particular groups of learners. Those currently teaching told us that the decision making process varied from sticking to a known awarding organisation to active choices made based on content.

We were shown some examples demonstrating how Core Maths builds on GCSE knowledge but is different from GCSE in that it focuses on problem solving. Resources were available to take away at the end, but the bulk of the session was spent answering questions from those who had some knowledge of the qualification but wanted advice on the best way of implementing it.

Different models were put forward eg specialist teaching or embedded teaching. Everyone agreed that, whichever model was chosen, building strong links with the teachers on the students' main programme and eliciting their support re student attendance etc was vital. Some questions raised could not be answered as, for example, it is not known if or when post-16 mathematics study will be made compulsory.

There was extensive debate about the merits of running the course over two years or as a one-year option. Some colleges had strong preferences for particular options. Those thinking about starting to offer Core Maths were recommended to talk to similar providers. Everyone was recommended to get involved with the Core Maths Support Programme where there are many new resources as well as examples of how to use existing resources eg from Nrich and Bowland.

The presenters took away our unanswered questions and hope to post answers on the conference area of the NANAMIC website.