



Proposal regarding the future of the classroom-facing mathematics subject associations

In the UK there is a large number of bodies in mathematics education. Over two dozen professional associations, learned societies, policy divisions and other institutions are represented on the Joint Mathematical Council, covering interests affecting all ages in a wide variety of settings.

Five of this group identify themselves as *classroom-facing mathematics subject associations*, whose direct interest is in the teaching and learning of mathematics in schools and colleges.

These five are:

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| • Association of Mathematics Education Teachers | AMET |
| • Association of Teachers of Mathematics | ATM |
| • The Mathematical Association | MA |
| • National Association of Mathematics Advisers | NAMA |
| • National Association for Numeracy and Mathematics in Colleges | NANAMIC |

These five have met for some years as a designated Meeting of Mathematics Subject Associations [MMSA]. Several considerations have caused deliberation on how the associations' aims will be best achieved in the future, namely:

- could a single, independent association better provide support, information and professional/mathematical stimulation across the range of those engaged with, or supportive of mathematics education?
- could such an association have a greater voice than any one or a collection of associations?
- could economies of scale make associations' financial position more secure?
- trustees' (of some associations) obligations to fulfil charitable aims
- evidence that teachers interested in engaging are confused by having to choose a particular association to join – distinctions are unclear

As a result, these five agree that it is appropriate to consider the possibility of making changes to how the associations are organised, with a view to making a proposal to be put to each association.

Useful background reading on this process includes:

- the original discussion paper on the future of the MMSA organisations
<http://www.m-a.org.uk/resources/Proposal-Amalgamation-of-MMSA-Organisations-Sep-2017.pdf>
- an informative piece on the history of the mathematical subject associations
[https://www.atm.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/News/Pope_2012_The_future_of_SAs_\(1\).pdf](https://www.atm.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/News/Pope_2012_The_future_of_SAs_(1).pdf)
- the outcomes of an initial meeting held at the Royal Society on 4 December 2017
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OJLgQM35rnjeiomAM40L_ICEEcn6_ETN/view?usp=sharing

The five associations met with this focus for a second time at the Royal Society on 15 May 2018. At this meeting, inputs from the Institution of Mathematics and its Applications and the Association of Science Education informed the agenda to consider whether we should be looking to change, and if so, what might be the possible end structures and routes to achieving those.

There was consensus amongst the representatives to take steps towards drafting a more detailed proposal that could be taken out to existing subject associations for comment and which is presented here.

Draft proposal for Aims, Membership, Activities, Publications and Resources of a new association for mathematics education

Aims

- To support, develop and improve the teaching and learning of mathematics collaboratively and creatively
- To provide an informed independent voice expressing perspectives from a range of mathematics education professionals
- To inspire, inform, celebrate, support and communicate with the range of those involved with and interested in mathematics education

Membership

- Teachers of mathematics, and those learning to be teachers of mathematics, in the UK and beyond
- Those who work with or support teachers of mathematics
- Those interested in the teaching and learning of mathematics
- Those who support the aims of the association, whether working or retired

Activities

- Produce a range of journals, resources and newsletters to represent the interests of members¹
- Provide CPD events such as conferences (day and residential), local branches, online, targeted events, discussions, bespoke events, ad hoc support
- Maintain a presence on appropriate social media
- Inform educational policy by responding to consultations, represent the community on appropriate committees, meet politicians and policy makers, produce position papers etc
- Promote positive perceptions of mathematics
- Support the award of CMathTeach

Draft proposal for a structure for a new association for mathematics education

The association would be a charity with a Board of Trustees as its governing body. Trustees would be elected to serve specified periods of office, yet to be determined.

The officers² of the association would be Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Answerable to the Board of Trustees would be the following Committees:

Business Committees:

- 1) Membership, marketing, publicity, website
- 2) Publications responsible for all publications³ including journals, books and resources
- 3) Branches

Teaching and Learning Committee representing a variety of Special Interest Groups (SIGs)⁴, such as:

- 1) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- 2) Primary
- 3) 11-16
- 4) Post 16 in all contexts
- 5) Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in all contexts
- 6) Advisory and local leadership
- 7) Conferences and CPD

Additionally, perhaps, limited term 'working groups' could be convened for particular purposes. The Chairs of the Business Committees and the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee would be elected to those positions and be members of the Board of Trustees.

The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees could include setting out and upholding the aims of the association, the direction of policy to fulfil those aims, securing the financial basis of the association, making all decisions relevant to the fulfilment of the aims and policies of the association, securing the employment of well qualified and able administration staff. The association would be supported by an employed staff.



Notes:

1. The list of journals is not definitive or exhaustive. However, it might be anticipated that the new association would want to address all sectors of the mathematics education community with its journals.
2. The new association may wish to consider the election of a President, a figurehead well known in mathematics and mathematics education circles, to give status to the association and perhaps ease entry to external organisations.
3. The new association may wish to separate journals, via an editorial board or boards, from other forms of published materials.
4. The list of SIGs is not definitive or exhaustive, and could include for example a SIG devoted to SEND, etc.

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