

Meet the next MA President — Colin Foster

From April 2022, the MA will have a new President in Dr Colin Foster, who succeeds Chris Pritchard at the AGM. Colin and his work will be well-known to many members but he has written a more complete introduction to himself below.

I am a Reader in Mathematics Education in the Mathematics Education Centre at Loughborough University, where I do research into all things related to learning and teaching mathematics. Before this, I worked at the University of Leicester, and before that at the University of Nottingham, where I collaborated with Professor Malcolm Swan on several large design-research projects producing resources for school mathematics. Before that, I taught mathematics in secondary schools for 12 years.

I have been a member of both the Mathematical Association (MA) and the Association of Teachers of Mathematics (ATM) ever since I did my PGCE, which is now over 20 years ago. My tutor then in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge was Paul Andrews, who was also (later, in 2011) a President of the MA. Over the years, I have enjoyed teaching on PGCE courses and supervising PhD students, and, now at Loughborough, I teach some mathematics to undergraduates, which I also enjoy doing.

My research interests in mathematics education focus on the learning and teaching of mathematics in ways that support students' conceptual understanding. I am particularly interested in the design and use of rich tasks in the mathematics classroom, and in finding ways to enable students to develop the necessary fluency in mathematical processes to support them in solving mathematical problems. At Loughborough, I am a Challenge Lead within our new £8m *Centre for Early Mathematics Learning*, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). This Centre aims to transform understanding of children's mathematics learning during the early years and design effective educational activities to improve their skills and knowledge. It is a really exciting development.



I am also Director of the Loughborough University Mathematics Education Network, which provides completely free professional development for teachers of mathematics from early years up to university (see <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/lumen/>). We are currently developing the *LUMEN Curriculum*, which will be a totally free, research-informed, full set of mathematics curriculum resources for schools. This will build on a considerable body of research, from Loughborough and elsewhere, as well as on my recent ESRC project looking at “coherent curriculum design” in mathematics. In that project, I collaborated with colleagues at Tokyo Gakugei University and visited many schools in Japan in order to understand more about how the Japanese mathematics curriculum builds a connected understanding of the subject.

I really enjoy working closely with teachers and schools, and I am currently the Researcher in Residence for the *Origin Maths Hub*, which serves Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire. I write frequently for MA publications, especially *Mathematics in School*, and also for *Mathematics Teaching* (ATM), and I have a regular feature in each issue of *Teach Secondary*. I have written 13 books (two for the MA) and over 300 articles, and you can find more details on my website www.foster77.co.uk.

During my Presidential year, I hope to visit Branches and speak with Members, whether online or face to face. I also intend to write a blog, and I will post something there every other Thursday throughout my Presidential year, beginning on **Thursday 14 April 2022**. I'll aim to address issues that I hope will be of interest to all Members, from early years through to university – and I realise that's a tall order! I hope that the blog format will encourage responses and facilitate a conversation, and, as the blog will be free to access, will also promote the MA and its work more widely, and draw in new Members to the Association. Please subscribe to the blog at <https://blog.foster77.co.uk/> and follow me on Twitter [@colinfoster77](https://twitter.com/colinfoster77).

Colin Foster, MA President Designate.