

# The Joint Mathematical Council of the United Kingdom

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

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Registered Office: De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London, WC1B 4HS

## Minutes of the General Meeting held at De Morgan House and online at 11:00 am on Thursday 26 February 2026

### Present

#### *Officers*

|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Chair        | Noel-Ann Bradshaw (pm) |
| Deputy Chair | Jenni Ingram (chair)   |
| Secretary    | Sue Pope               |
| Treasurer    | Fiona Curtis           |

#### *Representatives of Participating Bodies*

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Adults Learning Mathematics                            | Diane Dalby               |
| Association for Mathematics in Education               | Helen Madeley             |
| British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics | Alf Coles                 |
| British Society for the History of Mathematics         | -                         |
| Edinburgh Mathematical Society                         | -                         |
| Heads of Departments of Mathematical Sciences          | Mary McAlinden (am)       |
| Institute of Mathematics and its Applications          | Paul Glaister (am)        |
| London Mathematical Society                            | Mary McAlinden (am)       |
| Mathematics in Education and Industry                  | Vicky Wheelhouse (deputy) |
| National Numeracy                                      | Paul Milner               |
| NRICH  | -                         |
| Operational Research Society                           | Chiara Carparelli         |
| Royal Academy of Engineering                           | Dean Thompson (am)        |
| Royal Statistical Society                              | Chris Brignell (deputy)   |
| Scottish Mathematical Council                          | Bill Richardson           |
| United Kingdom Mathematics Trust                       | Matthew Main              |
| Mathematics Support Programme Wales                    | -                         |

#### *Co-opted Members*

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Immediate Past Chair   | -                  |
| UK Representative to the<br>International Commission on Mathematical Education | Paul Glaister (am) |
| British Congress of Mathematics Education                                      | Ruth Trundley      |
| Social Media Lead  | -                  |

#### *Representatives of Observing and Other Bodies*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Department for Education [England]                            | Catherine MacKenzie                    |
| Department of Education [Northern Ireland]                    | Julie Harris                           |
| Education Scotland  | -                                      |
| National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics | Sue Madgwick                           |
| Office for Standards in Education                             | -                                      |
| The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation      | Sarah Old                              |
| The Royal Society   | Cath Boulton<br>(joined by Sam Murphy) |
| The Royal Society Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education | -                                      |
| Qualifications Scotland                                       | -                                      |
| Welsh Government Education Department                         | -                                      |
| Academy for the Mathematical Sciences                         | Lynne McClure (am)                     |

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular new members and deputies.
- 1.2 **Practical Arrangements** The Secretary explained the fire evacuation procedures and arrangements for lunch.
- 1.3 **Apologies for absence** Apologies for absence were received from: Andy Noyes (Immediate Past Chair); Charlie Stripp (MEI) – deputy: Vicky Wheelhouse; Georgina Holmes (QS), John Neeson (Education Scotland); Liz Woodham/Charlie Gilderdale (NRICH); Noel-Ann Bradshaw (chair); Richard Perring (social media lead); Tony Mann (BSHM); Zoe Nye (RSS) – deputy: Chris Brignell

## 2 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2025

- 2.1 **Approval of the minutes of the meeting on Thursday 26 November** The minutes were approved subject to a minor amendment to item 11.2 - the course at UCL is not unique.
- 2.2 **Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda**

There were no matters arising.

## 3 Reports from Trustees

- 3.1 **Chair** The Chair's report was noted. The New Year's Honours list included several mathematicians. The first tranche of fellows of the Academy for the Mathematical Sciences (92 plus two honorary) has been announced.
- 3.2 **Deputy Chair** The Deputy Chair's report was noted. There has been a lot of activity around curriculum reform. Barbara Jaworski sadly passed away at the end of 2025. She made a tremendous contribution to mathematics education. There is an obituary in AMiE's Mathematics Teaching <https://atm.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Journals/MT299/MT29916.pdf>
- 3.3 **Secretary** The Secretary's report was noted. There will be a call for nominations for Treasurer in March, as Fiona's term of office comes to an end in November. Fiona has completed one term as treasurer and is willing to continue, which would be valuable for continuity with BCME.
- 3.4 **Treasurer** The Treasurer's report was noted. Establishing the BCME bank account is proving challenging, so JMC has made some payments on BCME's behalf.
- 3.5 **Constitution:** This has been reviewed, no changes required.
- 3.6 **Bye Laws:** These have been reviewed, no changes required.
- 3.7 **Policies:** These have been reviewed, no changes required.
- 3.8 **Risk Register:** This has been reviewed and updated by the trustees.

## 4 Matters for Council Decision

- 4.1 **Co-opted trustee** Council (with two abstentions) agreed to the co-option of Helen Madeley.
- 4.2 **Participating Bodies** Council (with one abstention) agreed to accept the Early Childhood Maths Group (ECMG), the Collaborative Lesson Research group (CLR-UK) and the Dyscalculia Network CIC as participating bodies.
- 4.3 **Observing Body** Council agreed (with one abstention) to accept the University of Nottingham's Observatory for Mathematical Education as an observing body.

## 5 Reports from Committees

### 5.1 BCME

BCME takes place 23 and 24 October 2026 at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham. Further sponsorship continues to be sought. Four key note speakers have been secured. Final adjustments to the programme are being made. Session contributions to the programme are invited, closing date 5 May. JMC has public liability cover up to £5M, which is sufficient to cover BCME. BCME is a face to face event. Accommodating virtual participation/presentation is prohibitively expensive. The BCME committee has been looking at

ways of ensuring that the conference is as accessible as possible to a range of potential delegates. They proposed a range of potential alternatives to virtual attendance that would balance the needs of different delegates and JMC supported these suggestions as reasonable. Costs for recording plenary sessions are also being explored.

## 5.2 ICME

ICME is in Prague in 2028. The ICME bursary committee has met. JMC will fund four £500 bursaries. There will be requests to other organisations for bursary funds. BSRLM usually prepares a national presentation for ICME. Jennie Golding has revised the UK entry for the ICMI website.

## 6 Reports from Participating Bodies

The submitted reports were noted. Additionally:

- 6.2 AMiE highlighted the development of Member Interest Communities and the Member Day on 11 April – three key note speakers: Paul Glaister, Lynne McClure and Jenni Ingram.
  - 6.3 BSRLM is looking for venues for conferences. Elena Nardi is the new chair, taking over from Alf.
  - 6.4 BSHM Research in Progress meeting 2026 will be held on Saturday 7 March in Oxford. It will include the inaugural John Fauvel Invited Lecture.
  - 6.5 IMA The Awards Evening for the IMA John Blake University Teaching Medal will be taking place on Wednesday 25 March 2026 at De Morgan House. More information about the evening, including the theme of the talks, is available online [IMA John Blake University: Teaching Medal 2025 Awards Evening](#).
  - 6.6 LMS Outreach Lecturers - details are available at: <https://www.lms.ac.uk/news/lms-outreach-lecturers-call>. deadline for receipt of applications is 9 March 2026.
  - 6.7 MEI The [2026 MEI conference](#) will be held at Keele University 2-3 July.
  - 6.10 National Numeracy The [National Numeracy Day](#) is scheduled for 20 May this year, with a theme of 'Count On Your Community'.
  - 6.12 ORS The Ruth Davies Award – for Masters academic dissertations in OR that do not involve an external client (<http://bit.ly/4r9AhFz>). and the May Hicks Award – for Masters projects in OR that do involve an external client (<https://theorsociety.com/mayhicks>). The deadline for both awards is 30 April.
  - 6.13 RA Eng Skills centre – digital support for engineers, their teachers and businesses. More to follow.
  - 6.14 RSS Sophie Carr is no longer vice chair, Chris has taken her place. RSS has a call for outreach lecturers.
  - 6.15 SMC The SMC conference is Saturday 16 May 2026 at Stirling University. SMC journal goes free to all schools in Scotland.
  - 6.16 UKMT has a large body of volunteers – and is currently focused on considering future strategies. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be celebrated with volunteers. 1999 was when the first year book was published. There was a lull in printing the year books and UKMT is printing back years.
- Suggestion that we look at having a discussion about Mathematics Careers that includes opportunities in OR and data science. – Noel-Ann to follow up

## 7 Reports from Observing and other Bodies

The reports from Education Scotland, NCETM, the Royal Society & ACME and the Academy for the Mathematical Sciences were noted.

- 7.1 DfE Catherine drew attention to the Education white paper that proposes reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England to ensure that every child can achieve and thrive, was published on 25 February [Every child achieving and thriving - GOV.UK](#)
- 7.2 Education NI has a Curriculum Taskforce reviewing the curriculum and qualifications. A working group of current practitioners has been established to work on mathematics. A new NI

Mathematics Teacher Association was established in the summer with a couple of hundred members.

7.5 NCETM 61% of schools are engaging with their local Maths Hub

7.8 & 7.9 RS/JMC [Rapid Review of Data Education](#)

Other reports were received orally. In line with Council practice minutes of these were not recorded.

## 8 Discussion of reports

The request from the Academy for the Mathematical Sciences to promote its [survey](#) of corporate support for the mathematical sciences was noted.

## 9 Any other business

### Collaborative Lesson Research - Network event 1

People across the UK are welcome to join the Collaborative Lesson Research Network meeting on 24 March 18:00 - 19:30 GMT online:

<https://www.collaborative-lesson-research.uk/events/network-event-1> (Ruth Trundley)

## 10 Discussion

### 10.1 Report from the Observatory for Mathematical Education by Chris Brignall & Cath Gripton

The presentation is distributed with the minutes and the full report is available online <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/observatory/documents/reports/rome-2025.pdf>

Since publishing the report, the Observatory team has conducted further analysis to understand how Y7 confidence measures are patterned by sex and KS2 attainment, e.g., lower attainers are less likely to feel they understand mathematics topics before they move on to something new and higher attainers are more likely to perceive mathematics as an important subject. Members were asked what they would like to see in ROME 2026.

### 10.2 JMC working group report on Lower Secondary Mathematics by Jenni Ingram

The report was circulated with the papers and is available on the JMC website <https://www.jmc.org.uk/2026/03/03/mathematics-learning-and-teaching-in-lower-secondary-schools-in-the-uk/>. Lower secondary is associated with a dip in attainment and attitudes, slowing of progress, fall in interest and widening gaps in achievement. The report was the result of collaborative work: issues identified with teachers and co-authoring involving the collation of evidence. Three dimensions were identified: equity and opportunity (socio-economic and gender), pedagogies and practice, and engagement and motivation. More evidence is available for England than other UK nations. There is considerable variability in the mathematics teaching at this level – often teachers are less experienced and less well qualified, greater emphasis on number, too many resources. Key recommendations: lower secondary needs to be a specific policy focus; greater coherence needed around what is meant by problem-solving, reasoning, fluency, etc.; teachers need more time to think and develop; students need more time to reason, explain, discuss and justify; more variety needs to be offered in classrooms. Hopefully the Observatory for Mathematical Education (OME) will be able to follow up on gaps in the evidence base.

### 10.3 Maths Anxiety related to Lower Secondary Mathematics by Sally Bamber

The presentation is distributed with the minutes. Sally emphasised the impact that Maths Anxiety has on learning and achievement. Girls are more susceptible to maths anxiety than boys. There is a complex interaction between maths anxiety and specific leaning differences in mathematics. Transition from primary to secondary can exacerbate potential issues, with lower socio-economic groups suffering disproportionately.

### 10.4 Questions and Discussion

Suggestions for future analysis included:

Why are gaps (e.g. between boys and girls) widening in KS3?

Are there schools (or classes) in the study that are closing gaps in attitude?

Are there differences in attainment and attitude by SEN(D) status?

How does the balance of topics taught compare to the balance of topics in the national curriculum?  
Are attainment and attitude patterned by pedagogy or schemes of work?  
Does the level of experience of teachers make a difference?  
Does the use of standardised curricula and other practices have an impact?  
How do friendship groupings impact attitudes?  
Are pedagogical practice and schemes of work patterned by MAT or region?

## **11 Conclusion**

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

## **12 Dates of future meetings**

Thursday 11 June at De Morgan House Deadline for papers: Thursday 28 May 2026

Thursday 5 November at De Morgan House Deadline for papers: Thursday 22 October 2026