



## What The Mathematical Association has done for me.

People often ask why they should join an association, what do they get out of it. Well here's what being an active member of The Mathematical Association (MA) has done for me. Hopefully it will encourage you to take part and join in with the fun.

You can get as much as you are willing to put into The MA, I've been particularly fortunate to meet some incredible people who have given me some wonderful opportunities. Not everyone who is a member follows this path but I've taken advantage of the experiences that have come my way!



## A brief potted history of my life in The MA.

Whilst training to be a teacher and in my first couple of years of working I didn't really understand what the subject associations were. I knew of some published resources and that was about it. I attended an Easter conference thanks to my school offering to pay for me to go. My first conference was incredible. I was warmly welcomed by a community dedicated to maths and maths education. This ranged from other teachers, to teacher trainers (university, LEA and independent), to those developing the public face of mathematics, academic mathematicians and even OfSTED maths specialists. I had never known that this community had existed and came away enthused with ideas for the classroom, some new maths, theoretical ideas behind developing my pedagogy, a clearer picture of what OfSTED inspections should be like and a host of new contacts.

I joined the 11 – 16 sub-committee. Through this sub-committee I contributed to publications and responses to consultations. Meeting three times a year we discussed current issues in the secondary classroom, areas where we felt we could help and various resources for publication. I also continued to attend the annual conferences. At my second annual conference I delivered a workshop; Engaging ideas for the classroom, it went down well and off the back of delivering this workshop other teachers and members contacted me to run a similar session for their school, group, education department. All of these workshops along with work in school that developed on them was a great contribution to my advanced skills teacher application.

Through the links I made in those first couple of years, experience I gained delivering workshops and reflections I collected on my own ideas I began to spread my wings. My subject knowledge was also extended. Members love their maths as much as they love teaching it. It doesn't matter whether you're teaching early years or post 16 there is always someone to talk to about the maths you are teaching as well

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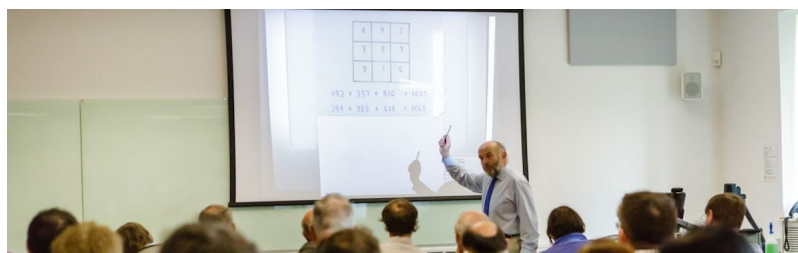
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By Phyllis Kavanagh

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as the best way to teach it and resources to use. As chair of the sub-committee I was responsible for collating responses to governmental consultations; another thing I never really knew existed. I represented The MA at a number of events and brushed shoulders with HMI, authors of resources I treasured, experienced well informed leaders of maths education and a wealth of amazing classroom teachers. I continued to deliver workshops for The MA but was also asked to deliver Master Classes for the Royal Institute, lectures for sixth formers at the Institute of Education in London, and write multiple articles, resources and publications. I was also asked to get involved with some international education development projects and travelled the world working with maths teachers.

Having then been on the Teaching Committee for a couple of years I took on the chair. This was a huge challenge but has kept me on my toes. I have to be up to date with governmental policies and consultations, recognise the challenges facing classroom teachers and continue to represent The MA at events around the country (even world).



### So what have I gained?

Being an active member of The MA has allowed me access to highly esteemed colleagues in the education and maths world. It has taken me on a route of continuing my own and others professional development and given me the confidence to delve into some of my own writing. I've made contacts who have linked me up with some wonderful opportunities, challenged my beliefs and encouraged me to widen my experiences. My knowledge of maths has also been extended, emphasising that we're all learners and that a teachers education is never complete!

By joining the association and a committee you become a member of a community where people help and support each other. For example, I was given the real pleasure of proof reading Rob Eastaway's book "More Maths for Mums and Dads: The Teenage Years", I learnt loads. In return he came to my challenging secondary school and delivered an incredible workshop that wowed the pupils and impressed our SLT, LEA and surrounding schools.

Even my current role at Cambridge Mathematics is partly due to my membership of The MA. I met Lynne McClure at an MA event, continued to keep in touch through my SLE role (she came to the school where I worked as an SLE to run multiple workshops) and was chair of TC whilst she was president.

So whether you want new ideas to use tomorrow, have your say about governmental policies, simply sit and discuss the wonders of maths or network to discover new opportunities joining the association and being active is a must.

