BRANCH CONFERENCE BURSARY RECIPIENT 2018

BCME9 – Report on THE CONFERENCE

I am currently studying a PGCE at Leeds Trinity University specialising in secondary mathematics. The Mathematical Association newsletter from November 2017 included an advertisement, for one full residential attendance bursary for a first-time delegate with the question *"How would attendance at this conference benefit you in performing your role?"*

I was honoured to be chosen as the recipient of the bursary and would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest thanks to the MA, for allowing me to experience BCME9, which was my first mathematics conference.

Initially I was daunted by the 300+ sessions available to choose from, however I was always able to find a session that aligned with my interests as a PGCE student. The variety of sessions available corresponded to the diverse range of attendees at BCME9; all of whom were consistently friendly as well as willing to discuss their vast experience and varied roles.

I created a twitter account specifically for engaging with the mathematics community ahead of BCME9. Having already benefited from using so many of their fantastic resources, it was inspiring to meet mathematical 'celebrities' face-to-face such as Craig Barton and Jo Morgan.

Examining the different perspectives of academics, teachers, trainers and advisers has broadened my outlook, enabling me to gain a greater understanding of the range of roles that mathematical educators fulfil.

I particularly enjoyed the ICT strands, which were led by Douglas Butler and Tom Button (MEI) on web resources, autograph and GeoGebra. They provided instruction on how to use the software as well as clear examples of their applications to GCSE and A-level mathematics.
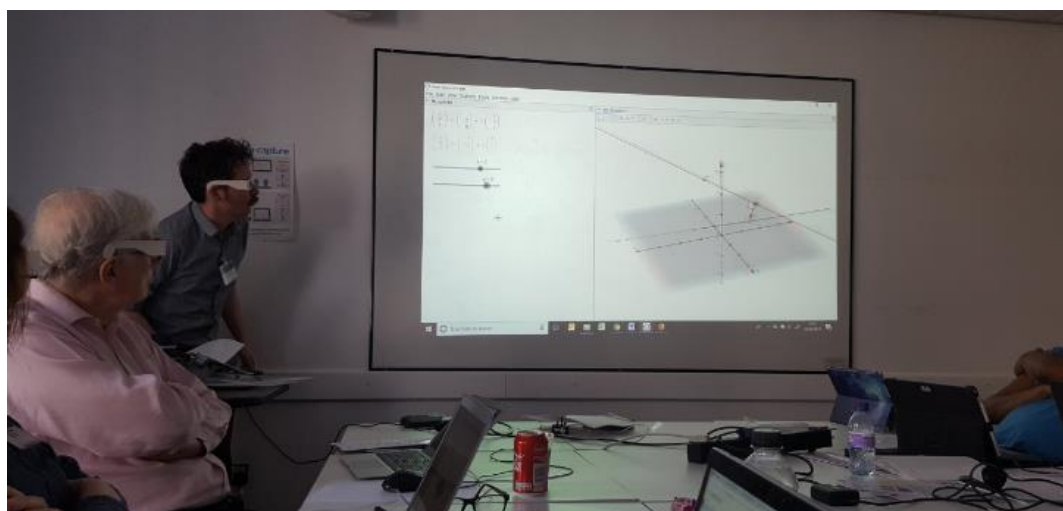
We explored the parabolas of listening ears, used during WW1: visually represented the derivative of a function as its gradient function, which the icon of a skier gracefully glided along. Most impressive of all was GeoGebra 3D representation of the shortest distance between skew lines.

Technology such as this provides a powerful means of incorporating real world examples into mathematics lessons and encourages students to explore mathematics through the world around them. At this crucial formative stage of my training, without any previous experience of attending a BCME conference, exposure to the diverse range and scope of events has enriched my teaching and improved student outcomes.

The Mathematical Association have provided me with a broader understanding of the importance of mathematical education within the UK and functioned as a key source of news and information: without which I might never have learnt of BCME9. Attending the conference gave me the opportunity for four days of focused CPD to improve my practice.

Thank you to all the BCME Committee for an enjoyable, informative and well-run conference and to the MA for your support.

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