

## EDITORIAL

### Editorial

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Welcome to this edition of MSOR Connections, which once again reflects the broad range of mathematics education activity taking place across Higher Education in the UK.

I am delighted that this edition starts with a report of the important workshop held recently in memory of Professor John Blake, who is so much missed in the mathematics education community. Edited by Grove, the report contains details of the talks given at that meeting which both summarised the enormous contribution that John made to UK HE mathematics education and investigated the next steps going forward. It covers a wide range of topics including employability, maths support, assessment and the HE maths curriculum. This theme of mathematics curricula is taken up by Capes and Rowlett, who discuss the design of a first-year curriculum to aid transition from school to university. This is a subject very close to my own heart as it was my concern for issues with transition and retention which led me to set up the first Maths Arcade at Greenwich and to take a number of other initiatives to help first-year undergraduates. The Maths Arcade is the focus of the next paper, authored by students Golding and Smith from Sheffield Hallam University, who investigate how strategy games can be used to promote mathematical thinking.

We then move to maths support: Mulligan and Mac an Bhaird examine the value of having a full-time maths support worker based in maths support centres. Although this is specific to maths support at Maynooth University, Ireland there are many lessons that can be learned for maths support centres elsewhere, and this paper may be particularly helpful for anyone wishing to make a case for a full-time role at their institution. This is followed by Mitchell's paper detailing one of the roles of a maths support centre, in providing statistics help to non-maths students. Mitchell describes his method of teaching them statistical appreciation rather than trying to teach a couple of statistical methods which are unlikely to be understood. The final paper from Little shows how important statistics support is in the teaching of nurses: something that I was privileged to learn more about during my time organising meetings for sigma.

I am particularly pleased that this edition of Connections resonates so strongly with my own special interests in mathematics education in HE, as this is likely to be the last editorial I will be writing, due to my recent move from HE to industry.

I would like to end by saying how grateful I am to Duncan Lawson, Tony Croft and others for giving me the opportunity of helping resurrect MSOR Connections and, as John Blake urged, to build upon the legacy of the Maths, Stats & OR Network. I have very much enjoyed working with the rest of the editorial team – Peter Rowlett, Alun Owen and Rob Wilson – and I am very pleased to announce that Tony Mann will be joining them. I wish them every success for the future and am confident that Connections will continue to serve the needs of the HE maths community for many years to come.