

Mathematics in Education and Industry

Support with Coursework for the GCE Mathematics (MEI) specification

Coursework is an important part of the MEI specification. It allows some areas of mathematics to be assessed that written examinations may not assess so well. It also allows candidates to show what they can do in a context other than a timed written paper.



Working on coursework helps students to develop skills that are highly valued in higher education and by employers; it also helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the mathematics involved.

Coursework is mandatory in three units:

- 4753 Core 3
- 4758 Differential Equation
- 4776 Numerical Methods

Centres and teachers can get support in their teaching and assessing of coursework in several different ways. Some of these are free and others are charged at a reasonable rate.

Asking questions

Questions about teaching: Email Stella Dudzic at MEI: stella.dudzic@mei.org.uk

Questions about assessment: Email Keith Proffitt at OCR: maths@ocr.org.uk

Resources available

OCR website: the reports to centres always contain helpful advice on coursework. They can be found on the OCR website: follow the link to the MEI A level from www.ocr.org.uk/maths. The section concerning coursework can be found at the back of the examiners' report. Examiners' reports are public documents so the advice in them can be shared with students.

MEI: you can obtain the coursework bank for teachers for each unit either through the Integral online resources or by filling in the form at www.mei.org.uk/teachersupport. There is also a student guide for each of the courseworks; these are available in the Integral resources: integralsmaths.org.

OCR: you can purchase a pack of exemplar coursework costing £6.74. This is only available to centres.

The publications catalogues can be found at:
http://www.ocr.org.uk/orderpublications/pubs_catalogue/index.aspx

JCQ have published general advice about coursework to ensure teachers are clear about how much guidance can be given to students.

The JCQ instructions for coursework can be found at:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/attachments/published/1482/Coursework%20ICC%201112.pdf>

Other kinds of help

If you are a centre new to the course, intend to give your students 10 equations to choose from for the 4753 task and would like some advice on the equations, you can email your suggested list to Keith Proffitt: maths@ocr.org.uk and a moderator will get in touch with you.

If you want some help with getting the marking right then you can send two marked scripts to OCR before the deadline and a moderator will advise you on your marking. There is no fee for this service. We will try to do this as quickly as possible, but you should allow four weeks for this. The form you need to fill in can be found on the OCR website: follow the link to the MEI A level from www.ocr.org.uk/maths.

If you want some INSET specifically at your centre you can request a telephone call (£50) or a half day visit (£250) or a full day (£400) from an expert through MEI. Contact Stella Dudzic to arrange this. Other packages, for example for a group of schools, can also be arranged.

The annual MEI conference regularly includes sessions about coursework. Handouts from some past sessions can be found at www.mei.org.uk/conference2011

MEI has a local branch structure which allows centres new to coursework to get support from centres which have more experience with it. If you are unsure who your local branch chair is, contact Stella Dudzic: stella.dudzic@mei.org.uk.