NEC to offer pioneering Further Maths distance learning course

Tuesday 11 December, 2018

The *National Extension College* (NEC), using Mathematics in Education and Industry's (MEI's) *Integral*® online teaching and learning materials, has developed a pioneering and innovative Further Maths A-level distance learning course. This is a huge step forward for the many students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to study Further Maths, and equally opens up access to Further Maths for those learners who require the flexibility of learning at a time and place to suit their lifestyle.

Most schools and colleges that offer A levels include Further Maths in their offer. Those that are not in a position to teach Further Maths themselves are often able to offer it to their students with the support of the government-funded Advanced Mathematics Support Programme (AMSP), which is managed by MEI. There are, however, many people who wish to study Further Maths who are unable to access it at a school or college, including adult learners, home educated students, and university students who need Further Maths to change course. This new NEC course will provide these people with a means of accessing high-quality tuition in this important subject.

The take up of A-level Further Maths has risen dramatically over the last 15 years from fewer than 6,000 in 2003 to more than 16,000 in 2018 (NCETM, 2017; JCQ, 2018). Further Maths is widely acknowledged as a *facilitating subject* for students applying to university and is often preferred when applying to particular universities, such as Russell Group Universities, for some specialist courses (including engineering, computer science, and mathematics).

NECs A-level Further Maths follows the latest course specification from the awarding organisation Pearson Edexcel, and can be either studied independently or as an accompaniment to A-level Mathematics.

The NEC has been committed to breaking down barriers to improve access for distance learners for over 50 years. It is this ethos which has led NEC, in coordination with MEI, to develop this new, exciting and innovative course, which will help ensure opportunities to study A-level Further Maths are available to all, and build on our legacy as true innovators in distance learning.

Dr Ros Morpeth, CEO of the National Extension College (NEC) comments: *"Maths qualifications both at GCSE and A Level open doors to jobs, careers, university places and professional training. NEC is delighted to add Further Maths to our range of subjects."*

Charlie Stripp, Chief Executive of MEI, said: *"We are delighted that those students unable to access A level Further Mathematics at a school or college will be able to access the opportunity to study it through the NEC."*

Note to the editors:

About the National Extension College (NEC)

The National Extension College (NEC) transforms lives through learning. It opens up pathways for people of all ages, from diverse backgrounds and cultures by offering access to flexible online learning courses across the UK and beyond.

Over the past 50 years, the NEC has built a reputation for quality and innovation in

learning, alongside a deep commitment to offering each student an exceptional level of

support in achieving their ambitions.

Maths A level is NEC's most popular course with the number of students making up 10% of all enrolments. It is often taken alongside other STEM subjects by students intending to go on to university.

About the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme

The Advanced Mathematics Support Programme (AMSP) is a government-funded initiative, managed by MEI, which aims to increase participation in AS/A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics, and Core

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Maths, and improve the teaching of these level 3 maths qualifications.

The AMSP provides national support for teachers and students in all state-funded schools and colleges in England. Additional support is given to those in priority areas to boost social mobility, so that, whatever their gender, background or location, students can choose their best maths pathway post-16, and have access to high quality maths teaching.

For further information see amsp.org.uk

About MEI

Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) is an independent charity that is committed to improving mathematics education for all.

For further information see: mei.org.uk

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References:

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Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) ‘A Level examination results’, 2018.

https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/a-levels/2018

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