

# Maths, Stats&OR

No 2

May 2000

Published quarterly by the Learning and Teaching Support Network Centre for Mathematics, Statistics and OR

The distributed Centre, based at the Universities of Birmingham (lead site), Glasgow and Nottingham Trent, is supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.

The newsletter is available free of charge to academics in UK Higher Education institutions. For those outwith this sector, a paid subscription scheme exists. Contact the Centre for details.

Contributions are invited - please contact the editor. Advertisements and inserts can also be accepted - see p6.

The articles and reviews from this newsletter will shortly be published on the Centre's Web site. Many other resources can be viewed at <http://www.bham.ac.uk/ctimath/> for Mathematics, and <http://www.stats.gla.ac.uk/cti/> <http://science.ntu.ac.uk/rsscse/> for Statistics



ISSN 0959-3950  
© 2000, Learning and Teaching Support Network Centre for Mathematics, Statistics and OR

## Networking Maths, Stats & OR

Welcome to the second newsletter from the Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) Centre for Maths, Stats & OR.

Since the last newsletter in February we have invited Heads of Departments to nominate learning and teaching contacts, and to date have received 74 names. We have also taken part in four major mathematics conferences, where we circulated a questionnaire to interested delegates. Topics mentioned by respondents included service teaching, assessment and the relationship between our Centre and the Institute for Learning and Teaching (ILT) - a full list of issues raised is published on our Web site. We are grateful for the feedback from this exercise and have replied to all suggestions. We have also brought relevant issues to the attention of Paul Clark, Chief Executive of the ILT. If anyone would like to contribute ideas on how this Centre might support learning and teaching in our subject area, there is a Web version of the form at <http://www.bham.ac.uk/msor>

Our first workshop on Teaching Materials for Engineering Mathematics was run jointly with the LTSN Centre for Engineering at the recent IMA conference for the Mathematical Education of Engineers held at Loughborough. This took the form of hands-on sessions, computers running symbolic and numeric packages, and printed and electronic worksheets. An electronic guide to Internet resources devised for the event can be found on our Web site. The second workshop, on computer-aided assessment in mathematics, is due to take place on 24 May at Birmingham.

On Monday 8 May there was a launch-lunch at the University of Birmingham to welcome the two LTSN Centres with lead sites here. The other subject centre covers sociology, anthropology and politics, so between us we can relate to many of the disciplines on the Birmingham campus. Amongst those attending was our new Information Officer, Robert Surowiec, who took up his appointment in April. Robert can be contacted at 0121 414 7670, email [r.l.surowiec@bham.ac.uk](mailto:r.l.surowiec@bham.ac.uk)



### Contents of this issue

<b>Promoting Effective Learning in Statistics and OR</b>	2
<b>Report on the BMC Splinter Session in Mathematical Education</b>	4
<b>Teaching and Learning Discrete Event Simulation &amp; Modelling</b>	6
<b>The Global Classroom</b>	11
<b>Articles published in the TaLUM newsletter</b>	16
<b>Undergraduate Mathematics Teaching Conference - one experience</b>	18
<b>Review of Maple 6</b>	22
<b>Review of Algebra Interactive</b>	27
<b>Workshop Report: Teaching Applications using Matlab</b>	31
<b>Diary</b>	32

### Editors - Pam Bishop and Robert Surowiec

Learning and Teaching Support Network Centre for Maths, Stats & OR  
School of Mathematics & Statistics  
The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT  
Tel: 0121 414 7670  
Fax: 0121 414 3389  
Email: [p.bishop@bham.ac.uk](mailto:p.bishop@bham.ac.uk), [r.l.surowiec@bham.ac.uk](mailto:r.l.surowiec@bham.ac.uk)