

# TEACHING FOR MASTERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

**Teaching for mastery means students gaining a deep and lasting understanding of mathematical procedures and concepts.**

The NCETM and Maths Hubs offer two different, funded professional development programmes in teaching for mastery. Both involve individual teachers and their departments working over time to embed mastery into maths learning. One involves a highly trained teacher supporting other schools to do the same.

## MASTERY SPECIALISTS

Teachers who want to become experts in mastery and take it beyond their own school can become Mastery Specialists. They are linked to their local Maths Hub.

The three year Secondary Mastery Specialist Programme involves fully funded face-to-face training and online collaboration. Participants on the programme also work to achieve NCETM PD Lead status, a nationally recognised qualification.

## WORK GROUPS

Maths Hub Work Groups, each led by a Mastery Specialist, offer locally-based, collaborative CPD. Two teachers ('Mastery Advocates') from each of a small group of schools or colleges, meet half termly. Together they develop classroom and departmental approaches consistent with teaching for mastery.

The Mastery Specialist leads the process and gives bespoke support to each school or college.

Mastery Specialist, London

“Implementing teaching for mastery has been a huge success. The biggest difference in our department is the shift in culture of both our teachers and our students.”

KS3 Maths Co-ordinator, London

“To anyone considering joining a Work Group, I could not recommend it enough. It is arguably the best continual professional development you can get.”

Mastery Specialist, South Yorkshire

“It is rewarding to see the lessons students are now experiencing with teachers who are teaching for a deeper understanding.”

Head of Maths, Surrey

“The ‘open lessons’ provide inspiration by showing the strategies in real-life use. This allows for genuine developmental conversation.”

For more information and to get involved, visit our website or contact your local Maths Hub.

[www.ncetm.org.uk/secondarymastery](http://www.ncetm.org.uk/secondarymastery)

[www.mathshubs.org.uk](http://www.mathshubs.org.uk)

**National Centre**  
for Excellence in the  
Teaching of Mathematics

## MASTERY:

### YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

**Chances are that even if you've heard of teaching for mastery, you will have some questions about it. You may have also heard some of the mastery myths which are out there.**

Our Q&A answers the questions that teachers and leaders may have about implementing mastery. We also bust some of the common myths about this approach to maths.



<b>The NCETM? What is it? What is its role?</b>	The National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) was set up in 2006. We support schools, colleges, teachers and anyone seeking maths-specific CPD. We firmly believe that the mastery approach works in maths classrooms, and we coordinate plenty of professional development to support anyone interested in developing mastery in their school and beyond.
<b>Where do Maths Hubs come in?</b>	A national network of 35 Maths Hubs has existed since 2014. They work closely with the NCETM to organise and lead maths-specific professional development at the local level. All the CPD available through the NCETM and Maths Hubs blends national expertise with knowledge of the local landscape.
<b>Isn't teaching for mastery just for primary school children?</b>	Definitely not! Mastery is not yet as well established in secondary schools, but more and more are embracing it each year. The mastery approach is just as beneficial to secondary school students. The NCETM has lots of guidance and information about how mastery works in secondary schools. Their Work Groups are suitable for secondary maths teachers at all stages of their career.
<b>I've heard that it only works if you get rid of sets and have mixed attainment groupings. Is this true?</b>	Again, this myth is not true. Mastery is based on the belief that all students can achieve. This belief does not rely on mixed attainment groupings to be successful. Schools are free to make their own decisions about sets or mixed attainment groupings.
<b>Has it shown results yet at secondary?</b>	Mastery, like all effective classroom practice, is not a quick fix. It relies on teaching over time promoting deep understanding. Many schools who have adopted mastery are already reporting that their students are stronger and more confident mathematicians.
<b>I've heard of mastery but I'm not sure about it. Why would I get involved if I'm not keen?</b>	Mastery is not an educational fad or gimmick. The term is simply a label which refers to students doing maths deeply, effectively and efficiently. Already for thousands of teachers, mastery has been a catalyst for deeper thought about their teaching.
<b>Surely implementing mastery is going to involve a huge cultural change? It would be too much on top of everything else we have to do.</b>	Embracing teaching for mastery can involve a cultural shift, but it is one which teachers and schools who have done it so far believe to be completely worthwhile. Teachers in Work Groups aren't alone. They benefit from the support of their local Maths Hub and Mastery Specialists. It is worth the investment and the change.

For more information and to get involved, visit our website or contact your local Maths Hub.