

Nick Gibb
Minister of State
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

24 October 2014

Dear Minister,

Thank you very much for meeting with Professor Andy Noyes (ACME Deputy Chair) and I on 8 October. I hope that you found the discussions were constructive, informative and interesting.

We discussed a range of issues, including mathematics at primary and post-16, mathematics education reform. We also began a conversation on initial teacher education that you suggested we speak about again later this year, an invitation that we accepted.

- **Post-16 mathematics:** ACME supports the development of Core Maths qualifications. We discussed with you the challenges that there might be in scaling up Core Maths from the Early Adopter Schools to many more schools offering Core Maths qualifications. We also discussed the importance of a limited recognised number of qualifications that sit under the Core Maths banner and the importance of students knowing how they fit into the post-16 suite of qualifications. We remain concerned that a proliferation of different Core Maths qualifications will inhibit take up. ACME will consider the development of a briefing paper for admissions tutors on the post-16 mathematics landscape.
- **A level mathematics:** We discussed the very strong take up of A level mathematics, with A level Mathematics as the most popular subject in 2014. We raised the concern that the move to linear A levels, the decoupling of AS and A level qualifications and the introduction of Core Maths has the potential to damage participation rates and that care would be needed to ensure that the numbers taking mathematics at A level continue to increase.
- **Primary mathematics:** In relation to primary education, we discussed the placement of a mathematics specialist in every primary school. We shared common ground on the importance of professional development, and the Maths Hubs' role in this, and the use of first class text books and online resources in the primary classroom to support the learning and teaching of mathematics.

I am very much looking forward to our discussion on ITE and other matters on 9 December. The ACME member leading on ACME's new project on ITE, Robert Barbour, will accompany me and we look forward to another fruitful discussion.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Steve Sparks FRS, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education (ACME)