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## **Investigation of International Mathematical Cultures**

### **Day 2 – Parallel IV (10.25-10.55)**

Recruitment to post-graduate mathematics programmes and to lecturer positions in mathematics departments in UK universities has become dominated by international students and staff. Although mathematics is generally regarded as ‘the universal language’, the reality is that different countries have very different cultures when it comes to the teaching and learning of mathematics. There are significant variations in the pre-university mathematical experience, in terms of the curriculum content, learning styles, levels of abstraction, and assessment methods. Even within the UK, a considerable number of pre-higher education mathematics qualifications are available and, it is not always clear what mathematics can be expected when students commence their degree programmes. With increasing numbers of international students and academic staff in UK HE, the scene is becoming more complicated. Students enter degree courses with a wide range of backgrounds and bring with them very different experiences. At the same time, academic staff, having experienced different education systems, may have some unrealistic expectations of their students.

With an HEA Teaching Development Grant, we have produced a guide to investigate the mathematical cultures of a range of the main international suppliers (of students and staff) to UK HE mathematics departments. Using semi-structured interviews and online questionnaires, we have drawn upon the personal experiences of academic staff who have studied or taught in more than two educational systems. The talk will show some of the main findings.