

Larry Krause, London South Bank University

## **Back To Basics! The lasting value of face-to-face interaction**

Day 1 – Parallel I (12.00-12.30)

In 1996 Dr Sue Starkings began a Student Maths Support Service at London South Bank University (LSBU) with herself as the only tutor and in a remote location detached from the main part of the university's campus. The aim was to help students with lower mathematical/ statistical knowledge comprehend the subject to the levels required for success in Higher Education. The service grew organically to be taught now by the Maths Support Team of three part time staff that she developed, moulded and enthused with an ability to conduct face-to-face tutorials both individually and with cohort size classes.

The valuable work of the service at LSBU will be illustrated through a case study of a young homeless person, Tony (not his real name) who, through intensive support, and attending face-to-face tutorials on an almost daily basis, eventually achieved his goal, graduating and now working in Product Design.

Over the years there have been hundreds of Tony's and the face-to-face maths interaction they received at LSBU improved their lives making a difference by being different, giving students who want to turn their lives around through the gaining of a better education the opportunity to do it through face-to-face support tuition and the development of conceptual understanding. From Tony who was homeless to asylum seekers seeking a better life away from persecution and single parents wanting to give their family a better future LSBU's Maths Support Service, <https://my.lsbu.ac.uk/page/maths-support>, continues to help change those willing to help themselves.

The service Sue began was often observed by other HE Institutions determined to instigate their own support service for many of the same reasons; the service she began still exists, it is still very much needed. The epistemology is simple; everyone likes a personal service – teaching face-to-face is giving students what we would all like – teaching with the adaptability and ability to make it personal. What this presentation will attempt to convey is a brief outline of the face-to-face maths support available to LSBU students.

Footnote: Sue Starkings has now retired from teaching at university level to teach a different cohort of students as she is now the Reverend Sue Starkings, a fully ordained priest in the Church of England.