

CETL-MSOR Conference 2015

Peter Rowlett and Ewan Russell: Developing professional skills in mathematics undergraduates: three years of practice

A new final year module was developed in 2012 for the Keele undergraduate mathematics degree programme. This aimed to develop certain skills that are needed when undertaking a research degree or entering employment but which may not be developed by traditional mathematics teaching. The specific skills included working in depth on a problem over an extended period, writing reports, communicating mathematical results to different audiences, working in collaboration with others and skills articulation. This built on some related skills development in earlier years of the degree programme and had a focus on reflecting on and understanding the skills developed.

This talk will report on three years of operating this module. This has included individual and group assignments; formative and summative group activities; training on real-world problem-solving and how groups operate; employer input into setting and assessing projects; and, peer assessment of contribution. The initial design decisions will be set in context of student feedback and later changes to the module delivery and their evaluation will be detailed.