

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING & MENTORSHIP SEMINAR

Shabnam Beheshti
s.beheshti@qmul.ac.uk

Welcome! Who am I and what have I been tasked to do? Here is what I answered in the job application:

Guided by the philosophy that postgraduates can and should be prepared for the large variety of responsibilities they will encounter at the next stage of their careers, academic and otherwise, the proposed programme involves both TA training and professional mentorship. Main areas of emphasis include soft-skills training specific to the effective and clear communication of mathematics and mathematical concepts, as well as learning to balance high-quality teaching with excellent research.

[proposed activities—more on this below]

Each of the proposed activities provide mentorship and interaction with staff and colleagues outside of the immediate research group of the postgraduate, building important secondary relationships within the School. They will be planned with the flexibility to prioritize activities based on the needs, interests, and input of the graduate students themselves. Implementation of the activities will be dovetailed with the existing training in place at QMUL, including the 1st-year induction, PGR Teaching Support Day and available CAPD courses.

The approximate plan is as follows: In the first semester, we will focus on TA Training. Specifically, we will discuss tutorial structures, responsibilities in the classroom, best practices for facilitating learning in groupwork settings, marking effectively and efficiently, and observations in the field. We will also develop of Teaching Statements for your postdoc/academic job applications. In the second semester, we will address other issues surrounding life as a mathematics Ph.D., including postdoc panels, applying for research and travel funding, outreach in teaching and research impact, the “complete” academic job application, and demystifying the publication process.

Over the course of this year, I will be compiling resources with commentary for your use (suggested reading on effective teaching of mathematics, websites to look for postdocs and academic jobs, L^AT_EX templates for your CVs, outreach opportunities, etc.) and making them available online. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have something you wish to add to the list or if you would like to see a particular topic included.

In the meantime, here is your teaching support network, for any questions/issues you may have in the coming weeks:

- The Module Organizer
- Graduate Student Representatives
- Me: Shabnam Beheshti (s.beheshti@qmul.ac.uk)
- Education Manager: Norman McBreen (n.mcbreen@qmul.ac.uk)
- PGR Office: Mike Witcombe (m.witcombe@qmul.ac.uk)
- Director of Taught Programs: Thomas Prellberg (t.prellberg@qmul.ac.uk)
- Director of PGR Program: Michael Farber (m.farber@qmul.ac.uk)

Notes

“Being indispensable is the new tenure” –Anonymous

Week	Seminar Topic	Tutorial	Notes
Week 1	Your first day, preparation and execution	Week “0” (no tutorial)	
Week 2		Tutorial #1	
Week 3	Marking Schemes/Strategies, Teaching Study Skills	Tutorial #2	
Week 4		Tutorial # 3	
Week 5	Mathematical Writing, Facilitating Group Learning	Tutorial #4	
Week 6		Tutorial #5	
Week 7	Observations Assignment	Midterm Review (no tutorial)	
Week 8	Observations Discussion	Tutorial #6	
Week 9		Tutorial #7	
Week 10	Troubleshooting Attendance, Regrouping and Revising	Tutorial #8	
Week 11		Tutorial #9	
Week 12	Technology in the Classroom, Wrap-up	Tutorial #10	