

FIRST YEAR IN MATHS

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ABSTRACT

The academics involved in teaching, coordinating and managing first year mathematics programs play an important role in facilitating students' transition from school to university. Typically, they possess attributes that give them an affinity for first year students' needs and aspirations, and the ability to facilitate their learning. They have a significantly different role from their colleagues due to the particular demands created by the management of large numbers of students with diverse backgrounds. In this presentation we will describe the preliminary findings of the current Office of Learning and Teaching funded project, First Year in Maths (FYiMaths), which seeks to articulate the role and value of the academics involved in teaching and managing first year mathematics programs and to develop their leadership via a supportive network. Interviews and workshops already conducted have highlighted the key challenges facing first year mathematics coordinators. Common threads identified to date are the adaptive responses and innovations required to address teaching an increasingly diverse student cohort, heavy workloads and the challenges of effecting change without positional authority.

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