

Mastering Maths Evaluation

Summary of Key Dates and Responsibilities: Sept 2024 – Sept 2025

Dates	Task	Responsibility
September 2024	NatCen randomly allocates teachers to the intervention or teaching-as-usual group	NatCen
November 2024	All colleges share student lists with NatCen	All colleges
January 2025	All colleges share updated student lists with NatCen	All colleges
February 2025	Eight colleges will be invited to take part in case study research	Some colleges
March 2025	All colleges will receive paper surveys for both teachers and students	All colleges
August/September 2025	All colleges will share students' raw GCSE Maths scores with NatCen, or, NatCen will access this information directly from the exam board	All colleges

Mastering Maths Evaluation

FAQs

1. Taking part in the Mastering Maths study

1.1 What is the difference between taking part in Mastering Maths, and the evaluation?

- Mastering Maths is a research study involving an intervention group of teachers and a 'teaching-as-usual' group. Both groups of teachers need to take part in some core evaluation activities, like uploading student lists. Teachers in the intervention group additionally take part in professional development run by the University of Nottingham and a group of lead teachers. They also teach at least five Mastering Maths research lessons to all their GCSE classes between November 2024 and April 2025.

1.2 How was it decided which teachers take part?

- Researchers at NatCen randomly assigned teachers to either the intervention or teaching-as-usual group in September 2024. UoN informed settings of their assignment on Thursday, 12th September.

2. Students' right to withdraw

2.1 Do I need to tell the students' parents or carers about the study?

- It is not necessary to inform parents or carers about the evaluation due to students being over the age of 16. This means that students can opt out of the evaluation on their own.

2.2 What do I do if a student does not want to take part?

- Ultimately, it is the student's decision. We recommend that you encourage them to take part by reminding them that this is an opportunity to be involved in an exciting study to see whether we can assist future generations of students to experience better teaching in mathematics. Also, reassure them that their data will be stored securely following all legal requirements and that they and their college will be anonymous in all reports resulting from this study.
- If they still do not want to take part, this is fine. Opting out has no effect on the teaching that they receive.
- When we ask you to upload student lists in the middle of November, please **do not** include those students' details who declined to take part. When uploading the student lists, it is your responsibility to keep track of which students declined to take part.

2.3 How do students withdraw?

- Before you upload the student list to NatCen, students will let **you** know that they do not wish to take part. You will leave these students out of the student lists.
- After you upload the student list to NatCen, students can email the research team to withdraw their participation. Students have a right to withdraw until the publication of the evaluation report in 2026.

3. Student lists

3.1 Why do I need to share information about my students?

- It is not possible for us to carry out the necessary analyses to determine whether Mastering Maths is effective or not if we do not have access to some basic information about the students. For example, one of our analyses involves using attainment at Key Stage 2 as a baseline and comparing it to the GCSE scores students attain in May 2025. To do this, we need students' full name, date of birth and post code to help us locate them on the National Pupil Database, which is a database held by the Department for Education.

3.2 I am in the teaching-as-usual group. Do I still need to complete and upload student lists?

- Yes. It is imperative that **all** teachers complete this key evaluation task regardless of their allocation in the trial. The impact evaluation analyses will compare the GCSE scores of students in the treatment group compared with those in the teaching-as-usual group. Receiving students lists from all teachers is therefore very important to us.

3.3 How do I share student information with you?

- You will populate an Excel template and upload it onto our secure website. You will receive step-by-step instructions on how to do this.

3.4 Is the secure website safe for sharing personal data?

- Yes, it is completely safe. The Excel file is uploaded onto a secure drive that is only accessible to named individuals in the NatCen evaluation team. NatCen regularly conducts randomised controlled trials, and this is a tried and tested way of sharing participant confidential information. It will not lead to an information security incident if you follow the step-by-step instructions and use the platform.
- You **must not** share the student list by email. Email is not a secure way of sharing this data.

3.5 Why do I need to send updated student lists in January?

- We need you to update the student lists with some additional information in January. The information will only be available to you then, which is why it is a two-stage process.
- We need to know if any of your students attempted the November 2024 GCSE Maths resit exam and whether they achieved a Grade 4 and are therefore no longer in your class. You need to update us with this information when the resit results are published in January. We also need to know the students' Unique Candidate Identifiers and GCSE candidate numbers. You will receive updated instructions about this task closer to the time.

3.6 Why do I need to save the student list I compile in November?

- It is **very important** that you save the original November student list somewhere secure where you can find it again. You will use this document again in January for the updated student list. It will be much easier for you to compile the January student list if you have the original copy saved. This way you can build on the existing Excel template rather than starting from scratch.

4. Other research activities with staff and students

4.1 What other research activities will be taking place, and when?

- We will carry out case studies of teachers in February 2025. These will include interviews with teachers and students and lesson observations.
- We will also send survey packs to colleges in March 2025. These will include surveys for both teachers and students. We will arrange a courier to collect and return the completed surveys to us.
- We will be in touch with more information about these activities closer to the time.

4.2 Who will take part in the additional research activities?

- Case studies will involve teachers and students in eight colleges. Some case studies will be in intervention colleges, others in teaching-as-usual colleges.
- Surveys will be sent to **all** teachers and students, regardless of their allocation.

5. Students' endline GCSE results

5.1 When and how do we send these?

- In August/September 2025, we will provide guidance to colleges about how to securely share the raw GCSE scores of students. There is a possibility that we will access the scores directly from exam boards. If this is the case, we will let you know.

5.2 Whose results will you need?

- We will need the results of all students whose details were submitted to NatCen in January, and who are still in the programme in the summer of 2025.