



Numeracy for Life Committee

Corrected oral evidence

Thursday 2 July 2026

12.10 pm

Watch the meeting

Members present: Lord Agnew of Oulton (The Chair); Baroness Alexander of Clevedon; Lord Blackwell; Baroness Bull; Baroness Garden of Frognal; Lord Hampton; Baroness Hamwee; Lord Hannett of Everton; Lord Massey of Hampstead; Viscount Stansgate.

Evidence Session No. 13

Heard in Public

Questions 153 - 161

Witnesses

Sam Sims, CEO, National Numeracy; Lynne McClure OBE, Trustee, National Numeracy; Rotimi Merriman-Johnson, Ambassador, National Numeracy.

Examination of witnesses

Sam Sims, Lynne McClure and Rotimi Merriman-Johnson.

Q153 **The Chair:** Good afternoon and welcome to this evidence session on numeracy for life. Thank you so much for joining us today. We will get cracking with the questions. I am just going to set the scene with the first one, which is about the cultural issues that surround numeracy and how we treat it differently from literacy. I am interested to know whether you are doing anything to help with that or have any suggestions that you think we should be considering.

Sam Sims: Thanks for having us here today. I am the chief executive of the charity National Numeracy, and have had the privilege and pleasure of meeting you previously as well.

Thinking about those specific areas around the culture and what we are doing to address that, culture, maths anxiety and confidence are closely related. When it comes to lack of confidence that informs this around numbers and maths, we know this is widely experienced. This is a critical national issue experienced at some scale. In general, it affects women more than men when it comes to confidence with numbers and maths anxiety, and we know that this holds people back. We also know that it is very changeable, and I can set out some ways in which we go about changing that.

When it comes to culture, though, we know that particularly younger adults—under-34s, for example—will in large numbers avoid situations that involve numbers and maths. We have good data on this. We also know that adults, but younger adults even more so—as many as half—will avoid applying for a job, for example, or taking a qualification if they know that numbers or maths is involved, mentioned or part of the process. This culture around feeling a lack of confidence is really holding many people back. From our research, about 32% of adults say that they feel anxious when put in situations where they have to use numbers.

Culturally, though, not that many adults with low numeracy say that they want to improve their numeracy, which is very interesting. They do not necessarily see the need to do that or how it would benefit them. The second of those is absolutely key to how we start changing this culture. There is a separation between what we think numeracy or maths is, what it meant to us when we were young at school, and what it could mean to us and the value that we might gain from it in our lives.

That is critical to changing culture. Fewer than half of all adults say that they would feel embarrassed to say that they cannot do maths or that they were no good with numbers and maths, which compares to 65% when it comes to reading and writing, so there is this big separation in culture around numbers and maths, as compared to reading and writing, that we need to address.

We know that it is a huge issue. We have really important clues about how to address it. The place I would start is this intergenerational nature of both number confidence and numeracy skills that we see come through time and time again, and it is a big way in which National Numeracy works to address low numeracy right across the UK, on the ground, in all four nations.

We work to empower communities, whether those are school communities, local communities, or employers working with local partners who are best placed to meet people where they are and to start to bring about change. Rather than introducing them somewhere else where people need to go and work in a different way with different people, we equip people locally who are already working with people in order to bring about that change.

Crucially around culture, we need to focus much more on motivations and outcomes. Why should we be numerate? Why should we invest in this? We have too much focus on seeing numeracy as the outcome. I would say that numeracy is not the outcome when we want to motivate people who might struggle to improve. The outcome needs to be something else. It needs to be how that will help you get into work or get on at work, improve how you manage your money or feel more comfortable with it, or how you support your children. That needs to be much more the reason why we are doing it, not for the sake of being good with numbers. That has been crucially powerful in how we work with communities.

We need to remove the barriers through bite-sized learning and informal approaches to get people started. Most people who struggle are not ready to engage with a significant maths course, for example, for a wide range of reasons, so we need to reach people and give them a way to make a start. As we see in so many other areas, that will then lead to greater and deeper engagement. I will stop there.

The Chair: We are going to move on, because we have only about three or four minutes for each question. I am going to turn to Lord Stansgate.

Q154 **Viscount Stansgate:** Good afternoon and thank you. I wanted to ask about the Multiply programme. We have been given the results of the evaluation. In fact, I had to order an extra ream of paper when I pressed print. It is full of a great deal of information. It does not seem as though it demonstrates any evidence that participants' numeracy skills have been improved, unless you tell me that that is unfair. I just wondered what your reflections are on the Multiply programme and whether there is anything that you would like to say in the light of it.

Sam Sims: There is evidence around improvement in confidence, and our research shows that improving number confidence is the strongest predictor of a subsequent improvement in skills. There is an inference there, but that is absolutely crucial. We know that 33%, a third, of learners on Multiply went on to pursue a further course. That is good evidence of progression.

We know as well that 81% of learners with parental responsibilities said that the programme had improved their confidence in helping their children with their homework and talking about maths. That is a very specific, strong outcome.

In many ways, Multiply provided the missing link. Before, we were asking, "Do you want to do a maths course?" The evidence shows us that not many people do, with significantly declining numbers over the past decade, for understandable reasons. People do not do that in high numbers. With Multiply, it was all about asking, "Do you want to help the kids who are in your care, to get on at work, to build a career or make a start? Do you want something to add value and then go on from there?" That is what it provided, which was not, and now again is not, available to people in any other way.

It allowed local communities to reach those hardest-to-reach people and get them started, and that is an incredibly powerful outcome. I know this because, both in terms of the development of the policy, and in the delivery of this, National Numeracy was heavily involved, and we have seen those results ourselves.

Viscount Stansgate: Thank you. In the light of the time, I had better allow the Chair to move on.

The Chair: Maybe one of you would like to come in on that.

Lynne McClure: I am not an expert on Multiply, but I would like to just mention one or two things that are happening out in the wider mathematics space, which is supporting the publicity, if you like, about mathematics and numeracy.

One of the charities of which I am a trustee is called Maths World UK. We have a Maths Exploratorium in London, and another one in Leeds. We have been funded to have a two-year City of Maths in Leeds, so there are all sorts of activities going on. For example, Asda is working with us. One of the challenges is, "How many litres of milk do you think were sold last week?" These are all about things that are accessible. You do not need to be able to do calculations to do all of these things, but estimation is a really important thing.

Last week, you had information from the Mathematical Futures project and Professor Jane Clarke. Mathematical Futures talks about general literacy in mathematics. That is not the same as arithmetic. Arithmetic is the precursor to doing the mathematics that you need for numeracy. The Academy for the Mathematical Sciences has looked at the contribution of the mathematical sciences to the budget of the country and has done redone the Deloitte report. All of these things are out in the public domain and are being publicised as much as we can, in order to show the importance of mathematics. Mathematics is not numeracy, and numeracy is not mathematics, but they are very closely aligned.

Q155 **Baroness Bull:** Just to follow up on the question about Multiply and

adult education, what we have heard as a committee is that there are a multitude of initiatives, programmes, projects and funding pots. There is a list as long as your arm. It is quite confusing for people. On the issue of devolved budgets, I do not know whether you heard the last session, but Mr Sunak said that having a national strategy in the light of devolved budgets becomes quite challenging.

The question is really about what changes need to happen so that we have a sustained, accessible, comprehensive adult education offer. Learning from Multiply but moving forward, what needs to happen? We clearly do not have that, but we have a massive problem, as you have clearly set out, with adult numeracy. What changes need to happen?

Sam Sims: Where I would start is by saying that we do not really have a supply issue when it comes to provision. We have incorrectly diagnosed the issue as, "Let's put on more courses. Let's give people more things to do", successively over decades, because we have identified that, if we just provided more and made it free, and free to a higher level, more people would do it.

The problem is that it is not a supply issue when we are talking about adult learners. It is primarily a demand issue, so we have to recognise that. To come back to Multiply, it was the first initiative that recognised that in the adult funding space, which said, "How do we boost demand here? How do we get people started? How do we provide flexibility to allow local authorities and local providers to work with different types of organisation, to be nimble, and to get people starting to experience something in a different way than they have ever experienced before?"

Boosting demand is absolutely key, starting with how we are going to get more people engaged, started and experiencing success, having previously, typically, experienced a great deal of failure, and get them to say, "I am a maths person. I can do this. I know now that I can improve". We see that with Multiply, not just in terms of the impact on adult numeracy levels or going on to take further courses, but also learning in other areas. We know that, when we support adults to improve their numeracy, they are more likely not only to go on further, but, as our research shows, to learn in other areas of their life as well, because it is a barrier that they have removed.

The key to addressing this, beyond all the things that are currently being done, many of which are fantastic, is to focus much more on boosting demand by giving that flexibility locally.

Baroness Bull: What you might be saying is that it is a bit unfair to assess Multiply on the basis of something that it was not set up to do. In what it was set up to do, which was to stimulate demand and meet people where they are, it had some success.

Sam Sims: Yes. If we focus on looking primarily at achievement or attainment, it misses the fact that, if people are not doing it, there is no attainment.

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: I would just like to echo what Lynne and Sam have said, which is that, if we are assessing numeracy, we need to put confidence at the heart of that. That is something that we tried to do at National Numeracy through a few initiatives.

Through our national numeracy challenge, people can use a calculator and other tools. It is the only online tool that measures how you feel about maths as well as the numeracy aspect. National numeracy day, which gets bigger and bigger every year, incorporates activities that people would do anyway. We did a school assembly last year with some year 3s to year 6s. We held dance classes and online conversations around maths to help normalise it.

The final thing that I would mention is the role of social media content. I am a financial educator. I create content on the likes of Instagram and TikTok. If you go on either of those platforms and just type in the word "maths", you will see many engaging, interesting maths content creators who help to normalise the topic for people every day.

Baroness Bull: Do we know anything about the age demographic of people who lean towards social media for—let us not call it "education"—further development of their numeracy skills? Do we know about the age demographic?

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: Generally speaking, TikTok tends to skew younger, towards Gen Z and those under the age of 25. It is a video-first platform. Instagram tends to skew towards millennials and my age group. The likes of Facebook will tend to skew to slightly older audiences.

Baroness Bull: So you can really target it.

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: Yes.

Q156 **Lord Hannett of Everton:** I want to ask you about the role of employers and whether you have a particular opinion on this. We know that many employers take staff on who may not have good numeracy skills. That then raises the question of progression in the workplace. What role do you think employers have in identifying, and particularly in improving, low numeracy in their workforce? What could the Government do to support and encourage this work?

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: There is a huge opportunity with employers. We have tens of millions of payrolled employees in the country, and they will spend much of their time at work. There are a few things that we could look at, such as accreditations for numeracy-friendly employers that provide training or integrate numeracy into the ways that they work. The more numerate members of staff in teams and workforces could nominate themselves as numeracy champions to support their fellow employees. We could also invest more. As a financial educator, I have gone into workplaces and delivered financial literacy workshops, but why not numeracy workshops as a pillar of employee well-being as well?

Sam Sims: I would add that employers should care about this issue because it will benefit them to care about it. The evidence shows that it can help create a more productive workforce and, very importantly, a more agile workforce. We know that low numeracy has a significant impact on careers in terms of earnings progression, for example, job hunting or job performance, so government and employers should really take note.

It is important also to say that we have the National Numeracy Leadership Council, which is a group made up primarily of large employers and businesses that care about this issue. It has already, for example, set up an employee task force to look at how the confidence gap between women and men in terms of numeracy levels can be addressed in workplaces. It has created, with National Numeracy, the numeracy for equality employer pledge.

Lots of employers are already doing great work in this area, have already recognised that it needs much further attention, and are taking action. Some of the biggest employers in the country work with National Numeracy, but we can go a lot further, as Rotimi set out.

Q157 **Baroness Bull:** We have heard a lot of evidence about maths education. We have heard people quote the improvements in the PISA figures, et cetera, but, as you will well know, those improvements are happening among the higher achievers, and we are leaving people behind. We heard from Brian Butterworth that, if you could raise the standards of the lowest 11%, there would be a 0.44% increase in GDP. I do not know whether that is so, but I have no reason to doubt him.

My question is about the low achievers—the ones who are getting left behind. What do we need to do to help them? Do you have any confidence in the driving licence-style course being developed that could be a way of accruing learning and tracking it in a passport-style way?

Lynne McClure: I would totally agree with previous speakers that the starting point has to be in early years. It is good to see that the Government are putting a lot of money into early years at the moment. Things could be improved in early years, because we know that what happens in early years has a really significant knock-on effect into the future. One is to ensure that those people who are early years practitioners are really expert not only in literacy and the start of literacy, but also in numeracy. It was a little time ago when the need for nursery nurses to have a maths GCSE was removed, so there is a lack of expertise in that very early area.

In terms of what happens when students go into key stages 1 and 2, I have the privilege of chairing the DfE drafting group, and we have been looking very carefully at the amount of content that there is in key stage 1, because there is quite a lot to do in just those two years. You have to take in quite a lot of very basic and very important mathematical ideas.

With direction from the CAR and from the DfE, we are trying to space out that content, so that key stage 1 is much more about using a smaller amount of knowledge, but in a much more sophisticated way, so that they really have a deep understanding. That has a knock-on to key stage 2 because if, in key stage 1, you are secure, when you start key stage 2, you are starting from a good place instead of having to try to do retrograde work.

Some 40% of key stage 2 children, so not far off half the children leaving primary school, do not achieve what the Government have said is an expected standard. One thing that we are hoping for is that, by spacing out and giving more time for problem solving and reasoning, which is the purpose of doing mathematics anyway, we will get to the point where we have a much higher percentage of students reaching that accepted standard.

In terms of the curriculum in key stage 3, one of the things that we know about financial literacy is that the mathematics underpinning it is mostly about proportional reasoning. Key stage 1 children talk about additive reasoning. By the time they get into key stage 2, they are talking about multiplicative reasoning. By the time they get into key stage 3, they are talking about proportional reasoning, which is all about ratios, percentages and all of those sorts of things, which are the absolute groundings for a lot of financial literacy.

In the curriculum, we are trying. It is a shame that the curriculum is about evolution, not revolution, because we would have loved to do some revolutionary things, but we have not been allowed to do that. We have had to stick within the parameters, but we are trying to make sure that these things are consistent and coherent.

In terms of the work that Rishi Sunak and his colleagues have been doing with citizenship, we have made sure that the mathematics that is needed in citizenship for financial literacy is taught in mathematics first, before they meet it in other subjects. Similarly, they meet the mathematics that they need in science, geography or computer science first in mathematics, before they then meet it in other subjects. You might think that that has been so for ever, but that is revolutionary.

Baroness Bull: That is really helpful. I am just going to come back to the low achievers. As Sam knows, I am patron of the Dyscalculia Network, so I am very interested in people with maths learning difficulties too. What more needs to be done to support those children who are being left behind and, as you have already said, not getting the foundations, so that the house on which they are trying to build is not solid?

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: To cast my mind back to when I was at school, I loved maths as a primary school pupil. I fell out of love with it during secondary school and then during university. Now, in my job, I use maths every day, and I love it again. What caused that rift to happen in my secondary school education was streaming, so the dividing of pupils into different sets by achievement. There was a sense among me

and my classmates that we were taken less seriously as pupils because we were in the lower set. Even within the lowest set, the most confident children would sit towards the front of the classroom, and then you would have the people who felt they were not maths people towards the back of the classroom.

I can appreciate that there are probably advantages for teachers in teaching people of similar attainment levels, and there are probably advantages for the children as well, but I just wonder whether, by separating people by ability level in maths, which is not something we do with English, for example, we add to the rift that you are asking about, and whether there are opportunities for cross-pollination between the more confident and the less confident students in mixed-ability sets.

Baroness Bull: I think that you have put your finger absolutely on the nub of the problem. Do you have a view on this?

Lynne McClure: Students come up from primary school into key stage 3. We know that they get turned off at the beginning of key stage 3 because they have not been very secure at key stage 2. Year 7 is all a repetition. We know that students' liking for maths does a deep dive. If they are kids from a low socioeconomic background, they are then unlikely to ever pick up maths again, whereas those who have a background of parental support will probably stick with it.

If they stick with it, they are just as likely to take a GCSE and get a high grade, and to do A-level maths and a maths degree, but that year 7 is a really pivotal year. I know that David Thomas was here, who is also on the drafting team for the DfE, and Axiom Maths is doing some great work looking at trying to keep low socioeconomic students in the maths world rather than us losing them.

Q158 **Lord Blackwell:** Staying on the topic of maths teaching, how helpful is it to use real-life context in trying to get children interested in learning? A number of our witnesses have said how helpful they think this could be, but, presumably, there are some aspects of numeracy—for example, multiplication tables—that you just have to learn in an abstract sense.

Lynne McClure: It is not easy to apply mathematics. Mathematics and numeracy are muddled up together. Say you are trying to solve an everyday problem, such as working out how much wallpaper you need for this amazing room. What measurements do you need to take? What calculations are you going to have to do in order to amalgamate all the different bits of the room? When you have done that, how do you translate that into the dimensions of ordinary wallpaper? This is a complicated thing to do.

When we are talking about applying maths, you have to be really careful about what applications you do, because, if the application is too far away from the mathematics that you are doing, it just puts children off. You need to choose applications that are very close to the content that you have been doing. It is a great idea, and everybody says, "The thing that

we are missing in the maths curriculum is real-life calculations". There is a reason for that, and it is because they are really difficult. It does not mean to say that we should not do it, but they have their place, and you need to choose where the place is quite carefully.

Sam Sims: Picking up on the end of Lynne's points there, it is worth it, because, if it is done well, it can be that difference between seeing maths as something abstract—maths for the sake of maths—which has tremendous value in itself, but, for lots of people, it is about how they are going to use it. Allowing people to see the connections between what they are learning and how it is going to benefit them does an awful lot of good, which is why it is worth doing this.

At National Numeracy, we would never use any mathematical notation that is not contextualised. It is the approach that we take, particularly focused on people with lower levels of numeracy, because we have seen, time and time again, through our research, that that is what helps people break the connections that they have had between, "This is something that I learned at school, the reward for which was not having to do it again" and, "Hang on a minute. This is something that can help me. I am using this all the time".

We have examples of where we ask people, "Do you use maths in your daily life?" The vast majority of people will consistently say, "No, I don't". Then we will say, "Tell us what job you do". We start to go through some examples, and they suddenly say, "Yes, I am using maths", and not just every day but probably every hour, so there is this disconnect.

Contextualising numbers and maths really helps make those connections towards value, which is a big part of the proposition that gets people to engage and invest in something, because they can see the benefit to them. It is hard, but absolutely worth it.

Q159 **Lord Hampton:** We keep on coming back to this. Again and again, people tell us that they want an alternative qualification that is more functional. We have it. It is the functional skills qualification. Is it a case that it just needs to be advertised more, or does it need to be changed?

Lynne McClure: I would say that functional skills is not functional, so it needs to be changed. Becky Francis, who chaired the CAR, talks about having a level 1 after GCSE, because, if you put it before GCSE, you are automatically assuming that some students are going to do this, and dividing students out is seen to be not a fair thing to do.

I think that we should have a numeracy passport and everybody should do it. You can have students who get a grade 8 at GCSE, and so they are very good at all the stuff that they have practised, but, if you asked them to solve a real-life problem, they would find that much more difficult.

The issue with having a different qualification is that it is seen to be of lesser value because it is for those who can do only that stuff. Everybody should have to do it, like a driving test. We do not identify people who are already physically very adept and say, "You only need to do this in

your driving test. You do not need to do this". There is a lot of merit in that, and it would be a brilliant stepping stone to GCSE, rather than doing something when you failed it after 11 years' worth of maths.

Lord Hampton: There was a lot of nodding coming from Rotimi there.

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: Picking up on some of the points that have been made, I have had success imparting mathematical principles by making the outcomes rewarding, as has already been said. If I speak about mathematical concepts in theory, I tend not to engage people, but, if I then apply it to, "Here is how to get a pay rise", I can introduce percentage change, or, "Here is how to save money" or, "Here is how to budget", particularly with the cost of living challenges going on. I take things that people already want or are already doing, and then I put the maths lesson into that. I have had a lot of success with that as an educator.

Lord Hampton: That leads us quite nicely on to post 16. We have just had Rishi Sunak in, who is a great ambassador for that. That seems to be a way to build on the more real-world stuff. How do you see that going? Why has it not got more traction?

Lynne McClure: Core maths is a fantastic qualification, but we do not have enough maths teachers. If a school is going to have maths post 16, it is going to put it into A-level and further maths. One thing that has been tried is retraining teachers of other subjects to teach core maths, with quite a lot of success, but its acceptability by universities is not universal. That is a key thing. What are students going to do post 16 if they know that it does not have any value for the university that they want to go to? Those two things are really the barriers, but they are fantastic qualifications, and the students who do them really enjoy it because it is about applications, as well as a lot of data science, which they do not get that much of in GCSE.

Sam Sims: I agree. This currency issue is one of the key drivers. There is progress being made but still a lot more to come in terms of universities recognising core maths in that way. Something that needs to change if we are to improve the take-up of provision of core maths is employers seeing and recognising that as something that is valuable. That could also shift the dial.

Lord Hampton: Rotimi, would you have done a later maths qualification at school if it had been an option?

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: Would I have done the qualification later on in school or just later on in life?

Lord Hampton: No, in school, post 16.

Sam Sims: Yes, absolutely. I feel quite sad about what happened with me. Lynne touched upon year 7 being that pivotal point. I got moved down into a lower set. You get taught things and, if you miss a level, you are locked behind that for the rest of your time at school, and so, by the

time I got to year 11, I was really strong in the humanities and had not done maths properly for five years, basically. I am just very thankful and very lucky that, at my first job, I worked for a manager who loved maths. Maths was part of my role as a researcher at a PR company, and I was able to then use it again every day, but not everyone will get that opportunity.

Q160 Baroness Hamwee: We ended the last session with some questions about technology. I must say that, in my own experience, I may use a calculator, but I still want to retain the question in my head of, "Does this look like a sensible outcome?" I wondered whether you would like to say anything more about that and about how numeracy policy should adapt to reflect the way that the world is changing.

Sam Sims: We probably all have something to add on that. Certainly, from the perspective of National Numeracy, we are very much in favour of the use of technology, but the example you gave is the perfect example: it should accompany having those fundamental numeracy skills and confidence in place. It should be used in conjunction, so that you know, first, that what you are putting in is the right query and, secondly, that what you are getting out is likely to be accurate and sounds about right.

The risk with all kinds of technology when we rely on it entirely is not just that we make those mistakes because we trust it too much, but that, therefore, we stop worrying about putting those foundations in place at all, and then we have a much bigger problem as a society as well.

Alongside research organisation Policy Connect, KPMG and businesses of the National Numeracy Leadership Council that I mentioned earlier, we have undertaken some research on AI numeracy and social mobility. This is due to be published in less than two weeks, so we will have a lot more to share around those interdependencies very shortly.

Numeracy is essential to be able to critically engage with information, particularly when we are using technology. It is not really sufficiently recognised or understood. We know that a significant proportion of people do not necessarily see that yet, in the same way that they do not see that they are using numbers in their daily lives.

When it comes to checking accuracy, using estimation, consistency, and understanding probability and likelihood, these are all things that we absolutely have to have in place in order to get the most from technology and to avoid making mistakes.

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: To bring in social media as well, it would be a good idea to seek out, engage with and partner with people who are doing great work with maths content online already, and finance content to a certain degree, because they show up online every day. They have audiences. They are trusted. They are able to make maths interesting and fun. They have enormous reach—in some cases, to millions and

millions of people all over the country. Utilising technology in that way to reach more people is really important.

I heard a few of Mr Sunak's remarks in the previous session. AI is changing the world very rapidly, has done in the last five years, and will continue to do so. We are going to have to teach AI skills in the same way that we teach IT and numeracy skills going forward. We should empower young people to use AI tools when calculating. I do. I will put calculations into AI tools when I am doing my work. As Sam has said, we should not forget to teach the foundational things, because AI quite happily hallucinates from time to time, so you want to understand that what you are getting back is the correct answer.

Baroness Hamwee: It is quite easy to put in "point something" because your finger just strays, instead of the bigger number.

Q161 **The Chair:** Just to sum up, our last question is to offer your one killer solution to our numeracy challenges. If you want us to put one thing into our report as a recommendation, what would it be?

Lynne McClure: Each or together?

The Chair: If you each have different ones, you can all bid, but be brief, please.

Lynne McClure: I would really like a numeracy qualification that everybody takes, like a driving test. Incidentally, I think that there should be a literacy one and a digital skills one that go alongside it as a sort of passport that you do in secondary school.

Rotimi Merriman-Johnson: I would just reiterate the final point that I made. The idea of having nationwide numeracy ambassadors or influencers is quite exciting. Google released some data a few years ago that found that it was losing significant amounts of traffic on its search engine from people under the age of 25 to the likes of Instagram and TikTok, because young people keyword search on the social media platforms more than they do on the search engines. A great way to engage people earlier on in their life is by partnering with the people they follow online and trust.

Sam Sims: You started the session talking about culture and how we shift it. We need to change how people see, feel and understand the value of numeracy in their everyday lives. This is going to take a massive effort, and every sector of society needs to be part of this, if we are to change and improve that culture.

That is why we collaborated with Barclays in its recent report looking at some of this culture, attitudes and confidence. Together, we have been calling for a year of numeracy. It is currently the year of reading. We are seeing so many organisations really working together to make change happen. We could do that with numeracy as well.

We not only are calling for this but are going to go beyond and build a coalition of willing organisations and people who want to make this happen. Government should and could play an absolutely critical role in making this very successful.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That brings us to the end of this session. I am most grateful to you all. If you have further thoughts, do write in, particularly with that policy paper you are about to publish. We are starting on our heads of report from now on, so if you have any more ideas that you would like us to think about, if you could get them in quickly, that would be great. You are very important advocates in this area, so thank you all so much for joining us today.