**Observer**

Has your understanding of ‘Literacy and Numeracy for mathematics teaching in Ireland’ changed as a result of observing these workshops?

Yes, I found the lectures I attended extremely interesting and informative.

Prior to attending the literacy and numeracy workshops, I thought I had an in depth understanding of the importance of literacy and numeracy due to two main reasons. The first being my background, that I am a teacher of mathematics and secondly I was assigned the role of the Numeracy link teacher in school. However, I was surprised at the amount I learnt from observing the workshops in Literacy and Numeracy for mathematics teaching in Ireland.

Before my participation in these workshops, I made the assumption that numeracy was more important and relevant to mathematics teaching than literacy. I stand corrected. One of the greatest learning curves for me, is that both literacy and numeracy are and should be perceived as an equal importance in every subject.

Having engaged in these workshops I have realised that as a mathematics teacher in Ireland, it is very evident that literacy skills are crucial in the teaching and learning of mathematics. Students find it difficult to interpret word problems and so literacy skills are an essential skill to have, in order for students to access the mathematics syllabus. Gaining a better understanding of the need for literacy skills has changed my view on literacy in mathematics education.

My participation in these workshops have also added to my numeracy learning, which I didn’t think was possible. As a mathematics teacher, I felt I already knew everything about numeracy and how it should be applied within my subjects. Again, this was not the case. I learnt many new numeracy strategies that not only work in mathematics, but also in other subjects. My favourite example was picking a student at random using the calculator. This idea is a very simple strategy for using numeracy within your subject and it also teaches the students the concept of random sampling and probabilities.

Overall, I found the workshops very useful. I have become more aware of my own understandings and misconceptions about the terms literacy and numeracy.