National Numeracy
for everyone, for life

nationalnumeracy.org.uk

The Essentials of Numeracy

Learning to date from the NHS, National Numeracy Day and elsewhere

ALM Conference 11th July 2018

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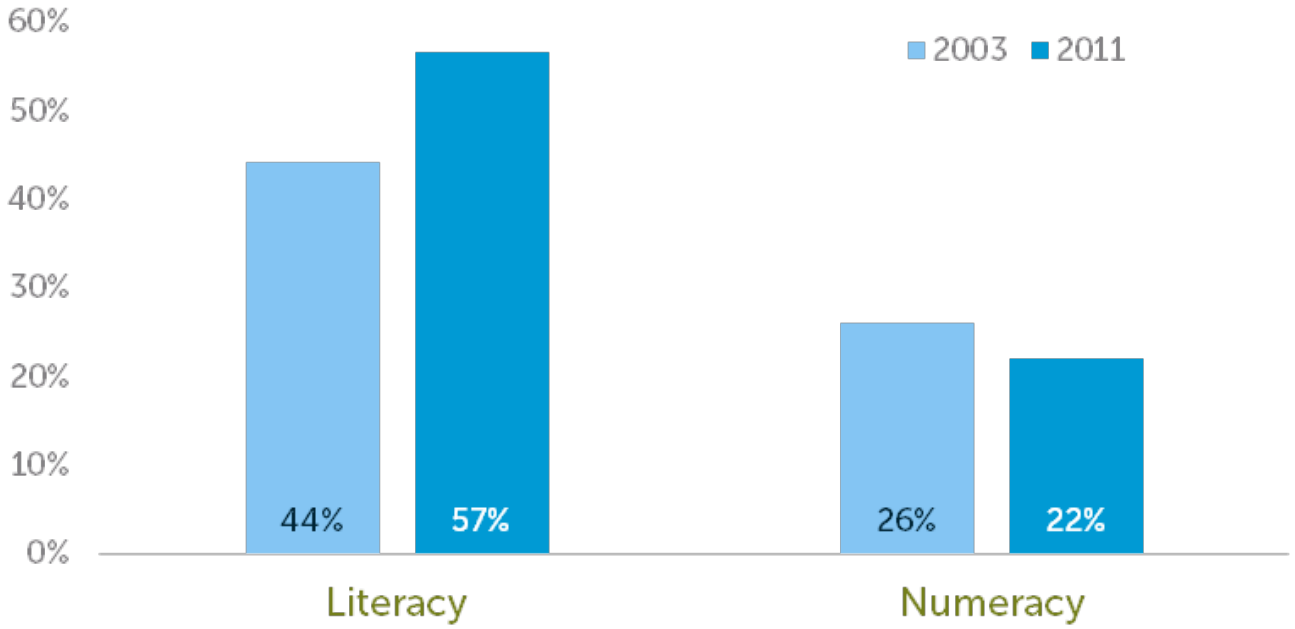
The context: Something has worked for literacy – but numeracy is getting worse…

Adults in England with skills equivalent to the level we expect of a 16 year old:



Source: Department for Business Innovation and Skills. 2012. "The 2011 Skills for Life Survey: A Survey of Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Levels in England."

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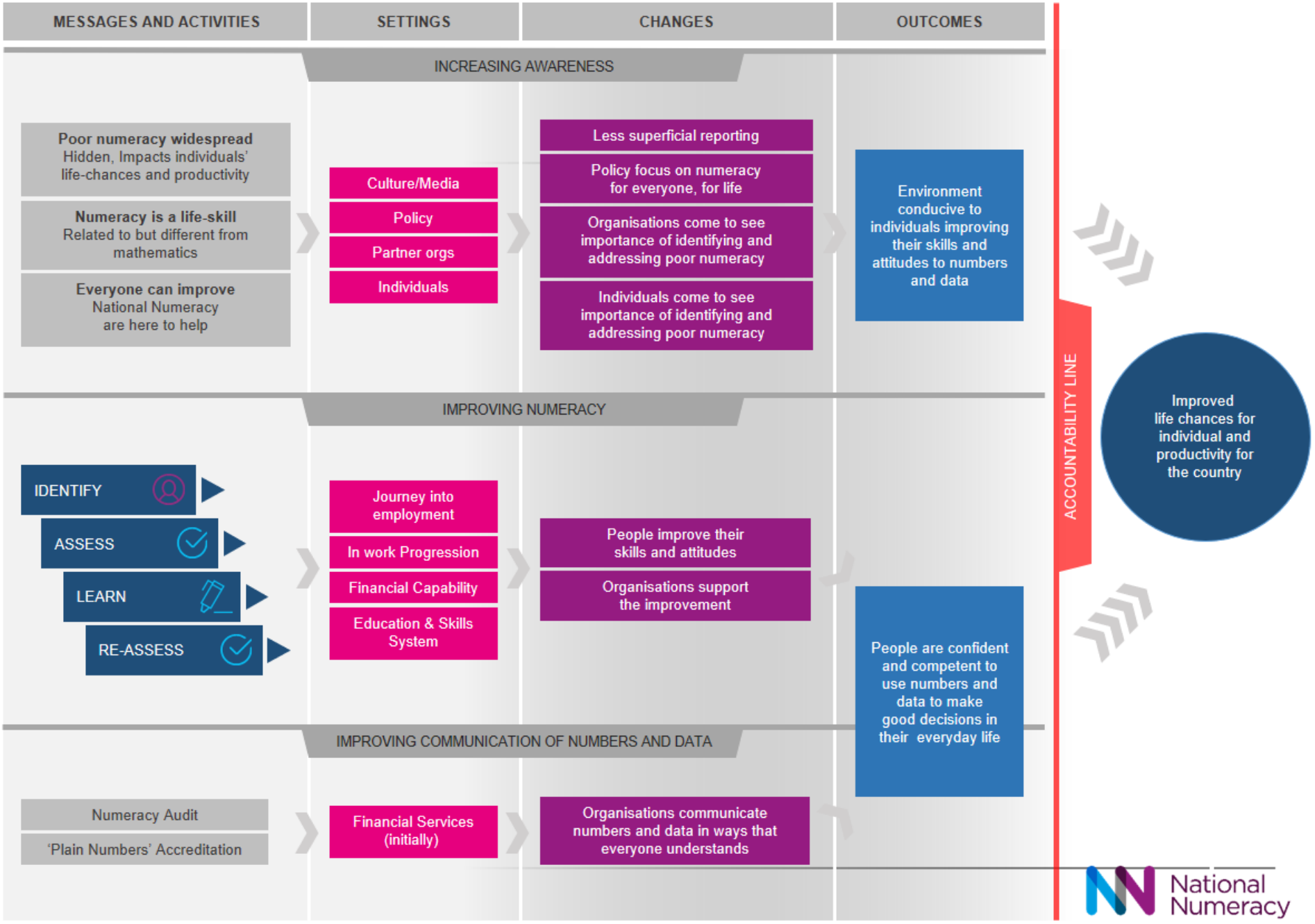
What are we trying to do?



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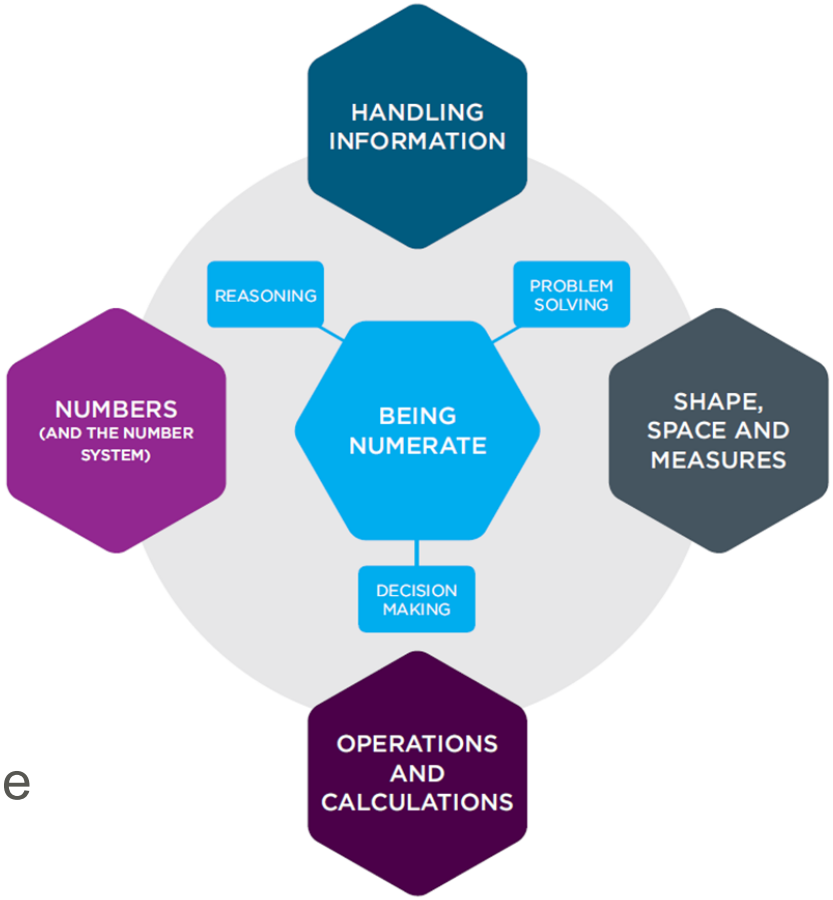
Being numerate is more than maths knowledge

Being numerate is knowing what to do with the tools…

…so that you can use quantitative information to **make good decisions**

Our Essentials of Numeracy

...the confidence and competence to use 'simple' maths in complex situations.



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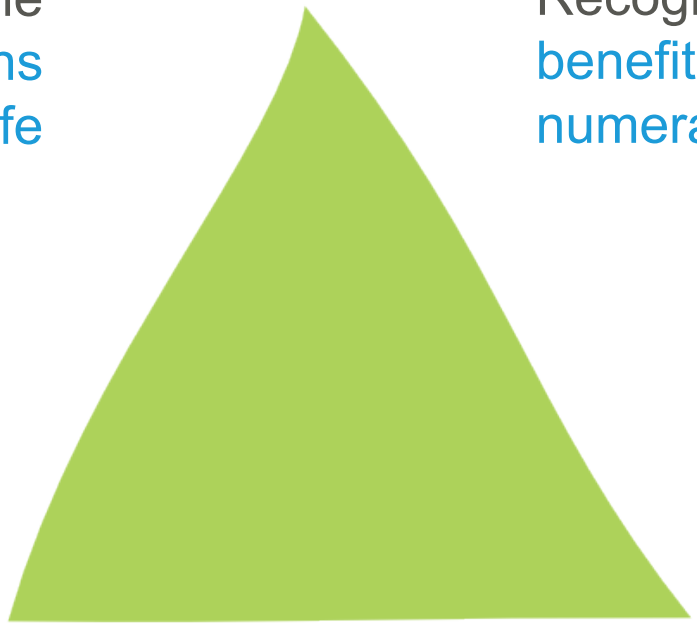
‘Mathematical resilience’ is key

Value

Understand the value of maths in everyday life

Recognise the benefits of improving numeracy



Ability is not fixed

Belief

EFFORT

Develop a ‘can-do’ attitude

Recognise that everyone struggles in order to succeed - its part of the learning process

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RESULTS SUMMARY

We now have data across these 7 variables for over 29,000 adults who are learning maths...

Your confidence:

Self-Confidence

You have faith that you can deal well with unexpected situations which arise. This can help when trying out new things, or applying for new jobs, or working to improve your numeracy skills.

Confidence with Money

One of the main benefits of good numeracy is to be able to manage your finances well. At the moment you may lack some confidence with managing your money, and might not feel in full control of your finances.

Confidence with Numbers

Confidence in situations that involve numbers and data can help you to make the best decisions in daily life and the workplace. It currently looks like you will benefit from improving your confidence with numbers.

Appetite for Learning

You have a healthy appetite for learning new things, and of course this will help you to improve your numeracy... just as improving your numeracy can increase your appetite for wider learning.

Your attitudes:

Value

You can see the value of numeracy skills in daily life and the workplace. This means that you see the point in improving your numeracy, and is good news when it comes to improving your skills.

Belief

Our research shows that any adult can improve their numeracy. Right now, you don't seem to believe that you are able to improve your skills, and this may block your progress.

Effort

If you're going to improve your numeracy, you will need to overcome the barriers of getting started and then sticking with it. This can feel hard, but this doesn't mean you can't do it, just that it's going to take effort.

...and data on the maths skills of over 122,000 adults learning maths.

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16th May 2018
National Numeracy Day
bringing numbers to life

Join us on National Numeracy Day 16th May

SIGN UP

WHAT'S THE ISSUE? | GET INVOLVED | SUCCESS STORIES | OUR SUPPORTERS | NEWS

We're all numbers people.

Many of us say we're not numbers people. But numbers play a big part in all our lives. National Numeracy Day is all about recognising this and helping people sharpen their skills and build their confidence. Being better with numbers isn't a special talent, it's something we can all learn.

So join us on 16th May and make numbers work for you. You can even start now and check your skills using our free online tool.

ADAM, 32,
SALES,
LONDON

Register now to join us on 16th May National Numeracy Day

Already registered? See how you can get involved.

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The UK's first National Numeracy Day succeeded in...

10,000 people registered to start improving their numeracy on our free online tool on May 16th

25,000 people registered throughout May 2018.

100 Organisations officially backed the campaign with many more getting involved on the day.

#NationalNumeracyDay

Trended nationwide on Twitter.

Media coverage by: **BBC Breakfast**, **Good Morning Britain**, **Sky News**, The **Today Programme**, The **Financial Times**, The **Telegraph**, The London **Evening Standard**, The **Daily Mirror**, **City A.M** and several **local radio** stations.

Support from: Countdown star **Rachel Riley**, TV money advisor **Martin Lewis**, Deputy Chief Economist at the Bank of England **Andy Haldane**, Chief Secretary to the Treasury **Liz Truss**, Skills Minister **Anne Milton**, weather presenter **Heather Reid** and Depute First Minister of Scotland **John**

Lead supporters

cisco · Columbia Threadneedle Investments · experian. · Education Scotland Foghlam Alba · Health Education England · M&G Investments · ns&i · PFG Provident Financial Group · Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba gov.scot · ICAS · tfi charitable trust · Virgin money

…reaching out beyond the education & skills system with a positive "we're all numbers people" message.

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We have been working in the NHS for 3 years, with over 20 trusts, gathering evidence of poor numeracy and its impact…

Of the NHS staff who have volunteered to take our online assessment,

77%

do not have the Essentials of Numeracy.[1]

Staff with the Essentials of Numeracy

Patient safety

"We had a nurse who calculated the BMI incorrectly and the patient was given the wrong dose of Chemotherapy as a result – so we have seen how serious it can be"
Practice Educator NHS Trust

Efficiency

"We are constantly throwing out catheters which are out of date because they are not interpreting the usage data correctly." **Orthopaedic Nurse**

Recruitment

"Time and time again we are losing good potential staff because they are failing the numeracy."
HR Manager

Career Progression

"We have had appalling non-passes among HCAs. Its shameful for us as a trust. People either don't go to university that year and delay their career or just don't bother going forward at all" **L&D Team**

…our results show that poor numeracy is common amongst HCAs and nurses. This impacts patient safety, efficiency, recruitment and career progression.

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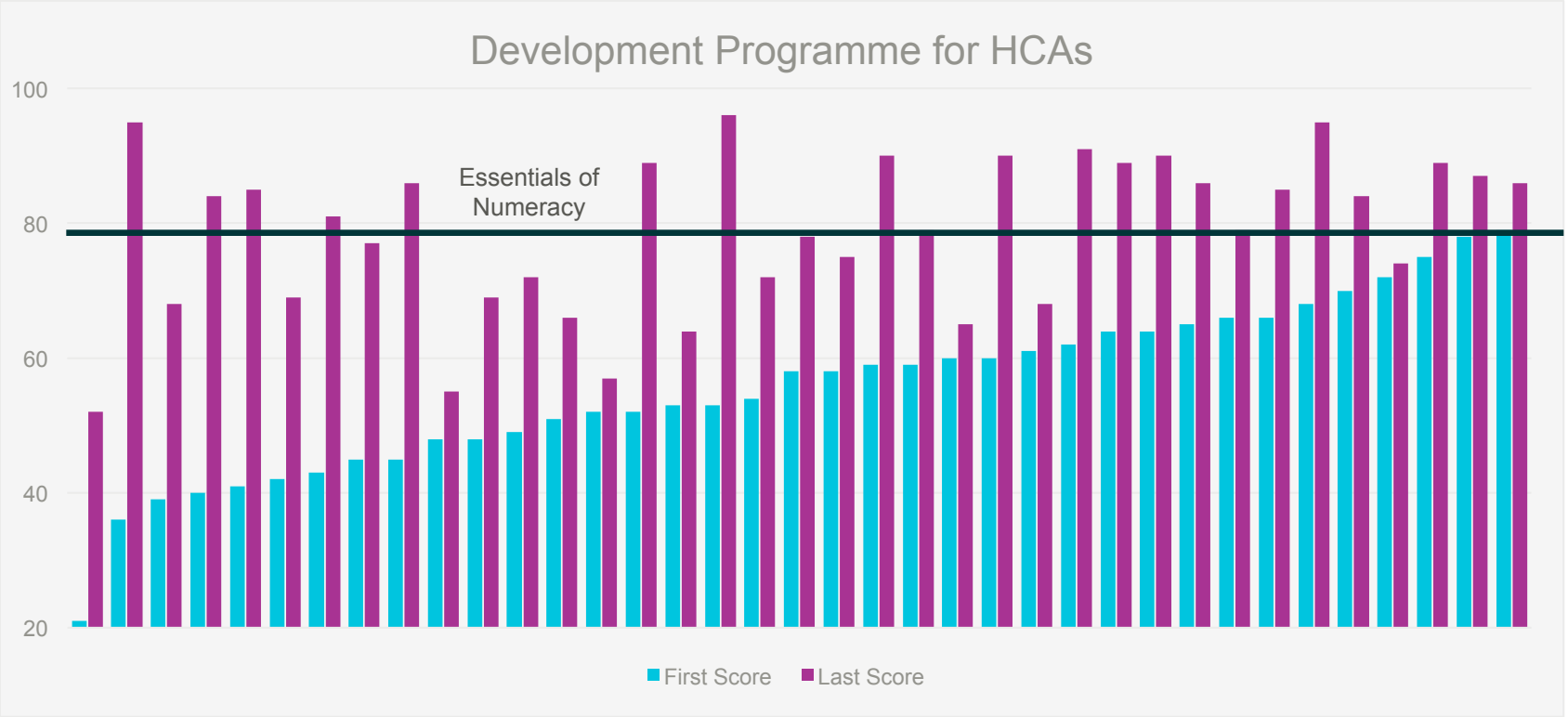
However, this CAN be addressed: we have run pilot programmes in which EVERYONE has improved...



…using our unique online approach which focusses on the Essentials of Numeracy – the skills and attitudes needed for work and everyday life.

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Some current policy-makers seem to get this...

"...I'm calling on everybody to get involved with this important campaign and check whether you have the Essentials of Numeracy.
You can visit the website – nnchallenge.org.uk - to find out how you can make numbers work for you.
Do a simple test and it will redirect you, so that you can make sure you get better."

Skills Minister, Anne Milton 29th March 2018

…and we hope to provide further evidence of positive action to address this issue in the coming years.

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We would like to engage with the maths research community...

Our focus is on:

1. **Shifting attitudes:** 'I can't do maths' is at the heart of the issue so we have worked with employers to define the 'Essentials of Numeracy' that everyone needs
2. **Check** whether adults have the Essentials – and if not help them!

…to help us to better understand 'what works' and how to best replicate at scale.

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