

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ICMI STUDY ON THE COMPUTER AND INFORMATICS

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COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE  
DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT MATHÉMATIQUE  
(INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION  
ON MATHEMATICAL INSTRUCTION)

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ICMI STUDY  
ON THE COMPUTER AND INFORMATICS

The International Commission on Mathematical Instruction is planning a number of studies on topics of international interest. Each study will be built around an international seminar and will be directed towards the preparation of a published volume intended to promote discussion and action at national, regional, or institutional level. Each study will attempt to identify key problems within a specific area and to provide up-to-date accounts of relevant thought, research and practice.

The effect of computers and informatics on mathematics and on its teaching at the university and pre-university level is the theme of the first such study to begin. The Planning Committee has already met and has prepared the discussion document which follows. We now invite reactions to that document.

It is essential here, however, to emphasise that the ICMI studies do not aim to find an "ICMI approved" solution to any particular problem. Rather we wish to encourage the discussion in depth of key issues and the sharing of knowledge and experience. For that reason we ask those who respond to our invitation to bear in mind the international nature of the exercise and the consequent need to focus attention on aspects of the topic field which have general and not merely national interest. Thus, for example, it would be in keeping with the study's aims if descriptions of newly devised curricula concentrated not merely on the end effect of such changes in terms of revised syllabus content, but also emphasised the principles which governed curriculum design and the constraints which had to be satisfied.

Case-studies of change form one type of response to the discussion document which would be welcomed. We hope, however, that the document will also encourage individuals, national sub-commissions and other national committees to respond in a variety of ways. Many points relating to the effect of the computer and informatics on mathematics and on how one might respond to these through curriculum change are made in the discussion paper. There will, however, be other issues which readers wish to raise, and also a need to develop, elaborate and exemplify in greater detail ideas which are only hinted at there.

We hope that many responses will be generated and that papers will be sent to the Secretary for the study, Dr. F. Pluvinage, IREM, 10, rue du Général-Zimmer, 67084 Strasbourg Cedex, France.

An international seminar at which invited papers and those received in response to the discussion document will be considered is to be held in France between 25 and 30 March, 1985. Attendance at this meeting will be by invitation only, but a number of places will be reserved for those who submit responses to the discussion document. Further details of the seminar can be obtained from Dr. Pluvinage.

Following the seminar it is intended to publish *Proceedings* which will include a survey of the key issues raised as well as a selection of papers submitted.

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