

Operation Safecode

This challenge is in six parts, each containing three puzzles, and all leading to a single answer which takes the form of a 9-letter word with a mathematical connection.

Despite the threefold nature of the challenge, no knowledge of triangles is needed. It will not be clear at first what the overall structure of the challenge is, but as you work through the six parts more will be revealed to you. Although a perfect answer involves solving every puzzle, it may be possible to get the overall answer without having solved every puzzle, and later puzzles may well cast light on earlier ones (in other words, if you get bogged down early on, don't give up).

In general, UK spelling and the format of dates have been used throughout and US spellings have only been used when it helps, or adds interesting confusion. Having said this there is one particular puzzle that majors in 'Americanisms'. Overall there's a lot of logic, a fair amount of language and a smidgeon of maths (but nothing too deep; we don't expect to see any answers using integrals or trigonometry).

A prize will be awarded to the first person to unravel the clues, work out the final word solution and send it in before 3 June. The prize is VIP tickets to a talk of the winner's choice at the Cheltenham Science Festival. Details of where to send entries are on the [Science Festival website](#).

A solution page for each part of the challenge will be published on the GCHQ website throughout the six days of the Times Cheltenham Science Festival (7 - 12 June 2011).