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Media release

Popularity in mathematics continues to grow

The number of A-level mathematics entries across the UK is up 2.7% on last year, with 88,060 students sitting the exam.

Figures released today by the Joint Council for Qualifications also show that

- A-level further mathematics has continued in popularity, with entries increasing by 4.5% (to 13,821)
- AS mathematics entries increased by 1.5% (to 150,787)
- AS further mathematics entries have increased by 7.9% (to 22,601)

Over the past five years the number of A-level mathematics entries has risen by 21.5% and in further mathematics the increase is even greater at 32%. This continues to be a welcome trend for mathematics and shows that students value the skills a mathematics qualification gives them to help fulfil their career aspirations and is excellent currency in the job market.

Mathematics plays a vital role in all aspects of modern society, including cybersecurity, manufacturing sectors such as aerospace and dealing with the new challenges of 'big data'. Maintaining the pipeline of well trained mathematicians is vital for the future prosperity of the UK and its position in the world economy.

Professor Alice Rogers, Education Secretary of the LMS said, 'It is indeed excellent news that the number of A-level Mathematics and Further Mathematics entries continues to rise. Studying mathematics at this level

both opens doors to a wide range of higher education courses and careers and increases the prospect of success. For many students it is also a rewarding and enriching intellectual experience. What is good for individuals is also good for the country as the economic needs for a mathematically educated workforce continue to increase'.

Professor Nigel Steele, Honorary Secretary of the IMA added, 'It is most gratifying that the message detailing the importance of mathematics to the nation is reaching school and college students in increasing numbers. We congratulate both the students and those who have taught and advised them'.

Notes for Editors

1. The **London Mathematical Society (LMS)** is the UK's learned society for mathematics. Founded in 1865 for the promotion and extension of mathematical knowledge, the Society is concerned with all branches of mathematics and its applications. It is an independent and self-financing charity, with a membership of over 2600 drawn from all parts of the UK and overseas. Its principal activities are the organisation of meetings and conferences, the publication of periodicals and books, the provision of financial support for mathematical activities, and the contribution to public debates on issues related to mathematics research and education. It works collaboratively with other mathematical bodies worldwide. It is the UK adhering body to the International Mathematical Union.

2. The **Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)** is the learned and professional society for mathematics. It promotes mathematics research, education and careers, and the use of mathematics in business, industry and commerce. Amongst its activities the IMA produces academic journals, organises conferences, and engages with government. Founded in 1964, the Institute has 5,000 members. Forty percent of members are employed in education (schools through to universities), and the other 60% work in commercial, industrial and governmental organisations. In 1990 the Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter and was subsequently granted the right to award Chartered Mathematician and Chartered Mathematics Teacher designation.

3. The LMS and IMA are members of the **Council for the Mathematical Sciences (CMS)**, which also comprises the Royal Statistical Society, the Edinburgh Mathematical Society and the Operational Research Society.

4. For a complete set of national results, visit http://www.jcq.org.uk/national_results/alevels/

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