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Introduction of a second GCSE mathematics award

The London Mathematical Society (LMS) and Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA) welcome the ministerial statement on plans for a new GCSE in mathematics as part of the new 'Scheme of learning' and the introduction of a second mathematics GCSE in 2015.

Professor Alice Rogers, vice-president of the LMS, said, "The introduction of a second GCSE will have a strongly beneficial effect on mathematics education, leading to inspiration and opportunity at a key stage in pupils' lives. It should benefit children throughout the ability range, giving a fairer reward to those to whom maths does not come easily while offering the more able the opportunity to appreciate the nature of mathematics and build a sound base for future study in this important and demanding subject."

Professor Nigel Steele, honorary secretary of the IMA, said, "The IMA also welcomes the proposals with the sincere hope that the new arrangements will lead to a greater number of students continuing to study mathematics post-16."

The IMA and LMS endorse the comments of the Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education, which has been working on behalf of the mathematics community to ensure its views are heard. In particular, they agree with ACME's concerns about the scope and extended timescale of the introduction of the new second award.

The introduction of a double award for GCSE mathematics was first recommended by Professor Adrian Smith in his 2004 report, "Making Mathematics Count". His vision was to reward candidates for the amount of work they put in to the subject, in a similar way to awards in English and Science.

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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 and is a member of the Council for the Mathematical Sciences, which also comprises the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications and the Royal Statistical Society.

2. The **Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)** is the professional and learned society for qualified and practising mathematicians. 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 designation.

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