



**Media release**

18 December 2008

**For immediate release**

**Will the results of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise ensure opportunity  
for all in the Mathematical Sciences?**

The London Mathematical Society (LMS), Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA) and the Heads of Departments of Mathematical Sciences (HoDoMS) congratulate the mathematical sciences departments in UK universities for the impressive results they have achieved in this year's Research Assessment Exercise.

The real test for departments will come in March 2009, when the funding councils decide the amount of funding for each rating. This will ultimately determine whether this is good news for mathematical sciences and their impact on our knowledge economy.

Professor Brian Davies, President of the LMS, said, "It is very pleasing to see so many departments with world leading and internationally excellent profiles in the 2008 RAE. This rightly confirms that the UK has a world class mathematical sciences base. We now have to wait and see how this is reflected in funding decisions in March. The real question will be, how steep will the funding cliff be in England for those departments rated as merely good?"

Professor David Abrahams, President of the IMA, added, "The mathematical sciences are one of the UK's key strengths and we are delighted to see this reflected in the number of institutions with high percentages of internationally excellent research. We are keen to ensure that mathematical sciences departments remain healthy throughout the country, guaranteeing opportunity for all students as well as maintaining vital collaboration with industry. The funding decisions must ensure the sustainability of departments."

Professor Andrew Osbaldestin, Chair of the Heads of Departments of Mathematical Sciences welcomed the results, saying that he hoped that the international nature of research in the mathematical sciences was truly reflected. "Mathematics is a rigorous,

well-established international subject and notions such as world-leading really mean something," he explained. "We are fortunate to have many mathematicians who have achieved recognition not just in the UK community but across the globe. It is important that this particular aspect of the subject is not overlooked. "

## **ENDS**

### **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, the Royal Statistical Society, the Edinburgh Mathematical Society and the Operational Research 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.
3. The **Heads of Departments of Mathematical Sciences (HoDoMS)** is the body that represents UK departments of Mathematics and Statistics by co-ordinating senior members of these departments.
4. Contact:

#### **Caroline Davis**

Mathematics Promotion Unit  
London Mathematical Society  
De Morgan House  
57-58 Russell Square  
London WC1B 4HS.  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7927 0804.  
Email: [caroline.davis@lms.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.davis@lms.ac.uk)

#### **Institute of Mathematics and its Applications**

Catherine Richards House, 16 Nelson Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. SS1 1EF  
[www.ima.org.uk](http://www.ima.org.uk)

#### **London Mathematical Society**

De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London. WC1B 4HS  
[www.lms.ac.uk](http://www.lms.ac.uk)