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Media release

Mathematics maintains its increased popularity

The number of A-level mathematics entries across the UK is marginally up by 0.9% on last year, with 88,816 students sitting the exam.

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

- A-level further mathematics has maintained popularity, with entries increasing by 1.5% (to 14,028)
- AS mathematics entries increased by 7.2% (to 161,711)
- AS further mathematics entries have increased by 8.5% (to 24,530)

Since 2010 the number of A-level mathematics entries has risen by 15.3% and in further mathematics the increase is even greater at 20%.
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 Nigel Steele, Honorary Secretary of the IMA said, 'The Institute recognises the efforts of all those who have succeeded in A-level mathematics and further mathematics, and we offer our congratulations and

best wishes for their future studies and subsequent careers. At the same time, we urge the government to monitor carefully the effect of changes both in content and assessment arrangements for examinations in mathematics. It is essential that our schools continue to provide a healthy flow of leavers who are well-qualified in mathematics to meet the needs of the national economy'.

Professor Alice Rogers, Education Secretary of the LMS added, 'Given that Mathematics underpins study in many areas of higher education, it is encouraging to see more students taking A-levels in Mathematics with such success.

Universities are increasingly able to ask their applicants for the Mathematics A-levels which they would like their students to have. With Further Mathematics A-level there now appears to be a virtuous circle, the Further Mathematics Support Programme has made this qualification more widely available, so that it can be a requirement for Mathematically intensive degree courses, which in turn feeds increasing numbers taking the A-level'.

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/examination-results/a-levels/a-as-and-aea-results-summer-2014.

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