

## FMSP Wales Media release 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012

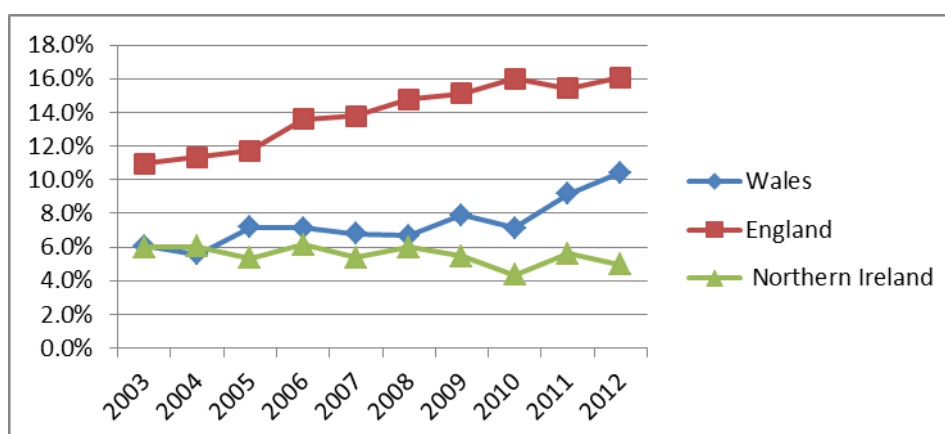
# Taking Mathematics Further in Wales

This year's both Mathematics and Further Mathematics results have built upon last year's increased entry with further rises.

- A level Further Mathematics numbers are up from 309 to 380, a 23% increase.
- AS Further Mathematics numbers are up from 289 to 339, a 17.5% increase.
- A level Mathematics numbers are up from 3375 to 3643, a 7.9% increase.
- AS Mathematics numbers are up from 4448 to 4647, a 4.8% increase.

The proportion of Mathematics students who sat Further Mathematics A-level reached 10.4%, which is the highest result ever in Further Mathematics in the last nine years, as shown on the graph below. Compared with 2010 year A-level Further Mathematics student numbers have increased by 58.3% from 240 to 380 in Wales.

**Graph 1.** Percentages of A-level Mathematics students taking A-level Further Mathematics in England, Northern Ireland and Wales since 2003.



From July 2010 schools and colleges in Wales have been supported in teaching Further Mathematics. Funded by the Welsh Government, the Further Mathematics Support Programme (FMSP) Wales offers tuition and access to online resources to support the teaching of Further Mathematics. It is currently in developmental mode (from September 2010 to July 2013) and full tuition is offered in the pilot area of South West Wales.

A substantial increase in the numbers of schools offering Further Mathematics or supporting Further Mathematics students has been achieved in the pilot area. According to the FMSP Wales data, only 40.7% (11 out of 27) 11-18 state funded schools had Further Mathematics students in the pilot area in October 2010. By the end of 2010/11 academic year 5 more schools had Further Mathematics students. A further 5 schools introduced or reintroduced Further Mathematics in 2011/12. It is expected that from September 2012 4 further schools will be offering Further Mathematics, thus enabling the total proportion of sixth form centres offering Further Mathematics to reach 93% in the pilot area.

These changes have been welcomed by the STEM Departments in Wales. Aberystwyth University (Physics), Cardiff University (Mathematics), Glamorgan University (Department of Science and Sport) and Swansea University (Mathematics and Engineering) support the Programme.



Physics: *"We strongly support the idea of encouraging students to choose Further Maths for their A-level studies and schools to offer this option to their pupils. Our students who had A-level Further Maths cope with the transition from school to university much better than those who had only standard A-level Maths. It is our policy, when other factors are equal, to prefer candidates holding qualification in A-level Further Maths over candidates holding A-level Maths at the same grade."*

Supportive statements from other universities in England and Wales can be seen at <http://www.furthermaths.org.uk/universities.php>

Leighton Andrews earlier commented: "Further Maths is held in high regard by Higher Education Institutions across the UK and contributes to the growth of the knowledge economy in Wales as a whole."

In 2011/12 academic year the FMSP Wales run four face-to-face and five online tuition groups. Joseph James McCambridge, one of the students who studied a Further Mathematics module online commented: *"I really enjoyed the course as I find Maths a very interesting subject and was very glad that I was able to learn more complicated Mathematics from this course. I would highly recommend this course to anyone who is thinking of taking maths on at University."*

FMSP Wales school support includes Further Mathematics tuition, revision days, enrichment events and teaching and learning materials available from [www.integralmaths.org.uk](http://www.integralmaths.org.uk). The Head of Mathematics in Gowerton Comprehensive, the very first school that started offering Further Mathematics through the FMSP, said: *"I have found the FMSP to be extremely useful, primarily in giving pupils an opportunity to gain a qualification that we were unable to provide for, and also in providing extremely useful revision classes for all of the sixth form to use. I have had regular communication with them about students' progress and the pupils themselves have had a very positive experience."*

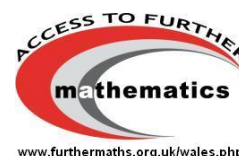
The FMSP Wales looks to an exciting 2012/13 academic year, helping more students to study Further Mathematics and enhance their learning experience.

### Notes for Editors

1. Further Mathematics reinforces the content of the standard AS/A level Mathematics and introduces students to important topics such as complex numbers and matrices, which are vital for many mathematics-related degrees.
2. Supported with funding totalling £440,000 from the Welsh Assembly Government over a three year period, the FMSP Wales ([www.furthermathematics.org.uk/wales.php](http://www.furthermathematics.org.uk/wales.php)) is being delivered by the Wales Institute of Mathematical and Computational Sciences (WIMCS).
3. All schools and colleges in Wales can access extensive and high quality online resources from the FMSP Wales free of charge. In South West Wales, the FMSP draws together

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schools, colleges, universities and local authorities to support existing teaching of AS/A level Further Mathematics as well as to encourage others to provide their students with the opportunity to study it, either “in house” or through tuition provided via the FMSP Wales.

4. WIMCS ([www.wimcs.ac.uk](http://www.wimcs.ac.uk)) is a partnership of the universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Glamorgan and Swansea.
5. The FMSP Wales is supported by Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) which has operated a similar programme ([www.furthermaths.org.uk](http://www.furthermaths.org.uk)) in England for the past 7 years. MEI is an independent charity that supports mathematics education ([www.mei.org.uk](http://www.mei.org.uk)).
6. For more information, please contact the FMSP Wales on 01792 606609 or by email at: [infoFMSPWales@wimcs.ac.uk](mailto:infoFMSPWales@wimcs.ac.uk).

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