



Focus of the Month

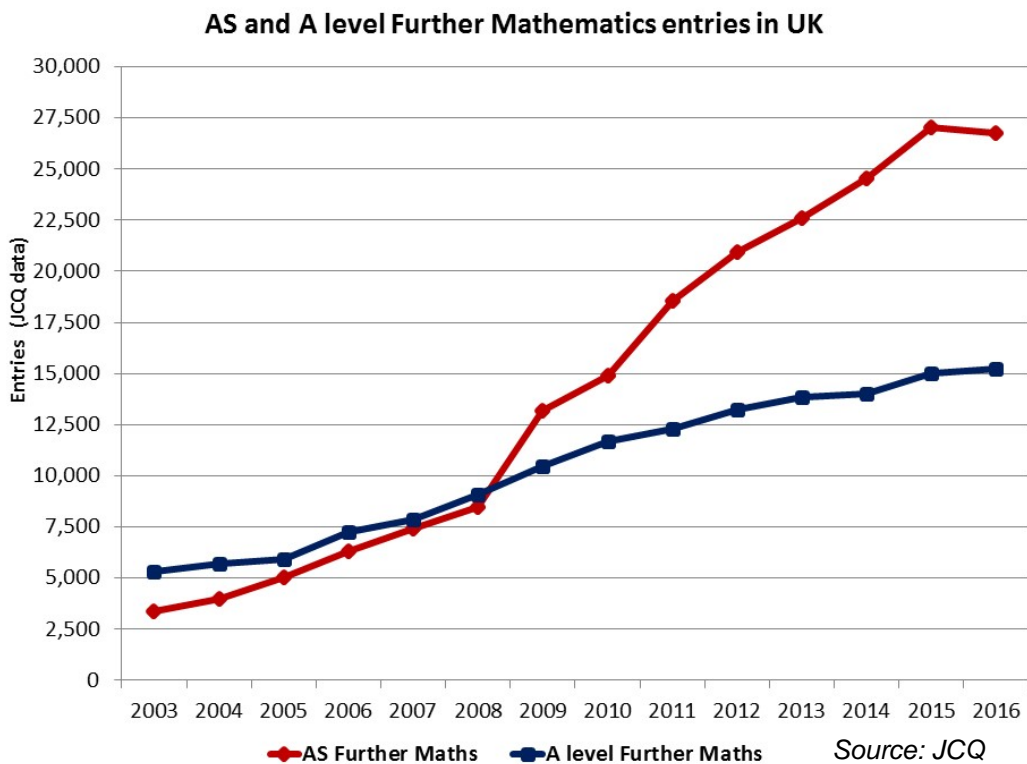
January 2017

Offering Further Mathematics

Our focus for this month is on why schools and colleges should offer their students the opportunity to study AS and A level Further Mathematics and the support that the FMSP provides to enable you to do this.

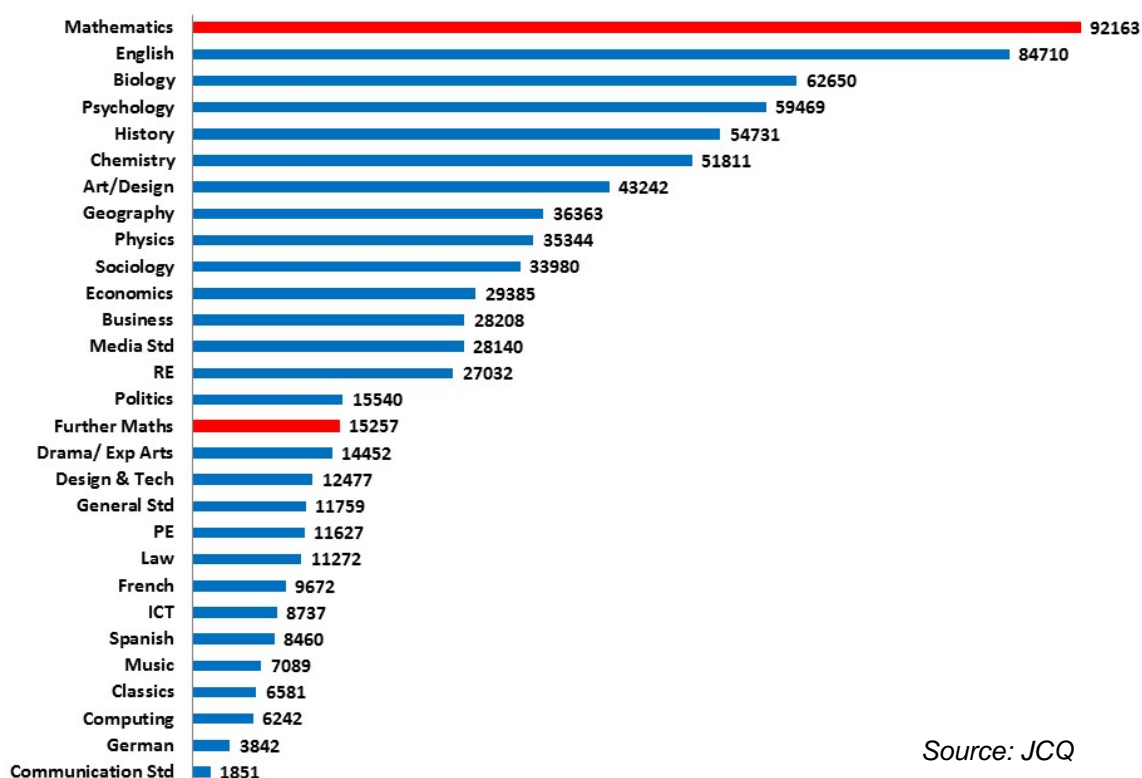
Why offer Further Mathematics?

The number of students taking A level Further Mathematics has increased each year for 13 years. Entries for AS Further Mathematics have risen even more dramatically.



In 2016 there were more than 15 000 entries making it as popular as subjects such as politics and drama/expressive arts. It is now a mainstream subject.

2016 A level entries by subject



Source: JCQ

The majority of schools and colleges now offer A level Further Mathematics. In 2015 68% of state-funded schools and colleges which had students studying A level Mathematics also had students taking A level Further Mathematics.

Further Mathematics is now a mainstream subject and is **not** just for the top A level Mathematics students. AS Further Mathematics is accessible to many students capable of passing A level Mathematics.

On the [Why offer Further Mathematics](#) and [Making the case for Further Mathematics](#) pages of the FMSP website, you will find resources and information to help you make the case for offering A level Further Mathematics. This includes information for senior leaders, as well as a presentation and hand-outs for students and parents.

Five key reasons for offering Further Mathematics are:

- Supporting the study of A level Mathematics and other subjects
- Helping progression to university courses (and beyond)
- Supporting and challenging more able students
- Retaining high achieving students
- Raising the profile of mathematics in the school/college

The wider benefits to the school/college of introducing Further Mathematics have been investigated by the UCL Institute of Education. The [full report](#) and a [summary report](#) can be found on the FMSP website.

Further Mathematics as an additional AS or 4th A level subject

Further Mathematics is often taken as a 4th A level subject. Many schools and colleges now have a standard offer of three A level subjects for most students. In such cases it is important to retain the option of taking Mathematics and Further Mathematics as two A levels from a four A level programme. This is a manageable programme for students who enjoy mathematics and are considering studying a mathematics-related degree. It will ensure they are able to access Mathematics degrees at all universities and is likely to have a positive impact on their A level Mathematics grade. There is a funding uplift for students following a large A level programme of 4 or more subjects.

It is also useful to provide access to AS level Further Mathematics for many students. This can be studied in a single year or over two years. Students who take up AS Further Mathematics in year 13 after performing well in the first year of A level Mathematics will find this a particularly useful qualification. AS level Further Mathematics is usually taken alongside A level Mathematics and as such is unique as an A level that extends the study of another A level.

Further Mathematics from September 2017

New specifications for AS and A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics are being introduced for first teaching from September 2017. The awarding bodies have submitted draft specifications and sample assessment materials (SAMs) to Ofqual but as yet none have been accredited. The FMSP has produced some helpful summaries of the content changes and the draft structures proposed by the awarding bodies. All this information, together with teacher cpd opportunities is available on the 2017 pages of the FMSP website – furthermaths.org.uk/2017.

Once the specifications are accredited the FMSP will provide resources to support schools and colleges in scheduling Further Mathematics provision alongside A level Mathematics.

Ways to offer Further Mathematics

Even if you have small numbers of students, it is possible to offer Further Mathematics in a cost effective way with the support of the FMSP.

The FMSP has a lot of experience of working with schools and colleges to help them set up and establish Further Mathematics provision. The [strategies](#) that have been used are summarised on our website and will be updated in 2017 to reflect the changes to the mathematics A levels.

There are a number of [useful case studies](#) of schools/colleges that have worked with the FMSP to develop Further Mathematics which give a helpful insight into strategies that have worked.

[The FMSP is also able to support schools/colleges with tuition](#) for Further Mathematics. Schools/colleges that [register](#) with the FMSP receive free access to online teaching resources for Further Mathematics.

Promoting Further Mathematics

The FMSP supports schools and colleges in promoting the uptake of Further Mathematics, providing information to GCSE students and raising awareness about the benefits of studying both A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

The FMSP has produced a [leaflet and presentation](#) to help promote A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics. There are also links to videos that can inform students of the advantages of studying mathematics. Contact the FMSP admin team admin@furthermaths.org.uk to order copies of the posters or leaflets.

In addition to providing resources, the FMSP organises [enrichment events](#) for students which aim to inspire and inform them of the opportunities open to them through studying mathematics at A level.