

Maths for all - a fully-funded national access programme

Introduction

In June 2024, the LMS published a report by Prof. Paul Wakeling (York) entitled *Mathematics in UK Higher Education, A Brief Overview*. The author noted, in the Executive Summary, that maths has become less inclusive and is performing poorly in terms of social mobility.

“Across various measures, maths has a lower proportion of socioeconomically disadvantaged students than the sector average and has seen a shift towards more advantaged students over time.”

A national access programme for underserved groups

The IMA is pleased to announce a national maths access programme for A level students chosen from underserved groups. All universities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible to take part. For over-subscribed maths departments, the programme presents an opportunity to select a more diverse undergraduate cohort... and for under-subscribed departments it is a way of boosting recruitment. In this programme, participating departments will be able to engage over a significant period with twenty local A level maths students. In addition to an on-campus visit, this initiative can be offered virtually, in-person or in hybrid mode for ten sessions in the summer term of Year 12. It comprises six academic sessions: two sessions on applying to university and a further two sessions chosen by the maths department.

Sustained engagement with local schools

The six academic sessions should be delivered in small tutorial groups, led by undergraduates from the maths department. The four non-academic sessions are considered to be part of a university's usual outreach activities, often delivered in conjunction with the Widening Participation team. A central component of this initiative is the engagement with local schools. There is considerable scope to strengthen these mutually beneficial relationships.

Fully-funded for three years

We are pleased to acknowledge financial support for this programme from Dr Tony Hill FIMA. Funding of £2000 per year per department is available for three years. Recent experience has shown that this will cover the full cost of a university delivering the programme - apart from the on-campus visit and the four non-academic sessions.

Applications are now open

To find out more about this new programme, or to register your interest, please contact the IMA by clicking the following link: levellingup@ima.org.uk.