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September 1997

Staff room

A–Levels: a post–mortem



This year's A–level results were rightly hailed as a great success, showing overall increases in numbers taking the exams and a small increase in the proportion of candidates gaining a pass (grades A–E).

In an encouraging statement by the Joint Forum of the GCE Examinations Boards students were congratulated on their success and the Boards confirmed their commitment to maintaining the highest standards.

Unfortunately their statement does not provide information about gender but according to the TES (15 August 1997) there is still cause for concern, as girls' progress at GCSE is not yet matched at A–level, where male candidates dominate mathematics and science subjects.

Although the absolute numbers taking Maths rose, its share of the total A–level entry fell slightly, from 9.1% to 8.9%. On a more positive note the numbers taking Physics showed a rise for the first time in seven years, with a marginal drop in share from 4.4% to 4.3%.

All the main Examination Boards now have sites on the web and detailed figures are available from them.

Associated Examining Board (AEB) and the Southern Examining Group (SEG)

Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

Northern Examinations and Assessment Board (NEAB)

University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES)

incorporating the Midland Examining Group (MEG), the Oxford and Cambridge Examinations and Assessment Council (OCEAC) and the University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations (UODLE)

Edexcel

formerly ULEAC



Plus is part of the family of activities in the Millennium Mathematics Project, which also includes the NRICH

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and MOTIVATE sites.