

## [News story: Top universities urged to open new maths schools](#)

Top universities in England can now apply to open specialist 16-19 maths schools to help more young people learn from the best mathematicians in the country, School Standards Minister Nick Gibb announced today.

Maths is one of the most in-demand skills in the labour market and it is already the most popular subject at A level, with almost 25% of students choosing to study it. The government is determined, through its [Industrial Strategy](#), to increase the number of young people studying maths, helping them to secure good jobs and boosting the UK economy.

Two maths schools – King’s College London and Exeter Mathematics School – are already achieving outstanding results. In 2017 98% of King’s mathematics students achieved an A or A\* in A level mathematics, for Exeter this was 75%.

Ofsted has also singled out both schools for recruiting students from disadvantaged backgrounds who had not previously had the opportunity to fulfil their potential in mathematics.

To spread that excellence across the country, the government wants top universities to establish more of these specialist schools. It is providing £350,000 dedicated funding each year to existing and future schools to support outreach work with local schools and colleges, sharing their specialist skills, helping to raise standards and get more children studying maths.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

We want more students to study maths as it can open up a wide range of options for future study, training and work.

Thanks to Government reforms and the hard work of teachers 1.9 million more pupils are in good or outstanding schools than in 2010. We have also introduced a more rigorous maths curriculum and now have record numbers studying maths at A level.

The success of existing maths schools shows the value of tapping into the expertise of our world-class universities. We now want more institutions to follow the lead of King’s and Exeter and help our most talented students, regardless of background and gender.

Minister for the School System Lord Agnew said:

I recently visited King's maths school and was humbled by the students I met there – their ambition and ability is inspiring. These innovative schools are giving the mathematicians of tomorrow – many from disadvantaged backgrounds – the opportunity to take their talents to the next level. We want more leading universities to open these schools and help encourage more young people across the country to study maths at A level and beyond.

King's College London Mathematics School has 140 pupils currently studying for A levels in maths and further maths as well as other maths related subjects. Last year's average A level result was A+. At Exeter Mathematics School, there are 120 pupils studying these qualifications and achieving excellent results. Both schools have close links to their universities which support the schools and provide teaching from their top mathematicians.

Professor the Baroness Alison Wolf, founding governor of King's College London Mathematics School said:

Setting up the maths school has been a wonderful experience for King's. It has brought people together from right across the university, and enabled us to serve London and society in new ways. And we bask in reflected glory from the students' achievements.

Professor Janice Kay, who was instrumental in setting up Exeter Mathematics School said:

Exeter Mathematics School has been a fantastic success story. The Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' school is also delivering outstanding results for its students: over 50% of its latest graduating cohort obtained places at Russell Group institutions.

Promoting maths participation and skills development in the region, a strong social mobility focus, increasing the number of young women mathematicians and developing outreach are founding principles. University staff have been integrally involved and in partnership with the School, Exeter College and industry, we have been able to do more to nurture and inspire the next generation of mathematicians and scientists.

Charlie Stripp, Chief Executive of Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) Chief and Director of the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics said:

The expansion of the Maths Schools programme will extend opportunities to students with a passion and talent for

mathematics, whatever their background, to develop their potential and access the most prestigious maths-related university degree courses. Linking with the Maths Hubs and the Level 3 Maths Support Programme, and building on the success of the Exeter and King's College Maths Schools, the new schools will enhance our national provision of maths education.

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## [News story: Pothole fund boosted to repair roads after winter damage](#)

Local roads badly affected by recent winter weather will benefit from a further £100 million to help repair any potholes and other storm damage, Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced today (26 March 2018).

This money will help repair almost 2 million potholes as well as help protect the roads from any future severe weather.

This is on top of the £75 million in government funding already given to councils from the Pothole Action Fund this year, as well as the additional £46 million boost for highways authorities announced just before Christmas. Around 7 million potholes will be filled due to this money, announced in the 2016 Budget.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

People rely on good roads to get to work and to see friends or family.

We have seen an unusually prolonged spell of freezing weather which has caused damage to our local roads.

We are giving councils even more funding to help repair their roads so all road users can enjoy their journeys without having to dodge potholes.

Already, £2.5 million has been allocated to Devon County Council to quickly repair the A379 which was badly damaged by Storm Emma.

The government is also investing more than £900,000 in innovations using connected vehicles to help councils more efficiently manage and plan maintenance works. These trials will ultimately help provide councils with data to enable them to repair potholes before they occur as well as maintain their other assets more effectively as part of their asset management plans. This will help prevent further potholes and other road defects occurring over

time.

Blackpool Council has been given £100,000 to lead on a digital inspector scheme with 8 councils. This will see high definition cameras mounted on vehicles to collect data on road and path conditions, which is then analysed by computers to highlight where roads are deteriorating. The City of York will also get £72,000 to use a similar system to build on its pothole spotter trial.

Transport for the West Midlands, West Sussex County Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Croydon Council and Southampton City Council have also been awarded funding for road condition monitoring innovations. Swindon Borough Council will trial the use of smartphone sensors to collate road conditions and Essex County Council will work with Daimler to use information collected by its cars. Derby City Council and Oxfordshire County Council will use connected vehicles to collect data on the condition of road signs.

Westminster City Council will trial the use of cameras to provide real-time updates so people can locate parking spaces easier.

The department is also providing £30,000 to the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) to work on technological and innovative improvements to future-proof the local road network.

This fund is on top of the record £6 billion the government is providing local authorities between 2015 and 2021 to maintain and improve their roads.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pothole/flood resilience funding £97.5 million allocation (£)</b>
North East	North East CA	4,533,373
North West	Greater Manchester CA	2,882,002
North West	Liverpool City Region CA	1,860,126
Yorkshire and The Humber	Sheffield City Region CA	1,364,732
Yorkshire and The Humber	West Yorkshire CA	3,107,703
West Midlands	West Midlands ITA	1,702,946
North East	County Durham UA	1,296,639
North East	Darlington UA	185,229
North East	Hartlepool UA	136,775
North East	Middlesbrough UA	147,147
North East	Northumberland UA	1,849,720
North East	Redcar and Cleveland UA	246,208
North East	Stockton-on-Tees UA	270,003
North East	Gateshead	279,456
North East	Newcastle upon Tyne	296,781
North East	North Tyneside	265,372

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pothole/flood resilience funding £97.5 million allocation (£)</b>
North East	South Tyneside	183,836
North East	Sunderland	361,570
North West	Blackburn with Darwen UA	178,365
North West	Blackpool UA	146,983
North West	Cheshire East UA	1,081,305
North West	Cheshire West and Chester UA	892,090
North West	Halton UA	212,684
North West	Warrington UA	325,886
North West	Cumbria	2,859,217
North West	Bolton	318,470
North West	Bury	200,241
North West	Manchester	438,956
North West	Oldham	269,365
North West	Rochdale	247,494
North West	Salford	268,154
North West	Stockport	297,212
North West	Tameside	228,036
North West	Trafford	244,119
North West	Wigan	369,956
North West	Lancashire	2,393,218
North West	Knowsley	215,689
North West	Liverpool	481,702
North West	Sefton	311,440
North West	St. Helens	259,687
North West	Wirral	378,923
Yorkshire and The Humber	East Riding of Yorkshire UA	1,251,395
Yorkshire and The Humber	Kingston upon Hull, City of UA	205,595
Yorkshire and The Humber	North East Lincolnshire UA	223,298
Yorkshire and The Humber	North Lincolnshire UA	529,807
Yorkshire and The Humber	York UA	256,632
Yorkshire and The Humber	North Yorkshire	3,285,049
Yorkshire and The Humber	Barnsley	412,485
Yorkshire and The Humber	Doncaster	541,934

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pothole/flood resilience funding £97.5 million allocation (£)</b>
Yorkshire and The Humber	Rotherham	410,314
Yorkshire and The Humber	Sheffield	0
Yorkshire and The Humber	Bradford	595,461
Yorkshire and The Humber	Calderdale	385,751
Yorkshire and The Humber	Kirklees	629,186
Yorkshire and The Humber	Leeds	989,926
Yorkshire and The Humber	Wakefield	507,378
East Midlands	Derby UA	230,810
East Midlands	Leicester UA	260,236
East Midlands	Nottingham UA	242,057
East Midlands	Rutland UA	213,766
East Midlands	Derbyshire	2,035,992
East Midlands	Leicestershire	1,560,176
East Midlands	Lincolnshire	3,457,324
East Midlands	Northamptonshire	1,630,762
East Midlands	Nottinghamshire	1,635,629
West Midlands	Herefordshire, County of UA	1,252,647
West Midlands	Shropshire UA	1,858,807
West Midlands	Stoke-on-Trent UA	271,391
West Midlands	Telford and Wrekin UA	347,983
West Midlands	Staffordshire	2,203,545
West Midlands	Warwickshire	1,415,650
West Midlands	Birmingham	0
West Midlands	Coventry	276,480
West Midlands	Dudley	331,366
West Midlands	Sandwell	313,551
West Midlands	Solihull	278,680
West Midlands	Walsall	261,690
West Midlands	Wolverhampton	241,180
West Midlands	Worcestershire	1,627,557
East of England	Bedford UA	305,589
East of England	Central Bedfordshire UA	495,565
East of England	Luton UA	130,996
East of England	Peterborough UA	334,006
East of England	Southend-on-Sea UA	142,545

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pothole/flood resilience funding £97.5 million allocation (£)</b>
East of England	Thurrock UA	213,231
East of England	Cambridgeshire	1,608,546
East of England	Essex	2,602,886
East of England	Hertfordshire	1,801,196
East of England	Norfolk	3,448,743
East of England	Suffolk	2,454,918
South East	Bracknell Forest UA	174,074
South East	Brighton and Hove UA	188,705
South East	Isle of Wight UA	0
South East	Medway UA	280,565
South East	Milton Keynes UA	389,883
South East	Portsmouth UA	154,934
South East	Reading UA	134,681
South East	Slough UA	91,408
South East	Southampton UA	190,285
South East	West Berkshire UA	467,317
South East	Windsor and Maidenhead UA	240,894
South East	Wokingham UA	282,055
South East	Buckinghamshire	1,187,081
South East	East Sussex	1,177,912
South East	Hampshire	2,956,522
South East	Kent	3,058,239
South East	Oxfordshire	1,831,494
South East	Surrey	1,878,063
South East	West Sussex	1,594,870
South West	Bath and North East Somerset UA	379,059
South West	Bournemouth UA	157,232
South West	Bristol, City of UA	357,387
South West	Cornwall UA	2,572,746
South West	North Somerset UA	383,954
South West	Plymouth UA	228,539
South West	Poole UA	173,296
South West	South Gloucestershire UA	504,258
South West	Swindon UA	270,224
South West	Torbay UA	163,108
South West	Wiltshire UA	1,811,343
South West	Devon*	4,446,606
South West	Dorset	1,490,177
South West	Gloucestershire	1,998,120
South West	Somerset	2,437,335

\*Devon will also receive £2.5 million for the A379 road repairs as announced by the Prime Minister on 7 March 2018.

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## [News story: Yemen needs inclusive peace talks, UK says as conflict enters its fourth year](#)

The Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, and International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, have issued a statement on Yemen:

Today, as the Saudi-led Coalition's intervention in Yemen enters its fourth year, we call on all parties to return to the negotiating table to find an inclusive political solution that delivers the peaceful future the people of Yemen deserve.

The humanitarian crisis triggered by the conflict has left over 22 million people in need of assistance. In the last eight months alone, an additional one million people found themselves without the necessities such as food and medicines that they need to survive.

With the rainy season fast approaching, the crisis could be made even worse if there is another surge in the cholera outbreak – the number of suspected cases reported over the last year is already well over one million.

The UK has been at the forefront of the international response and is the third largest humanitarian donor to Yemen. We are delivering life-saving interventions including food for 3.4 million people, nutrition support to 1.7 million people, and clean water and sanitation for an expected 1.2 million people. UK aid is also funding a new cholera response programme that aims to vaccinate 1.1 million people against the preventable disease.

But without de-escalation and a political settlement millions of civilians risk starvation. Saudi Arabia has the right to defend itself against security threats including missiles launched from Yemen, and we support the Saudi-led Coalition's efforts to restore legitimacy in Yemen, as accepted by the UN Security Council. We have worked hard with Saudi Arabia and other international partners to strengthen the UN shipping inspection mechanism to ensure that all ports can remain open to all commercial and humanitarian supplies. All sides must redouble their support for the UN's efforts to reach an inclusive political settlement which addresses the root causes of the conflict. We welcome the appointment of the new UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths, who brings with him extensive experience in conflict resolution.

A UN Panel of Experts has concluded that Iran is in non-compliance with UN

Security Council Resolutions for failing to take measures to prevent the supply of Iranian-made ballistic missiles to the Houthis. If Iran is genuinely committed to supporting a political solution in Yemen – as it has publicly stated – then it should stop sending in weapons which prolong the conflict, fuel regional tensions, and pose threats to international peace and security. We question why Iran is spending significant revenue in a country with which it has no real historical ties or interests, rather than using its influence to end the conflict for the good of the Yemeni people.

We call upon countries of the region and the international community to redouble their efforts in support of this goal, and for parties to the conflict to allow unhindered commercial and humanitarian access throughout Yemen, including for fuel, and for the Government of Yemen to pay public sector salaries across the country. We will continue to play our part in restoring the peace and security needed for Yemenis to resume normal lives.

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## **Speech: Welsh innovation is key to Britain's future export success**

Thank you for that introduction and a very good morning to you all.

It's a pleasure to be here today and to be at this GREAT Festival showcasing the very best of British innovation.

I may have only been here for 24 hours but in that short amount of time I have been truly inspired by the conversations I've heard about our shared ambitions, and energised by the opportunities we have to work together to shape the future of global trade.

There is no denying that there is a real buzz about the place.

At every turn I am seeing:

- British and Asian visionaries forging new links and strengthening existing relationships.
- Businesses enthusiastic to show that they are capable, cutting edge and confident to embrace global markets.
- And innovators making the connections that will put them in pole position to benefit from the opportunities this important market provides.

It truly is a meeting of brilliant minds and I am very much looking forward to seeing businesses reap the benefits of the valuable relationships that they will forge here.

And I'm delighted to have the opportunity to talk to you today about Britain's trading future and how our global reputation for innovation excellence places us on a firm footing for the future.

## **INNOVATION**

If your experience abroad has been anything like mine, you will know that British innovation is deeply valued around the world.

In our distilleries and on our factory floors; in our tech hubs and our research facilities: ideas, goods, and services are being produced that are coveted right across the globe.

Indeed, innovation is in the fabric of Britain's DNA.

Game changers invented by the Brits include items as diverse as penicillin and the pencil, the jet engine and bungee jumping.

We invented the telephone and text messaging. We can claim evolution, gravity, longitude and the Higgs Boson particle. And, perhaps the most important breakthrough of all – a Brit invented the chocolate bar.

And from a personal point of view, I am particularly proud to say that the world's first ever wireless broadcast took place in my own constituency the Vale of Glamorgan. And the message was, 'are you ready'?

Ironically, a message which is equally relevant to today's challenges.

Yet there can be no denying that having the capability and capacity to innovate is still the way to prosper in the 21st century.

And – as Welsh Secretary – I'm delighted that Wales is playing its part.

How many people know, for example, that the wafer semiconductor technology for more than half the world's smart phones is manufactured in south Wales in what is becoming a hub of hi-tech excellence and innovation?

I'm delighted to see IQE – the company helping to drive this innovation forward – here at this festival this week.

And Swansea University is already exploring how 5G technology can be used for smart bandages which can detect how a wound is healing and send a message back to doctors in real time.

They – and the thousands of other Welsh companies breaking overseas markets – are making a huge contribution to the value of Welsh exports which totalled £16.4 billion last year – an increase of 12.3% on the previous year.

So you know, as well as I, that we have world class innovations and services

to offer to the world.

But what is the UK Government doing to help British innovators to thrive abroad?

Well, everything that the Department for International Trade does is designed to help you on every step of your exporting journeys.

From financial backing, export advice, trade missions or access to the 1,200 advisers in 108 countries worldwide, there is a world class resource that you can tap into.

## **EU EXIT**

I understand that every business here at this Festival will be hoping for a glimpse of what that trading potential with the rest of the world will look like once we leave the EU.

I know that businesses value certainty and stability above all else.

But what I also know is that this Festival shows that the connections that we have around the world can become more varied, become stronger and become more enticing as we leave the EU.

We are living in a time of historic opportunity with great prizes at stake for our economy if we only have the courage to grasp them.

But we must, as a country, set our sights on this future.

And our future must be global.

Because the pattern of our trade is changing.

Dynamic trading has shown that over 50% of Britain's exports are now to outside the EU, compared with only 46% in 2006.

So in the wake of Brexit, we must become more not less international in our outlook.

We need to make sure that Britain will always be open for business, will be open to collaborative partnerships with like-minded countries, institutions and firms right around the world.

But to encourage innovation, it is not enough to simply increase investment and to set challenges.

We also need to provide the freedom that innovators and optimists need to thrive.

And that is what our Industrial Strategy is all about.

A strategy that has been developed in full partnership with the innovators, investors and job creators of the British economy.

It is a strategy sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future and how we will respond to the technological revolution taking place across the world.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is another example of how we have set out a positive vision of an optimistic, open, outward looking, free trading, buccaneering Global Britain.

It is a vision of a country back in charge of its trading destiny.

But to realise that vision, we know that Government and businesses need to work hand in hand.

The UK Government will continue to lay the foundations and develop the international relationships – opening doors and taking down barriers.

But it is ultimately our enterprising businesspeople like you who will make the most of those new opportunities.

I want you to know that the UK Government will be backing British business all the way – doing all we can to help you realise our vision of a prosperous, truly Global Britain.

I look forward to experiencing what the rest of this Festival has to offer, and to continuing to celebrate with you the success of British innovation now and in the future.

I'll now hand over to the Permanent Secretary to the Department for International Trade, Antonia Romeo.

Thank you.

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**Speech: “Our vote today against this resolution is a vote against the politicization of the Commission on the Status of Women.”**

Thank you Chair,

The United Kingdom is firmly committed to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women plays a crucial role as a forum for building international consensus in support of gender equality, fulfilling

the promise of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and ensuring gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

We continuously strive to advance gender equality both domestically and internationally. But it is not equality for the few, it is equality for all. We cannot accept in the name of equality the inherent discrimination of singling out one country alone, Israel; as this resolution clearly does. No other country is singled out in the same way.

The fact that the occupation has a detrimental impact on the status of Palestinian men and women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is without doubt. But today's resolution focusses solely on Israel; how can this be acceptable in a region where women's rights are so often and so tragically trampled upon?

The resolution fails to fully reflect the challenges that Palestinian women endure each and every day due to gender stereotypes, negative social and cultural norms, and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that exist. Nor does it reflect the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority for the wellbeing of women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Our vote today against this resolution is a vote against the politicization of the Commission on the Status of Women. We remain committed to strengthening the Commission and the invaluable role it plays in the empowerment of women.

Indeed, many in this room share our longstanding position that Commission on the Status of Women is an inappropriate place for this sort of country-specific resolution to exist. Today we have acted in line with our longstanding position.

Ultimately, a lasting and negotiated settlement that ends the occupation and delivers peace, rights and security for both Palestinian and Israeli women alike is long overdue. The United Kingdom is committed to making progress towards this goal.

Thank you.