

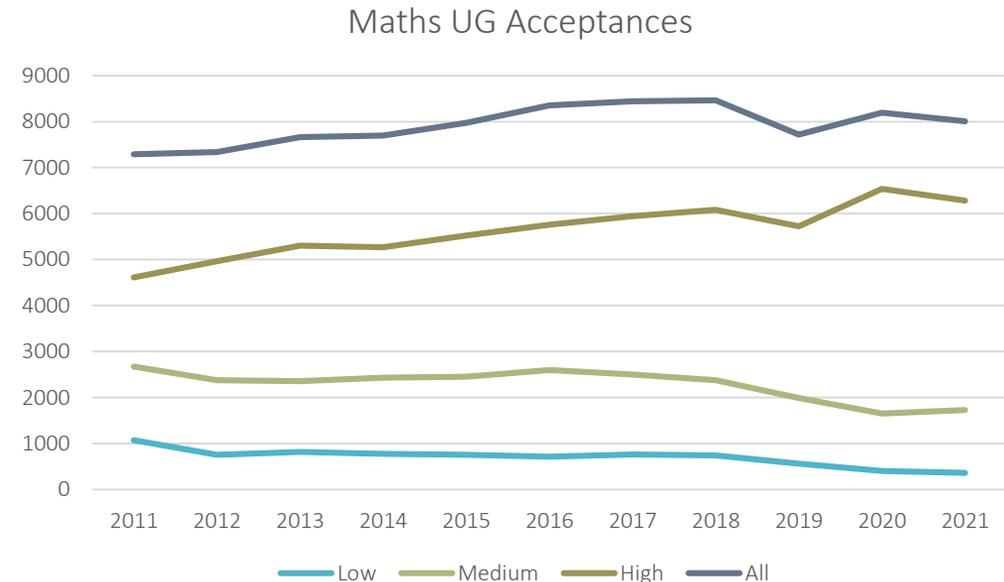
# Intake to Maths Sciences degrees

Session for HoDoMS 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Prof Cathy Hobbs

# The issue

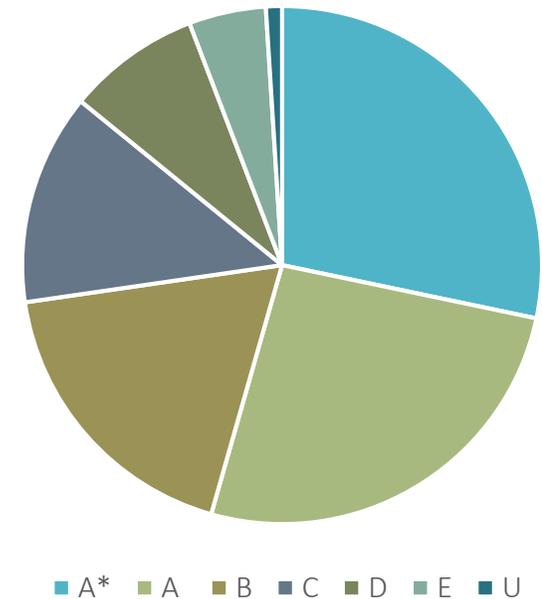
- Intake to Maths Sciences degrees in the UK static over last 10 years – around 8.5k
- This masks **significant** variations at HEI level
- Not just a Covid effect, though has accelerated since 2019
- Around 15 ‘low tariff’ institutions ( $\leq$  **B grade**) share intake of less than 400 students.
- Maths is becoming an A\*A\* only degree, leading to lack of diversity of intake.
- Risk that diversity of provision may be lost.



# A level Maths

- Entry to A level Maths continues to rise gradually
- Maths is the most popular A level subject with around 90k entries in 2021
- Further Maths A Level intake is steady at 15k
- 54% of those taking A level Maths got A or A\* grades in 2021

2021 A Level Maths Grade distribution



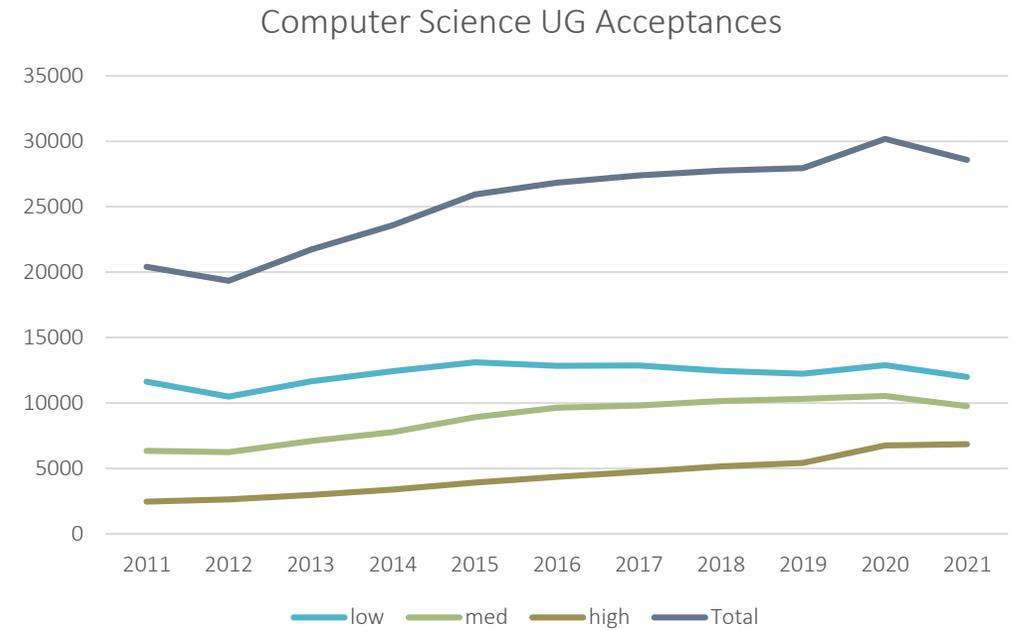
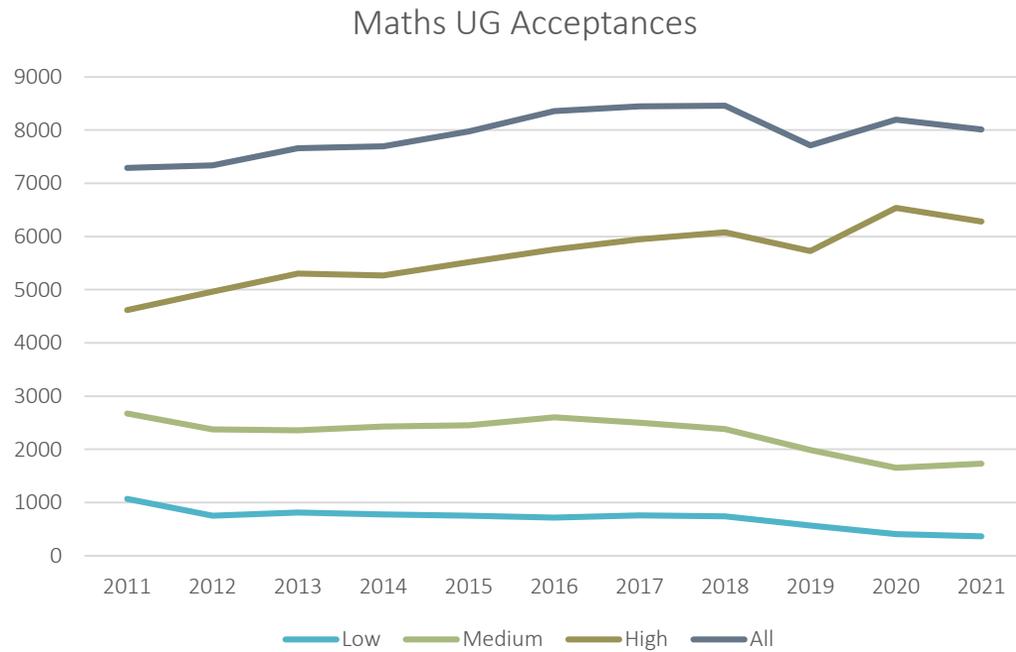
# Maths UG Entry

- Tariff offers range from CCC to A\*A\*A\* (plus additional tests)
- The distribution of offers appears to have A in Maths as the median
- All providers at the lower end of the range (B or C in Maths) have intake below 50 and dropping
- Lower tariff providers had 13% of the market share in 2011 and 4.5% in 2021.
- Many of the higher tariff providers have increased intake by over 150%
- UK-wide trend ie includes Scotland

# Graduate prospects for maths grads

- Graduate employability for Maths grads remains high at all tariff levels – there is no evidence of an oversupply of maths grads.
- Mathematics graduates going into teaching are frequently drawn from the middle to low tariff HEIs.
- Mathematics graduates from high tariff HEIs are more likely to leave their region of domicile (with London a major destination), leading to a loss of maths grads to the regions.

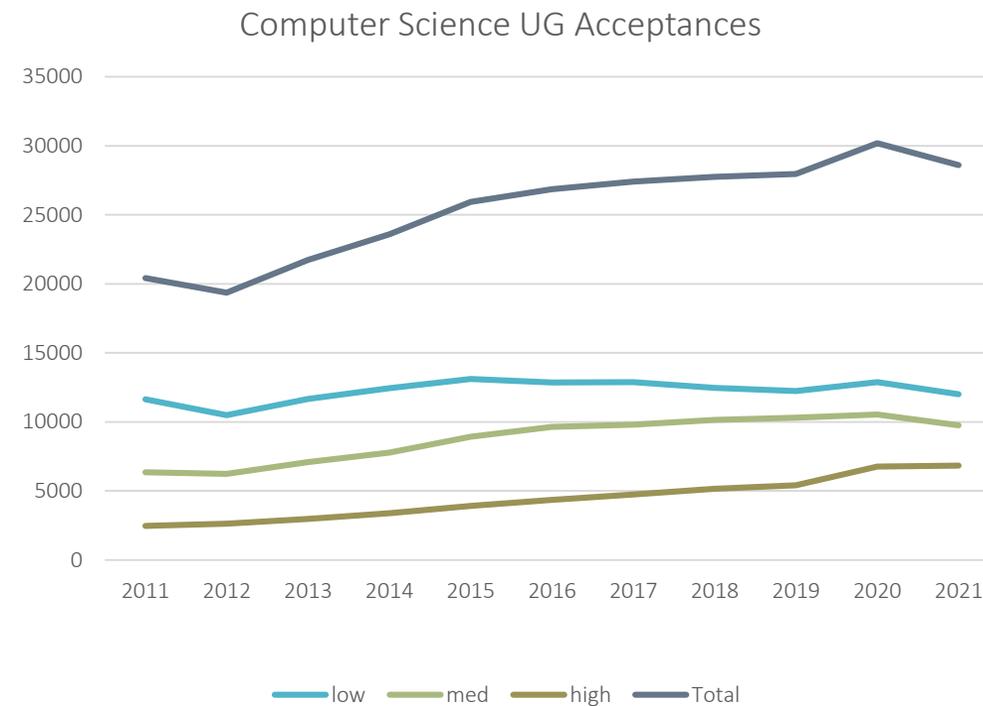
# Intake to Maths vs Computer Science



Data source: [UCAS Provider-level end-of-cycle resources](#)

# Computer Science

- Computer Science tariff offers range from CCC to A\*A\*A\*
- There are providers at the very lowest tariff whose recruitment is continuing to rise.
- There is evidence that at the high tariff end a similar effect to maths is happening, with 200% rises in intake not uncommon.



# So what?

- If pupils with B or C don't choose maths UG, lower tariff providers are likely to drop out of the market.
- The sensible strategy for an individual provider is to increase tariff or leave the market (or maybe rebrand as 'Data Science'?)
- If Maths becomes an A\*-only course, this provides diminishing opportunities for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds/regions to study Maths in the future.
- Diversity of types of maths programmes is likely to decrease, which may impact on supply of graduates for some employment areas

# Discussion points

- In terms of benefitting UK plc, what are the most important characteristics of diversity of provision that ought to be preserved?
- What are the key actions we should be asking for, and from whom?
- How can we influence within our own institutions and/or at national policy level?