



**MEDIA RELEASE: FINAL
20 AUGUST 2009**

ETB WELCOMES A LEVEL INCREASES IN MATHS AND PHYSICS - NOW THE FOCUS MUST BE ON PACE OF CHANGE AND ENCOURAGING MORE WOMEN

The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) today congratulated students on their excellent A Level results in science and maths subjects but warned that science, technology, engineering and mathematics communities must remain at the top of their game and continue to encourage students from all backgrounds and in particular women, to take key subjects such as physics and maths.

In response to promising increases in the number of male and female students taking Maths, Further Maths and Physics, the ETB welcomed young people's increasing recognition of science and engineering subjects and the benefits they bring.

This year's results saw the following increases since 2008:

- 11 % rise in Maths entrants overall
- 14% rise in female Maths entrants
- 15% rise in Further Maths entrants
- 19% rise in female Further Maths entrants
- 5% rise in Physics entrants overall
- 6% rise in female Physics entrants

Overall achievements were:

- 82% achieving A-C in Maths in 2009
- 90% achieving A-C in Further Maths in 2009
- 71% achieving A-C in Physics in 2009

At 19 % and 14% respectively, there has been a positive and significant increase in the number of women studying physics and maths, although women still represent only 22 % of Physics students, 30 % of Further Maths students, and 40% of Maths students overall.

With engineering and manufacturing set to play a key role in the economic recovery, it is vital that the UK continues to address this issue by ensuring that students of both genders and from a diverse range of backgrounds take crucial subjects such as maths and physics.

Paul Jackson, Chief Executive of the ETB said:

“The ETB wholeheartedly congratulates this year’s A Level students and teachers for their excellent results in science and maths. With engineering set to play a key role in the economic recovery, it is vital to encourage even more young people to take key subjects such as physics and maths. We are already working with 70 organisations, including engineering firms, businesses that rely on these skills and the wider STEM community, to deliver The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists’ and Engineers’ Fair, featuring the National Science and Engineering Competition. This is about inspiring and exciting young people about the opportunities in this sector. With the UK being the sixth largest manufacturing nation in the world, nurturing and developing young scientists and engineers will be key to building our nation’s future success.”

The ETB also embraces the introduction of the new Extended Project qualification, which encourages students to develop skills in planning, presenting and problem solving, all skills important in engineering, and which mirror the work place and wider world.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1.) The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) is an independent organisation that promotes the vital role of engineers, engineering and technology in our society. The ETB partners business and industry, government and the wider science and engineering community: producing evidence on the state of engineering, sharing knowledge within engineering and inspiring young people to choose a career in engineering, matching employers’ demand for skills. For more information about the ETB please visit www.etechb.co.uk.

**For further information please contact:
Gareth Lyon, Communications Executive, the ETB**

**Tel: 020 3206 0445 or (m) 07887 943 017
Email: glyon@etechb.co.uk**

About The Big Bang

The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists’ and Engineers’ Fair at Manchester Central Convention Complex, 11-13 March 2010 will celebrate and raise the profile of young people’s achievement in science and engineering and encourage more young people to take part in STEM initiatives with support from their parents and teachers. School groups will be invited to the Fair, which will take place over three days and include 300 student projects showcasing innovation and creativity and competing in the National Science & Engineering Competition for national and international awards. The Fair will also be open to the public on the Saturday.

The British Science Association’s CREST awards and the projects supported by Young Engineers’ form the centre piece of the Fair. The event is being organised by an extensive partnership from across the science, technology, engineering and mathematics communities, with support from the ETB (Engineering and Technology Board).

Individual projects will be selected and invited to The Big Bang to showcase their projects to over 13,000 visitors, including students, journalists, celebrities and VIPS.

The fair will represent the best the UK has to offer, with entries from students (both individuals and teams) aged 11 to 18. Projects chosen will cover all aspects of science, technology, engineering and maths (including computing) - and range from hands-on or practical, to research and test based.

Judging will start on day one of The Big Bang - with finalists shortlisted for judging again the next day. Day two will end with a glitzy and prestigious awards ceremony where winners of the National Science and Engineering Competition will be announced - plus the winners of the senior category will be crowned the UK Young Scientist and Engineer of the Year. For more information on The Big Bang visit www.thebigbangfair.co.uk.

About the National Science & Engineering Competition

The National Science & Engineering Competition is an initiative of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills as a response to a recommendation in Lord Sainsbury's report 'The Race to the Top'. It is coordinated by the British Science Association in partnership with Young Engineers and The Big Bang. The competition, open to all 11-18 year olds, accepts projects from all areas of science, technology, engineering and maths. The finals of the National Science and Engineering Competition will be held at The Big Bang. For more information and a full list of sponsors go to www.nationalsciencecompetition.org.