

## History of UCD Maths Enrichment Classes

The Mathematics Enrichment programme at UCD has been offered for just over a quarter century. Ireland has competed in the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) every year from 1988 onwards. For the first few years, in order to find a good team to represent Ireland, a small cohort of very talented students was identified on the basis of performance in an Irish National Mathematics Contest, based on the American High School Mathematics Examination which plays a similar role in the U.S.

The Mathematics Enrichment programme was established to prepare those students for IMO - type questions and give the chosen team a chance of getting some marks in the competition. While the number participating initially was small, this changed when, with the help of the Department of Education, students who scored best in Junior Cert Mathematics were invited. In the beginning the programme was focussed entirely on developing the knowledge and techniques required in the IMO, but, in more recent years, it has included showing these talented students some lovely results of advanced mathematics and the sheer joy and sense of achievement that comes from understanding and answering questions about them. Many members of the School of Mathematical Sciences freely devote Saturday mornings to delivering the programme, hoping to inspire students to be enthralled and captivated by the beauty of Mathematics as they are themselves.

Over the last twenty years, many of our top students in mathematically related areas, such as Science and Engineering, have had their first experience of UCD through participation in the Enrichment programme.

***UCD School of Mathematical Science – updated January 24<sup>th</sup> 2014***