

# Press Release

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2015

## **Young Academy stresses numeracy skills for new school term**

A group of Scotland's brightest young leaders is relaunching a series of videos and an accompanying resource pack to address the decline in numeracy standards in Scotland and ensure numeracy learning links to the world of work.

The Young Academy of Scotland (YAS) is making the resources available to all Scottish schools as the new term starts. The videos and information sheets are available online and can be downloaded, free of charge, by teachers, parents, and students.

YAS created the resources, entitled 'Numeracy Counts' in 2013 when the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy reported a drop in the number of pupils performing well and very well in numeracy at P4 and P7 primary level. With the release of Sir Ian Wood's Developing Young Workforce report, they see numeracy skills as vital to the success of the economy. The latest figures published this week showing an overall decline in presentations for the SQA Highers in subjects such as mathematics, chemistry and computing science reinforces the need for Scotland to prioritise numeracy in order to equip Scotland's young people with the skills necessary to take the opportunities of the future identified by Sir Ian.

Experts believe that about 25% of adults have literacy and numeracy problems which affect their daily lives, with around one person in 30 suffering from severe problems.

Numeracy Counts demonstrated how a variety of YAS members use maths and numeracy, both in their careers and their everyday lives. A heart doctor, a composer, an archaeologist and an astrophysicist are amongst a group who gave video interviews showing how they use a variety of number skills on a daily basis.

Neil McLennan, who led the project, said "The resource was devised alongside maths teachers and was well received. We launched the resource to a small group as a pilot and conducted a short survey. It showed that it helped users to understand Curriculum for Excellence Numeracy Levels and also that it helped users understand how numeracy is used in the world of work."

"Now seems the right time to relaunch it at the start of a new term and on the back of the momentum of Sir Ian Wood's Developing Young Workforce report and the high profile learning in maths is currently being given. The importance of linking learning to the world of work could not be more important. We hope the resource will help students better understand numeracy this academic year and also let them see the relevance of numeracy concepts to a range of jobs from robotics to archaeology."

The resource can be accessed at <http://www.youngacademyofscotland.org.uk/numeracy.html>

The Young Academy of Scotland members are now working on similar resources for the Science and Technology curriculum and will launch them later in the academic year.

ENDS

**Notes for Editors:**

The RSE Young Academy of Scotland fosters interdisciplinary activities among emerging leaders from the disciplines of science and humanities, the professions, the arts, business and civil society. Established by the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2011, the Young Academy of Scotland provides a platform for able and innovative young entrepreneurs, professionals and academics to develop a coherent and influential voice, and to address the most challenging issues facing society in Scotland and beyond.

For interviews or queries regarding the RSE Young Academy of Scotland, contact Marie Montondo 0131 240 5027