

Students subtract maths from their education

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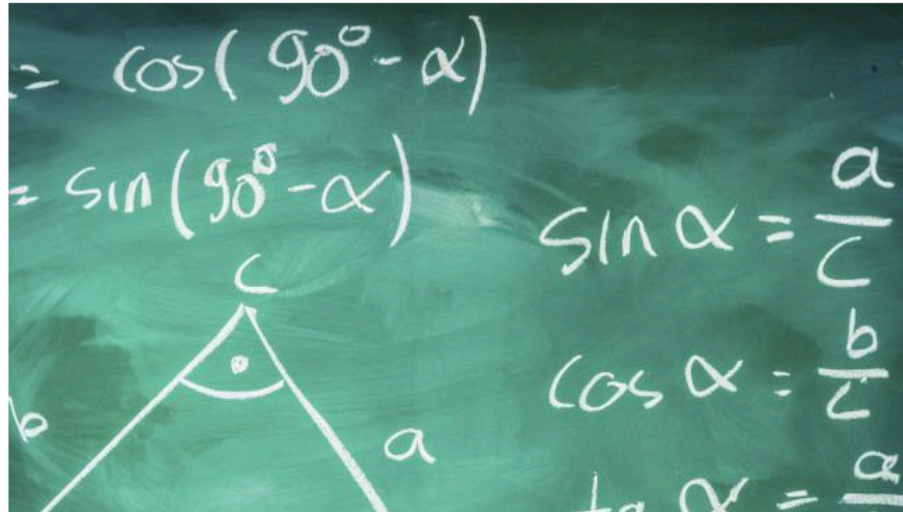


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Only one in every 10 Australian students studied advanced maths in Year 12 last year.

Teenagers are shunning advanced maths subjects, with participation nearly halving in two decades.

Only one in every 10 Australian students studied advanced maths in Year 12 last year, new statistics show.

Girls are half as likely as boys to study advanced maths at high school.

One in five Australian students — and one in four teenage girls — fails to study any maths in Year 12.

The Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute yesterday blamed universities for removing advanced maths as a prerequisite for science and engineering degrees.

New AMSI data shows that the proportion of students studying advanced maths in Year 12 plunged from 14.2 per cent in 1995 to 10 per cent in 2014. At the same time, enrolment in elementary maths courses rose from 37 per cent to 52 per cent of Year 12 students.

AMSI director Geoff Prince called on universities to gradually reintroduce advanced maths as a prerequisite for tertiary science studies.

He said it was “deeply concerning” that so few high school students were taking maths at an advanced level.

“Only 14 per cent of university science courses have calculus-based maths as a prerequisite for study,” he said. “That sends the totally wrong message to parents, schools and teachers. Parents are the main influence on kids’ choice of subjects, but most have no clue about maths careers.”