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**Media release**

**For immediate release**

**Mathematics community expresses  
funding concerns to the Prime Minister**

The Council for the Mathematical Sciences (CMS) has written to the Prime Minister to express its major concerns over the future of the mathematical sciences in the UK as a result of changes to funding being made by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

The new Fellowship Scheme has been introduced by EPSRC - with no consultation - and an immediate consequence is a big reduction in postdoctoral opportunities this year and for the foreseeable future. There will be no EPSRC Fellowship support for most of the mathematical sciences portfolio.

The UK benefits greatly from the number of talented mathematical scientists who move here to take up academic positions. However, the situation is fragile and poses a serious risk to our future national standing, and also to our continued ability to educate the number of under- and postgraduates needed by employers. This issue is much more of a problem in mathematical sciences than other disciplines because of the very low numbers of postdoctoral positions funded (3.8% of EPSRC-funded postdoctoral positions were in mathematical sciences as of March 2009).

Fellowships at the postdoctoral level provide a rare opportunity for the future leaders of the discipline to develop independently, and the loss of these fellowships to the general area of mathematical sciences will hit the best young mathematicians disproportionately.

Professor Frank Kelly FRS, Chair of CMS, said, 'Mathematics underpins our 21st century technology, economy and society, and is recognised as such in the employment market. The government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in science and research: it is important that the EPSRC recognises the importance of mathematics to the delivery of the government's vision'.

### **Notes for editors**

1. The **Council for the Mathematical Sciences** (CMS) provides an authoritative and objective body that exists to develop, influence and respond to UK policy issues that affect the mathematical sciences in higher education and research, and therefore the UK economy and society in general. The CMS was established in 2001 by the Institute of Mathematics and its applications (IMA), the London Mathematical Society (LMS) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS). In 2008 the Edinburgh Mathematical Society (EMS) and the Operational Research Society (ORS) became members of the CMS, providing the CMS with a broader view across mathematical sciences and throughout the UK.
2. Frank Kelly is a Cambridge mathematician and a director of Autonomy, the UK software company which has recently agreed to be acquired by Hewlett Packard for over 10bn dollars.
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