

The Council for the Mathematical Sciences

Secretariat: Martin Smith, De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HS
Tel: 020 7927 0803 Email: cms@lms.ac.uk web: www.cms.ac.uk

Innovation, Universities, Science
and Skills Select Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
London
SW1P 3JA

12 January 2009

Dear Mr Willis,

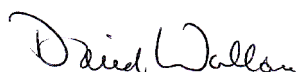
Putting science and engineering at the heart of government policy

The Council for the Mathematical Sciences (comprising the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, the London Mathematical Society, the Royal Statistical Society, the Edinburgh Mathematical Society and the Operational Research Society) would like to respond to the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Select Committee inquiry on *Putting science and engineering at the heart of government policy* with the following points:

- Mathematical sciences underpin all other science subjects, and developments in mathematical sciences often go hand in hand with advancements in biological, chemical and physical sciences. For a healthy research base and the construction of coherent government policy it is essential that the remit for any proposed Department for Science includes mathematics, statistics and operational research. Clarity in the Committee's use of the word 'science' in this context is very important. The subject of this inquiry should be putting 'STEM' (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) at the heart of government policy. In some contexts (particularly secondary education) the word 'science' is taken to mean only biology, physics and chemistry, which propagates the idea that science and engineering are separate to and can exist without mathematics.
- The CMS believes that the Research Councils' move towards directed research programmes and away from transformative research conflicts with the Haldane Principle; a review of the principle could be helpful in this context. The CMS welcomes the Committee's recent scrutiny of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's operations and is deeply concerned at the drop in the EPSRC Mathematical Sciences Programme budget from £21M in 2006/07 to £14M in the 2009/10 financial year.

We would be pleased to expand on these points if the Committee wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sir David Wallace CBE FRS FREng
Chair, Council for the Mathematical Sciences