

Inaugural Annual General Meeting

6th September 2016, Loughborough University

MINUTES

Purpose of the Inaugural Annual General Meeting: to confirm the future role of the **sigma** Network as a professional association for those involved with mathematics and statistics support in Higher Education, as a direct continuation of **sigma's** work as a funded project in recent years.

Due to the inaugural nature of this AGM, there was a reduced agenda of three items.

The meeting was attended by 51 people representing 34 institutions.

1) Chair's Report

For the past eleven years, **sigma** has been synonymous with the provision of high quality mathematics and statistics support in higher education. Originally established as a HEFCE-funded CETL in 2005, **sigma** subsequently received funding from the HE STEM programme (2010-2012) and again from HEFCE (2013-2016).

However, as from August 2016, external funding has come to an end. It was an integral part of the recent HEFCE funding agreement that sustainability measures would be put in place, so that the **sigma** Network could continue to thrive as a "community of practice" for those involved in mathematics and statistics support into the future. The **sigma** Directors, Advisory Board and Hub Co-ordinators have considered in detail various options for the most appropriate way forward.

This meeting is asked to approve the proposed arrangements for the transition of **sigma** from a funded project to a professional association, by (a) ratifying the Steering Group members who will henceforth manage the **sigma** Network on behalf of the sector, and (b) ratifying the Constitution that will provide the framework for the activity and governance of the **sigma** Network.

There are a number of reasons why it is considered important to put these formal procedures in place:

- To ensure continuation of current practice and existing networks, building on the success of the **sigma** Network over recent years in engaging and providing development opportunities for the mathematics and statistics support community;
- To safeguard the acknowledged reputational capital of **sigma**, and protect the brand;
- To maintain activity which is provided by the sector for the sector;

- To curate and further develop the resources that have accumulated under **sigma** over the past years , for example mathcentre and statstutor;
- To retain **sigma**'s position as the leading professional network for mathematics and statistics support practitioners in higher education, with a national and increasingly international reach;
- To demonstrate sound governance, with an eye to future partnerships and collaborations.

2) Ratification of membership of Steering Group 2016/17

A call for nominations went out in April/May 2016, via the sigma-network Jiscmail list and the **sigma** Network website. The call included clear Terms of Reference for the Steering Group. The following people have agreed to serve on the **sigma** Network Steering Group for 2016/17, and all have an appropriate level of management support within their institutions to carry out this role:

David Bowers	Chair, sigma Network
Emma Cliffe	University of Bath
Ruth Fairclough	University of Wolverhampton
Mark Hodds	Coventry University
Eugenie Hunsicker	Loughborough University
Tony Mann	University of Greenwich
Ellen Marshall	University of Sheffield
Mohamed Mehbali	London South Bank University
Alun Owen	University of Worcester
Chetna Patel	De Montfort University
Cheryl Voake-Jones	University of Bath
Rob Wilson	Cardiff University
Noel-Ann Bradshaw	Representative of the IMA

The meeting ratified the Steering Group membership by show of hands.

3) Ratification and adoption of the Constitution of the sigma Network

The constitution proposed here for adoption has been the subject of much consideration and re-drafting in recent months by the **sigma** Directors, the Advisory Board and the Hub Coordinators. Constitutions of equivalent organisations relevant to the higher education sector were taken as models. Legal advice was received. The constitution has been available to view on the **sigma** Network website since 5th August 2016. The constitution was presented to the meeting, and key points highlighted and explained.

The meeting ratified the constitution by show of hands, for immediate adoption.

4) Any Other Business

The meeting acknowledged and expressed huge gratitude for the excellent and inspirational work carried out by the **sigma** Directorate (Tony Croft, Duncan Lawson, Trevor Hawkes, Michael Grove and Moira Petrie) over the past years, which has made **sigma** such a thriving and widely recognised community of practice for mathematics and statistics support in higher education.