Call for proposals – Good Practice Guide in Undergraduate Peer Support

For several years the MSOR Network, in conjunction with sigma – centre for excellence in mathematics & statistics support, has been developing a programme of activities associated with supporting specialist mathematics and statistics students, particularly those beyond year 1. Amongst the evidence emerging from this programme is the potential that peer support mechanisms can have in motivating and encouraging students.

As a result the Network wishes to commission one of its Good Practice Guides to identify, synthesise and share current good practice in the area of undergraduate peer support mechanisms. The mechanisms of interest involve the use of undergraduates to support other undergraduates either in the same or different year groups, either in formal or informal situations.

We invite colleagues to submit proposals to undertake this work. Whilst any well-argued case will be considered we expect the following activities to be included:

1. the preparation of a Literature Review focusing upon existing undergraduate peer support mechanisms primarily within mathematics, but if appropriate in related disciplines;
2. a survey of current practices within UK HEIs;
3. the production of an overview and summary of existing models which should contain, as a minimum, • Information on the extent of current practice • Descriptions of the models • Any identified successes • Any challenges and constraints • Details of implementation procedures • Useful information on monitoring and evaluation
4. recommendations to help those wishing to implement peer support mechanisms within their own institutions.

Up to £5000 is available for an individual or group to undertake this work. Experience shows that work of this nature is often better produced as a collaborative effort so we encourage submissions with more than one author.

Submissions by sole authors will be considered but these should demonstrate the involvement of a critical friend who will work with the author to ensure quality of the finished article.

Copies of existing Guides in the series can be viewed on http://www.mathstore.ac.uk/publications

Proposals should be submitted using the template available on http://www.mathstore.ac.uk/projects to Janet Nuttall (J.Nuttall@bham.ac.uk). The expected duration of the work is 12 months.

Informal enquiries can be made: contact Michael Grove (m.j.grove@bham.ac.uk) (tel: 0121 414 7095) or Tony Croft (a.c.croft@lboro.ac.uk) (tel: 01509 223185). Closing date Friday 11th January 2008.

In addition to production of the Guide authors will be expected to:

• present a “work in progress” paper at the CETL MSOR Conference in Lancaster University Sept. 2008.
• submit an article on their project for publication in MSOR Connections
• contribute to a forthcoming MSOR Workshop on Peer Support.

Authors of the Guide will have access to an informal advisory group from the MSOR Network which will offer support and guidance.

Invitation to Tender for Learning & Teaching Projects

The Maths, Stats & OR Network will again be offering funding for a limited number of projects investigating learning, teaching & assessment to commence in Spring 2008. Up to £5000 is available for any one project, and collaborative applications are welcome.

Application forms, and further details can be found on the website http://www.mathstore.ac.uk/projects or by contacting us at info@mathstore.ac.uk. The closing date for all applications is Friday 25th January 2008.