



Loughborough  
University



Coventry  
University

Submission

Mathematics drop-in classes have proved a massive hit since they were started at Loughborough and Coventry universities.

More than 12,000 students visited the Sigma Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the two universities between September 2010 and May 2011, with a further 13,000 visitors going to the Mathcentre resources website each month.

Students in disciplines from architecture to zoology have benefited from up to 40 hours of support each week since the project started in 2005. Those with severe confidence issues, math-phobia or other needs can get extra help at the Sigma project's Eureka Centre for Mathematical Confidence, and one-to-one support classes for students working on particular projects are also available. Student ambassadors have helped to promote the scheme and acted as mentors alongside academic staff.

Sigma went national in 2010-11 and was introduced to universities that previously had no such provision. Six regional hubs have also been established to provide opportunities for staff to share good practice, while many other universities have already copied the Sigma model.

"We stand on the shoulders of giants," said John O'Donoghue, director of Ireland's National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and Learning. "Coventry and Loughborough and Sigma are the giants. We have unashamedly copied out ideas from them"

"Sigma is a fantastic example of institutions recognising genuine concerns in standards and acting in a positive way to address them. Students' reports about the support they receive were exceptionally positive," and judge Liam Burns, president of the National Union of Students. "Loughborough and Coventry should be incredibly proud of delivering support for students in a positive, innovative and transferable way."