

Representatives from AMET, ATM, the MA, NAMA and NANAMIC met at the Royal Society on 4 December 2017 to discuss the future of mathematics subject associations and the possibility of forming a new single association for mathematics education.

This document represents notes from that meeting, agreed by attendees.

Possible purposes of a new association:

Provide an inclusive, independent, professional home for anyone who works in mathematics education, and welcome all who are interested and/or concerned

Promote and support mathematics education

Sustain reflective and informed mathematics education practice

Be part of an active community: one home, multiple internal voices, opportunity for discussion and debate

Where appropriate, provide a strong external voice, representing mathematics teachers/educators from early years to university and across all provision (including work based and the secure estate)

Share and develop expertise through high quality resources and CPD

Meet the professional needs of mathematics educators throughout their careers, from student teacher to teacher educator/advisor/consultant, drawing on experience and expertise from across its members

Possible aims of a new association:

Enable learners and teachers to engage positively, and enjoy doing and learning mathematics

Provide a learning community for all involved in mathematics education throughout their careers

Collaboratively develop high quality journals, resources and publications

Encourage teacher collaboration and development through local networks, working groups, conferences, and other CPD opportunities

Draw on members' experience and expertise to respond to external agendas and influence policy development

Be an independent, authentic, representative and authoritative voice for mathematics education

SWOT analysis of forming a new professional association for mathematics education

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No insuperable differences between existing organisations were identified More efficient organisational structure Single association for mathematics professionals throughout their careers Specialist interest groups (SIGs) under one umbrella (like ASE, ALL, GA) Better match with the changing role of practitioners Simpler profile making it easier for others to engage with mathematics education Independence from government and others An organisation run for and by practitioners More opportunity for dialogue across the mathematics education community Journals, publications and resources developed drawing on pooled expertise Conferences One stop shop: external agencies e.g. awarding organisations, DfE, media know who to contact; mathematics educators don't have to choose Reduced burden on volunteers Strength – stronger together 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent positive messaging about mathematics education Promoting mathematics and its value to society Increasing number and scope of activities, including local and regional events More opportunity for members to do mathematics together Authentic, representative, authoritative voice Greater efficiency (administration, volunteer) through reducing duplication New, more and different volunteer opportunities Increasing geographic diversity of membership Rethink and redefine voluntary and paid roles More activity leading to a more active membership with a higher profile Greater appeal to more people involved in mathematics education Stronger voice to influence policy (e.g. Ofsted, STA) Improved communication with members and potential members Improved access to high quality journals Exploit digital technology affordances Consistent promotion of CMathTeach
<p>Weaknesses and likely challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time and work involved to establish a single organisation Determining an appropriate membership subscription profile Allocation of resources to different activities including SIGs Ensuring equitable representation of different specialist interests Loss of individual representation (e.g. on JMC) Loss of responsiveness and flexibility as a larger organisation Still may not attract the vast majority of teachers of mathematics – relevance and sustainability Loss of 'competition' could lead to complacency 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overlapping membership means a new organisation will initially have fewer members altogether Current association members may have deep existing attachments Potential job losses – administrators and editors Government funded professional support for mathematics education Independent commercial support for mathematics education School groups perceiving themselves self-sufficient e.g. MATs, TSAs, federations Squeezed school budgets don't support membership Current variable levels of financial security of different associations (perceived threat) Loss of individual association voices, identity and influence

Points from further discussion

Current variable levels of financial security of different associations

If a new organisation is established, all the other organisations would have to wind up and their resources would be constrained to be used for their existing charitable purposes.

It is assumed that the charitable purposes of a new association would be consistent with those of the existing associations, facilitating a smooth transfer of any such resources. For clarification, the use of those resources would then be entirely at the discretion of the new organisation.

All existing organisations must have a respected and valued voice in the new organisation, irrespective of current size of membership or resources.

Existing employees

Only two organisations have employees and they are highly valued. Any move to a new association will need to be mindful of these employees and move at a pace that minimises job losses and offers opportunities for new responsibilities. A new organisation would need to determine its own administrative structure and ways of working.

Possible organisational structure

Charitable status is essential

Rethink staff roles and responsibilities – learn from other organisations (e.g. ALL, ASE, GA, NEU)

Maintain independence from government

Opportunities to rethink all activity including: journals, publications, conferences, branches, CPD, social media presence

Agreed Actions

Find out about the experiences of other organisations that have undergone a process of re-creation (ASE - Tom Roper, NEU – Peter Ransom).

Final agreed version of these notes to be distributed to associations by Monday 11 December, and made public at their convenience, inviting comments and feedback to a named person within their body of trustees, ideally before 29 January so feedback can be discussed at the next MMSA meeting on 30 January 2017.