

# Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

*School of Advanced Study, University of London*

Proposal to: **develop an Open Access version of the *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* in SAS Open Journals**

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## **1. Background and summary of proposal**

*Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* is a well-established and highly-regarded specialist law journal <http://www.deaeslr.org/>. Since its launch in 2004 the journal has been published annually in a print version on a subscription basis and made available additionally electronically through the commercial online journal services: EBSCOhost, HeinOnline and VLex. The journal is edited and published privately by Stephen Mason (Barrister, Legal Scholar and IALS Associate Research Fellow).

As the costs of print production and distribution are becoming prohibitive, the editor/publisher is keen to find an appropriate host to secure a successful transition from print to open access online delivery - to help ensure continuity of publication and an important ongoing contribution to socially relevant legal discourse.

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) is actively involved in innovative legal information delivery - developing and promoting public access to materials capable of supporting legal research on the Internet. IALS is committed to extending the reach of digital provision of legal information by delivering specialist legal research tools and niche web services - maximising access to key or hard to find information to facilitate legal research, public understanding, and promote justice and the rule of law. The IALS website [www.ials.sas.ac.uk](http://www.ials.sas.ac.uk) includes a portfolio of online legal research tools and national services for law.

Building on successful work with the SAS Open Journals system, IALS has an important opportunity to work with Stephen Mason to develop an open access version of *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* - further raising the visibility and accessibility of the journal and its contents. Our project, in collaboration with SAS OJS, will safeguard online access to all the back issues for legal researchers, support the publication of publicly available future issues and help stimulate new areas of legal discussion and scholarship.

## 2. Journal aims, scope and audience

The *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* is concerned with legal topics such as: electronic evidence, electronic signatures, e-signature products, identity and authentication, banking, security, data protection and related matters to on-line trading. The journal encourages article that cover:

- Comparison across jurisdictions
- Inter-disciplinary aspects
- Social relevance
- Legal and cultural development
- Cross sector interest

Members of the editorial board comprise legal academia and practitioners.

The journal is primarily aimed at: academic lawyers, law students, members of the judiciary, barristers, solicitors, government lawyers and other legal practitioners.

The journal also has interest from: police forces; IT vendors; prosecution authorities.

## 3. Editorial approach and staffing

Stephen Mason is the editor

<http://www.stephenmason.eu/> and <http://ials.sas.ac.uk/about/staff/staff.asp?ID=88>

He has a long-established relationship with the Institute as IALS Associate Research Fellow and contributing author to the IALS/SALS journal *Amicus Curiae* and most recently through the work of the IALS Think Tank on Law Reform:

[http://ials.sas.ac.uk/news/IALS\\_Think\\_Tank.htm](http://ials.sas.ac.uk/news/IALS_Think_Tank.htm)

The initial production management elements of the project, utilising the SAS Open Journals system, will be undertaken by Steven Whittle, Information Systems Manager at IALS.

## 4. Peer review process

Articles submitted and commissioned for publication in *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* are subject to a peer review process. This comprises the editor in the first instance, and then specialist editors that undertake a further blind review when considered necessary (this always occurs with articles that are not directly related to electronic evidence or electronic signatures and requires a peer reviewer in the country of origin).

## 5. Copyright and IPR position

Our project will identify and address rights and permissions matters, including retrospective permissions relating to the early articles published in the original print journal.

Past authors will retain copyright in their own work.

The original pre-published layout of the journal is the IPR of Stephen Mason's company, Pario Communications Limited, which by arrangement will be transferred to IALS at date to be agreed with an agreed token consideration.

Data and digital copies created by the SAS OJS project will be deemed to be in the public domain with material being made freely available to researchers under Creative Commons licensing <http://www.creativecommons.org.uk>

Future articles will be included on the basis of a non-exclusive licence to publish online and the Creative Commons "Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives CC BY-NC-ND" user licence. Contributing authors will retain author copyright in their work but will be asked to grant two licences. One is an irrevocable, non-exclusive royalty-free right to licence to the

School of Advanced Study of the University of London, enabling us to reproduce the item in any format including electronic formats throughout the world for educational, research, and scientific non-profit uses during the full term of copyright including renewals and extensions. The other licence benefits those making use of items stored in the open journal system or the e-repository allowing them to download works and share them with others as long as they attribute the original and link back to the entry in SAS OJS or SAS-Space.

## **6. Open Access hosting and benefits of development**

By arrangement and in collaboration with the editor and publisher, IALS is proposing to establish an open access version of the *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review*. A six month set-up project is envisaged for early 2014 to include publication of the full run of back issues (volume 1 2004 to volume 10 2013) and the development of future 2014 issue in publication capability.

The contents of all published issues of *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* will be readily available to the project in MS Word and PDF file formats.

The title will continue as an annual publication, while investigating the potential for more frequent and flexible publication patterns offered by the SAS Open Journals system.

Future issues of *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* would utilise the journal management and production system facilities in the SAS OJS to assist the work flow of author submission, peer review and proofing.

Publication of the *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review* in SAS OJS will offer another opportunity to unlock past work which is often revealed to have contemporary resonance and context; deliver new searching/browsing and finding/using tools which extend research value; include social networking tools to offer further dialogue on current legal topics; engage with a wider audience including a new generation of writers; and importantly provide public access to socio-legal commentary which helps demonstrate the links and relevance of the Institute, the School and higher education in general to the legal and wider public communities.

This initiative will benefit the legal community on several levels and make a valuable contribution to facilitating further research initiatives in the UK and overseas particularly in the areas of electronic evidence, cryptography, authentication, security and electronic signatures and additionally extend the scope of wider open access information delivery.

The project will also provide an important case study in open information provision and preservation.

The proposal furthers the mission of the Institute, its Global Law Library and the School of Advanced Study in serving the national academic research community in law and in helping to provide the national resource for legal research.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stephen Mason, IALS Associate Research Fellow

Steven Whittle, IALS Information Systems Manager

**Stephen Mason**, BA, MA, LL.M, PGCE (FE) is the founder, publisher and general editor of *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review*

<http://www.stephenmason.eu/> and <http://ials.sas.ac.uk/about/staff/staff.asp?ID=88>

**Steven Whittle**, BA, MA is the Information Systems Manager at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. He has helped develop *Amicus Curiae* online and the *IALS Student Law Review* in the SAS Open Journals System <http://ials.sas.ac.uk/about/staff/staff.asp?ID=43>