

## **HELOA Training Report AGM**

### **Charlotte Brooks Vice Chair (Training)**

The HELOA Training Team consist of five conference managers, with different areas of responsibility across the range of HELOA training provision. Emily Day and Jonas Rae oversee the National Conference, they have responsibility for membership liaison and hotel liaison respectively. Reena Kaur is responsible for the New Practitioners Conferences and Sophie Hall and Chloe Warsop for the Professional Development Conferences.

The team this year ran six conferences, an increase from five last year after taking on the managing of the collaborative SCL and HELOA Conference. This year we had our largest Professional Development Conference (66 delegates in total booked onto the ambassador PDC) and our national and new practitioner bookings remained strong.

#### **New Practitioners Conferences**

In October 2018 we moved the conference from the Holiday Inn in Liverpool to The Met Hotel in Leeds. The venue in Leeds is very accessible and offers good value for money for our events; we will also run our May NPC there in 2019. Although booking rates for the May NPC reduced slightly from 2017, we reached capacity taking 81 bookings for the October NPC in Leeds.

We have continued to receive positive feedback across the two PDCs with 83% of delegates rating the conferences as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' and 92% reporting that the NPCs were good value for money. We have altered the format of the NPCs slightly to allow more time for networking at the beginning of the conference and received positive feedback about this from delegates. We have also included new sessions for 2018 such as 'Classroom Management' and 'Delivering Effective Presentations' to ensure that delegates have strong take-away messages and information from the events.

The Training team are also considering how to adapt the NPCs to respond to new staff within Higher Education, moving careers from other sectors like teaching, to ensure that we have sessions that are both entry-level and advanced to meet the needs of all delegates on the NPC.

I would like to formally thank Reena for her hard work over the past year as she has taken over the role of managing the NPC and for her enthusiasm in working with delegates to make the conferences a success.

#### **Professional Development Conferences**

In 2018, the UK Committee took the decision to increase the PDCs HELOA offers from two to three a year and run two of these with our official partner organisations, UCAS and the Student Loans Company. Unfortunately, due to staffing changes at UCAS we were unable to fix a date and run a PDC with them in 2018 and this is something that the Training team are looking to do going forward. As a result, our first PDC was small in numbers but received

excellent delegate feedback and resulted in HELOA developing new links with the company ‘Amazing Apprenticeships’ who are keen to work more with HELOA going forward.

Despite this, the training team saw a 26% increase in bookings to our PDCs in 2018. We successfully ran a PDC with SLC in Birmingham in November 2018 and had 33 delegates attend. Feedback from the collaborative event in 2017 was that delegates did not find the conference particularly helpful and criticised the value for money. This year the training team worked with SLC to provide finance advice in the context of mature students and combined presentations from HELOA members with SLC representatives. This received much improved feedback with 100% of delegates reporting that they found the conference helpful to their day jobs. We also offered this conference at a cheaper rate to previously and ran the event at a profit rather than a loss, which was the case for 2017.

We look forward to working with SLC to further develop training going forward and I would like to thank the SLC team for their support on HELOA training events this year.

Our largest PDC was our ‘Working with Student Ambassadors’ event which had seventy bookings. The event was very well received by delegates with ample opportunity for sharing best practice and exploring the legal side of student working.

Going forward we are looking to expand our links with external organisations to broaden our training offer for the year ahead and considering offering a PDC earlier on in the year as well as continuing with our November events. I would like to thank Chloe and Sophie for their hard work on managing three PDCs within three months in 2018.

### **National Conference**

2018 was our first year of running National Conference from Stratford-upon-Avon. In 2018, we had 193 full delegates and 28-day delegates attend, an increase from 181 full delegates and 21-day delegates in 2017. The venue received very positive feedback from delegates who enjoyed the central location, high-quality facilities and proximity to the town centre and railway station. The value for money of this location was also a consideration and allowed us to maintain conference costs.

In 2018 we also trialled new ways of engaging sponsors by having a business fair throughout the day on the Thursday and through having sponsored awards and sponsored workshop sessions. Both sponsor and delegate feedback around this new approach to partnerships was positive and focused around enabling delegates to find out more about businesses that may help in their day-to-day jobs and sponsors getting increased opportunities to liaise with delegates.

We have moved forward with this model for the 2019 conference with the help of the expansion of the HELOA Partnership team who have been working with the Training team to extend sponsorship opportunities and revenue.

We have made some amendments for our 2019 conference due to feedback we received in 2018 such as:

- Creating a new style lanyard to document breakout sessions to make it easier for delegates to see where they need to be and when
- We have used the new style lanyards to make registration for breakout sessions easier and to help manage capacity in popular sessions which has been an issue at previous conferences
- We have altered the prizes for this year's quiz and awards to make them more inclusive to our diverse membership
- We have provided a detailed briefing to all our speakers to provide further information about HELOA and our membership to try and ensure that workshops sessions and keynotes are relevant to members that work across a broad range of roles within HE and across the UK
- We released 50% of our workshop choices ahead of bookings opening in the digest back in October to allow members more time to write proposals and have discussions within their teams about who might attend ahead of bookings opening in November
- We have created a new 'Best Practice' award for 2019 to showcase the diversity of our membership and recognise the work of members in marketing and communications roles as well as outreach initiatives

Going forward it will be important to reflect on these changes and consider if they have been helpful in increasing delegates experiences of the conference and consider where we can make further amendments.

For this year's National Conference, we have two new conference managers, Emily Day and Jonas Rae. Having come into their HELOA roles in late 2018, I would like to thank them both for their hard work and commitment to this year's event. I would also like to thank Roshan Wakerley who stepped down from his position of Conference Manager in November upon starting a new role.