

HELOA

UK COMMITTEE REPORT 2019

UKC Overview

The Association is overseen by an Executive Committee (Exec) who typically meet four times per year and who report into the UK Committee (UKC). The UK Committee is the Executive Committee and the Group Chairs. For 2018, this consisted of the following elected officers:

Executive Committee:

UK Chair: Robbie Pickles (Bath)

UK Vice-Chair (Finance): Joe Bradbury-Walters (Surrey)

UK Vice-Chair (Membership and Administration): Harri Tatnell (Aston)

UK Vice-Chair (Communications): Rebecca Montgomery (City and then Edge Hill)

UK Vice-Chair (Partnerships): Rebecca Hollington (Southampton Solent and then Wolverhampton)

UK Vice-Chair (Governance and Policy): Jo Marchant (King's)

UK Vice-Chair (Group Development): Amandip Bisel (Imperial), and then Helen Walker (Hallam)

UK Vice-Chair (Training): Emma Hall (Edge Hill), and then Charlotte Brooks (Edge Hill)

Group Chairs:

Anglia: Rachel Cox (Cambridge)

Cymru / Wales: Rebecca Bowen (South Wales)

London: Rupa Lakhani (UCL) and then Becky Robson (Roehampton)

Midlands: Elliot Newstead (Leicester)

North East, Yorkshire, & the Humber: Helen Walker (Hallam), and then Amanda Kinningley (Huddersfield)

North West & Northern Ireland: Louise Carr (Liverpool), and then Jonathan Atkinson (Liverpool)

Scotland: Ali Clark (Dundee)

South East: Gail Alani (Southampton)

South West: Rebecca Oliver (Bournemouth)

Conference and Training Officers, Marketing and Web Officers, Finance Officers, and other invited members also attend UK Committee as non-voting members, and HELOA operates an office at Edge Hill University, which is staffed by Dawn McClintock.

The UKC meets four times per year and discusses a range of business predominantly relating to the management and governance of the Association. Decisions taken by Exec and UKC are communicated back to membership via Group meetings, and through the HELOA Digest and website. Committee meetings are also an opportunity for the membership to feed issues into the committee for discussion and resolution. UKC, as the main decision-making body of the Association, reports to members via the AGM each year. Minutes of Committee meetings are available to members and annual operational plans for each area are developed and reported on via the committee structures of the Association.

UKC Business

Following a successful period of stabilisation and consolidation in 2017/18, in which a range of new initiatives were developed including a new HELOA Strategy, 2018/19 has been an unusual year for the Association: elections to the UK Exec, normally carefully staggered, were quite frequent in the first half of the year, with 3 posts naturally vacant, one post new, and two officers finishing their term early. In a move which is (presumably) unprecedented in HELOA history, this means the Exec welcomed six new officers (out of eight) over the course of the year.

This, somewhat inevitably, resulted in two particular outcomes: an awful lot of handover, consolidation, and finding-of-feet, combined with a burst of new energy to pursue initiatives which would deliver a positive impact. A similar reshuffling of Appointed Officer positions has produced a similar impact. The especially positive outcome of this, especially for me as the outgoing Chair, is that the Executive and Committee go into the next year in an incredibly strong and exciting position: a relatively new set of Officers, combining both experience and enthusiasm, and bolstered by an approved Strategy, will no doubt achieve great things long into the future.

Within the year, however, there are a great many achievements to mention, of which I will highlight a few:

- **Groups:** The HELOA Groups have continued to make a strong contribution to the relationship between members and the Association, and there has been active engagement from the Groups in various aspects of HELOA's plans and developments. In a year of personnel change, the Group Chairs in particular have represented a pinnacle of stability, with relatively limited turnover this year compared to significant change since 2017. On that basis, they have been able to contribute a solid body of knowledge and wisdom which has kept the Association firmly on track. The new Vice Chair (Group Development) has continued to interact positively with Group Chairs, as the reports from each of the nine HELOA Groups will demonstrate. In line with the Strategy, new funding has been available this year to enable Groups to further develop their already solid set of training opportunities, and I anticipate this will continue to be a popular area of development in future;
- **Charity:** A postal vote during 2016 secured the necessary endorsement of the membership to proceed with the transfer to charitable status. This has proven to be a large project which has fully engaged the Vice-Chair (Governance and Policy) as well as the UK Chair and the UKC more widely. Disappointingly, despite receiving membership approval for our new, compliant Constitution, it has not yet been possible to file our registration with the Charity Commission. This is due, in large part, to factors beyond our control, in particular ongoing changes in what is needed from us in order to register. However, at the time of writing, it is anticipated that we will shortly be in a position to complete the pre-registration process, and I have every confidence that the Committee will steer this issue to a successful resolution in 2019;
- **Training:** A range of new and improved training events have sought to set the tone for where we are heading under our new Strategy, especially in regards to the manner in which HELOA works with the sector to bring extra benefits to members. This includes a second partnership event in November with the Student Loans Company, and a new Professional Development Conference themed around student ambassadors. In addition, the expansion of the New Practitioners' Conference to twice-yearly has continued to prove valuable, providing invaluable opportunities to welcome dozens of new members into the sector;
- **Money:** Stability in the HELOA office, and provision of new financial systems, has enabled a sharper focus on the terms and conditions under which we spend and make money. The Vice-Chair (Finance) has continued to develop and improve the reporting mechanisms which enable us to recoup potential debts, with additional support this year from two new Appointed Officers, which should further increase stability in this area. This sound basis will support our ability to grow activity in future years;
- **Digital:** The creation of a new post to support communication with our various stakeholders has proven to be incredibly effective, producing a range of benefits, many of which will come into fruition over the next year. In particular, the UK Vice-Chair (Communications) has overseen a revamp of the website, new social media content, and additional articles in the HELOA Digest have been some of the more visible changes;
- **Partnerships:** The UK Vice-Chair (Partnerships) has worked in close partnership with Andrea Bourne (University of York) to continue to develop the work of the HELOA/UCAS Events group throughout 2018, ensuring that HELOA member concerns are actively discussed with relevant staff at UCAS. Earlier in the year, the Association also signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Student Loans Company, setting out our future partnership and delivering a range of new benefits. It is anticipated that more agreements of this kind will come forward in future, as the Association seeks to deepen and broaden its reach across the sector;
- **Representation:** HELOA continues to have prominence and engagement in wider discussions around outreach, widening participation, student recruitment, and admissions. The Association has engaged in membership of the UCAS Secondary Education Advisory Group, as well as taking up a seat on the UCAS Council, an advisory group to the UCAS Board, the SLC Operations Group, and the Pearson Associates Forum. We have already had representation in discussions with the Office for Students, as well as a range of national examination boards.

Conclusion

Following a period of handover, HELOA is in a strong position to achieve great things in 2019. I am confident that the solid foundation outlined in this report, alongside our far-reaching vision and ambition, will ensure the UKC continues to provide the enthusiastic stewardship of the Association, on your behalf, that you would expect. At the time of writing, I have not received the outcome of the vote for my own replacement, but I wish them the absolute best of luck, and am confident they will dive into things with energy and enthusiasm.

Robbie Pickles, UK Chair, January 2019