

HELOA Communications Team Annual Report 2021

The team

The HELOA Communications Team focuses on a variety of key projects, looking to increase member engagement and help members to keep informed on developments across the Association as well as the wider higher education sector. The team are also the gatekeepers of the HELOA brand and look to ensure there is a consistent brand to HELOA internally and externally. Interactions with social media channels are also managed by the Communications Team.

The team has undergone numerous changes in 2021, with all postholders new to their roles since the 2021 AGM. Below is a description of the team and role holders, as well as who they have replaced:

- UK Vice-Chair (Communications) - Andy Cotterill (Keele University) replacing Rebecca Montgomery
- Communications and Marketing Manager - Amy Fairbrother (University of Derby) replacing Andy Cotterill
- Communications and Marketing Manager - Russ Jordan (University of Kent) replacing Mark Hoddell
- Digital Development Manager - Sam Corbett (University College Birmingham) replacing Jacob Brown
- Digital Development Manager - Zhuliyana Boyanova (City, University of London) replacing Chris Nock

HELOA would like to thank Rebecca, Mark, Jacob and Chris for their hard work in their roles over many years of service.

Key activity during 2021

2021 proved to be a challenging year for the team, with the Covid 19 pandemic ongoing. There was a desire for the membership to continue to discover more about ongoing changes to the sector and to keep up to date with developments in HELOA. The team has worked remarkably hard to ensure that communications were sent in a timely but also well thought out manner. Below is a summary of the key activities undertaken by the team.

- **HELOA Digest** - continuing to serve the membership with a range of fortnightly material from across the sector. Analysis of popular topics was also looked at to get a sense of what exactly members were looking for. Other communications have been managed through a content calendar to avoid too much email traffic to the membership.
- **New HELOA Bulletin** - a new design to HELOA's main form of member communication, with shorter and sharper content replacing the more editorial format of the HELOA Digest. Testing has been carried out to see when members engage the most with our content to help inform best send times and when to receive core HELOA messages.
- **HELOA blogs** - the HELOA blog has been increasingly used to bring expertise from across the membership and the wider sector. These have ensured that insights are not merely included in an email but saved where members can access whenever they need it and can also be viewed externally to HELOA, helping to highlight the work of the membership.
- **Refreshed brand** - a new look and feel to HELOA's suite of communications will have been seen. A range of email templates have also been created to ensure a consistent brand is recognised across all the HELOA teams, both internally and externally. Role descriptors have also received a rebrand to help with recruitment to roles.
- **Social media** - HELOA communications continue to be shared via social media channels Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, as well as sharing more content on the HELOA YouTube channel to help make content more accessible to members in the absence of physical training opportunities.
- **HELOA website** - the HELOA website continues to be regularly updated. There have been a number of specific developments, such as embedded forms for training events and new links to documents. More imagery is being used across the website and the document library has been tweaked as well, with regular updates occurring.
- **Conference and AGM materials** - enhanced web presence for both the HELOA AGM and the national conference, alongside the production of printed material for the return to physical events.

Plans for 2022

Building on the success of 2021, the team will continue to review its work and build on strong foundations. As the team grows in experience, more and more ideas are emerging.

First and foremost, the team will continue with the business-as-usual work. On top of this, a full brand refresh will take place with the findings of the last twelve months, building on the existing brand guidelines and expanding them to serve more platforms. From a communications perspective, the team will look to continue to provide members with access to insight from across higher education and share content within and outside of the association to raise its profile and members' work across a range of channels both physical and digital. On the web, the team will work to increase ease of access to documentation and make the website an appealing and easy-to-navigate member resource.

Andy Cotterill

UK Vice-Chair (Communications)

Amy Fairbrother and Russ Jordan

Communications and Marketing Managers

Sam Corbett and Zhuliyana Boyanova

Digital Development Managers

November 2021