



Associate Membership Proposal 2020

For this proposal the term ‘non-publicly funded institution’ is, *‘An institution that does not benefit from public funding, unlike traditional universities that receive government grants for both teaching and research. Some providers are classed as ‘for profit’ whilst other providers are run as charities or classed as not for profit.’* Membership for NPMI members is classed as associate membership and publicly-funded HEIs and FE providers as full members.

Background

The HELOA Constitution and Byelaws state that the following types of university are eligible for HELOA institutional membership: *“Publicly-funded Higher Education Institutions in membership of any one of the UK HE sector’s recognised parent bodies.”* Additional rules govern membership for FE providers. At the HELOA AGM in 2013, and again in 2014, two similar motions were presented seeking to extend this definition to: *“Institutions in membership of any one of the UK HE sector’s recognised parent bodies.”* In brief, these motions (if passed) would have enabled some privately-funded HEIs to become HELOA members. Both motions received significant debate, and failed to pass by relatively narrow margins.

In 2017, the UK Government passed a Higher Education bill, redefining the definition of a university. This bill had a significant impact on the sector including an expansion of private universities in England. There are now different frameworks governing the definition of a university in each of the four UK nations. Following this change in the law, a number of formerly ‘alternative’ providers contacted HELOA seeking further clarification on their position, and requesting a review of the existing position. In light of this, the issue was given further consideration by HELOA and at the 2019 AGM the membership agreed to, *“Mandate the UK Executive and UK Committee to bring forward either a single, or a set of, proposal(s) regarding the full scope of HELOA’s potential membership, giving consideration to the changed funding status for UK universities, and taking into account the different HE systems operating in each UK nation. These proposals should be circulated in 2019, and subject to a membership vote by the 2020 AGM at the latest.”*

In April 2019 HELOA was granted charitable status within England and Wales. The charity commission made the decision to grant charitable status based on the information provided within the application which states that HELOA members are, *'publicly-funded higher education institutions who have Access and Participation Plans in place with the Office for Students.'* However, Clause 9.7.1 of the HELOA constitution allows some flexibility that would provide a mechanism for non-publicly funded institutions to take part in training and development opportunities, *"The charity trustees may by Standing Orders create honorary, associate or other classes of non-voting membership, and may determine the rights and obligations of any such members (including payment of membership fees), and the conditions for admission to, and termination of membership of any such class of members."*

At the 2020 AGM, the membership voted in favour of the creation of an Associate membership for institutions who are not (or part) publicly funded and have commitment to widening participation with an Access and Participation Plan in place with the Office for Students in England, or for providers based within Scotland and Wales can show a clear and demonstrable commitment to widening participation as part of their institutional strategy and operational delivery, and have published figures showing their WP targets and their current progress towards those targets.

Associate membership would allow institutions who meet the criteria, access to HELOA national training events including national conference. Costs of both membership and training events would be determined by the HELOA training team and agreed by the HELOA executive.

Following this, the membership voted to invite the Executive to consider the practicalities around allowing Associate members access to group level activity which this proposal aims to do by providing the necessary information for the membership to make an informed decision.

Aims

The aims of this proposal are to:

1. Consider the practicalities around allowing associate members to access group level activity;
2. Determine the benefits of HELOA membership for associate members, and;
3. Consider the impact of this on full members and the association as a whole.

Research

The research for this proposal focused on two main areas: current membership benefits and research into organisations that have associate membership, or similar.

The first area of research, into the current membership and the benefits it holds, was informed chiefly by the results of the recent membership survey, the HELOA office and the executive committee. This was to ensure that each aspect of our current membership, which are represented by the different executive areas, were fully explored to create a detailed overview.

The second area of research was around other organisations that had levels of membership. Many of these organisations were similar to HELOA in that they were primarily involved in Higher Education, with a similar aim of providing networking and training opportunities for a particular career within the sector. This research was undertaken by the HELOA Office, two volunteering group Vice-Chairs for Memberships and Communication and the UK Vice-Chair for Membership and Administration.

As extensive as the second area of research was, there were aspects of HELOA that did not always align with other organisations and therefore, there had to be more emphasis on the first area of research in these instances. However in most areas, the creation of HELOA's Associate Membership was formed by a combination of these two research areas. An extensive list of the institutions researched can be found at the bottom of this document.

Membership Benefits

This entailed a detailed analysis of our current membership involvement and benefits. For this we looked at each area of provision: communications, finance, group development, governance and policy, partnerships, national training and membership administration. For each of these areas, we also carefully considered the level of involvement of associate members in accordance with the constitution and without causing a disadvantage to full members.

Full Membership	Associate Membership	Rationale	Impact
Fortnightly Digest	Fortnightly Digest	The Digest is one of the most accessible ways of staying up to date with the organisation	All members, including associate members, will be fully up to date with all the latest from HELOA
Access to document library on the HELOA website including policies and HELOA documents	Access to document library on the HELOA website including policies and HELOA documents	Transparency with all members is important to the organisation	All members, including associate members will have the appropriate access to key information about the organisation, should they have any gaps in knowledge
Email updates from the Chair, the office, training team	Email updates from the Chair, the office and training team		All members, including associate members, will be fully up to date with all the latest from HELOA
Receive national election communications	-	Associate Members will not be participating in elections, as they will not have input into the organisation, thusly the communications regarding this is only required for full members	No impact on current membership
Run for national election positions	-	Associate Membership will have no influence on the organisation	Members are assured all elected positions are filled by full members
Members only Facebook group	Members only Facebook group	The members only Facebook group is great for asking questions and information sharing	Scope to broaden discussions and share best practice with a wider audience
Access to HELOA material on social media - Twitter, YouTube & Linked In	Access to HELOA material on social media - Twitter, YouTube & Linked In	These platforms are great sources of information sharing. These are also public and already readily available.	Scope to broaden discussions and share best practice with a wider audience
Access to the HELOA Blog	Access to the HELOA Blog	This is a great tool for sharing best practice, full and associate members will contribute and receive alike.	Share insight and best practice with a wider audience

Full Membership	Associate Membership	Rationale	Impact
Access to HELOA Slack channels	Access to HELOA Slack channels	Slack channels are great for asking questions and information sharing	Scope to broaden discussions and share best practice with a wider audience
Institutional logo and link on the HELOA members' pages on the website	Institutional logo and link on the HELOA members' pages on the website	Clarity and transparency within the organisation around who makes up our membership body	Increased administration for comms team
Attend group meetings	Attend group meetings	Our research indicates that attendance at regional or group level meetings and training is a common theme throughout a lot of organisations. The recent membership survey also indicates that group training and meeting are a great way to share best practice and network.	Currently well attended, limited capacity, may restrict venue choice, may require increase in events. Scope to broaden discussions and share best practice with a wider audience.
Attend group training events (at no additional charge)	Attend group training events (at no additional charge)		
Attend national training events - New Practitioner's Conference, professional Development Conference and National Conference (additional charges apply)	Attend national training events - New Practitioner's Conference, Professional Development Conference and National Conference (additional charges apply) <i>Associate membership attendance capped at 10% of capacity</i>	Research indicates that across the board, associate members are allowed to attend such events, but often the number of how many can attend is capped.	Currently well attended, limited capacity, may restrict venue choice, may require increase in events. Scope to broaden discussions and share best practice with a wider audience.
Attend member-only webinars	Attend member-only webinars		
Access to partner and sponsored sessions	Access to partner and sponsored sessions		

Full Membership	Associate Membership	Rationale	Impact
Enter HELOA national awards	Enter HELOA national awards	The awards are to recognise and reward best practice and this recognition allows members exposure to best practice	More competition for HELOA awards
-	Elected NPMI Representative to work with UK VC (Mem & Admin)	This elected person would not be a trustee, but would be the representative for all associate members, supporting the VC (Mem & Admin)	Considerations from a sector perspective from all HEIs
Appoint a primary contact for the institution	Appoint a primary contact for the institution	Important to have an assigned member of staff who HELOA can contact, especially regarding renewals and memberships	Possible administration increase for HELOA Office
Can run for elected group positions	-	Associate members will not have input into the association and so will be unable to take elected positions. This is also in line with the information available from other associations in the research undertaken	Members know that whoever is elected into a position of influence in their group is a full HELOA member with rights to all elements of the organisation
Can vote on group level elections	-	Associate members will not have input into the association and so will be unable to vote on elections This is also in line with the information available from other associations in the research undertaken	Separate Jiscmails will be needed, as associate members will not receive these communications, thus an increase in group admin work.
Receive communications regarding constitutional and standing order changes	Receive communications regarding constitutional and standing order changes	Transparency across the organisation so that all members are given the opportunity to be sufficiently knowledgeable of the organisation	When interacting with each other at events, training and meetings, all members will have access to the most up to date changes within the organisation

Full Membership	Associate Membership	Rationale	Impact
Attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association	VC Memberships and Admin to work with NPMI Representative to highlight where there may be significant impact for NPMIs	No direct influence on direction and conversation of AGM but awareness of changes and considerations taken by UKC	Considerations from a sector perspective from all HEIs
Primary contacts of full member institutions hold a vote at AGM	-	Associate members and their institutions will not have input into the organisation and therefore their primary contacts will be unable to hold a vote	An understanding that any votes at AGM are taken from solely full membership institutions
Presence on UCAS working group/member feedback groups	Elected Associate Membership Representative will have the opportunity to work with these groups	The role of the elected Associate Membership Representative will be to have a presence on behalf of all associate members	On these working groups there is a perspective from all HEIs
Receive new membership welcome details	Receive new membership welcome details	All membership types are aware from the start of their membership details have access to necessary sources	Increased administration for the HELOA office
Flat rate for membership	Flat rate for membership	Full members have input into the organisation whereas associate members will not. Other organisations that have levels of membership either charge these members less as they have access to less, or give associate members the opportunity to pay more to become full members, which does not match up with HELOA's model. We feel given the nature of our associate membership and the level of access they have, paying a flat rate is suitable.	This will provide additional financial support into HELOA which will be used to continually improve the organisation or the training opportunities it can offer

Impact

As highlighted by the above table, the creation of associate membership will have an impact on current membership. There are recurring themes of impact throughout the aforementioned table; Firstly, there will be increased administrative duties for the HELOA Office as there are more memberships to process and more enquiries to deal with.

Further to this, increased numbers in membership may lead to restrictions in suitable venues for events and training. However, increased membership will bring more financial support into the organisation, which will help with locating suitable venues for national and group events.

It should be pointed out however, that regardless of the outcome of this proposal, a review into the core membership costs will still be taking place. Should the vote of this proposal be for the creation of associate membership, the increased administration and subsequent costs will be offset by the increased income from associate membership fees.

Additionally, in regards to group level events, associate membership will mean there are more institutions able to host such events. Finally, associate membership will add a wealth of ideas and knowledge to our current membership body. HELOA aims to help students make informed decisions and the creation of associate membership will allow our members to inform students even further.

Next Steps

Now that we have conducted research and created this proposal, the next steps are to take this to a vote at the Annual General Meeting in January 2021. The outcome of this vote would then dictate the direction of subsequent work. An update to standing orders would be needed, including:

- Collating the criteria for associate membership;
- Compiling the governing termination of associate membership and;
- Compiling details regarding governing election of the Associate Membership Representative, once the role descriptor has been compiled.

NPFIs would then need to be informed of the opportunity for them to become associate members and the subsequent election of an Associate Membership Representative.

Organisations Researched

AMOSSHE	The Student Services Organisation	professional membership association for leaders of Student Services in UK higher education.	https://www.amoshe.org.uk/
ACGAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services	expert membership organisation for higher education student career development and graduate employment professionals.	https://www.agcas.org.uk/
AHUA	The Association of Heads of University Administration	the representative body for senior University managers in the United Kingdom and Ireland, with Associate Members in other countries	https://www.ahua.ac.uk/
AUDE	Association of University Directors of Estates	promotes excellence in the strategic planning, management, operation and development of Higher Education estates and facilities.	https://www.aude.ac.uk/
EUPRIO	European Association of Communication Professionals in Higher Education	the association of European Universities Public Relations and Information Officers, now renamed as European Association of Communication Professionals in Higher Education.	https://www.euprio.eu/
NEON	National Education Opportunities Network	professional organisation supporting those involved in widening access to higher education	https://www.educationopportunities.co.uk/
SEDA	Staff and Educational Development Association	professional association for staff and educational developers in the UK, promoting innovation and good practice in higher education.	https://www.seda.ac.uk/
UKCGE	UK Council for Graduate Education	national representative body for postgraduate education and research.	http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/#
UALL	Universities Association for Lifelong Learning	supports all aspects of the diverse engagement of universities and higher education providers with their wider communities.	https://www.uall.ac.uk/

UCISA	Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association	member-led professional body for digital practitioners in education	https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/
Chatham House	The Royal Institute of International Affairs	helps people, societies and governments understand and adapt to seismic change.	https://www.chathamhouse.org/
RIBA	The Royal Institute of British Architects	deliver better buildings and places, stronger communities and a sustainable environment	https://www.architecture.com/