



HIGHER EDUCATION LIAISON OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

UCAS Higher Education Conventions

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HELOA is the professional association of staff in higher education who work in the field of education liaison, providing guidance and information to prospective higher education students, their families and advisors. Established in 1990, the Association has approximately 900 members from 135 higher education institutions across the UK. Our members work in a wide range of functions within universities, covering schools and colleges liaison, student recruitment, widening participation, external relations, marketing, publications and publicity, and student services. What binds the membership together is our commitment to encouraging high standards of professionalism amongst our members. Our members are spread across all stages of university careers, including graduate-entry Officers and Assistants, to Heads of department and Directors. HELOA members are actively in contact with prospective students on a daily basis, working with students from primary school to sixth form, and prospective students within the community and business/industry.

HELOA supports the provision of UCAS Higher Education Conventions as an essential opportunity for prospective students to access free, impartial and well-informed information, advice and guidance from university representatives. HELOA members commit to being able to provide a broad range of information about the opportunities available within higher education, and recognise that UCAS Higher Education Conventions play a key role in widening participation to university.

HELOA recognises that commercial organisations are able to attend UCAS Higher Education Conventions, but do not support spaces being allocated to commercial organisations at the expense of educational institutions. UCAS Higher Education Conventions should not be organised with the intention of profit-making, but should instead focus on providing opportunities for students to access the essential information they need to make choices about their educational future.

Principles: UCAS Higher Education Conventions

1. UCAS fairs are organised and provided by UCAS and universities across the UK, with the purpose of providing prospective students with the opportunity to access information, advice and guidance about higher education.
2. The focus of UCAS fairs should be on the provision of information about higher education. Commercial organisations and/or organisations representing areas other than higher education, should have limited access to UCAS fairs. Higher education institutions should be given priority for space at UCAS fairs.
3. The UCAS subscription for higher education institutions to attend UCAS fairs should reflect the cost of organising the fairs. HELOA believes that the primary purpose of UCAS fairs should be to provide access for students to information, advice and guidance, and income-generation from subscription-paying institutions should be a secondary consideration.
4. Marketing and advertising opportunities within the UCAS fairs, where available, should be offered to all higher education institutions participating in the UCAS fairs. Advertising should not be intrusive.
5. All schools/colleges within the local area of a UCAS HEC should be encouraged to attend. UCAS fairs are an essential opportunity for widening participation to university. HELOA members believe that students should have the opportunity to learn about their HE options.
6. UCAS fairs are an essential opportunity for face-to-face engagement between students and universities. Students should have access to a range of information about university.
7. UCAS fairs should be available to students across the UK, regardless of whether they live in a large city or town, or in a rural village. HELOA strongly supports the continued availability of UCAS fairs in areas of low

population density as some students will have no other opportunity to communicate face-to-face with universities.

8. All university representatives attending UCAS fairs should be able to answer a wide range of questions about their university. Areas include: course information, entry requirements, fees and financial support, the student experience, employability, opportunities for working whilst studying.

9. Students providing contact information to universities should have the opportunity to opt-out of receiving information.

10. HELOA members, both individual and institutional, should seek to provide potential applicants, their parents and advisors with the best possible information, advice and guidance to assist them in making the most appropriate decisions for their future. Members should seek to recognise the role that they play in dispelling myths about higher education which exist in the public domain.

11. In advising potential applicants, HELOA members shall ensure that they do not provide information or advice that is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date.

12. HELOA members should ensure that they do not say or do anything that might be construed as negative towards, or biased against, other institutions or courses.

13. HELOA members should ensure that all institutional representatives, whether or not they are HELOA members, are aware of the existence and contents of the HELOA Good Practice Guidelines.

14. HELOA members should seek to keep themselves fully up to date with developments in Higher Education and related sectors and pass this information to students, their parents and advisors, where relevant.

15. HELOA members should be able to effectively signpost potential students to authoritative sources of information and guidance if they themselves are unable to assist with questions or queries.

16. HELOA members and their institutions should aim to only attend UK events and conventions that visitors may attend free of charge, and where the cost to institutions is not prohibitive or exclusive.