

## AGM 2025 Minutes

Wednesday 29th January 2025, 09:30 – 12:30

Online via Zoom

### 1. Welcome and Introduction - Reena Littlehailes (RL), UK Chair

The meeting opened at 09:30 and members were welcomed to the HELOA 2025 AGM.

#### Voting

Primary Contacts and nominated proxies were eligible to vote which was conducted via the Mi-Voice voting platform. The Association has 144 full member institutions and requires one third (48) of primary contacts/ appointed proxies to be quorate. 74 Primary contacts or their appointed proxies were present at the start of the meeting so the meeting could continue. All decisions were taken by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting. In the event of an equality of votes, the chair would either call for another vote or exercise their casting vote.

#### Motions

Each item would be introduced followed by an opportunity to ask questions or make comments by raising a hand or through the chat function and a proposer and seconder would be sought before bringing it to a vote. Those proposing, seconding, or commenting were asked to provide their full name and institution, to be recorded in the minutes. For proposed amendments to the original proposal, a proposer and seconder would be sought. The amendment would be voted on before returning to a vote on the original proposal, which may have included the amendment or if it was changed significantly, there may have been no need to return to it.

#### Non-member attendees

Dawn McClintock, HELOA Office Manager and Louise Povey, HELOA Office Assistant representing the HELOA office and Matt MacDonald from Mi-Voice supporting the voting process.

### 2. Apologies for Absence - Alexandra Whitham (AW), UK VC (Membership & Administration)

The Vice-Chair (Membership and Administration) Alexandra Whitham, Manchester Metropolitan University, received six formal apologies from member institutions who were unable to have a representative attend the meeting. The apologies will be circulated following the meeting.

### 3. Minutes of the AGM, 24th January 2024 - Reena Littlehailes (RL), UK Chair

The Chair asked for comments, questions or amendments to the 2024 AGM Minutes. No comments or questions were received.

<b>Proposer</b>	Andrew Cooper, University of Liverpool
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<b>Secunder</b>	Hannah McEvoy, University of Chester
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The Chair invited the meeting to adopt the 2024 minutes as a true and accurate record. The minutes of the 2024 AGM were accepted as an accurate record - For: 80, Against: 0, Abstain: 3.

#### 4. Reports

##### 4.1 UK Committee Report - Reena Littlehales (RL), UK Chair

###### UKC Committee

HELOA has over 30 volunteers so there are often opportunities for people to join the committee. Last year we had four UK committee meetings, two virtual and two in-person, and 12 executive meetings. One of the key discussions was around reviewing the UK committee structure. HELOA is celebrating its 35th year, and the sector has evolved significantly since 1990, along with members' roles and needs. A review of the UK committee structure is underway to ensure it aligns with these changes. However, further discussions are needed, so no proposal was presented at today's meeting. The aim is to share a revised structure with members later this year.

###### Sector Challenges

The sector is facing challenges, which has also been evident within HELOA. There has been a reduction in areas, but efforts are being made to ensure that members remain represented and stay informed about projects and goals through group meetings and communication channels.

###### Sustainability

HELOA's mission is to help students make informed choices, and part of this focus is on sustainability. This includes addressing issues like climate change, reducing waste, and running an efficient organisation. Additionally, there is an emphasis on ensuring the long-term sustainability of HELOA so it can continue to operate for years to come.

###### External Representations

The UK Chair sits on the UCAS council to represent HELOA's views providing input on the free school meals waiver, apprenticeship applications on the UCAS platform, predicted grades project and the UCAS 2025 Strategy. The Chair also met with Ofqual, Unifrog and The Brilliant Club.

###### Thanks

Thanks to our members who get involved in much of the work that HELOA does across the sector and thank you to the volunteers who give up their time, which has a significant impact on the work we do. Thanks also to the office team.

##### 4.2 Partnerships Report - Raffaella Cuccia (RC), UK VC (Partnerships)

###### UCAS

The UCAS Events Working Group and Product Development Group managed by partnerships meet regularly throughout the year, with representation from each group via the new Vice-Chair Partnerships roles. It's through the groups that we take feedback from our members to UCAS. We have run two successful Train the Trainer sessions, engaging over 300 members.

###### FindAUniversity

The partnerships team continue to work closely with FindAUniversity to share insights and have included updates in the Bulletin. A member of the UK Committee has been invited to attend their training days that run twice per year. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been reviewed and signed.

### **Student Loans Company (SLC)**

Continued to work with SLC and share their updates and insights. They delivered a session at National Conference with Edge Hill University focusing on finance and funding for postgraduate, masters and doctoral students.

### **The Student Room**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was re-signed with The Student Room in March. They provide monthly student insights for HELOA Bulletins and have supported HELOA events such as National Conference, the Professional Development Conference and an online South West HELOA group meeting.

### **Supporters**

Supporters of HELOA are UniTasterDays, Zero Gravity, Save the Student and IDP and HELOA has signed a new supporter agreement with The Brilliant Club following members' feedback to increase partners linked to the widening participation agenda. Supporters delivered sessions at National Conference, including a keynote and supported the awards. The UK Vice-Chair (Partnerships) sits on the advisory board for IDP and attends their meetings.

### **Commercial Partners**

Commercial partners/sponsors of the 2025 National Conference include: Blackbullion, Campus XR, Datafiltr, Gecko, Pathways, Prospectus+, RAD Brothers, SMRS, Student CRM, UK University Search, Unifrog and Unibuddy. These partners provide financial support, insight and services that benefit our members. Unifrog will sponsor the February Professional Development Conference on the theme of collaboration and will be delivering a workshop session.

### **Thanks**

Thanks to the partnership team for their continued hard work and support, especially in preparation, during and post conference as RL mentioned it is a difficult year and we are constantly asked to do more with less in our day jobs so, volunteering their time is very much appreciated.

## **4.3 Group Development Report - Andrew Jackson (AJ), UK VC (Group Development)**

### **Groups**

The focus in group development has been on supporting the Group Chairs, ensuring they have the resources and understanding needed for their roles. Efforts have also been made to implement the revised group committee structures approved at last year's AGM. Stronger relationships have been built with the training and partnerships teams to better support Vice-Chairs and integrate them into national activities.

### **Elections**

There has been a significant amount of election work, as more is being asked with fewer resources. This has impacted people's ability to stand for or continue in roles, but there's been a push to highlight the benefits and skills gained from being on group committees.

### Awards

The group development team took responsibility for the 2025 National Conference awards, increasing the number of awards offered and adjusting categories to reflect feedback. Collaboration with the partnerships team helped secure sponsors and organise a successful awards ceremony.

### Thanks

Thank you was extended to Group Chairs and those who have stepped down, and to the Vice-Chairs who support and ensure the smooth running of groups across the UK.

**RL** - As AJ steps down from his role, I'd like to thank AJ for his contribution over the past five years. It's been fantastic to have his ideas, insight and opinions on the Association.

**Ali Clark**, University of Stirling (Chat) - Disappointing to not see Group Chair reports as it was good for wider members to see best practice across the regions.

**Caitlin Pedder**, University of Westminster (Chat) - Would have been good to see the Group Chair reports!

**Claire Forsman**, The University of Edinburgh - Agree, it would be good to see the group reports - lots happening across the UK.

**AJ** (Chat) - Group level reports were discontinued after AGM 2022 and have not been prepared since this date, as much of the information is available through the website or other channels. The Group Chairs meet regularly to share best practice and update on activities taking place.

**Jonathan Leeds**, Beckett University (Chat) - AJ, I wonder if there could be a middle ground perhaps group highlights in your report or something?

**Ali Clark**, University of Stirling (Chat) - Good idea Jonathan. Great to see Wales had their conference but would also be good to see what they are doing in Anglia, West Midlands, etc - key highlights as you say.

**Caitlin Pedder**, University of Westminster (Chat) - Love it - they were lengthy but if we could see snapshots, it'd be lovely. We hear about our own groups but would love to connect and celebrate what the other regions are up to as well.

**RL** - The group level reports were discontinued from AGM 2022. The last group level report, in 2021, was 40 pages long and received feedback that it was too lengthy and inaccessible for members to read. Following feedback today, we can have discussions around finding the middle ground and will try to implement this. On the membership survey, members will be asked for their thoughts on the format and content of future reports, keeping in mind the volunteer workload involved in preparing them. This feedback will help ensure the reports are more relevant and manageable for everyone involved.

## 4.4 Communications Report - Hannah Goodwin (HG), UK VC (Communications)

### Communication Guidelines

We improved our internal briefing process and established updated content guidelines to ensure that our communications are on brand and they're relevant to members.

**Social Media**

Social media engagement has seen a significant increase across all channels. On LinkedIn, the follower count rose by 45%, with further growth following National Conference, helping raise awareness of HELOA's activities both internally and externally.

Instagram usage has been focused on increasing video content and gathering member feedback at events. At conferences, the communications team has been capturing live feedback, which has proven valuable for showcasing how members appreciate HELOA's training events.

The Facebook group continues to be an important space, with 32% of HELOA members actively participating throughout the year. Members use the group to ask questions, share best practice and connect with each other.

HELOA has decided to phase out the use of X (formerly Twitter), in line with broader sector trends but are keeping an eye on future developments and will make adjustments as needed.

**Plans for 2025**

**Email Communications** - Plan to review email communications, acknowledging that members receive many emails. The goal is to analyse the performance of the bulletin, improve its design, and ensure the content aligns with what members want to receive. This is aimed at increasing member engagement with communications.

**Brand identity** - Additionally, there's a focus on refining the brand identity, ensuring that communications from different areas of HELOA (whether from groups, the office, or the comms team) are easily identifiable to members. The aim is for members to clearly understand where the communication is coming from and why it's being sent to them.

**Content Strategy** - The content strategy aims to expand social media content by spotlighting best practices across the sector. Members are encouraged to engage and contribute, as some of the best content comes from members sharing their experiences and learning from each other. If anyone is interested in writing a blog or creating a video, they are invited to contact the comms team.

**Website Accessibility Audit** - A full website accessibility audit will be conducted this year to allow for further web development and to ensure we have a lasting, high-quality website that not only reflects us as an organisation, but also is user friendly and offers a good user experience for members and partners.

**Thanks**

Thanks to the current and past digital comms managers Niamh Gallagher, Lauren Storey, Michael Long, Adam Blackmore, Andrew Smith, Charlotte Coleman, Millie Brown, Charlotte Thomas and Michelle Terrell.

**Lucy McDonagh**, University of Winchester - Are you considering moving from X to Blue Sky?

**HG** - We haven't explored joining Blue Sky but will monitor universities and other sector partners using the platform and explore it if there's a valuable opportunity for engagement.

**4.5 Membership and Administration Report - Alexandra Whitham (AW), UK VC (Membership & Administration)****Membership**

There has been a slight decrease in individual membership numbers, though HELOA has gained one new institutional member. It appears that while institutions are renewing their memberships, fewer individual memberships are being renewed. This drop is expected, especially given the current state of the sector and budget cuts, along with the membership fee increase at the last AGM. It's something HELOA is closely monitoring, as it may impact the association's future risks, but the decrease is relatively small.

**Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

HELOA will be evaluating the success of this online AGM, which is the third time it has been held overall and the second time it has been decoupled from National Conference. Following the meeting, the success criteria will be reviewed, and decisions will be made about the format.

**Associate Member Representative**

There has been a change in the Associate Member Representative, with a big thank you to Chloe Sinclair, who worked hard to create engagement opportunities for associate members. Welcome to James Kerr, University of Buckingham as the new representative. James has previous experience at the group level within HELOA, so he is already familiar with the charity's aims. This year, we will be examining the role of associate members within the association and exploring how to shape their involvement.

**Membership Survey**

HELOA will soon be sharing the membership survey, which is a valuable opportunity for members to provide feedback on what works well, what doesn't, and what they'd like to see from the association. This feedback is crucial as HELOA is a member-led association, and aims to implement changes that align with members' needs.

**Jonathan Holland**, Leeds Beckett University - Are you concerned about the drop in membership looking at the report, it seems to be a bit of a trend?

**AW** - While it would be ideal for membership levels to grow year on year, the current situation reflects the challenges both individuals and institutions are facing in the sector and with the recent membership fee increase, the decrease is not unexpected. However, HELOA is closely monitoring the situation and has raised the risk level internally to track membership trends.

**RL** - HELOA typically sees a slight drop in membership numbers around the renewal period in August and September. However, as the year progresses, membership numbers tend to increase and by the start of the next renewal cycle in July, membership is often up by about 100 members as teams grow and other changes occur.

**Jonathan Holland**, Leeds Beckett University - Or is it just the result of smaller teams rather than the relevance of HELOA and the offer?

**AW** - The membership survey will provide insight into membership and team structure and includes questions about whether all team members have the opportunity to be HELOA members, or if membership is split among different team members. The aim is to better understand how the membership system is working and identify areas for improvement.

**Natalie Johnston**, University of Salford - Is there any detail around the type of institutions that are reducing membership (size/ type of institution)?

**AW** - The feedback from the membership survey will provide insight into which types of institutions and teams are renewing their memberships, providing a clearer picture and supporting future decisions regarding membership engagement and retention.

**RL** - We have not yet conducted a detailed analysis of the types of institutions that have seen membership changes. However, the office team put together a report that compared trends and found that the overall drop in membership was small decreases from various institutions. We could investigate this once more data is gathered from the membership survey.

#### 4.6 Governance & Policy Report - Amy Slater-McGill (ASM), UK VC (Governance & Policy)

##### Charity Status

The annual reports for both the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the Charity Commission for England and Wales, have been submitted so we continue to be a charity. Following HELOA's registration of intention to the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland in 2020, we're still waiting for an invitation to progress with the application. For now, HELOA remains as a sector 167 organisation in Northern Ireland so can still operate there for charitable purposes.

##### Elections

Over the past 12 months, HELOA held three national elections for the roles of UK Vice-Chair (Finance), UK Vice-Chair (Group Development), and UK Vice-Chair (Membership and Administration). It is important to review nomination and election information to consider running for a position and for voting opportunities.

##### Policies

During the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the decision was made to decouple AGM from the HELOA National Conference. Quorum and online delivery success measures were met for AGM 2024, so this format has been continued for AGM 2025.

The Risk Register is an internal HELOA document used for both risk assessment and risk mitigation, ensuring the charity continues to represent its values and mission. This register has recently been updated. As highlighted in the annual reports and updates from each member of the executive team, HELOA strives to provide quality engagement and development opportunities for members while maintaining compliance with governance and financial regulations.

The Executive team are reviewing the HELOA Constitution and HELOA Standing Orders, to ensure clarity and update discrepancies if required.

##### Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Following the EDI consultancy period and report, the Executive team and UK Committee are continuously reviewing and developing policies, role descriptors, and election/appointment processes. This includes evaluating current practices around the physical and digital inclusivity of HELOA events, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity. These efforts will continue throughout 2025 as part of achieving the objectives outlined in HELOA's strategy. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

(EDI) is considered an embedded responsibility across all committee roles, ensuring it remains a central focus in everything HELOA does.

Members are encouraged to share their ideas and feedback on best EDI practices within the association. Speak with your Group Chair or email governance with input. This ongoing dialogue is vital to ensure that EDI remains a strong focus within HELOA.

**Kev Betts**, University of Sussex - Have those EDI policies and changes been published and shared?

**ASM** - The updated policies will be re-published on the website and announced in the Bulletin.

#### 4.7 Training Report - Emily Day (ED), UK VC (Training)

The success of the training events is not solely the responsibility of the training team but is a collaborative effort across the association. This approach has maintained the high quality of training events offered, as evidenced by the positive feedback from members. Feedback is taken into consideration where possible to meet the diverse needs of the membership.

#### **Continued Professional Development (CPD)**

HELOA has successfully continued offering CPD accreditation for various events in 2024, including the New Practitioners' Conferences and the four Professional Development Conferences. Additionally, five of the group meetings held last year were also CPD accredited. This is an initiative that HELOA hopes to maintain and expand in 2025, providing valuable development opportunities for members.

#### **Speakers**

HELOA is committed to increasing the diversity and varied backgrounds of speakers at its events. This effort will continue moving forward. Members are encouraged to share ideas for sessions or recommend colleagues. Anyone interested, please complete the Expression of Interest Form or reach out to committee members for information. We can talk through the process and there is content from the comms team providing insights into what it's like to speak at conferences, which can help ease concerns.

#### **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

We are committed to continuing to build EDI recommendations into conferences. Extended thanks to the comms team for their work in adapting and embedding these recommendations into the structure of events. The training team plans to take successful EDI practices from National Conference and incorporate them into New Practitioners' Conferences (NPC) and gradually apply them to other events throughout the year.

#### **Team**

There will soon be a vacancy in the training team for a Conference Manager. If you are interested in the role please contact training. Thanks to the past and current Conference Managers and in particular Jonas Rae who did 5 and a half years on the team.

**RL** - There have been valuable comments regarding EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) over the past year, and HELOA is working hard on this area, even though much of the effort takes place behind the scenes. At National Conference, comments were made about the representation of speakers. While HELOA volunteers have worked diligently to secure a variety of speakers from across the sector, it is challenging due to the sector's current representation. EDI isn't limited to visible aspects like ethnicity but also includes other forms such as hidden disabilities, which may not always be immediately apparent. Members are encouraged to consider all forms of EDI when evaluating representation at events and are urged to engage in conversations about roles within HELOA. Roles may seem daunting but they are rewarding and provide opportunities for learning and personal development.

**Natalie Johnston**, University of Salford - The comments made regarding the diversity of the panel at conference were cleared up at conference. However, given the drop in conference bookings, has this been considered as a possible factor? Thank you, ED, I know how much work goes into this and also the reality of who has done the job does dictate who is on the panel.

**ED** - The drop in National Conference bookings may be due to CPD budget cuts rather than the panel lineup. The panel consisted of past HELOA Chairs, with some originally confirmed members unable to attend due to personal circumstances. While panellists' views are their own, feedback on speakers and sessions is welcome for future planning. Suggestions for keynote speakers are especially encouraged, as finding someone suitable for HELOA's diverse membership is a challenge.

**Ellie Lloyd-Davies**, Manchester Metropolitan University - Group Chairs contacted primary contacts about bookings, but cost was the primary concern raised and the programme wasn't mentioned. Members are encouraged to share their conference preferences with their Group Chair for future planning.

**Rowan Cruickshank**, University of Aberdeen - I know it's difficult but if there is any way to consider the cost of the National Conference as I'm sure all our budgets are getting smaller.

**ED** - Budget constraints are affecting conference attendance, although our conferences remain among the most affordable. HELOA makes no profit on events and sometimes anticipates losses, offset by sponsorship. Venue costs and contracts are key challenges, with 2025 and 2026 bookings made in 2021 at lower prices than those expected for 2027. Members are encouraged to read the blog post from summer 2024, which details these challenges and the factors influencing costs, and suggest potential venues for 2027.

<b>Proposer</b>	Brad Eeley, University of Chester
<b>Seconder</b>	Jane Rae Ross, University of West London

The meeting was invited to adopt the reports of the UK Committee and UK groups as one. The reports were approved - For: 82, Against: 2, Abstain: 1.

**5. Election and Appointment of Officer Posts** - Amy Slater-McGill (ASMc), UK VC (Governance & Policy)

**5.1 Elected Officers and 5.2 Appointed Officers**

The elected and appointed officer's report was shared with the meeting.

<b>Proposer</b>	Andy Long, Keele University
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<b>Seconder</b>	Christine Todd, University of Liverpool
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The meeting was invited to adopt the elected and appointed officers of the association. The officers were approved - For: 79, Against: 1, Abstain: 0.

### 6. HELOA Office Report - Reena Littlehales (RL), UK Chair

#### Office Provision

The HELOA Office, based at Edge Hill University, consists of paid staff who manage logistical support for the association. Their responsibilities have evolved over time to meet membership needs, including processing memberships, managing enquiries, ensuring GDPR compliance, and supporting events and internal meetings. Since the 2024 AGM, their roles expanded to include managing invoicing and remuneration processes.

#### Regional Representation

Following a vote at the previous AGM, regional representatives can now run for group committee roles, allowing them to support HELOA more actively. Systems were implemented to ensure regional members can engage in their main HELOA group and a regional group, leading to the first elected regional representative in the London Group.

#### Banking and Charity Compliance

HELOA transitioned its bank account to an association account to align with its legal status as a charity. This required extensive coordination with Barclays, verification of trustee details, and compliance with the Charity Commission. This process was successfully completed.

#### Sustainability Initiatives

HELOA has integrated sustainability into its strategic plan, responding to increasing institutional demands for environmental impact reporting. Key efforts include reducing merchandise, sourcing eco-friendly materials, minimising printing and laminating, and prioritising digital alternatives. Future plans focus on travel sustainability and creating a clear sustainability action plan.

#### Office Hours

A review of the office responsibilities were conducted to assess workload and reduce risks for volunteers, ensuring the association's continued operation. Following this, the HELOA Office will transition from part-time to two full-time paid staff members. This change will be implemented in the coming months and was reflected in the financial report.

**Keir Robinson**, The University of Edinburgh (Chat) - I just wanted to extend my thanks to the office! Always done with a smile :)

<b>Proposer</b>	Rebecca Heaton, Northumbria University
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<b>Seconder</b>	Chris Mullen, Edge Hill University
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The meeting was invited to approve the report of the HELOA office. The report was approved - For: 77, Against: 2, Abstain: 0.

## 7. Officer Report and Financial Proposals - Fiona Curry (FC) UK VC (Finance)

### Financial Stability

HELOA's main income sources are membership fees from institutions, training events and sponsorships, primarily for National Conference. Key expenditures include group and training event costs, HELOA Office operations at Edge Hill, website maintenance, Mailchimp communications and marketing.

A key responsibility for trustees and the executive team is managing the risk register to ensure HELOA operates within its means and remains financially sustainable. Collaborated closely with the executive team, and in particular ED, to forecast booking trends.

Despite sector-wide Continued Professional Development (CPD) budget cuts, HELOA's institutional membership numbers have remained stable, even after a membership fee increase last year, the first in eight years to account for inflation. This indicates that institutions still see value in HELOA, even if budget constraints impact event bookings. Additionally, partnership income for the National Conference has remained consistent with previous years, aligning with budget forecasts.

Over the past three years, HELOA has navigated significant financial shifts - from post-pandemic recovery and reinvesting surplus funds into members, to current sector-wide budget constraints impacting CPD funding. Despite these challenges, the organisation remains financially stable.

### Future Challenges and Event Sustainability

HELOA faces tough decisions regarding the future of training events, including attendance expectations and financial viability. The Professional Development and New Practitioner Conferences historically covered their costs and generated a small surplus, which was reinvested into group meetings and operations. National Conference has always run at a loss, subsidised by sponsorships and partnerships, meaning members pay less than the actual event cost. However, given rising costs, National Conference fees cannot be reduced and are likely to increase in line with inflation. HELOA can no longer afford to run National Conference at a loss. While sponsorship and partnership income has remained stable, there is a financial risk if these sources decline or attendance numbers continue to drop. Decisions will need to be made regarding the future structure of training events and how they are funded to ensure long-term sustainability.

### Committee Structure

HELOA is reviewing the size and structure of its committee to ensure efficiency and financial sustainability. Budget reductions for the in-person UK committee meetings have been successfully managed, keeping spending within limits. Upcoming discussions in February will focus on the committee's structure and future financial strategies. Thanks to the UK Committee and volunteers for helping maintain a strong financial position.

### UK Vice-Chair (Finance) Role

Three years as VC (Finance) has provided valuable leadership and financial management skills. Members are encouraged to consider the role, as there is ongoing support from the UK committee, office and auditor. It provides a great CPD opportunity in leadership and managing budgets which can be applied to work at your institutions. HELOA is a supportive community where volunteers lean on each other.

### Thanks

A heartfelt thank you to Sarah Parkins and the UK committee members who contributed to making the time in the role meaningful and impactful. Thanks also to Dawn and Louise for their dedication, passion, and calm presence. Their support has been invaluable to volunteers, providing stability and reassurance.

### 7.1 Completed Accounts for the 2024/2025 Financial Year

Accounts were shared with the AGM reports.

### 7.2 Membership costs for 2025/26

Annual membership fees will now rise in line with inflation, ensuring gradual and manageable adjustments which prevent sudden large increases in the future, maintaining financial stability.

### 7.3 Proposed Budget for 2025/26

The budget was shared with the AGM reports.

**Caitlin Pedder**, University of Westminster (Chat) - Thank you for keeping the purse so well Fiona!

**RL** - A huge thank you to FC for her incredible dedication and contributions over the past five years. From starting in the partnerships team during the pandemic to serving as Vice-Chair (Finance), showing remarkable diligence, insight, and commitment. Her work has strengthened HELOA's financial position, and she leaves the role in a strong place for her successor. Her passion and efforts have made a lasting impact - thank you, Fiona!

**Sarah Booth**, University of Warwick (Chat) - Just to echo your thoughts, RL. Fiona - a fabulous job on the Finance. It's not always the most exciting role, but you've made it accessible and engaging. Thank you!

### 7.4 Proposed Auditor

Bick Accountants will continue as our auditor for next year.

<b>Proposer</b>	Dan Williams, University of Kent
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<b>Seconder</b>	Caitlin Pedder, University of Westminster
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The meeting was invited to adopt the financial reports of the association. The reports were accepted - For: 83, Against: 1, Abstain: 0.

### 8. Honorary Membership - Alexandra Whitham (AW), UK VC (Membership & Administration)

Honorary membership is for individuals who are no longer represented by institutional membership of the Association and are unlikely to be in the future, and therefore cannot be considered for HELOA membership, but have previously served to support the Association in achieving its aims and objectives.

The following two nominations for honorary membership were received:

1. Jonny Atkinson White nominated by Andrew Cooper, University of Liverpool

Andrew has described Jonny as the definition of HELOA. He passionately believes in supporting students through informed decisions and has supported members to enable them to best support students as both the North West and Northern Ireland Chair and later the UK Chair. Whilst he may have left working directly in the sector, he is still involved in higher education and supporting students and is still fulfilling our main goals as a charity, which is why he's a worthy nominee.

2. Gareth Oliver, nominated by Lewis Clark, University of Lincoln

Gareth has worked in higher education for 30 years and has devoted his time to supporting a huge range of students to make informed decisions about their next steps. Lewis has described him as a supportive and proactive colleague, not just within the university, but within the circuit and he's always encouraged participation from colleagues within HELOA.

**Jamie Graney**, University of Liverpool - Does that mean Jonny will not be able to re-join HELOA in the future if he returned to a role in HE that qualifies for HELOA Membership?

**AW** - He would be removed as an honorary member and be able to uptake full membership again.

<b>Proposer</b>	Ali Clark, University of Stirling
<b>Seconder</b>	Brad Eeley, University of Chester

The meeting was invited to approve the honorary membership(s). The nominations were accepted  
 - For: 83, Against: 3, Abstain: 0.

### 10. AOB - Reena Littlehales (RL), UK Chair

The following comments in the chat have been noted and will be taken into consideration:

**Christine Todd**, University of Liverpool (Chat) - for National Conference 2027, to reduce costs, the conference could be reduced to two days, one night.

**Jane Rae Ross**, University of West London (Chat) - Agree with potentially reducing the number of days for National Conference to 2 days as suggested by Christine. In-person is preferred, online or live streaming could be another option for sessions e.g. keynotes.

No other business was raised.

**11. Date and Venue of 2026 AGM - Reena Littlehales (RL), UK Chair**

The constitution states that an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the association shall be held early in the calendar year and not later than the end of March. As mentioned, this AGM was a trial virtual meeting which will be reviewed against our success criteria and members will be notified of the 2026 AGM date and format. There will be an option for members to provide feedback on this via the AGM feedback form.

Thank you for coming along to the meeting. The AGM serves as a formal way to put things on record and ensure HELOA continues to thrive in the years ahead. Open channels for feedback and suggestions remain vital. Members are encouraged to reach out to committee members, the executive team, or the office.

No comments or questions were received. The meeting was called to a close at 11:25.

*Please note that 74 primary contact/ proxies had registered their attendance at the start of the meeting but the total number of voting codes used was 92. Voting totals are those finalised by Mi-Voice.*

*Dawn McClintock  
HELOA Office Manager*