

Academic venue bookings buoyant as agents appreciate what they offer.

2017 is proving to be a good year for academic venues among HBAA members in developing their meetings business.

A clear majority are reporting year on year increases in revenue from this sector – and there is widespread agreement among them about trends that are generating this growth.

Hayley Hardy, Acting Revenue and Events Manager for Loughborough University, captured the views of many saying: ‘We are finding that clients are considering academic venues a lot more. Event bookers are realising the advantages of using academic venues, from their location, price and that profits are reinvested in to academic excellence.’



Keele University

Harry Warner, Head of Conference Sales & Marketing at King's College London, echoed this when commenting that “Conference agents are waking up to the benefits of booking academic venues and we are seeing an increased volume of agency enquiries.”

Emma Woodcock, Senior Business Development Manager at Keele University said: “Clients are starting to appreciate more and more the benefits of using a University to host their event. Academic venues offer a fantastic range of quality, bespoke and specialist facilities and make positive contributions to Universities and the local communities they service.”



Loughborough University



Kings College London

Competitive market

Client expectations are always high for all venues and to compete, academic venues have to offer quality up with the best. As Marina Boor, Commercial Marketing Manager at Imperial College in London says: “With such a competitive market, academic venues are maintaining, and generally exceeding, the increasingly high standards expected by event organisers today. From in-house chefs creating bespoke menus, to dedicated events management teams, academic venues offer an exceptional alternative to traditional venues.”

Looking at trends in the market, Josh Fitzsimons, Marketing Manager at Warwick University, observes “In a crowded marketplace customers are no longer just looking for a space for their events, but the delivery of an experience. We created the strapline: “Anything is possible”, to help ensure we create an experience for our guests that will keep them wanting to come back.”

He adds: “Personalisation is key moving forward to enhance our delegates’ experience and to help us understand their needs and what matters most to them.”



Warwick Conferences

Looking at trends from a different perspective, Rose McDonald, Head of Sales at Robinson College, Cambridge, says: “Lead time for conferences and events are getting shorter – we’re seeing average lead times of 3 to 6 months for our Crausaz Wordsworth Building and under a year for average size conferences in our main building.”

But, concluding on a positive note, Rose says: “Already we have the vast majority of bookings secured for the next financial year.”

1 Keele University

Event spaces: Keele Hall, 400 as Lecture Theatre, 500 for dining.

Largest venue: Exhibition Suite is 654sqm.

Accommodation capacity: 800 en-suite bedrooms.

Additional facilities: over 30 conference rooms and extensive outdoor spaces.

Optimum event: conference up to 400 delegates.

3 Kings College London

Event spaces: 200 unique spaces.

Largest venue: Waterloo campus caters for 400.

Additional facilities: Great Hall on the Strand location can accommodate 200 delegates, while the Greenwood Theatre can hold up to 450 seated delegates.

Optimum event: one day conference for 250 delegates.

5 Warwick University

Event spaces: Scarma, Radcliffe, the University campus space Conference Park and The Slate which features 650sqm of meetings space.

Optimum event: one that uses a variety of room setup from plenary to restaurant.



Robinson College Cambridge



Imperial College London

2 Imperial College London

Event spaces: room for 200 delegates across their South Kensington, Paddington, Hammersmith and White City locations.

Largest venue: Great Hall can hold 740 attendees.

Accommodation capacity: 1900 room across campuses.

Largest event held: a marquee reception, 1500 for drinks and 700 for dinner.

4 Loughborough University

Event spaces: Burleigh Court has 26 meeting rooms, while Holywell Park has 10 meetings spaces which can hold up to 200 delegates.

Largest venue: Loughborough University Campus has facilities for 2,000 spread across 410 acres.

Accommodation capacity: Burleigh Court has 225 en-suite rooms and The Link Hotel offers 94 en-suite bedrooms.

Optimum event: residential conferences and training.

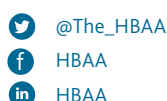
6 Robinson College

Event spaces: Conference facilities include the Crusaz Wordsworth Building, Auditorium Suite, Umney Suite and garden restaurant. Over 20 individual meeting rooms for smaller conferences, training courses and syndicate use.

Accommodation capacity: The College can hold 270 delegates.

Optimum event: conference up to 270 delegates.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this or any of our events, so please share via any of the below channels:



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