

The Northern Ireland Schools and Colleges Careers Association (NISCA)

Trustees' Report

The trustees present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The advancement of CEIAG professional development for careers teachers in NI

To support Careers Education in Schools and Regional Colleges.

Public benefit

NISCA has operated for a number of years providing a professional support network for careers teachers and guidance professionals across Schools and Colleges in Northern Ireland. Operating primarily through a committee comprising current and former Careers teachers with co-opted input from business and industry as required, NISCA runs two major conferences each year and in addition disseminates relevant up to date information relating to Careers matters and current issues through its website. The aim of the association is to

empower and enable Careers professionals to support pupils / students and their parents as they make informed career decisions at key points of transition.

provide a professional Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance service within their Schools and Colleges to meet the statutory requirement placed on Schools and Colleges by Department for Education and regularly assessed through its ETI Inspection process

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 3 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission Northern Ireland

Achievements and performance

This year marked the return to Pre-COVID activities. We were able to enhance the capability of the committee by:

- Having in-person committee meetings (see appendix 1), building a coherent team that has been enhanced by a promotional event that we held to explain the role of the committee, informing the roles and time commitment involved along with other aspects. This event resulted in the committee gaining 4 new members.
- Throughout the year roles have evolved, with some shadow roles created, and this will lead to better succession planning in the future.

We have engaged with key bodies to strengthen the influence of NISCA to better serve our members such as:

- Building on relationships with ETI, IGC, UCAS Advisers Advisory Group.
 1. ETI – discussed with ETI concerns of teachers in terms of what should be in a CEIAG programme and how CEIAG should be evaluated. ETI are now always invited to NISCA conferences to contribute or actively participate in the CPD that teachers are gaining.
 2. UCAS AAG – two members of the committee now sit on the UCAS AAG and are able to represent the NI teacher perspective.

We are responding to the needs of our membership by:

- Using evaluations to respond to membership needs hence the move to a full summer conference.

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Events

The following is an outline of our two main conferences and relevant statistics:

- Our main Autumn Conference held in La Mon Hotel in Nov 2022 was sponsored by PeopleHawk (main sponsor) and Work + (secondary sponsor). See Appendix 2a.
- Our smaller Summer Conference held in Glenavon Hotel in May 2023 was sponsored by ATU (main sponsor) and UniFrog (secondary sponsor). See Appendix 2b.
- Full conference conditions for both Post-COVID with no restrictions.
- All exhibitor stalls in La Mon (41) and Glenavon (30) were taken.
- Participant engagement for Autumn Conference 2022 was 200.
- Participant engagement for Summer Conference 2023 was 170.
- Between main sponsors, secondary sponsors and those that took exhibitor stalls we had 71 organisation engagements across both conferences from across the UK and Ireland

As an organisation we endeavour to provide the latest CPD for our member schools so that overall, we can help to enhance the CEIAG provision right across NI. We raise the issues that pertain to our members with the relevant bodies such as ETI, DE, EA, UCAS, third level providers and apprenticeships providers including employer groups and also those that provide services that complements the CEIAG programme of our member schools such as Interview Skills and information events.

Planning for 2023-24 conferences are well under way with sponsorship secured for the November and May conferences with a continuing focus of strengthening relationships with DE, ETI, UCAS, DfE, UCAS

Membership

Membership has stayed at the same level, in part due to the high levels of uptake in membership from schools across NI. We have maintained the membership fee. The Committee will look to engage with schools that are not currently members.

Committee

Our recruitment drive at the November 2022 as part of our stated aim to refresh the committee yielded 4 new members. As stated in the introduction they have enabled us to plan for the future and enhance our capability to deliver for our membership due to the diversity they brought to the committee. The committee make-up more accurately reflects the school landscape in NI.

Website

We are making some progress in revamping the website, but this still has a way to go. This will continue to be a focus for this year with a look at how we utilise better social media. However, we need to be mindful in making adjustments that will help our members to access information in a more efficient way.

Development plan 2023-24

The key targets for 2023-24 are:

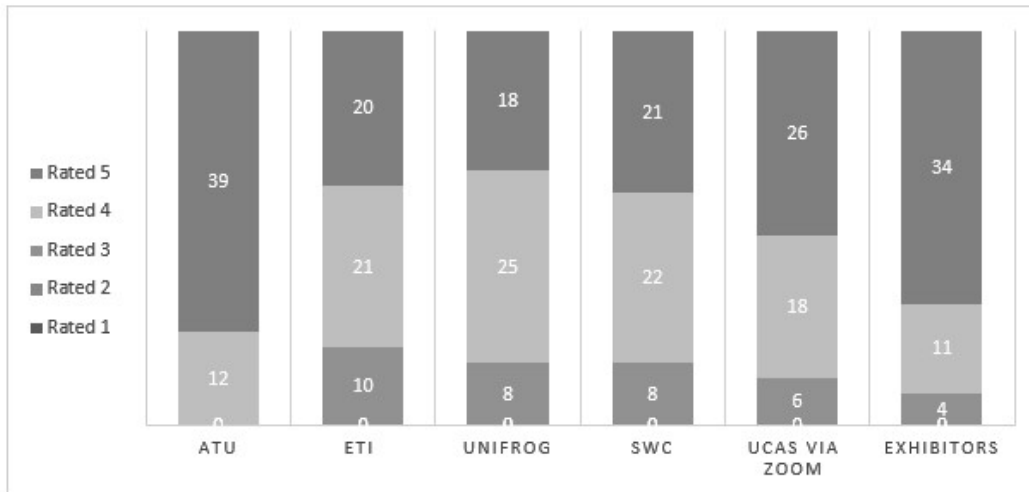
- To grow the Summer Conference and have two large conferences to best meet the CPD and other needs of our members.
- To set up a sub-committee that will act on an evaluation of a questionnaire that will be sent out to member so that we can be proactive in responding to our members and the issues they want us to address.
- To maintain and progress our relationships with key organisations such as DE, EA, ETI, UCAS, MEGA, Sentinus, Universities and Colleges in UK and ROI

Summary

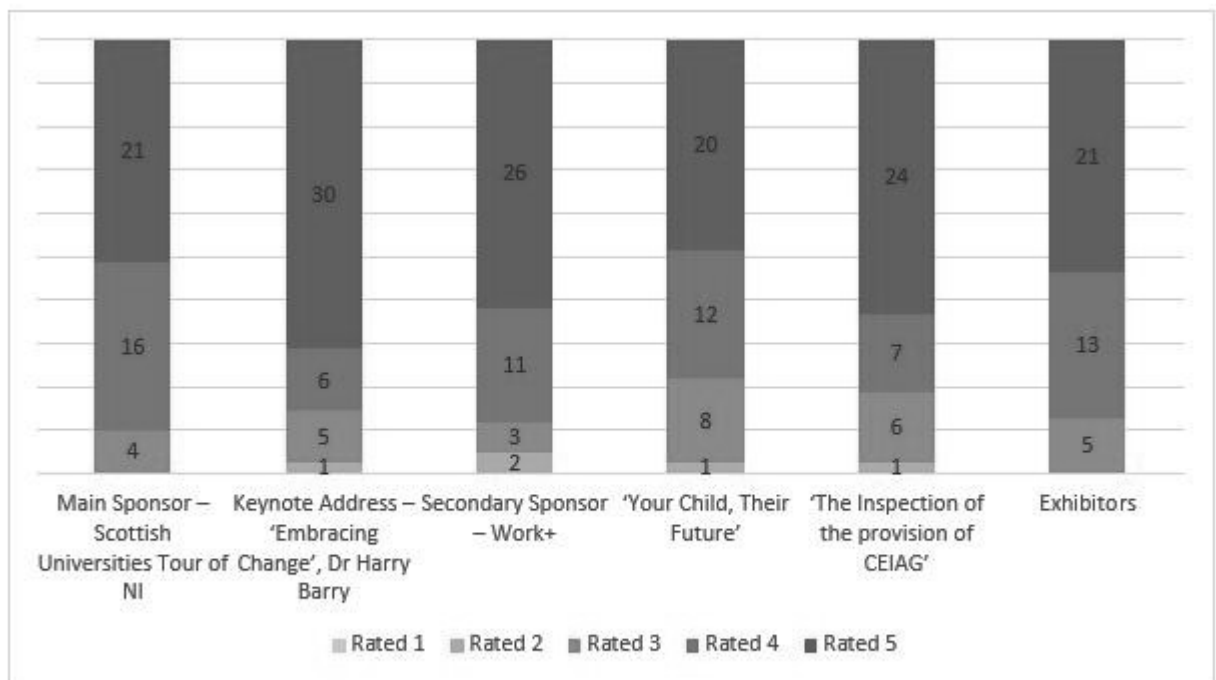
In conclusion, the period 1 Sept 2022 to 31 Aug 2023 saw a time when we returned to a full programme of conference after the pandemic. The committee has been enhanced by the introduction of new members and the organisation is fostering closer ties to organisations where we need our influence to act in the best interests of our members and the provision of CEIAG in schools across NI.

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**Based on 2023 evaluations from conference attendees asked to rate the talks and exhibitors from 1 to 5; 5 being excellent*



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Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

The Northern Ireland Schools and Colleges Careers Association (NISCA) is an unincorporated charity and is governed by a constitution.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The charity shall be managed by a committee of Trustees who shall be appointed by election at the Annual General Meeting of the charity. The charity must have a minimum of six Trustees. The charity must appoint officers by election at the Annual General Meeting.

The charity must have a minimum of the following officers :

A Chairperson

A Vice Chairperson

A Secretary

A Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer.

A Conference Chairperson

Officers shall remain in post for two years and shall be eligible for re-election at the AGM. A minimum of 50% of the Trustees must be current CEIAG practitioners.

All Trustee posts shall be elected on an annual basis at the AGM. They must retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election.

All Trustees must be either :

A Full Member of the charity

A person who has been co-opted by the Full Member Trustees.

A Trustee may not appoint anyone to act on his/her behalf at a Trustee meeting.

A Trustee must cease to hold office if he or she:

is disqualified from acting as a trustee by virtue of section 86 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);

ceases to be a member of the charity.

in the written opinion, given to other Trustees, of a registered medical practitioner treating that person, has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a charity trustee and may remain so for more than three months.

resigns as a Trustee by notice to the charity.

is absent without the permission of other Trustees from all their meetings held within a period of 6 consecutive months and the other Trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated.

In order to enable them to effectively carry out the work of the charity, the Trustees may co-opt persons, not exceeding four in number, to act as Trustees for one year.

A Trustee mid-term vacancy can be filled by a co-option.

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Financial instruments

Objectives and policies

The charity's activities expose it to a number of financial risks including credit risk, cash flow risk and liquidity risk. The use of financial derivatives is governed by the charity's policies approved by the board of trustees, which provide written principles on the use of financial derivatives to manage these risks. The charity does not use derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes.

Cash flow risk

The charity's activities expose it primarily to the financial risks of changes in foreign currency exchange rates and interest rates. The charity uses foreign exchange forward contracts and interest rate swap contracts to hedge these exposures.

Interest bearing assets and liabilities are held at fixed rate to ensure certainty of cash flows.

Credit risk

The charity's principal financial assets are bank balances and cash, trade and other receivables, and investments. The charity's credit risk is primarily attributable to its trade receivables. The amounts presented in the balance sheet are net of allowances for doubtful receivables. An allowance for impairment is made where there is an identified loss event which, based on previous experience, is evidence of a reduction in the recoverability of the cash flows.

The credit risk on liquid funds and derivative financial instruments is limited because the counterparties are banks with high credit-ratings assigned by international credit-rating agencies.

The charity has no significant concentration of credit risk, with exposure spread over a large number of counterparties and customers.

Liquidity risk

In order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing operations and future developments, the charity uses a mixture of long-term and short-term debt finance.

Further details regarding liquidity risk can be found in the Statement of accounting policies in the financial statements.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 15 May 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Mr Edward Collins
Trustee

.....
Mrs Julie Richardson
Trustee