

Essential Checklist for Conference Organisers

Important Dates to Remember

Things To Do (and Note):	When:
Booking form to be issued	As soon as possible after agreement reached on dates & costs
Booking form to be signed and returned* <u>together with deposit</u> Apply for VAT exemption (if applicable) <i>* Please read Terms & Conditions of booking first</i>	By the return date specified on the booking form
Total loss of deposit if event cancelled	Once booking form signed
Shortfall charges come into effect @ £10.00 + VAT pp per night for the number of beds reduced	6 months - 3 months prior to the event taking place
Shortfall charges rise to £20.00 + VAT pp per night for the number of beds reduced	3 months - 10 working days prior to the event taking place
Profile of event to be provided & confirmation of name & address for invoice	8 weeks prior to the event
Final site visit - meetings with the Conference and Catering teams to finalise arrangements including draft joining instructions	Ideally 6 – 8 weeks prior to the event taking place
Choices of Formal/Buffer Menu finalised	6 weeks prior to the event
Forms are sent to organiser for completion	6 weeks prior to the event
AV Technician to be booked	4 weeks prior to the event
All forms to be returned to Conferences & Events N.B. Any change to nos. after this date incurs a £50.00 + VAT administration charge (per change) Shortfall Charges become the full rate in accordance with the numbers booked	10 working days prior to the event
No further changes to numbers will be accepted	5 working days prior to the event
Invoice issued by Conferences & Events	After the event has taken place
Final Invoice to be paid by organiser	30 days after date of issue

Preparing the conference registration form

Delegate Registration

A few points to consider when drawing up the delegate registration form for the event are listed below:

- **Booking Fee:** Differential rates to encourage people to book early, for example, an early-bird discount, and a late booking penalty.
- **Cancellation Charges:** These should mirror the University's own penalties for cancellation and shortfall - see *Terms and Conditions of Booking* in Appendix B.
- **Non-Smoking Accommodation:** It should be made clear to all delegates that they cannot smoke in any of the buildings on campus, following the National Smoke-Free Legislation, introduced in July 2007.
- **Special Dietary Requirements:** This should be asked to identify those people who have vegetarian/vegan diets, ethnic food requirements, food allergies, food intolerances, etc.
- **Visitors with Special Needs:** Such as wheelchair users, visual and hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, etc.

Joining Instructions

It is essential that you provide detailed 'Joining Instructions' to your delegates, which should be drawn up in liaison with Conferences & Events. We request that organisers send their draft 'Joining Instructions' to us before they are printed, as an additional check that all details given are correct, to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding on the part of delegates. A joining instructions template is available in Appendix I. Points which should be covered include:

- Checking in and departure times for the residences
- What to do if you arrive late or early
- Details of what the residential package comprises - brief description of accommodation and catering services, etc
- Times and locations of meals and refreshment breaks during the conference
- Time the registration desk will be open and its location
- Details of how to get to the University by various means of transport, a plan of the campus, either by enclosing a copy of the "*Find US*" leaflet provided by Conferences & Events, or providing the web address where this can be found and downloaded
- Car-parking arrangements, including permits
- Useful telephone numbers, Conferences & Events, 24-Hour Reception, etc
- Location of the conference sessions and any exhibition/poster displays - access times for setting up, dismantling, etc
- Details of pre-organised, off-campus activities, meals etc. and travel arrangements
- Final programme of the conference
- Suggestions of places to visit, things to do in the area

Registration at the Beginning of the Conference

Some of the residential areas have space where a conference registration desk may be set up to enable delegates to register for the conference and collect their room keys at one point. In other residences this is not possible and conference organisers may prefer to have a registration desk set up nearer to where the actual conference sessions will be taking place. Alternatively on the first day of arrival the registration desk can be located at the

residence and for subsequent days moved nearer the main conference activities, depending on the conference programme and arrival times of guests.

Conferences can arrange to have their own direct line telephone extension (internal only or internal/external) installed at their registration/reception point for the duration of their conference, for which a charge will be made.

Faxes may be sent and received by organisers through Conferences & Events.

Conferences & Events can meet most photocopying requirements, the costs for which will be added to the final invoice, issued after the event.

The porter for each residence will hand out the bedroom keys to delegates personally, so they can then direct them to their room, answer any immediate queries and deal with any special requests on the spot.

With prior arrangement with Conferences & Events, porters can work over lunchtime and/or stay beyond their normal working hours to hand keys out to delegates arriving up until 20:00 hours. After this time delegates should be directed to the 24-Hour Reception Desk in York House.

Information & Activities for Delegates

Civic Hospitality

Brighton and Hove Council are happy to extend Civic Hospitality to conferences visiting Brighton. Conference organisers should contact Brighton and Hove Visitor & Convention Bureau (T: +44 (0) 1273 292629) for details of how to apply and the venues available for hosting such events.

Information and Activities for Conference Delegates

A folder of useful information, detailing services and facilities available on campus and in Brighton, will be in each delegates' bedroom on arrival.

A wide variety of tourist information literature is held at the 24-Hour Reception Desk in York House or can be obtained from Brighton & Hove Visitor & Convention Bureau (T: +44 (0) 01273 292629). 'Visit Brighton' also has a wealth of information on www.visitbrighton.com

Ideas for off-campus activities, entertainment and trips can be suggested by Brighton & Hove Visitor Convention Bureau, who are experienced in arranging such activities for conferences in the area. Past conferences have arranged private viewings at the Sealife Centre followed by a fish & chip supper at Harry Ramsdens, an evening at the Brighton Pier, a tour of Harvey's Brewery in Lewes and trips to Arundel Castle, Lewes Castle, and the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum near Chichester.

For entertainment on campus, organisers might like to consider putting on a film evening, a classical music recital in the Meeting House, live music, a string quartet during the conference dinner, a ceilidh/barn dance, a disco, a race evening or a quiz night.

Email and Internet Access

Internet and web-based email access is available to residential conference delegates from their bedrooms via wired connection free of charge for delegates using their own laptops during their stay at the University.

Delegates will be given a user name and password that is valid for the duration of their conference for their laptop only (this will not work on any University computer). They will also need to bring a Cat-5 network cable.

There are wireless hotspots around campus, for a detailed map of where these are located, please visit <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/services/networkandstorage/wifimap>

Finance

VAT Exemption

Conferences organised by certain “eligible bodies” and which are for ‘educational purposes’ may be eligible for VAT exemption on all supplies provided by the University except alcoholic beverages, fruit juice and mineral water. To obtain VAT exemption the organiser should complete a VAT exemption form available from Conferences & Events.

Conferences organised by a member of the University should note that a condition of VAT exemption in this situation is that all the finances for the conference should be dealt with through the books of the University. They should therefore contact their Finance Manager for advice on appropriate accounts codes and should consult the University’s Financial Regulations which can be viewed at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/finance/>

Shortfall Charges and Penalties

Please read the “Terms and Conditions of Booking” (see Appendix B) for full details of when shortfall charges will come into effect prior to an event. These should be read before a booking form is signed to confirm the booking of University facilities for an event.

For your assistance, these time periods are also included in the “Reminder of Important Dates” **(at the beginning of this document)**.

Payment of Final Account

Accounts will be calculated on the numbers booked for accommodation and catering, provided by the organiser, 10 working days in advance of the event. As stated in our *Terms and conditions of booking*, if the University is not notified of these numbers by the specified dates, the final numbers will be assumed to be the number on the signed booking form.

Accounts must be paid within 30 days of the date of issue of the invoice. The University reserves the right to charge interest on outstanding accounts. Should any dispute arise regarding the final invoice, 90% is to be settled within thirty days. The University reserves the right to defer acceptance of a booking until previous accounts have been settled.