



UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN

HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR CLASS REUNION



University of Aberdeen Alumni Relations



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WHY BECOME A REUNION ORGANISER?

Behind every great reunion is an enthusiastic organiser! Becoming a reunion organiser is also a fantastic opportunity for you to acquire a number of transferable skills which can always turn out to be extremely useful for your CV or job application, especially if you are a recent graduate of the University. You should have:

- Excellent time-management skills
- Strong organisational skills and ability to multi-task
- Resourcefulness and flexibility
- Good communication skills
- Attention to detail and ability to creatively solve problems
- Ability to work to a specific budget
- Event planning experience
- Ability to prioritise

How can we help

We know that organising such an event can take a lot of time and effort so we have put together this guide to make things a little easier. We appreciate that all reunions are unique and can take many different forms. Whether a casual lunch, a formal dinner or a whole weekend of activities we hope our guide will provide some useful information on how to get started. The Alumni Relations team will be happy to provide you with any additional information or advice that you may need.

Set up a small organising group to share the workload of organising your reunion.

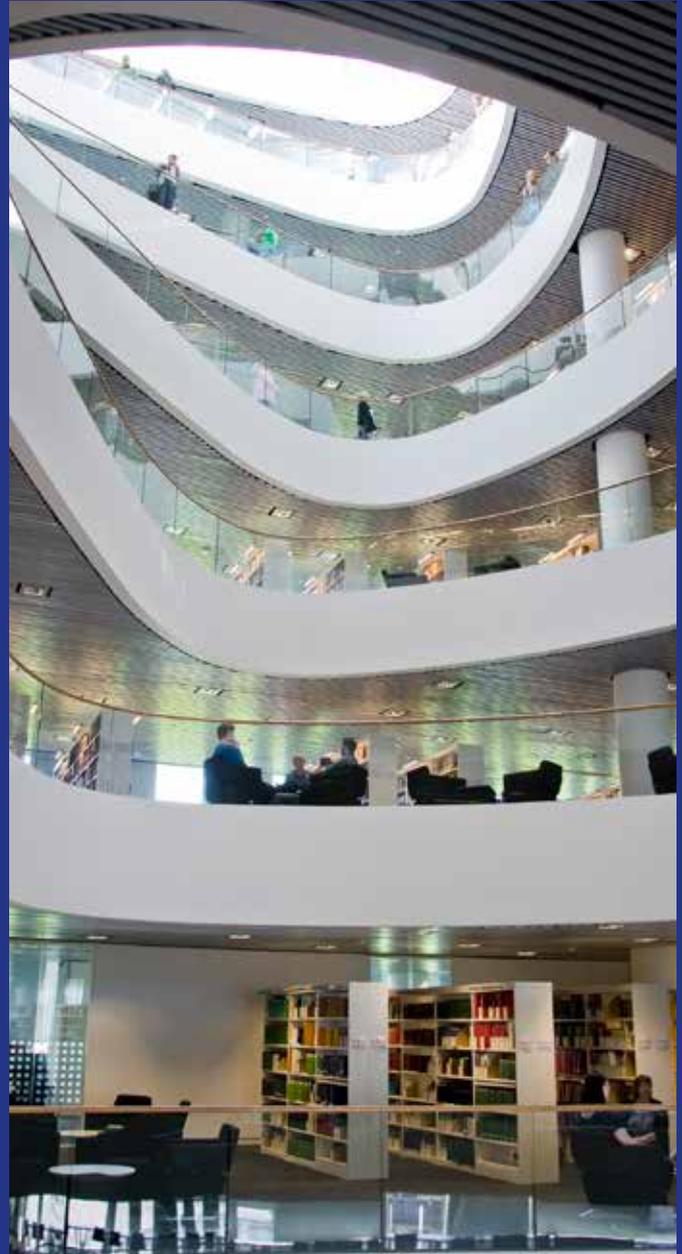




SERVICES FOR REUNION ORGANISERS

The alumni relations team can assist you with planning your reunion. Here is a full list of the services we offer:

- Sending email invitations on your behalf
- Sending out follow up emails to remind alumni of the upcoming reunion
- Advertising the reunion on our **website**
- Advertising the reunion in the quarterly e-zine – **Voice:E**
- Posting about the reunion on our **social media pages**
- Follow up story and pictures in Voice:E and on the website
- Assisting with information relating to appropriate **venues on campus**
- Arranging academic guests/speakers for your reunion
- Information on accommodation on and **off campus** (note: **on-campus accommodation** is not available during **term-times**)
- Arranging **campus tours** (e.g. Library, Old Aberdeen, Suttie Centre, Rowett)
- Assisting with name badges
- Event management **checklist**
- Information on archives (getting you in touch with our **Special Collections Centre** who may hold some class photographs)
- Providing information on current University **projects and research**
- A menu of projects and research that you could **support**
- Attendance at reunion (e.g. current students, alumni relations team representative)
- Connections to entertainment provided by students such as the University of Aberdeen Chapel or Chamber Choirs
- Information about a peer-to-peer fundraising **guide** and **fundraising tips**



Summer accommodation on campus is convenient and relatively inexpensive.



BUDGET

Work out a budget before you start planning the event and try to stick to it where possible. In the past alumni have set up separate accounts for their event. Costs to bear in mind are:

- Venue hire
- Catering
- Entertainment
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Mailing costs
- Decorations
- Equipment

Add a 10% contingency to the overall total to cover any last-minute expenses.

Some graduates may have to travel long distances, start to plan at least 12 months in advance.

When

Decide upon a date for the event. Remember that you will need time to organise the event and give invitees plenty of notice. Take into consideration public and school holidays. If you want to hold your event at the University, bear term dates in mind as there will be less space available on and around campus.





What

What sort of event will it be?

A dinner, drinks reception or educational tour? If it has a special theme, consider linking it with an existing event taking place at Aberdeen.

Where

Where is your preferred location and room set-up?

The University has a variety of different venues suitable for alumni reunions and events. We can put you directly in touch with our Conference and Events Office, or you can find ideas here.

Who

Who are you going to invite?

Those in the same year, studied the same subject or lived in the same Halls of Residence? Do you plan to invite partners?

How many people do you want to attend? Please remember there will always be a drop-out rate on the night of events so be prepared for at least 10% of those registered not to attend.

Do you want a guest academic? The alumni relations team can assist you with this.

The University of Aberdeen's alumni office hold data for approximately 86,000 alumni in over 170 countries, so the chances are we will have contact details for many of your classmates.

You can contact us to discuss the invitation list (unfortunately, due to data protection we cannot give out contact details). We can also assist you with sending out invitations to your guests and we can add this to our **website** and **social networking sites**.

Set up a Facebook group for your reunion to allow people to share contacts and ask questions.





BOOKING A VENUE

Campus venues

The University of Aberdeen has a variety of venues suitable for events, from meeting rooms to larger venues suitable for hosting a dinner dance. We are also delighted to be able to offer alumni a 50% discount on room hire and 15% discount on catering costs.

Some of the most popular venues on campus and their dining capacity are listed below:

- **Elphinstone Hall** (300)
- **Linklater Rooms** (50)
- **James McKay Hall** (50)

We also have the **Suttie** centre, **Old Town House**, **King's Auditorium** and three meeting rooms in the **Students' Union Building** available to hire.

If you would like to book any of these venues we can put you in touch with our **Conference and Events Office**.

External venues

There are several things to consider when searching for an external venue. You need to decide what is most important: venue, location or atmosphere? If you have a clear idea of what you are looking for it should help narrow down your search for the venue.





CATERING

Make sure you choose a menu that will appeal to all guests including those of different religions and make sure there is a vegetarian/vegan option. As for seating, you might want to think of a seating plan if you are inviting more than 20 people to your event. Ask guests to confirm their dietary or seating requirements when they book.

Helpful questions to ask the venue

- Is there a minimum spend? - Some venues will add this and you have to pay it even if your bill doesn't come close to the amount.
- What is included in the cost? - Some venues will charge you a package price while others will charge separately for everything.
- Is insurance included?
- Do they charge a service charge?
- Is there a deposit and is it refundable?
- Is there a booking fee?
- What is the cancellation policy?
- When is the final balance due?
- Is VAT included?





Use the sample event checklist in the appendix of this guide. It is a roadmap through every step of your reunion, guaranteeing it will be a success!

MAKING YOUR EVENT A SUCCESS

Name badges

It is a good idea to provide name badges for alumni events and reunions. They help avoid any awkward moments, are easy to do and can be handed to guests when they arrive. If you are interested, we would be happy to help you with these.

Speakers

Alumni always like to hear what is happening at the University and learn of new developments. The alumni relations team can help identify speakers for you and put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Attendance

You might also be interested in having someone from alumni relations or a current student with the same degree as yours attend your reunion.

Photos

Make sure that someone is tasked with taking pictures of your event or reunion. You can send these to guests after the event and we would be delighted to display them on our website and social networking sites. You could also ask your fellow alumni to bring old photos and set up a memory board at your reunion, or we could put you in touch with our **Special Collections centre** and check if they have any images in their archives.

Tours

Tours can be given of our old Aberdeen campus or of your old department. If you would be interested in taking a tour please **get in touch** with our office and we can help arrange this.

Comments and feedback

Setting up a comments book might turn out to be useful for both you as a reunion organiser and the alumni relations team as a service provider, so you might want to consider that as well.



REUNION GIVING

You're having fun, catching up with old friends and reminiscing about the great time you had as a student at Aberdeen. Why not add an extra element to your reunion event and raise some funds for the place that brought you all together?

Reunions provide the perfect opportunity to give something back to the University in recognition of your time spent here, by either launching a combined fundraising effort or augmenting previous contributions.

Funds raised at reunion events are a great example of the generosity of our alumni around the world. Whatever the size of your contribution, you collectively have the potential to make a real difference.

The **University of Aberdeen Development Trust** raises essential funds for a wide variety of activities from world-class research to new building projects.

As you recall fond memories and reflect on your time at Aberdeen, we hope you are inspired to give something back. Monies raised can go towards any of our current priorities or a general contribution will be used where it is most needed.

As a reunion organiser you would also have the opportunity to be the main fundraiser of your reunion group. To succeed as such, our fundraising team would equip you with a brief peer-to-peer fund raising guide. For more information on this, please contact **Darren Hill**.





MARKETING

You can request marketing and promotional materials such as pull up banners. These items can be used to identify your reunion at a venue. Requests can also be made for word props, pin badges and posters.

YouTube Videos

YouTube videos can be downloaded below and provide a colourful visual element to your reunion gathering. The videos can run in the background or form part of a presentation.

4K overhead view of University of Aberdeen campus

Generic video of campus, library, ASV and city

BENEFITS AND SERVICES

University of Aberdeen alumni are entitled to an amazing selection of benefits and services. These include campus based offers such as discounted membership at Aberdeen Sports Village and the University Library, as well as discounts at various local shops and businesses. However, there are also a few offers that international alumni can take advantage of, such as discounts on accommodation, taxis and holidays, not to mention discount on postgraduate study and access to lifelong careers advice.

Please remember to remind those attending the reunion of these wonderful benefits, a full list of which can be found [here](#).





CONTACTS

Alumni Relations Team
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CONFERENCE AND EVENTS

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Alumni Engagement
Coordinator

Appendix



Event Management Checklist

Event name:				
Venue:				
Event date and time:				
Event coordinator:				
Nominated proof reader:				
Brief Description:				
Running Order:				
Venue contact details:				
Capacity:				
Charge:				
Pre event administration:	Responsibility	Date Requested	Date Completed	Notes
Email Alumni Relations Team with details				
Check event added to alumni webpage				
Check event added to alumni social media channels				
Email Alumni Relations Team with copy for invitation email				
Proof and approve draft HTML email invitation				
Register attendees and email to Alumni Relations				
Send email confirmation and tickets (if applicable)				
Detail email to registered attendees (one week prior to event)				

Appendix



Communication plan:				
Invitations text				
Confirmation email text				
Detail email text				
Schedule of communications:	Responsibility	Target Date	Actual Date	Notes
Alumni webpage				
Alumni social media sites				
Initial electronic invitation				
Postal invitation (if applicable)				
Follow up electronic invitation				
Final follow up reminder				
Detail email to registered attendees				
Event Management:	Responsibility	Date	Notes	
Book venue				
Book catering				
Book entertainment				
Book AV				
Nominate photographer to take pictures at the event				
Prepare event material, name badges, promo literature, place names etc				
Finance:	Responsibility	Date	Notes	
Set and manage budget				
Monitor income (cheque, cash and CC)				
Update Alumni budget with income and exp				
Post event admin:	Responsibility	Date	Notes	
Update Alumni Relations Team with actual event attendance				
Email Alumni Relations Team with photos from the event				
Follow up email/ letter				

Notes



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