



in partnership with
technology1

GuildHE Annual Conference

Transformation and change:
opportunities for the future

19 – 20 November 2025



sponsored by



Welcome to conference



Dr Brooke Storer-Church
Chief Executive Officer
GuildHE

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the GuildHE team, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the GuildHE Annual Conference 2025 – *Transformation and change: opportunities for the future* – hosted this year by the wonderful Professor Randall Whittaker and his team at Rose Bruford College.

Our Annual Conference is always a highlight in the GuildHE calendar – a space for connection, collaboration, and reflection across our uniquely diverse higher education community. This year’s theme feels particularly timely. Across the sector, we continue to navigate profound shifts: in student expectations, digital innovation, skills and employability, research investment, and the policy environment. Yet within this change lies a great opportunity – to reimagine how we teach, lead, and serve our learners and communities.

Together, we’ll explore these opportunities. I’m delighted that we are joined by an exceptional line-up of speakers and contributors, including Minister for Skills, Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith; Professor Sir Chris Husbands; Josh Fleming from the Office for Students; and colleagues from across UUK, HEPI, Jisc, the British Academy, and many of our member institutions. Their insights will help shape not just our conversations here, but the way we collectively influence and lead the sector in the months ahead.

We are pleased to be delivering this year’s conference in partnership with TechnologyOne, and with the generous support of our sponsors Shakespeare Martineau, Strengthify and Studiosity. Their engagement enables us to deliver this flagship event and reflects their shared commitment to supporting transformation and innovation across the higher education sector.

I hope you will use this time to connect with peers, exchange ideas, and enjoy the creativity that Rose Bruford embodies – from the evening performances to the lively discussions that make GuildHE such a special community.

Thank you for being part of it. I look forward to the conversations, ideas, and inspiration that will emerge over the coming days.

By your side,
Brooke

[View / download the GuildHE Annual Report 2024-5](#)

Welcome from our host



Prof Randall S Whittaker,
Principal & CEO
Rose Bruford College

It is a privilege to welcome you to Rose Bruford College as we celebrate our 75th anniversary and host this year's GuildHE Annual Conference.

Ours is a college born of radical ambition, founded by three visionary women who believed the arts could re-shape society. That spirit of daring has carried us through moments of challenge and transformation, and today it continues to drive our work as a creative institution with global reach, rooted at our campus set in protected parkland.

This conference invites us to confront transformation not as a distant theme but as the daily reality of higher education. At Bruford, change has demanded boldness, creativity, and a refusal to stand still. I encourage you to enter these conversations in the same spirit: adventurous, collaborative, and committed to re-imagining what comes next for our students, our institutions, and our sector.

About Rose Bruford College

Rose Bruford College stands as essential infrastructure for Britain's creative economy, transforming talent into the professionals who power an industry worth £126 billion annually. From their South London campus, anchored by the historic Lamorbey House, the institution delivers world-class conservatoire training across acting, directing, design, production, lighting, and stage technology through facilities that rival any international institution: a 330-seat theatre-in-the-round, the Barn Theatre, multiple black-box studios, state-of-the-art production labs, and specialist workshops purpose-built for creative excellence.

The College's 75th anniversary in 2025 celebrates not heritage for its own sake, but seven decades of proven impact: graduates who shape global entertainment, research that defines industry practice, and partnerships that drive creative innovation. Recent accolades, including significant research funding wins and sector-leading graduate employment rates, demonstrate what specialist institutions deliver when properly resourced and strategically positioned.

As our conference host, Rose Bruford exemplifies the economic case for specialist provision. The College is proof that focused excellence, not institutional scale, creates the distinctive talent pipelines our creative industries demand.

Our conference partner

TechnologyOne

TechnologyOne is a global Software as a Service (SaaS) company. This enterprise SaaS solution transforms business and makes life simple for universities by providing powerful, deeply integrated enterprise software that is incredibly easy to use. We take complete responsibility to market, sell, implement, support and run solutions for customers, which reduce time, cost and risk.

OneEducation

OneEducation, is a student-centric, end-to-end ERP SaaS solution for the higher education sector used by more than 50% of the UK's universities. The comprehensive and scalable software platform integrates seamlessly, providing a holistic approach to managing finance, student records management, human resources, procurement, payroll, asset management, and other key areas of university administration. By consolidating disparate systems and automating manual processes, OneEducation enables universities to improve decision making, provide an exemplary student and employee experience and importantly, improve their cybersecurity credentials.

technology¹

Panel discussion on transformation and collaboration in leadership

Cheryl Watson, Vice President Education - UK, Technology One will be joining the panel discussion on Transformation and Collaboration in Leadership on day two of the conference, 20 November.

Visit TechnologyOne in Room CO15

To learn more about TechnologyOne and OneEducation, **visit us in Room CO15** at the conference and our websites [TechnologyOne](#) and [OneEducation](#)

Our conference sponsors



Shakespeare Martineau legal firm are recognised experts in higher education, working closely with sector bodies on key issues and actively involved in helping to shape 'universities of the future' through thought leadership and presence on – and contribution to – sector commissions, such as the HE Commission and the Skills Commission. These activities directly influence government policy and sector strategy.

We act for over 100 further and higher education institutions. Shakespeare Martineau has a long standing relationship with GuildHE and regularly delivers presentations to members to provide insight on sector policy.

Our team have extensive experience across all legal issues that affect the sector, guiding and supporting our clients through challenges and opportunities. To learn more about how Shakespeare Martineau works with higher education providers, **visit us in Room C015** at the conference and our website www.shma.co.uk



Strengthify supports leaders, managers and teams in higher education to build stronger, more resilient ways of working. Our practical workshops and programmes focus on what people are good at – helping teams improve trust, motivation and performance through a strengths-based approach.

We offer Discovery Workshops that give teams new insight and energy, and a Management Development Programme that supports managers over time. All our sessions are designed to fit the realities of university life and are tailored to your needs. We keep things practical, useful and rooted in evidence – not just theory.

By focusing on strengths instead of problems, teams feel more connected, managers grow in confidence, and staff are more likely to stay and succeed. We help create healthier, more engaging workplaces where people feel valued and perform at their best. To learn more about how we work with universities of all sizes, **visit us in Room C015** at the conference and our website www.strengthify.com



Studiosity is a global education technology leader dedicated to student success at scale. We partner with over 250 institutions to provide core infrastructure that helps universities uphold academic integrity and protect the value of their degrees. Our platform offers ethical, scalable AI for Learning, focusing on pedagogically-sound feedback that enables students to develop critical thinking and their own, authentic writing skills.

By combining ethical AI with human oversight, Studiosity provides 24/7, on-demand academic support. This approach is proven in university research around the world to improve student confidence, retention, and learning outcomes, empowering universities to demonstrate students' ongoing progress and reflection on their own work. To learn more about how we work with providers, **visit us in Room C015** at the conference and our website www.studiosity.com

Agenda

Day 1: Wednesday 19 November

Networking dinner and entertainment

Please note that aspects of the conference, dinner and performance contain haze and strobe lighting.

3.00 PM - 6.00 PM

Check in at accommodation*

Accommodation: Premier Inn London Sidcup

*Please note: This only applies to delegates or speakers who have opted for additional accommodation during registration.

6.00 PM - 6.15 PM

Annual conference guest registrations

The Barn Gallery

6.15 PM - 7.00 PM

Welcome drinks reception

The Rose Theatre Foyer

7.00 PM - 7.15 PM

Opening remarks

The Rose Theatre

Professor Randall S Whittaker, Principal and CEO, Rose Bruford College

7.15 PM - 9.30 PM

Networking drinks, dinner with entertainment

The Digital Studio (drinks) The Studio Theatre (dinner), The Barn Theatre (entertainment)

Join us for 'Rose Bruford's A Drag!'

A dazzling celebration of drag, cabaret, and queer creativity that's as entertaining as it is thought-provoking. Co-produced by Dr Joe Parslow and Me The Drag Queen, this unmissable event brings together standout alumni and stars of the UK drag scene for a night of lip-synchs, burlesque, clowning, and unapologetic glamour.

Uniquely imagined for the GuildHE conference, this show will drag you in and leave you wanting more. Discover why Rose Bruford College is at the heart of cutting-edge queer performance and research.

9.30 PM

Close for the day

9.30 PM - 11.00 PM

Check in at accommodation*

Accommodation: Premier Inn London Sidcup

*Please note: This only applies to delegates or speakers who have opted for additional accommodation during registration.

Day 2: Thursday 20 November

GuildHE Members' Annual General Meeting

8.00 AM - 8.15 AM

Arrival for the Annual General Meeting

The Barn Gallery (registrations), The Rose Theatre Foyer (morning refreshments and food)

8.15 AM - 9.00 AM

GuildHE Annual General Meeting

The Rose Theatre

Morning session

8.30 AM - 9.00 AM

Annual conference guest registrations

The Barn Gallery (registrations), Room CO14 (morning refreshments and food)

9.00 AM - 9.15 AM

Proceed to main venue

The Rose Theatre

9.15 AM - 9.30 AM

Chair's welcome message

Professor Ken Sloan, Chair of GuildHE and Vice Chancellor of Harper Adams University

9.30 AM - 9.45 AM

Chief Executive's report

Dr Brooke Storer-Church, Chief Executive Officer, GuildHE

9.45 AM - 10.15 AM

In conversation

Professor Sir Chris Husbands, Director at Higher Futures and Honorary Professor at King's College London

10.15 AM - 10.50 AM

Keynote with Q&A

Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith, Minister of State for Skills and Minister of State for Women and Equalities

10.50 AM - 11.00 AM

Proceed to breakout sessions

11.00 AM - 11.50 AM

Breakout sessions

Sessions take place simultaneously.

Session 1: Unlocking efficiency: how shared services can future-proof UK higher education

The Digital Studio

Liam Earney, Managing Director HE and Research and Executive Director of Digital Resources, Jisc

Session 2: SHAPE Observatory work cold spots and crisis in SHAPE research

The Studio Theatre

Ruairí Cullen, Senior Observatory Lead, British Academy

Session 3: Innovative delivery models and the national skills agenda

The Barn Theatre

Professor Ramita Tejpal, Dean of Academic Quality and Policy, BPP

11.50 AM - 12.00 PM

Proceed to main venue

The Rose Theatre

12.00 PM - 12.45 PM

Keynote with Q&A

Josh Fleming, Director of Strategy and Delivery, Office for Students

12.45 PM - 1.45 PM

Lunch and networking

Room CO14 (lunch), Room CO15 (partner and sponsors)

Afternoon session

1.45 PM - 2.45 PM

Panel discussion: Transformation and collaboration in leadership

The Rose Theatre

Chair: Professor David Green CBE, Co-Vice Chair of GuildHE and Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive of University of Worcester

Speakers:

Dr Debbie McVitty, Editor, Wonkhe

Andrea Turley, Partner, KPMG

Cheryl Watson, VP Education - UK, TechnologyOne

2.45 PM - 3.00 PM

Afternoon break

Room CO14 (refreshments and snacks), Room CO15 (partner and sponsors)

3.00 PM - 3.50 PM

Breakout sessions

Sessions take place simultaneously.

Session 4: How to win friends and influence people: a workshop on political and sector influence

The Digital Studio

Sunday Blake, Policy Manager, GuildHE

Jess Lister, Director (Education), Public First

Rose Stephenson, Director of Policy, Higher Education Policy Institute

Session 5: Free speech and academic freedom: navigating law, values and neutrality

The Studio Theatre

Dr Paul Greatrix, Director of Higher Education, Shakespeare Martineau
Smita Jamdar, Partner and Head of Education, Shakespeare Martineau

Session 6: Using AI for institutional efficiency

The Barn Theatre

Daniel Fairbairn, Group Executive Director - Digital and Operations, Windsor Forest Colleges Group
Juliana Valadares Sali, Lecturer at Slough & Langley College and AI trainer for education and business

3.50 PM - 4.00 PM

Proceed to main venue

The Rose Theatre

4.00 PM - 4.45 PM

Public Perceptions of HE: Universities UK and Public First research and next steps

Seb Gordon, Director of Communications, Universities UK

4.45 PM - 5.00 PM

Conference wrap-up and closing remarks

Professor Ken Sloan, Chair of GuildHE and Vice Chancellor of Harper Adams University

5.00 PM - 6.15 PM

Break

Get ready for the evening dinner and entertainment!

Evening dinner and entertainment

Please note that aspects of the conference, dinner and performance contain haze and strobe lighting.

6.15 PM - 6.45 PM

Arrivals and pre-dinner drinks

The Edith Scorer Room, Lamorbey House

Experience a lighting installation across campus to the dinner location!

6.45 PM - 9.00 PM

Dinner and entertainment

Lakeside by Lamorbey House

There's No Business Like Show Business!

Get ready for a dazzling finale to the GuildHE Conference! Join us for an unforgettable evening of fine dining, fabulous performances, and a few jaw-dropping surprises.

As you savour each course, students from Rose Bruford College will light up the room with a thrilling medley of choral showtunes – and don't be surprised if the performance comes right to your table!

Expect the unexpected. Hold on to your wine glass. This is dinner with a dramatic twist!

9.00 PM

Annual Conference 2025 closes

Biographies



Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith, Minister of State for Skills and Minister of State for Women and Equalities

Session: Morning Keynote

The Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Malvern was appointed Minister of State (Minister for Skills) in the Department for Education on 6 July 2024, and her remit has since expanded to include responsibilities in the Department for Work and Pensions. Since 4 March 2025, she also serves as Minister for Women and Equalities, having previously acted as a Government spokesperson on equalities matters.

Her ministerial portfolio encompasses adult education, technical and higher technical qualifications, apprenticeships, funding and governance of further education, student finance, and participation in higher education.

Baroness Smith brings extensive public service experience to her role. She was Labour MP for Redditch from 1997 to 2010, and during that time held several senior government positions, including Home Secretary – a role in which she became the first woman ever to serve.

Beyond government, she is a broadcaster, commentator and public figure, and chairs health and charitable organisations, including NHS trust boards and the Jo Cox Foundation.

Professor Ken Sloan, Chair of GuildHE, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Harper Adams University

Sessions: Welcome messages and closing remarks

Professor Ken Sloan is Vice Chancellor of Harper Adams University and brings extensive national and international experience in higher education strategy, leadership, governance, and innovation. Before joining Harper Adams, he was the inaugural Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Enterprise and Governance) at Monash University, Melbourne, where he led strategic partnerships, government relations, innovation, commercialisation, and institutional governance initiatives.

Ken previously served as Registrar and Chief Operating Officer at the University of Warwick and has held senior roles with SERCO and the Stephen A Schwarzman Education Foundation in Beijing. He continues to serve as a panel chair for the Schwarzman Scholars global selection process.

A Fellow of the RSA and the Association of University Administrators, Ken holds degrees from the University of Glasgow and Warwick Business School. He also serves on the Executive of GuildHE and the Board of the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).





Professor Sir Chris Husbands, Director at Higher Futures and Honorary Professor at King's College London

Session: In conversation with Professor Sir Chris Husbands

Professor Sir Chris Husbands is an experienced board chair, non-executive director, and higher education leader with a distinguished career in teaching, research, and public policy. He served as Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University from 2016 to 2023, and previously led the Institute of Education, University of London, guiding its merger with UCL.

Sir Chris was the inaugural Chair of the UK Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), advising government on improving teaching quality across higher education. His international work spans Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, Ethiopia and India, supporting education reform and policy development worldwide.

A prolific author, he has written fifteen books and over eighty papers on education and leadership, and delivered more than 250 keynote addresses globally. Knighted in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours for services to higher education, Sir Chris continues to influence educational transformation through strategic leadership, data-driven insight and policy innovation.



Liam Earney, Managing Director HE and Research and Executive Director of Digital Resources, Jisc

Session: Breakout 1 - Unlocking efficiency: how shared services can future-proof UK higher education

Liam Earney is the Managing Director for Higher Education (HE) and Research at Jisc. He leads Jisc's strategic engagement with the HE and research sectors, holding overall responsibility for the development of its HE and research strategies.

Liam has worked in the higher education sector for over 25 years, with a long-standing background in digital licensing. His portfolio includes Jisc's extensive digital content and software licence negotiations, as well as its work on digital transformation, research management and consultancy. More recently he has overseen Jisc's research into the opportunities for efficiency through greater sector collaboration and shared services as well as collaborative approaches to the provision of digital research infrastructure, where his teams work with UKRI and the UUK Transformation and Efficiency Taskforce.



Ruairí Cullen, Senior Observatory Lead, British Academy

Session: Breakout 2 - SHAPE Observatory work cold spots and crisis in SHAPE research

Ruairí Cullen is the Senior Observatory Lead within the Higher Education & Research policy team at the British Academy, where he leads the Academy's SHAPE Observatory work mapping subject provision, regional inequities, and 'cold spots' in access to arts, humanities, social sciences and cultural subjects across the UK.

His research, data-visualisation and policy analyses are central to shaping sector conversations about the sustainability, equity and geographical balance of subject portfolios, particularly in light of evolving pressures on SHAPE disciplines.

Prior to his current role, Ruairí has engaged in higher education policy, advocacy, and analysis through roles in policy networks, think tanks and education organisations.



**Professor Ramita Tejpal, Dean of Academic Quality and Policy,
BPP University**

Session: Breakout 3 - Innovative delivery models and the national skills agenda

Professor Ramita Tejpal is Dean of Academic Quality and Policy at BPP University, where she provides strategic leadership for academic quality, governance and policy. She joined BPP in 2019 and holds significant experience spanning both the higher and further education sectors.

Ramita is nationally recognised for her expertise in regulatory compliance and standards, working closely with bodies such as the Office for Students and the QAA. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and is currently completing a Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD) at the University of Glasgow. Through her policy, reviewer and inspectorate roles, she influences sector-wide practice in academic leadership and quality assurance.



Josh Fleming, Director of Strategy and Delivery, Office for Students

Session: Afternoon Keynote

Josh Fleming is Director of Strategy and Delivery at the Office for Students, where he oversees strategy, evaluation, stakeholder engagement, communications, and the organisation's data, foresight and analysis functions. His work helps ensure the OfS meets its strategic aims to promote quality, equity and innovation across higher education.

Josh plays a leading role in shaping the OfS's approach to emerging issues such as artificial intelligence in education, emphasising principles-based regulation that enables experimentation while safeguarding academic integrity. He has spoken publicly on how the regulator can support innovation in teaching and learning through evidence, insight and sector engagement.

Prior to this role, Fleming built experience in policy development and organisational strategy. At the OfS, he is central to bridging strategic vision with operational delivery, ensuring that student voices, sector perspectives and robust evidence inform regulatory direction.



**Professor David Green, Co-Vice Chair of GuildHE, Vice Chancellor and
Chief Executive, University of Worcester**

(Chair) Session: Panel discussion - Transformation and collaboration in leadership

The University of Worcester has achieved an outstanding reputation for educational quality, imaginative, inclusive innovation, sound management and ethical leadership with David as Vice Chancellor. David has championed the development of close working relationships with businesses, community, educational, health care, regional and sporting organisations. David has a deep passion for educational inclusion.

Prior to joining Worcester, he held senior academic posts at London South Bank University, Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of West London. David has worked as a researcher, consultant and economist in both the private sector and for SHELTER, the campaign for the homeless, and has engaged in extensive voluntary work in community organisations and for racial equality.



Dr Debbie McVitty, Editor, Wonkhe

Session: Panel discussion - Transformation and collaboration in leadership

Dr Debbie McVitty is Editor of Wonkhe, where she steers the platform's commentary, analysis and sector insight on higher education policy. Before joining Wonkhe, she served as Chief of Staff at Universities UK, Director of Policy at the University of Bedfordshire, and Head of Policy at the National Union of Students.

She holds a doctorate in English Literature from the University of Oxford and completed a Masters in Research at Lancaster University, focusing on student engagement and curriculum policy. In her role at Bedfordshire, Debbie advised the Vice Chancellor and university executive on government relations, policy, and stakeholder engagement.

Dr McVitty has held board and advisory roles with the Higher Education Academy, the Equality Challenge Unit, and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Her voice in higher education discourse is respected for combining rigorous policy understanding with a commitment to amplifying student and institutional perspectives.

Andrea Turley, Partner, KPMG

Session: Panel discussion - Transformation and collaboration in leadership

Andrea Turley has extensive global experience in the education sector, with 15+ years working in universities in the UK and Australia, and 8+ years providing advisory services. She supports education institutions to transform, focusing on the student and staff experience, and delivers organisational change across strategy, operating model, service re-design, digital transformation and cost optimisation.

Andrea is passionate about the power of education to transform lives and is committed to supporting institutions to thrive in an ever-changing environment. The education sector is facing significant challenge and new opportunity, and her work has focused on helping institutions to consider ways to drive growth ensuring impactful outcomes for students, staff, academics and the communities in which they operate, while delivering long term financial sustainability.

Cheryl Watson, Vice President, Education - UK, Technology One

Session: Panel discussion - Transformation and collaboration in leadership

Cheryl is an accomplished leader in education technology, currently serving as Vice President, Education - UK, at TechnologyOne, where she oversees product strategy, delivery and client engagement across the higher education and skills sectors. With more than two decades of experience in the intersection of digital innovation and learning, Cheryl has led implementation and transformation programmes for universities, colleges and training providers across the UK and Australia.

Her expertise spans student information systems, enterprise planning, analytics, and cloud-based platforms, and she has a track record of helping institutions streamline operations, enhance student experience, and adapt for future challenges. A respected voice in sector forums and networks, Cheryl brings strategic vision and a collaborative approach to building technology-driven change in higher education.





Sunday Blake, Policy Manager (Education and Parliamentary Engagement), GuildHE

Session: Breakout 4 - How to win friends and influence people: a workshop on political and sector influence

Sunday is a policy powerhouse shaping education's future and GuildHE's newest Policy Manager, joining in 2025. A proven influencer with experience dissecting complex legislation and driving change with her research at Wonkhe, Sunday has particular insights into learner analytics, belonging and inclusion, the cost of living crisis and gender-based violence.



Jess Lister, Director (Education), Public First

Session: Breakout 4 - How to win friends and influence people: a workshop on political and sector influence

Jess Lister is a Director in the Education Practice at Public First, leading the firm's higher education work in the UK and internationally. She advises universities, governments, and third-sector organisations on policy, public affairs, opinion research, and strategic engagement.

Before joining Public First, Jess held various roles at the University of Cambridge, where she shaped institutional responses to national, regional and international policy developments and supported senior leadership on political and strategic issues. She has authored commentary and analysis across multiple platforms including Wonkhe, Times Higher Education, and Research Professional, contributing insight on regulation, funding, student experience, and institutional strategy.



Rose Stephenson, Director of Policy, Higher Education Policy Institute

Session: Breakout 4 - How to win friends and influence people: a workshop on political and sector influence

Rose Stephenson directs HEPI's work on policy, including research, policy analysis and the development of policy recommendations. Rose also oversees the strategic direction of the Higher Education Policy Institute.

Rose is an experienced educator, having worked in outdoor education and as a teacher and Head of Science in secondary education before moving to the higher education sector. She worked at the University of Bath, overseeing policies and projects to improve the student experience. She is driven to support the development of considered, evidence-based policy and has an interest in social mobility and equity. Rose is a Governor of Hartpury University.



Dr Paul Greatrix, Director of Higher Education, Shakespeare Martineau

Session: Breakout 5 - Free speech, the law and institutional neutrality

Dr Paul Greatrix is Director of Higher Education Consultancy and joined Shakespeare Martineau in August 2025 after over 35 years working in the HE sector including 18 years as Registrar of the University of Nottingham. Paul is working with Shakespeare Martineau's Education team to develop a suite of new services to support institutions in implementing their strategies both in the UK and overseas and in planning their responses to the challenging environment the HE sector is currently facing.

He has strong connections across higher education and previously held positions as an executive member of the AHUA, and as president of HUMANE, the Heads of University Management and Administration Network in Europe.



Smita Jamdar, Partner and Head of Education, Shakespeare Martineau

Session: Breakout 5 - Free speech, the law and institutional neutrality

Smita Jamdar is a recognised leader in her field, specialising in constitutional, governance and regulatory advice which helps educational institutions thrive in a rapidly changing landscape. She has helped institutions to innovate and develop, to widen their reach, build institutional resilience, and deliver the best outcomes for students and other stakeholders.

Smita is recognised in Legal 500's 'Hall of Fame' for education, and as a 'Band 1' lawyer in Chambers.



Daniel Fairbairn, Group Executive Director - Digital and Operations, Windsor Forest Colleges Group

Session: Breakout 6 - Using AI for institutional efficiency

Dan Fairbairn is the Group Executive Director - Technology at the Windsor Forest Colleges Group, a role that sees him lead multiple departments, including IT, Marketing, Admissions, and Learning Technology.

With over a decade of experience in the further education sector across both curriculum and service delivery leadership, he is a seasoned expert in digital transformation. Dan is known for his "customer-first focus" and for embracing and promoting new technologies, such as cloud working, mobile applications, and AI in education.



Juliana Valadares Saili, Lecturer at Slough & Langley College and AI trainer for education and business

Session: Breakout 6 - Using AI for institutional efficiency

Juliana Valadares Saili is a bilingual educator, ESOL lecturer, and teacher trainer with over 30 years of experience in language education. Based at Slough and Langley College, she has led innovative work on integrating artificial intelligence into English language teaching, teacher development, and corporate training.

Juliana is passionate about promoting learner autonomy, inclusion, and cross-cultural understanding through language and technology. She is also the author of *Our Bilingual Journey: Stories, Strategies and Love in Raising Children Across Languages and Cultures*, a recently published book exploring bilingualism, identity, and the bridges we build between languages and cultures.



Seb Gordon, Director of Communications, Universities UK

Session: Presentation and discussion - Universities UK and Public First research on public perceptions

Seb Gordon leads the political affairs, digital, and media teams at UUK, bringing more than 15 years of experience in strategic communications across various sectors. He is focused on helping organisations build impact and enhance their reputation.

Before joining Universities UK, he led communications at the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) and served as Director of External Communications for the Rail Delivery Group. His career has included senior communications roles within the rail industry, London Fire Brigade, and the Local Government Association. A strong believer in the public value of his work, Gordon is an experienced crisis communications professional with an MA in TV Journalism from Goldsmiths, University of London.

Key information

How to contact us / our support

We're delighted that you're joining us for the GuildHE Annual Conference. Please take a little time to read the following important information. If we can help in any way, please email Amanda Suwart, our Membership and Events Manager, amanda.suwart@guildhe.ac.uk. Also, all the GuildHE team are on site and ready to help, so please flag any of us down!

Venue and rooms

The venue is **Rose Bruford College, Burnt Oak Lane, Sidcup DA15 9DF** ([Google Maps](#))

On arrival, there will be signage leading to the carpark where you will find the main reception. At reception you will be guided to the specific rooms. There will also be information displayed throughout the campus on digital media walls. Room information for all events taking place is also listed below.

Registration area - The Barn Gallery

- GuildHE Annual Conference day 1 networking dinner and entertainment guests
- GuildHE Members' Annual General Meeting
- GuildHE Annual Conference day 2 delegates

Main room - The Rose Theatre

- GuildHE Members' Annual General Meeting
- GuildHE Annual Conference day 2

Breakout room 1 - The Digital Studio

- Breakout session 1: Unlocking efficiency: how shared services can future-proof UK higher education
- Breakout session 4: How to win friends and influence people: a workshop on political and sector influence

Breakout room 2 - The Studio Theatre

- Breakout session 2: SHAPE Observatory work cold spots and crisis in SHAPE research
- Breakout session 5: Free speech and academic freedom: navigating law, values and neutrality

Breakout room 3 - The Barn Theatre

- Breakout session 3: Innovative delivery models and the national skills agenda
- Breakout session 6: Using AI for institutional efficiency

Morning refreshments and food, GuildHE Members' AGM - The Rose Theatre Foyer

Morning refreshments and food, GuildHE Annual Conference guests - Room CO14

Lunch and networking room - Room CO14

Partner and sponsors' exhibition room - Room CO15

Networking drinks, dinner with entertainment, day 1 - The Studio Theatre

Conference dinner and entertainment, day 2 - Lakeside by Lamorbey House

Dress code

The conference is informal, so please wear whatever you feel comfortable in, ranging from business attire to smart casual. For the evening dinners with entertainment you are welcome to opt for a smarter look or a party dress if you'd like to embrace the celebratory atmosphere of the evening.

Registration

Please visit the Barn Gallery each day that you are at conference to register your attendance. You will be provided with a name badge on the first occasion you register.

Conference wifi

Wifi is available throughout the entire campus for visitors. The name of the wifi is **RBC-Public**. **No password** is required.

What to bring

We recommend bringing a laptop or tablet and writing materials to support your participation. A smartphone may also be useful to scan QR codes.

Travel recommendations

Please note that you are responsible for booking your own travel. You may find the following useful:

By train

- Arrive at Sidcup Station, which is approximately a 10-15 minute walk to the main campus reception.
- Frequent services run from central London (for instance, London Charing Cross) to Sidcup with journey times of approximately 30 minutes.
- From Sidcup Station: exit the station, walk down Station Road, turn right onto Burnt Oak Lane and follow the signs leading to the college entrance.

By car

- Set your GPS or SatNav to postcode DA15 9DF (Rose Bruford College).
- If you are travelling from central London, use the A2/M25 route towards Sidcup. Then follow local signage for the college.
- On-site parking is available in front of the college reception but may be limited, so please allow extra time. Please inform the person at the reception that you are parking as a guest for the GuildHE Annual Conference.

By public transport (bus)

- There are several bus routes within a short walk of the campus: buses 51, 160, 229, 286, and 625.

Accommodation

GuildHE group booking information

For participants who registered by 11 November 2025 and chose accommodation on their registration form, you are part of GuildHE's group booking with the Premier Inn London Sidcup. A list of names has been provided to the hotel and the key information is below.

Unfortunately we are not able to accommodate last minute bookings for accommodation.

- Hotel: Premier Inn London Sidcup ([Google Maps](#))
- Booking reference number: **GUIL251118LONSID**
- Group reservation made in the name of: Amanda Suwart, GuildHE
- Room type: double room
- Information on check-in and check-out dates and times: you will receive a personalised email from Amanda Suwart (Membership and Events Manager) covering the details of your Annual Conference registration.

Organisations attending

Advance HE
Arden University
Arts University Bournemouth
Arts University Plymouth
ARU Peterborough
Bath Spa University
Birmingham Newman University
BPP University
British Academy
Buckinghamshire New University
Central School of Ballet
Christ the Redeemer College
Department for Education
Escape Studios
GatenbySanderson
Harper Adams University
Hartpury University
Health Sciences University
Hereford College of Arts
Higher Education Policy Institute
Higher Futures
Institute of Contemporary Music Performance
Jisc
KPMG
Leeds Arts University
Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art
London Higher
MLA College
National Centre for Circus Arts
National Institute of Teaching

Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Office for Students
Office of the Independent Adjudicator for HE
Oxentia
Perlego
Public First
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Rambert School
Regent College London
Rose Bruford College
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
Shakespeare Martineau
St Mary's University Twickenham
Strengthify
Studiosity
TechnologyOne
The Northern School of Art
The Place
Times Higher Education
UCAS
Universities and Colleges Employers Association
Universities UK
University for the Creative Arts
University of Law
University of Suffolk
University of Winchester
University of Worcester
Winchester School of Art
Windsor Forest Colleges Group
Wonkhe



The beautiful Rose Bruford College campus is a protected parkland and a sanctuary for wild birds. Enjoy this unique environment and join us in respecting and preserving the grounds and the wonderful wildlife during your visit.

GuildHE Annual Conference 2025

Rose Bruford College, Burnt Oak Lane, Sidcup DA15 9DF

For annual conference enquiries, email Amanda Suwart,
Membership and Events Manager, amanda.suwart@guildhe.ac.uk

GuildHE
Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square
London
WC1H 9HB

020 3393 6134
info@guildhe.ac.uk
[@guildhe](#)

Charity No. 1012218

www.guildhe.ac.uk