

ORGANISING A REUNION

A reunion is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends, share memories and build social and career networks. Reunions give you a chance to reminisce about 'old times' and learn about what your classmates have been doing since leaving university. Typically, reunions are held to mark a special occasion or in recognition of significant milestones i.e. 10th, 20th, 25th & 30th year since graduating. While in some cases special reunion events are organised by Faculties, most reunions are planned by members of the class for their peers.

This guide gives you a step by step guide on how to organise a reunion.

STEP 1

Getting started

- What type of reunion are you planning? Do you want to organise a reunion for your course, graduation year, department or faculty, etc.?
- Contact the LSBU Association and let them know you are planning a reunion.
- Start by creating a reunion committee. Putting on a reunion can be a big job so it's best if all the tasks can be shared among a team of organisers. The LSBU Alumni Office can help you form a committee.
- The more advance planning the better, we suggest you start planning 12 months in advance for large events.
- If you are unsure of the level of interest the Alumni Office can send out a survey to your reunion group.

STEP 2

Planning a reunion

- Choose a chair or co-chairs (If you have set up a reunion committee).
- Create a budget (registration fee, venue, catering, and other applicable rentals, photography, registration package contents, flowers, balloons, postage etc). Will the costs be covered by applying a price to attend?
- Apply for an LSBU Association grant if needed.
- Choose a date and time (This may depend on venue availability). Reunions can vary in length - from an afternoon to several days.
- Determine program, theme and schedule.
 - Is it a formal sit down meal or a few drinks in a bar?
 - Are partners invited?
 - What type of entertainment would you like to have at the event?
- Choose a venue. Please be aware some University buildings are not open at weekends though special provision can occasionally be made. The LSBU Association can advise on Venues near the University campuses and may be able to organise a campus tour for your reunion. Do you require a venue with a bar, parking or disabled access?
- Create a schedule and allocate duties.

STEP 3

Publicising it

- Create a promotion plan on how you will let people know about your event
- Determine an invitation list. The LSBU Alumni Office will be able to search the LSBU Association database, which contains over 50,000 alumni. We can not give you the contact details, but we can send invitations on your behalf.
- Ways to promote your event include:
 - Notice in Connected (Alumni magazine dispatched twice a year)
 - Notice in the LSBU Association e-newsletter (Sent every 4 months)
 - Notice on LSBU Association website events calendar
 - Notice on social networking sites e.g. Facebook
 - Invites to contacts in the LSBU Association database
 - Ask invitees to also contact their peers (you could include a missing classmates list and ask people to respond if they have any information about the lost alumni)
- Consider sending a save a date card

STEP 4

Sending invitations

- Write your invitation letter and design your RSVP card. The LSBU Association can provide templates for you, but if you create your own remember to include the date, time, location, cost to attend, RSVP date, dietary or special requests, how to book a place, how to book accommodation and contact details.
- Send e-mail/letter invites or arrange for the LSBU Association to send them on your behalf. Please note, in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 1998, we will not release personal contact details on our graduates. Therefore we can only send out emails/letters on your behalf for contacts held in our database.
- If you want to invite your former lecturers, the LSBU Association can help you get back in contact with them.
- Give the LSBU Association the text you wish to include in the Alumni website, e-newsletter or Connected magazine.
- Make sure you have one central person to keep count of attendees. The LSBU Association are happy to manage this on your behalf.
- If responses are low, a follow up letter may need to be sent to those who have not replied.

STEP 5

Pre-event

- Finalise numbers with the venue
- If applicable, arrange catering.
- Try to dig up fun memorabilia (like old photos or documents) to display at the reunion.
- Create name tags.
- Plan and get decorations.
- Create registration packages and forms.
- Visit the venue site and determine if extra items are required e.g. a PA system.
- Arrange photography for the event.
- Create reunion evaluation forms. This will help you ascertain whether your group wishes to meet up every year, every 5 years or in 10 years time. The LSBU Association can provide you with a template.
- Do you want to obtain details from attendees on the day, if so you may want to organise a visitor book or forms which can be completed by attendees and then shared with the group after the event.
- Send a reminder letter/e-mail to those attending to confirm details of the event. Include your contact details and the contact detail of the venue.
- Establish who will help on the day will staff the registration desk etc.

STEP 4

On the day

- If applicable, put signs up to point attendees to the right area
- Put up display and decorations
- Lay out the badges/welcome packs/reunion evaluation forms
- Check equipment e.g. microphone etc.
- Brief staff
- Enjoy!

STEP 4

Post event

- Please send the LSBU Association photos and a summary of the reunion so it can be published on our website and magazine.
- Thank any speakers/ special guests who presented at the event

The LSBU Association wish you luck organising your reunion and will be more than happy to help. You can contact us on 020 7815 6712 or alumni@lsbu.ac.uk.