



# SHETLAND INSTITUTE UHI

## A NEW COLLEGE FOR SHETLAND

*Shetland College, Train Shetland and NAFC Marine Centre will merge to create an inspirational hub of innovation and learning designed to meet the needs of the people of Shetland, nationally and internationally*

## Background

The proposed merger will build on the considerable strengths of NAFC Marine Centre, Shetland College and Train Shetland to create a vibrant new College within the family of the University of the Highlands and Islands.

We will be at the heart of economic development for the islands and work closely with industries as diverse as textiles and aquaculture, in various ways from skills development to research.

Over recent years, the three institutions have been working to bring all their provision together in order to make efficiencies in operations but also develop opportunities for all learners and better meet the needs of Shetland.

Shetland Islands Council and NAFC Marine Centre recently approved the Merger Business Case, which outlines the business case which will be considered by Scottish Ministers before the new merged college is launched.

We are delighted to be entering the final stages of this project which will end an extended period of uncertainty and will see us work towards the launch of Shetland Institute UHI. We hope you enjoy learning more about what we propose and encourage you to engage with us now and in our future to help us make sure we deliver what Shetland needs.

To find out more about the proposals or to respond to our formal consultation please visit: [www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/consultation](http://www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/consultation)

If you would like to contact us then email [shetlandmerger@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:shetlandmerger@uhi.ac.uk) or to provide feedback online visit: [www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/feedback](http://www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/feedback)

## The case for change

The existing services play a vital role in delivering improvements to the economy through skills development, training, research and by providing varied and high quality options to school leavers and others who wish to learn.

Current services are, however, expensive to maintain and are operated separately. This is not sustainable longer term and it was important to build critical mass and find a way to have in place a single management and governance structure.

Over recent years there has been extensive work undertaken to make sure the merger goes forward in the best way for Shetland. We have a business case that outlines how we can make sure the new college will be sustainable and deliver the services that will meet the needs of the community and local economy.

There has been a considerable amount of work done on our business case. The goals for our merger are:

- Achieve the best possible student experience
- Make tertiary education in Shetland sustainable
- Change and innovate, and build capacity amongst staff
- Build on our relationships and be responsive.

We will be an important part of Shetland community planning, not least in supporting targets for local economic policy but also in growing the student population and increasing apprentice opportunities. This can only happen if we develop our curriculum to the highest quality and ensure it is demand-led and inclusive.

## The future vision

All of our work to date has helped inform our vision for Shetland Institute UHI. We want the new merged college to be an inspirational hub of innovation and learning designed to meet the needs of the people of Shetland, nationally and internationally.

This will be achieved by:

- **Working together**  
Fostering activity and interaction across the organisation and between staff and students
- **Working for Shetland**  
Addressing skills needs, supporting innovation and applied research for the Shetland economy as the university for Shetland, within the University for the Highlands and Islands (UHI)
- **Working sustainably**  
Embedding sustainability in the curriculum and in our practice
- **Working to become resilient**  
Encouraging staff and student development and aspiration, exploring and achieving new income streams
- **Working with partners**  
Furthering relationships, strengthening our position within UHI and developing partnerships including with other institutions, particularly in the research field.

## Learning and Teaching

Shetland Institute UHI will provide the help, facilities and services all students need to participate in the life of the Institute and to make the most of their learning experience, regardless of their background, reason for learning, when or how they learn. As many learning opportunities as possible will be created for students to explore, enjoy and experience. Students will be able to choose a vocational or an academic route, with equal opportunity for meaningful progression.

Existing expertise in developing short courses and in apprenticeships will strengthen work-based learning throughout the Institute whilst our reputation and track record in scientific and creative/cultural research will allow us to continue to build on our research and curriculum offer.

We have strong community links through our outreach Learning Centres in remote and rural locations and these will be maintained. We will also be looking to widen participation to include residents in Shetland's remotest locations.

The curriculum activity areas will be:

- **Creative and Cultural**  
Continuing the exciting work in creative textiles and fine art as well as the courses offered in partnership with Shetland Arts
- **Seafood and Sea**  
Continuing focused research and learning developed by NAFC Marine Centre
- **Community and Enterprise**  
Building core skills, employability and entrepreneurial capacity in our learners and consequently Shetland community
- **Healthcare and Society**  
Working to support the provision of a sustainable health and care workforce for Shetland
- **Technology, Engineering and the Marine and Built Environment**  
Drawing together Information and Communication Technology and Computing, Construction and Marine and Engineering sections.

## Curriculum development

For students, we will make sure we provide:

- A curriculum and student experience that attracts Shetland school leavers and students from the UK, EU and internationally
- Strong school-community-college links which maximise learning opportunities and access to facilities and resources for all learning phases
- Inclusive provision that enables learners with diverse needs to learn and progress, with high quality support for students
- Accessible provision for people of all ages, at all stages in their lifelong learning journey, from all areas of Shetland
- Learner progression and learner journeys enabling cross-curricular learning and diverse pathways
- Excellence in employer engagement and response to employer needs
- High quality teaching and research attracting and retaining excellent staff, providing career progression and continuing professional development in Shetland.

To make sure Shetland Institute UHI provides opportunities for all then we will:

- Enhance the visibility of all Learning Centres including Lerwick and the remote and rural communities, increasing their role in supporting lifelong learning
- Strengthen relationships with local communities to support learning for capacity building, local enterprise and local civic leadership;
- Increase uptake of learning for specific target groups such as parents, for whom local learning is more accessible than centralised learning
- Create stronger links with local organisations supporting carers, care experienced people, and people experiencing other barriers to learning, to create access to learning that meets learners' needs and encourages their aspirations, enabled by well-planned student support services
- Work within UHI to provide the widest possible provision in the islands.

Each curriculum delivery section will establish an employer's forum (or similar), which will be designed to inform curriculum and ensure the skills needs of local employers are understood and addressed. To make sure that we continue to contribute and support Shetland's economy we will develop:

- A one-stop approach to short course enquiries, administration of bookings, consistent pricing and customer follow-up
- Institute of Leadership and Management centre accreditation, increasing the range of short courses for leadership, management, coaching and mentoring
- A review of short course provision in particular looking to support and promote entrepreneurship for our students and local start-ups
- Feasibility studies to inform direct support to enterprise through college facilities such as the training kitchen, the Textile facilitation Unit and Information and Communications Technology facilities for business-hub use
- Research in particular subjects relevant to Shetland and with international profile.

## Governance

Shetland Institute, UHI will be established as a non-incorporated college. It will be an assigned college to UHI the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the Highlands and Islands. The new body will seek charitable status through registration with OSCR prior to vesting.

## The steps to the launch of Shetland Institute UHI

Now the Ministerial business case has been endorsed and submitted then there is a period of local consultation with staff, students and stakeholders. That will be followed by evaluation visits and work led by the Scottish Funding Council after the summer.

There will then be a further period of consultation led by the Scottish Government before a final decision on the merger is made by the Minister. Time will then be required in order for legislation to dissolve the current colleges and create the new one. We will be sharing news of our progress and if you would like to be kept informed then please contact us by emailing [shetlandmerger@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:shetlandmerger@uhi.ac.uk) or telephone 01595 771000.

We are carrying out a formal consultation to gather views about the merger business case from as many people, businesses, organisations, stakeholders, and other interested parties as possible.

You can respond to the consultation online by visiting:  
[www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/consultation](http://www.a-new-college-for-shetland.uhi.ac.uk/consultation)

Please complete the consultation online by 3<sup>rd</sup> of July. If you would like to receive the survey in a different format please contact us at [collegemerge@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:collegemerge@shetland.gov.uk)