

Report on enrolments and associated risks

Analysis of our current position in relation to student numbers relates directly to two of the key risks on our risk register – failing to achieve allocated HE student number targets and/or not meeting allocated FE credit targets. Each of these risks have potentially very significant financial implications with potential clawback and possible reduction in future grants.

| | | 12/9/22 | 27/9/21 | Total AY enrolment figures | | | | |
|----|----------------|------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | | | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
| FE | Full time (FT) | 49 | 69 | 72 | 76 | 90 | 94 | 89 |
| | Part time (PT) | 421 | 406 | 2585 | 2235 | 2197 | 3348 | 3584 |
| HE | Full time (FT) | 117 | 116 | 128 | 163 | 117 | 112 | 117 |
| | Part time (PT) | 122 | 150 | 273 | 255 | 254 | 278 | 220 |

Shetland UHI enrolments at 12/09/2022 (data extracted from Metis)

Please note that these figures will continue to change as further enrolments are completed, and part time students join courses later in the academic year.

Full time FE enrolments are significantly reduced from last year, by approximately 30%, and are the lowest that we have seen for at least five years. The steady and significant decline in the number of such enrolments across the partnership that we have seen since 2018 appears to have continued, with partners seeing an average reduction of around 25%, with some reductions as high as 50%. Perth UHI appears to be the one exception to this having enrolled 400 more full time students than last year. However, the figures will evolve and stabilise as registrations are finalised.

A significant contributing factor to falling full time FE numbers is the high level of employment, which does not require the candidate to hold an FE/HE qualification, that is available to school leavers. The SDS publication of Annual Participation Measures states that of 16-19 year olds in Shetland, 27% were in employment and only 66% were in education in 2021-22. This places Shetland 2nd in Scotland for the percentage of young people in employment, at 10% more than the national average. Conversely, Shetland is 2nd lowest in Scotland for the number of young people in education, at 7% less than the national average. Indeed, as a whole, UHI partners are situated within six of the top eight local authority areas for percentage of employment amongst 16-19 year olds, and six of the eight lowest areas for percentage in education.

Furthermore, of the young people who are in education, there appears to be an increase in the number that are choosing to stay on at school as opposed to moving on to college settings.

HE full time figures have returned to a figure consistent with pre-pandemic levels. This was expected in the wake of the upturn that we saw from 2020 caused by uncertainty around students going away to university. This situation is more positive than across most of the partnership where there has universally been a further reduction on last year's HE full time figures to a point lower than in 2018.

At present, part time numbers in both FE and HE are similar to 2021 at this point in the year. We are still processing enrolments from the early part of the academic year and would expect these numbers to continue to increase throughout the year.

Our credit target for AY 2022-23 is 4335. This is consistent with the credit totals achieved over the last two years.

| 12/9/22 | 12/10/21 | Total credit figures | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 |
| 1393 | 2763 | 4383 | 4337 | 4276 | 4572 |

Shetland UHI credits at 12/09/2022 (data extracted from Metis)

Our current internal credit forecast puts us at 2023 credits; however, this is not considering any of our SVQ or additional part time students. Unlike most partners, Shetland UHI depends heavily on part time students to achieve credits, with over two thirds of our target being met with such students in a typical year. Relying on students completing SVQ units and embarking on shorter part time courses makes it very difficult to predict what our final enrolment and credit total is likely to be, particularly at such an early stage in the academic year. Nonetheless, with such a reduction in full time FE enrolments (20 enrolments representing 360 credits) substantial and sustained growth in shorter programmes will be required if we are to meet our target.

Our school partnership vocational pathways programmes are very strong, with most courses at capacity this year, and a new course in drama successfully launched. We currently have 231 school pupils attending across these programmes from S3 and S4. This is a notable increase on last year and represents around 43% of all S3/4 Shetland school pupils. Across our school programmes at all levels, in the region of 16% of all Shetland school pupils are engaging with us on a partnership course, which is consistent with the national statistics from 18/19 and higher than the predicted 12% outlined in the 2021 CDN report for the Curriculum and Assessment Board.

Whilst vocational pathways programme numbers are very encouraging, our senior phase partnership enrolments were disappointing. Only three of the offers were able to run and with small numbers. It is important that we can successfully offer progression through our school programmes, and we are working with SIC and schools to review the senior phase offering to ensure that it is sustainable and desirable, but significant changes will not be implemented until 2023. The various priorities of the involved parties make the planning challenging however we hope to have a more attractive and effective offer in place for next academic year.

There has been a positive start with short courses across the campuses, with a significant increase in the number of courses and delegates when considering the same period last year. There are also new short courses currently going through the approval process to start as promptly as late September.

| No. of Courses | | No. of delegate places filled | | No. of days of training | |
|----------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
| AY 22/23 | AY 21/22 | AY 22/23 | AY 21/22 | AY 22/23 | AY 21/22 |
| 20 | 13 | 150 | 81 | 56 | 23 |

Short course numbers 1st August to 9th September

Modern apprenticeship numbers are buoyant, with workplaces beginning to take on students again in the post pandemic environment. We have also attracted some new clients to enrol apprentices with Shetland UHI and secured ongoing work in this area for health and care.

The year ahead presents a challenge in meeting our targets, with a slow start to the year in some areas. We are working hard across the college to consider updated and new offerings for flexible start dates. Additionally, increased cross campus and partnership working within UHI is offering new opportunities for growth, whilst the UHI Curriculum Review presents both opportunities and challenges for the future.

In considering our risk register, at present the two risks outlined of not meeting our allocated FE credit target and of falling short of our HE student number targets can be considered as amber. It is possible that we may not reach our targets at this stage, given the early enrolment indications, and should we not meet either of them it would be of significant impact.