

Merger Proposal Cover

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A proposal for the merger of Shetland College, Train Shetland and NAFC Marine Centre to create one tertiary education institution for Shetland – Shetland Institute, UHI

Foreword

I am delighted to have been appointed to lead the creation and development of a new tertiary education institution for Shetland. I believe this is a timely initiative to secure the future of tertiary education in Shetland in the wider context of improving the quality of life for island communities and valuing their potential to contribute to Scotland's economic development.

The three present institutions, NAFC Marine Centre, Train Shetland and Shetland College are 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. Bringing all of this provision together will allow efficiencies in operation and cross-fertilisation to further develop what we do, with an overarching aim of providing diverse learner journeys through all sections and research apposite to the needs of Shetland.

The business case which follows highlights the breadth of activity that is being delivered both here in Shetland, for islanders, and, in some specialist provision, for students from a wide geographic spread. We are immensely proud of our students and their achievements and look forward to developing and strengthening our offer to students of the future – across all levels of delivery and all ages, locally, nationally and internationally.

I believe the cross cutting themes of Sustainability, Technology, Innovation and Start-ups, and Wellbeing and Inclusion will help us guide the development of both staff and students in topics and skills that are highly relevant to the wider world of work. Our delivery areas – Creative and Cultural, Seafood and Sea, Community and Enterprise, Healthcare and Society and Technology, Engineering, Marine and Built Environment are aligned to the economic needs of Shetland. In our small institution we will encourage cross-collaborations between these areas and I am excited to hear some of the ideas already emerging for new delivery.

I understand the process of bringing together these institutions has taken a great deal of work and a long time to come to fruition. There is now a real commitment to complete this project to form a single Shetland Institute within the UHI family which we all can be proud of for the future. I would like to thank all of those who have worked to develop this case and the staff of the merging institutions for their patience in face of uncertainty.

Professor Jane Lewis
Principal Designate/ CEO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To be Written

CONTEXT FOR MERGER

Background

The development of this case for consideration by Scottish Ministers to merge three of Shetland's most important institutions builds on more than a decade of discussion and consideration in the Shetland Islands. This signifies the importance of creating a new, unified college that offers unique and high quality further and higher education opportunities, fulfilling the lifelong learning needs of the islands, sharing our research expertise with the wider world which itself is facilitated by our exceptional marine and coastal environment and our strong cultural traditions, and making Shetland a great place to live, work and study.

This piece of work is being finalised at a time when the proposed National Islands Plan establishes thirteen strategic objectives critical to improving the quality of life for island communities and helping Scotland's islands play their rightful place in Scotland's national and international development. Without doubt the proposed institution, Shetland Institute UHI, will play an essential role in achieving every one of the thirteen Island Plan objectives. In our delivery of further and higher education, high quality research and knowledge exchange, we are also ensuring island students of all ages and backgrounds benefit from the wide range of national policies to enable all learners to achieve their potential, gain knowledge and skills for life and work, we fulfil the needs of businesses contributing to our economy and we empower communities.

The Ministerial Merger Business Case concludes two years of intensive work, initiated by a project team within Shetland Islands Council and their collaboration with Scottish Fisheries Training Centre Trust, reaching agreement to merge NAFC Marine Centre, Train Shetland and Shetland College. The following development of this business case involved many hours of learning from staff, students, employers and other stakeholders what the essential elements of a merged institution should look like - and more than this, developing a vision for the new Shetland Institute UHI that reflects the passion, aspirations and strengths of staff and students for tertiary education and research in Shetland.

A Shadow Board of non-executive directors and stakeholders have worked tirelessly to develop and present this case for establishing Shetland College UHI. They profoundly believe in the importance of tertiary education and research in Shetland and make the case for ensuring it secures the resources and support it will need as it builds on the track record of the previous colleges to grow its activities, reach more learners, and play its rightful role in contributing to the economy, creative and cultural and social life of Shetland and Scotland in the wider world.

The Shadow Board is ensuring good governance and leadership, in partnership with the new Principal Designate and CEO Professor Jane Lewis.

The Strategic Context for Change

Shetland Institute, UHI will operate in a rapidly changing and developing context, locally and nationally. To provide the best possible, most relevant learner experience, the Institute will need to take account of the strategies and plans which will impact on Shetland and on Scotland. The most significant areas of these plans are set out here.

National

The National Islands Plan

The National Islands Plan for Scotland was published by the Scottish Government in December 2019. It sets out thirteen strategic objectives. The most relevant to the creation of Shetland Institute, UHI are set out here:

Strategic Objective 2 – To improve and promote sustainable economic development we will:

- Create and promote apprenticeships and job opportunities for young islanders.
- Ensure that skills provision is agile and responsive to future demand and enables individuals to take up opportunities.
- Build on Scotland's National Marine Plan to ensure that fishing and other economic activities stemming from the sea provide increased opportunities for island communities, but at the same time that they are pursued in a sustainable manner.

Strategic Objective 12 – To promote and improve education for all throughout life we will:

- Work with UHI, the University of Aberdeen, Heriot- Watt University, Robert Gordon University and other education providers to ensure a broad range of options are available to young people.
- Support UHI as it deepens collaboration with island partners to promote learner pathways, innovation and industry/employer engagement.
- Ensure that young people are given the same opportunities to access education as young people on mainland Scotland.
- Consider the needs of adult learners in our island communities as we develop our adult learning strategy for Scotland.

Scotland's Economic Strategy

Scotland's Economic Strategy describes the actions the Scottish Government plan to take to develop the priority of sustainable growth. These include:

“Invest in Scotland's people at all stages of life to ensure that we have a well skilled, healthy and resilient population and an innovative, engaged and productive workforce;

Support the development of highly innovative businesses across the Scottish economy;

Encourage more of Scotland's diverse business base to engage in innovation and research and development as part of their day-to-day activities;

Continue to support the high-impact, world-class research of Scotland's Universities and improve levels of commercialisation of academic research.”

Colleges Scotland: Colleges Sector Statement of Ambition 2018-2023

The purpose of Colleges Scotland's Statement of Ambition is to set out a vision, mission and set of values for the college sector for the next five years (2018-2023). A set of underpinning ambitions have also been outlined which will support the achievement of the vision by the sector:

“Colleges have a critical role supporting individuals and businesses in Scotland as well as providing community leadership in the regional economies in which we are situated.

The sector's three ambitions are outlined below:

1. Developing our people and partnerships
2. Supporting a successful economy
3. Helping communities thrive.

Regional

University of the Highlands and Islands: Strategic Vision and Plan 2015-2020

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is an integrated university comprised of thirteen academic partners across the Highlands and Islands region of Scotland, which include Shetland College and NAFC Marine Centre.

The University of the Highlands and Islands is the Regional Strategic Body for the Highlands and Islands, as established under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 (amended by the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013) to support a regional approach to the planning and funding of college provision.

The strategic vision for the University of the Highlands and Islands comprises the following themes:

- The University will act as a force for economic, social and cultural change across the region by connecting and collaborating with businesses, public and third sector partners and communities;

- The University will continue to meet the needs of learners within the region, while targeting growth in our share of young entrants and students from beyond the region;
- The University's research will be recognised internationally, nationally and regionally for its quality and for its contribution to our remit of transforming and enhancing lives, the environment and the economy.

Highlands and Islands Regional Tertiary Outcome Agreement 2017-2020

Through Outcome Agreements, colleges and universities in Scotland set out what they plan to deliver in exchange for funding from Scottish Funding Council. The Highlands and Islands Regional Tertiary Outcome Agreement 2017-2020 details the agreed aims, priorities and outcomes for the delivery of education, research and training through the University of the Highlands and Islands, and how these will deliver on Scottish Funding Council objectives.

The aims, priorities and outcomes agreed in the Regional Outcome Agreement are:

Access

- Higher Education Priority 1: Widening Access – learning that is accessible and diverse attracting and providing more equal opportunities for people of all ages and from all communities and backgrounds;
- Further Education Outcome: Access – a more equal society because learning is accessible and diverse attracting and providing more equal opportunities for people of all ages and from all communities and backgrounds.

High Quality Learning and Teaching

- Higher Education Priority 2 and Further Education Priority – an outstanding system of learning that is accessible and diverse where students progress successfully with the ability, ideas and ambition to make a difference;
- Further Education Outcome: an outstanding system of learning where all students are progressing successfully and benefitting from a world-class learning experience in the hands of expert lecturers delivered in modern facilities;
- Outcome: a more successful economy and society with well prepared and skilled students progressing into jobs with the ability, ideas and ambition to make a difference.

Research

- Higher Education Priority 3: World leading research – world-leading universities, nationally and internationally connected with a global reputation for their research.

Innovation

- Higher Education Priority 4: Greater innovation in the economy – a national culture of enterprise and innovation leading to a more productive and sustainable economy.

High performing institutions

- Higher Education Priority 5: Further Education Outcome – a coherent system of high-performing, sustainable institutions with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements.

Highlands and Islands Skills Investment Plan

In October 2014, Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise launched the *Skills Investment Plan (SIP) for Highlands and Islands*. This was the culmination of discussion, research and consultations on finding the best way to realise the ambitions of the three agencies to position the Highlands and Islands as a region with outstanding skills and the potential for development, in light of emerging economic opportunities.

The Skills Investment Planning approach is intended to bring skills demand and supply closer together, and to contribute to a vibrant economy by supporting individuals to develop the skills needed by industry. The Highlands and Islands Skills Investment Plan

sets out:

- the region's economic performance and sectoral and local assets;
- the performance of the regional labour market and associated demographic challenges;
- skills issues facing employers within the region;
- opportunities and challenges related to future economic and employment growth;
- assessment of current education and training provision.

This extensive and robust evidence base is used as the basis for a framework for future regional action on skills issues. Five key themes were identified as priorities for action with a range of specific interventions and activities identified for each. The themes are:

- Meeting the current skills needs of employers;
- Planning for the future;
- A region for young people;
- People attraction and place attractiveness;
- Strengthening the employer voice in the skills system.

The actions set out in the Skills Investment Plan are intended to have an impact on:

- numbers of young people entering positive destinations on leaving school;
- numbers of young people staying within the Highlands and Islands on leaving school, college and university as a result of good quality education, training and employment opportunities being on offer;
- reducing the number of businesses reporting difficulties accessing skills training;
- increasing the number of businesses reporting growth in their workforce;
- the scale and range of continuing professional development provision available within the Highlands and Islands.

The Skills Investment Plan is helping guide skills planning and investment decision-making within the Highlands and Islands. However, the Highlands and Islands is a large and diverse area, and employment and skills issues are often local in their focus – reflecting the boundaries of local labour markets, and the specifics of local economies.

Local

Shetland's Partnership Plan 2018-2028

The Shetland Partnership, of which the Council is a key member, is the Community Planning Partnership for Shetland. The Shetland Partnership Plan 2018-2028 reflects the shared vision of the local area and the partner organisations:

“Shetland is a place where everyone is able to thrive; living well in strong resilient communities; and where people and communities are able to help plan and deliver solutions to future challenges.”

The Shetland Partnership Plan sets out the shared priorities of the Shetland Partnership for 2018-2028, which are as follows:

- **People** - Individuals and families thrive and reach their full potential.
- **Participation** - People participate and influence decisions on services and use of resources.
- **Place** - Shetland is an attractive place to live, work, study and invest.
- **Money** - All households can afford to have a good standard of living.

The following targets in the Partnership Plan will be addressed by maintaining and developing a sustainable Tertiary Education Research and Training sector in Shetland:

- 97% of school leavers will be in positive destinations (education, employment, training, and personal development) in 2021, rising to 98% by 2028 (currently 96.1%);
- No more than 15% of businesses are struggling to fill vacancies due to a lack of local labour in 2021, and no more than 5% in 2028 (currently 20%).

The relevant ten-year outcomes from the Plan are as follows:

People

- The number of disadvantaged people and households in Shetland will be considerably reduced as a result of people being enabled and empowered to address the issues they face and helping others to thrive in the same way.

Place

- People will be accessing employment, education and services in new and innovative ways designed to minimise barriers to involvement for all.
- Shetland will be attracting and retaining the people needed to sustain our economy, communities and services.

Money

- Everyone will be able to access the support they need to maximise their income potential; including innovative, flexible and entrepreneurial employment opportunities throughout Shetland.

Securing the future of Tertiary Education Research and Training services in Shetland will contribute to the Shetland Partnership Plan's achievement of the following National Outcomes within Scotland's National Performance Framework:

- We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely;
- We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society;
- We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone;
- We are open, connected and make a positive contribution nationally.

10 Year Plan to Attract People to Live, Study, Work and Invest in Shetland

A key objective for the Shetland Partnership is to develop and implement a ten-year action plan to attract people to live, work, study and invest in Shetland. This plan is predicated on the link between a healthy demographic balance and the ability to sustain communities and services, and compete economically.

The vision of the 10 Year Plan is:

"In 2028 Shetland will:

- *Be an island of opportunity for young people, businesses and investors;*
- *Be a vibrant and positive student destination;*
- *Have a more balanced demographic profile and a growing population underpinned with more private sector jobs."*

In order to achieve this vision, one of the objectives of the Plan is :

- To foster an environment that supports entrepreneurship and sustainable learning and research.

Under this objective, the plan identifies the following key priorities:

- Expansion of Modern Apprenticeship programmes across all disciplines, and access funding from the Apprenticeship Levy;
- Development of Further Education programmes in developing skills areas, and work with local businesses and community partners to develop a skills investment plan;
- Further develop HE programmes which retain and attract in students e.g. the performing arts programme with Shetland Arts in Mareel;
- Facilitate the provision of student accommodation;
- Provision of short courses for businesses;
- Priority will be given to highly applied, industry specific research that supports sectors of local economic importance;
- A vibrant post-graduate research community will be developed within Shetland.

Our Plan 2016 to 2020

Ensuring inclusive growth through developing the skills of local people and creating well-paid jobs is a core part of the Council's vision. The Council's current Corporate Plan: Our Plan 2016 to 2020 states:

"A stronger economy which has well-paid jobs available to more people has the potential to produce a more prosperous and fairer society in Shetland.

The long-term community plan aim is for Shetland to have good places to live as well as sustainable economic growth with employment opportunities, and for our residents to have the skills they need to benefit from those opportunities."

The Council's Corporate Plan highlights the following as priorities for improving the economy and quality of life in Shetland:

- The tertiary education, research and training project will have created an effective model for providing excellent services to our learners;
- There will be opportunities for people with all levels of skills, and there will be a close match between the skills that businesses need and those that the trained workforce have;
- We will have an economy that promotes enterprise and is based on making full use of local resources, skills and a desire to investigate new commercial ideas.

Tertiary Education Sector in Shetland: Strategic Plan 2017-2019

A joint strategic plan for the tertiary education services in Shetland, comprising Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland, was developed in 2017 as a response to the requirement for a closer integration of services, with a view to integration of management structures in the future. The plan describes the following vision:

"NAFC Marine Centre, Shetland College and Train Shetland will work together to help build the future of Shetland through education, training and research".

The joint strategic plan identifies six strategic goals for the period up to 2019:

- Respond to the needs of Shetland;
- Deliver high quality learning experiences and successful outcomes for all learners;
- Carry out high quality research;
- Provide high quality governance, leadership and management structures;
- Grow our business;
- Build sustainability.

The Future and the Case for Change

The development of a sustainable Tertiary Education Research and Training sector in Shetland should be clearly seen as an investment in the future of Shetland, and one which should be undertaken in partnership with community planning partners, learners, employers and the local community.

Growing the working age population and developing Shetland as a destination of choice to live, work, study and invest are core aims for community planning partners in Shetland. In order to achieve these aims, it is essential to establish and maintain a Tertiary Education Research and Training sector which is financially sustainable, student-focused, delivers a high quality learning experience and which is properly engaged with learners, businesses and communities.

The political priorities of the Council, community planning partners and government are clear in placing Tertiary Education Research and Training services at the heart of economic policy, given their vital role in delivering improvements to the economy through skills development, training, research and providing varied and high quality options for school leavers. This sector is crucial to the ambitions of the Shetland Partnership Plan and the 10 Year

Plan, not least in the targets of creating new private sector jobs, growing the student population and increasing the number of local apprentices.

Current services are expensive to maintain and are operated separately in a manner which is not conducive to implementing a cohesive strategy for the local sector. In order to reduce the draw on public finances which support the separate institutions, and to develop a more sustainable, responsive and learner-friendly sector to grow the student population and take advantage of economic opportunities, restructuring is required.

Demand for a more highly skilled workforce is borne out from the results of the Shetland Employment Survey 2017, which showed that 20% of employers cannot fill vacancies due to a lack of local labour, while 23% said that the basic employability of candidates for vacancies is a problem. Further, of those businesses who stated they had plans to invest in the next three years, 28% said that they have plans to invest in their workforce, while only 27% of local employers said that they were able to source all their training needs in Shetland.

Following the Shetland Employment Survey 2017, a dedicated skills survey was carried out in order to gather information on recruitment and skills issues, in order to inform local skills planning. As part of this survey, employers were specifically asked about experiences with the local tertiary sector, and the draft report makes the following summarised statement:

“It was felt both local training providers and SIC could liaise more with industry, to discuss potential future workload, and required skills and training. It was further felt that local training providers could be more proactive in terms of marketing their services to employers. Long waiting periods for training courses locally, cancellation of courses at short notice, irregular running of courses, and minimum numbers required for training were raised as issues. Increased use of IT, web and cloud based services was raised as a major change in recent years.”

Only 24% of respondents to the skills survey stated that they felt communication and consultation between employers and training providers was good, while 68% felt that employers should be involved in curriculum development, suggesting a need for change in the local sector.

Uncertainty over the future of Tertiary Education Research and Training services in Shetland has ongoing negative impacts for the sector, including loss of key staff, inability to invest for the future, difficulties in cultivating and maintaining strategic relationships and the lack of coherent long-term planning. For those reasons it is essential to identify a suitable option for delivery of these services and provide a clear direction of travel for the future.

The Case for Merger

Three major pieces of evaluative work have been carried out to determine how best to provide tertiary education in Shetland. All have recommended merger of the current provision. These are summarised below:

- In 2013, the Anderson Solutions Report: the review concluded that *“combining NAFC Marine Centre, Shetland College and Train Shetland into a new independent college will be substantially more beneficial than alternative options, including the status quo”*.
- In 2016, the Shetland Tertiary Education, Research and Training Draft Integration Proposals report: concluded that the overall vision for the future of Tertiary Education in Shetland would be better achieved if there was better joint-working and collaboration, in line with the findings of earlier reviews and studies.
- In 2018, the Mullen Report concluded that:
“A three-way merger (NAFC Marine Centre, Shetland College UHI and Train Shetland) would best provide “the opportunity for the education sector in Shetland to play a stronger role in enhancing vocational skills, supporting economic growth and improving the “life Chances” of the people within Shetland”;

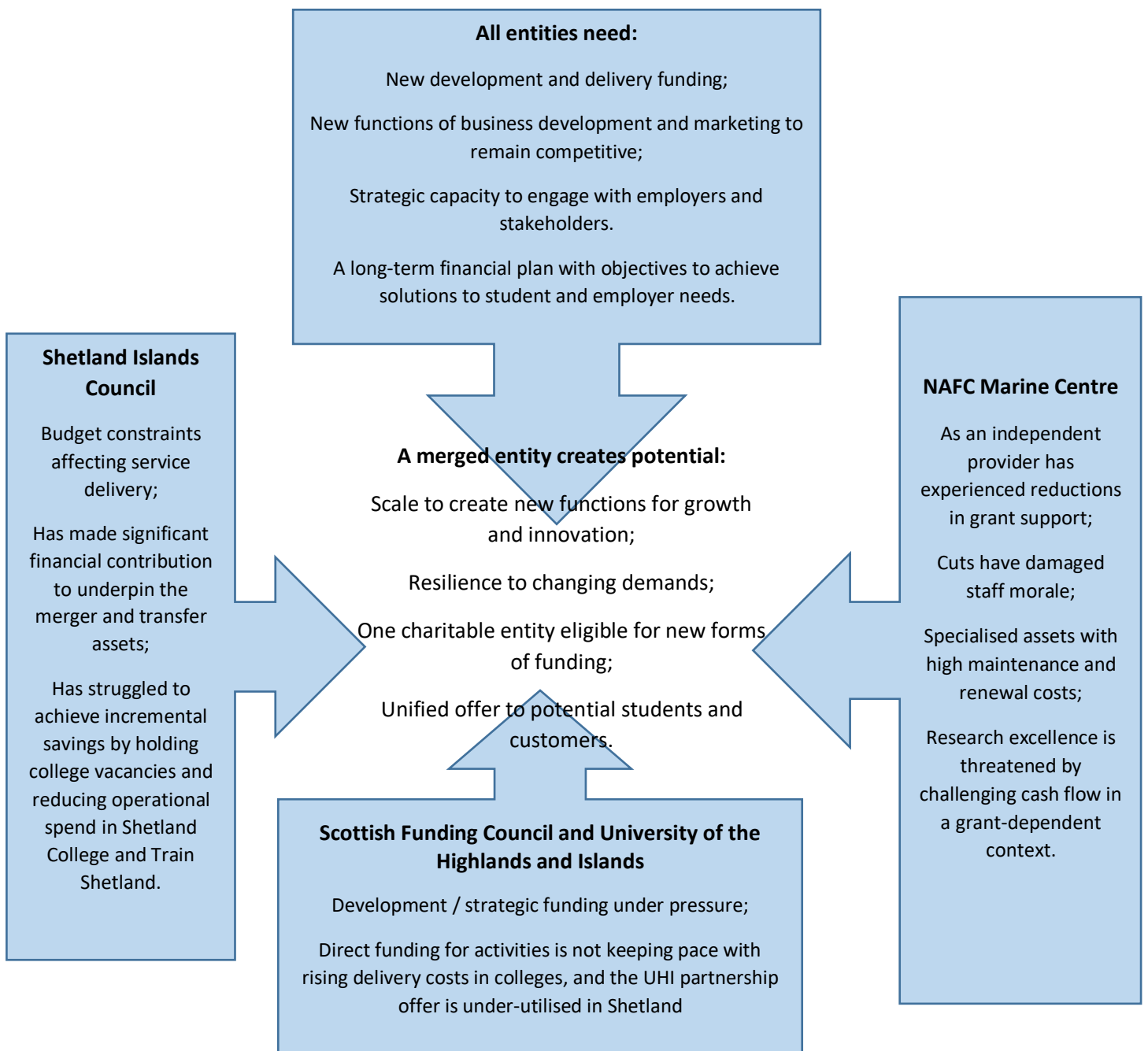
A merged institution would be better able to achieve financial sustainability, more effective streamlined governance, greater capacity for financial planning and attracting investment, develop commercial income and to safeguard specialisms;

A merger would “assist in the development of a more entrepreneurial and innovative culture within the education sector in Shetland”.

- In 2018, Shetland Islands Council Full Business Case concluded with an agreement in principle to a merger with some conditions from the NAFC Marine Centre Board.

In addition to these pieces of work various impediments to a successful merger have been overcome, with arrangements in place for transfer of properties and pensions cessation.

Financial drivers initiated the studies informing the merger proposals and the sustainability of the new Shetland Institute UHI is of critical importance to future generations and to Shetland’s economy and community life. Exploring how the stakeholders have experienced the financial challenges they face together differently in their own organisations, confirms that all organisations reach the same conclusion to merge regardless of their starting point.



More widely, the context for tertiary education delivery in the current public financial climate is challenging with reducing public sector funding and rising costs of delivery. The local context is of a remote island base with elevated delivery costs; a small local market for education, research and training and an increasingly competitive landscape in the UK and internationally alongside the challenge of aging assets and facilities. Shetland Islands Council Medium Term Financial Plan 18/19 to 23/24 describes the challenge well: “the answer is not simply spending more on more of the same”. The merger project survey of staff across all three establishments, in August 2019 showed 71.5% of staff feel that their organisation needs to change.

Shetland Fisheries Training
Centre Trust

Shetland Islands Council

Gremista Campus

Scalloway Campus

Main Building

Training Suites

NAFC Marine Centre

X staff

Access/FE/HE Apprenticeships Delivery:

Nautical

Engineering

Aquaculture

Training and consultancy:

Aquaculture

Fisheries

Marine Spatial Planning

Research and Knowledge Exchange / Post-Graduate

Fisheries

Aquaculture

Marine Spatial Planning

Shetland College

X staff

Access/FE/HE Apprenticeships Delivery:

Business and Hospitality

Health & Care

IT and Computing

Construction

Creative & Cultural

Community Learning & Development

Outreach Learning:

3 remote/rural learning centres

Research and Knowledge Exchange / Post Graduate

Centre for Rural Creativity

Services to Shetland

Textiles Facilitation Unit

Train Shetland

X staff

Short Course Delivery:

Accredited programmes for industry

Bespoke training development

Apprenticeship development

SDS delivery contract

Employer engagement

Course brokerage

Apprentice support and mentoring

Shared Libraries and Student Support Services

Joint Senior Team

Joint Principal (2016-2019)

Shetland College UHI

Shetland College

Originating in 1970 as the Shetland College of Further Education, Shetland College is an academic partner of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and a part of Shetland Islands Council's Development Services Directorate. The College offers a wide range of study options, from national certificates to postgraduate degrees, across a variety of subjects, including creative industries, Information and Communication Technology, Business and Hospitality, Health and Social Care and Construction.

The College also hosts the Centre for Rural Creativity and is one of three key locations (including Orkney and Perth Colleges) from which the Institute for Northern Studies operates. Creative courses, including music and film, are delivered in Mareel through a Service Level Agreement with Shetland Arts Development Agency.

Shetland College also includes the Train Shetland service, which comprises two separate functions:

- Short Courses delivers a range of training courses to employers in Shetland across various disciplines, including first aid, business management, ICT, health and safety and construction. The centre is accredited by a number of compliance bodies including Highfield ABC, REHIS and OCR, and is the local Construction Plant Competency Scheme (CPCS) centre. Short Courses provides business and related training as part of the local Business Gateway service, and also operates as an examination centre for professional bodies and further/higher education institutes outside of Shetland.
- Vocational Training co-ordinates Modern Apprenticeships across a range of industries, including construction, business and administration, health and social care, engineering, vehicle maintenance, agriculture, hospitality and services. This is done through an annual delivery contract with Skills Development Scotland.

Shetland College operations are under the authority of the Shetland College Board, while overall strategic authority remains with Shetland Islands Council, Education and Families Committee. Staffing issues fall under the authority of Shetland Islands Council Policy and Resources Committee. Shetland College employs 31.7 FTE lecturing staff and 26.6 FTE support staff.

There are 5.0 FTE staff in Train Shetland Short Courses and 4.7 FTE staff in Train Shetland Vocational Training.

Shetland College's main campus is located at the Gremista Industrial Estate in Lerwick, with Train Shetland located in an adjacent building. The College also operates rural learning centres in Yell, Unst, Whalsay, Brae and Lerwick.

Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust

Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust (SFTCT) promotes the development of the Shetland fisheries and maritime sectors, including fish catching, fish processing, fish farming, marine engineering, navigation, seamanship, research and all related ancillary activities. It does this through advice, support, training and research. SFTCT is a registered charity governed by a Board of Trustees; the Board is comprised of representatives of the local seafood industry and a number of independent appointees and is responsible for operating NAFC Marine Centre.

NAFC Marine Centre

Originating in 1992 as the North Atlantic Fisheries College, NAFC Marine Centre is an educational and scientific institute which supports training and development in Shetland's maritime industries, including the seafood sector. The Centre is an academic partner of UHI and is operated by SFTCT. NAFC Marine Centre delivers a range of training and qualifications related to maritime industries – this includes qualifications in the engineering, fish catching and aquaculture sectors (including Modern Apprenticeships), and courses to train and qualify seafarers, including the Merchant Navy Cadet Programme. NAFC Marine Centre carries out a range of applied research and development projects in subjects relevant to the fishing and aquaculture industries, marine spatial planning and the marine environment in general. These include the assessment of shellfish stocks, analysis of fish catching trends, provision of fisheries management advice in support of policy development, and the preparation of the Shetland Islands Marine Spatial Plan and associated guidance. Research can be provided on a contract or consultancy basis. Facilities

at NAFC Marine Centre include a ship bridge simulator, research/teaching laboratories, a marine hatchery and engineering workshops.

The NAFC Marine Centre operates a number of vessels for research, survey, training and other purposes – these include a 12m fishing vessel and a 12.5m survey/training vessel which is equipped to carry out seabed and hydrographic survey work and benthic sampling, as well as for nautical training.

NAFC Marine Centre employs 18.2 FTE staff in Marine Sciences, 16.5 FTE staff in Training and 10.1 staff in Central Services. The NAFC Marine Centre campus is located at Port Arthur in Scalloway.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision

Shetland Institute. UHI

Introduction

The new college will 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, with 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** - Developing relationships with employers, schools, communities, SIC and relevant national and international institutions

This reflects the vision of the University of the Highlands and Islands, to which Shetland Institute will become an assigned college: to be recognised for the quality of its students' experience and for their achievement; and to have a worldwide reputation built upon its innovative approach to learning and its distinctive research and curriculum, enriched by the people, natural environment, economy, culture and heritage of the region and its communities.

The structures, resources and activities of Shetland Institute will shape the future of the new college by:

- Providing diverse learning journeys with opportunities for all who can benefit;
- Providing skills development in areas relevant to Shetland;
- Supporting innovation in research and enterprise for Shetland;
- Developing strong local, national and international links with key partners.

Aims and Objectives of the Proposed Merger

Goals for the merger

- To achieve the best possible student experience, providing more opportunities educationally, socially and pastorally, than can be achieved by separate entities;
- To make tertiary education in Shetland sustainable, in ways that cannot be achieved by retaining separate entities with diminishing resources;
- To change and innovate, and build capacity amongst staff;
- To build on our relationships with Shetland schools, communities and employers and respond to their ambitions and aspirations for post-school local learning and research.

In summary, the following areas of potential development for the Shetland Institute, UHI have been identified.

School Collaboration

- Maintain Skills for Work programmes and college-led opportunities for Senior-Phase pupils;
- Develop school-college programmes and activities for primary and early secondary phases in STEM, Sustainability and Enterprise.

Work-Based Learning

- Further collaboration as a partner to the University of the Highlands and Islands in increasing the range and number of Foundation Apprenticeships in Shetland;
- Growing the range and level of Modern Apprenticeships in Shetland, anticipating and responding to employer need with strategic development in key sectors, such as energy efficiency accreditation for the construction industry, rising to 180 in the next three years;
- Maintaining the range and quality of work-based learning in health and care, hairdressing, business administration, engineering, aquaculture, nautical cadetships, fishing industry and construction, enabling entry-level qualifications and career progression;
- Expand NHS delivery of work-based learning (increase assessor capacity with NHS-experienced assessor);
- Develop Health and Care courses in response to emerging trends such as Early Years Pedagogy; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Palliative Care; Child Development and Froebel methods;
- Develop Health and Care pathways for Childminders, Direct Payment Personal Assistants, “Journeys to professional Roles in Health and Care”.

Further Education

- Work towards increasing student numbers by 20% in three years (except in courses where maximum capacity dictated by equipment and workstations is reached);
- Develop Reflective Learning modules; stand-alone credit rated units in e.g. autism (National Autism Strategy); Forest Schools;
- Development of modules supporting the widening access and participation agenda: mini-modules writing language courses, mini-module Online Safety, Core Skills for Older Adults with Additional Support Needs, English for Speakers of Other Languages train the trainer;
- Development of welding courses in engineering;
- Expanding aquaculture training into online learning;
- Reviewing and strengthening the nautical course student experience, ensuring accommodation meets sponsor companies’ requirements;
- Mapping and improving progression routes from FE to HE levels where appropriate;
- Introducing a new “career shifter” programme for adult returners (SCQF level 5) with a target to convert 50% participants into FE/HE students.

Higher Education

- Develop HNC in Digital Design and Web Development (course already approved) leading onto the BSc Interactive Media course; Analysing and Creating Media module;
- Develop course provision in creative textiles: Constructed Textiles Residential short course (SCQF 7) 20 credit module / HE: Printed Textiles Residential Short Course (SCQF7) 20 credits / MA level Shima Knit Design CPD module (SCQF 11) 20 credits;
- Establish Graduate Apprenticeships in Health and Care;
- Develop new undergraduate courses / modules in arts and social practice;
- Introduce Tourism as a new discipline in the Enterprise section integrating development with UHI development of Tourism undergraduate opportunities.

Post-Graduate Education

- Develop two new masters-level courses (Marine Spatial Planning and a further creative industry Masters programme);
- Increase the number of international students choosing Shetland courses;
- Increase the number of post-graduate students studying in Shetland (Masters and PhD) by 20%;
- Increase the number of visiting students using Shetland facilities for fieldwork/research;
- Increasing teaching activity aligned to the research specialisms in marine science.

Process and Outcome

A Colleges Integration Liaison Group, which was made up of Board representatives from the NAFC Marine Centre and Shetland College, was set up in 2016 to provide guidance to the then Joint Principal of Shetland College and NAFC Marine Centre to help integrate the activities of Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland and provide a more joined up Shetland tertiary education, research and training offering. To this end the Joint Strategic Plan and Operating Plan 2017-19 was agreed. Following on from that, discussions between the Liaison Group and the strategic and funding stakeholders Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), resulted in a commitment to develop a Full Business Case analysis of an effective and sustainable model for tertiary education, research and training in Shetland.

The Strategic Outline Case for developing this sustainable model was presented to Shetland Islands Council on 23 May 2018 following presentation to the Shetland College Board, Education and Families Committee and Policy and Resources Committee in May 2018. The Strategic Outline Case recommended merger as the preferred way forward and gave approval for appropriate project resources to be put in place to develop the Full Business Case.

On 23 November 2017 the Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust confirmed that they were committed to the process of planned merger.

Critical Success Factors for this project were developed by the project team to ensure that all key considerations were taken into account for the future of the tertiary education, research and training sector in Shetland. These are described as follows:

- 1) Develop a financially sustainable model for delivery of tertiary education, research and training in Shetland:
 - Establish the most cost-effective way to deliver the services in Shetland;
 - Reduce the level of annual subsidy from Shetland Islands Council;
 - Ensure the ability of the merged college to achieve assigned status to UHI as the Regional Strategic Body.
- 2) Maintain and enhance quality standards in all aspects of service delivery
 - Ensure ability of services to meet quality requirements set by government and service delivery partners.
- 3) Maximise future income
 - Ability to achieve income targets from students, learners, research and business services;
 - Ability to respond quickly to income generating activity.
- 4) Commit to a single clear, consistent and effective voice for the tertiary sector in Shetland
 - Develop a targeted business development and marketing strategy for the sector, with clear targets for growth and engagement;
 - One clear, strong and focused voice at regional and national tables.
- 5) Maintain local tertiary education, research and training presence, and build strong relationships with resource enablers and strategic partners
 - Maintain physical presence in Shetland;
 - Build strong relationships with external organisations vital to the successful delivery of services.
- 6) Simplify governance arrangements, and ensure the retention and attraction of appropriately skilled staff
 - Ensure appropriate management structure;
 - Developed simplified governance structure for the sector.

A long list of options was then developed for consideration in the options appraisal exercise:

Summary of long list options and findings

	Options	Definition
1	Do Nothing	No further action is taken to change governance, management and funding arrangements of Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and/or Train Shetland.
2	Status Quo	Maintain existing governance, with joint management posts regularised, joint strategic plan adhered to and joint curriculum developed as per interim arrangements. Requirements for operational efficiencies would continue.
3	Create a single tertiary education, research and training centre within the Council ('Host SIC')	NAFC Marine Centre becomes part of the Council. Employment of staff is transferred and all assets and liabilities are taken on by the Council.
4	Create a single tertiary education, research and training centre within UHI ('Host UHI')	Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland transfer from existing arrangement to organisational and operational control of UHI. Staff, governance and management transfer to UHI.
5	Create a single independent tertiary education, research and training centre, which is part of the UHI network ('Host NAFC')	Creation of independent organisation comprised of operations of Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland, which is part of the UHI network, with SFTCT as the 'host' organisation.
6	Create a single independent tertiary education, research and training centre, which is part of the UHI network ('New College')	Creation of a new, independent organisation comprised of operations of Shetland College, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland, which is part of the UHI network.
7	Shetland College and Train Shetland remain within SIC as part of Education and Families Committee; NAFC Marine Centre remains as is	Strategic oversight of Shetland College and Train Shetland is more closely aligned with SIC Children's Services. NAFC remains as per status quo.
8	Provide only minimum amount of tertiary education, research and training in Shetland	No further investment from SIC in tertiary education, research and training. UHI and SFC fund only basic services.
9	Provide no tertiary education, research and training in Shetland	Disestablishment of Shetland College and Train Shetland by the Council.

Short-Listed Options

Prior to scoring the options against the Critical Success Factors, a brief scoping exercise was carried out against each option. This judged whether or not each option was capable of achieving the basic aims of each Critical Success Factor, how this impacted on achievability and affordability, and whether or not each option could demonstrate a fit with the business needs and strategic objectives as described in the Strategic Case. Options 3, 4, 5, and 6 could all demonstrate either a potential or direct fit with the Critical Success Factors, potential affordability and achievability, and fit with the Strategic Case. For that reason, these options remained in the process and were subject to scoring against the Critical Success Factors. Options 7, 8 and 9 were considered to be unable to achieve some or all of the Critical Success Factors, and were unable to demonstrate affordability, achievability or a fit with the Strategic Case. For that reason, these options were discounted at this stage. Options 1 (Do Nothing) and 2 (Status Quo) were also unable to show achievements or fit with the above criteria, these options are important comparators for the remainder of the Business Case process, particularly the Status Quo, against which any preferred option must be judged. For that reason, these options remained in the process at this stage and were subject to scoring against the Critical Success Factors.

In order to provide a ranking of options, a scoring mechanism was developed by the project team. This mechanism provided a score of 0 (low)-5 (high) based on the potential ability of each option to deliver against the Critical Success Factors. Each Critical Success Factor contained two categories against which options were scored (with the exception of Critical Success Factor 2, which was weighted by a factor of two to bring the available score in line with the other Critical Success Factors).

The scoring process demonstrated that two options from the shortlist were clearly preferable. These were:

- Option 5 – ‘Host’ Organisation with North Atlantic Fisheries Centre as the host;
- Option 6 – New College.

The preferred way forward identified by the options appraisal was therefore a merger of Shetland College UHI, NAFC Marine Centre UHI and Train Shetland, to create an entity outwith Shetland Islands Council. Two options were identified as the most suitable to realise this merger.

When considering an options appraisal, it is essential to ensure that all key considerations have been taken into account. The legal due diligence reports prepared by Anderson Strathern found no legal impediments to merger. However, the choice of governance arrangement leads to the requirement that certain other crucial factors be appraised. One of these crucial factors considered was the ability of the merged college to secure funding from the Scottish Funding Council for Further Education delivery. Anderson Strathern’s report on legal due diligence includes the following statement:

“One of the key issues is that the college is financially sustainable. It is therefore essential that the new college is able to be funded by the SFC through the RSB.”

On this basis the Strategic Outline Case was revisited, and the Critical Success Factors revised to take account of crucial information. The Critical Success Factors were therefore revised and agreed as (*changes in italics*):

- 1) Develop a financially sustainable model for delivery of tertiary education, research and training in Shetland
 - Establish the most cost effective way to deliver the services in Shetland;
 - Reduce the level of annual subsidy from Shetland Islands Council;
 - *Ensure the ability of the merged college to achieve assigned status to UHI as the Regional Strategic Body.*
- 2) Maintain and enhance quality standards in all aspects of service delivery
 - Ensure ability of services to meet quality requirements set by government and service delivery partners.
- 3) Maximise future income
 - Ability to achieve income targets from students, learners, research and business services;
 - Ability to respond quickly to income generating activity.
- 4) Commit to a single clear, consistent and effective voice for the tertiary sector in Shetland

- Develop a targeted business development and marketing strategy for the sector, with clear targets for growth and engagement;
- One clear, strong and focused voice at regional and national tables.

5) Maintain local tertiary education, research and training presence, and build strong relationships with resource enablers and strategic partners

- Maintain physical presence in Shetland;
- Build strong relationships with external organisations vital to the successful delivery of services.

6) Simplify governance arrangements, and ensure the retention and attraction of appropriately skilled staff

- Ensure appropriate management structure;
- Developed simplified governance structure for the sector.

It was essential that the merged college will be an ‘assigned college’ – this means that the college will be assigned to a Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the purposes of delivering further education outcomes. It is through the RSB that assigned colleges receive grant funding from the Scottish Funding Council – the RSB for the Highlands and Islands is the University of the Highlands and Islands. All assigned colleges must comply with a number of requirements, including a Financial Memorandum between themselves and the RSB (which, among other things, requires that colleges must operate on a financially sustainable basis); the 2014 ministerial guidelines on college board membership; and Colleges Scotland’s Code of Good Governance. There are a number of factors within each of the elements above which raise questions over the ability of Option 5 – ‘Host’ Organisation (with North Atlantic Fisheries Centre as the host) to meet the requirements for assigned status, including:

- The lack of student and staff representation on the Board of Trustees;
- The legal status of Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust as a Trust, which does not provide limited liability protection for Board members;
- Diversity of membership to include a range of community interests;
- Transparent and open decision-making, including public dissemination of agendas, minutes, decisions and financial information;
- Requirement for specific committee structures, which at a minimum comprise Audit, Remuneration, Finance and Nominations/Appointments.

There would also be a requirement for Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust to considerably widen its purpose in order to accommodate the course provision delivered by Shetland College and Train Shetland. A number of the issues above could be dealt with by Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust adopting a new legal form. The implication of this is that, under Scottish charity law, the conversion of a charity from one legal model to another effectively ends the previous charity and creates a new one, so any conversion of Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust would require the creation of a new entity, which must be capable of achieving charitable status (e.g. company limited by guarantee, SCIO). This is effectively the New College model.

The legal requirements summary notes a number of considerations relating to New College. This includes that *“the structure of the new organisation should reflect the good governance requirements to ensure that there are no problems with obtaining the consent of SFC to assign the college to UHI.”* As the New College model will be a bespoke arrangement designed to achieve the best chance of success, it can be expected that governance arrangements will be designed with this specific goal in mind. The summary also notes that, while the New College model will require complex legal agreements in the form of Transfer Agreements and multiple applications to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), these would be required regardless of the Host or New College model being chosen.

As a result of taking account of all of these considerations the final preferred option was determined as **Option 6 – New College**, because it has been evaluated as providing the highest chance of achieving the objectives specified by the Critical Success Factors, and provides a compelling case for change against the status quo. Option 5 – ‘Host’ Organisation (with North Atlantic Fisheries Centre as the host) would have provided a high degree of benefits against almost all of the Critical Success Factors; however, it was evaluated to have a high degree of risk with regard to being able to achieve assigned status with UHI, and therefore scored lower than Option 6 – New College.

Financial and Legal Due Diligence

The legal due diligence exercise was carried out by Anderson Strathern on behalf of the merger project. The diligence exercise reviewed matters relating to:

- Governance issues, legal constitution, powers of governing bodies, partnership board and charity issues;
- Material contracts;
- Property;
- Intellectual property issues;
- Borrowing and funding issues;
- Employment and pensions;
- Litigation and disputes;
- Compliance.

The conclusion of the report is that no material issues have been identified which would legally prevent merger. The full report is attached to Merger Proposal document as **Appendix?**

Impact of not Proceeding with Merger

Current arrangements, with three separate institutions, is not financially sustainable. Without a merger, the ability of services to operate in the future will be in doubt. A number of key resource gaps limiting the ability of the sector to operate effectively, notably in business development, marketing and student support, have been identified and without resourcing, these areas the ability of the institutions to grow business and delivery high quality services will be impacted.

In addition, Shetland Islands Council's auditors are required to consider the Council's arrangements in place to secure Best Value and to ensure value for money, and have been aware that a project was underway to achieve this with regards to tertiary education in Shetland. While having previously not commented on the provision of deficit funding to the sector, the auditors would be required under auditing standards to consider the compliance of this arrangement (or any subsequent arrangement) with the Council's statutory duty to secure Best Value and the Code on Following the Public Pound if concerns are raised that the arrangement is non-compliant.

Given that the process of considering the future of tertiary education in Shetland has gone through various iterations over a number of years, staff morale has suffered considerably as a result of ongoing uncertainty. The failure of yet another attempt to resolve this issue will lead to a loss of confidence, further impact on morale and lead to even more uncertainty.

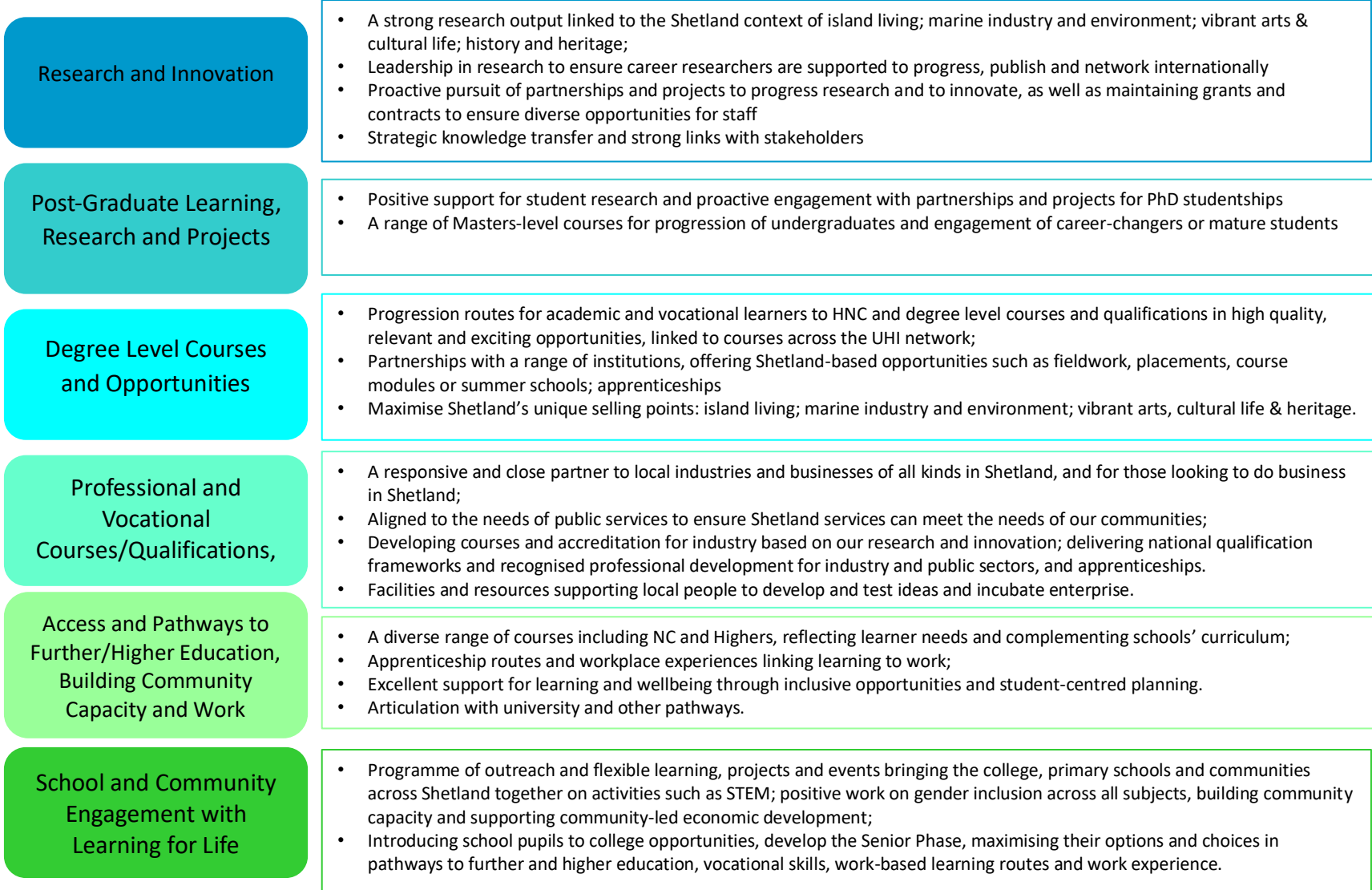
The requirement to maintain multiple management and governance structures will be a lost opportunity in terms of streamlining the services and achieving integration.

Without a Tertiary Education, Research and Training sector which is financially sustainable, appropriately managed and governed, and which is capable of sound strategic and operational planning, it is unlikely that many of the goals of the Shetland Partnership Plan and the 10 Year Plan can be achieved. It is also likely that the loss of key services as a result of financial instability will have a negative impact on businesses and individuals who require local access to training and qualifications.

The new Shetland Institute, UHI

To respond to a complex and rapidly changing environment in which it will operate, Shetland Institute, UHI will be an institution focused on having the courage and confidence to remain flexible and responsive. It will look ahead and play its part in seeking knowledge through research, applying knowledge with industry and community partners, and helping our students learn from the cutting edge through its curriculum offer.

The silo delivery of learning and opportunities will be replaced by an Institute in which cross-disciplinary collaboration is the norm. The proposed vertical integration model below is designed to map clear pathways for learners' progression from widening participation activities and entry-level learning through to post-graduate research, but not to restrict their learning to one discipline.



As many opportunities as possible will be created for students to explore and enjoy a variety of learning experiences at all levels during their progression through learning. Students will be able to choose a vocational route or an academic route, with equal opportunity for meaningful progression.

Existing expertise in developing short courses to resource employers' needs for accreditation and industry-recognised standards will become a clearer element of these pathways, and the Vocational team's expertise in apprenticeships, and their knowledge of local employers will be utilised to strengthen work-based learning throughout the Institute.

Shetland's reputation and track record in scientific and creative and cultural research already provides the "upward pull" for our vertical integration model, and we will continue to build on our research and curriculum offer for post-graduate students and researchers.

Strong community links through outreach Learning Centres in remote and rural locations, will be maintained. Participation will be widened to include residents in Shetland's remotest locations. Learners facing other disadvantages will be supported to participate and progress with Support for Learning within a strong strategic approach to student participation and support.

Curriculum activity will be clustered in five areas as follows:

- Creative and Cultural
- Community and Enterprise
- Health, Care and Society
- Technology, Engineering, Marine and the Built Environment
- Seafood and Sea

These areas link closely to Shetland's economy as illustrated below.

Infographic being prepared – links of curriculum areas to Shetland economy

Each section will set up an employer's forum (or similar) designed to inform curriculum and ensure the needs of local employers are addressed.

The **Creative and Cultural** section will continue the exciting work Shetland College has established in creative textiles and fine art. The research strengths of the existing Centre for Rural Creativity will transfer and be integrated into this section. Heritage and archaeology will continue to play an important role and can be further developed, building on Shetland's archaeological assets and linking to activities in other islands

The **Community and Enterprise section** will be key to building entrepreneurial capacity in our learners and consequently Shetland communities. It will build on Shetland College's existing work in hospitality, events management, business studies, accounting and community learning to explore further the skills and attributes entrepreneurs need. Short courses and curriculum development will be used to introduce marketing, strategic thinking and other skills. The breadth of learning will expand to encompass tourism and leisure industries, both important to Shetland's economy.

In **Health, Care and Society**, Shetland College's work to support the provision of a sustainable health and care workforce for Shetland will continue. New recruits will be enabled, from the outset, to develop the skills and ethos to lead participatory and co-production approaches in service delivery now recognised as critical to prevention and early intervention in healthcare. Similarly in childcare, the importance of play and child-centred practice will be a focus. The provision of appropriate continuing professional development pathways will ensure Shetland's existing workforce develops, and contributes to the succession planning critical to maintain capacity within Shetland's core public sector services.

Technology, Engineering and the Marine and Built Environment will draw together Information and Communication Technology and Computing, Construction and Marine and Engineering sections allowing exciting collaborations to be created which will share knowledge, equipment and resources.

Fulfilling the needs of local industry in Shetland for a skilled workforce will continue to be the key priority, but development in this area will focus on engagement with new technologies and it will become an important source of knowledge transfer to local industry. This area is also a critical part of the development of the STEM agenda. The collaboration with schools will provide young people with opportunities to learn across these disciplines whilst developing their career aspirations.

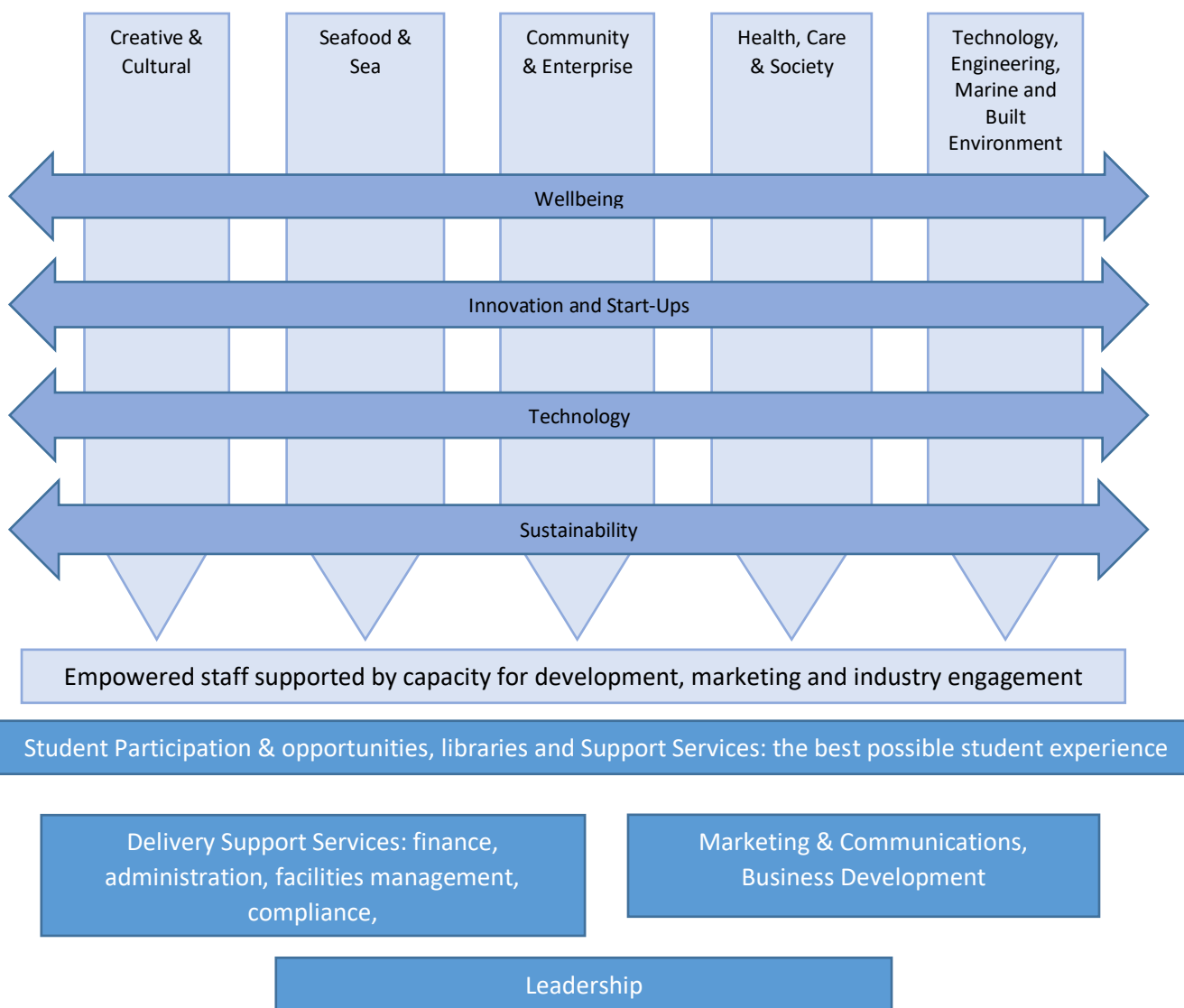
The **Seafood and Sea** area will continue the focused research and learning developed by the NAFC Marine Centre. This has long been a key strength in Shetland and further develop the contribution that our scientists and trainers are making in fisheries, aquaculture and marine spatial planning.

This section already has the potential to reach international audiences in our training delivery in aquaculture. The Shetland Institute, UHI will also build the curriculum further to share its leading specialisms in marine spatial planning through a proposed new Masters programme. The Institute will have strong specialist facilities to support research and learning: boats, a broodstock building and hatchery, laboratories and an experienced team of researchers.

Cross-cutting Themes

Cross-cutting strategic themes are being introduced to achieve our ambitions of becoming an Institute which leads by example as well as teaches through the curriculum and student experience. Activities in Sustainability, Technology, Innovation and Start-ups, and wellbeing and inclusion, will be embedded in our practice and delivery.

Clustering delivery sections and introducing cross cutting themes



Cross-cutting themes are strategic areas of development which will create exciting opportunities for students by helping to develop connections between all aspects of the curriculum, research and operations in Shetland Institute UHI.

Set out below is how each strategic theme will add value to the Shetland Institute UHI's offer.

Wellbeing and Inclusion

Vision: Shetland Institute, UHI is making a meaningful contribution to the health and wellbeing of the community of Shetland.	Short term objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve Health Promoting College status; Secure a wider range of partners (e.g. Mind Your Head) to deliver wellbeing services to students.
	Medium term objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Shetland's health and wellbeing through the provision of relevant courses; Provide students with peer-led initiatives to promote shared understanding, information resources and skilled helper approaches.
	Long term objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop research and action research packages focussing on remote island health and care challenges; Support local professionals and communities to engage with successful practice trialled elsewhere.

Innovation and Start-Ups

<p>Vision: Shetland Institute, UHI is making a tangible contribution to innovation and entrepreneurialism in Shetland</p>	<p>Short term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with staff and students in cross-curricular events and collaborative opportunities to stimulate innovation skills; Generate learning and work-based projects which build entrepreneurial skills; Undertake a feasibility study of a business support hub or learning exchange network for new entrepreneurs.
	<p>Medium term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a programme of short courses in innovation and entrepreneurship for Shetland Institute, UHI; Develop and support student-led innovation projects.
	<p>Long term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop optional innovation skills modules as electives in a range of learning programmes for local and networked learning; Support the ambition of Shetland researchers to strengthen their contribution to science, culture and wellbeing; Engage entrepreneurs in assessing and utilising resources to promote and strengthen entrepreneurship to further develop the Institute's role.

Technology

<p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students have confidence to engage with digital transformation; Shetland embraces digital transformation, a tech-savvy place to learn and do business. 	<p>Short term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend essential skills learning with tech stretch learning opportunities to encourage engagement with social media and tech tools to support life and learning.
	<p>Medium term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with industry to assess how technology is impacting on their business in order to design courses and short courses to meet their needs; Develop a wider range of work-based projects, in partnership with local companies, to increase Shetland's community and business use of app design, and other tech advances.
	<p>Long term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage industry and communities in assessing Shetland's strengths and development potential in becoming a tech-savvy island: exploit areas where Shetland's environment is the ideal test-bed for new technology.

Sustainability

<p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shetland's beauty is preserved for future generations; Shetland communities are environmentally sustainable. Shetland Institute, UHI is a leading partner in Shetland's response to Climate Change. 	<p>Short term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve Transition College standards (re Transition Movement); Manage waste, purchasing, canteen services, use of utilities and utilise greener transport options.
	<p>Medium term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a range of partners to provide learning opportunities on sustainable lifestyles; Develop use of estate grounds; Build on the success of the HISA green team, encouraging and supporting more student-led initiatives.
	<p>Long term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum: develop and promote courses for students and communities in knowledge and skills for sustainability.

How Strategic Themes Address Scottish Government Priorities

Shetland Institute UHI will also use its cross-cutting themes to address Scottish Government priorities for the Scottish Funding Council which were set out in the Letter of Guidance 2019-20. Developments over the first five years will reflect these priorities.

Scottish Government Priority: To provide the best student experience, seamlessly connected for learners of all ages and backgrounds.

Shetland Institute, UHI strategic theme: Wellbeing and Inclusion

- Develop the best possible student experience which fosters confidence and personal skills to live happy, healthy, connected lives and get help when it is needed;
- Ensure health and wellbeing are a priority for our student support services and are reflected throughout learning, curriculum and partnership working;
- Use creative and inclusive approaches to ensure disadvantaged students (including carers and care experienced young people) engage and benefit from health promoting activities;
- Develop a mental health strategy;
- Implement the Equally Safe toolkit;
- Ensure positive individual relationships with our students, making their college experience is personalised;
- Meet the needs of students disadvantaged by care experience; being a carer; having a disability or any other disadvantage, working with them to find solutions to their needs so they can participate fully in what we offer;
- Embrace the different learning needs of adults, whose pathways through learning may be diverse and whose flexibility and priorities should inform how we attract learners and deliver opportunities for them;
- Demonstrate our inclusive approach with support for learning, English for Speakers of Other Languages opportunities and any other means by which the Institute, in concert with other partners in Shetland, engage learners with diverse needs;
- Build a new focus on helping adult learners and career-shifters to consider future options through targeted engagement, personal development, learning and re-training;
- Support the delivery of local priorities to improve health and wellbeing through a whole-college ethos promoting health and wellbeing, and consider the Health Promoting College award.

Scottish Government Priority: To provide high quality learning in a system where institutions work in partnership and demonstrate the highest standards of governance and financial accountability

Shetland Institute UHI strategic theme: Technology

- Develop the best possible student experience which provides opportunities, projects and facilities that contribute to students' learning and high aspirations;
- Ensure a strong, strategic and integrated approach with public sector, third sector and industry partners to maintain an overview of emerging demand and skills gaps, developing effective responses to need and collaborating to advance the availability of data and intelligence to inform local strategic planning;
- Strengthen our relationship to schools to establish a range of vocational pathways for senior phase learners, and work collaboratively with the Shetland Developing the Young Workforce programme, using our capacity to support apprenticeships at all levels, and our ability to think creatively about work-related experiences and learning for our students in an island context;
- Support the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Shetland by continuing our delivery of access through to progression routes in early learning and childcare skills, practice and management; continuing our support of new directions in childcare such as outdoor learning;
- Play our part in developing and promoting STEM, making the most of our assets to promote gender equality in STEM (all senior scientific staff are women); engage children and communities as well as senior pupils;

- Strengthen our digital skills capacity and delivery, enabling our staff to keep up to date with and respond to emerging technologies and engaging with industry technological advances, ensuring students' learning keeps pace with workplace developments;
- Continue our collaboration with Shetland Arts Development Agency (SADA) to provide learning and support for Shetland's talent in music, television and film, showcasing their work, and embedding this in the Institute's marketing and promotional campaigns;
- Build on our track record in research and development of learning opportunities in rural creativity, and our strong offer in fine art, textiles and archaeology, to create, in partnership with UHI, a leading Centre for Rural Creativity capable of attracting investment in research and learning, and attracting international interest from learners and other collaborators;
- Collaborate with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and Shetland Islands Council to showcase opportunities in Shetland to the global market for education and skills, making the most of our unique offer in marine science and creative industries.

Scottish Government Priority: To support Scotland's global reputation as a Science and Research Nation synonymous with high quality teaching, research, knowledge exchange and innovation.

Shetland Institute UHI strategic theme: Innovation and Start-Ups

This is a major strength of Shetland Institute UHI in marine science and creative industries:

- To create the best possible student experience by enabling our researchers to mentor new talent, and embed throughout our curriculum opportunities to develop the behaviours of curiosity and critical thinking that are integral to good research;
- Forge active relationships with innovation centres, international institutions and industry, with UHI and between UHI partner colleges, to develop Shetland's contribution to research and innovation, continue to apply this through knowledge exchange, and further develop our work to attract students into science at all levels, in particular showing Shetland as a great place for post-graduate study where our facilities and environment, as well as our data resource, give students great opportunities;
- Develop research and knowledge exchange roles in other critically important areas for a rural island economy: health and care in remote communities and development of rural enterprise in an island context, are areas where small scale research and knowledge exchange in collaboration with third sector partners could attract investment from third sector funders.

Scottish Government Priority: Focus and action on decarbonisation

Shetland Institute UHI strategic theme: Sustainability

- To follow and support our students' leadership, through the HISA Green Team, ensuring this is matched by efforts throughout the Institute to play our part in protecting our planet;
- Embed throughout our research, learning and skills delivery a commitment to carbon reduction and sustainability
- Take immediate steps to attract investment to help us reduce our carbon emissions across all our campuses and to mitigate the carbon footprint of our students' travel in any practical way we can.

Learning and Teaching

Shetland Institute, UHI will have a commitment to excellence in learning and teaching. Students will be at the heart of our activity and courses will be delivered which are strongly linked to the local economy. Single management and governance structures will improve the consistency of the student experience, strengthen the student voice and provide increased opportunity for co-creation with students. Opportunities will also be created to share good practice.

As indicated in an earlier section a wide range of national and local policies and strategies were reviewed to ensure that the new Shetland Institute UHI will reflect the local context and national priorities. Strong alignment was found between the ambitions of staff and students with the National Outcomes and the expression of these in the more detailed specific national directives for further and higher education. In particular, the focus on innovation, sustainability, widening access and participation, and strengthening the articulation of all learning opportunities to create pathways for progression for learners.

Within Shetland, the local priorities and commitments of Shetland Islands Council, the NHS and third sector, inform the Institute's commitment to integration of vocational pathways and employer engagement, promoting entrepreneurialism and working closely with Shetland's larger employers, micro- and small businesses, providing flexible training and continuing professional development for the local workforce as well as enabling new recruits to enter the workforce with the skills and confidence to meet employers' needs.

The new Shetland Institute will also strengthen its contribution at regional level. As the university presence in Shetland for the University of the Highlands and Islands, it will act as partner and collaborator with eleven other colleges in the region, a vast network of educators, researchers and specialists within reach of Shetland students, and making Shetland within reach of learners based throughout the Highlands and Islands, and indeed the wider world.

This outward-facing approach will position Shetland Institute UHI as a leader and a resource for other outward-facing regional forces such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise. It will ensure Shetland plays its part in, and benefits from, the National Islands Plan and the proposed Islands Deal. But it will also ensure Shetland's tertiary education and research reaches UK, European and international audiences, networks with island communities throughout the world, and connects with our near neighbours in arctic and Nordic communities.

A regular, robust curriculum development process will be undertaken with the following objectives:

- To develop a curriculum that is demand-led, of the highest quality, and which makes a significant contribution to Shetland's society and economy.
- To ensure that the curriculum is broad, inclusive and aligned to meet the needs of employers, communities and individuals in Shetland, but also one that reflects regional and national priorities.
- To ensure that curriculum planning is closely aligned to the planning arrangements and mechanisms of the Shetland Partnership and of the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Curriculum Development – for students

Reviewing student demand shows that tertiary education provision in Shetland must respond to the islands' demographic changes (fewer young people, ageing population); outward migration of young people for higher education; high employment for early career employees but fewer opportunities for progression locally; a high proportion of micro- and small businesses. The merging tertiary provision must therefore respond by providing:

- 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.

Curriculum Development – Widening Access

Shetland College, UHI will commit to an inclusive agenda, providing opportunities to all who can benefit from them. In particular it will build on existing strong community links to provide supported access routes for the widest set of learners. We also recognise that some students are not able to travel to access education and we aim to improve the range of networked courses available within UHI for those studying in Shetland.

Shetland College, UHI will do this by:

- Enhancing the visibility of all Learning Centres including Lerwick and the remote and rural communities, increasing their role in supporting lifelong learning;
- Strengthening relationships with local communities to support learning for capacity building, local enterprise and local civic leadership;
- Increasing uptake of learning for specific target groups such as parents, for whom local learning is more accessible than centralised learning;
- Creating 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;
- Working within UHI to provide the widest possible provision in the islands.

Curriculum development – Supporting Shetland's Economy

There are already extensive links with local employers and industry across the existing organisations which informs much of the present activity. The new merged Institute will work to simplify relationships with employers to provide a coherent strategic approach for employers accessing the Institute. Related to each of our sections an employers' forum will be developed to allow for efficient dialogue, feed-in and feedback on our activities, thus contributing to shaping the curriculum offer to maximise student employability.

Additionally Shetland Institute, UHI 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.

Curriculum Development - structure

Through the proposed structure, where delivery is clustered into five complementary sections focussed on curriculum linked to areas of economic relevance to the islands, course delivery, links with industry, and learner pathways and cross curricular learning will all be strengthened. This will be supported by the cross-cutting involvement of library services (for learning and research skills) the Vocational Team (supporting apprentices), Short

Course co-ordination, and community learning specialists (for widening access and participation), will strengthen vertical integration.

The sections which follow provide a high level summary of the priorities of each of the new delivery sections of Shetland Institute, UHI. Behind each is description of each of the existing sections which will now form a part of that newly formed section. These descriptions have been developed by the staff themselves and present here in the merger proposal, an important perspective from staff of the potential of the new Institute.

They are set out as follows:

Seafood and Sea

- Aquaculture Skills
- Marine Science, Technology and Fisheries Research
- Fisheries Research
- Aquaculture Research
- Marine Spatial Planning

Creative and Cultural Shetland

- Cultural and Creative
- Centre for Rural Creativity
- Shetland Arts and Development Agency

Technology, Engineering and the Marine and Built Environment

- Nautical
- Engineering
- Construction
- IT and Computing

Community and Enterprise

- Business, Hospitality and Events
- Community Learning – Essential Skills, Access and Outreach

Health, Care and Society

- Health and Care

Student Participation

- Vocational Team for Apprentices
- Student Support Services
- Libraries

Delivery Support Services

- Short Courses for Businesses and Individuals
- Business Development and Marketing

Seafood and Sea – marine science, fisheries, aquaculture, marine spatial planning.

Strategic aim:

- Our research provides the right information at the right time to enable industry and policy makers to invest and act in the best interests of sustainable fishing and aquaculture;
- Our research and learning engage this generation of seafarers and seafood stakeholders to contribute to a low carbon, low impact food future;
- Our learning opportunities and research utilises and informs technological advances in the sector.

Strategic Lead: Sustainability

Close collaboration

- Internal connections with engineering, IT and Computing, hospitality;
- Collaborations with STEM initiatives;
- External connections with Marine Scotland, Shetland Islands Council, local seafood industries.

Safeguarding specialist facilities in fisheries and aquaculture science, marine spatial planning, seafaring:

The Marine Science and Technology sections comprise specialist facilities which will be the foundation of Shetland Institute's continued commitment to seafood and the sea. The physical infrastructure supports specialist staff with an international reputation which add significant value to the Institute's ability to attract research funding, training delivery contracts, sponsored cadetships and management of the Regional Marine Plan. It is a priority for the new Institute to strengthen this resource and utilise the specialist facilities for maximum benefit.

Seafood and Sea priorities

- **Strengthen research by developing and implementing a funding strategy;**
- **Build on the success of aquaculture, enabling the section to deliver its potential in e-learning, international reach and greater knowledge transfer between research and training;**
- **Realise the potential of marine spatial planning expertise in development of learning opportunities and consultancy.**

Aquaculture skills

There are around 2,279 people in Scotland employed in finfish or shellfish production. Production capacity in Scottish salmon needs to expand to meet demand, with implications for workforce numbers and skills required. Industry changes such as Closed System Aquaculture (CSA), more offshore production, increased automation, climate change, and farming new species will mean new skills, knowledge and expertise will be needed in the sector requiring new technology and skills, informed by up to date research through industry/academic collaboration. Aquaculture businesses provide the 7th highest employment by sector in Shetland, 4.5% of all employment.

Local economic and community priorities

Shetland's Economic Development Plan identifies a commitment to 2 projects adding value to local aquaculture by 2022.

The Aquaculture industry needs engineering and boat handling skills as well as skills in organisational management, leadership and R&D. Some local businesses are small, indicating consultancy is a cost-effective option to bring this capacity when it is needed.

HIE recommends greater consistency across the sector in skills training and career progression in order to attract and retain employees to the sector.

Course opportunities and progression

National Progression Award in Aquaculture delivered to S3/S4 School students over two years

Modern Apprenticeships involving 5 companies; students in Shetland, Orkney, Scottish mainland and England, MA L4 in Ireland.

Short courses: 19 courses delivered face to face and online 250 participants worldwide on fish welfare course

CPD Aquaculture Management online course from Jan '20 RAS Water Quality and Introductory Fish Vaccination launching online

Student demand 18/19: 10 school students | 105 Modern Apprentices | 263 short course participants | 440 FE credits | 40 HE students

- Shellfish MA starting with Loch Fyne Oysters.
- Requests for MA delivery in Freshwater Hatcheries in England (all levels), and students in Ireland.
- Demand for forklift courses is consistently high, bespoke H&S courses and additional practical courses (sea cranes, slinger, telescopic forklift) are also in demand and outstripping section capacity to deliver.
- Online courses for Mexico, additional 23 new fin fish MA starts for companies in freshwater and marine sites; MOWI request for CPD aquaculture management training

Staff capacity: 3.5 fte 1fte section leader; 2.5fte delivery staff

The range of new courses being introduced with demand for new MA (Aquaculture in Shellfish) by additional companies and bespoke courses being developed. Additional capacity in designing E-Learning is required.

Maintaining industry links as the sector changes and develops will open up new opportunities in skills training, consultancy, research and development. The sections' equipment and quality of industry experience of staff must continue to be aligned with industry needs.

Marine Spatial Planning

The vision of the Marine Spatial Section is to promote the sustainable management of marine resources by developing and using its expertise to deliver research, consultancy, and training. The expertise of the Marine Spatial Planning team has provided Shetland with the richest data in Scotland with which to understand the marine environment and inform decision making concerning the development and management of our inshore seas for the future of fishing, aquaculture, sea-based renewables, shipping, cables and pipelines, sport and leisure, and other needs.

Many projects are multi-disciplinary or cross-disciplinary. Current and future benefits derived from well managed seas include creating opportunities to transit to a low carbon economy (renewable energy, low carbon food production), maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and carbon sinks from marine habitats, and promoting health and wellbeing benefits to local communities and tourists.

The Marine Spatial Planning section is responsible for developing and implementing **Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan**, in partnership with Shetland Islands Council. The team's expertise is called on by other Scottish regions and international bodies. Shetland was one of the two first regions to develop a Marine Planning Partnership and Marine Plan. The Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan (SIRMP) presents a comprehensive picture of the marine environment around Shetland, a collation of a large volume of existing and new data which our section analysed to provide the necessary underpinning knowledge required for a more decisive and cohesive decision making process, ensuring sustainable development principles underpin the management of the marine environment and its use by different sectors to further their development needs.

Research undertaken by the Marine Spatial Planning section includes:

- Cumulative impacts – understanding all the factors interacting in a marine location
- Predictive habitat mapping
- Fisheries and marine planning
- Cultural use and value of the marine environment
- Use of data and data quality management

Consultancy undertaken by the Marine Spatial Planning section supports a number of sectors including oil and gas, cables and pipelines, marine renewables, and fisheries. It also undertakes consultancy work on behalf of local and central government agencies. Current services include:

- Marine surveys
- Data analysis
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Habitats Regulation Appraisal
- Biosecurity planning and surveying
- Habitat mapping
- Mapping and modelling
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Visual Impact Assessment

Resources

3.3 Fte staff and 1 post-graduate research student

Research laboratories equipped with survey and sampling equipment; a survey vessel equipped with a multibeam echosounder, Sub-Bottom Profiler to look at sediment thickness, underwater video systems, and grab samplers; licences for specialist software to analyse data and can provide various options with GIS mapping.

Growth

The Marine Spatial Planning section has over 10 years of marine management experience and has the potential to offer training courses to other marine planning regions, both within the UK and internationally. In addition, there is considerable scope for increased post-graduate research supervision.

Fisheries research

The NAFC Marine Centre carries out industry relevant research to contribute to the assessment, management and sustainable harvest of commercially important finfish and shellfish species. The fisheries section works closely with industry and also in partnership with Government bodies, national and international academic institutes. Our unique working relationship with stakeholders and our geographical location uniquely position us to support the fishing industry for a future in which climate change and significant policy changes will impact on the management of fisheries and the marine environment.

Supporting management and decision making

The fisheries research team's flexibility enables it to engage positively with industry and stakeholders. This facilitates directed and timely responses to data and research requests. These outputs then inform decisions enabling competitiveness, investment and changes in practice. The broad scope of work ranges from biological research to practical research using our vessels and to the use of GIS and mapping techniques.

Supporting policy

Local and national fisheries agencies benefit from, and will continue to need, research and analysis to support the sector's sustainability and growth. This will become increasingly important as regional management increases.

Potential for curriculum development

The NAFC currently supports post-graduate research students and undergraduate field trips and placements. There are opportunities to enhance research-teaching linkages through additional research placements and through collaboration on existing courses offered by the UHI.

Research & Knowledge Exchange

Provision of industry relevant data to support fisheries management:

The fisheries section has a proven track record in the identification, collection, analysis and integration of data relevant to the fishing industry and its wider policy context. Current and recent projects include:

- Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation – over 20 years' worth of data collection and analysis driving inshore fisheries management policy development, underpinning sustainability accreditation and informing the national policy environment.
- PANDORA (Horizon2020 funding) - contributing to ensuring the long-term sustainability of European fisheries by advancing current models for fish stock assessments, including the incorporation of self-sampling data from pelagic fishers.
- A series of gear technology, selectivity and diversification in response to policy and management requirements.
- Research to enhance biological understanding of commercially important but data limited species, e.g. monkfish, megrim, ling and lemon sole.

Strategy

Short term:

Continue to provide the applied data which is required by industry and stakeholders in the ever changing policy environment. Ensuring that fishery managers are equipped with the information required for sustainable management; effective spatial management to protect the environment, and to adjust to changes in fish distribution and abundance, and to respond to the challenges due to political change.

Long Term:

Be a leader in the provision of applied research to underpin our maritime industries in a changing environment.

Aquaculture Research

The vision of the Aquaculture Section is to see our aquaculture industry become cleaner, greener, wealthier and more diversified. To realise this vision, the Aquaculture Section continues to use its expertise and facilities to deliver a diverse portfolio of research, innovation, consultancy and knowledge exchange.

There are exciting opportunities for growth to further the development of shellfish and seaweed aquaculture and associated opportunities to develop specialisms in the seston and environment interactions, nutrient flow, shellfish breeding, data processing, with relevance to Shetland, the UK and internationally, and partnerships with UHI and others.

Applied R&D and Innovation

Recent programs of R&D and innovation within the Aquaculture Section highlights the flexibility of this group and demonstrates their ongoing relevance to industry' needs. Examples include:

Welfare of aquatic stocks and the environment:

- Management and control of sea lice through testing of novel chemotherapeutants and cleaner fish R&D
- Nutrition and diets for fish and shellfish
- Assessing production capacity and growth modelling for shellfish farming

Developing novel species appropriate to Shetland waters:

- Exploring environmentally- and ethically-sound protocols that allow socioeconomic evaluation of these species as an aquaculture business opportunity including -
 - Coldwater marine finfish species such as Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut and haddock, and shellfish such as the European lobster and sea urchins.
 - Production of juvenile bivalves (mussels)
 - Seaweed cultivation and development of end-products.

Knowledge Exchange

In addition to facilitating and promoting these projects, staff have engaged in delivery of informative outreach and training programs that support sustainability, enterprise, knowledge transfer and optimising production.

Our Marine Science and Technology section also currently holds the roles of Chair and KE Officer for the UHI Aquaculture Hub.

Industry Links

Flexibility in approach, practical and scientific know-how as well as rapid response to industry needs has created a unique position with regular liaisons/links with industry and scope for collaboration on industry sites or using our own facilities.

Facilities

The laboratory and aquarium facilities provide an excellent platform for knowledge exchange and innovation, as well as life sciences (e.g. elasmobranch-derived human immunological therapies) and engineering applications; we have provisions for microbiology, microscopy, dry-space prep areas.

Cultivation facilities include those for microalgae (batch and continuous) production, zooplankton production, broodstock husbandry and spawning, larviculture and on-growing. Trials can be scaled from small to semi-commercial levels. The area and staff are also designated for regulated Animal Scientific Procedures (Home Office) and the Section also has further access to a sea farm site.

Creative and Cultural Shetland – arts, culture, textiles, film, music, media, heritage and archaeology

Strategic aim:

- Our research stimulates and explores creativity and our cultural past, present and future;
- Our learning opportunities connect arts, creative industries, cultural and heritage interests, encouraging the development of artists, creators, makers and interpreters in the fields of fine art, textiles, traditional arts, media, heritage and archaeology; encouraging enterprise and contributing to the creative and cultural economy in Shetland and internationally;
- We maximise the potential of our specialist facilities in textiles, our local history and traditions, and our local creative and cultural community to engage learners, visitors and professionals.

Strategic Lead: Innovation and Start Ups

Close collaboration

- Internal connections with IT and Computing, Enterprise;
- External connections with Shetland Arts Development Agency, Shetland Amenity Trust, Creative Scotland and Historic Scotland.

Safeguarding specialist facilities in creative and cultural industries:

Creative and cultural industries continue to prove attractive to local and partnership-wide students following the strengthening of research via the UHI Centre for Rural Creativity and the specialised facilities such as the Textile Facilitation Unit. This builds on the creative and cultural context within Shetland in which art, music, textiles, film, heritage and archaeology are rich local resources for the Institute to connect with. It is a priority for the new Institute to build on this foundation by integrating the Centre for Rural Creativity research-led activity and the creative and cultural curriculum, for a seamless articulation.

Creative and Historic Shetland Priorities

- Integrate the Centre for Rural Creativity and strengthen research by developing and implementing a funding strategy, ensuring succession projects follow those underway;
- Realise the potential of the Textile Facilitation Unit in supporting learning and local makers;
- Exploit Shetland's assets in archaeological sites, innovating with technology and providing services to a wider range of learners through fieldwork opportunities;
- Maintain Shetland's strengths in course delivery in arts, creative industries and textiles.
- Continue the delivery partnership with SADA Mareel and explore further mutual benefits.

Cultural and Creative

Creative, cultural and heritage activity forms a large part of Shetland's quality of life for residents and attraction to visitors. There are 95 employers in Shetland concerned with creative industries (arts, culture and recreation). Shetland's particular strengths of textiles and music are of central importance to the creative industries sector, which is characterised locally by small organisations and part-time involvement.

Shetland's Economic Development Strategy 2018-22 commits to increase the economic impact of the creative industries in Shetland, whilst heritage is a key focus for visitor experience.

There are a range of successful and well-established cultural events (Wool Week; Shetland County Drama Festival; Shetland Folk Festival) enhancing local participation and attracting visitors.

Local economic and community priorities

SIC Economic Strategy commitment to a strategic review of local textile manufacturing capacity (by 2020) should link to the Institute's Textile Facilitation Unit design and prototype capacity.

SIC Economic Strategy commitment to establishing 6 Creative and Cultural Centres (2022) should link to the Institute's capacity to deliver creative and cultural learning by outreach, and strengthening community capacity for running these centres (linked to Business, Hospitality & Tourism/ Community Learning/Learning Centres)

Taking a strategic approach to integrating cultural, creative and heritage activity in the Institute to benefit students and communities, enhance visitor experience, and provide enterprise experience for learners.

Current courses and progression opportunities

Courses supporting inclusion and access delivered with the Eric Gray Centre and New Directions;
Skills for Work in art and textiles delivered with school pupils.

NC level course in Art and Design.

A range of Bachelor and Masters degree courses delivered locally and via the UHI Network in Fine Art, Contemporary Textiles, Archaeology and Heritage

Facilities for students and local crafts businesses via the Textile Facilitation Unit, providing design and small product runs

Student demand 18/19:

9 school students | 171 FE credits | 35 HE students

- Section staff deliver to the UHI network extensively as module leaders and tutors, in addition to the direct teaching within Shetland.
- Fine Art and Contemporary Textiles courses are increasing in popularity; requiring a review of space and facilities to support growth.
- The technical support for design and production through the Textile Facilitation Unit regularly supports around 35 external customers with an average spend of £1600 for services (lowest £30, highest £14000)

Staff capacity: 5.3fte lecturers | 1f/t section leader; 3f/t & 4p/t delivery staff + 2 f/t technicians

Short term development

Development of the Textile Facilitation Unit is needed to gain maximum advantage from its capacity to support students and local crafters. Further short course development in textiles, potentially linking with Wool Week, could attract commercial/leisure customers.

Long term growth

Development of Contemporary Textiles degrees to Masters level for progression of BA students; development of art and design evening classes to provide another access route into HE courses; development of modules in Archaeology and Landscape interpretation.

Centre for Rural Creativity

The Centre for Rural Creativity is an initiative to support research and knowledge exchange in the creative industries in remote and rural areas, established in 2015 with the support of Shetland Islands Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Creative Scotland.

Based in Shetland College UHI the Centre undertakes interdisciplinary research and acts as a focal point for the university's teaching, knowledge exchange and engagement with the creative industries.

The MA Art and Social Practice has been developed in partnership with UHI and is offering a unique course for artists working with creative and social engagement, with inter-disciplinary collaboration from social anthropology. It is a leading example of a course developed in Shetland that reaches international students and maximises the benefits of UHI partnership working.

39 students (19 full time, 17 structured part time, 2 unstructured part-time) | 1 x international, 1 x EU, 5 RUK, 32 Scotland

The MRes Creative Practice is a new research-based degree tailored to the needs of Highlands and Islands creative practitioners who often work in isolation. This has only recently been through UHI academic scrutiny and is a new course being offered to students.

New MA module Creative Re-Use of Archive Film shared across several MA programmes in the UHI network.

1 student | led by local PhD student

Research being undertaken by the CRC includes:

- Resilience through Culture and Heritage, Language, Education and Creativity – in partnership with Djagora University, Senegal and UHI Cultural Resilience Team
- Textile production and skill transmission in Shetland and the West of Ireland (Carnegie Research Incentive Grant)
- Home and Belonging programme with care experienced young people (Life Changes Trust)
- Virtual education for socially engaged art (RSE Arts & Humanities Small Research Grant)
- Managing Digital Archives of Heritage Film as a Sustainable Community Resource (European Structural and Investment Funds) led by PhD student (ESIF funded).
- Investigation of the Cold War period in Unst, following on from Northern Exchange: Cold war Histories and Nuclear Futures, Carnegie Trust funded research project.

A pipeline of knowledge exchange projects including:

- Shoormal International Conference 2019 | Collaborations with business owners to promote arts to a wider market
- Shetland ForWirids (Shetland Dialect) | Shetland Film Archive

The Islands Deal proposal is identified as an opportunity to strengthen and develop inter-island collaboration for the development and expression of creative talent, utilising the capacity of the UHI with the Regional Funded Organisations (Creative Scotland) in Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles.

Shetland Arts and Development Agency

Shetland Arts and Development Agency is a key delivery partner for Shetland College, the Centre for Rural Creativity and Shetland Islands Council. Operating from the modern and well-equipped Mareel Centre (with film, music and performance spaces), Bonhoga Gallery (with exhibition spaces) and The Garrison Theatre (with performance and production spaces) students can benefit from excellent facilities, teaching and opportunities for practical application, with links to established artists and festivals. As a Regularly Funded Organisation (Creative Scotland) and beneficiary of Shetland Charitable Trust, Shetland Arts has strategic and delivery capacity to benefit future partnerships with Shetland Institute UHI.

Shetland Arts Development Agency manages the Garrison Theatre, and is working with a steering group to determine the future of the theatre, with the opportunity for further development of drama, of which there is a strong tradition of community-led theatre in Shetland, and with this, further scope for students to apply their learning in areas including sound, music, film, lighting, marketing and events production.

Shetland Arts Development Agency runs enterprises including two café facilities and retail outlets for local artists, crafters and other goods. There is potential for further collaboration for work placements, exhibition of works, events etc of benefit to Institute students.

Current courses and progression opportunities via Service Level Agreement

Vocational Pathways in Sound Engineering and Video Production for S3 and S4.

NC Creative Industries Music Group Award and Film Group Award.

HNC Music Group Award.

BA Hons Applied Music.

BA Hons Contemporary Film Making.

MLitt Music in the Environment.

Suite of Creative Practice modules available as options to MA level students.

Student demand 18/19:

23 school students | 226 FE credits | 30 local and 12 networked FE/HE students

Technology, Engineering and the Built Environment

Strategic aim:

- We partner with industry and researchers to ensure our knowledge, skills and experience is up to date and reflects the present and future of the applied environments of engineering, nautical engineering, IT and computing and construction;
- Our learning opportunities inspire learners to excel in their crafts and to participate in furthering their knowledge and understanding through research and development;
- We maximise the potential of our specialist facilities in nautical studies, engineering, construction and technology, collaborating with manufacturers and others to bring students up to date learning facilities.

Strategic Lead: Technology

Close collaboration

- Internal connections with Seafood and Sea, Enterprise, Creative and Historic Shetland;
- Collaborations with STEM initiatives and Developing Young Workforce;
- External connections with industry: construction, energy, marine industries, seafaring, technology.

Safeguarding specialist facilities in technology, engineering and construction:

Investment in nautical, engineering, construction and technology has been constrained in recent years. A strategic review of facilities and equipment to support future learning will ensure a renewals strategy is in place to sustain learning opportunities.

Technology, Engineering and Built Environment Priorities

- Develop a shared strategy for industry engagement, curriculum development and use of short course development, exploring the potential for increasing options and choices for continuing professional development pathways for industry, and best use of teaching staff time;
- Realise the potential of the new welding unit;
- Identify the future direction of relevant industry sectors, using this to inform the continuing professional development of staff;
- Maintain the competitiveness of the nautical training delivery by continuing to promote Shetland to commercial sponsors.

Nautical

There are 170 large and small fishing vessels operating from Shetland and almost 1,000 local jobs in or linked to fishing. The Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation manages shellfish fisheries around the Shetland Islands and fish landings in Shetland make a substantial contribution to Shetland's economy, not least through public sector benefit from quota shares and ad velorum on fish sales. Aquaculture employees are also required to have boat handling skills.

Ferry services are lifelines in Shetland, between the isles (8 ferries operated by Shetland Islands Council) and to the Scottish mainland (Northlink, daily passenger and freight ferries), providing employment for people in roles from skipper to customer service.

Local economic and community priorities

Shetland's Fishing, Aquaculture, Workboat and Shipping industries have requirements for mandatory training certification; Manila training is also required for leisure users and seafarers.

Local fisheries employers require short course provision to meet their restricted on-shore time and rapid response to needs to maintain seagoing capacity (e.g. employee turnover).

Shetland has long-standing relationships with merchant marine companies sponsoring cadetships but more competitors are now providing courses. To stay competitive, Shetland must remain attractive to employers and students.

Course opportunities and progression

School pupils - Skills for Work Maritime course

Introduction to Fishing Course

Basic mandatory short course training for seafarers (Merchant Navy and fishing)

MA in Maritime Occupations (deck rating, engine rating or seafishing)

Officers and masters courses for aquaculture industry, coastal ferries and tugs

Skippers certificate courses for fishing vessels

Merchant Navy Officers certificate courses (Cadetships and direct entry)

HNC/D Nautical Science

Student demand:

22 school pupils | 12 FE cadets | 650 short course participants | 510 FE credits | 18 HE cadets | 10 MAs

- SDS surveys show around 8 school leavers per year in Shetland identify fishing and aquaculture as a preferred occupation.
- Fish catching involves approximately 3% of all employment with around 269 fte employees; this supports an ancillary workforce in fish processing of roughly the same size in fish processing and a slightly smaller workforce (230fte) in sea transportation, ports and harbours.
- Cadetships are sponsored by companies who place cadets with providers, therefore one of the courses that attracts non-local students

Staff capacity: 4.5fte 1.5fte section leader; 3fte delivery staff

Short term development

New short course development to meet legislation changes in industry (e.g. STCW(f) regulations for fishing industry).

Increased demand due to enhanced refresher requirements of short courses.

Potential for additional MA programmes, including workboat operative.

Long term growth

Potential to expand offering to higher level Merchant Navy certificates (Chief Mate and Master Unlimited).

Potential to offer select certificate and short courses to foreign students.

Increased and more creative offerings using available practical equipment including the simulator.

Potential to offer travelling trainers for short course delivery onboard operational vessels.

Engineering

Engineers are at the heart of Shetland's economy: they ensure that the boats keep running, wind turbines keep turning, fish factories keep processing, oil keeps flowing and the power stays on. Furthermore, engineering provides opportunities for people to stay locally while working off-island, in sectors such as the Merchant Navy and Oil & Gas, bringing wealth into the island's economy. Around 574 people in Shetland work in the engineering sector, approximately 6.7% of all employment, with the 6 companies who specialise in marine engineering being the mainstay.

The NAFC Marine Centre is one of two locations in Scotland that offer the Merchant Navy Training Board's cadet officer programme for engineering, and the only training provider regularly offering fishing Certificates of Competency.

Local economic and community priorities

A range of transferable skills are required across all industries requiring engineering skills, including health & safety, project management, site management

Local industries requiring engineering skills include Aquaculture; Decommissioning; Fabrication; Fishing; Merchant Navy; Marine industries; Oil and Gas; Renewable Energy; and Utilities.

Engineering is a dynamic sector in which new technology brings new training requirements, and challenges providers to keep equipment and teaching skills up to date.

Course opportunities and progression

Schools:
Skills for Work Engineering (S3/S4);
Part time NC Engineering Systems (S5/S6).

Modern Apprenticeships
Full time NC Engineering Practice;
HNC Marine Engineering.

Engineering Cadetships (HNC);
Engineering Ratings Apprenticeships;
Certificates of Competency – Merchant & Fishing.

Short courses:
MCA Approved Engine Course, welding, abrasive wheels, machining.

Student demand:

39 school students | 35 Modern Apprentices | 24 cadets | 12 NC students | 73 short course participants | 532 FE Credits | 22 HE students

- SDS surveys show around 74 school leavers per year in Shetland identify some form of engineering as a preferred occupation; 27 of these in engineering roles for which current courses provide for (others are in electrical engineering (19) mechanical (6) chemical (3) oil and gas (6) and software (2)).
- The FTNC (delivered as part of the MA program and to students who are not on a MA) has been very popular and is regularly over-subscribed.
- The Skills for Work program was doubled in size 3 years ago, and still proves very popular.

Staff capacity: 6.5 fte 0.5ft section leader; 6ft delivery staff

Short term development

Recent upgrade to welding training facilities to reflect industry specifications will lead to increased short courses and facilitate link up with the arts department for sculpture. Current department emphasis is on growing student numbers whilst condensing courses to reflect student/industry needs.

Long term growth

Longer term developments require analysis of capacity and industry trends, equipment and space for teaching, potential articulation with higher level courses in decommissioning, renewable energy and new technology in marine engineering, potential development of HND Marine Engineering and flexible shore based engineering HNC.

Construction

The construction industry is a lead sector employer with 730 workers representing 8.1% of the islands workforce making it the third largest employer by sector, the variety of skills incorporated range from administration, trade, technical, professional and management. Throughout turbulent times the construction industry has remained a consistent employer diversifying to meet market demands with contracts of all scales catered by local employers from maintenance of private homes to large scale projects supporting Oil & Gas and Education. Provision of affordable homes that are energy efficient has been a primary source of employment with large schemes both underway and planned. Innovation in the use of technology and materials are key to the high standards of today's Shetlanders home. The use of advanced modern technologies will see new demands including digitised plans driving CNC routers, saws and directing onsite work and satellite based surveying. Construction as an option for a long and varied career path needs strong promotion message to ensure we can all enjoy living, working and relaxing in the environment that has been built around our needs.

Local economic and community priorities

Major infrastructure projects in Shetland such as the proposed re-development of the Knab site will require skilled tradespeople.

Housebuilding and maintenance requires a range of trades in Shetland's social housing sector.

Efforts to tackle fuel poverty by making existing housing more energy efficient will require more local capacity in this sector.

Heritage sites and projects require specific and specialised skills and a range of projects hold potential for partnership with Shetland Amenity Trust's Architectural Heritage Team.

Course opportunities and progression

Schools:
Skills for Work
NC Built
Environment

Modern
Apprenticeship: PDA
and SVQ Carpentry
and Joinery

Advanced Craft
Carpentry and
Joinery

HNC Construction
Management

Student demand 18/19:

24 school students | 30 Modern Apprentices | 362 FE credits | 21 HE

- Positive relationships with the Construction Industry Training Board ensure developments in Shetland make the most of national opportunities.
- School leaver surveys show around 6% of young people are considering a career in a construction or property services role. School-based delivery may increase demand over time as young people get more opportunity to develop skills and interest.
- There is very limited artisan carpentry and joinery in Shetland. There is some interest in heritage carpentry on traditional boat building.

Staff capacity: 3.5 fte 1fte section leader; 2f/t, 0.5 p/t delivery staff, 0.5 Assessor

Short term development

Foundation apprenticeships offer further scope for developing school-Institute links. Ongoing employer-engagement is needed to fully assess the potential for further apprenticeships as small companies may reach saturation point. Shorter more intense courses in general construction skills may be needed to help companies respond to business demand.

Long term growth

Strategic development is required to consider the role of the Institute in meeting local needs, assess how investment in equipment and workshops can be made to align with modern industry needs. Creative partnerships with other UHI colleges may provide some solutions.

IT & Computing

Shetland is well connected by Broadband and further developments will ensure broadband speed and reliability supports IT development and industry locally. A small number of local companies provide software development, website development and hardware support, are keen to grow local talent to meet the demand for skills to serve their national and international work. The potential to develop a local digital hub is being explored as a strategic support to the local tech sector by Highlands & Islands Enterprise. The Council's Economic Development Plan 2018-22 describes its commitment to facilitating high speed broadband to the north isles and to generate further community-led broadband schemes. Varied general and specialised Computing and IT skills are essential in all industries to ensure they remain up to date with technologies and remain competitive.

Local economic and community priorities

Local broadband development will require skills in demand by companies contracted to deliver this.

Software development has a high component of design and creative input, for which collaboration between sections in the Institute can generate exciting opportunities for learners.

Cyber security is a growing sector, which could be resourced by the Institute in terms of skills and consultancy for local businesses.

Public and third sector use of apps to engage customers and facilitate access to services present potential opportunities for collaboration.

Current courses and progression opportunities

Skills for Work and Access to Computing courses provide core skills and facilitate access to other courses.

NQ Interactive Media & Computing course ensures progression to HNC Computing, then HND Computer Science courses.

BSc Hon Computing courses via UHI, currently including named pathways in Networking, Software Development and Interactive Media allowing students to study specialisms.

New UHI BSc Hon Applied Software Development award due in 2020 will provide a new dedicated degree pathway.

Student demand:

2018/19: 0 school students, 5 FE students, HE: 16 local students + 22 remote students
2019/20: 10 school students, 10 FE students, HE: 22 local students + 20 remote students

1. A small number of school pupils identify Computing and ICT as a potential career choice (SDS Survey) – only 4% of young people nearing school leaving age. Around half of these are not specific about their preferred career within this sector. This suggests more school engagement is required to promote the breadth of opportunities in this sector.
2. It is a fast-moving sector and it is essential that staff maintain their own professional development to keep abreast of advances and ensuring courses are relevant.
3. Partnerships with local companies could provide excellent opportunities for work experience.

Staff capacity: 2.8fte | 1f/t section leader; 1f/t, 1p/t delivery staff

Short term development

1. Approval already gained to deliver the HNC Digital Design & Web Development course which would enhance the local pathway to BSc Interactive Media via the UHI network.
2. Short course development and Professional Development Awards could increase appeal to part-time learners.

Long term growth

Assess the potential for course development and consultancy in cyber-security, ethical hacking, creative design and app development for local companies. Computing & IT exist in 'ALL' areas of work and types of industries.

Enterprise – Business, Accounting, Hospitality, Events, Tourism and Leisure (including Hair and Beauty), Community Learning and Development.

Strategic aim:

- We ensure businesses of all sizes in Shetland have the skills and experiences needed for business owners, business leaders and employees to prosper;
- We work creatively with local businesses to ensure appropriate pathways for new entrants and existing staff to learn skills and gain qualifications;
- We will promote entrepreneurialism and ensure Institute resources are accessible to start-ups and existing businesses;
- We will give all students opportunities to learn skills in enterprise and gain the support they need to put their business ideas into practice
- We will use our resources and expertise to build community capacity for economic development, wellbeing and sustainability
- We will ensure remote communities can access learning.

Integration plan

- Strengthen and develop industry links in tourism, hospitality and enterprise;
- Ensure outreach courses through Learning Centres and other venues is developed to strengthen the Institute's strategic approach to widening participation;
- Develop approaches within all delivery sections to reach a wider range of learners and strengthen their progression routes starting from community access;
- Increase engagement with a wide range of potential learners including schools, and community groups, providing opportunities, tasters, events and other activities encouraging their participation;
- Targeted engagement with communities to support learning for community-led enterprise.

Close collaboration

- Internal connections with all courses in which self-employment is a potential destination of learners;
- Collaborations with Developing Young Workforce;
- External connections with industry and other sectors, business gateway, Shetland Tourism Association.

Safeguarding specialist facilities in Enterprise:

The Institute has specialised resources for Hair and Beauty, and a training kitchen with commercial equipment. These will be used to support start-ups, community enterprises and others, as well as providing appropriate industry-standard learning environments for students.

Enterprise Priorities

- Integrate Institute-wide engagement with Short Course development and administration services, and Vocational Pathways, ensuring all sections maximise the potential of short courses and apprenticeships to reach a wider audience and engage more learners;
- Develop and promote partnerships for the use of enterprise college resources; collaborate with Shetland Islands Council to explore the delivery of community kitchens;
- Strengthen the offer of the section to the local tourism sector.

Business, Hospitality and Events

69% of businesses in Shetland have up to four employees. Small businesses require different skills and opportunities with direct relevance to their needs, hence the popularity of accounting and IT courses. There are 50 companies in Shetland with 50-250 employees, presenting an opportunity for leadership, management, project and operational management courses to enable career progression and succession in these businesses. Hospitality and tourism reflects this business profile, and is regarded as a growth area. Increases in tourist numbers reflect approximately 38,000 visitors making overnight/multi-night stays and approximately 90,000 cruise ship day-visitors; all of this business largely seasonal. Development of this sector therefore requires creative entrepreneurialism approaches.

Local economic and community priorities

The majority of hospitality and tourism operators in Shetland are small and entrepreneurial, with many requiring business start-up/support skills. The small number of large companies with an outlet in Shetland want competitively priced training locally as an alternative to self-delivery.

Opportunities for small businesses must reflect the limited availability of staff time for professional development and changes in seasonal demands.

There is scope to develop opportunities to support local businesses to strengthen Shetland's niche in hospitality, tourism and business: the environment, wildlife, culture and heritage.

Current courses and progression opportunities

School engagement activity reaches x schools. Bespoke courses with external partners for people with additional support needs.

NC Administration; NC Accounting and NC Hospitality routes provide entry level courses with opportunities for progression to HNC

A range of SVQs reflecting industry demand and supporting MA and FA pathways.

Professional Development Awards and short courses supporting career progression in business and administration.

Student demand 18/19: 372 FE credits | 28 HE students

- School engagement is strong, adding value to schools' curriculum with expertise of college lecturer with professional restaurateur experience
- Accounting courses and introduction to SAGE accounting package meets local business needs, the capacity for delivery on an outreach basis via local Learning Centres provides flexibility for small scale entrepreneurs
- Professional Development Awards delivered for larger local employers (e.g Shetland Recreational Trust) introduce new learners to the college who can then consider progression options.

Staff capacity: 3.5fte 1p/t section leader job share/delivery role; 3p/t delivery staff

Short term development

- Customer Service SVQ is now developed and ready for delivery
- Foundation Apprenticeship routes in accountancy, business skills and food & drink technology could be developed
- Short course development targeting small business owners could strengthen uptake

Long term growth

Develop industry links to place the section at the forefront of supporting Shetland to deliver on its Tourism Strategy 2018-23, and economic development targets, with more strategic engagement and development of learning opportunities to stimulate and support sectors.

Community Learning – Essential Skills, Access and Outreach

The key focus of the Shetland Partnership Plan is to reduce inequality of outcome in Shetland – to tackle the issues that mean some people and groups have a poorer quality of life than others. The Plan’s priorities are to support and nurture participation in communities; to enable individuals and families to achieve their full potential; to make Shetland an attractive place to live, work and study; and to enable all households to enjoy a good standard of living. These priorities align with those of the college, to provide essential skills, employability skills and opportunities for learning, for people of all ages, leading to better outcomes for them.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that colleges continue to reach people of all ages and abilities, and those disadvantaged by experience in

Local economic and community priorities

Poor public transport links requires the college to reach out to learners on the larger isles and less accessible areas, supporting and resourcing learning online, and locally-led opportunities, important to parents and carers, close to local schools, nurseries and day centres.

Shetland’s international workforce requires creative and practical approaches to enabling migrant workers and their families to work and integrate, through skills and language courses.

People requiring a higher level of essential and employability skills, support for learning or work, benefit from programmes designed for their needs.

Course opportunities and progression

Access and inclusion

20 New Directions students;
40 students with additional learning needs;
60 students receiving individualised support for learning

Support for progression

125 students receive essential skills courses additional to their FE/HE courses;
10 students take Alternative to Higher English.

Learning Centre

Enrolments:
65 North Isles;
30 Whalsay;
32 North Mainland;
45 Islesburgh

Engagement

40 enrolments/year for ESOL courses from Introduction to English Literacies (SCQF2) to National 5 and Higher ESOL (SCQF6).

Student demand: 300 FE students | 537 FE Credits not including Essential Skills students | 31 HE students

- 30% of secondary school pupils in Shetland schools are identified as having additional support needs. 25% of school leavers achieve literacy and numeracy below level 5; although school leavers with the lowest tariff scores for attainment do much better than comparator schools (235 Shetland, 165 comparator) the gap is very slightly greater between the lowest and highest 20% tariff scores in Shetland than in comparator schools.
- 99% of learners attending Learning Centres are over 30, and 29% are over 70. This represents the role of the Learning Centre as a community resource for all ages. 28% attend for work-related reasons and 14% for career advancement or higher qualifications. 58% of Learning Centre learners report they are unlikely to engage with distance learning from home, although 84% would from a Learning Centre.

Staff capacity: 6.6 fte 1fte section leader; 5.6fte delivery staff

Short term development

Outreach will continue to reach distant and less accessible communities. In line with the Shetland Partnership Plan, learning opportunities to strengthen community participation will focus on skills communities need such as PDA Event Management, PDA Community Involvement.

Long term growth

Development support for community organisations and start-ups/micro-business in island and less accessible communities could be strengthened by recruiting more students accessing supported distance learning in our Learning Centres, bespoke workplace and CPD for businesses and community groups, short, FE and HE courses.

Health, Care and Society

Strategic aim:

- We will build on our strengths and experiences in health and care sectors, and our high quality learning opportunities, to contribute to the sector in research and partnership working relevant to remote and rural health and care;
- We will develop future generations of professionals skilled and confident in designing and using participatory and co-production methodologies in their practice, strengthening community-led health and preventive health in Shetland and elsewhere;
- We will develop resilient, forward looking professionals at all levels of the health and social care field, and encourage new entrants with exciting opportunities reflecting new developments in care, childcare and health.

Strategic Lead: Wellbeing and Inclusion

Close collaboration

- External connections with health, care and childcare providers, NHS Shetland, Shetland Islands Council.

Health, Care and Society Priorities

- Maintain the pace and breadth of learning opportunities to fulfil local needs for new recruits and continuing professional development required in Shetland's health and care services;
- Provide staff development opportunities by exploring potential collaborations with community organisations exploring community-led solutions to health and care challenges.

Health & Care

Shetland's population of 23,000 people requires the same health, social care and childcare services of any local authority area, in the context of specific local challenges of remote and island communities.

NHS Shetland is committed to providing more services on mainland Shetland. To meet workforce demand the NHS committed in 18/19 to work with FE and HE providers and apprenticeship schemes to strengthen pathways into healthcare support worker roles and progression routes to nursing. Shetland's Community Health & Social Care Partnership forecasts the challenge of meeting the needs of a higher proportion of ageing citizens in Shetland and 30% of the population have a long term condition, with a need to prepare the workforce, communities and carers for self-directed support, and appropriate skills for prevention and specialised needs such as dementia.

Local economic and community priorities

The NHS wishes to develop its approach to developing the young workforce and address risks associated with an aging workforce.

Childcare is in high demand in Shetland's high employment economy for children of all ages. New areas of provision include Forest/Outdoor nurseries.

Lack of Foster Care capacity in Shetland could be supported with learning and development opportunities for potential foster carers.

People working, volunteering and caring require professional qualifications, including Counselling skills for Shetland's mental health agenda.

Current courses and progression opportunities

School engagement - a range of courses at Higher level via the UHI network. Foundation Apprenticeships and Modern Apprenticeships. 65/6 Skills for Work courses including Hairdressing.

NC and access courses in social care, nursing and childhood studies create several pathways into health, social care and childcare.

A range of SVQs reflecting sector demand and work-based options, including Hairdressing. HNC and Degree-level courses.

Professional Development Awards and short courses supporting career progression in care specialisms and childcare.

Student demand 18/19: 84 school students | 1107 FE credits | 88 HE students

- Delivery of SVQs to Modern Apprentices, leading to a further 300 credits at course completion;
- Delivery of a range of Highers in social subjects adds value to local schools' curriculum and provides entry criteria for school leavers to access degree courses in social science subjects;
- The range of courses offered in Shetland is enhanced by access to the UHI network, on which local lecturers also deliver modules;
- Local businesses and organisations are now being encouraged to become aware of dementia and autism, creating scope for short courses for a wider sector beyond health and care;
- Flexibility and sector knowledge of lecturers and assessors provides employers with high quality work-based learning and assessment.

Staff capacity: 6.2fte lecturers; 4 fte assessors | 1f/t section leader; 2f/t & 8p/t delivery staff

Short term development

High demand for entry level courses to a sector with high growth and staff shortages. High demand for Professional Registration qualifications which are a statutory requirement of the local authority to run social services provision. There is a need for a strategic review of capacity and delivery.

Long term growth

The section should be central to workforce planning for health and social care. To ensure ongoing high quality of course delivery and create new learning opportunities for the local workforce in emerging care specialisms, strategic links with centres of excellence and research are required.

Student Participation, Opportunities and Support Services: we will strengthen access to learning, access to employment and career development, outreach to remote areas and communities, and the ways we support students, using our experienced staff and all our Learning Centres

Strategic aim:

- To enable all our students to access learning and remove barriers in ways that meet their needs;
- To develop our strengths in enabling people with diverse and additional needs to start, and enjoy, their learning journeys;
- To develop our approach to vocational pathways through apprenticeships;
- To develop and deliver our objectives as a Health Promoting College.

Integration plan:

- Ensure additional support for learning, delivery of access courses, essential skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages, ECDL, and outreach courses through Learning Centres and other venues is developed to strengthen the Institute's strategic approach to support for, and delivery to, all students, at every stage in their learning journey, holistically;
- Develop approaches within all delivery sections to reach a wider range of learners and strengthen their progression routes starting from community access;
- Develop curriculum and learning opportunities for individuals starting to explore their learning options, for example a "Career Shifter Programme" attracting people considering returning to learning and supporting their access and progression through the Institute, in partnership with Student Engagement, Guidance and Communications;
- Increasing engagement with a wide range of potential learners including schools, and community groups, providing opportunities, tasters, events and other activities encouraging their participation;
- Targeted engagement and delivery with specific target groups of people who may be experiencing different barriers to learning, including care experienced people, carers, people with physical and mental health challenges, people whose first language is not English;
- Collaborating with other agencies to continue to deliver and support for learners with different needs, for example through Project Search, Lifeskills programmes; Access to Core Skills learning; and ensuring a strong transition support programme for learners identified by schools in need of additional support.

Safeguarding specialist facilities for community learning:

Outreach learning centres in North Isles, North Mainland, Whalsay and Lerwick will be retained, but we will also see new partnerships with community halls, schools and other venues throughout Shetland.

Student Participation (including Learning Centre priorities)

- Conduct a community capacity and local learning review, to gather evidence to inform a strategy for the Institute's delivery in local areas;
- Maintain services and delivery to students who need access to personalised learning opportunities to enable them to participate in the Institute.
- Develop the Institute's approach to Health Promoting and Recovery College frameworks.

Vocational Team for Apprenticeships

69% of businesses in Shetland have up to four employees, so Skills Development Scotland (SDS) financial support to train new staff is an important boost to Shetland's economy. Nevertheless, for a small business with limited administrative capacity to enter into an apprenticeship contract is challenging, the system is complex. The claims process also presents a cash flow.

Apprenticeship frameworks focus on specific qualification routes relevant to sectors.

Young people from Shetland and employers who want an apprenticeship framework where the qualifications are not provided locally are supported to access courses in other colleges, for which SDS contributes towards travel and accommodation costs.

Shetland Islands Council is currently the largest user of the Institute's Vocational Team's service.

Local economic and community priorities

All sections of the Institute benefit from Modern Apprentice or Foundation Apprentice frameworks through delivery of the required qualifications to apprentices. If apprentice numbers dropped this would impact on income.

Shetland Islands Council's Economic Development Strategy commits to developing assistance to improve recruitment of Modern Apprentices in target sectors and supporting Modern Apprenticeships for older age ranges (targeting 2 businesses per year) and those in more rural areas.

The Vocational team provides robust services to young people with positive employer engagement. Developing the Young Workforce initiative and local Skills Development Scotland team are partners.

Apprenticeship opportunities for intake 19/20 (79)

Administration & related (10)
Automotive (6)
Construction (7)
Energy & Engineering (9)
Financial services (4)

Hospitality & Tourism (3)
Transport & logistics (1)
Sport, Health & Care (30)
Personal Services (3)
Other services (3)

Current: 62 employers | 161 Modern Apprentices in training | 15 training providers

- An "end-loaded" funding model is challenging for providers where apprenticeships last 2 - 4 years.
- Through the UHI Partnership, a collective bid for Foundation Apprenticeships allows for a staged funding model in which payments follow interim milestones rather than an end completion date. The suitability of FAs for local requirements is being considered.
- Evaluation by Skills Development Scotland of the Vocational Team's outcomes is very positive: "Learners and employers are well supported through the whole process of the MA programme. The provider conducts all reviews with learners and employers, using feedback that they have received from the subcontractor to set targets and discuss achievements. The provider will also intervene to support learners to sustain their MA should there be issues that arise".

Apprentices enrolled at a college in Shetland: **116**

Apprentices in off-island learning: **45**

Staff capacity: 7.1 fte

Short term development

The team has recently expanded its provision to apprentices outwith Shetland (two apprentices in Orkney). There is scope to attract young people to Shetland into hard-to-fill apprenticeships with strategic planning to retain choice and opportunity to local applicants.

Long term growth

Strategic planning is needed to make the most of the partnership with UHI whilst retaining a direct contract with Skills Development Scotland where it is more financially viable to do so. Scottish Government's 15-24yr Learner Journeys should feature in future development.

Student Support Services

The importance of pastoral care, guidance and support for learning in tertiary education is essential to widening participation, highlighting the importance of ensuring student support services encompass careers advice and guidance, welfare advice and personal counselling. The Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges calls for colleges which “transform the health and sustainability of our current and future societies, strengthen communities and contribute to the wellbeing of people, places and the planet...They infuse into the everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates”. Shetland has the opportunity to make this vision a reality. Student Support Services can develop and lead a whole-college approach. However, the current service is under-resourced.

Local economic and community priorities

Mental health and physical wellbeing are key components of Shetland’s strategies for prevention and early intervention.

Pressure on local accommodation means staff often struggle to find rooms for students to stay near to the college if they are from Scottish mainland or the isles.

Shetland is becoming more conscious about the need to tackle inequality. Many students have limited resilience to high winter bills, rent and other costs. The college provides free sanitary products.

Recruitment of students to Shetland’s colleges is critical to future success. Student Services engagement with schools and communities is vital.

Current student support functions

Counselling is provided on a part-time basis in-house, and is at capacity re student demand. The Guidance function controls student bursaries, discretionary payments and hardship support for students.

Student engagement is combined with a marketing function, creating pressure on the role, which in turn becomes reactive rather than strategic.

A range of tasks, from induction and freshers programmes to graduation events are co-ordinated by the team. Support with administration and marketing would aid effectiveness.

Personal Learning Support Plans are required for students with disabilities which is essential to around 60 students in the college.

- Highlands & Islands Student Association (HISA) is strengthening its local support with establishment of a part-time officer and a dedicated office in the Gremista campus. Student engagement staff also support class reps.
- When student associations do get off the ground they are successful (football, the student Green Team)
- Students rate their experience of support services positively (Student Survey Aug 2019) and the majority prioritise functional aspects of student support (information, work experience) as important for development. Social and other facilities are more limited in Shetland’s campuses than other colleges.
- Student accommodation is a key issue: a hostel previously provided accommodation within NAFC Marine Centre but this building has been held vacant for over a year to assess its fitness for use due to construction issues.

Staff capacity: 1.5fte 1ft1 p/t student engagement officers; 3 p/t staff (guidance and counselling)

Short term development

Re-visiting the role and remit of staff to provide more dedicated time for student support will help to ensure a strategy for student support and an annual action plan for enhancing the student experience. Additional capacity could be sought through positive partnerships with external agencies for health, mental health, careers advice.

Long term growth

The new Institute may consider whether becoming a “Health Promoting College” or other framework for a positive student experience would assist development. Student accommodation must be the focus of urgent business planning but is likely to take some time to resolve unless investment can be secured.

Libraries

Libraries are pillars of learning and research, not only as a repository for books and journals, but also as a resource for skills of seeking and managing information: supporting the process of becoming a learner rather than simply a supply of material to aid teaching. Libraries, and librarians, shape this process. There are two libraries serving the new Institute, based in Gremista and Scalloway. Beyond the physical base, the libraries serve distance learners, and benefit from the partnership wide network of libraries and librarianship of University of the Highlands and Islands. It is a priority for the new Institute to find ways to strengthen the digital and physical resource of our libraries for our students and communities, using the resource to develop information and digital literacies.

Libraries and information management priorities

The libraries service aims to provide users with specialist knowledge, quality resources and services that have a positive impact on learning and that nurture and improve the digital and research skills of our users.

There is scope for our libraries to become resources for lifelong learning in our community. Providing access to specialist resources for residents seeking to develop their professional knowledge e.g. fisheries, textiles, early years teaching etc.

Skills for learning are grounded in the ability to seek and manage information. Our aim is to develop a proactive library service central to the experience of learning and which engages with students, academic staff and researchers by:

- Supporting the development of information literacies within the curriculum
- Developing learners' ability to gather, use, manage, synthesise and create information appropriate to their need
- Encouraging students to think critically, ethically and make balanced judgements about information found and used
- Providing expertise and specialist knowledge for research resources, and services, available at Shetland Institute and UHI
- Providing expertise to support and enrich teaching and flexible learning experiences, supporting technology enhanced learning and digital course content e.g. etextbooks models and availability
- Preserving, maintaining and expanding physical and digital collections relevant to the needs of Shetland Institute and wider UHI community
- Working collaboratively with UHI Libraries to deliver services across the partnership
- Developing accessible collections: providing resources that cater for different learning styles and needs
- Providing a customer-focussed service utilising user experience (UX) methodologies wherever possible to inform decision making

Staff capacity: 1.7 fte 1fte Librarian and 2 p/t Library Assistants

Short term development

Continue to develop the library spaces to enhance student experience, providing more varied workspaces for group and individual study. Develop print collections, and online collections (in partnership with UHI), to meet Shetland Institute UHI course portfolio demands. Assimilate processes and procedures across both campus libraries.

Long term growth aspirations

To support learning by embedding information literacy skills, via a longitudinal induction approach, across courses. Ensuring that learners at any level develop the information retrieval and information handling skills they require for success in education, work and life.

Delivery Support Services

Strategic aim:

- To enable all our students, staff and stakeholders to get the information they need to engage with and lead the Institute; including data and information to support quality assurance;
- To provide support to enable the Institute to develop and grow by ensuring efficient use of resources and effective Institute operations
- To provide all sections of the Institute with the support to develop, grow and administrate short courses and ensure effective accreditation with relevant governing bodies to ensure we meet industry needs
- To ensure a high standard of administrative and financial management

The integration plan is to bring together administrative and financial staff to work together, whilst developing functions to account for the services previously provided and recharged by Shetland Islands Council. Delivery Support Service functions will include:

Student registration and academic records	Staff records and payroll
Academic and training quality assurance	ICT Services
Administration, reception in main campus buildings	Compliance, Health and Safety
Facilities management and janitorial services	Financial management,
Financial records, banking, transactions	Supplier management and procurement

Functions that will be reviewed for cost effective delivery:

- Cleaning Services;
- Human Resources advice and Staff Welfare services.

Functions that will be strengthened are:

- Marketing and Communications
- Business Development (Contracts and Funding)

Safeguarding specialist facilities:

We need to retain the expertise and institutional knowledge of our finance and administration staff to ensure that the new Institute can seamlessly manage the transition. As a small organisation our delivery will be strengthened by networking and collaboration with the support services of other colleges in the UHI network; and supported by that regional framework for development, problem solving, policy and practice.

The new Shetland Institute UHI will be open and supportive to any future development of collaborative working by which Shetland Institute can provide services to, or cost effectively purchase services from, other colleges in the UHI network of colleges. From the outset we are inheriting some areas of service in the independent institution that were previously fulfilled by Shetland Islands Council (Human Resources, staff welfare services, legal and internal audit) that could be shared with other colleges. At present, no service sharing is in place in the UHI network and it may take some time before this can be achieved.

Delivery Support Service priorities

Create development plans for the financial and administrative operations of the Institute ensuring policies, procedures and guidance is prepared, allowing for succession and collaborative working across the department.

- Short Courses for Businesses and Individuals
- Business Development and Marketing

Benefits for Students

Within the merged institution student support will be delivered by a single co-ordinated team able to develop personalised support for learning and pastoral care. They will contribute to activities to improve student experience, to develop student leadership across all areas of the merged institution.

Specific improvements include:

- One consistent approach to enrolment, induction and personalised learning planning;
- One map of learning pathways and cross-curricular opportunities for all learners;
- Clear articulation between learning opportunities in Shetland and elsewhere, to encourage and support progression;
- Strategic development of student social and extra-curricular opportunities for all students and improvements to student-centred campus space in all locations;
- Improved school-college activity, so that all students regardless of career choice or further/higher education destination can benefit from college experience and facilities to enhance school-based studies;
- Enriched learning experiences resulting from collaboration with employers, communities, other colleges and other partners, increasing project-based learning opportunities;
- Learning environments using up to date technology to support learning and to engage with real-world challenges and methods of working;
- Increased opportunities for student leadership and co-production of development;
- Improved post-graduation links with all students, engaging with them as lifelong learners;
- More international links throughout our learning opportunities, both virtual and through exchanges and visits, and by attracting more international students to Shetland;
- Solutions to the challenges of student accommodation and local travel which consistently feature as problems in student feedback;
- Work with Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA) to develop annual targets for developing the student experience in Shetland benchmarked against other appropriate institutions.
- Improvement in overall satisfaction and to increase participation rates in student satisfaction surveys

Enhancing the Student Experience

Shetland Institute, UHI will put its learners at the centre. One hundred and three students and participants who attended NAFC Marine Centre, Shetland College and Train Shetland in 2018/19 were surveyed. The results of the survey identified a number of strengths of the existing establishments:

- 86% rated the college's response to their initial enquiry as good or very good, and 89% felt the respondent had sufficient knowledge to respond to their enquiry;
- 81% of students reported they knew the location of the colleges before joining;
- More than 80% of students felt staff contact, quality of course delivery and college facilities for learning were good or very good;
- 78% of students agree they were given information about next steps in learning progression;
- 74% of students agree they were given information about possible careers;
- 75% rated the projects and tasks in their course as relevant and interesting.

Finding out about the College

Twenty-nine percent of respondents found out about the college through their employer and 23% through school, followed by 31% through friends and family. Leaflets (4%), local newspaper advertising (7%) and open days (2%) did not reach people effectively and online searches (9%) were only slightly more effective. Thirty-two percent regarded word of mouth as being the most effective way of hearing about the colleges.

Sixteen percent of colleges' staff feel dissatisfied with student course information and careers advice.

Getting to the College

Seventy-one percent of respondents drove themselves to the campuses and 14% were driven by someone else. Only 14% arrived by bus. Seventeen percent of students took two or more different forms of transport to attend. Twenty percent of students rated transport to/from the college as poor. Seventy-two percent of colleges' staff feel dissatisfied with transport links to the college. Apprentices experience similar challenges.

Student Accommodation

Forty-four percent of students for whom the question of accommodation options was applicable rated the options in Shetland as poor. Fifty percent of students identified this as a priority for development. Forty-four percent of staff were dissatisfied with accommodation options for students. Apprentices also need affordable accommodation.


Student (and apprentice) Leisure and Social Facilities

Twenty-six percent of students for whom leisure facilities was a concern rated Shetland as poor and 23% rated social activities as poor. The majority of students report using the canteen, libraries, reception areas and classrooms in their free time between lectures, with 35% using the college grounds (car parks). Clubs and societies are an important part of the student experience in many tertiary institutions. Eighty-seven percent of students for whom student clubs and societies were relevant had never attended one, 68% had not attended a college social event and 83% had not attended a college sports event.

Friendship is also an important feature of student life and a vital aspect of mental resilience and physical wellbeing. Forty-nine percent of students had not engaged in informal socialising with fellow students and 73% had not pursued hobbies or interests with other students. Twenty-two percent of staff feel dissatisfied with student leisure and social opportunities.

Students, parents of prospective students and employers were asked to rate priorities for the new Institute on issues relating to student experience:

Priorities for new college development	Priority for development			Keep as is / no development needed		
	Students	Parents	Employers	Students	Parents	Employers
Information for prospective students	62.4%	70%	71%	23%	20%	7%
Student information to get the most from college	61%			24%		
Range of courses	67%			19%		
Progression and linking courses to further qualifications	66.4%			20%		
Connecting with schools to enable pupils to benefit from college experiences	59%	87%	69%	22%	0%	4%
Connecting with employers for projects and work experience	77%	70%	84%	8%	0%	7%
Opportunities for research	59%	66%		20%	0%	
Connecting with other colleges and universities online	55%			25%		
Visits, exchanges and other opportunities to gain more experience or learning	59%			26%		
Campus buildings	40%	66%	40%	40%	11%	16%
Classroom facilities	39%			45%		
Canteen facilities	42%			38%		
Student recreational space	45%	44%	36%	29%	0%	16%
Student-led projects and activities	44%			27%		
Transport to campuses	63%			15%		
Student accommodation	50%	66%	40%	16%	11%	4%

 = not asked

In developing the student experience, all students will be valued and their ambitions supported. 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. This is an exciting challenge in an islands context where many local learners combine learning with employment and live in remote locations, and to which incoming students face logistical challenges of travel and accommodation. Shetland Institute, UHI will have a high proportion of distance learners and a high proportion of learners over twenty-five.

Student's perspectives on the need for accommodation and transport to help them access learning have been listened to, and these are vital areas of further development, for local learners and for students considering coming to Shetland to learn.

In addition to this, students want more social experiences and a greater sense of being part of a student community. Shetland Institute, UHI is committed to working with the Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA) to develop creative responses to this.

Becoming a Health Promoting College will bring a focus to activities and partnerships which support students' health and mental wellbeing.

Shetland Institute, UHI will build on past experience of student exchange programmes (e.g. with Norway, through the Erasmus scheme) with new opportunities for engaging with the wider world, project-based learning and employer-led experiences.

The Shetland Institute, UHI student experience will start with school engagement and be furthered reflected in community engagement. With students, a strategy for enhancing the student experience will be developed. Success will be measured from an annual action plan.

Staff, in every role, will support Shetland Institute, UHI's ambition to create a fantastic student experience. They will have the skills and knowledge to respond effectively to the range of students' circumstances and needs. This will complement a Student Participation and Support Service which will bring specialised skills, through partnership and team working, to respond to particular needs, and to ensure the progress of all learners is championed. All learners who come to us with disadvantage will be supported. Through our approach, our curriculum and our environment equality for all will be embraced.

Students are Shetland Institute, UHI's best ambassadors for future success. They will be front and centre of efforts to improve and grow learner opportunities.

Benefits for Staff

The merger project survey of staff across all three establishments, in August 2019 showed 71.5% of staff feel that their organisation needs to change. The protracted process of achieving merger has led to suspension of many future facing activities and the uncertainties have impacted on staff morale. A conclusion to this process will allow all organisations to move forward in a positive way with a management team focussed on developing the new organisation.

Benefits for the Community of Shetland

Local Employers

In addition to strengthening work-based learning, through Shetland Institute, UHI local employers will benefit from:

- A one-stop approach to 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 courses supporting and promoting 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 IT facilities for business-hub use;
- A strategic approach to industry engagement, ensuring trends and needs of local sectors (including those specific to micro- and small businesses) inform future curriculum development.

Local Economy

The retention of more Shetland school-leavers in Shetland, and more mainland graduates returning to Shetland to continue their professional learning locally, supports the local economy in the following ways:

- Employer recruitment of qualified new entrants is supported, addressing current recruitment challenges;
- Each school leaver who goes to study at a Mainland university is a loss to Shetland's economy of at least £6,000 per year (not including accommodation, assuming "remainers" live with parents).

Attracting students from mainland Scotland, the UK, of the EU or internationally is an immediate benefit to the Shetland economy:

- A non-local student contributes around £10k per year to the local economy – in addition to the course fees paid to the institution;
- Retaining incoming students as graduates strengthens the economy and our communities.

Financial Benefits of the Proposed Merger

To be added

Governance

Shetland Institute, UHI will be established as an un-incorporated college. It will be an assigned college to UHI the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the Highlands and Islands. The governing body is responsible for ensuring compliance with a Financial Memorandum which sets out:

- The relationship between the RSB and the new college, and the responsibilities of each for the proper stewardship of public funds;
- General requirements that apply to the new college, including internal and external audit requirements, student activity and support, tuition fee policy and governance;
- Additional requirements for non-incorporated colleges, including capital finance and contingent commitments.

The new body will seek charitable status through registration with OSCR prior to vesting.

Corporate Development

The corporate and operational benefits arise from the increase in scale. It should be noted that a range of functions currently provided by Shetland Islands Council will become the responsibility of the independent merged institution.

Governance and leadership

- A single merged institution will follow the national Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges, introducing to Shetland's tertiary governance a single Chair and Board of Directors with an audit committee, remuneration committee, finance and nominations committee;
- The single merged institution will have charitable status (only NAFC has this at present);
- The Board of Directors will have staff directors and student directors (neither of the boards for the separate institutions has this at present);
- A new Board of Directors for a single merged institution will lead and direct strategically, with a focus on improving performance, managing resources effectively, securing investment, and driving growth;
- A new Principal/CEO for the new institution was appointed in October 2019.

Management

- The development of a senior management structure for a single merged institution presents the opportunity to streamline and strengthen management and focus on leadership of key priorities for growth of learning and teaching; knowledge exchange and research.

Administration and delivery support services

- Review of delivery of core functions during preparation for vesting will enable cost-effective administration, aligning the capacity created by the merger to ensure effective financial management and processes, ICT support; administration of student registration, records and data, marketing and communications, estates management, canteen services, quality assurance, health and safety and compliance. Where possible UHI common services will be used to support this activity.
- The most cost-effective means of delivering HR services, staff welfare support, legal and audit services, will be sought and where possible, collaboration through UHI with other colleges or other local agencies will be developed to create efficiency.
- Insurance and audit costs will increase in the new institution, since these were previously only applicable to NAFC as an independent body.

College name

The name **Shetland Institute, UHI** has been recommended by the Shadow board, endorsed by UHI. Confirmation for the title is awaited through SFC.

Key Performance Indicators

Table under preparation

Timetable to Vesting Day

Management of the Merger Process

Between May and September 2019 work to bring the history of the merger to a tangible conclusion of a merged institution has been being finalised in this Ministerial Merger Business Case. Work to finalise this case has included:

- Establishment of a Shadow Board with recruitment of new Non-Executive members working alongside representatives from Shetland Islands Council and the NAFC Board of Trustees (SFTCT) ready to become the Board of a new independent institution;
- Agreement on a Memorandum and Articles of Association to establish the new institution as an unincorporated association with charitable status, with adequate representation by Shetland's seafood sector as a major stakeholder, to meet NAFC trustee conditions;
- Detailed discussions with all staff in all entities, exploring curriculum, development and growth potential, and the capacity required for delivery;
- Further research into the needs of students, the views of parents of future students, the needs and businesses and employers, to support the development of priorities for the new institution and an assessment of how growth for sustainability can be achieved;
- Agreement on a name for the new institution: **Shetland Institute UHI**;
- Successful recruitment of a new Principal/CEO Designate to lead the new Shetland Institute UHI;
- Detailed assessment of the growth potential in the new Shetland Institute UHI over its first five years, informing analysis of efficiencies that can be made whilst preserving capacity for development and growth, leading to proposals for transition support.
- The start of preparations for the operational changes required to successfully bring three entities together to function confidently as one organisation.

Risk Management

An initial risk register has been prepared for the merger process. This will be kept reviewed regularly and kept up to date by the Merger Working Group.

Risk	Likely	Impact	Possible cause	Mitigation	Review
Delayed restructuring	Low	Medium	Process of ER/VS slow; inadequate HR input; windows of opportunity for consultation and action provided by term times is limited.	Advance planning to ensure activity takes place as expected; Manage HR input closely and procure additional support if necessary.	SMT
Target savings from restructuring not achieved	Low	High	Retention of essential posts for	Advance planning to ensure staff time is strategically allocated to support delivery	SMT External HR advice

			delivery costs more than expected	and growth in the most cost-effective way.	
Further pay rises through NRPA without government uplift impacts on affordability	Low	High	Further national bargaining.	Collaborate with Regional Strategic Body, Colleges Scotland and Scottish Funding Council on managing impact	Audit Committee SMT
Loss of key skills impacts on new course development	Medium	High	Key personnel leave for new opportunities elsewhere.	Ensure all staff are aware of growth priorities and effort to secure investment; Effective and vigorous fundraising and business development activity to secure investment. Strategic collaboration with UHI network to secure new course approvals etc. Ensure Shetland Institute is a positive place to work and develop a career with a programme of culture change and seeking professional development opportunities via the UHI network.	SMT
Significant price rises impact on operational costs	High	Low to High	Wide range of variables and wide range of costs could be affected.	Ensure management of cash flow allows for strategic purchasing of e.g. reserve fuel; Ensure all sections manage operational costs efficiently and have planned responses to price rises or subsequent resource shortages.	Audit committee All section leaders
Drop in student numbers impacts on SFC income	Low	High	Demographic changes Loss of institution reputation e.g. in response to course closure Industry sponsorship reduces	Re-boot marketing and engagement to promote Institute opportunities; Make managed changes to the curriculum to ensure least impact on students; Ensure proactive industry engagement.	SMT
Failure to improve student accommodation options reduces potential for student fee increases	Medium	Medium	Capital works on Port Arthur House delayed or it remains unfit; Alternative solutions not found.	Make student accommodation solutions a high priority project; Collaborate with local public sector partners on shared solutions.	Business Development
Failure to attract grant income reduces potential for growth	Medium	High	Fundraising and business development not competitive; Increased competition for funds across all sectors; Track record and potential of Institute not sufficiently promoted.	Ensure dedicated staff time for fundraising and business development and invest in the skills development to ensure high quality submissions; Maintain a robust fundraising strategy with identified prospects, understanding of trends, positive engagement with funding bodies;	Business Development

				Ensure the profile and positioning of the Institute reaches a wide UK audience.	
Continuing restrictions in EU funding (or lack of replacement) impacts on grant funding					
Change in government in 2021 adversely affects FE/HE funding	Low	Low	Even with a change in government, sudden changes to funding and ring-fencing unlikely without consultation.	Collaborate with Regional Strategic Body, Colleges Scotland and Scottish Funding Council on managing impact.	Audit committee SMT

Strategies to Ensure Merger Proposal Success

Communications Strategy

Clear, relevant and timely communications are an essential component of any change process, and must be delivered in combination with the vision, direction and rationale for change.

The purpose of the Communications Strategy is to co-ordinate consistent communications about the merger to staff, students and all stakeholders, including the general public. The following communications objectives apply:

- Devise and deliver a programme of public relations to support the aims and objectives of the merger through existing and new communications channels, internally and externally;
- Identify, analyse and monitor stakeholder engagement;
- Develop and review key messages.

To ensure the success of this strategy, it is suggested that the following policies for communication are adopted:

- We are committed to open and timely two-way communication with all staff and learners;
- We will take time and effort to deliver high-quality, proactive communication that ensures stakeholders are informed about board activity, aims and objectives, and know how they impact upon our collective success;
- We will use a combination of traditional methods and innovative technologies to reach a culturally and geographically diverse audience and will put stakeholder need at the core of all communication;
- We will value feedback, listen to and involve people in our activity and we will recognise the link between strong, effective communication and organisational success, adhering at all times to the principles of openness, transparency and accessibility.

Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy

Integrating staff from two disparate organisations—one a charitable trust, one a local authority—is a challenging process, but one which will be undertaken in an open and transparent manner at all stages. The success of the new institution will rely on the development of a new culture, and a curriculum which reflects the strengths and specialisms of the partners, and the current and future needs of the local, regional and national economy.

A new staffing structure for the merged college will be developed by the Principal Designate in a spirit of co-operation and consultation, and will adhere to the following principles:

- The structure must support a diverse, vibrant and flexible curriculum which is coherent and offers progression;
- The new staffing structure will address areas of support service delivery which are currently under resourced, such as student support, marketing and business development;
- The structure must be efficient, effective and sustainable, and incorporate opportunities for individual and professional career development and progression;
- The volume and level of provision of FE Education will be designed to deliver on the Regional Outcome Agreement and the UHI Strategic Plan, as well as local strategies and priorities;

- The appropriate restructure policies and procedures will be used during any staff restructure;
- Consultation with trades unions and staff will take place during the restructure process in line with restructuring procedures including SIC's Organisational Restructure and NAFC's Redundancy policies and procedures;
- Significant change can only be delivered successfully with the commitment and engagement of staff. Support for staff will be provided through a range of workforce development and well-being strategies. Human Resources will work with the trades unions and managers to provide advice on the restructure process to all employees affected by the restructure.
- The new college must be sustainable in its own right;
- All staff transferring to the new college will have their terms and conditions of employment protected in line with TUPE regulations.

Quality Strategy

It is the ambition of the new college to be renowned as an organisation where the highest standards of quality are achieved and are integral to everything we do.

Considerations relating to quality permeate other policies, including Learning and Teaching, Curriculum Development, Research and knowledge transfer and Student Engagement.

However, in an environment where there is an increasing expectation on colleges to self-evaluate, it is essential to establish a policy which ensures the college takes a wide-ranging and coherent view of its approach to managing quality.

The proposed Quality Strategy details the following requirements:

- To have in place a set of arrangements that are aimed at enhancing the quality of all aspects of the Institute's operations;
- To ensure that self-evaluative and reflective activity, and the gauging of the college's quality performance, is well-informed by current and comprehensive data and that the analysis is routinely acted upon;
- To have in place effective internal verification and audit processes;
- To have in place a course and unit approval process that assures the quality and sustainability of the college curriculum and which is aligned to the University of the Highlands and Islands processes in respect of higher education qualifications.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

As part of the original workstreams informing the full business case a draft learning and teaching strategy has been drawn up and is included as Annex 2.

Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy

A Draft Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy has been drawn up and is included as Annex 3.

Estates Strategy

An Estates Strategy for Shetland Institute UHI will be developed. This must ensure that the existing estate and its facilities are utilised to their maximum potential and meet the college's strategic objectives while promoting:

- Sustainability;
- Accessibility; and
- Safety.

Strategic objectives identified as part of the initial review are:

- ensure robust management of the college estate and its facilities across the multiple campuses and delivery points;
- ensure that the facilities are utilised efficiently and deliver value for money;
- create an environment for students and communities that inspires learning and prepares students for real work environments;

- be flexible and adapt to the changing requirements of curriculum delivery;
- create an inclusive, accessible environment that promotes equality and facilitates progression and achievement;
- support technological innovation;
- ensure that facilities are safe, healthy environments that are fit for purpose;
- appropriate investment which enhances the financial and physical sustainability of the College;
- ensure the college meets its responsibility for the stewardship of its public assets; and
- enable the delivery of sustainable, effective and relevant courses and activities that contribute to our quality of life.

A space utilisation survey is being undertaken to inform requirements for estates development and usage and the views of staff, students and external stakeholders will be sought to develop an estates strategy.

Information and Communications Technology Strategy

In order to inform future integration systems and processes, a review was initiated to investigate ICT issues which may arise during the merger. The purpose of the review was to investigate issues relating to the transfer of ICT services from existing arrangements to merged Institute, including:

- Issues relating to existing corporate services functions;
- ICT resource requirements for merged college;
- Transfer of Train Shetland staff from existing (SIC) network to new (UHI) network;
- Continuing functionality of CRM and management systems (e.g. LearnSmarter, FIPS).

The scope of the review included: staff; service delivery and support; operating costs; capital costs; ICT hardware, systems and software; web presence; corporate systems; printing; telephony; virtual server environment; backup and replication; local network provision.

It is assumed that the merged college will be using the UHI network and Wide Area Network (WAN) links as its primary backbone, and that core services such as Active Directory, Domain Name System, etc. will be provided through the UHI.

The review established that:

- There are no major issues relating to the transfer of Train Shetland staff to the UHI network;
- There are no major issues relating to the continued use of CRM and management systems currently used by Train Shetland after the merger, however there may be some minor issues relating to branding, and further investigation is required to determine whether the existing systems will meet the requirements of the merged college;
- Issues relating to corporate service functions such as finance, payroll and HR will have to be addressed prior to the merger;
- Integration of the two existing Active Directory UHI partner sites into the merged college site will require an ICT led project to deliver the desired outcome;
- Integration of the two existing number plans on the UHI telephony system will require an ICT led project to deliver the desired outcome. This can be combined with the Active Directory project using the same ICT teams.

There will be many strategic, operational and technical requirements relating to ICT that need to be considered prior to, and after the merger. These include, but are not limited to:

- Developing an ICT strategy for the new college;
- Developing a single website for the new college;
- Rolling equipment upgrade programme;
- Existing software licensing and subscriptions to new organisation.

Appendices

Appendix i: Strategy to integrate Campuses???

Appendix ii: Financial Due Diligence Summary - Insert from December 2018 SIC Business Case Report
Appendix iii : Legal Due Diligence Summary - Insert from December 2018 SIC Business Case Report
Appendix iv: Assessment Matrix used to merger model
Appendix v: Timetable to Vesting Day

Annexes

Annex 1: Financial Business Case

Annex 2: Draft Learning and Teaching Strategy

Annex 3: Draft Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy