

Committee	Board of Management		
Agenda Item	8		
Date paper prepared	08/07/2022	Date of committee meeting	20/07/2022
Subject	Principal's Report		
Author	Jane Lewis, Principal with members of SMG		
Action requested	For discussion		
Purpose of the paper	To update the board on activities across the College		
Brief summary of the paper	<i>An outline is given of the measures being taken to mitigate COVID whilst ensuring a suitable student experience. The current position on student numbers and credits is provided. Activities of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee are provided. An update is given on activity related to the Islands Deal. Updates are given on research activities and other college activities and achievements.</i>		
Consultation	SMG members provide the updates in the report		
Resource implications	n/a		
Risk implications	n/a		

Link with strategy	Links to all parts of the college strategic plan
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	n/a
Island Community Impact	n/a
Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].
Freedom of information	Choose an item. If closed/ withheld, select date this will become 'open': Enter a date.

1. UHI Updates

Appointment of Interim Deputy Principal (Tertiary and Research): Professor Neil Simco has been appointed to the role of interim Deputy Principal (Tertiary and Research) for 12 months. Currently, Vice-Principal (Research and Impact), Professor Simco has recently returned from sabbatical leave. This new role will see the research portfolio move into the education portfolio creating a new portfolio called tertiary and research

REF outcomes: As informally reported at our last Board meeting the latest assessment looked at a range of aspects of the work of 147 researchers across the UHI partnership. It examined the impact of their research, demonstrating how targeted research at UHI can support sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity in our communities, as well as addressing some of Scotland's biggest challenges.

Results can be reviewed at [results and case studies](#). Research in health and nursing, earth systems and environmental and marine sciences, area studies, archaeology, education, Gaelic and history were all recognised, with nearly three quarters of UHI research being classified as 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent'.

In terms of ranking, UHI now sits 9th in Scotland and equal 70th in the UK in terms overall GPS.

Funding flows from SFC linked to these results will be distributed across the partnership and we will see an increase in funding in this area once the allocations are agreed.

2. Return to campus

A final Covid-19 Monitoring Group of AY 2021-22 was held in June. The main points:

- Social distancing will cease across the UHI Shetland campuses from the start of the new Academic Year.
- Distance Aware lanyards are available from the libraries should staff or students wish to wear one so that people know to give them appropriate space
- Face coverings are still optional for staff and students who might wish to wear them
- Hand sanitiser will still be available, and its use is encouraged for staff and students to practise good hand hygiene
- CO2 monitors will be available in all classrooms.
- Lateral flow test (LFT) kits will no longer be available to staff. There is a limited amount now available, and we will keep those stock for any staff who require a LFT to do their job (such as SVQ assessors going to care homes where they are required to test before entering).

3. Update on enrolment figures (FE/HE)

Data extracted from Metis		8/7/2022	Total AY enrolment figures			
			2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
FE	Full time (FT)	74	76	90	94	89
	Part time (PT)	2498	2235	2197	3348	3584
HE	Full time (FT)	128	163	117	112	117
	Part time (PT)	274	255	254	278	220

Full time numbers remain reasonably constant as can be expected for this time of year. There has been an increase of 485 part time FE enrolments, and 21 part time HE enrolments since 21st April. Our part time FE numbers well exceed the levels during the pandemic years but are not in line with pre pandemic levels. This is indicative of the fact that practical courses have been able to run throughout this year unlike in 2020/21 and 2019/20. It is concerning however that, in a year where there has been pent up demand post pandemic, we are not seeing a return to pre 2019 numbers. Part time HE numbers are strong, being the second highest we have seen over a five year period.

Currently credits are sitting at **4304** meaning that we have now exceeded our revised credit target of 4200. Based on activity that is still to take place, we expect our final total for 2021/22 to be in the region of 4330.

Looking towards next year, we have good numbers on our skills for work and apprenticeship courses, but we are not seeing particularly strong application numbers for our longer FE and HE programmes. This is a common concern across the UHI partnership. We are continuing to promote our courses throughout the summer and working on new offers to attract students throughout 2022/23.

4. Update on Short Courses

Data correct at 6/7/2022	No. of courses		No. of delegate places filled		No. of days of training	
	21/22	20/21	21/22	20/21	21/22	20/21
Scalloway	148	14	1053	117	466.5	22.5
Lerwick	86	122	666	705	106	167
TOTAL	234	136	1719	822	572.5	189.5

As is to be expected, short course numbers are much healthier than during the pandemic. There has continued to be strong demand for short courses in certain areas throughout the year, particularly those that are closely linked to local industry. Several new short courses have also been successfully launched and continue to be popular. However, there is still much work ongoing to further increase our portfolio and interest to expand engagement with our short courses.

5. Update on Apprentices

The new contract for SDS was awarded as part of SDS's offer to extend for an additional year, with the potential for this to be repeated next year. This would mean that we would not have to tender again which would be of benefit.

The contract volumes have been rolled over and based on last year's figures. We were therefore awarded 171 places for apprentices across the different disciplines. The contract value for SDS funding for the apprenticeships was £500,719 which included £55,000 for expenses for those apprentices who have to travel south for the theory part of their training as it is not available in Shetland. This is a reduction from last year where the expenses value was £100,000. When questioned, we were advised this was based on previous usage. If required we hopefully will be able to request further funding for this area to meet the demand.

The contract year runs from 1 April through to 31 March. Here is a short snapshot of where we are as of 12 July:

- 39 New Starts
- 41 Leavers, Achievement Rate 90%
- We've claimed £134,621.60 so far on milestones, outcome, start etc. - 27% of contract
- We've claimed £32,993.60 on T&L - 60% of contract

Given that we are 4 months into the contract, we are currently in a relatively healthy position with a good number of starts already registered and a good achievement rate. We are assessed quarterly on where we are at in terms of value and volume. We also have a reasonable demand for the rest of the places and would anticipate many of the spaces being taken, particularly during the period between July to September as the apprenticeships often align with the college start dates.

Since April, there has been some reorganisation at SDS and we have had two changes of our Skills Investment Advisor. We will be meeting the latest Advisor in August.

One area of concern is Health and Social Care as success in this area will depend upon Shetland UHI's success in the tendering process as released by the Council. We have a number of apprentice places for Child Care and Social Care and the potential loss of this contract would have a big effect.

6. Update on research

6.1 Marine Science and Technology

Funding has been awarded to support the Fair Isle Research and Development MPA, this includes an extension of the existing inshore fish survey (£29,625) to cover Fair Isle, and also some work relating to habitat modelling (£40,500).

6.1.1 Marine Planning

Projects

Shetland Marine plan- Marine Scotland have now updated the Direction from NAFC Marine Centre to Shetland UHI and we will now be able to progress with adoption by Scottish Ministers. Shetland Islands Council have confirmed funding for Development and Maintenance of the Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan (£44,214 ex VAT – award letter received)

PhD's

Bryden Centre- Inne Withouck has successfully defended her PhD during a Viva held in Perth. Her examiners congratulated her on a fantastic piece of work. Inne will be taking up a post in Belgium but will continue to work on publications from her PhD.

Rachel Shucksmith our Marine Spatial Planning Manager has successfully defended her PhD thesis, which was a PhD via published works, bringing together her existing publications relating to Shetland Marine Plan. Rachel was registered with the University of Portsmouth as the UHI does not currently offer a PhD via this route

6.1.2 Fisheries

Demersal

Ling project (Defra FISP Part A fund) – Application was successful and a 5-month feasibility study starts in August to develop a larger Part B project application.

Pelagic

Confirmation of successful funding application for 'Catch to batch' feasibility study with the SPFA (through Defra's Fishing Industry Science Partnership [FISP] Part A funding call).

Abstract accepted for presentation (Katie Brigden 'Industry-science collaboration to enhance traditional fisheries data collection') at the Small Pelagic Fish symposium in November and funding granted

Shellfish

Confirmation of successful funding application to SIC for SSMO work (£197,255 - award letter issued).

The scallop survey is underway and weather permitting will be completed on time. We have been working closely with MSC on a promotional piece for sustainable seafood – with a focus on the science and people involved. This should be launched in September.

Dr Richard Shelmerdine has left our staff and an proposal to replace him is being developed for the approval of F&GP in due course.

Ongoing work is being undertaken to support MPA management and providing data and information to Waitrose to promote the sustainable practices in response to questions from Open Seas.

Fisheries Policy

Dr Napier has continued to provide expert advice, information and other services to industry under the terms of the MoU with Shetland Fishermen. Issues around cod, monkfish and ling have been of recent prominence.

6.1.3 Aquaculture

Stepping Stone project report completed

Harmful Algal Blooms and Phytoplankton monitoring:

- Imaging Flow Cytobot – initial setup of instrument completed but deployment still requires some significant time and development of facilities.
- Workshop on HABs with Shetland aquaculture MDs, and included presentation of results from ASTOX project (SAMS)
- Further assistance with IFCB deployment through Crown Estate Scotland application with Marine Scotland and SAMS, is still awaiting a decision.
- PhD candidate recruitment was successful, with student to be based in Moray and due to start in August 2022.

Aquaculture UK – (not attended due to COVID) but successful for the Aquaculture Hub

Hosted a visit from Salmon Scotland

Contributed water samples for eDNA MSc project (SAMS)

6.2 Centre for Island Creativity

A highlight of this period was the hosting by the Centre of the Islands Studies International Conference 2022 event at the Scalloway campus at the end of June. Delegates travelled from all over the world for the event and were joined by delegates online. The theme of the conference was [Creativity, Ingenuity, and Practice](#).

The Centre has successfully validated a PhD for Creative Practice in the Arts which builds on the existing portfolio of Masters teaching and in particular the MRes in Creative Practice.

The period also saw the completion of the Nordic Connections project led by Roxane Permar, which was funded in the first round of the Scottish Government Arctic Connections Fund. Roxane reported *'that the project ended extremely positively despite many challenges. The new Norwegian partners have been amazing, as have our Scottish/Shetland partners. We have established a very strong foundation for future work.'*

The Centre was successful in a bid for the Knab Creative Strategic Framework commission and was also successful in a funding bid for a University of the Arctic collaborative project entitled Living in the Landscape.

7 Update on merger related topics

As reported at the last Board meeting a Draft Memorandum of Understanding remains with Shetland Islands Council for ratification (since November 2021). Data Sharing Agreement with SIC also outstanding, a draft has been shared awaiting comment from SIC's Data Protection lead.

8 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Last modified: 19/07/2022 17:42

We currently have students with severe allergies and a shortage of First Aiders with Anaphylaxis training across the campus. Training has now been arranged for 6 First Aiders across the two sites to try to ensure there is always someone available on site. This issue will be resolved before the start of the new academic year and plans put in place for individual students. The Anaphylaxis Risk Assessment will also be reviewed following the training.

First Aid lists are now in place in both campuses, plus phone cascade systems for each building.

Incident Coordinator training (including Fire Warden training with practical extinguisher training) has been completed for half of the Incident Coordinators. The remaining Incident Coordinators will take part in their training after summer break.

HR have circulated a Stress Questionnaire and the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee are waiting for the results.

As a mitigation for Covid19 going forward, CO2 monitors have been placed throughout the campus, with instructions for use.

As the Board Directors and Principal are legally responsible for the Health and Safety of the college it was agreed that the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee approved minutes would be made available to the Board.

There was only one minor accident reported and one hazard involving a loose air-conditioning unit, still to resolve at the time of the committee meeting.

9 Update on Estates

Train Shetland Building: Work is well underway towards relinquishing the Train Shetland Building at the end of July. The vocational team have moved to the Scalloway campus to refurbished rooms. Reorganisation of storage in the Lerwick Main Building has allowed transfer of equipment linked to short courses and the remaining staff in the TS building will shortly make the transfer to that building.

Port Arthur House: Contracting is underway for refurbishment of the ground floor to provide student accommodation on a temporary basis. It is hoped this work will be complete in September.

10 Islands Deal

Islands Deal activity continues at pace with outline business cases being completed, reviewed and submitted to government and feedback incorporated (see table below). UHI programme board has been meeting regularly to oversee projects with which we are engaged and additional resource for management of the Islands Deal is being put in place.

Project	SUHI involvement	Progress
Shetland campus redevelopment	Lead	OBC signed off but reopened and resubmitted to encompass Space Innovation project
Shellvolution	Joint leadership	OBC submitted to government, feedback has been incorporated and resubmitted
Creative Islands and Wellbeing	Lead	OBC feedback from govt received and resubmitted
Talented	UHI Lead	OBC submitted to government, feedback received and incorporated and resubmitted. Work on FBC underway

In addition to the above we are actively engaged with SIC to develop a project within the Knab redevelopment concerning student accommodation.

On 22nd June we hosted an Island Centre for Net Zero (ICNZ), Energy Transition Engineering Workshop led by Professor Susan Krumdike. The transition to Net Zero is a 'wicked' problem – indeed a series of 'wicked' problems. The ICNZ (an islands deal project) is developing tools to help with defining the problems, assembling data to inform analysis of the problems and exploring potential solutions. We will be supporting the Island Centre for Net Zero though hosting labs and we look forward to some fascinating conversations in the future.

11 General activities and achievements

11.1 Student achievement

HISA awards: Sue Beer won in the category Best Student Voice Representative. This award recognises students who have made an exceptional contribution to serving their peers through their role as student voice rep. Lisa Ryder was highly commended in the category, Most Inspiring Student - The Students' Choice

Student Showcase at Mareel: 1st June saw Shetland UHI music and film students present a showcase of work from their studies during the 21/22 academic year. This was a dynamic event that showed the full range of student activity in film and music.

Vision 22 Exhibition: After almost two years away, the UHI Shetland Fine Art Degree show was open for viewing from Friday 10th of June until Friday 24th of June. The exhibitions had Saturday openings and late evening openings. This exhibition was part of the creative industries department end of year show and featured work from various courses including contemporary textiles, national certificate portfolio, core and life skills and skills for work art.

[Something for all as fine art show returns | Shetland News \(shetnews.co.uk\)](https://shetnews.co.uk)

11.2 Staff achievement

HISA awards: Around a third of the teaching staff were nominated for awards this year which is an exceptional achievement by our staff and shows their commitment to students.

Karen Warner won an award; she was voted winner of the Best Personal Academic / Learning Support award. This award recognises staff who excel in the provision of support and guidance to students.

A number of staff were highly commended:

- John Hunter - Above and Beyond - Staff Award
- Roisin McAtamney - Best Support Staff (Non-Teaching)
- Roxane Permar - Above and Beyond - Staff Award / Best Research or Dissertation Supervisor / Most Engaging Video Conference Lecturer

New Scholarships: A contract was bid for and agreed with ECITB for scholarships linked to new areas of provision the college is looking to grow in the coming years.

[New scholarship programme aims to support 'next generation of engineers' | Shetland News \(shetnews.co.uk\)](https://shetnews.co.uk)

Tender submitted: A team of staff submitted a tender for 'The Provision of Care and Child Care Qualifications for Shetland Islands Council'. This relates to a substantial portion of our current Health and Social Care provision. With a tight 3 week turn around straddling into an academic holiday period a tender has been prepared and submitted. This affects teaching for the coming academic year and we expect a decision soon.

Staff development day: June's event was held at the Scalloway Campus. It included a Principal's address; presentations and workshops from John Bowditch and John Laird from Education Scotland; get to know you discussion groups with a theme "*hybrid learning and what I've learned from the pandemic*"; a variety of workshops on topics requested by staff and managers and a final team discussion slot.