

Committee	Board of Management		
Date paper prepared	23/09/2022	Date of committee meeting	05/10/2022
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>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 Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online.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

UHI updates are the subject of a separate paper to the Board on this occasion.

2. Return to campus (*Gemma/Angela*)

The return to campus for AY 2022-23 has been smooth, with students and staff no longer having to adhere to any social distancing.

At the last Covid Group meeting, the Lerwick reception and libraries wished to continue using the plexi-glass at their public facing desks. Briggistanes was keen to remove theirs – which was done.

All Covid information has been updated on the website and was also included in the student induction spaces on Brightspace.

Lateral flow tests are still available for any staff who requires them to visit workplaces (i.e. care homes). These staff know how to access these kits at both sites.

3. Update on enrolment figures (FE/HE)

		23/9/22	27/9/21	Total AY enrolment figures			
				2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
FE	Full time (FT)	50	69	72	76	90	94
	Part time (PT)	651	406	2585	2235	2197	3348
HE	Full time (FT)	123	116	128	163	117	112
	Part time (PT)	141	150	273	255	254	278

Shetland UHI enrolments at 23/09/2022 (data extracted from Metis)

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

Full time FE enrolments are significantly reduced from last year, and are the lowest that we have seen for at least five years. The steady and significant decline in the number of such enrolments across the partnership that we have seen since 2018 has continued, apart from only one partner, colleges are seeing an average reduction of around 25%, with some reductions as high as 50%.

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

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

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working with the schools to develop a semester two offer for students who may decide to make an in year transition.

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

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

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

23/9/22	12/10/21	Total credit figures			
		2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
1696	2763	4383	4337	4276	4572

Shetland UHI credits at 23/09/2022 (data extracted from Metis)

Unlike most partners, Shetland UHI depends heavily on part time students to achieve credits, with over two thirds of our target being met with such students in a typical year. Relying on students completing SVQ units and embarking on shorter part time courses makes it very difficult to predict what our final enrolment and credit total is likely to be, particularly at such an early stage in the academic year. Nonetheless, with such a reduction in full time FE enrolments (20 enrolments representing 360 credits) substantial and sustained growth in shorter programmes will be required if we are to meet our target.

Our school partnership vocational pathways programmes are very strong, with most courses at capacity this year, and a new course in drama successfully launched. We currently have 231 school pupils attending across these programmes from S3 and S4. This is a notable increase on last year and represents around 43% of all S3/4 Shetland school pupils.

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

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

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

Vocational team

The SDS contract year runs from 1 April through to 31 March. This year's contract for Shetland UHI was the first of the combined contracts (previously Train Shetland and NAFC). The Vocational staff have now been looking after the administration of the whole contract whereas previously it was managed by the Aquaculture section separately. This process is in transition but has been successful.

The contract total for this year is for £500719 value (including £55000 expenses for apprentices going south) and for 171 new starts. The first milestone point of the contract is for the end of August where we needed to have 48 starts registered. As of 23/09/2022 we are at 68 new starts so we are in excess of the target and we are at £250,000 of our contract spend (August target £185000).

During the last few years owing to COVID, the apprentice travel was restricted, and alternative delivery methods were sought, including online. The delivery has returned more to normal and we have more apprentices travelling south again for the training they are not able to access here.

There is consistent demand for apprenticeships, with the largest areas in Care and Aquaculture, where requests for training remain consistent. The recent successful tender bid for Health and Care has assured that we can continue to offer apprenticeships to the SIC for the next 2 years and we have already met to plan the delivery of those programmes. There has also been demand from other employers including the NHS for whom a new SVQ in clinical and non-clinical care was developed by the section. We look forward to working more closely with the NHS and there have been requests from new customers too.

Demand in other areas has returned with sectors such as Engineering and remaining popular but other areas such as Logistics, Professional Cookery, Accounting and Hairdressing being requested. Through the apprenticeship provision, we aim to provide a service to local employers especially at a time when there are challenges to recruit staff.

SDS's Modern Apprenticeship of the Year nominations are open, with a closing date of 5 October. The department hopes to put some nominations forward and we hope to get some positive results again.

4. Update on Short Courses

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

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

Short course numbers 1st August to 9th September

5. Update on research

5.1 Marine Science and Technology

5.1.1 Marine Planning

Shetland Marine plan-We are still waiting for an update from Marine Scotland relating to the Marine Plan adoption.

Community Wildlife Group- The community wildlife group has run a series of events over the summer, including Cunningsburgh Show, Climate week, drop in sessions at Shetland Library and Dunrossness.

Non-native species monitoring- We have undertaken non-native species monitoring across Shetland, 10 years after our initial baseline survey. We have also taken samples for e-DNA analysis which will be processed by Marine Scotland as part of a Scotland wide survey.

Diverse Values Project- we have hosted visiting researchers from Portsmouth University and MCS to gather values relating to the marine environment using arts based methods.

Article published- Mika Schröder has published a research article for a special issue on Commons management, which offered reflections and glimpses into the benefits and discussions that could come with being more mindful and critical of the ways we speak of society, human-nature relations, and law.

MASTS Abstracts- Rachel Shucksmith, Inne Withouck, Becky Giesler have all had abstracts accepted for MASTS (November) and Rachel Shucksmith will be chairing a session.

PhD's SUPER DRP- Phd student Sophie Smith will be starting on 3rd October, supervised by Dr Rachel Shucksmith, Dr Lauren McWhinnie (Heriot Watt) and Prof Ben Wilson (SAMS). Sophie's PhD is titled 'Investigating methods for a multi-faceted approach to determine distribution and habitat use of harbour porpoises to inform management'

5.1.2 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. Specific pieces of work carried out have included analyses of whitefish market prices in Shetland and of monkfish catches by local fishing boats.

Whitefish:

Fair Isle fish survey fieldwork undertaken, including trawl sampling and baited camera lander deployments. Funding for additional stomach contents analysis has been approved and lab work started.

Shetland Inshore Fish survey almost completed, three tows remaining (out of 52) due to be completed on Wednesday this week. SFA Executive Officer Daniel Lawson joined the Atlantia last Friday to see for himself the benefits of the survey. Opportunistic data collection for other projects has also been undertaken including:

- Thornback ray diet project (Mia MacAllister, Edinburgh Uni)
- Fish stable isotope project (Luis Huckstadt, Uni of Exeter)

- Biotoxin project (Ailsa Hall, SMRU)

Shaun Fraser completed a mini-Sabbatical through UHI funding which has allowed some dedicated staff time to submission of a scientific paper.

Shaun Fraser has been included as co-supervisor on two PhD project proposals. One to the SUPER DTP call and led by SMRU, and one to NERC Envision led by Bangor Uni.

Ling project progressing, first industry stakeholder workshop completed.

Pelagic: pelagic science workstream is progressing well. Activity of note is:

- Katie Brigden has participated in 'CatSam' online workshop (collaborative project, working with other national agencies on pelagic catch sampling, with aim to improve regional catch sampling).
- KB participation onboard local vessel Research for fishing trip during the herring season, collecting more data to support the science-industry data collection programme.
- KB onboard visit to Fraserburgh vessel Christina S for crew training for the science-industry data collection programme.
- KB / CA work initiated for 'Catch to batch' feasibility study (led by SPFA).
- Pelagic science PhD proposal submitted to SUPER DTP call (CA lead supervisor, co-supervision from MSS, SPFA and Uni of Aberdeen).

Shellfish: Work is progressing in line with funding awarded in support of SSMO requirements. Scallop survey was completed on time.

5.1.3 Aquaculture

Shell-volution project:

- Second tranche of feedback to Outline Business Case has been responded to
- Contributed to Islands Deal Seminar with SIC Elected Members
- Contributed to Shellfish Seminar at SAMS

Harmful Algal Blooms and Phytoplankton monitoring:

- Imaging Flow Cytobot – several faults identified and rectified
- PhD studentship is now inducted and begun his work. He's already attended a European phytoplankton instrumentation workshop (in Sweden).
- Plans for deployment of the instrument have started in association with Scottish Sea Farms.
- Further assistance with IFCB deployment through Crown Estate Scotland application with Marine Scotland and SAMS, is still awaiting a decision.

History of Aquaculture PhD - we hope to advertise soon, after having main funders confirmed

We hosted a **visit from Malcolm Pentland, Deputy Director for Marine Scotland** Attending Water Hub Forum (Inverness) to update on collaboration opportunities with UHI Aquaculture Hub.

5.2 Centre for Island Creativity

- CIC hosted Island Studies International Conference in Shetland in June. Andrew Jennings was on steering group with academics from New Zealand and Japan. 42 attendees, inc. 28 in person. Attendees from Easter Island, Aruba, Prince Edward Island, Japan... Presentations from Andrew Jennings, Simon Clarke, Roxane Pemar

- CIC membership
 - Andrew Jennings, based in Shetland but has been mostly employed via Orkney in the Institute for Northern Studies. Contract moving wholly to Shetland UHI
 - set up 'membership' for any interested colleagues across UHI
 - currently have 9 people signed up - 5 from outside Shetland (plus another two yesterday)
- HARC/SILK funded research project looking at the UHI Island Strategy (£54k budget)
 - Andrew and Siún are leading this work
 - Workshops and other internal engagement is ongoing
- Knab Creative Strategic Framework for Shetland Arts (£16k fee)
 - 28,000 word report by Malcolm, Roxane and Siun was submitted last Thursday
 - Strategy was built from public engagement workshops and interviews to assess community views
 - Framework sets out strategy for 10 year investment of public art budget of £250k
- Brodie Illuminated 2022 (£27k project inc £8.4k fee)
 - live event in November
 - setting up meetings with Mandy Haggith to look at possibility for student workshops and writing retreats at Brodie Castle, plus placements for 3rd year creative writing students.
 - proposed online workshop to introduce interested UHI staff to NTS team to explore future collaborations - all subjects are invited
- Innovation Voucher for Scottish Flag Trust (£5k fee)
 - Project due to complete in the next couple of weeks
 - Expected to lead into an application for an Advanced Innovation Voucher (£40k project, inc. £20k fee)
- Creative Economy Challenge Fund award for Malcolm (£2.5k)
 - scoping project with NTS exploring creative conservation lighting for light sensitive textiles exhibits
- Joint project instigated by Neil Simco and Nick Fyfe (VP research and community engagement, RGU) exploring potential collaborations between RGU, UHI Rural Health and UHI Creative Economy / CCI for creative innovation to tackle rural health and inequality issues
 - follows an unsuccessful bid to SFC's Alliances for Research Challenges call
 - aiming for a bid to ESPRC Developing Local Policy Innovation Partnerships in Jan 2023 (£30-50k)
- Roxane to lead selection process for a lead artist(s) to deliver the Remembering Together Covid Memorial project for Highland Region (greenspace trust)
- MI working with former colleagues at Napier on joint bid for AHRC Design Exchange Partnerships: design the green transition (£40k pilot)
- Roxane is an advisor for AHRC funded project with Middlesex, Tate, Queens Museum and CUNY Art & Social Practice programme
- Roxane, Siún and Malcolm are involved in a joint bid with RGU for a digital engagement project
- Roxane involved as Co-investigator in an AHRC bid with Manchester Met and RCA who want to use MA Course as case study

- Roxane's Nordic Connections research project has completed but the partners are looking to extend that collaboration
- Roxane involved in setting up a University of the Arctic - Living in the Landscape project for PG students
- Siún had an article published from her Carnegie funded research about knitting in Shetland and Ireland
- Roxane has a paper being published about her Landscape in Pain research project

- TFU
 - textile technician recruitment is underway, we hope to be able to make an announcement soon.
 - We ran an online TFU customer survey which had 16 responses - 11 from Shetland, 2 Highlands, 3 Fife, Central Belt, Borders
 - From the survey respondents we have interest from 6 people in undertaking a textiles post grad and 5 people interested in a PhD
 - 8 SMEs contacted are interested in pursuing joint research projects including Innovation Vouchers

- PhD Creative Practice
 - Research Degrees Committee have formally approved the new PhD.
 - Some conditions and recommendations to progress
 - Panel recommended timed starts to establish a sense of a cohort
 - Malcolm has a live list of 24 individuals who have said they want to do the PhD (inc TFU survey respondents) – plus three more enquiry emails this week
 - As part of the requirements, Shetland UHI will need to provide training for potential supervisors on practice led research. This will be covered from fee income.

- MRes Creative Practice
 - two examinations coming up before Christmas
 - two / three new starts before Christmas

- Island Growth Deal
 - CIW OBC revision 3 submitted last Friday
 - MI to take on leadership of the CIW programme following the departure of Joe MacPhee (to join UHI OH)
 - Expected start of the programme is March/April 2023 and will run until March 2032
 - CIC will lead the Imagining an Island workstream. Each year, this will include:
 - £15k research and innovation fund (£2-5k seed funding to set up new R&KE projects in the islands related to CIW aims)
 - £3k Creative Islands Research Forum
 - £17k Post Grad Research Student Fund - equivalent to 3 full time + 1 part-time fee waivers for islands based PhD students (10 students over 8 years)

6. Update on merger related topics

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.

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

EpiPen training is continuing for First Aiders across campus.

Incident Coordinator (Fire Warden) Training should be complete this month with all new ICs undergoing classroom and practical fire equipment training.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee is setting up a few short life working groups to review the results of a recent Stress Questionnaire, review a draft Shetland UHI Health and Safety Employee handbook, a draft Training Contractor H&S Handbook (and supporting forms) and its Contractor H&S Handbook and also to create a unified Lone Working policy, procedure and Risk Assessment proforma.

The Permits to Work process for key staff was clarified at the September meeting, for restricted work such as Hot Work, Working at Heights and Confined Spaces.

No accidents were reported at this meeting, only one hazard which had been resolved.

The second Peninsula external H&S audit is scheduled for the 28th of September.

8. 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). Projects contributed to a member's seminar. 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. Full deal sign off is being prepared, at last discussion this was being anticipated as early 2023.

Project	SUHI involvement	Progress
Shetland campus redevelopment	Lead	Revised OBC signed off but fuller treatment of some areas required at FBC. Tender out for design elements of the project. Project management resource being sought.
Shell-volution	Joint leadership	OBC submitted to government, second round of 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

Shell-volution

The Govt reviewers continue to be supportive of the Shell-volution project and we hope the response to this latest round of feedback may satisfy their queries and will lead to their approval for progression towards Full Business Case.

The main issue raised in the recent round of Govt feedback was to clarify matched funding requirements. We have amended the OBC so it is more clear that the £2.2m is 'additional' and 'leveraged' funding, as that better articulates our intention, rather than matched-funding. Our

economic appraisal identified that Option 2 (£3.3m) had a BCR of 5 and the preferred Option 3 (£6.6m) a BCR of 5.6, indicating that a £4.4m investment alone (without the £2.2m leveraged funding) would still be a good return on the public investments.

It is expected that applicants will be required to identify additional income to cover Full Economic Costs (FEC), with funding offered to higher education institutes (HEIs) at a % FEC, and that to be detailed at the time of application as it may depend on TRL levels.

We intend to promote the Shell-volution opportunity again to HEIs and to invite individuals or consortia to submit expressions of interest (EoIs) for project activities and for these to include expected project costs, deliverables, and benefits. This was most recently done a couple weeks ago with colleagues at SAMS shellfish research cluster and we have upcoming opportunities to do similar at a SSMG producer's technical meeting in Aberdeen and at the ASSG conference 6-7 October in Oban, where there is a separate seminar dedicated to Shell-volution stakeholder engagement.

The Islands Deal programme have raised concerns over project's individual resourcing for developing the FBCs and at UHI centrally, UHI responded positively with their commitment to the Islands Deal, although we do not expect this will be cash or additional human resources for Shell-volution.

There are a number of project challenges to be worked through at this time and weekly meetings continue to be held with UHI to progress a number of problematic areas, especially around eligible costs and process. One example: due to the structure of UHI it is now clear that money cannot flow from UHI to an Academic Partner (i.e. a direct award with UHI Shetland) without a formal public tender and procurement exercise. This will mean that any projects delivered by UHI Shetland or UHI Shetland consortia will need to go through a bidding process. Establishing positions on these matters consistently takes many months of deliberation.

Industry are facing considerable new challenges with energy costs, etc., but they are still enthusiastic for the Shell-volution project and its unprecedented level of R&D investment in the sector - they are eager to find solutions for a return to growth.

9. General activities and achievements (all)

ECITB Scholarship:- Following a challenging and changing process to get to this point, Shetland UHI has registered 9 existing NC level 5 engineering students onto an ECITB one year scholarship programme. These students will benefit from additions to their original course including a safety passport, supplied PPE, employer engagement workshop, work placement and a digital passport.

9.1 Student achievement

Graduation 2022: UHI Shetland held its first – and second – ever graduations on Friday 26th August. The morning graduation saw 40 graduates from 2020-21 and 2021-22 who had not been able to graduate in person attend and receive their scrolls from Todd Walker. In the afternoon (which covered AY 2021-22) we had 75 FE and HE students don their gowns. **Sue Beer** received a HISA award for *Best Student Voice Representative* which recognises students who have made an exceptional contribution to serving their peers through their role as student voice representative.

UHI Shetland Student of the Year: Inne Withouck was nominated as the UHI Shetland Student of the Year 2022. Inne's contribution to campus and wider UHI life, her adaptation during the pandemic and collaborations that she has undertaken during her time at UHI Shetland made her stand out. Inne has now gone forward for consideration for the overall UHI Student of the Year award.

9.2 Staff achievement

New UArctic Thematic Network: Dr Andrew Jennings, the Reader in Island Studies, is pleased that the new UArctic Thematic Network Northern and Arctic Studies was one of the four new networks approved by the UArctic Assembly. It will explore how islands can be helped to develop resilient, dynamic, and sustainable communities, charting the changing relationship between islanders and the sea, and exploring innovative ways of adapting to the effects of climate change. Topics within this overarching objective will include researching the sustainability of cold-water island tourism; how island subnational jurisdictions with small populations use their powers of jurisdiction and interpersonal relationships to forge relationships with other islands - outside of the usual state-to-state relationships; what makes young people want to stay in or to leave their local island community; what is the role of 'local knowledge' (and intergenerational relations) in young people's future perspectives and attachment to their island places? The members come from all across the North, including Estonia, Gotland, Scotland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Canada. There are members from UHI Shetland, Andrew himself and Dr Beth Mouat.

The UHI Shetland Aquaculture team recently supported Joseph, a school pupil at Lochgilphead High School, through his NPA level 5 Aquaculture course via online learning with UHI Brightspace.

This came after an initial conversation with Kames Fish Farm, who were keen to support the young person in his aquaculture learning.

Stuart Fitzsimmons, Aquaculture Senior Lecturer explained "This was the first time we had done this course via distance learning and the Kames staff did the on-site practical skills on their trout sites. It worked really well, and Joseph has now successfully completed this course, and has been employed full time by Kames. This is now an option for other schools to encourage young people into aquaculture learning."

Jamie McAndrew, Manager of Kames Fish Farming added "Joseph was working with us on a Tuesday through the Lochgilphead High School work experience scheme. This then led to part time employment working at weekends. The NPA level 5 course in aquaculture has allowed Joseph to develop classroom-based knowledge and understanding, while gaining valuable work-based experience. Joseph's personal development has been greatly accelerated thanks to the high quality of the course and opportunities it has given him. Joseph is now working full time on our Loch Craignish site and will shortly start the SVQ courses, which will further add to his personal achievements and contribute to the Kames Fish Farming Operations.

The feedback from the school on the quality of materials and level of learning required was very positive. The course materials and support from UHI Shetland teaching staff was well structured and of a level that challenged the student."

Congratulations to **Rachel Shucksmith, Marine Spatial Planning Manager**, who was successful in her viva for a PhD by publication. This is a very well-deserved recognition of the high-quality research that Rachel has undertaken and continues to produce.

Beth Mouat reports that the partnership to deliver the Shaetlan language plan is being drawn together with an aim to launch formally at an event in October. The plan has garnered international interest with opportunities for collaboration and research being identified for the future.