

Learning, Teaching and Research Committee

Meeting 1/4

Wed 21 September 2022, 16:30 - 18:30

Teams

Attendees

Chair

- Karen Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee)

Prescribed Board Members

- Simon Clarke (Teaching Staff Director)

Other Board Members

- Claire Christey (Independent Director)
- Christopher Bolton (Independent Director)
- Lucy Wilson (Independent Director)

Ex-Officio

- Jane Lewis (Principal - Shetland UHI)

Also in Attendance

- Laura Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary)
- Beth Mouat (Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange)
- Matt Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)

Apologies

- Ian McCormack (Student Director)
- John Goodlad (Independent Director)

Meeting minutes

1. Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest, and Announcements

Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching and Research Committee) welcomed everyone to the meeting, and extended a warm welcome to the new members of the committee Mr Bolton (Independent Director), Ms Christey (Independent Member), and Mrs Wilson (Independent Member).

Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) announced that Search and Nominations Committee determined that the student elected as the HISA Shetland Scalloway Officer would be the second student director, and therefore join this committee, for its next meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee) asked members to review the minutes of the previous meeting for matters of accuracy.

Decision: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Terms of Reference

Noted: The committee noted the terms of reference.

5. Student Experience

5.1. Senior Staff Presentation - Outcomes of Research Excellence Framework

Doctor Mouat (Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange) updated the committee on the Research Excellence Framework (REF), highlighting the key institutional outcomes and areas of development. The Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange explained that it will be a UHI wide piece of work of further development for the next cycle of the framework.

The committee discussed the paper, and how the funds are allocated. Professor Lewis (Principal) reported that £67,000 has been allocated to Shetland UHI, each year until the next cycle, as an outcome of this REF cycle. The Principal informed the committee that this figure had already been incorporated into the financial accounts of Shetland UHI. The Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange indicated that at this stage it is postulated that the individual unit of assessment environment statements will be replaced by a single UHI-wide environment statement in the future and we need to inform UHI of how we are using the funds.

5.2. Surveys - NSS, PTES

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) spoke about the survey results and the strengths of the results,

For the Post-Graduate Taught Survey, (PTES), she highlighted that UHI achieved a response rate of 33% compared the UK average of 23%, that the UHI satisfaction rate was 95% and Shetland UHI's was 100%, resulting in UHI ranking 4th out of 90 in in the UK, and the highest in Scotland. Additionally, she informed the committee that, UHI achieved the highest satisfaction rate in Scotland in seven of the nine areas of student experience, and was ranked 2nd in the UK for assessment, and 6th in the UK for engagement, adding that in relation to the pandemic response, UHI was ranked 10th in the UK.

The Depute Principal Tertiary spoke about how the PTES informed areas of improvement included focus around online connectivity and community between student peers and enhancing virtual library resources support for students, together with an increasing availability of online resources.

For the National Student Survey (NSS), the Depute Principal Tertiary informed the committee that the UHI response rate was 75%, compared to the UK average of 69% and that of Shetland UHI at 88%. She highlighted that the UHI overall satisfaction was 82%, compared to the Scottish average of 76%, placing UHI at 4th within Scotland, the highest position held by UHI in organisational memory.

The Depute Principal Tertiary explained that UHI performed above the UK average in the following sections of the survey: teaching, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, and student voice; while noting that UHI performed below average in Scotland and the UK in learning resources and learning community.

The Depute Principal Tertiary summarised that the main positive comments regarding Shetland UHI could be collated and summarised under two themes: supportive staff and knowledgeable staff.

She also concluded that across the PTES and NSS, there were a consistent themes of students desiring better online learning and online communities at UHI, noting that both the positive themes and the improvement themes would be incorporated into various plans for the year.

The committee noted that the Early Student Experience Survey (ESES) is coming up shortly, which should give a measure of whether these have been developed further since the results of the PTES and NSS.

Mr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) gave context to the results that lecturing staff can, for some courses, be spread across a number of academic partners.

The committee discussed the nature of the online environment of students, and the provision of the transfer to online learning during the pandemic.

Noted: The committee noted the results as brilliant, particularly at Shetland UHI.

6. Performance Monitoring

6.1. Applications and Enrolment

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) updated the committee on enrolment numbers, which were at the time of paper submission, as follows:

- Further Education Full Time: 49 (down 30% on September 2021).
- Further Education Part Time: 421 (up 4% on September 2021).
- Higher Education Full Time: 117 (up 1% on September 2021)
- Higher Education Part Time: 122 (down 19% on September 2021)

The Depute Principal Tertiary set context to the Further Education figures by drawing the committee's attention to the employment rate in Shetland, the increase in young people staying on in school, the steady and significant decline in student numbers across the partnership with an

average of 25% reductions of enrolment with highest reduction being 50%. She clarified that the figures evolve and stabilise as registrations are finalised, and increase throughout the year

The Depute Principal Tertiary set context to the Higher Education figures by drawing the committee's attention to the fact that the figures have returned to pre-pandemic levels at Shetland UHI. She highlighted that for most of the partnership, such figures have reduced to lower than 2021 and 2018. She clarified that the figures evolve and stabilise as registrations are finalised, and increase throughout the year.

The Depute Principal Tertiary updated the committee on the progress of credits, noting that the AY 2022-23 target is 4335. At the time of writing the report, total credits across Higher Education and Further Education stood at 1393 (down 50% on October 2021), though the 2022 figure had yet to account for SQA students or additional part-time students.

The Depute Principal Tertiary talked positively regarding the school partnership vocational pathways, the senior phase partnership enrolments had been disappointing. She outlined the actions that can be mitigated it regarding future development. The committee discussed this matter further.

The Depute Principal Tertiary updated the committee on the positive start with short course enrolment between 1st August and 9th September, which was recorded as follows:

- Number of Courses: 20 (up 54% on AY21/22)
- Number of delegate filled places (up 85% on AY21/22)
- Number of days training (up 143% on AY21/22)

She drew attention to the buoyancy of Modern Apprenticeship numbers, and the expected growth of short courses in the near future.

6.2. Risk Register Update

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) updated the committee on how the enrolment numbers impact the status of the risks:

- Failing to achieve allocated HE student number targets
- Not meeting allocated FE credit targets.

The Depute Principal Tertiary outlined the financial impact upon Shetland UHI, should these risks come to fruition. She also highlighted that SQA and additional part time students make up over two thirds of the credit target at Shetland UHI in a typical year, noting that such a dependency, makes predicting final enrolment numbers and credit total extremely challenging to anticipate at this point in the academic year, adding that substantial sustained growth is required in order to achieve the credit target.

Summarising the risk, the Depute Principal Tertiary stated that both risks remained classified as amber, reporting that it was possible that Shetland UHI may not reach its targets at this stage, while noting early enrolment indications, that may not meet either target, would have a significant impact on Shetland UHI.

7. Scholarship and Research

7.1. Approval of Doctoral Programme

Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the committee on the validation of a new PhD degree, highlighting the methodology of study suiting the needs of creative practitioners, with the programme delivered out of the Centre of Island Creativity and rolled out across the partnership. The Dean of Research at UHI had spoken very highly of the work done on for this.

8. UHI Standardised Policies

Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee) introduced this section of the agenda, and for the benefit of new members of the committee, set this in context to the committee's previous work.

8.1. Student Code of Conduct

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) informed the committee as to the development of the policy regionally, and how Shetland UHI staff had undertaken a local contextualisation process for the policy, to match the appropriate clauses to the relevant staff roles.

Decision: The committee approved the policy for use at Shetland UHI.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary shall implement the Student Code of Conduct.

8.2. Student Conduct Policy

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) informed the committee as to the development of the policy regionally, and how Shetland UHI staff had undertaken a local contextualisation process for the policy, to match the appropriate clauses to the relevant staff roles.

Decision: The committee approved the policy for use at Shetland UHI.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary shall implement the Student Conduct Policy.

8.3. Student Disciplinary Procedure

Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) informed the committee as to the development of the policy regionally, and how Shetland UHI staff had undertaken a local contextualisation process for the policy, to match the appropriate clauses to the relevant staff roles, adding that the school section was developed entirely locally.

The committee discussed why a verbal warning is written, and suggested that it should be labelled a 'first written warning'. The committee also discussed the retention life of warnings, along with how this policy could be applied fairly to networked students.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary is to feed back the queries raised on this policy to UHI, and report their response to the committee.

Decision: The committee approved the policy for use at Shetland UHI.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary is to implement the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

9. Any Other Business

Professor Lewis (Principal) highlighted a lecture at Scalloway by Dr John Halpin from SAMS taking place tomorrow, and streamed live on Facebook.

10. Date of Next Meeting

23rd November 2022 at 16:30 on Teams

Action: Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) shall liaise with Mr Collins (Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) in swapping the next scheduled meeting of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee with the next scheduled meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Progress
8.1	Implement the Student Code of Conduct.	Depute Principal Tertiary	
8.2	Implement the Student Conduct Policy.	Depute Principal Tertiary	
8.3	Feedback the queries raised on this policy to UHI, and report their response to the committee.	Depute Principal Tertiary	Complete
8.3	Implement the Student Disciplinary Procedure.	Depute Principal Tertiary	
10	Liaise with Mr Collins (Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) in swapping the next scheduled meeting of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee with the next scheduled	Board Secretary	Complete

	meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.		
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