

HISA

Highlands & Islands Students' Association
Comann Oileanaich na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean

Shetland UHI End of Year Report 2022/23

Author: Sara Fox, Assistant Voice Manager – Orkney & Shetland

Date: June 2023

1. Shetland HISA Team 2022/23

Ian McCormack started the Academic Year as Depute President Shetland following his election in March 2022, with his term running from 1st July 2022 – 30 June 2023. Ian resigned in September 2022.

A by-election was held in November 2022 for both Depute President Shetland and Scalloway Local Officer. There were no nominees for the Scalloway post and one nominee for the Depute role. Sinead Lucock was duly elected, commencing in January 2023 for a term of office running until 30 June 2023. Sadly, Sinead resigned in May 2023.

1.1 Post of Lerwick Local Officer

Following discussion with the then Depute President, Ian McCormack and the then Chief Executive of HISA James Lindsay, it was decided that the post of the Lerwick Local Officer would be absorbed into the Depute President role. This took the Depute position to 12 hours per week.

2. Democratic Engagement

This has been another difficult year, following on from the effects of the pandemic on democratic engagement. Despite the combined efforts of HISA staff locally and regionally, engagement remained down across the UHI on pre-pandemic years, as can be seen across the sector.

2.1 Winter by-election

A by election was held in November for the usual recruitment of the Scalloway Local Officer, and the role of Depute President Shetland was included following the resignation of Ian McCormack. A report for this was previously circulated by HISA's Democracy and Student Governance Co-ordinator. No Scalloway students put themselves forward for the local officer role, and one student came forward for the role of Depute. This led to the election of Sinead Lucock as Shetland Depute President for a term of January 2023 to June 2023.

2.2 Spring Elections for AY 2023/24

No further information is currently available on the Spring 2023 election due to the timing of this report. The full elections report will be provided by HISA's Democracy and Student Governance Coordinator in due course. The elected candidate will no longer be a student at UHI Shetland resulting in the need for a by-election to be run at the start of the next Academic Year. This will be done at the same time as the usual by-election for the Scalloway Officer post in October/November 2023.

2.3 Summer by-election 2023

Another by-election was held in May as the regional roles of Vice President Communities and Vice President Education were unfilled in the main Spring election. The report is not yet available for this election but will be circulated in due course.

2.4 HISA Awards

No information currently available. Shortlisting is due to commence in the next week.

3. Student Voice Representatives

Following the change in recruitment of SVRs (formerly Class Reps) last year, numbers have remained lower than previous years. The option to be appointed by staff as the representative for their class has been removed, so every registered SVR has chosen to step forward and volunteer for the role. Numbers this year are similar to 2021/22, see fig 3.1

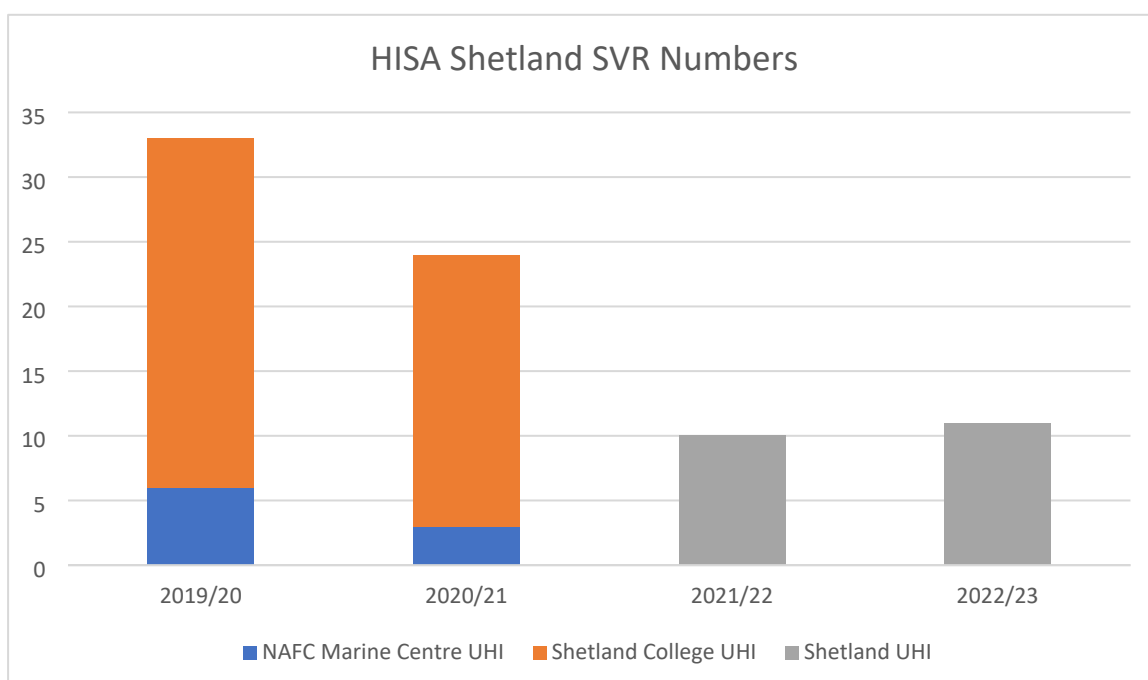


Fig. 3.1 – SVR numbers

3.1 SVR Monthly Meetings Attendance

Monthly meetings were kept as time for SVRs to discuss issues with the HISA Depute President and rather than invite UHI Shetland staff to all meetings as standard, invites were issued on an individual basis as appropriate to the agenda. Meetings were well attended at the start of the year with a good dialogue between SVRs and HISA, however, this tailed off towards the end of the Academic Year.

3.2 SVR Exit Survey

An exit survey was issued to all SVRs across UHI in the first week of June. Questions focussed on training, communications and support received from both HISA and AP staff. The aim is to understand how HISA can improve the experience for SVRS in order to sustain engagement and facilitate the recruitment of more reps in the future.

4. Board of Management and Committees

The two Deputies in post have attended Board of Management and associated committees according to their tenure dates. Studying commitments at times prevented Sinead Lucock from attending.

5. Student Engagement Opportunities and Events

5.1 Inductions

HISA staff and officers were fully involved in the inductions across UHI Shetland. For Lerwick campus, HISA offered a more informal induction with a follow up power point presentation during the longitudinal induction.

5.2 Freshers



The Freshers calendar for 2022 had to be adjusted slightly to take account of the Royal funeral. A volunteer Freshers Fair ran at both Lerwick and Scalloway campuses, showcasing to students the volunteering opportunities and third sector services available to them locally.

Study sessions at Mareel café bar with refreshments were offered to students throughout the week. This offered students the opportunity to study in a relaxed but quiet setting and share a social lunch with their fellow students during a study break.



An evening event at Scalloway Boating club was unfortunately cancelled due to a lack of HISA staff/officer availability.



A comedy event organised by HISA Perth was made available to all UHI students online. This offered students from across the region to come together and share an evening of laughter from the comfort of their own home.

5.3 HISA Active Community



This initiative aims to bring together students and staff from across the UHI into one, active community. The online Strava club (available [here](#)) hosts competitions, challenges and many more opportunities to engage with other students and staff. This club connects people over the vast distances covered by UHI and provides a sense of community while encouraging people to get active and stay active.

5.4 International Women’s Day

To celebrate International Women’s Day, HISA organised a Round Table event with guest speakers. This event was supported by local and regional officers and open to all UHI students online.



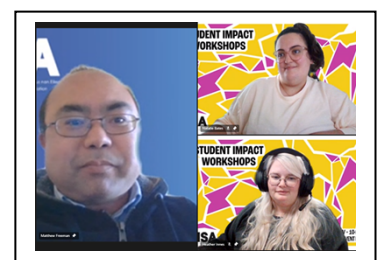
5.5 HISA Brit Challenge



HISA participated in this year’s Brit Challenge, an inclusive fundraiser which aims to improve participants health and wellbeing while raising money for local and national charities. We offered students a range of activities to participate in and offered prizes to encourage students to get involved.

5.6 Student Impact Workshops

HISA ran a 2-day, online event exclusively for Student Voice Representatives. This gave all SVRs the opportunity to meet local officers and staff and help shape HISA’s priorities for the year ahead. These ran on 29th and 30th November, consisting of workshops, presentations, and discussions to engage SVRs and empower students.



5.7 HISA Student Survey



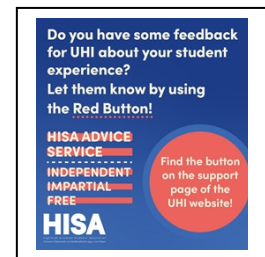
HISA created a survey to students to ask what they want from us, their Student’s Association. To encourage participation, a £150 voucher was offered. Data from this will be used to plan for the future to ensure we are delivering what our students want to see.

6. Clubs and Societies

All previous clubs and societies failed to recruit new student members. It is hoped that students will come forward to create their own sustainable clubs and societies that meet the needs of local students in the next Academic Year.

7. HISA Advice Service

HISA set up its own dedicated Advice Service in 2022 offering free independent and impartial advice to all UHI students. Advice is currently offered on issues such as academic misconduct, mitigating circumstances and complaints, with signposting offered on any areas of expertise not covered by the service.



8. Officer Campaigns



HISA officers from across the partnership came together to write letters to MSPs on behalf of UHI students in protest of the Scottish Government's plans to end funding for mental health counsellors in colleges and universities.