

Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee 3/4

Wed 15 February 2023, 16:30 - 18:30

Teams

Attendees

Acting Chair

- John Goodlad (Independent Director)

Prescribed Committee Members

- Sinead Lucock (Student Director)
- Simon Clarke (Teaching Staff Director)

Other Committee Members

- Claire Christey (Independent Director)

Stand-in Member

- Graeme Howell (Vice Chair of the Board of Management, Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Senior Independent Member)

Ex-Officio

- Jane Lewis (Principal - Shetland UHI)

Also In Attendance

- Andrew Anderson (Head of Section)
- Kevin Briggs (Head of Section)
- Laura Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary)
- Matt Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)
- Rachel Shucksmith (Marine Planning Manager)

Apologies

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

Meeting minutes

Introductory Items

1. Welcome, Apologies, and Announcements

In the absence of Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee), due to transportation challenges, Mr Goodlad (Independent Director), acted as Chair for the majority of the meeting. The Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee gave her apologies.

Ms Lucock (Student Director) introduced herself to the committee.

Mr Howell (Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee) volunteered to step into the committee on a one-off basis to ensure that the meeting had the appropriate numbers of Independent Directors to meet quoracy.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Mr Goodlad (Acting Chair), asked members of the committee to review the confidential minutes of the previous meeting, and the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting.

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

Decision: The Committee approved the non-confidential minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Terms of Reference

Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) informed the committee that there were name changes due to be made to the terms of reference in the table of committee membership, as a result of the recent turnover of members to the Board of Management. The Board Secretary added that the terms of reference for all of the Board of Management's committees would come to the Quarter 3 meeting of the Board of Management in March 2023 for approval.

Action: The Board Secretary shall updated the terms of reference ready for approval at the next Board of Management meeting

Student Experience

6. Senior Staff Presentation - Early Student Experience Survey

This agenda item was taken as eighth in the order of the meeting, and all subsequent items not already discussed, followed as per the agenda order.

Mr Briggs (Head of Section) introduced the survey and gave the committee a background of other surveys that are undertaken by students.

Mr Briggs highlighted the turnout of 18% compared the the target of 50, and noted that the overall satisfaction at 85% down from 93%, but also set this figure in the context of turnout. He spoke on results covering introduction to SUHI, Support Provided section, Feedback to Modules section, and Finance section. He specifically drew the committee's attention to the impact of the cost of living, and how this may have affected the results given.

Ms Lucock (Student Director) spoke to the survey and her planned actions to enhance students' awareness of her role. Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) raised concerns on the turnout of the survey, and queried the demographics of the respondents. Mr Briggs responded detailing survey methodology, and actions undertaken to boost survey responses, noting the different approaches taken at Perth. The Student Director raised a query regarding student engagement in person, and offered her support to gathering responses. Mr Briggs acknowledged the opportunities to utilise a wide variety of staff.

Action: Mr Briggs to send survey to Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) for the public record.

7. Whalsay Learning Survey

This agenda item was taken as seventh in the order of the meeting.

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced this item and spoke to the paper. She spoke about the departure of the longstanding lecturer at the Whalsay Learning Centre, and explained that the survey was developed to understand what needs the community had for the learning centre. The committee also wished to understand how many other Learning Centres Shetland UHI had. The full list of learning centres is as follows: Brae, Unst, Islesburgh, Yell, Mossbank, and Whalsay. Mr Anderson (Head of Section) spoke about the trip undertaken to meeting with the community, and the interest shown in the Learning Centre by local stakeholders.

Ms Burden (Deputy Principal Tertiary) joined the meeting during this agenda item. She spoke about the access to technology as well as the need for courses, and asked the committee to discuss the centre's development.

The committee discussed the survey, and the need for a Whalsay Learning Centre. Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) raised points regarding how different courses could be delivered. Mr Howell (Stand-in Member) raised the point regarding the provision at Learning Centres as a whole. The Principal responded. The Teaching Staff Director pointed out that there was a Dunrossness Learning Centre, and raised points regarding the impact of the changes to the culture of education delivery created by Covid, and made suggestions as to how the educational model could change based on expected needs of the next 10 years for education delivery. Mr Anderson spoke directly to the survey

highlighting the results regarding educational delivery and the need for catering to local needs. Ms Lucock (Student Director) raised points regarding the flexibility of courses and the challenges presented by Two-Factor Authentication with students only receiving training 8 months on this into their courses. The Stand-In Member raised positive comments regarding funding potential and what happens at other academic partners. The Principal responded.

The Principal mentioned the development of the Unst Learning Centre will be connected to the Space Centre.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary is to meet with the Student Director regarding IT matters.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary is to meet with the Stand-In Member regarding Funding matters.

Action: The Depute Principal Tertiary is to come back to the committee with details as to what provisions can be delivered for Learning Centres offering as a whole, including but not limited to: pros, cons, cost, and statutory obligations.

8. Education Scotland Themes

Ms Burden (Deputy Principal Tertiary) introduced this item and informed the committee of the SQA Audit which is a year long process, detailed that process, and the actions undertaken throughout the process. She also detailed the goals of the process.

She spoke about the inspectors from HMI and what they will be looking at on their visits and throughout the process. SC pointed out that no teaching observation would be part of the process.

9. Student Handbook

This agenda item was a duplicate was part of item 10.

10. Student Handbook and Support Provision at Port Arthur House

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the documents provided as a suite of supporting documentation for Port Arthur House. Mr Goodlad (Acting Chair) noted his gratitude with regards to re-opening of Port Arthur House. Mr Briggs gave further detail to the committee regarding the documentation provided. He noted that Port Arthur House had been added to the UHI student accommodation system, and spoke about the update of the rooms. Mr Howell (Stand-In Member) asked about clarification of terminology, and disciplinary procedures of accommodation and courses. The committee discussed the matter.

Performance Monitoring

11. Risks 1 and 2 - Student Numbers

Mrs Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) introduced this agenda item. She informed the committee that the current Part-Time Further Education enrolments was 1568, while the Part-Time Higher Education enrolments was 199. She spoke on the increases of Further Education Part Time numbers, which were more than expected, and more than previous year, though she explained that the credit risk was still at amber.

The Depute Principal Tertiary moved on to talk about Higher Education enrolments, and explained that these numbers were very concerning across UHI. She explained that Shetland UHI was currently exceeding the Higher Education target of Full Time Equivalents, and therefore will receive additional funds as result. Speaking about FE Credits, the Depute Principal Tertiary informed the committee that they were are in a good place for this year across UHI, but part of this was down to better reporting processes.

The Depute Principal Tertiary spoke to the committee about UCAS applications, noting the decrease in Full Time Higher Education applications compared to this academic year. She spoke about the differences across UHI Academic Partners. She spoke further about the PGDE numbers and the targets for 2023/2024.

Mr Goodlad (Acting Chair) asked if there were any trends impacting the figures. The Depute Principal responded, highlighting the variety of reasons, including, that Life Sciences enrolments were down across Scotland, the continued impacts of COVID and Brexit, that more students are going to more traditional courses, and the cost of living crisis was also having an impact. Another cause she mentioned was a move towards work based learning.

Professor Lewis (Principal) commented on the systematic reduction in Full Time Further Education students due to the changes in economic climate, and the cuts in apprentices from Skills Development Scotland. Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) spoke of the increased blended learning delivery competition from other universities and colleges that previously was not the case pre-covid.

12. Risk 9 - Quality

Mr Briggs (Head of Section) introduced the presentation, and spoke to the committee about the Quality risk.

He spoke about the causes, impact, and actions to mitigate against the risk under the following headings;

- failure to engage with awarding bodies
- failure to train staff adequately
- quality processes not circulated to staff/ineffective QIC process
- not keep to date with UHI quality discussions and forums

- failure to respond to feedback on quality system
- overly complex system for quality. Lack of oversight of the system
- poor record keeping
- out of date content and materials

During this agenda item, Mr Howell (Stand-in Member) took over the role of Acting Chair, temporarily.

Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) commented on the importance of quality to UHI Shetland, and expressed a desire to increase reviews on how to deliver teaching more effectively. The committee discussed this point. Professor Lewis (Principal) suggested amendments to point 8.

Action: The Quality Risk is to be discussed further at the next Senior Management Group meeting led by Mr Briggs.

Scholarship and Research

13. UHI Research Conference

This item was taken as the sixth item on the agenda.

Ms Shucksmith (Marine Planning Manager) gave an update on the conference noting that 10 people from Shetland travelled to the conference and 3 attended virtually, with 6 giving presentations. UHI Shetland won the most innovative video award and the most informative video award. She mentioned that PhD potentially to be developed in in collaboration with Perth UHI as well as a masters course. The conference was held at UHI Moray.

The committee discussed the conference, and Ms Shucksmith added further details on the conference to the committee, confirming that it was a multi-disciplinary knowledge exchange.

Noted: The committee noted their thanks to the conference for funding travel to the conference.

Action: Ms Shucksmith is to share the video and posters.

Concluding Items

15. Any Other Business

Professor Lewis (Principal) highlighted the dynamic earth event in Scalloway taking place on the weekend of the 18th-19th February with a focus on the deep sea.

Mr Howell (Stand-in Member) praised the Space Day 102, and is looking forward to Space Day 103.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is 7th June 2023.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Progress
5	Update the terms of reference ready for approval at the next Board of Management meeting	Board Secretary	Complete
6	Send survey to Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) for the public record.	Mr Briggs	Complete
7	Meet with the Student Director regarding IT matters.	Depute Principal Tertiary	Complete
7	Meet with the Stand-In Member regarding Funding matters.	Depute Principal Tertiary	Complete
7	Come back to the committee with details as to what provisions can be delivered for Learning Centres offering as a whole, including but not limited to: pros, cons, cost, and statutory obligations.	Depute Principal Tertiary	Ongoing
12	The Quality Risk is to be discussed further at the next Senior Management Group meeting led by Mr Briggs.	Mr Briggs	Ongoing
13	Share the video and posters.	Ms Shucksmith	Ongoing