

Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee

Meeting 4/4 2022-2023

Wed 7 June 2023, 16:30 - 18:30

Teams

Attendees

Chair

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

Prescribed Board Members

- Simon Clarke (Teaching Staff Director)
- Sue Beer (Student Director)

Other Board Members

- Claire Christey (Independent Director)

Ex-Officio

- Jane Lewis (Principal - Shetland UHI)

Management Team Member

- Laura Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary)

Staff In Attendance

- Matt Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)

Also In Attendance

- Sara Fox (HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, Absent from 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)
- Andrew Jennings (Lecturer, Absent from 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16)
- Kevin Briggs (Head of Section, Absent from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16)

Apologies

- John Goodlad (Independent Director)
- Valerie Nicolson (Independent Director)

Meeting minutes

Introductory Items

1. Welcome, Apologies, and Announcements

Ms Hall (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Ms Nicholson (Independent Director) and Mr Goodlad (Independent Director).

The Chair recorded her thanks to Mr Goodlad for stepping in to chair the last meeting of the committee she was unable to attend the last meeting due to unplanned air transportation challenges. She also announced the departure of Ms Lucock (Student Director) and recorded a warm welcome for joining the Committee to Ms Nicholson (Independent Director).

2. Declarations of Interest

Ms Hall (Chair) asked any member of the committee if they had any declarations of interest to make with regards to items on the agenda. None such declarations were made.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Ms Hall (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 two outstanding actions from the previous meeting that were not already covered by items on the agenda.

Firstly the Provision of Learning Centres. Professor Lewis (Principal) informed the Committee that Shetland UHI had received some additional funding, and planned to look the learning centres as a whole across the Northern areas of the Shetland Islands Archipelago. The Committee will be updated on this matter at the next meeting.

Secondly, the 2023 Freshers update, which was deferred to the next Committee meeting.

Action: Senior Management Team shall update the Committee on the Provision for Learning Centres at the next meeting.

Action: Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) shall add the Provision for Learning Centres to the agenda of the next meeting.

Action: Miss Fox (HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney) shall provide an update on plans for 2023 Freshers at the next meeting.

Action: The Board Secretary shall add 2023 Freshers to the agenda of the next meeting, and invite the HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, to the meeting to present this agenda item.

5. Terms of Reference

Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) informed the Committee that there were changes requested by UHI's Internal Auditor with regards to the Terms of Reference, including a named member of the management team, and a clearer reference to the committee's role in monitoring the quality of student experience.

Ms Hall (Chair) also requested the remove of the name of Ms Lucock (Student Director) as she had resigned.

Decision: The Committee agreed to the recommended changes to the Terms of Reference.

Action: The Board Secretary shall make the additional change to the Terms of Reference as requested by the committee, and add the Terms of Reference to the agenda for the next Board of Management meeting for final approval.

Student Experience

6. HISA Shetland Annual Report 2022-2023

Miss Fox (HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney) introduced the HISA Shetland Annual Report, and spoke about the resignation of Ms Lucock (Student Director) and the resulting impact. She spoke about the impact of Student Voice Representatives at UHI Shetland and their engagement. She spoke about the events put on for 2022 UHI Shetland Freshers, along with inviting students to shaping events for the future including a student wide survey.

Moving to the topic of Student Activities, the HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, spoke about the lack of engagement from students in sports and societies, and the barrier set centrally within HISA of 10 members for a club or society, which has since been rescinded from HISA centrally. She spoke about the new dedicated HISA Advice Service.

On the topic of Officer structure at HISA Shetland, the HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, spoke to the decision made by the former CEO of HISA and the first HISA Shetland Deputy President of 2022-2023, Mr McCormack, to make the role of HISA Lerwick Officer redundant and to absorb the hours of this role into the HISA Shetland Deputy President role. She also confirmed that HISA is now a real living wage employer.

The Committee discussed the report, focused on the challenge of retention of officers. The HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, spoke about the focus on Student Voice Representatives as a means of boosting student engagement, including the challenges in engaging students in classrooms, and involvement with sparqs. The discussion also focused on building social structures within the student community in Shetland. Doctor Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) spoke about representation, particularly about networked student representation. The HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, agreed and empathised with the points raised.

Ms Beer (Student Director) spoke about a lack of dedicated student-only space serving as a challenge. Professor Lewis (Principal) confirmed, as part of the campus redevelopment project, which is due to get underway next academic year, the design of such student-only spaces will go out to students for consultation.

The Committee also discussed the topic of student engagement opportunities for induction, including with HISA. Discussion also focused on whether regional team could be in attendance at such events. The HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, also spoke about the clash of induction events that she experienced as a student, along with how to expand the support for incentivisation for student engagement in the future. She informed the Committee about the difference between the role of staff members in Students' Associations and the role of elected officers in Students' Associations, stating that elected officers are needed to take the lead on student matters. The Committee discussed the scheduling and the recruitment of the by-election for the HISA Shetland Depute President.

The HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, left the meeting at the end of this agenda item. Mr Briggs (Head of Section) joined the meeting during this agenda item.

Action: The HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, is to pass on the comments of the Committee back to the HISA Senior Management Team.

7. Senior Staff Presentation - Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

Mr Briggs (Head of Section) gave the presentation on the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES). He outlined the key facts, which students were included, and which students were excluded. He noted the improved response rate and improved satisfaction compared to previous years.

The Head of Section noted the number of male respondents and those declared disabilities, along with the impact of Personal Learning and Support Plans (PLSPs). He outlined the progress on student satisfaction with staff discussing their progress with them along with and useful feedback on marked work. He also spoke about student responses to services provided, and gave a summary of the results.

The Committee discussed the survey results, including participation inclusivity.

Action: The Head of Section is to provide the Committee with comparisons on SSES results between UHI Shetland and other academic partners within the UHI partnership.

8. 2023 Student Induction - (Restricted)

Mr Briggs (Head of Section) spoke about the induction paper he presented. He informed the Committee that work would begin on the student handbook, as well as the structure and order of induction, along with balance of information to avoid information overload, SQA mandatory requirements for induction, and Brightspace.

The Committee discussed the longitudinal induction that was delivered this year, and the Head of Section added context to the basis behind spreading induction activities over a term. Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) gave supportive comments.

Performance Monitoring

9. Risks 1 and 2 - Student Numbers

Mrs Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) gave an update on the student numbers, speaking to this paper.

She stated that UHI Shetland was quietly confident that the credit targets would be met. She spoke about the different methodologies by which students study. She spoke about the increase of HE students, and was confident that Shetland UHI would exceed the target too, against the flow of trend of the Partnership. She confirmed that Shetland UHI would receive an increase of funding as a result. The Depute Principal Tertiary therefore confirmed that the residual risk categorisation for both Risk 1 and Risk 2 was now Green.

As of 31st May 2023 the Student Enrolment Figures were:

- Full Time Further Education Students: 54
- Part Time Further Education Students: 2135
- Full Time Higher Education Students: 139
- Part Time Higher Education Students: 223

As of 31st May 2023 the Total Credit figure was: 4187. This compares to 4153 in June 2022, and the 2022-23 Academic Year Credit Target of 4335.

The Depute Principal Tertiary informed the Committee about the expectations and targets for next the academic year. She spoke about the funding challenges for next academic year, and the work being done at a regional partnership wide level. She also spoke about the applications received so far for next academic year.

The Committee discussed the paper, with a focus on fundable applications, which has currently increased by 31%. They also discussed the partnership target setting process. Doctor Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) spoke about the challenges of retention of existing students.

10. Performance Indicators

Mrs Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) gave a presentation on Performance Indicators, as a means of speaking to the statistics in the attached paper, including national statistics which were released last week.

She highlighted the strong performance of Further Education Full Time students relative to the UHI and Scotland-wide statistics. She explained to the Committee that UHI Shetland was close the top of completion rates amongst small colleges. She highlighted the strong performance of Further Education Part Time students relative to the UHI partnership and Scotland-wide statistics. She spoke about the course length statistics, and where success in completion lay. She drew the Committee's attention to the stronger success rates compared to Scotland-wide statistics for most groups of students at UHI Shetland, except for care experienced students, which were lower.

She informed the Committee that the following areas would be focused on next academic year. care experience students, 80-160 course success rates, full time partial success, education and training course success rates, and social subject success rates.

11. Risk 11 - Research Output

This item was delayed to the next meeting of Learning, Teaching and Research Committee.

Action: Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) shall add Risk 11 - Research Output to the agenda of the next meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.

12. Regional Outcome Agreement

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the paper, and explained its focus. She informed the committee that it was only recently received and noted that work was already ongoing on its contents. She confirmed that it forms a context on what UHI Shetland does.

Action: The Regional Outcome Agreement is to be discussed at the Board Workshop on Saturday 10th June.

13. Quality Reporting Update

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the paper, and felt how it was useful for the Committee to see the audits undertaken on Learning and Teaching, including the activities and their recommendations. She highlighted the diversity of audit authors.

The Committee discussed the actions that had arisen from the audits. The Principal and Mrs Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary) spoke further about audits on learning and teaching.

Decision: This agenda item is to return to the Committee at future meetings.

Action: Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) shall add Quality Reporting Update to the agenda of the next meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.

Scholarship and Research

14. Islands Link Senior Staff Presentation

This item was taken as 7th on the agenda.

Dr Jennings (Lecturer) gave his presentation, and introduced the Institute for Northern Studies to the Committee. He spoke about MLitt Island Studies and its course content, the Guest Speakers, Research Degree students, Island Research that has been published, and Island based Conferences. He also spoke about Other Island Activity and Future Activities. He engaged with the Committee about his ambition to establish UHI Shetland as the Centre for Island Studies.

The Committee discussed the presentation, its context in a post-covid world, and technological engagement with Islands Studies, along with online engagement avenues which the Committee felt increased the accessibility of islanders to opportunities that were previously beyond the reach, due to travel requirements. Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the Committee on the International Project work that was discussed at Partnership Council and that Island courses would become part of this project work. Dr Clarke (Teaching Staff Director) raised the matter of individual modules that can be studied at UHI but are not always promoted effectively.

Concluding Items

15. Any Other Business

Professor Lewis (Principal) highlighted the Student Showcase at Mareel on 8th June at 18:00-20:00, as well as the art exhibition launch on 9th June at 18:00 at the Lerwick Campus.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is 6th September 2023 at 16:30 on Teams.

Agenda Number	Action	Responsible	Progress
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4	Update the Committee on the Provision for Learning Centres at the next meeting.	Senior Management Team	On Agenda
4	Add the Provision for Learning Centres to the agenda of the next meeting.	Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)	Complete
4	Provide an update on plans for 2023 Freshers at the next meeting.	Miss Fox (HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney)	On Agenda
4	Add 2023 Freshers to the agenda of the next meeting, and invite the HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney, to the meeting to present this agenda item.	Board Secretary	Complete
5	Make the additional change to the Terms of Reference as requested by the committee, and add the Terms of Reference to the agenda for the next Board of Management meeting for final approval.	Board Secretary	Complete
6	Pass on the comments of the Committee back to the HISA Senior Management Team.	HISA Assistant Voice Manager - Shetland and Orkney,	Complete
7	Provide the Committee with comparisons on SSES results between UHI Shetland and other academic partners within the UHI partnership.	Head of Section	On Agenda
11	Add Risk 11 - Research Output to the agenda of the next meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.	Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)	Complete
12	This is to be discussed at the Board Workshop on Saturday 10th June.	Senior Management Team	Complete
13	Add Quality Reporting Update to the agenda of the next meeting of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee.	Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)	Complete