

<b>Committee</b>	Board of Management		
<b>Date paper prepared</b>	13/11/2023	<b>Date of committee meeting</b>	13/12/2023
<b>Subject</b>	Principal's Report		
<b>Author</b>	Jane Lewis, Principal with members of SMG		
<b>Action requested</b>	For discussion		
<b>Purpose of the paper</b>	<p>To update the board on activities across the College. These contribute to our fulfilment of the Regional Outcome Agreement*. The Regional Outcome Agreement covers aspirations around: Fair access and transitions; High quality learning, teaching and support; Partnership participation and student experience; learning with impact; equalities and inclusion; Responsive institutions; Climate emergency; Knowledge exchange and innovation; Research excellence and sustainability.</p> <p>Outcomes for students include our targets for FE credits; our UG and PG targets and our Schools delivery. It also highlights work on fair access; articulation and work with care experienced students.</p> <p>Outcomes for economic delivery and social renewal includes responding to employer and industry needs for example through upskilling and reskilling the workforce. It also includes our work on Islands Deal projects and knowledge exchange.</p> <p>Outcomes for research includes our work to maintain and increase research excellence.</p> <p>*The present ROA is for 2022-23 which was received and sent to the board at the Q4 2022-23 meeting.</p>		
<b>Brief summary of the paper</b>	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.		
<b>Consultation</b>	SMG members provide the updates in the report		
<b>Resource implications</b>	n/a		
<b>Risk implications</b>	n/a		
<b>Link with strategy</b>	Links to all parts of the college strategic plan		
<b><a href="#">Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</a></b>	n/a		
<b>Island Community Impact</b>	n/a		

<b>Paper status</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Open</b> – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restricted</b> – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Confidential</b> - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online.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].
<a href="#">Freedom of information</a>	Choose an item. If closed/ withheld, select date this will become 'open': Enter a date.

## 1. UHI Updates

A new committee structure to support the new Faculties (Arts, Humanities, Business and Education and Science, Health and the Environment) has been proposed.

With the restructuring of Executive Office new arrangements for the management of research and the graduate school have been put in place. Notably the appointment of Professor Michael Rayner as Dean of Research and Innovation and the expansion of Dr Iain Morrison's role for student experience to include the Graduate School.

## 2. Update on enrolment figures (FE/HE)

Analysis of our current position in relation to student numbers relates directly to two of the key risks on our risk register – failing to achieve allocated HE student number targets and/or not meeting allocated FE credit targets. Each of these risks have potentially very significant financial implications with potential clawback and possible reduction in future grants.

		29/11/2	4/11/22	Enrolments				
		3		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
FE	Full time (FT)	<b>91</b>	51	58	72	76	90	94
	Part time (PT)	<b>1171</b>	910	2476	2585	2235	2197	3348
HE	Full time (FT)	<b>126</b>	137	140	128	163	117	112
	Part time (PT)	<b>194</b>	162	227	273	255	254	278

*Shetland UHI enrolments at 29/11/2023 (data extracted from Metis)*

We have seen the largest percentage increase in full FE time students across the partnership compared to AY 22/23. The highest increases in full time students are in the creative area, on the administration NC which did not run last year, and on the new hairdressing NQ course, with other areas maintaining their numbers.

6/11/23	31/10/22	Total credit figures				
		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
<b>3751</b>	2408	4698	4383	4337	4276	4572

*Shetland UHI credits at 29/11/2023 (data extracted from Metis)*

Our FES (Further Education Statistics) return is closed and our credit total for AY 2022/23 is 4698. This is 363 credits more than our original AY target which was 4335, and is made up of over 80% part time learners.

Our credit target for AY 2023-24 was reduced to 3902 due to the required 10% reduction in credits across the partnership, and we are planning for 4118 credits delivery to provide some over delivery margin. With the flat cash award from SFC, we will not be paid for any additional credits delivered, so we will make sure that delivery of any credits over target doesn't increase costs.

We have currently recorded 3751 credits, substantially more than at the same date last year. This is due to the increase in full time enrolments, despite a reduction in maximum credits claimed per

student. However, this number should be treated with caution as we are currently checking the individual student credit levels.

Our part time FE numbers are also looking strong at present. It is likely to be difficult not to exceed our credit target by too large a margin despite moving short courses to full cost recovery and reducing claims against work-based qualifications.

The uncertainty around our credit allocation in future also creates challenges for curriculum planning for AY 24/25, balancing community and student need with potential funding allocation.

HE FTE numbers overall are reduced from this point last year, and it is likely we will struggle to meet our FTE target of 140 FTE for undergraduate taught 'home' fee status students.

<b>HE numbers (APC papers June and Oct 2023)</b>	Nov 23	Dec 22	22/23	21/22
<b><i>Undergraduate Taught 'home' fee status</i></b>				
Total FTE	79.1	133	131.7	113
Total Heads	208	209	194	211
<b><i>Postgraduate Taught 'home' fee status</i></b>				
Total FTE	14.0	10.3	15.5	24
Total Heads	25	26	26	36

In considering the two related risks for AY 2023-24, the risk around not achieving FE credit target can be considered green, although there is a significant risk we will over deliver, but the HE student number target sits at a red position.

### **Update on Short Courses**

We continue to see good interest in commercial short courses particularly in the aquaculture and maritime areas. Between 01/10/23 and 13/12/23 there were 57 short courses run, with a total of 303 candidates booked on.

Almost all of our short courses have now moved to full cost recovery as a result of the reduction in our credit target.

We currently have challenges around first aid training delivery due to a lack of trained delivery staff, and we are exploring the best way forward with this.

In the interests of inclusivity and access a Harbour Crane course was recently run in Foula and a REHIS Food Hygiene course was run in Whalsay at the request and requirement of the island communities.

We are currently developing new short courses around air tightness and heat decarbonisation for the construction industry by utilising green skills funding.

### **New courses**

In the aquaculture area new courses being developed include advanced powerboat/ dayskipper/ coastal skipper theory and practical, telehandler, powerboat level 1 and navigation. There is high demand for these types of courses from local industry and staff are engaging in their development to be able to increase delivery capacity in these areas.

### **3. Update on Apprentices**

The recent KPL period to 1 December, showed we had achieved 69% (125) of our new starts on FIPS and have used 64% of our budget allocation. As of 28/11, we had already used 66% of our budget – this is from milestone claims, outcomes and claiming money for travel. Our achievement rate is at 86.4%, still above the target of 75%. The resulting issues associated with ASOS are having an impact on this as some apprentices have a fixed term contract and have had to leave before their apprenticeship has finished.

One of the recent challenges is to do with travel funding for the apprentices. The amount we were provided with for the initial contract is insufficient for the volume of travel required. We have requested extra funding from SDS and this will be considered at the KPL period. We have since unsuccessfully bid for funding from additional sources.

In late November, we had a thematic audit on our travel and lodgings and await to see the outcome. On 20 November, the tender process was launched by SDS. The deadline is for 8 January 2024 so the team will prepare our bid and post it via PCS. One of the main duties will be to contact employers to gauge demand and submit a bid that will meet the needs of Shetland's workforce. Assuming that we are successful in the bid, it will commence on 1 April 2024. As with the previous contract, it has the potential to be a 3-year contract.

**Press Release/Website:** In a first for Scotland, four shellfish Modern Apprentices from Blueshell Mussels have started their education at UHI Shetland, undertaking a Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship. UHI Shetland are the only provider in the UK for shellfish modern apprenticeships.

#### 4. Update on Research

##### a. Marine Sciences

##### Staffing:

- Prof Jahn Johnsen has joined us on a sabbatical from the Norwegian College of Fishery Science at UiT the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø. We are developing collaborative research opportunities and Prof Johnsen is providing input with some of the aqua training groups.

##### PhDs:

- **Fisheries** - Iohara Quirino started a SUPER DTP funded PhD 'Interactions between biology, environmental and anthropogenic factors on the exploitation of pelagic species by the Scottish fleet' (Director of Studies, CA; co-supervised by KB and external colleagues from SPFA, Marine Directorate and Aberdeen Uni).  
Co-supervision: Alice Rolandini Jensen has started UHI PhD Studentship led by SAMS "Quantifying carbon uptake in the North Atlantic Ocean using Biogeochemical-Argo floats" primary supervisor Robyn Tuerena, co-supervised by Shaun Fraser.
- **Aquaculture - IFCB project** Gary Groves presented his project at 20<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Harmful Algae (Hiroshima). Preparatory work is ongoing before retraining the existing AI image classifier.
- **Marine Spatial Planning** - Erin Rizzato has started her PhD and is supervised by Dr Rachel Shucksmith and Dr Becky Geisler. Sophie Smith's one year review will be in the new year.
- Becky Geisler, Katie Brigden and Rachel Shucksmith started a series of Research and Development sessions for SUHI PhD students and early career research staff, to be held

every couple of months. The first session on the 8<sup>th</sup> Nov was centered around what a PhD looks like and how to design a project.

### Research Publications / Presentations:

- **Paper:** McAllister, M., Fraser, S., and Henry, L.A., 2023. Population ecology and juvenile density hotspots of thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) around the Shetland Islands, Scotland. *Journal of Fish Biology*. 2023: 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfb.15610>
- **Policy brief:** Kathryn Allen has completed a policy brief (REF money funded) based on the outputs on Dr Inne Withouck's PhD . '[Withouck, I. \(2023\). Just transition to net zero: creating a transition process that fully accounts for social justice. ed. by Allan, K. UHI Shetland Policy Brief](#)'. This policy brief highlights the importance of including communities and stakeholders in the process of decision making. The policy brief will be circulated to local councillors, MSP, MPs, NGOs, stakeholders and government agencies/ officials. Google alerts have been set up to monitor digital engagement.
- As part of RS role as MASTS marine planning and governance chair she has co-led the development of a marine natural capital policy brief: 'Slade Fernadez, L., Sheridan S., Shucksmith, R., (2023). Marine Natural Capital Policy Brief. Brief prepared by the Marine Planning and Governance Forum, Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS). 7pp.'
- **Presentations:**
- ICES Workshop on accounting for fishers and other stakeholders' perceptions of the dynamics of fish stocks in ICES advice (WKAFFPA) 10-12 Oct. CA & IN were invited contributors and gave a presentation on their experiences and lessons learned from the Fisher' North Sea Stock Survey. (Online attendance).
- Islands Matters Symposium on 3/11/23: CA gave a presentation on SUHI's Fisheries research and its impact (Online).
- ICES Scallop Working Group (Oct) - LH attended online and presented on SUHI scallop research for SSMO.
- ICES Crab Working Group (Nov) - LH attended online and presented on SUHI crab research for SSMO.

### Pelagic workstream:

- KB held meetings with SPFA, CEFAS and Marine Directorate RE potential collaboration for new EU project. SUHI will likely lead a workstream.
- KB joined mackerel fishing trip onboard Altaire to undertake sampling QA audit (15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Oct).
- Oct/Nov season samples from the pelagic co-sampling scheme have mostly now been received and analysis is on track.

### Fisheries Policy workstream:

- Dr Napier has continued to work with the Shetland Fishermen's Association and Shetland Fish Producer's Organisation on issues of ongoing concern to the local fishing industry under the MoU with these organisations. This has included work related to scientific advice on several important fish stocks, the preparation of several 'Fishy Falsehood' papers for the

SFA, and responses to several consultations. In October, Dr Napier was invited to speak at a Seafish-hosted meeting in Fishmonger's Hall, London, about some of his work with the SFA.

#### **Whitefish workstream:**

- Shetland Inshore Fish Survey (SIFS) 2023, data entry and analyses have progressed since fieldwork completed in September, report now drafted. Initial results presented at Fair Isle DR MPA Steering Group Meeting (Nov 23). Positive discussions ongoing regarding inclusion of SIFS cod data into regional stock assessment.
- SMEEF flapper skate project progressing as planned, further tags deployed in recent weeks and successful BRUV lander deployments in collaboration with local anglers. New video lander system has been built using remaining SMEEF equipment funding. Initial results presented at Fair Isle DR MPA Steering Group Meeting (Nov 23).
- SmarTrawl phase 4 trials with Shaun Fraser and Rosie Ashworth (Heriot Watt) aboard MFV *Atlantia II* testing bycatch reduction device developed by Prof Paul Fernandes (Heriot Watt) using multiple underwater camera systems and involving overhead drone flights.
- Whitefish market sampling for Marine Directorate is progressing on track.
- Ling project is progressing. Hardware for BATMap fitted to 8 vessels. Biological data being collected via MES Observer scheme.

#### **Shellfish workstream:**

- Stock assessment report has been provided to SSMO and will be presented to the board in December.
- Budgets have been prepared for submission to the SSMO Board and subsequently to the SIC for approval in FY 24-25
- TR presented preliminary maps as part of fishery-habitat interactions project and was well received at an advisory group meeting.
- Ongoing work with SSMO to provide input to MPA management consultation process
- Amendments have been made to data sharing agreements with Marine Directorate to ensure access to spatial data
- Velvet sampling project is progressing.

#### **Aquaculture:**

- **UHI Aquaculture Hub -**
  1. Three applications to [Aquaculture Student Support Scheme](#) and 1 [Aquaculture Industry Engagement Fund](#) application
  2. GA Attended Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers Conference with trade stand
- **Shell-volution project -**
  1. UHI provided v2.1 of the FBC and attended meeting with project board. Feedback has been provided to UHI and we are awaiting their responses. Timeline for submission of FBC is end of November 2023.
- **Harmful Algal Blooms and Phytoplankton monitoring -**
  1. SAIC-funded project with Scottish Seafarms (SSF)+MOWI+SAMS+UHI Shetland confirmed, but LoA from UHI Legal is still outstanding. IFCBs have performed more reliably this period at their monitoring stations [Scalloway and Cole Deep](#).

2. HAB App project is progressing.
3. We continue to contribute to the European IFCB network
4. BBSRC application prepared and submitted – with Scottish Sea Farms, Mowi, Bakkafrost, Salmon Scotland, SAMS, University of Aberdeen, SRUC and Marine Biological Association
  - **Completed trials with novel anti-seallice treatment**
  - **Lea of Trondra** – Marine Licence still to be submitted.

### Marine Spatial Planning:

- **Diverse values UKRI project**- Kathryn Fradera will be presenting her preliminary analysis at MASTS in December. KF presented research findings at project meetings in October, also attended by RS. KF giving a guest lecture and participating in a workshop at the University of Portsmouth (Nov). The initial research outputs have been presented to impact working groups with the Scottish Government/ Marine Directorate and Welsh Government. KF is hosting a IES Speed Networking event 'Working across disciplines and sectors to solve environmental challenges' (Nov). Three peer reviewed publications, a report and policy brief are expected by the project completion (May 2025) and are currently in prep.
- **Fair Isle Demonstration and research MPA** - funding has been secured to support biotope mapping for desk based Fair Isle waters, an application has been submitted to fund survey work for summer 2024, as well as further modelling. RS continues to represent the Shetland marine planning partnership on the FI DRMPA steering group.
- **Course Development** - CPD courses in marine management are currently under development, supported by Stuart Fitzsimons. These will be level 8 CPD courses, comprised of 3 modules and be targeted at those involved in marine management in the energy, aquaculture and marine conservation sectors. Once approved it is anticipated these courses will be available from August 2024.
- **Marine Planning Partnership** - meetings with the Marine Directorate and SIC have been held to progress the formal adoption of the marine plan, as well as with MD-LOT to discuss the implementation phase of marine planning.
- **Non-native species monitoring** - 2023 non-native species monitoring has been completed. RG has two publications in-prep from this work stream, including the detection of a new species for Shetland. RG is contributing to the Marine Directorate led guidance on biosecurity planning and marine spatial planning, and has reviewed the national approach for INNS monitoring and recording. A PhD studentship application was submitted to SUPER, with the outcome expected in December. RG would be the DoS if funded.
- **ARVEN** – along with wider windfarm developer engagement by Marine Sciences staff, RS and RG have attended a number of data scoping meetings with ARVEN offshore energy developers on data acquisition to inform EIA processes.

### b. Centre for Island Creativity

#### Funding applications

- One application to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for a project called Divided Lines with Manchester Metropolitan University (lead) (Roxane Permar as a Col)
- One application to the RSE Collaboration Fund (Siún Carden as Col)

#### Research Outputs

- Roxane Permar produced the research output: *Windlins*, which is a looped digital film.



- Roxane Permar exhibited the film *Windlins* in the exhibition *Nurture* at Umeå University, Sweden, November 2023.
- Roxane Permar co-edited a publication with E. Härkönen, L. Lundstedt, K. Burnett, M. Gvårdik, *Nurture: Living in the Landscape Summer School*, published by the University of Lapland Press, November 2023.
- Roxane Permar published 'Torn by the Wind – questions around forest, loss and renewal', in *Nurture: Living in the Landscape Summer School*, ed. By E. Härkönen, L. Lundstedt, K. Burnett, M. Gvårdik and R Permar; (University of Lapland, 2023) pp 105-110.
- Malcolm Innes completed Brodie Illuminated 2023 with National Trust for Scotland

#### **Presentations for Conferences, Symposia, Public Engagement and Cultural Policy Network Events**

- Roxane Permar gave a presentation, 'Climate crisis, extractivism and social art practice in Shetland', for Relate North 2023: Beyond Borders at Umeå University, jointly organised with the University of the Arctic thematic network Arctic Art and Design and the University of Lapland, 16 November 2023
- Roxane Permar was a Respondent/Speaker for the Scottish Cultural Policy Network event on theme of the climate emergency at University of Aberdeen, 26 October 2023
- Roxane Permar was an invited artist to present a session, 'Sculpture on a Burning planet', in the series of public talks organised by the University of the Arts, Helsinki on 8 November 2023
- Malcolm Innes contributed to a panel presentation about the work of the Centre for Island Creativity for the International Island Studies Conference, Osaka, Japan.
- Malcolm hosted and contributed to a Creative Economy Knowledge Exchange public engagement event. Kirkwall, Orkney, 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023
- Malcolm hosted and presented to a Creative Research public engagement event. Stromness, Orkney, 8<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023

#### **PhD and MA Student successes - Centre for Island Creativity**

- PhD student - Helen Garbett had her PhD Creative Practice registration confirmed following a successful review with a panel comprising internal and external members.
- Seven MA students completed their participation in the research project *Living in the Landscape (LiLa)* with their work in the exhibition *Nurture* at Umeå University, Sweden, and an essay published in the publication *Nurture: Living in the Landscape Summer School*.
- Two students took part in Relate North 2023: Beyond Borders a research conference at Umeå University, Sweden, organised jointly with the University of Lapland and the University of the Arctic thematic Network Arctic Sustainable Art and Design. They delivered a storytelling and community philosophy workshop selected through a peer-review process.
- PhD student Helen Garbett presented an illustrated talk at the UnCommon Worlds III conference in Finland in October 2023.

#### **5. Update on merger related topics**

A meeting has been held with the CEO of Shetland Islands Council and other senior officers this covered a range of topics related to closer partnership working and also requesting progression of the MOU and data sharing agreements.

#### **6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

The following documents have been approved and are now being used:

- Harassment, Violence and Aggression Policy
- Harassment, Violence and Aggression Procedure
- Harassment, Violence and Aggression Risk Assessment template
- Risk Assessment and Safe Systems of Working
- Site Security Policy

A Central Record of Lone Working Risk Assessments has been set up and staff are encouraged to use it.

The BDO Health & Safety audit was discussed at the last Committee meeting and its actions were assigned. These should all be completed shortly.

People without disabilities have been parking in the disabled parking bays and this has caused an issue with those who need to park there. We have raised signs which make it clear that only blue badge holders should use the bays closest to the entrance and this seems to have resolved the immediate problem. However, this will be monitored, and the Facilities team are investigating how many disabled slots we need and whether signage on the road needs renewed or clarified.

Incident Coordinator training is scheduled to take place again on the 15<sup>th</sup> December with 5 participants.

## **7. Islands Deal**

**Creative Island Wellbeing:** The FBC has been submitted and we are awaiting feedback from UK and Scot Gov. The target start date for The Imagining an Island workstream being led by CIC is April 2024 and it will run for 7 years.

**Shellvolution:** Full business case has been drafted and revised. Awaits further revision before submission.

**Talented:** Full Business case has been submitted

**Campus redevelopment project:** Preparation of the full business case for the Campus redevelopment project has been paused awaiting decision on campus location. A project manager to take forward the work will be starting with us in January.

## **8. General activities and achievements**

Successful award/launch of Seafood Fund Round 2 Simulator updating project. Project has started with the aim of simulator installation by March 2024.

Positive SQA Systems Verification Audit – only one action/amber category around data management

Successful completion of FES audit

Following the conclusion of the ASOS resulting boycott, student results have now been received and put into our systems.