

Committee	Board of Management		
Date paper prepared	01/10/2024	Date of committee meeting	09/10/2024
Subject	Principal's Report		
Author	Jane Lewis, Principal with members of SMG		
Action requested	For review and discussion		
Purpose of the paper	<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>		
Brief summary of the paper	<p>UHI context is updated. 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.</p>		
Consultation	SMG members provide the material included in the report		
Resource implications	n/a		
Risk implications	n/a		
Link with strategy	Links to all parts of the college strategic plan		
<u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</u>	n/a		
Island Community Impact	n/a		

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 Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online.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

1. UHI Updates

Senior Team

As flagged in our last meeting Neil Simco retired on the 31st July. An interim Deputy Principal (Peter Francis) had been appointed but unfortunately resigned for family reasons. From the 1st August Brian Williams (Dean of Arts, Humanities, Business, and Education) has been Acting Deputy Principal Academic and Research. David Worthington has become Acting Dean of Arts, Humanities, Business, and Education. A search process is underway to make a Deputy Principal appointment.

Two VP appointments have been made – Jane Lewis VP Strategic Projects and Nick Owens VP Research and Innovation.

2. Update on enrolment figures

We had a successful student induction period. This year, we held inductions in Lerwick, Scalloway and Mareel, with an online session also offered. It was positive to have a standardised approach across sites. We also offered drop-in sessions for enrolments with reasonable attendance. In addition we incorporated enrolment sessions within inductions to try to ensure that people completed their enrolments promptly and prior to attending so that they can access all their resources from the start of their studies.

		24/09/24	20/09/23	Enrolments				
				2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
FE	Full time (FT)	96	76	87	58	72	76	90
	Part time (PT)	654	475	2196	2476	2585	2235	2197
HE	Full time (FT)	91	112	121	140	128	166	117
	Part time (PT)	99	116	243	234	276	264	254

Shetland UHI enrolments at 24/09/2024 (data extracted from Metis)

Enrolment numbers for FE full and part time courses are strong for this point in the year and suggest a similar level of engagement to last year. It is encouraging to see continued demand for our local provision; however, we are constrained by our credit target for AY 2024-25 which remains at 3902, despite requests for this to be increased.

Total credit figures				
2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
4890	4707	4359	4337	4276

Based on performance over the last two years and the evidenced demand for 2024/25, it is almost certain that we will once again exceed our credit target by a substantial proportion, having overdelivered by around 25% in 23/24 despite implementing mitigating actions. In addition to the measures taken in 2023/24 to reduce reliance on credits, we will also be putting in place stronger costing principles for modern apprenticeships to allow a reduction in credits required, and we have secured external funding to cover some of the delivery that would normally be supported by credit income. Further, we have reduced the number of courses running for small cohorts, so that the additional cost of delivery to more students is lessened by classes being of reasonable volume.

It is still early to report on HE FTE numbers with the term having only recently begun and modules not yet being entered on student records. Our HE undergraduate 'home fee status' FTE target for 2023/24 is around 130 FTE and early indications suggest that we can realistically expect to achieve this target.

Update on Short Courses

We have been reviewing how short courses are promoted and applied for, and industry feedback has promoted consideration of the use of Eventbrite. A pilot has been successfully conducted and we expect a wider breadth of courses to be live on the platform from November.

We have been focusing recently on provision for the fishing industry, with a permanent staff member now trained to deliver the basic safety courses and a fishing industry open event planned for November.

There has been an increase in demand for courses linked to the launch of the new Workboat Code, with one company alone seeking three separate courses for each of their sixty Orkney based employees.

In the Health Care and Society Section staff members are delivering Mental Health First Aid, First Aid and Adult/Child protection to wider college staff team. AsStaff member is also delivering training 'Wir Ain Peerie Bodies' to early years setting across Shetland.

Simon Clarke and Edina Szeles offered short courses for Wool Week on the Prehistory of Clothing and Introduction to Weaving

Scottish Seafarms awarded a Heart of Community grant (up to £5k) for all NPA/SFW students to undertake boat training (Powerboat level 1) within their courses.

New Courses

Health Care and Society:

- Senior Phase – Access to Allied Health Professions
- General Studies @SCQF level 5

Creative communities:

- Two programmes have started for the Eric Gray Service Access to Core Skills, on a full cost recovery basis
 - Life Skills which is offering classes in Art, Hospitality and ICT
 - Introduction to Core Skills to more able students
- Alternative to Higher English is being offered to Shetland and Argyll students as a combined distant learning cohort, by VC with VLE support. This isn't a new course but offering the course to students enrolled outside Shetland is new.

Marine Science:

- Powerboat Level 1 – all courses fully booked & excellent feedback. Age 8+

New courses approved:

- Online CPD Sustainable Aquaculture Management (Diploma)
- Online CPD Sustainable Marine Environmental Management (Diploma)
- Sustainable Aquaculture Practices module (SCQF L8)

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- 2 day Advanced Powerboat – courses fully booked
- 5 day coastal theory

3. Update on Apprentices

For Skills Development Scotland (SDS) period 5 (April to September), we had 54 new starts and so met our new starts target (51). We were only £500 short of our spend target £208,539 (target £209,043).

Our overall achievement rate has improved to 85% with 16-19 achievement rate increased to 76.9%

We had a successful SDS audit. Approximately 30 files were requested and the report came back with no actions required. We moved in one area from yellow to green so SDS were satisfied that we were complying correctly with processes. There was also a request via SDS from HMRC regarding ensuring that apprentices had employment status. From a sample of 5 apprentices, we came back with no actions required.

In the aquaculture section New MA/SVQ clients started – Bakkafrøst, Organic Sea Harvest, Loch Duart and also MOWI MA/SVQ enrolments for Anglesey cleaner fish hatcheries – full fees

4. Update on Research & KE

a. Marine Sciences

Grant awards:

Marine Scotland, Regional Inshore Fisheries Group, project funding for “*Investigating the age structure, population dynamics, and nursery habitats of commercial fish species in Shetlands inshore areas*”

Marine Scotland Fund – Marine Restoration and Enhancement Plan £65,000

NORA Blue Meets Green DKK 130,500 (marine planning)

NORA Local Knowledge in Marine Planning DKK 921,200 (marine planning)

Marine Scotland – Marine Planning Partnership £75 000

Publications:

- Publications - Marie E. Kirby, Trisha Toop, Miloud Ouadi, **Lesley McEvoy, Christine Rolin, Rhiannon Inkster**, Philip W. Dyer, Michael K. Theodorou, Thermo-catalytic reforming pyrolysis of ensiled *Saccharina latissima* dominated macroalgal pellets for bioenergy production, Energy Conversion and Management: 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecmx.2024.100692>
- Lieber, L., **Fraser, S.**, Coles D., and Nimmo-Smith, W.A.M., 2024. Sheared turbulent flows and wake dynamics of an idled floating tidal turbine. *Nature Communications*. 15:8244. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-52578-x>
- Hall, A. J., Kershaw, J.L., **Fraser, S.**, Davidson, K., Rowland-Pilgrim, S., Turner, A.D., and McConnell, B., 2024. Estimating the risks of exposure to harmful algal toxins among Scottish harbour seals. *Harmful Algae*. 136: 102653. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hal.2024.102653>

- **Riley, T., Mouat, B. Shucksmith, R.** (2024) Real world data for real world problems: Importance of appropriate spatial resolution modelling to inform decision makers in marine management. *Journal on Ecological Modelling and Systems Ecology* 498, 110864.
- **Riley, T.G. & Shucksmith, R.** (2024). Towards Net Zero: The role of marine habitats. UHI Shetland Policy Brief. Pp 9.

Aquaculture

- New Projects started in Q1 include BBSRC funded Aqua-Plankton a two year project, and SAIC funded 15 month project - Plankton-Predict
- UHI Aquaculture Hub met or exceeded all 23/24 targets

Fisheries

- Delivery of Fair Isle Inshore Fish Survey and annual Shetland Inshore Fish Survey fieldwork aboard MFV Atlantia II using scientific trawl and baited remote underwater video (BRUV) landers and new pelagic drifting camera equipment.
- First recaptures of tagged flapper skate (*Dipturus intermedius*) recorded as part of ongoing SMEEF-funded project.
- Katie Brigden presented at meeting in Faroes with colleagues from Nordic countries to discuss development of regional pelagic catch sampling (attendance funded by Nordic council, through Norwegian Institute of Marine Research).
- Work has commenced on the development of a pelagic science and sampling web portal, in collaboration with SPFA, with external company undertaking the work.
- Submitted application to EU HORIZON funding for 4 year project, as part of wider European consortium. If successful UHI (KB) will lead on one of four central work packages
- UHI Shetland was actively represented at the ICES Scallop Assessment Working Group and the 23rd International Pectinid Workshop in the Isle of Man with Leander Harlow presenting at both events, showcasing the collaboration between UHI Shetland and the Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation (SSMO).
- Research and stock assessment delivery to the Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation, enabling them to continue implementation of their Fisheries Management Plans.
- Interim reports produced for two work packages of project "Assessing and addressing knowledge gaps in the Ling (*Molva molva*) fishery" and updated work plan developed.
- Continued contributions to international shellfish and demersal fish stock assessments through routine data collection under the MoU with the Marine Directorate.
- On-going implementation of the Scottish Pelagic Industry-Science Data Collection Programme (SPISDCP), and other associated research activity in partnership with Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association (SFPA) and the Marine Directorate

Marine Planning

- Rachel Shucksmith witness to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh 18th September 2024,
- Invited lunchtime seminar - marine natural capital introduction and discussion on application June 2024 to Marine Directorate and NatureScot.
- Delivery of Fair Isle benthic survey September 2024
- Continued identification and mapping of previously lost seagrass beds as part of SMEEF funded research
- Initial workshops held as part of the marine restoration plan
- Continued engagement with Marine Directorate and their legal team to publish Shetland marine plan
- EU Horizon Europe Blue Connect protected started with official launch in Berlin

b. Centre for Island Creativity

- Andrew Jennings made presentations at two conferences
 - North Atlantic Forum Conference in Ireland 17 - 21 June, Sustainable Livelihoods
 - UArctic Congress 29 May 3 June, Overview of Shetland's Cultural heritage
- Andrew Jennings has a chapter in **History Maker: Essays in honour of Brian Smith**, titled "A parallel naming voyage through a familiar seascape, and investigates the nature of Norse naming practice in the Scottish maritime areas and on the Norwegian coast".
- Andrew Jennings was external examiner for University of Durham PhD candidate, Gailann Peake on the topic of Viking Sex
- Andrew Jennings continues to co-ordinate online research symposia on Shetland – Faroes and on Island Matters.
- Siun Carden has two papers coming out
 - a chapter in **Visual Essays on New Genre Arctic Art Education**, edited by Timo Jokelo, 'Mapping our Landscapes of Practice: visualizing situated learning for social art practitioners in geographically dispersed Communities of Practice'
 - 'Islandness, Nations and "Peerie Places": Shetland and Ireland as Archipelagic Neighbours', in the Irish Journal of Anthropology
- Roxane Permar also has a chapter in **Visual Essays on New Genre Arctic Art Education**, edited by Timo Jokelo.

5. Update on merger related topics

Over the summer there has been work on a data sharing agreement with SIC education we hope we are very close to a conclusion to this.

We are continuing to have liaison meetings with SIC with excellent attendance and engagement at the last meeting.

6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- 3 accidents reported (2 staff and one student) one was a 1 RIDDOR.
- The Head of Health and Safety reported that lack of Facilities staff is increasing the H&S risk levels in the Lerwick campus and has pointed to this as the likely root cause of both RIDDOR accidents in the last 12 months. As both RIDDOR's occurred in relation to working under increased pressure due to working alone in the canteen, she recommended that staff are not permitted to work alone in the canteen for more than an hour.
- The college is still struggling to recruit the two empty positions in the Canteen due to current market forces.
- A part time Janitor for Lerwick campus, who is the replacement for full time Estate Technician has been successfully recruited and will officially start on the 1st of November. He is working as a casual for a few hours a week until then.
- Absence of First Aid Training is reducing the availability of First Aiders on our lists, as qualifications run out. However, a lecturer has now been recruited and dates for training staff are being arranged in November.

7. Islands Deal

Campus redevelopment

Full Business Case in draft. Project awaiting outcome of planning permission for PAH changes.

Shellvolution

Full Business Case approved and project implementation getting underway.

Creative Islands and Wellbeing

Further questions have been asked of the submitted business case

Talented

Full business case has been submitted and revised

8. General activities and achievements All

a. Student achievement

Keith Massey, who graduated with first class Honours in June 2024, has won the New Graduate Award from the Society of Scottish Artists (SSA). This prestigious award gives Keith the opportunity to exhibit his selected artwork in one of the most high-profile exhibitions in Scotland. The work of all the winners can be viewed online at <https://www.s-s-a.org/ssanewgraduateaward2024/>. The exhibition opens 23rd November, Scottish Royal Academy, Edinburgh.

From Health Care and Society, the Access to nursing students have all started placement within Gilbert Bain Hospital. In the HND Counselling students – 4 of the cohort have completed 70 hours of clinical practice and are ready for the BACP Certificate of Proficiency exam. 3 PGDE students have completed and are now doing their probationary teaching year

In the Marine Science section PhD student Iohara Quirino attended and presented at the ICES Annual Science Conference (9th-12th Sept). Sophie Smith obtained £2500 Sea changers grant

b. Staff achievement

- Susan Menary – Completed PgCert Tertiary & Higher Education
- Heather Woodworth & Wilma Anderson completed Assessor Award
- Bryan Peterson and Kristi Tait have been awarded module leadership of network taught modules on the BA Film and BA Fine Art degrees respectively.
- Simon Clarke and Andrew Jennings took part in archaeological excavations at the Kame of Isbister alongside Gordon Noble from Aberdeen University in August 2024
- Guy Tindall completed Forklift Instructor training
- Rachel Shucksmith and Becky Giesler attended Holyrood Royal Garden party