

Board of Management

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 28 September 2021 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus

Board Secretary
21 September 2021

AGENDA

Welcome and Apologies

Declarations of Interest

ITEMS FOR DECISION

1. **MINUTES**
Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 08 June 2021.
2. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. **HISA REPORT AND STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UPDATE**
Report by Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality and HISA President
5. **RESEARCH REPORT – *To Follow***
Report by Assistant Principal – Academic & Research
6. **SSES AND NSS OVERVIEW – QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-22**
Presentation by Quality Manager
7. **COMMITTEE EVALUATION FEEDBACK**
Report by Board Secretary
8. **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT**
Report by Quality Manager

- 9. OVERVIEW OF SUPPORT SERVICES – WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH, TRANSITIONS, PDA'S**
Presentation by Access and Progression and Wellbeing & Learning Support Managers

ITEMS FOR NOTING

- 10. MINUTES FROM INVERNESS COLLEGE COMMITTEES - CONFIDENTIAL**
- Minutes from Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee held on 26 May 2021
- 11. AOCB**
- 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 07 December 2021 at 4.30 p.m.**

If any member wishes to add an item of business to the Agenda, please inform the Chair and the Board Secretary as soon as possible. Additional items of business will only be considered for inclusion in the agenda in advance of the start of the meeting.

DRAFT MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday 08 June 2021

- PRESENT:** Kelly Mackenzie, Chris O'Neil, Tina Stones, Robyn Kennedy, Ruth McFadyen, Arvinder Kainth, Russell Edwards
- CHAIR:** Tina Stones
- APOLOGIES:** Samantha Cribb
- ATTENDING:** Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality
Assistant Principal – Academic & Research
Access and Progression Manager
Student Association Coordinator
Information Systems Manager
Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities
Board Secretary

The Chair welcomed the Student Association Coordinator, the Access and Progression Manager, the Information Systems Manager and the Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities to the meeting.

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 16 March 2021 were **AGREED**, and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

2. POLICY FOR APPROVAL – UHI TERTIARY LEARNER SUPPORT POLICY

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality provided the Committee with a background to the policy advising that this was a common partnership policy which had been subject to minor updates.

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The Committee suggested that section 3.5 of the policy could be further developed to include the alternative assessment arrangements which are in place as a result of Covid-19.

Action: The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality will discuss the development of section 3.5 with the Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager, the HISA president and the Board Member Teaching Staff Representative.

The Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities joined the meeting.

Decision: The policy was approved and will now be taken to the Board of Management for final approval. Any development of section 3.5 will be subject to further scrutiny by the scrutiny panel and EMT.

3. REPORT ON IMPACT OF AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality provided the Committee with context to the jointly prepared report which focuses on our forward planning. The Committee was advised that the Covid-19 response group is now being led by the Administration Operations Manager with support from the Health and Safety Manager. A lengthy discussion around the return to campus took place with the Committee noting the intention to have every student on campus at least one day per week with student's being offered a blend of face-to-face and remote learning. With regards staff, the Committee noted that hybrid working guidance had been produced and circulated.

The Committee enquired as to whether an analysis of grades had taken place and was advised that anecdotal feedback had been received and that this will continue to be monitored at a programme level. The Committee noted that we will be monitoring the consistency of all remote teaching to ensure quality and a standardised approach by all.

4. STUDENT RETENTION 2020/21

The Committee enquired whether any analysis of the reasons why students have withdrawn from their studies has been carried out. The Committee noted that we have focused on the reduction of early withdrawal for a number of years and the

impact which the Access and Progression Team have had on reducing early withdrawals was highlighted. The Committee noted that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the number of withdrawals this year. The Committee discussed the complex reasons for early withdrawal, the support measures which the Access and Progression Team has put in place for students and noted that this will continue to be monitored.

The Committee welcomed the data within this report but enquired whether past year's data could be circulated to enable the members to look at any trends. The Committee noted that sector level data has yet to be released by the SFC.

Action: The Information System Manager agreed to provide current and past data by curriculum area which will be circulated to all Committee members by the Board Secretary.

5. **STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2020/21 & 2021/22**

The Information Systems Manager spoke to her report and advised that we have not met our FE credits for this year but highlighted that we will be able to claim for any deferred credits next year. With regards HE the Committee noted that we have exceeded our target. The Committee was advised that recruitment for the new Academic Year is around 3 weeks behind schedule due to the impact of the cyber incident.

6. **CURRICULUM PLAN 2021-22**

The Information Systems Manager spoke to her report highlighting that the information within this report is linked to the previous report in respect of the FE credits target. The Committee was also provided with an update with regards the curriculum plan for 2021/22. Discussions around additional space available to carry out assessments and capacity levels within the Campus took place.

7. **STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality provided the Committee with an update to the enhancement themes that the partnership had focused on this year. The Committee noted that HISA had a joint and key role in all communications which have been sent out to students over the past year.

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality and the HISA President spoke to their joint report highlighting to the Committee the relevant information with regards student life, tools for learning and student voice.

The Committee held a lengthy discussion with regards digital poverty and were advised of sources of funding available.

8. HISA END OF YEAR UPDATE

The HISA President extended her thanks to staff for their work on behalf of students over the past year and provided the end of year update to the Committee.

The Committee again voiced their thanks to the HISA Education Representative Vivienne Mackie, who left the Board and this Committee earlier this year, for all the work she had contributed and welcomed the addition of Bonnie Crawford to the role in the next Academic Year.

9. HISA ELECTIONS REPORT 2021

The Student Association Coordinator provided the Committee with an update in respect of the HISA elections which were held in March 2021 highlighting the challenges involved due to Covid-19, the cyber incident and the EIS strike action. The Committee noted the impact of not being able to speak with students on a face-to-face basis however the Committee acknowledged that the numbers of votes received were comparable to the other partner Colleges and the sector.

The Committee gave their thanks to the Student Association Coordinator for this comprehensive report.

10. UPDATE ON EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality advised that this report had also been discussed at the recent HR Committee. The Committee noted that our annual report on equalities has been delayed due to both Covid-19 and the cyber incident. As a result we have uploaded a holding statement onto our website and our deadline for submission has been extended to 18 June 2021.

11. STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEYS

The Committee noted that Liz Cook, Quality Manager has taken on a role within Executive Office. The Committee was advised that a recruitment process for a new Quality Manager is underway. The Committee noted that this student survey was undertaken during the EIS strike action which may have an impact on the satisfaction expressed by students.

Action: The Committee noted that we will receive a fuller report on the outcome of the student satisfaction survey at our September 2021 meeting.

12. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION REPORT

The Assistant Principal – Academic & Research spoke to her report highlighting the research KPI's which are currently applied. The Committee noted that research income this year has increased in comparison with last year and that we have exceeded our targets with regards staff submitted to the REF.

The Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities gave a presentation to the Committee which provided the Committee with an update on what each area was focussing and progressing on. The Committee thanked her for this update.

Action: A member of staff from the River and Loch Institute will be invited to attend the September 2021 meeting to provide a presentation to the Committee.

13. ANNUAL COMMITTEE EVALUATION

The Board Secretary took the Committee through the annual committee evaluation noting their responses. Any actions from this exercise will be brought to the September 2021 meeting for discussion.

14. AOCB

The Staff Representative for Teaching highlighted to the Committee that a UHI Online Learning and Teaching Symposium is taking place on 17 June 2021. Information on the keynote speaker, themes and how to register for this event was provided.

ITEM 01

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 4.30 P.M.

<p>Signed by the Chair: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
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Outstanding Actions from LT&R Committee Meetings

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time Line	ACTIONED
08 June 2021				
UHI Tertiary Learner Support Policy	The Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality will liaise with the Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager, HISA President and the Board Member Teaching Representative	All Chairs	Summer 2021	
Student Satisfaction Survey	A full report on the outcome of the student satisfaction survey will be discussed at the September 21 meeting.	Quality Manager	September 2021.	
Research and Innovation	A member of staff from the River and Loch Institute will be invited to attend the September 2021 meeting to provide a presentation to the Committee.	AP – A&R	September 2021.	

Subject/Title:	Terms of Reference
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lisa Ross Board Secretary
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	15 September 2021
Brief Summary of the paper:	Terms of Reference with suggested amendments. These amendments were discussed during the committee review meeting.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and then recommendation for approval by the Board of Management.

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Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	Governance Compliance		
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A		
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp> and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

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Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Terms of Reference

Membership

Not less than five members of the Board, including the Principal *ex officio*, the Teaching Staff Representative and the Student Representatives.

Quorum

Three members of the Committee entitled to vote upon the items before the meeting.

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet no less than four times each year.

Remit

The Committee has overall strategic responsibility for developing, monitoring and enhancing ~~monitoring~~ the direction and performance of learning, teaching and research at the College, as part of delivering excellence in the overall student experience, research and impact. ~~This includes providing support and challenging rhetoric where appropriate.~~

Commented [MS1]:

Commented [MS2]: This sentence is probably not required – is implicit in 'monitoring and enhancing' in the first sentence, and is then picked up below

The Learning, Teaching and Research Committee shall:

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- ~~1. Oversee~~ Support, challenge and enhance the development and implementation of the various strategies aligned to the committee and monitor their performance against targets.
- ~~2. Recognise~~ Observe and recognise trends in education and research and recommend specific areas of focus for initiatives in the College.
- ~~3. Monitor student recruitment, retention and achievement and any actions identified~~
- ~~4.3. Monitor~~ Engage with the progress of the annual Student Partnership agreement Agreement.
- ~~5.4. Monitor~~ data relating to the student experience and performance at ~~the~~ College.
- ~~6.~~ Ensure that the college continues to maintain and improve the quality of its provision, and supports lecturers in delivering excellent learning and teaching in line with the GTCS Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges.
- ~~7.5.~~ Monitor, develop and enhance the College's preparedness for the ongoing, external scrutiny of its provision.
- ~~8.~~ Monitor the development of the College's International links
- ~~9.6.~~ Monitor, develop and enhance the Curriculum to ensure that the College meets the needs of students, stakeholders and the local community and is responsive to opportunities.
- ~~10.7.~~ Receive, and consider and discuss information on research activity in the college including Research Excellence Framework (REF) REF funding, curriculum support, student journey, professional development for staff and stakeholder engagement.
- ~~11.~~ Review the results of the external verification visits carried out throughout the year.
- ~~12.8.~~ Monitor the level and type of complaints received.
- ~~9.~~ Receive regular reports from the Students Association and monitor provide

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Commented [LS3]: Would suggest this goes into FGP alongside the Recruitment piece which GP can oversee and report on

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Commented [MS4]: Research Excellence Framework

Commented [LS5]: as below – encompassed in the monitoring piece

Commented [LS6]: This would be encompassed in re points above re monitoring quality and data

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support to the college in order to respond to student concerns.

13.10. ~~Observe, and recognise~~ and encourage sharing from both staff and students of emerging good practice across various aspects of provision at the College

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Commented [LS7]: This relates to us having presentations from staff and students

Subject/Title:	HISA Report & Student Partnership Agreement Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Ruth McFadyen, HISA Student President IC UHI Lindsay Snodgrass, Assistant Principal Student Experience & Quality
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2021
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an update of developments around student experience and aspects of partnership working
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion

Item 04

Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	Strategic Plan - Opportunity and growth in student life To further embed the student voice to ensure its contribution to all aspects of college life.		
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/ No If yes, please specify:		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify: Improvements to Student Journey		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A		
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
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Student Partnership

Executive summary

To provide a brief overview of progress made with student engagement and the enhancement themes identified within the Partnership Agreement for academic year 2021-22.

Background

The Partnership Agreement was developed in 2018 to further embed the collegiate working between the college and the students' association. It has been, and continues to be, an important tool in leveraging out improvements across the student journey, as well as helping us to ensure the student voice is embedded across the life and work of the college.



Each academic year we collectively choose three enhancement themes informed by student feedback and other sources of evidence. The enhancement themes chosen for academic year (AY) 2021-22 are:

- Student Life
- Advice, Support & Progression
- Learning & Teaching

As the new academic year begins, we have continued to have a collective focus on the immediate and emerging priorities surrounding the gradual return to more on campus delivery. HISA have played a key role within our weekly Covid monitoring group helping to shape our



response to changing government guidelines and restrictions and their impact on the student experience.

Student Life

Students on campus

As we start the new academic year, we have been able to welcome more students back on site. We have been delighted to be able to hold face-to-face inductions for all Further Education programmes. This has allowed students the opportunity to meet their peers, their lecturers and some of the critical professional service teams. HISA have also attended all inductions to provide a welcome and to explain their role. Early feedback demonstrates the importance of the face-to-face induction in helping to build early rapport between staff and students; helping to develop the group dynamic of the class; and supporting students to feel more comfortable engaging thereafter in the remote aspects of their learning.

We have been able to follow through on our intention pre-Summer to make a shift away from fully remote learning towards most of our provision now being through blended learning (mix of remote and face-to-face). This has meant that most students have at least one day a week on campus. Early feedback suggests this blended approach has been very welcomed by students, with some commenting on the benefits of seeing their peers and lecturers in person, whilst also having greater flexibility due to the continuation of some remote learning.

Graduation, Fresher's & Halls

As previously discussed, we were committed to holding a celebration event for our students who graduated in AY 2019-20 and those due to graduate this month with a planned celebratory event to be held on Saturday 9th October. HISA were also planning to run a BBQ on site as a highlight of Fresher's Week. It has however been with huge regret that we have decided to pull back from these large gatherings due to rising Covid cases locally.

HISA provided an on-site welcome to students moving into halls during their 'move in' weekend. This proved to be hugely successful and was welcomed by both students

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and their parents/carers. HISA have also recently organised and subsidised an on-site catering van to be on site at halls to encourage residents to socialise outdoors and share a meal. This has been very popular. We are acutely aware of the benefit of us having an on-site student support presence in halls and are currently recruiting a new Wellbeing Officer who will spend some of their week in halls.

Advice, Support & Progression

Digital Poverty

Supporting students in digital poverty has been a key focus during induction and we have issued over 200 laptops over the two-week induction period. We have made a further financial investment in our digital technology to support both onsite and remote learning as we adjust further to our blended delivery model.

Mental Health Support

We added a new addition to our suite of mental health support going live with *Spectrum Life* on 9th August. This is our new 24/7, 365 telephone Student Assistance Programme (SAP) which provides a free, confidential service offering including:

- Wellbeing support
- Counselling
- Legal information
- Financial information
- Career guidance
- Life coaching
- Mediation
- Health information

Not only can students access a phone line to speak to a trained counsellor, but they can also access a portal through an app on their phones which has a whole host of wellbeing information and content. We feel this is a fantastic addition to the suite of support we provide.

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Learning & Teaching

We have begun discussions around refocussing our attention on learning and teaching. This will include reviving our programme of observations (including remote lessons) and the roll out of a new audit tool on Brightspace by means of assessing the accessibility of learning materials.

Subject/Title:	2020-21 Student Satisfaction and 2021-22 Quality Enhancement Plan
Author: [Name and Job title]	Grant Macdonald, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	24 August 2021
Brief Summary of the paper:	This report provides a short summary of the student satisfaction data for 2020-21 and a brief overview of changes to our approach for quality enhancement planning. The paper will be accompanied by a presentation to the committee.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting

Item 06

Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with::	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement		
<input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change			
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail			
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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and

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Student Satisfaction and Quality Enhancement Plan

Student Satisfaction

In 2020-21 the coronavirus pandemic and cyber security incident experienced by UHI has had an impact on the promotion and response rate for the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES).

The response rate to the SSES dropped from 34% in 2020 to 16% in 2021. Response rates were highest amongst full time students.

The response rate for NSS increased by 4% to 76%.

The satisfaction rate for SSES has fallen this year, from 93%, to 80%. For NSS the satisfaction rate fell from 83% to 80%.

Satisfaction across curriculum areas varied with practical leaning areas such as Forestry showing less satisfaction.

Satisfaction with the quality of professional services across all support areas remains high.

Quality Enhancement Plan

The recent pandemic has meant that requirements by Education Scotland and the funding council for colleges to engage in self-evaluation and quality enhancement planning have been temporarily removed.

Prior to the pandemic Inverness College participated in an improvement project and resulting from that project some new practices were adopted.

These practices have been implemented to varying degrees. Feedback indicates that the process has become fragmented as a result of the lighter touch approach but also due to a plethora of forms that deal with various aspects of both evaluation and enhancement.

A new approach has been proposed and agreed.

The new approach attempts to achieve several outcomes:

- Clearly link enhancement activity to the various frameworks under which the college operates e.g. How Good is Our College quality framework, Scottish Funding Council outcomes and the UHI Partnership Agreement.
- Replace the word based Quality Enhancement Plan document with a live and interactive tracker.
- Pull forward the completion of evaluation activity and publishing of the Quality Enhancement Plan to earlier in the college annual cycle.
- Simplify the process making it clear to understand and easier to manage and monitor.
- Reduce the amount of paperwork associated with the processes.
- Develop a more project-based approach to enhancement planning.
- Better connect the two constituent parts of evaluation and improvement.

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- Give better synergy to the process, ensuring all college teams are focused on supporting both college enhancement themes and their own department enhancement goals.
- Provide greater visibility of enhancement planning so that all staff can view enhancement measures across college.
- Make it easier for managers and college executive to track, monitor and follow up on planned enhancements.

A presentation to committee will demonstrate further the new approach and provide more detail on student satisfaction.

Subject/Title:	Committee Evaluation Feedback
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lisa Ross Board Secretary
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	15 September 2021
Brief Summary of the paper:	Feedback on the LT&R Committee Evaluation.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and Noting

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Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	Governance Compliance.		
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/ No If yes, please specify:		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/ No If yes, please specify:		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A		
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

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Background

The Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Evaluation was carried out within the committee meeting held on 08 June 2021. Seven members of the Committee were in attendance and provided feedback and comment on this evaluation.

Chair Feedback

As the Learning, Teaching and Research Chair took on this role in Spring 2021; it was agreed that no Chair Evaluation would be carried out this year.

Committee Feedback

A copy of the feedback from the Committee is attached as Appendix 1.

The feedback received made numerous references to the review of the Terms of Reference. This review has been carried out and the updated Terms of Reference have been made available to Committee Members for comment.

Action Required

Committee members highlighted the need to check whether any additional training for members is required. Our training programme is currently being updated and additional training is being sought as part of this.

Next Steps

The feedback received will be presented to the Board of Management on 05 October 2021 as part of the yearly report on Committee Evaluations.

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Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Evaluation (completed by the LT&R committee collectively) on 08 June 2021

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Composition, Establishment and Duties of the Committee				
Does the Committee meet regularly in accordance with the Board Standing Orders?	Y			
Does the Committee consistently have a quorum?	Y			
Do all Committee members attend meetings regularly?	Y			
Does the Committee have enough members?	Y			
Does at least one of the Committee members have a background relevant to the remit of the Committee?	Y			The Chair has the relevant background.
Have new Committee members received all necessary training?				Board Secretary to check whether any training is available on CDN.
Does the Committee report regularly to the Board?	Y			

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Terms of reference				
Does the Committee have written terms of reference?	Y			Due to be reviewed over Summer.
Do the terms of reference include all aspects of the Committee's role?	Y			Due to be reviewed over Summer.
Does the membership of the Committee need to be changed?		N		
Are the terms of reference adopted by the full Board and reviewed annually?	Y			Due to be reviewed over Summer.

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Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Compliance with the Law and Regulations				
Does the Committee have a mechanism to keep it aware of topical legal and regulatory issues?	Y			Policies and Procedures provide updates which are relevant to legal and regulatory issues

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Internal Control				
Does the Committee monitor to ensure that risk is controlled?	Y			Whilst not considered directly at this Committee, this is controlled through a robust questioning at Board Level.
Does the Committee regularly review relevant strategic plans?	Y			
Does the Committee consider the level of detail and information it receives appropriate?	Y			
Are appropriate internal performance measures monitored by the Committee?	Y			Review of KPI's
Is the Committee addressing all matters delegated to it by the Board and under its terms of reference?	Y			Due to be reviewed over Summer.

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Administrative arrangements				
Does the Committee have an independent secretary?	Y			Board Secretary
Are Committee papers distributed in sufficient time for members to give them due consideration?	Y			Updates and Changes to reports are circulated as soon as possible. The review of the CMT and alignment with our Committee meetings should assist this.
Are Committee meetings scheduled prior to important decisions on specific matters being made?	Y			
Is the timing of Committee meetings discussed with all	Y			Annual Schedule of Meetings is agreed in plenty of time.

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Appendix 1

involved?				
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Subject/Title:	Complaints Annual Report 2020-21
Author: [Name and Job title]	Grant Macdonald, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	24 August 2021
Brief Summary of the paper:	This report provides an analysis of the complaints received during the academic year 2020 – 21.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting

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Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement		
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	None		
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp>

and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Annual Report – 2020-21

Introduction

Complaints are received all year round, from a number of different sources although the primary source tends to be from students. Complaints are received via a variety of mechanisms including direct emails, complaints forms, Red Button. IC UHI uses the SPSO categories and sub-categories to classify complaints, which allows us to feed into sector wide data.

In April 2021 the 'Resolved' outcome when dealing with complaints was incorporated into the UHI Tertiary Complaints Handling Procedure (TCHP) to reflect changes in SPSO's Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP). A complaint is resolved when both the organisation and the customer agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the customer, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld. The introduction and reporting of this additional outcome category has increased complaint totals in Q4 so comparisons with previous quarters should be considered with this in mind.

The outcomes from complaint resolution are reported to UHI (HE) and published on the IC UHI website (FE).

Complaints are grouped into quarters depending on the time of year in which they are received. The quarter dates are detailed below:

- Quarter 1 (Q1): August – October,
- Quarter 2 (Q2): November – January,
- Quarter 3 (Q3): February – April,
- Quarter 4 (Q4): May – July.

This report provides an overview of the complaint categories and outcomes across academic year 2020-21 (Q1-Q4) including Q4 statistics and outcomes.

Key Findings

Q4 complaints almost doubled based on the same period in the previous year. This can be attributed to a new category of reporting.

In line with SPSO requirements IC (from the start of Q4 2021) capture 'Resolved' complaints. These are normally front-line complaints that would be resolved after the initial complaint is raised. Previously these complaints would be dealt with and not reported.

The introduction of the Resolved outcome from April 2021 has confirmed that many complaints can and are being dealt with at source if approached proactively by staff, thereby preventing escalation of the complaint.

A decline in complaints received is evident in the *Services* and *Facilities* categories and reflects the decrease in usage of the campus during lockdown.

The category 'Course Related' received the most complaints for the second year in succession and reflected a diverse set of concerns.

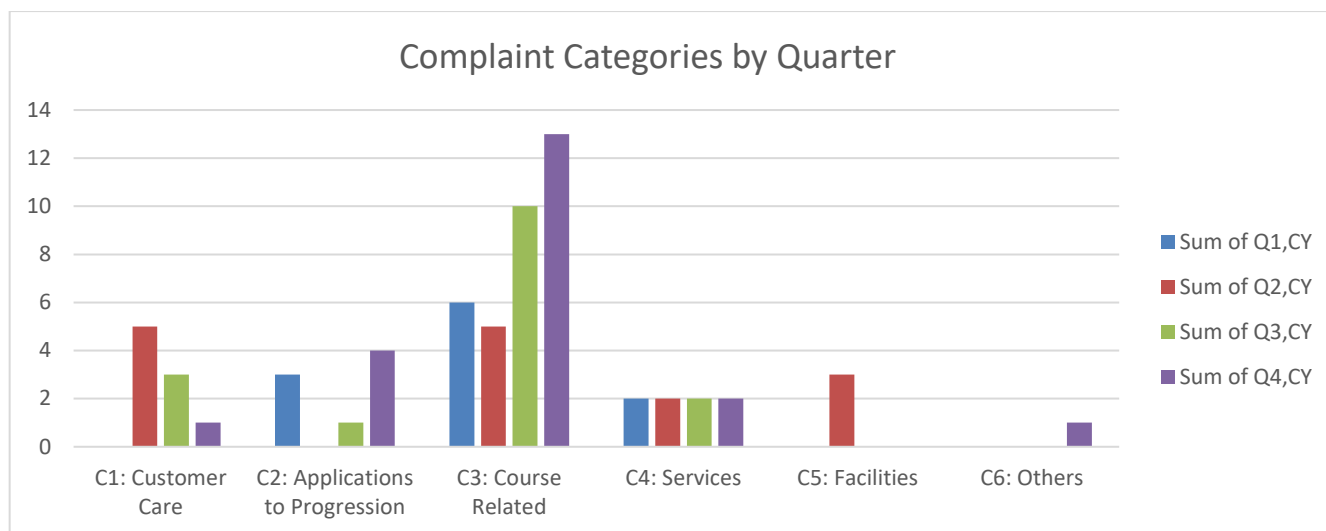
Two overarching themes however were communication issues and challenges with course delivery. The reasons for the increase reflect the challenges faced by both staff and students in a year disrupted by the pandemic.

New training materials have been produced to reflect the changes in SPSO guidance introduced in April 2021. The new training resource will be available on the Professional Development Brightspace site and completion of the training will be monitored by the Quality team. The requirement to complete this training will be included in the All Staff Briefings.

12 current staff have completed the SPSO stage 2 complaint investigation training and are able to assist in that process. A further group of new or newly promoted staff will complete training on the SPSO course in Q2 2021-22.

Complaints by Category

The graphs below display the sum of quarterly complaints each category received.



Customer Category: Current Year (Quarter) 2020/21	YTD CY	Q1,CY	Q2,CY	Q3,CY	Q4,CY
C1: Customer Care	9	0	5	3	1
C2: Applications to Progression	8	3	0	1	4
C3: Course Related	34	6	5	10	13
C4: Services	8	2	2	2	2
C5: Facilities	3	0	3	0	0
C6: Others	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	63	11	15	16	21

Customer Category: Current Year (Quarter) 2019/20	YTD CY	Q1,CY	Q2,CY	Q3,CY	Q4,CY
C1: Customer Care	12	3	3	5	1
C2: Applications to Progression	9	3	0	2	4
C3: Course Related	31	7	10	8	6
C4: Services	13	5	4	4	0
C5: Facilities	11	3	5	3	0
C6: Others	3	0	1	1	1
TOTAL	79	21	23	23	12

A total of 21 complaints were received in Q4, compared to 12 in the same quarter last year. The introduction and proactive reporting by staff of complaints with a Resolved outcome, of which there were 11, is a significant factor in this increase, as this outcome option was not included in previous reports.

The category of *Course Related* received the highest number of complaints in Q4 with a 116% increase (from 6 to 13 complaints) compared to Q4 last year. However, 6 of these complaints were in the additional Resolved outcome, which if excluded (for direct

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comparison) this category would be largely comparable with Q4 in 2019-20. *Courses Related* complaints remains year on year the most frequently received, increasing from 40% of total complaints in 2019-20 to 54% in 2020-21. 24 of these complaints related to HE provision, 8 to FE, 2 were received from externals. In 2019/20 there were 17 HE, 7 FE complaints and 7 from externals.

The sub-category of *Course Management* received 12 complaints in Q4, the main theme was poor communication with teaching staff but also included concerns about access to practical class activities and work placements. The sub-categories of *Learning & Teaching* and *Assessment, Exams and Certification* received 6 complaints each, the former includes dissatisfaction with course structure and IT concerns about Brightspace and Webex. The latter raised concerns about inaccurate resulting, assessment deadlines and how grades were estimated. The remaining sub-categories received between 1 and 2 complaints and there were no trends identified in such small numbers.

The category of *Customer Care* received just one complaint in Q4, the same as Q4 in 2019-20, this came from a HE student and had a Resolved outcome. The total for the year showed a 25% decrease compared to 2019-20.

The category of *Applications to Progression* received 4 complaints in Q4, the same as Q4 in 2019-20 and there was a drop of 1 complaint (11%) in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20. The Q4 complaints were all FE course related.

The category of *Services* received 2 complaints in Q4 compared to 0 in Q4 2019-20, both were within the Finance sub-category and both had Resolved outcomes. There was a 38% decline in complaints in this category for 2020-21 compared to the previous year, dropping for 13 to 8 complaints.

The category of *Facilities* no complaints in Q4 and there has been a 73% decrease in year 2020-21 compared to last year. The decline in *Facilities* complaints commenced with the implementation of the lock-down and drastically reduced use of the college building.

The category of *Others* received 1 complaint in Q4, the only complaint in this category for the year, compared to 3 complaints received in 2019-20.

The table below shows the full breakdown of complaint categories and sub categories, including the year to year shift

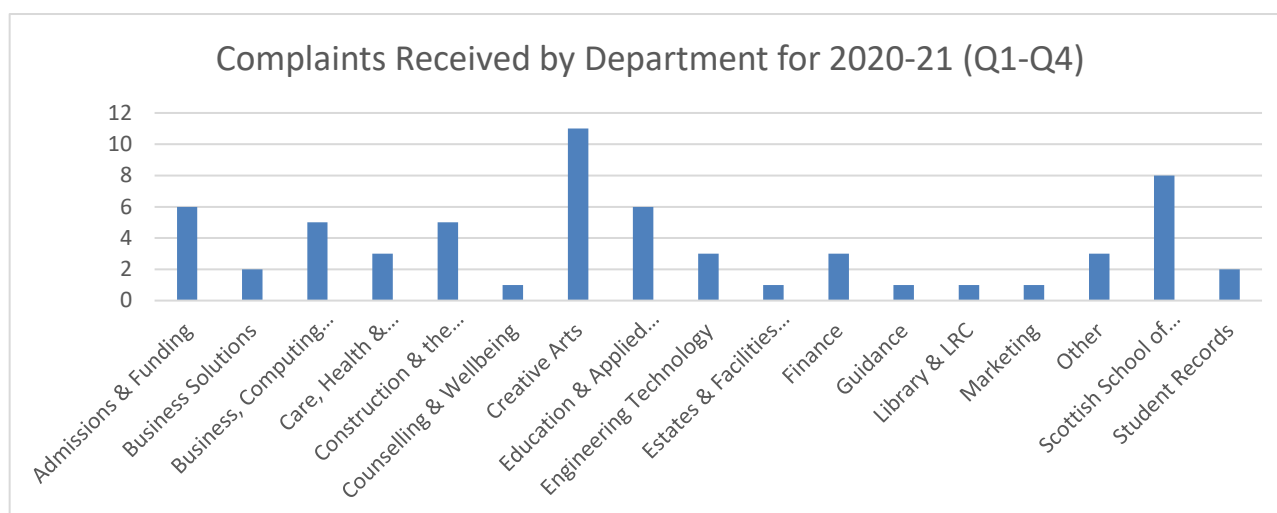
Category	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C1: Customer Care	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C1S01: Health & Safety	2	0	-2
C1S02: Security	0	0	0
C1S03: Diversity & Equality	0	2	+2
C1S04: Data Protection	0	0	0
C1S05: Environmental	0	0	0
C1S06: Staff Conduct	7	4	-3
C1S07: Student Conduct	1	1	0
C1S99: Other	0	2	+2

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C2: Applications to Progression	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C2S01: Marketing	0	1	+1
C2S02: Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	8	5	-3
C2S03: Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal	1	2	+1
C2S99: Other	0	0	0
C3S05: Assessment	0	0	0
C3: Course Related	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C3S01: Learning & Teaching	9	6	-3
C3S02: Environment/Resources	1	1	0
C3S03: Course Management	7	19	+12
C3S04: Facilitated Learning & Support	1	0	-1
C3S05: Assessment, Exams & Certification	6	6	0
C1S06: Staff Conduct	0	0	0
C1S07: Student Conduct	0	0	0
C3S99: Other	1	2	+1
C4: Services	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C4S01: Finance	3	3	0
C4S02: Funding / Bursary	3	4	+1
C4S03: Student Records	0	0	0
C4S04: Providing Learning Support	0	1	+1
C4S05: Library / Learning Technology	4	0	-4
C4S06: Quality etc.	0	0	0
C4S99: Other	2	0	-2
C5: Facilities	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C5S01: Catering	3	0	-3
C5S02: Student Accommodation	1	0	-1
C5S03: Maintenance, Lifts, Car Parking	2	1	-1
C1S05: Environmental	1	0	-1
C5S99: Other	4	2	-2
C6: Others	2019-20	2020-21	Change
C6S01: Others	0	1	+1
C1S04: Data Protection	1	0	-1
C1S07: Student Conduct	1	0	-1
C1S99: Other	1	0	-1
C6S99:	0	0	0
TOTAL	79	63	-16

Complaints by Department

The graph below displays the number of complaints received by department throughout academic year 2020-21. Creative Arts received the highest number of complaints overall (11 complaints), the Scottish School of Forestry received the next highest number of complaints with 8. Admissions and Funding had the highest number of complaints within the professional services departments with 6 complaints. Care, Health and Wellbeing received the most complaints in 2019-20 with 15, which has reduced to 3 this year.



Complaints by Mode of Delivery

In relation to mode of delivery in Q4 only, 67% of complaints received relate to HE programmes, 19% relate to FE programmes and 14% complaints came from Members of Public. The three complaints from Members of Public were from a prospective student, an ex-student and a parent. Two were applications to progression related and one related to an application and funding.

In 2020-21(Q1-Q4), 28.6% of complaints received related to FE programmes, 50.8% related to HE programmes and 20.6% were received from Members of Public, Stakeholders and Others.

The table below provides a breakdown for 2019-20 and 2020-21.

FE / HE	No. Received 19/20	No. Received 20/21
FE	25	18
HE	30	32
Other	24	13
Total	79	63

Complaint Outcomes

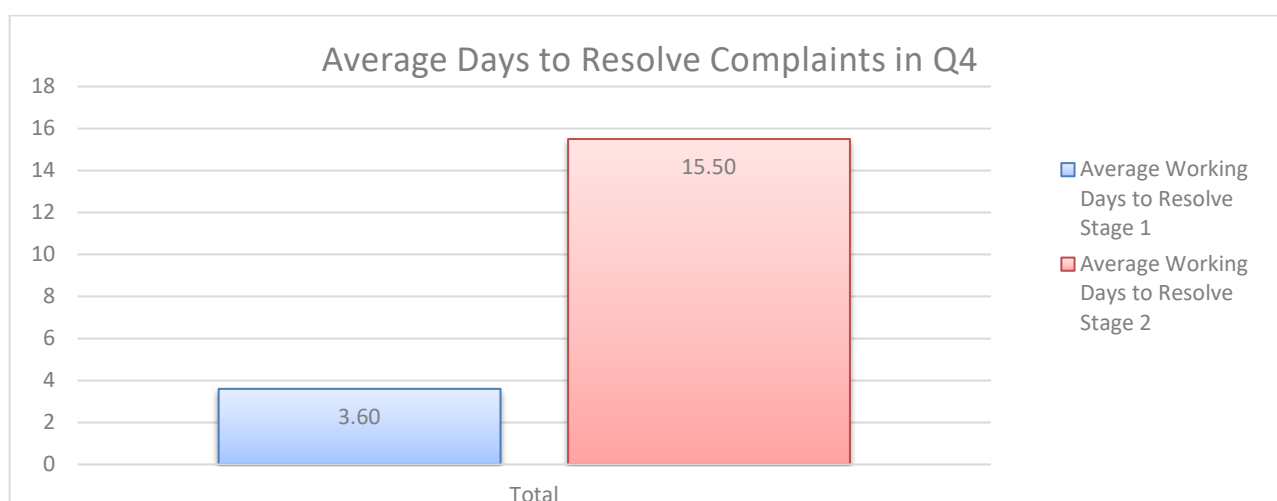
The table below shows the breakdown in stage 1 and stage 2 complaints and whether they have been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.

- Resolved – 19%
- Not upheld – 33%
- Partially upheld – 22%
- Upheld – 27%

Outcome	Resolved	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Resolved	12 <i>FE: 2, HE: 8, Other: 2.</i>			12
Not upheld		11 (36.7% of St 1) <i>FE: 6, HE: 3, Other: 2.</i>	9 (42.8% of St 2) <i>FE: 2, HE: 4, Other: 3.</i>	20 <i>FE: 8, HE: 9, Other: 9.</i>
Partially upheld		4 (13.3% of St 1) <i>HE: 2, Other: 2.</i>	10 (47.6% of St 2) <i>FE: 3, HE: 4, Other: 3</i>	14
Upheld		15 (50% of St 1) <i>FE: 5, HE: 8, Other: 2.</i>	2 (9.5% of St 2) <i>HE: 2.</i>	17
Total	12	30	21	63

Within the academic year 2020-21, two complaints were escalated to SPSO, one was rejected and the second is under consideration following notification by SPSO on 12 August 2021.

Complaint Timescales

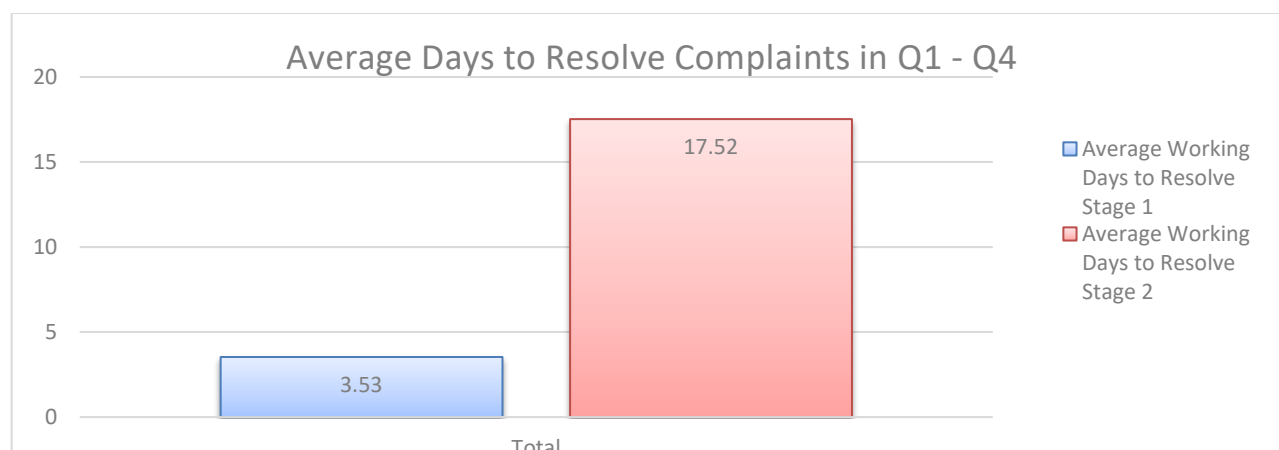


The chart above displays the average number of days taken to resolve complaints in Q4.

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The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in Q4 is between 1 – 6 days.
The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in Q4 is between 14 – 19 days.

The chart below shows the average number of days taken to resolve complaints across academic year 2020-21.



One SPSO guidelines state pre-defined timescales of a 5 day turnaround for Stage 1, and 20 days for Stage 2. As part of the Stage 2 process, updates are provided to complainants where the complaint is complex and may take longer than 20 working days.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in 2020-21 is between 1 – 8 days. 26 complaints (86%) were completed within the required 5 days. Four stage 1 complaints exceeded the 5-day timeframe, with three complaints requiring an additional day. One complaint required 8 days to complete as it coincided with the Easter bank holiday when the college was closed and required five working days to gather the required information and provide an outcome.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in 2020-21 is between 3 – 44 days. 17 complaints (81%) were completed within the required 20 days. Four Stage 2 complaints exceeded the 20-day timeframe. This was due to the complex nature of the complaint and in one instance it was further hampered by the cyber security incident which restricted the availability of information to inform the complaint investigation, this required 44 days to complete. In all instances the complainant received regularly updates on the status of their complaint.

In 2020-21, 18 complaints were received directly at stage 2, with 3 complaints (9%) escalated from Stage 1 to stage 2. These 3 complaints were closed in an average of 6 working days following escalation.

Complaint Follow Up Survey

Within 6 weeks of receiving the complaint outcome, complainants (unless the complaint was received anonymously) are sent a link to a short survey asking them for feedback on their experience of the complaints process and to rate their satisfaction levels against thirteen

aspects of the process. The survey is anonymous unless the complainant chooses to identify themselves.

Five responses were received in 2020-21. The outcomes from this small sample were largely positive with between 80-100% who answered (excluding n/a) reported that they found the complaints process easy to access and make a submission, that they received a prompt and courteous response, their complaint was taken seriously and fully investigated and they received a clear response within an appropriate timescale. Two respondents reported that they were not aware of the complaint process before needing to submit a complaint and one person scored *strongly disagree* to the statement "I was able to access information and assistance in making my complaint where this was required". As these are anonymised it is not possible to follow this up and identify the circumstances.

Learning from Complaints

Complaints often result in reviews of processes and procedures and they also allow us to identify opportunities for staff development. The Quality team continues to identify any learning points from each complaint in order to identify themes emerging. Programme and support teams use complaints as part of their evidence bank to inform their evaluative activities aimed at improving the student experience.

Below are examples of actions taken as a result of complaints received during 2020-21:

- Students 'known as' names are now used to populate Celcat registers. This was requested prior to the complaint being received however it was confirmed that this has now been implemented.
- An all-student email was sent reminding students of the necessity to comply with speed restrictions when driving on campus.
- Staff signing up and inducting new Modern Apprentices (MA) onto their programme of study will emphasise the future progression routes both to the MA and their employer
- Instructions on how to download Webex app will be included in the course induction.
- The broken links to student support services on Myday have been reinstated.
- Staff telling students that they do not receive sufficient support has been discussed by the Head of School with the appropriate team.
- Review of Brightspace by Quality Officer and action plan implemented to address issues identified regarding course delivery.
- HISA have been made aware of the issue relating to council tax exemptions for those students on 18 month FE programmes. They will raise this regionally, and nationally as an issue that needs resolution for students.

Themes emerging from complaints through the academic year 2020-21:

The introduction of the Resolved outcome from April 2021 has confirmed that many complaints can and are being dealt with at source if approached proactively by staff, thereby preventing escalation of the complaint.

The decline in complaints received is most evident in the *Services* and *Facilities* categories and reflects the decrease in usage of the campus during lockdown.

The category 'Course Related' received the most complaints for the second year in succession and reflected a diverse set of concerns. Two overarching themes however were communication issues and challenges with course delivery. The reasons for the increase reflect the challenges faced by both staff and students in a year disrupted by the pandemic.

Raising Awareness of Complaints Process

From May 2021 all complainants were asked to complete an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion form or in the case of enrolled students consent was requested to obtain this information from their student record. Within this three month timeframe 21 complaints were received with the following outcomes:

- 11 responses entered *prefer not to say* responses
- 6 complainants did not provide a response
- 4 complainants provided either full or limited details

Of the four respondents who provide full or limited details, two identified with one or more of the characteristics listed.

Students are made aware of the complaints handling process during orientation week and can be advised by college staff how to submit a complaint if required. The complaints process is available on the Inverness College UHI website and can be easily accessed via the Red Button tile on MyDay. For academic year 2021-22 the PDA's have been asked to reinforce understanding of the complaint process during orientation week and have been asked to be particularly mindful of ensuring students in vulnerable groups are included in this.

External stakeholders can access the complaint process via the college website or by contacting the college directly.

Revised all staff training is being introduced in Academic Year 2021-22 to raise awareness of the barriers some individuals may face when trying to submit a complaint and the additional support that they may require.

Staff Training

New training materials have been produced to reflect the changes in SPSO guidance introduced in April 2021. The new training resource will be available on the Professional Development Brightspace site and completion of the training will be monitored by the Quality team. The requirement to complete this training will be included in the All Staff Briefings.

12 current staff have completed the SPSO stage 2 complaint investigation training. New or promoted staff who may be required to complete this level of investigation will be offered training on an SPSO course to ensure sufficient staff are available to fulfil this responsibility.

Subject/Title:	Overview of Student Support Services
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass Assistant Principal Student Experience & Quality
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28 September 2021
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2021
Brief Summary of thepaper:	This paper acts as an accompaniment to a presentation by the Access & Progression Manager and the Wellbeing & Learning Support Manager on the suite of student support, which is provided to students and key challenges we identify.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion

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<p>Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with::</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> compliance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> partnership services</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> risk management</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strategic plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change</p>	<p>Risk management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student retention - successful outcomes - student satisfaction <p>Strategic plan –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing an excellent student experience - creating a study destination of choice 		
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: NA		
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Organisational: reputational risk to not providing high level of support; financial risk to not retaining or attracting students		
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify: equality implications of not providing appropriate support to individuals with disclosed disabilities		
Student Experience Impact:	Yes If yes, please specify: requirement to provide appropriate support across student journey		
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	NA		
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Y		
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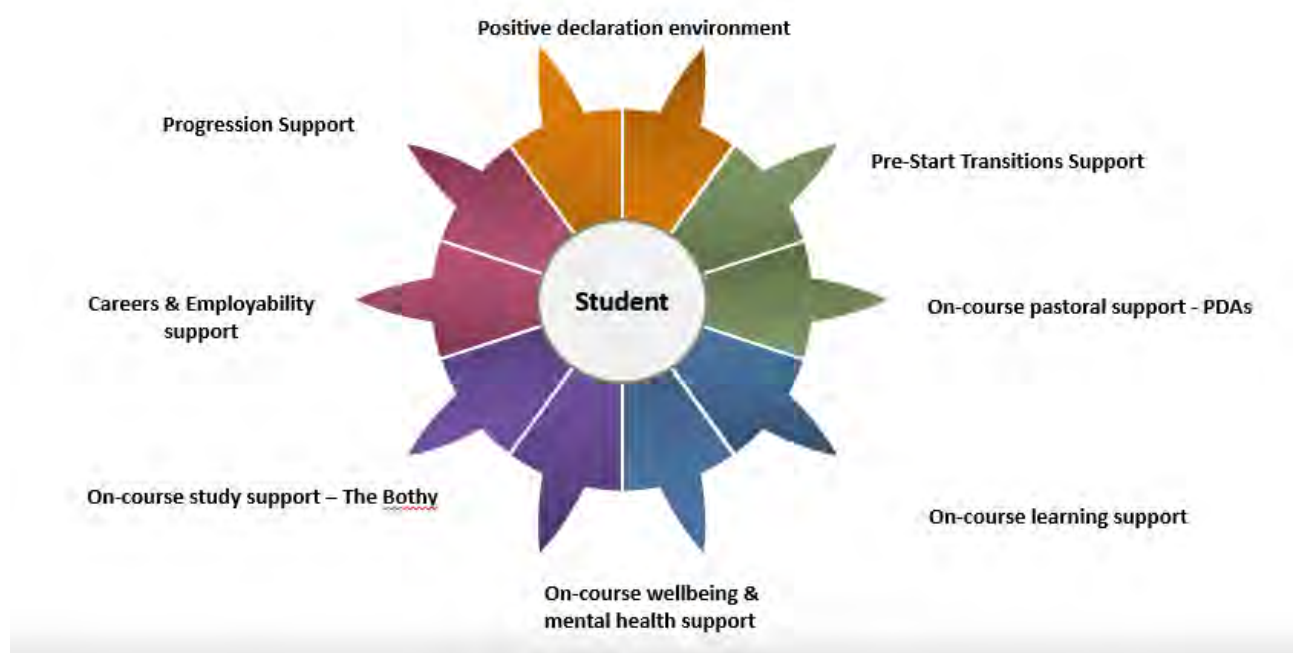
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The Access and Inclusion strategy, due for refresh this year, is one of the key national policy drivers for the student support services outlining the need for equity of opportunity to help close the attainment gap across learner groups. We pride ourselves in providing a high level of support to our students, reflective in **student satisfaction trending above 90%** for the professional services teams who provide that support.

The front facing student support teams underwent a **significant internal review in 2018** leading to some considerable changes, which include:

- changes to key management positions across Access and Progression and Learning Support
- a restructure of management remits bringing Wellbeing and Learning Support under one manager
- a new model of full-time pastoral support for FT FE students through the recruitment of the Personal Development Adviser team in AY 2019-20
- refreshes and additions to our policies and procedures
- tailored support across the student journey

The impact of the review has been the development of a **holistic approach to student support** across the student body and **tailored support according to individual needs**.



Our internal review aligned with a **growing awareness** at a national level around the critical impact of **services to support learning in learner success** and the subsequent inclusion in 2017 of *Services to Support Learning* as one of the four aspects for evaluation in the *How Good is our College*, Education Scotland quality framework.

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Student support services have also been the focus of the **common policy environment** to bring about equivalence in approach and experience across the UHI partnership:

- Tertiary Learning Support
- Promoting a Positive Learning Environment & Student Code of Conduct
- Fitness to Study
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Mental Health Strategy
- Suicide Intervention
- Student Carers

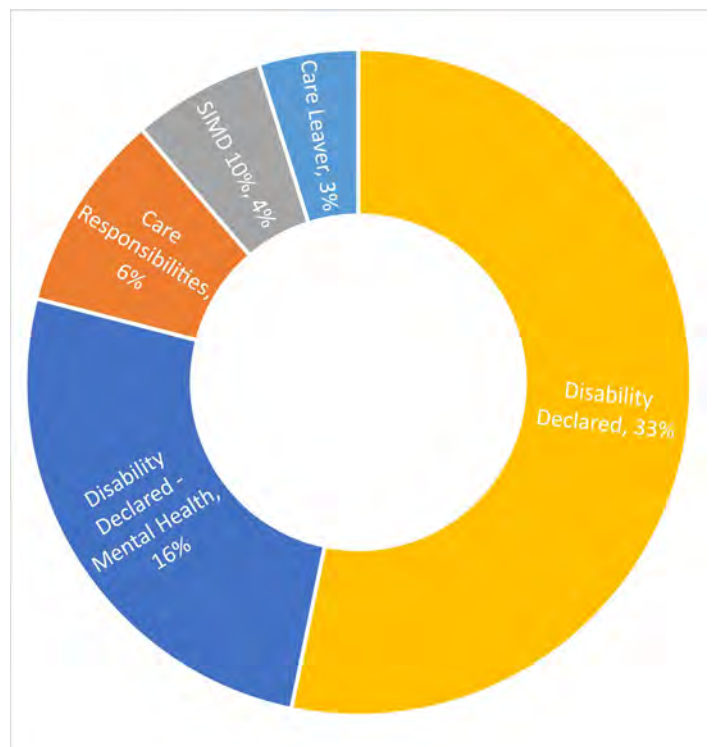
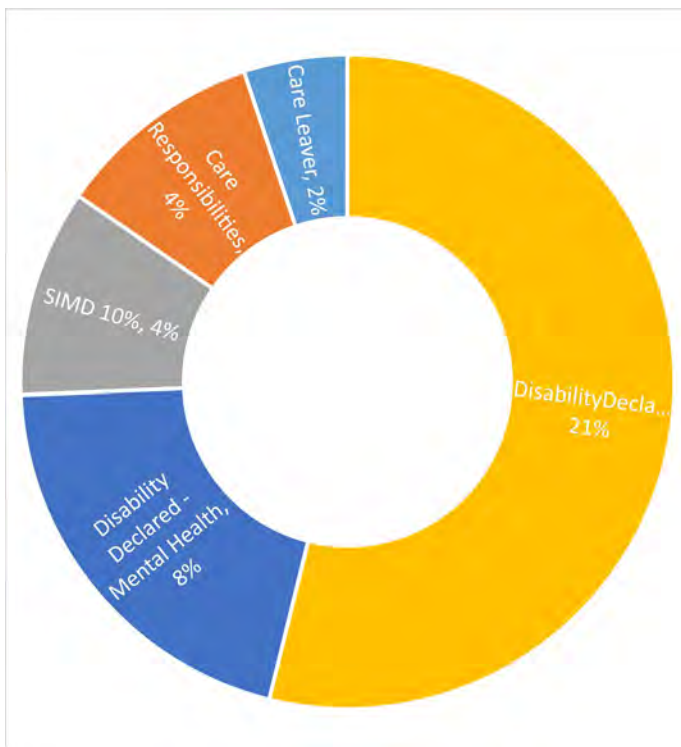
As part of the national widening access agenda, we have worked hard to encourage applications from our priority groups:

- SIMD10
- Care experienced
- Disability, Inc. mental ill-health
- Carers

A consistent approach has been taken to creating and promoting a **positive declaration environment**, which encourages early disclosure of any protected characteristics, which may require additional support. Consequently, we have experienced a **growth in disclosures and have an increasingly diverse student body** requiring greater levels of support.

Disclosures: AY 2017-18

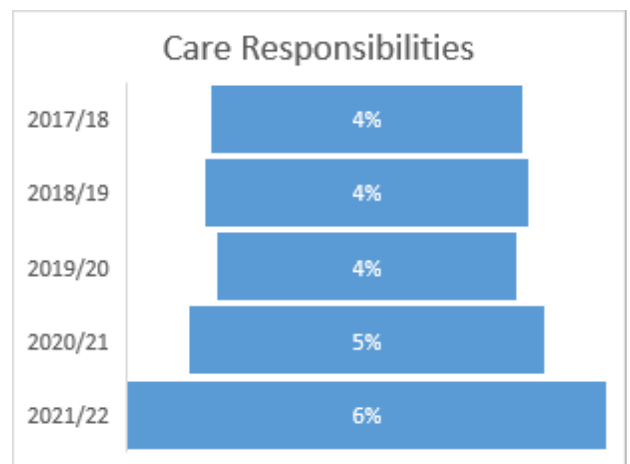
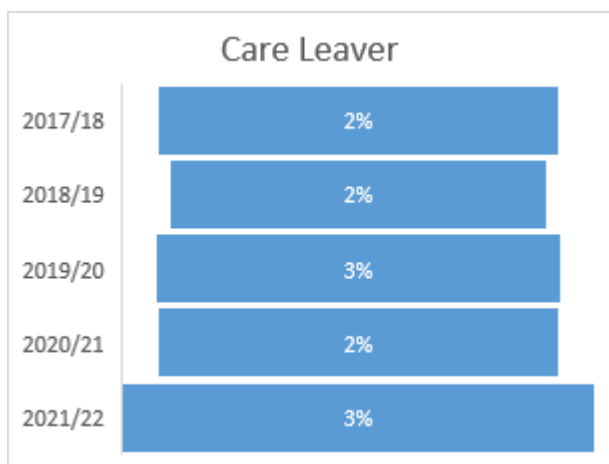
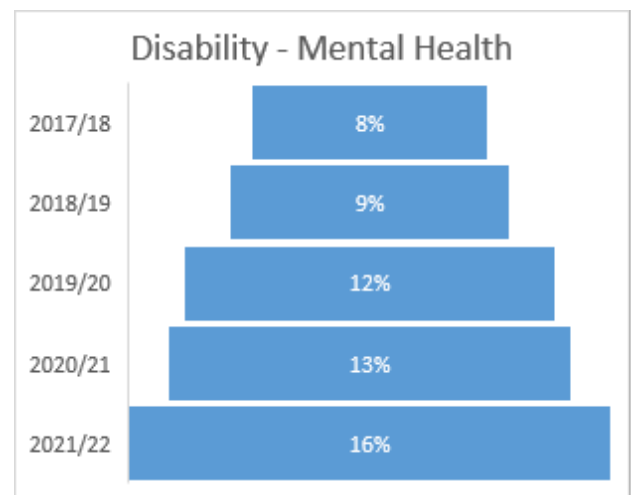
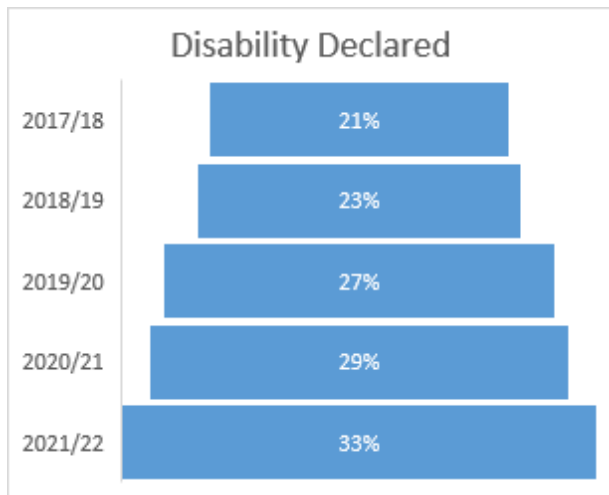
AY 2021-22 (as of 10.09.21)



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The most significant shift since AY 2017-18 has been in **disability disclosures, which have increased by 12pp**. As a subset of this, **mental health disclosures have doubled** in the timeframe and now account for 16% of disability disclosures. Disclosures of other disabilities have also experienced an upward trend with an increase of 3pp over the period.

It is worth noting that students will disclose throughout the academic year so this is not a final comparison, and we should expect to see a continued upward trend in disclosures across all categories.



Our presentation gives a brief overview of *some* of the services as well as the trends and emerging challenges.