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Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Virtually – via Microsoft Teams

Board Secretary
20 September 2022

AGENDA

Welcome and Apologies

Declaration of Interests and/or any Statement of Connections or Transparency Statements.

CLOSED SESSION

Session with Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) – Caroline Turnbull, QAA Acting Director for Scotland, Wales and NI and Laura Porter, QAA Liaison for UHI

ITEMS FOR DECISION

1. **MINUTES**
   a. Note of the Confidential Closed Session (CSN-LTR-062022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 14 June 2022
   b. Minutes of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 14 June 2022
   c. Note of the Confidential Session (CN01-LTR-062022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 14 June 2022.

2. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

3. **POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**
   a) Placement and Externally Supported Learning
   b) UHI Student Carers
   c) UHI Student Conduct

4.   **STRATEGIES FOR APPROVAL**
   a) Quality Assurance Enhancement Strategy
   b) Student Partnership and Engagement Strategy
   c) Access and Inclusion Strategy
   d) Digital Transformation Strategy
   e) Estates and Campus Operations Strategy
   f) Marketing Strategy
   g) Research and Innovation Strategy
   h) Environmental Sustainability Strategy
   i) Talent Management Strategy
   j) Tertiary Education Strategy

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5.   **QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLANNING AY 22-23**
      Report by Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality

6.   **NSS 2022 UHI INVERNESS OVERVIEW**
      Report by Quality Manager

7.   **ACADEMIC STRUCTURES**
      Verbal Update from Principal and Vice Principal – Academic and Research

8.   **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP REPORT**
      Joint Report by HISA President and Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality

9.   **COMMITTEE EVALUATION FEEDBACK**
      Report by Board Secretary

ITEMS FOR NOTING

10.   **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT**
      Report by Quality Manager

11.   **MINUTES FROM INVERNESS COLLEGE COMMITTEES**
      a) Minutes from Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 21 June 2022

12.   **AOCB**

13.   **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 06 December 2022 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.

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DRAFT MINUTES of the HYBRID MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams and Room 205, UHI Inverness Campus on Tuesday 14 June 2022

PRESENT:	Ruth McFadyen, Tina Stones, James Millar, Dee Bird, Russell Edwards
CHAIR:	Tina Stones
APOLOGIES:	Matthew Millward, Bonnie Crawford, Arvinder Kainth, Kelly MacKenzie, Stephen Sheridan & Chris O'Neil
ATTENDING:	Assistant Principal – Academic and Research
	Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality
	Director of Research – Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation
	Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities
	Professional Development Manager
	Tertiary Education Leader
	Tertiary Education Leader
	Access and Progression Manager
	Information Systems Manager
	Board Secretary

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests, statements of connections or transparency statements noted.

Confidential Closed Session – Committee Creative Space

A confidential closed session took place which provided the Committee with the creative space to discuss the Shared Vision for Tertiary Education and Research. This session

was led by the Assistant Principal – Academic and Research, the Director of Research – Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation, the Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities and our Tertiary Education Leaders.   (Note of Session: CSN-LTR-062022).

The Director of Research – Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation left the meeting.

The Director of Remote and Sustainable Communities left the meeting.

The Tertiary Education Leader left the meeting.

The Tertiary Education Leader left the meeting.

1.   MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a.) Note of the Closed Session (CSN-LTR-032022) held on 15 March 2022

The Note of the Closed Session (CSN-LTR-032022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 15 March 2022 was **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

b.) Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 March 2022

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 15 March 2022 were **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

2.   OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

- HISA Report – Funding for Packages – The HISA President - Inverness advised that it was thought that the funding for student packages during Christmas 21 had come directly from HISA Head Office.
  Action: Confirmation of this is to be sought and an update will be provided to the LT&R Committee in September 2022.

- Corporate Parenting Plan – The Board Secretary advised that the LT&R Chair had provided her with an introduction to the relevant members of the Highland Council and highlighted that this training will form part of the Board Development and Training Plan for the Academic Year 2022/23.

3. **SCHOOLS/SENIOR PHASE ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Access and Progression Manager joined the meeting.

The Access and Progression Manager spoke to the joint report and provided the Committee with a background to the different papers which had been released since 2018 around the senior phase both throughout the sector and within our community.

The Access and Progression Manager highlighted to the Committee the positive actions which have been taken post Covid as well as the concerns and challenges that have been faced.

The Access and Progression Manager provided the Committee with an update on the applications and offers for senior phase pupils across the Highland region for the Academic Year 2022/23 and the future consideration and plans for the senior phase programme.

The Access and Progression Manager also provided the Committee with an update in relation to our Foundation Apprenticeship Programme – highlighting that some programmes have had to be cancelled due to non-viable numbers and advising the Committee on the impact of private training organisations.

The Committee discussed at length the quality of learning which some private organisations are providing to students and the types of funding models which were available to us.

The Committee thanked the Access and Progression Manager for this report which provided them with an insight into the barriers some students are facing.

The Access and Progression Manager left the meeting.

4. **STUDENT RETENTION**

The Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.

The Information Systems Manager spoke to the joint report on student retention providing the Committee with an update on withdrawals for 2021/22.

The Committee discussed transfers within subjects and whether this has an impact on our finances and/or our withdrawal rates and noted that the biggest reasons for student withdrawal were due to mental health, financial challenges and the local employment market.

The Committee noted that we are currently looking at how we can develop more flexible pathways for students which would assist with study and employment.

The Committee thanked the Information Systems Manager for this report.

The Information Systems Manager left the meeting.

5. **LEARNING AND TEACHING ENHANCEMENT REPORT**

The Professional Development Manager spoke to her report providing the Committee with an update in respect of:

- The new Learning and Enhancement Team; highlighting how this ties in with research and the cohesive approach to enhancing learning and teaching.
- The support which is being provided to Lecturers to achieve the recognised teaching qualifications.
- Registration with GTCS highlighting that over 80% of eligible lecturers have completed this process.
- Our Learning and Teaching Review Programme

- The development of a new UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) Strategy and how we plan to implement this.
- Our Staff Conference and Team Development Day

The Committee thanked the Professional Development Manager for this update and welcomed the link between research and learning and teaching.

The Professional Development Manager left the meeting.

6. HISA – ELECTIONS REPORT

The HISA President – Inverness spoke to her report and provided the Committee with a breakdown of candidate and voting numbers for this year in comparison with previous years.

The Committee discussed the impact of Covid-19 on our numbers and made comparisons with other institutions.

The Committee discussed concerns with student engagement in respect of HISA within the region.

7. HISA – END OF YEAR SUMMARY

The HISA President – Inverness spoke to her report which provided the Committee with an update of the Student Associations activity for the academic year 2021-22 highlighting in particular:

- The changes within the support staff for the Student Association as well as the resignation of the Vice President (Activities and Welfare) in October 2021.
- The decrease in the number of student voice representatives and student engagement with HISA over the past year.
- The HISA representatives for the upcoming academic year.
- Events and campaigns carried out by HISA throughout the year.

- The changes which HISA have implemented throughout the year and the impact on the role and duties of the HISA President – Inverness because of this.

The Committee highlighted the decrease in the number of clubs and societies which has reduced from 32 to 8 this year. The Committee was advised that there was no longer a dedicated officer to aide with our clubs and societies. The Committee noted that this was a problem which was being seen across the region.

8. HISA AND STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UPDATE

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality spoke to the joint report - the contents of which the Committee noted.

The Committee was advised that progress is being made with regards the three enhancement themes for the upcoming academic year and that these themes will be underpinned by an action plan.

The Committee again discussed the concerns around the low engagement of students in respect of HISA activities and voting and noted that it is hoped that our themes for the upcoming year can address these issues.

9. CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION

A confidential discussion took place which was facilitated by the HISA President – Inverness (CN01-LTR-062022).

10. EDUCATION SCOTLAND UPDATE

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality advised the Committee that Education Scotland would be providing a presentation of our review at the Board of Management Meeting being held on 28 June 2022 and provided the Committee with a brief background to the review which took place in March 2022 highlighting to the Committee the four high level principles which the framework is based on and the five overarching themes which the review focused on.

The Committee welcomed the overwhelmingly positive outcome of our review noting that circa forty-seven aspects of positive practice was identified.

The Committee gave their thanks to all staff and students who participated in this review.

11. REPORT ON END OF YEAR STUDENT SURVEY (SSES)

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality spoke to this joint report which provided the Committee with an update on our end of year Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) highlighting in particular:

- That we had seen a 9% increase in student satisfaction this year.
- The increased participation by students in respect of this survey.
- That FEFT students have the highest satisfaction levels within our students.
- That HEFT students have the lowest satisfaction with the Committee noting that EO sets the HE curriculum.
- That our care experienced student satisfaction is back to pre-pandemic levels.

The Committee discussed the varying levels of satisfaction within schools and noted that work will be done to ensure consistency throughout each of the schools.

The Committee enquired whether the data within this report could be updated in respect of gender sex versus gender identity.

12. COMMITTEE AND CHAIR EVALUATIONS

The Board Secretary provided a background to the collective exercise to self-evaluate both the Committee and the Committee Chair. The Committee noted that a report from all Committees on their evaluation will be taken to the Board of Management in October 2022 and any actions arising will be incorporated into our existing Board Action Plan.

Action: It was **AGREED** that due to the number of committee members who had offered apologies that we would carry out these evaluations offline.

13. **QUARTER 3 – COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Committee noted the contents of the Quarter 3 Complaints Report.

14. **MINUTES FROM INVERNESS COLLEGE COMMITTEES**

The Committee noted the contents of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee meetings held on 22 March, 19 April and 17 May 2022.

15. **AOCB**

The HISA President – Inverness reiterated to the Committee their obligations to students under the Code of Good Governance Sections B1-B2 and E7-E8.

The Committee gave their thanks to the HISA President – Inverness for her contribution to the Committee over the past two years.

16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 4.30 P.M.**

Signed by the Chair: _____   **Date:**   _____

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Outstanding Actions from LT&R Committee Meetings

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time Line	ACTIONED
15 March 2022				
Corporate Parenting Plan	The Board Secretary will organise appropriate Corporate Parenting Training for all Board Members and include this within the Board Development and Training Plan for the Academic Year 2022/23	Board Sec	September 2022	
14 June 2022				
Confidential Discussion	Committee members are invited to reflect on the issues raised during the confidential discussion and highlight their key concerns to the Board Secretary and/or Chair offline. The Chair will then raise our concerns at the Board of Management meeting being held on 28 June 2022.	LT&R Chair	June 2022	

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Learning Teaching and Research - Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Placement and Externally Supported Learning
Author: [Name and Job title]	
Meeting:	Learning Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	27.09.22
Date Paper prepared:	13.09.22
Brief Summary of the paper:	The Committee are asked to approved the Policy. This policy provides a quality and legislative framework for identifying, running, or participating in the delivery of placement or externally supported learning. It focuses on management of the tripartite relationship between the student, the academic partner/university, and the third party. The university has a legislative and quality responsibility for the management and delivery of placement and externally supported learning. This includes proportionate risk assessment, consideration of insurance liability and provisions, and potential reputational risk to the university if approved policy and process is not adhered to. A meeting was held on the 9th August 2022 to discuss the Policy. Amendments were identified by the panel and changes made. Sections in red are amended/additional sections. Changes to the Policy identified on the 9th August include the addition of a statement around who the Policy does not apply to so it is clear. *"This policy does not apply to students who are employed and engaged in work-based learning (for example, Modern Apprentices, Graduate Apprentices, FWDF but does apply to Foundation Apprentices)* EMT Approved the Policy on 1st September 2022
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Recommendation for Approval to BOM
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Legislative 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:**
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	

*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 confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

University of the Highlands and Islands

Placement and Externally Supported Learning Policy (Tertiary)

POL160

Lead Officer (Post):	Head of Careers and Employability
Responsible Office/ Department:	Careers and Employability Centre
Responsible Committee:	Finance and General Purposes Committee
Review Officer (Post):	Head of Careers and Employability
Date policy approved:	24/02/2022
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	24/02/2022
Date policy due for review:	24/02/2024
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	TBC
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	Not required

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance Team on 01463 279000.

Policy Summary

Overview	The university is committed to providing placement and externally supported learning opportunities for students to consolidate and complement their academic learning. View all activity definitions. In addition, it is committed to providing opportunities to develop work-related skills, consider career pathways, and engage in personal and professional development planning. This policy provides a quality and legislative framework for identifying, running, or participating in the delivery of placement or externally supported learning. It focuses on management of the tripartite relationship between the student, the academic partner/university, and the third party. The university has a legislative and quality responsibility for the management and delivery of placement and externally supported learning. This includes proportionate risk assessment, consideration of insurance liability and provisions, and potential reputational risk to the university if approved policy and process is not adhered to.
Purpose	The policy will support staff in the development, coordination, and management of activity, including where appropriate adequate risk assessment procedures, and consideration of issues of insurance liability, legal responsibility, and reputational risk.
Scope	Application of this policy is mandatory for all activity which is tripartite in nature and consists of the following support elements: facilitation, organisation, coordination, monitoring or assessment of placement or externally supported learning opportunity by the university, academic partner (AP) or any member of staff. Examples of the application of support elements are available within the detailed staff guidance which accompanies this policy. The policy does not apply to externally supported learning opportunities which are initiated and organised by the student, and as such are not subject to the support elements identified above. In these circumstances legislative and quality matters will not be the responsibility of the university or APs.
Consultation	This policy has been created following extensive consultation with several specialists across the university partnership. These include but are not exclusive to subject network leaders; programme and curriculum leads at FE and HE levels; health and safety practitioners; finance, insurance, and legal practitioners; and placement/externally supported learning managers and coordinators. A strategic working group, with sub-consultation groups, was in place throughout the process.
Implementation and Monitoring	**Implementation:** This renewed and revised tertiary policy will be widely communicated to all academic partners when finalised via staff communication channels, subject network committees, curriculum leads, and staff drop-in sessions. The Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) will support these activities and provide ongoing support.

03	**Monitoring:** Monitoring of policy compliance will be undertaken by the CEC. This will involve mid-semester checks on all programmes, as detailed under point 8.5.2 in this document. All required paperwork and evidence of compliance is uploaded to a central, secure SharePoint area managed by the CEC. This allows for simplified tracking of activity via a single point of paperwork storage for each module undertaking placement or externally supported learning activity. **GDPR:** For data retention purposes, staff will be asked to remove documentation that features personal data and is no longer required from the secure, central SharePoint repository, at the end of each academic year. Data will be managed in line with the [University partnership retention and disposal policy.docx].
Risk Implications	The risk implications of this policy relate to the following aspects of placement or externally supported learning activities: • Health, safety, and welfare of students. • Risks arising from health and safety related liabilities. • Reputational risk to the institution of a failure to provide a learning and development experience in a workplace environment, which meets the expectations of students and employers.
Link with Strategy	This policy is closely linked to the University's Strategic Plan and Outcome Agreement in supporting the delivery of high quality curriculum and world-class research, whilst providing student opportunities to develop valuable skills and engage with employers and the communities in which we live and work, for mutual benefit.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Currently being finalised.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: Deemed not necessary after completion of DPIA screening form.

1. Policy Statement

The university is committed to the development of placement and externally supported learning opportunities for students as evidenced through its Strategic Plan, and its Scottish Funding Council Outcome Agreement. As such, it recognises the objective of any experience, regardless of length, is to consolidate and complement academic learning, knowledge, and skills, while integrating aspects of personal career planning and development. As this is generally a tripartite relationship involving student, provider, and the university/academic partner, this policy sets out a framework for those involved in developing, running, or participating in, placement activity or externally supported learning.

The policy also addresses the university's legislative and quality responsibility for the management and delivery of placement and other externally supported activity, including where appropriate, adequate risk assessment procedures, and consideration of issues of insurance liability, legal responsibility, and reputational risk.

2. Definitions

All the types of activity described below would fall within policy parameters.

Work experience	Work experience provides short-term opportunities to develop employability skills, professional behaviours and personal attributes while gaining knowledge and insight into working life. Opportunities are usually related to a students' programme of study or future career plans.
Work-based learning	This is an umbrella term for experiences students gain in the workplace/working for an external organisation which are either assessed for academic credit, used to support the achievement of specific units, or to help contextualise learning.
Externally led projects or challenges	These are opportunities for students to develop their skills in the context of a real-world scenario. They can be curricular or co-curricular, and usually require students to work independently or as a team to address a challenge posed by an external organisation and may or may not require the student/s to either visit or be based on the providers premises.
Placement	A period a student spends in the workplace as an assessed component of their studies. The terms 'placement' and 'internship' are interchangeable and as such contain the same features, however it should be noted that their application externally is subject to cultural/sector/organisational norms. The period of placement activity may vary in length dependent on curriculum area and can be undertaken outside term times i.e., during Summer, Easter breaks, etc.
Work shadowing	Shadowing opportunities are generally short term. They allow students to spend time at/with an external provider observing the activities of that organisation/individual and the typical working environment. Students are treated as visitors to the workplace and as such are not paid, will not have a contract with the organisation, and there would be no expectation that the student would contribute to the work of the organisation.

Virtual Placement	A virtual placement is an arrangement that includes the same basic features as other 'in-person' placement activity except that work contributions are undertaken away from the external providers usual work environment. As such students would be expected to complete virtual placement paperwork and the employer will have the same responsibilities towards their home workers as for any other workers.
Volunteering	Volunteering is a form of work experience but is most often used to benefit others. It is not subject to formal employment terms and conditions. It is a period that a student spends unpaid without expectation or promise of compensation for their work, on an activity which may benefit society, the environment, or themselves through developing skills and broader experience. It may be related to completion of an extra-curricular award or may contribute to a programme of study.
Practice Placements	Governed by a formal agreement between the Higher Education Provider and employer, NHS Boards, the General Teaching Council for Scotland and local authorities. These placements are usually undertaken on programmes where qualification leads to licence or registration to practice. Students will often do multiple practice placements as part of their programme of study. NHS placements may take place in-house and within other NHS facilities. Employers, higher education providers and NHS staff may be involved in the assessment of students.
Fieldwork	Any work carried out by the student in locations or at premises not under the managerial control of the university and may include research, exploration, surveying, observation or interviewing in a variety of different settings. Supervised fieldwork is mainly under direct supervision such as taught undergraduate or post graduate courses. However, there may be instances where students are under periods of indirect supervision.
Site visits and event attendance	Educational activities that take place off site offering students first-hand experiences of different environments and organisational cultures that are not available in their normal teaching environment.

3. Purpose

The policy (and accompanying detailed guidance) has been written to ensure:

- Clarity of understanding by each party of their roles and responsibilities.
- Preparation of the student so they understand the risks and can make informed judgements.
- There are processes for raising and resolving problems prior to, during, and at the conclusion of the placement and externally supported learning.
- There are contingency plans in case of any exceptional circumstances.
- Staff who are involved in handling student placements and externally supported learning have guidance and training on policy and the mandatory process that they must follow.

4. Scope

This policy is tertiary. It is mandatory for all members of support and academic staff involved in the development, promotion, or management of activity which is tripartite in nature and consists of the following support elements: facilitation, organisation, coordination, monitoring or assessment of placement or externally supported learning opportunity by the university, academic partner (AP) or any member of staff. Examples of the application of support elements are available within the detailed staff guidance which accompanies this policy.

The policy also applies to senior management of the University and Academic Partners, particularly in relation to devolved responsibilities.

5. Exceptions

The policy does not apply to externally supported learning opportunities which are initiated and organised by the student, and as such are not subject to the support elements identified in the scope of this policy.

In these circumstances legislative and quality matters will not be the responsibility of the university or APs. Examples of student led activity which is not subject to mandatory requirements is available in the detailed staff guidance accompanying this policy.

6. Notification

- Academic Principals
- The University Senior Management Team
- Members of QAEC
- Designated Signatories
- FE and HE Curriculum Teams across the partnership
- Academic Partner Placement Supervisors
- Academic Partner Externally Supported Learning Supervisors

7. Roles and Responsibilities

University Secretary, College Principals, Designated College Signatories, and Placement/ Externally Supported Learning Supervisors or staff arranging the activity, all hold a level of responsibility.

View full details of roles and responsibilities

8. Procedures

8.1 Management Principles

8.1.1 Participation in any form of placement, externally supported, or fieldwork activity should contribute to the purpose of the overall programme and or/extra-curricular award.

8.1.2 Planning and management of activity should follow a risk based, proportionate approach and adhere to all relevant university policies and procedures.

8.1.3 All activity should be subject to appropriate insurance and indemnity cover. Detailed policy guidance is provided here: Insurance and Liability.

8.1.4 All activity requires a signed tripartite Learning Agreement (TLA) and confirmation of relevant policy requirements in respect of points 8.1.3, 8.1.5, 8.1.6 and 8.1.7 is mandatory.   Other requirements as detailed in staff guidance should be included in the TLA as appropriate, for example, PVG checks and measures.

8.1.5 All activity should consider the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Detailed policy guidance is provided here: Health and Safety.

8.1.6 All activity should consider the Equality Act 2010. Detailed policy guidance is provided here: Equality and Diversity.

8.1.7 In the course of developing or taking part in activity, students, staff or employers may have access to confidential or sensitive information concerning individuals, the business of the organisation, or third parties. The university recognises that the correct and lawful treatment of personal data maintains confidence in the organisation and provides for successful operations and the university is committed to a policy of protection the rights and freedoms of individuals with respect to the processing of personal data. The university has adopted a robust Information Security and Data Protection Policy and all activity must consider the eight principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. Detailed policy guidance on data security and confidentiality is provided here: GDPR and Intellectual Property

 8.1.8 in certain circumstances the host organisation may require as a condition of acceptance that the student assign to them, by way of a contract, their Intellectual Property rights (IPR) in the work they create or develop while on the placement or externally supported learning. Guidance on this area can be found within the university's IPR policy.

8.1.9 Where activity is undertaken through a modular/unit framework, students should be provided with information and documentation as per the regulations set down in the university's Academic Standards and Quality Regulations.

8.1.10 Where activity is subject to accreditation through external awarding bodies, consideration should also be given to any additional specifications or requirements.

8.1.11 Where activity involves working with children or protected adults, account must be taken of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

8.1.12 Where activity is to take place abroad, account must be taken of cultural considerations, legislation, visa and insurance requirements. Placements or externally supported learning with overseas organisations require particular care, as it will be necessary to consider overseas jurisdiction issues and the requirements of statutory/regulatory authorities in the territory in respect of indemnity and insurance arrangements. Detailed policy guidance is provided here: Sending Students Abroad.

8.1.13 Where activity involves the placement of an international student in the United Kingdom, the university is subject to restrictions placed upon activity as set out by Guidance on application for UK visa as Tier 4 student. Detailed policy guidance is provided here: Placing international students in the UK.

8.1.14 Where additional support and guidance is required, in areas such as, job search, CV and interview preparation, academic staff should seek guidance from, or refer the student to, the university's Careers and Employability Centre.

8.2 Roles and responsibilities (incorporating, staff, students and third parties)

The objective of any work based, placement or externally supported learning experience, regardless of length, is to consolidate and complement academic learning, knowledge, and skills with experience. It generally involves a three-way partnership involving the student, the provider, and the university/AP.

The university has a legislative and quality responsibility for the management and delivery of placement and externally supported learning activity, including where appropriate, adequate risk assessment procedures, and consideration of issues of insurance liability, legal responsibility and reputational risk. It is important to remember that irrespective of who initiates the activity; whether a student makes a speculative application, an employer advertises a scheme or the university/AP sources a project, all parties should be involved in the relationship if it is to become a successful learning opportunity.

View roles and responsibilities chart here

8.3 Legislative requirements

The university has a duty of care in relation to legislative requirements, when planning and delivering placement and externally supported learning activity.

View information on all duty of care and legislative requirements

8.4 Quality monitoring

Quality monitoring is undertaken through the compliance monitoring process as detailed above under 8.5.2.

Annual updates will be provided to QAEC as part of enhancement theme quality monitoring processes.

Feedback from Placement or Externally Supported Learning Providers on the 'service delivery' aspect of hosting and managing students is also a vital element of the quality monitoring process.

View placement and externally supported learning provider process evaluation form

8.5 Monitoring, recording, and reporting processes

8.5.1 Storing of paperwork

All mandatory documentation and paperwork relation to placement and externally supported learning is to be uploaded to the secure, central repository set-up for these purposes. This allows for evidencing policy compliance.

The paperwork require depends on the type of activity being undertaken. More information is available on the Staff Guidance Site.

8.5.2 Compliance checks

The following approach will be used for checking paperwork compliance, in line with the requirements of this policy. This will be undertaken by the Careers and Employability Centre (CEC).

New Programmes

- Full paperwork check required for any programmes who are new to placement or externally supported learning activity.

Programmes with regular and ongoing activity

- Sampling approach where paperwork has proven to be in order in the past.
- Sample 25% of all programmes undertaking placement.
- For those 25% we sample paperwork for 5 student placements or 10% of total cohort undertaking placement (whichever is greater).
- Takes place once a semester (mid-semester) each academic year.

Non-compliant Programmes

- Identification of courses where there have been issues with paperwork and compliance in the past.
- Full check from CEC to ensure compliance with full process.

9. Legislative Framework

- Health and Safety Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act
- UK Visas and Immigration Policy
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

10. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- Placement and Externally Support Learning: Staff Guidance Site
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- QAA Work-Based Learning - Expectations and Practices
- UK Quality Code. Advice and Guidance: Work-Based Learning 2018
- ASET* Good Practice Guide for Work based and Placement Learning in Higher Education
- ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements
- ASET Good Practice Guide for Supporting Students with Disabilities on Placement
- Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits

11.   Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
1	24/02/22	FGPC	Policy approved	FGPC
2				
3				
4				

UHI INVERNESS

Learning Teaching and Research - Board of Management

Subject/Title:	UHI Student Carers Policy
Author: [Name and Job title]	
Meeting:	Learning Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	27.09.22
Date Paper prepared:	13.09.22
Brief Summary of the paper:	This Policy was Approved by PPRP on the 27th June and approved by EMT on the 1st September.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Recommendation for Approval to BOM
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • 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:**
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	

*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 confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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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Student Carers Policy

POL144

Lead Officer (Post):	~~Student Support Manager~~Assistant Principal Student Experience & Quality
Responsible Office/ Department:	~~EO Student Support~~Access & Progression
Responsible Committee:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee ~~Priority Groups Forum~~ ~~Finance and General Purposes~~Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Review Officer (Post):	~~Student Support Manager~~Access & Progression Manager
Date policy approved:	18/11/2019
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	29/04/2022
Date policy due for review:	29/04/2024
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	~~26/08/2019~~18/06/2022
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance and Policy Officer on 01463 279000.

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Policy Summary

Overview	Why is the policy required?
	This policy has been created to provide information on the support student carers can expect to receive whilst a student at the University of the Highlands and Islands.
Purpose	What will the policy achieve?
	The policy will provide a unified approach to student carers across the network and ensure parity of student experience.
Scope	Who does the policy apply to?
	The policy applies to all students enrolled at the University and its academic partners.
Consultation	Who has been consulted on the policy, and who will be notified?
	The policy has been developed by a group of practitioners from across the network who are part of the university's Priority Groups Forum.
Implementation and Monitoring	Who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy, and what resources/ costs will be incurred?
	Academic Partners are responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed in their local institution.
Risk Implications	What are the risk implications of this policy?
	This policy will reduce risk for partners by ensuring that best practice from across the partnership is being shared and followed.
Link with Strategy	How is this policy linked to University strategy?
	This is a cross-partner resource and links to Strategic Aim 1 – Our Students.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Yes
	Privacy Impact Assessment: No

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 The University is a collegiate institution based on a partnership of 10 colleges, 2 research institutions, and over 50 learning centres spread across the Highlands and Islands, Argyll, Moray and Perthshire. It encompasses both Further and Higher Education, allowing a single point of access for post-school education and training.

1.2 This policy outlines the university and its academic partners' commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for students with unpaid caring responsibilities and to enable them to successfully complete their course and undergo a worthwhile experience throughout their student journey.

2. Definitions

2.1 The University and its academic partners have adopted the Carers Trust Scotland definition of a carer which is 'anyone who cares, unpaid, for a family member or friend who due to illness, disability, frailty, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.'

3. Purpose

3.1 This policy provides information and guidance to staff and students on the support available to student carers. It will also ensure there is a unified response to the support needs of student carers across the University and its academic partners therefore ensuring equity of experience no matter where a student is located.

3.2 This policy covers both prospective and currently enrolled students of the University and its academic partners.

4. Scope

4.1 This is a tertiary policy and covers all students currently enrolled at the university or one of its academic partners.

4.2 To identify student carers, the below Metis reports can be used:

- ADM007 – this will identify students who have applied.
- ENR013 – this will identify students who have enrolled.

4.3 Staff members are asked to proactively contact enrolled students identified within the ENR013 report to raise awareness of support available. If an academic partner has a high number of disclosures, they may wish to send a blanket email to all disclosed students, however, please ensure you add addresses into the bcc field so students cannot see who else has disclosed.

4.4 If resource allows, staff may also wish to proactively contact those students who have disclosed at application using the ADM007.

4.5 Confirmation of student carer status is the responsibility of the student. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- During admissions process
- At interview
- Via the disclosure box on the enrolment form
- To the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) or Personal Development Advisor (PDA)

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- Or, to any other staff member during the student journey. Staff can refer students, with their consent, to the local Student Services team via the 'refer student to support' button in the Student Support area of UHI Records. Staff will require the student's ID number to make the referral.

4.6   To implement support, evidence is required to confirm a student's carer status which can come in many different forms. Some examples of acceptable proof include, but are not limited to:

- A local authority's Carer's Assessment, Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement
- Self-certification, in the form of a short statement, regarding the nature of caring duties and the impact these may have on studies. This can be verbal or written.
- A GP letter confirming status.
- Other relevant documentation such as a letter from a Carer's organisation, social worker, carer group or receipt from benefits.

4.6   Generally, self-certification will be the most common method used however the university can, at any point, request further information or evidence to confirm carer status or any changes to the student caring responsibilities.

5.   Exceptions
5.1   This policy does not cover:

- Students with parental/guardian responsibilities (unless for a child with a disability)
- Those employed in a caring capacity

6.   Notification
6.1   All staff have the potential to encounter students who are unpaid carers and should be aware of this policy.

6.2   This policy will be highlighted to Senior Management, Student Support Staff and all other members of staff via relevant committees and staff newsletters. Students will be informed via the appropriate communication channels.

6.3   The policy will be publicly available on the University/academic partner's website, along with other current policies. It can be viewed here.

7   Roles and Responsibilities
7.1   It is the responsibility of all university and academic partner staff to comply with the policy.

7.2   Students who disclose their carer status will be offered the opportunity to discuss their support requirements with the local student support team which may lead to the development of a support plan detailing the reasonable adjustments which are required.

7.3   Examples of the reasonable adjustments which may be put in place for student carers include, but are not limited to:

- Authorised absence
- Assessment/essay extensions
- Timekeeping and timetable adjustments
- Access to part-time study

- Priority access to discretionary funding (formal evidence may be required of carer status)

7.4   Students can request a meeting with their local Student Services team at any point during their studies, however, a review of their support plan is generally done once a year, unless there are any considerable changes in their caring responsibilities. Students are encouraged to advise their local student services team as soon as possible of any changes which may impact their studies.

7.5   Student Support staff will signpost to additional support available from external agencies, as required. This may include agencies such as Connecting Carers, Cross Roads or Connecting Young Carers, but will depend upon the geographical location.

7.6   The University will make every effort to accommodate the support needs of student carers however any flexibility must not impact on the student's ability to meet the necessary academic outcomes. All requests for reasonable adjustments will be carefully considered before being approved. If any request is rejected, the student will be made aware in writing which will include the reason for the rejection and guidance on what alternative arrangements can be made.

8   Legislative Framework

8.1   The below legislative is relevant to this policy:

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Carers (Scotland) Act (2016)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018)
- The Data Protection Act (1998)
- Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013

8.2   The policy should also be understood in conjunction with other policies and documentation such as:

- Tertiary Learner Support Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy
- Student Carers Action Plan
- Academic Partner Access and Inclusion Strategies

9   Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

Admissions Policy (Higher Education) – an applicant with caring responsibilities is recognised within the University's Admissions Policy. Applicants can highlight they are a carer within their personal statement or at any point during their student journey.

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Student Carers Online Staff Module – Held within the University's BrightSpace platform, key Student Support and student facing staff are encouraged to complete this module.

10   Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	18/11/19	FGPC	Approved	L Sutherland
1	25/04/22	Policy Owner	Reviewed – no changes required	L Sutherland
2	29/04/22	Policy Manager	Moved to new template	N Oakley
3				

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Learning Teaching and Research - Board of Management

Subject/Title:	UHI Student Conduct
Author: [Name and Job title]	Louise Martin-Theyers Access and Progression Manager
Meeting:	Learning Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	27.09.22
Date Paper prepared:	13.09.22
Brief Summary of the paper:	The Committee are asked to approve the following Policy. Minor amendments have been made to this Policy following actions identified at Policy and Procedure Review Panel on the 4th August. Amendments include the addition of a statement around those who represent a student on their behalf having to follow the Policy. As well as this amendments were made to reflect local committees and job titles at UHI Inverness. It was approved by EMT on 1st September 22
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Recommendation for Approval to BOM
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • 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:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

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Student Conduct Policy

<mark>POL(tbc)</mark>

Lead Officer (Post):	Vice Principal Student Experience and Quality
Responsible Office/ Department:	Access & Progression
Responsible Committee:	Learning Teaching and Research Committee
Review Officer (Post):	Access and Progression Manager
Date policy approved:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	n/a
Date policy due for review:	August 2025
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	TBC
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance and Policy Officer on 01463 279000.

Policy Summary

Overview	The policy aims to promote a positive learning environment. This is set within the context of the broader framework of policies and related procedures.
Purpose	The policy seeks to promote, encourage and recognise a positive learning environment, and engender a culture of equality, diversity and openness. We expect conduct that helps to create a positive and safe learning environment that reinforces our culture. This policy fits into a broader framework of policies related to culture, conduct and discipline.
Scope	This policy applies to all current and prospective students, including apprentices, regardless of level or mode of study and applies to all areas of student engagement in their learning environment and/or which may affect other students and staff, including online activities. It policy also applies to any representative acting on behalf of a student
Consultation	The policy has been developed by a group of practitioners from across the academic partners in the UHI to ensure that best practice is reflected in the policy and accompanying procedures.
Implementation and Monitoring	Academic partners are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed in their own organisation.
Risk Implications	This policy will reduce risk for academic partners by ensuring that best practice from across the partnership is being shared and followed.
Link with Strategy	This policy supports the university's commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning and working environment for all, aligned with the strategic pillar 'tertiary education' in the Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Completed – no further action required.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

1.   Policy Statement

1.1   The University of the Highlands and Islands aims to promote a positive learning environment. The Student Conduct Policy is part of a suite of documents, including:
- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Fitness to Practise Guidelines (course-specific)
- Gender Based Violence Policy (forthcoming 2022/23)
- Mental Health Strategy
- Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
- Support to Study Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Criminal Offence Data Disclosure Policy (forthcoming 2022/23)
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Student Mental Health and Counselling Policy
- Suicide Intervention and Risk Management Policy and Guidance
- Safeguarding Policy
- University of the Highlands and Islands Academic Standards and Quality Regulations
- University of the Highlands and Islands Academic Misconduct Guidance

1.2   The university recognises that the appropriateness, development and acceptability of certain conduct may be different depending on the background and maturity of the learner(s) involved, and that individuality and context will be recognised.

1.3   This policy sets out how we seek to promote and maintain acceptable student conduct in a positive learning environment, with reference to the Student Code of Conduct, and Student Disciplinary Procedure in the event of breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

1.4   This policy applies to UHI and all academic partners.

2.   Definitions

2.1   **Behavioural misconduct**: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner, both on and off campus, in a manner which demonstrates respect for the university, its staff, fellow students and property, and for other members of the local community in general. Behavioural misconduct is a breach of this expected standard.

2.2   **Student Code of Conduct**: This is a document that is made available to and is applicable to all students that states the university 's expectations for student conduct. It gives examples of misconduct offences and the types of disciplinary action likely to occur.

2.3   **Academic misconduct/malpractice**: A generic term to describe any type of cheating or dishonest conduct in relation to a formal academic exercise. It may be deliberate or unintentional and may take different forms, including, but not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsification or fabrication of data, personation and bribery.

2.4   **Academic maladministration**: Any activity or practice which arises due to ignorance of awarding body requirements, or carelessness or neglect in applying the requirements. This results in non-compliance with an awarding body's requirements.

2.5   **Exclusion from campus:** the removal of the student's access to all sites constituting the University campus for a specified period of time in response to a disciplinary incident. In

some circumstances this exclusion may extend to all university and academic partner campuses. The student may continue to study remotely throughout this period.

2.6   **Exclusion from studies**: the removal from the student's course of study in response to a disciplinary incident, resulting in the loss of registered student status and loss of access to all facilities. If a student is excluded from studies, they can also expect to have their university-operated residence contract terminated.

In some circumstances this exclusion may apply to the university and all academic partners for a period of time deemed appropriate by the disciplinary process. In some cases, this may result in any future applications from the student being rejected.

2.7   **Suspension of Studies**: A suspension of studies is not a disciplinary measure. When a student chooses to take a period of time out from their studies because of a change in their personal circumstances, with the intention to return at a later date. The option of suspension of studies is dependent on what the student's course allows.

2.8   **Precautionary Action**: In the event of an allegation of misconduct, a student may be excluded from UHI Inverness until the investigation is completed if there is risk of harm to themselves, other students or staff. During this time, they will be able to continue to study remotely and will continue to receive student support funds. Precautionary action is not a punishment but is intended to protect the interests of all parties.

Where precautionary action is to be used, in consultation with the Vice Principal Student Experience and Quality, the Access and Progression Manager should inform the student by letter and email, explaining that they are being excluded to allow an investigation to occur.

Precautionary action may also include measures up to complete exclusion from UHI Inverness, e.g. removal of access to a course of study or specific building. Consideration should also be given to removing access to other university and academic partner facilities.

3.   Purpose

3.1.   The university seeks to promote, encourage, and recognise acceptable conduct in a positive learning environment, and engender a culture of equality, diversity and openness.

3.2.   We expect conduct that helps to create a positive and safe learning environment that reinforces our culture. Examples of unacceptable conduct can be found in the Student Code of Conduct.

3.3   This policy fits into a broader framework of policies related to culture, conduct and discipline. Please refer to Section 1.1 and Section 9 for further information.

3.4   All breaches of the Student Code of Conduct will be investigated in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Procedure. Any such instance which may also constitute a criminal offence will be reported to the police and may lead to separate criminal proceedings.

3.5   In the event of a police referral, UHI Inverness will be unable to investigate any incidents whilst an official police investigation is underway however precautionary actions may be taken to reduce risk, ensure the safety of others and protect the integrity of the police investigation and a potential future UHI Inverness investigation. UHI Inverness will consult

with the police during this period, and appropriate support will be provided to any students and staff involved.

3.6   All disciplinary matters will be dealt with in strict confidence and all personal data will be dealt with following legislative guidelines. Should any queries arise regarding data protection and GDPR, the local Data Protection Officer should be consulted.

4.   Scope

4.1.   This policy applies to all current and prospective students, including apprentices, regardless of level or mode of study.

4.2   This policy applies to all areas of student engagement in their learning environment (physical or virtual) and/or which may affect other students and staff, including online activities.

4.3   This policy applies to students in accommodation managed by the university but may be brought into effect where a student residing in privately managed accommodation conducts themselves in a manner which brings the university and/or academic partner into disrepute.

4.4   This policy applies to any representative acting on behalf of a student

4.4   **Senior phase programmes:** Senior phase programme students fall within the scope of the Student Conduct Policy when they are studying on university/academic partner campuses and are expected to observe the Student Code of Conduct.

4.5   The Support to Study Procedure and course specific Fitness to Practice Guidelines are not explicitly within the scope of this policy but are linked and as such are signposted within the Student Disciplinary Procedure and the Student Code of Conduct.

5.   Exceptions

5.1   HISA has its own Code of Conduct, to which all HISA members are subject to. Behavioural misconduct by a student that constitutes both a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the HISA Code of Conduct may be investigated by both organisations. Should the incident(s) occur as part of a HISA event or business, HISA should conclude their investigation before UHI Inverness begins their own investigation or vice-versa. The outcome of the HISA investigation or a UHI Inverness investigation should not prejudice one another, and UHI Inverness reserves the right to take precautionary action pending the outcome of both investigations.

5.2   In some circumstances a disciplinary issue may involve an externally stipulated process, such as complaints or a safeguarding referral. In these circumstances, careful consideration should be given to how the issue should be managed and the other key staff e.g. complaints manager or safeguarding lead, involved at the earliest opportunity.

5.3   Student attendance and engagement is not normally managed using the Student Conduct Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure.

6.   Notification

6.1   All staff members will be notified of changes to the policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure through the normal channels.

6.2   Staff responsible for overseeing the process should have a detailed knowledge of the policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure.

6.3   Students will be made aware of the policy, Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedure within four weeks of commencing their course. Students have the opportunity to read the Student Code of Conduct before agreeing to it as part of the enrolment process.

6.4   The policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure will be publicly available on UHI Inverness' website.

7.   Roles and Responsibilities

7.1   The Board of Management, Inverness College is responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is followed. The Board of Management, Inverness College are also responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.

7.2   The Principal and Executive Management Team are responsible for operational compliance with the policy. The Principal and Executive Management Team are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for all staff.

7.3   Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff participate in training and follow the policy and procedure in their day-to-day role.

7.4   All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedure.

7.5   A practitioner group, made up of representatives from across the partnership and HISA, are responsible for periodic review of the policy and providing operational feedback.

8.   Legislative Framework

Data Protection:
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

General:
- Equality Act 2010

Protection of Vulnerable People:
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Post-16 Education Act (Scotland) (2013)
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

9.   Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- Academic Misconduct Policy

- Fitness to Practise Guidelines (course-specific)
- Gender Based Violence Policy (forthcoming 2022/23)
- Mental Health Strategy
- Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
- Support to Study Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Criminal Offence Data Disclosure Policy (forthcoming 2022/23)
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Student Mental Health and Counselling Policy
- Suicide Intervention and Risk Management Policy and Guidance
- Safeguarding Policy
- University of the Highlands and Islands Academic Standards and Quality Regulations
- University of the Highlands and Islands Academic Misconduct Guidance

10. Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Endorsed by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	Sep 2019 TBC	Academic Council	n/a	PPLE Policy Ownership Group
1	May 2022	TBC	Name change from Promoting a Positive Learning Environment to Student Conduct Policy; removed references to Disciplinary Framework Decision Tree due to removal of that document; 1.1: added suite of documents list for consistency; 2.7: added ' If a student is excluded from studies, they can also expect to have their university-operated residence contract terminated'; 2.8: added 'The option of suspension of studies is dependent on what the student's course allows'; 2.9: new section on precautionary action to align with Student Disciplinary Procedure; 3.3: Second sentence changed to 'Please refer to Section 1.1 and Section 9 for further information'; 3.5: new section on involvement of police in investigations; 4.2: 'physical or virtual' added; 4.4: 'schools link' updated to 'senior phase'; 5.1: added 'code of conduct' and new paragraph regarding HISA; 5.2: new section regarding externally stipulated processes running in parallel; 5.3: added for clarity regarding policy and attendance; various grammatical amendments; 6.3: 'Students have the opportunity to read	Student Conduct Policy Ownership Group

| | | | | the Student Code of Conduct before agreeing to it as part of the enrolment process' added; 7.5: added for clarity around policy creation and revision; 8: Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 added; updating the names of related policies, procedures and guidelines. 9: List updated to reflect 1.1 | |

Quality Assurance & Enhancement Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to working with students as partners in continuous improvement.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

The college identified five strategic themes in its Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Each theme has a strategic aim and objectives that will inform operational planning throughout the strategic plan cycle. The five strategic themes are:

- Tertiary Education

- Organisational Development

- Research and Innovation

- Student Experience

- Finance & Sustainability

 A suite of strategies underpins these themes to inform and drive policy, procedure and practice. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy relates to the strategic aims and objectives under all five of the above themes as well as other college strategies.

The aim of this strategy is to ensure there is a clear structure and purpose to our quality arrangements to support our vision for the college to be recognised as a centre of excellence for educational provision.

 The objectives in this strategy are ordered under five areas:

- Data management and analysis

- Complying with and monitoring awarding body regulations

- Award approval

- Quality monitoring

- Quality enhancement

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Principal and Chief Executive: Prof. Christopher O'Neil
Inverness College UHI (known as UHI Inverness)
Scottish Charity No. SC021197

Strategic Objective 1:
To use data effectively to support the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the student experience

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining robust and effective systems and mechanisms to gather, process and use student data in line with relevant regulations and guidance.

- Continuing to identify relevant data sets and information for analysis and comparison with internal, sector and/or regional benchmarks.

- Continuing to make relevant data on student and college performance easily accessible to staff and presented in a way that supports continuous evaluation and improvement

- Ensuring that staff receive training in line with their role to enable them to access and use data appropriately and effectively to support evaluation, planning and improvement.

Strategic objective 2:
To maintain a culture of robust quality assurance to support improvement

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining a robust and effective internal verification process that ensures:
  - awarding and professional body requirements are upheld.
  - learning, teaching and assessment approaches are in line with college policy and best practice and assessment judgements are valid.
  - improvement actions are implemented in a timely way.
- Maintaining a robust internal audit schedule to ensure compliance with appropriate academic regulations, awarding body requirements and college internal verification policy and procedure.
- Ensuring staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to both lead and participate effectively in the internal verification process.
- Utilising the outcomes from internal audit systematically to further enhance quality assurance and improvement.

Strategic objective 3:

To maintain robust processes to support programme approvals

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining a robust programme approval process for new and amended awards ensuring the curriculum remains relevant, valued, progressive and sustainable, and that students have access to high quality resources and support.
- Ensuring the programme approval process is flexible to be agile in responding to the needs of our communities, employers and other stakeholders, whilst maintaining its integrity.

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- Ensuring the programme approval process includes the effective communication of decisions and outcomes with final approval for new provision confirmed by the Executive Management Team, and UHI where applicable.

Strategic objective 4:
To further enhance our culture of quality monitoring.

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining a calendar of quality monitoring arrangements aligning with operational activities across the entirety of the student journey.
- Ensuring quality monitoring arrangements encompass all aspects of our provision.
- Continuing to make effective use of a wide range of evidence to systematically inform self-evaluation and improvement activity.
- Developing and implementing a risk-based approach to quality monitoring to ensure the efficient and effective deployment of resource helping to maximise impact.

Strategic objective 5:
To maintain a focus on quality enhancement

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining a culture of continuous improvement by empowering and supporting all staff to be reflective, evaluating their personal performance and being cognisant of professional development needs.
- Extending our learning and teaching peer observation programme to identify emerging best practice and provide support and professional development
- Ensuring that our quality arrangements effectively support further enhancement and continuous improvement across our provision and services.
- Systematically using evidence-based approaches, using a range of sources, to identify strengths and areas for development to support continuous improvement.
- Continuing to work collaboratively with other UHI academic partners and external agencies and stakeholders to learn from emerging practice and to further enhance the student experience.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES)
19	National Student Survey (NSS) (previous AY)
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES)
22	Post Graduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

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Student Partnership and Engagement Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26
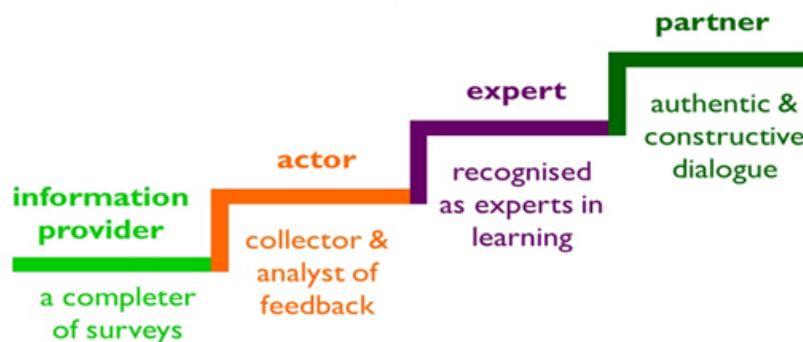
How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to working with students as partners in continuous improvement.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.
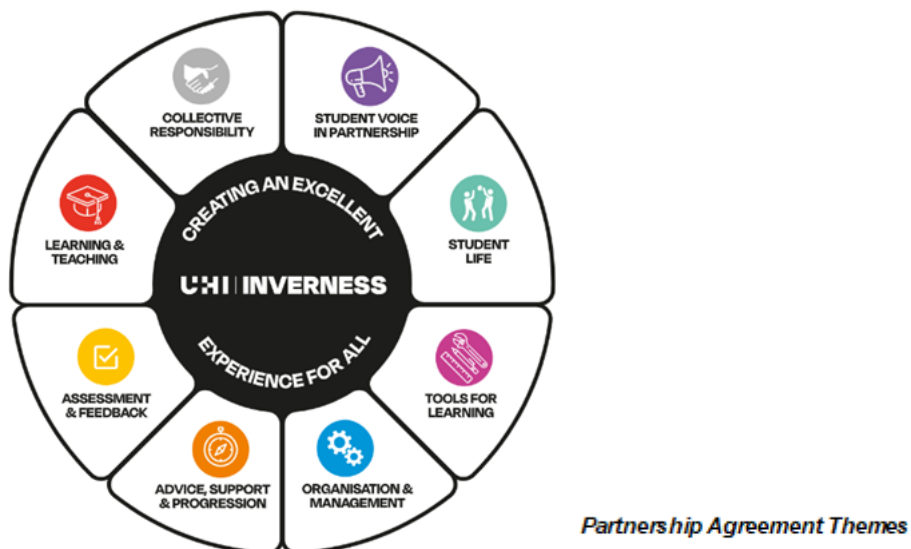
Context

UHI Inverness recognises the importance of engaging with students as true partners in the goal of enhancing the quality of the student experience and continuous improvement. We recognise this means going beyond students simply giving feedback and instead involves engaging students in recognising any areas for development, in analysing data and evidence, and in identifying solutions and actions leading to improvement. The approaches support our way of working, where our students are empowered to work with us together as partners to achieve our shared goals.

Sparqs Student Partnership Staircase

information provider
a completer of surveys

actor
collector & analyst of feedback

expert
recognised as experts in learning

partner
authentic & constructive dialogue

UHI Inverness recognises that students need to be actively involved on an equal basis in all aspects of our self-evaluation and improvement processes and to actively shape their experience across the student journey:

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Partnership Agreement Themes

The strategy is underpinned by four objectives across the themes of:

- Supportive institution
- Influencing learning
- Culture of partnership and collective responsibility
- Supporting student representation

Strategic Objective 1:
To ensure students feel part of a supportive institution maximising participation, transition, and progression

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining our partnership working with schools and external stakeholders to further enhance our transition planning arrangements ensuring all students are fully supported throughout their student journey.

- Further develop ways of communicating with applicants prior to admission, better identifying their needs, preparing them for their studies, and supporting their early student experience.

- Continuing to work with the students' association to ensure that HISA are involved in welcoming new students during induction, providing them with information about being a member of HISA, the role of Student Voice Representatives, and wider student life.

- Providing students with a range of high-quality services that support their participation and success, including services related to funding, wellbeing, and learning support.

- Recognising and celebrating on-going student success in a variety of ways.

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Strategic objective 2:
To support students to engage and influence their own learning, developing the range of skills and attributes they need to be successful in work and life

We will achieve this by:

- Providing the skills and opportunities for students to extend and enhance their learning through participation in activities such as peer review, structured reflection on progress and planning next steps.
- Providing opportunities for students to lead learning activities at all levels.
- Providing opportunities for students to feel empowered to reflect on and influence their learning.
- Embedding practice across the curriculum that supports the development of students' independence in learning.
- Providing high quality facilities and resources to support learning and skills development at curriculum and cross College levels.

Strategic objective 3:
To develop a culture of partnership and collective responsibility among staff and students across the work and life of the college

We will achieve this by:

- Further developing our partnership working with the students' association using the *Partnership Agreement* to steer collaboration on improvements across the student experience.
- Maintaining a variety of mechanisms to capture and analyse student views about their overall student experience, ensuring they are involved in identifying the areas for improvement and the actions required.
- Working with the students' association to ensure that Student Voice Representatives are recruited, prepared, and equipped to undertake their roles effectively.
- Supporting the students' association, to schedule and run effective Student Representative Council (SRC) meetings as a forum for students, the students' association, and college staff to engage with cross-college issues and facilitate open and productive discussion to support continuous improvement.

Strategic objective 4:
To support student representation by ensuring compliance with quality and governance arrangements

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to support the students' association to maintain elections and democratic processes to underpin effective student representation at both class and college level.
- Continuing to provide support for the students' association elected officers and Student Voice Representatives (SVRs) to undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively,

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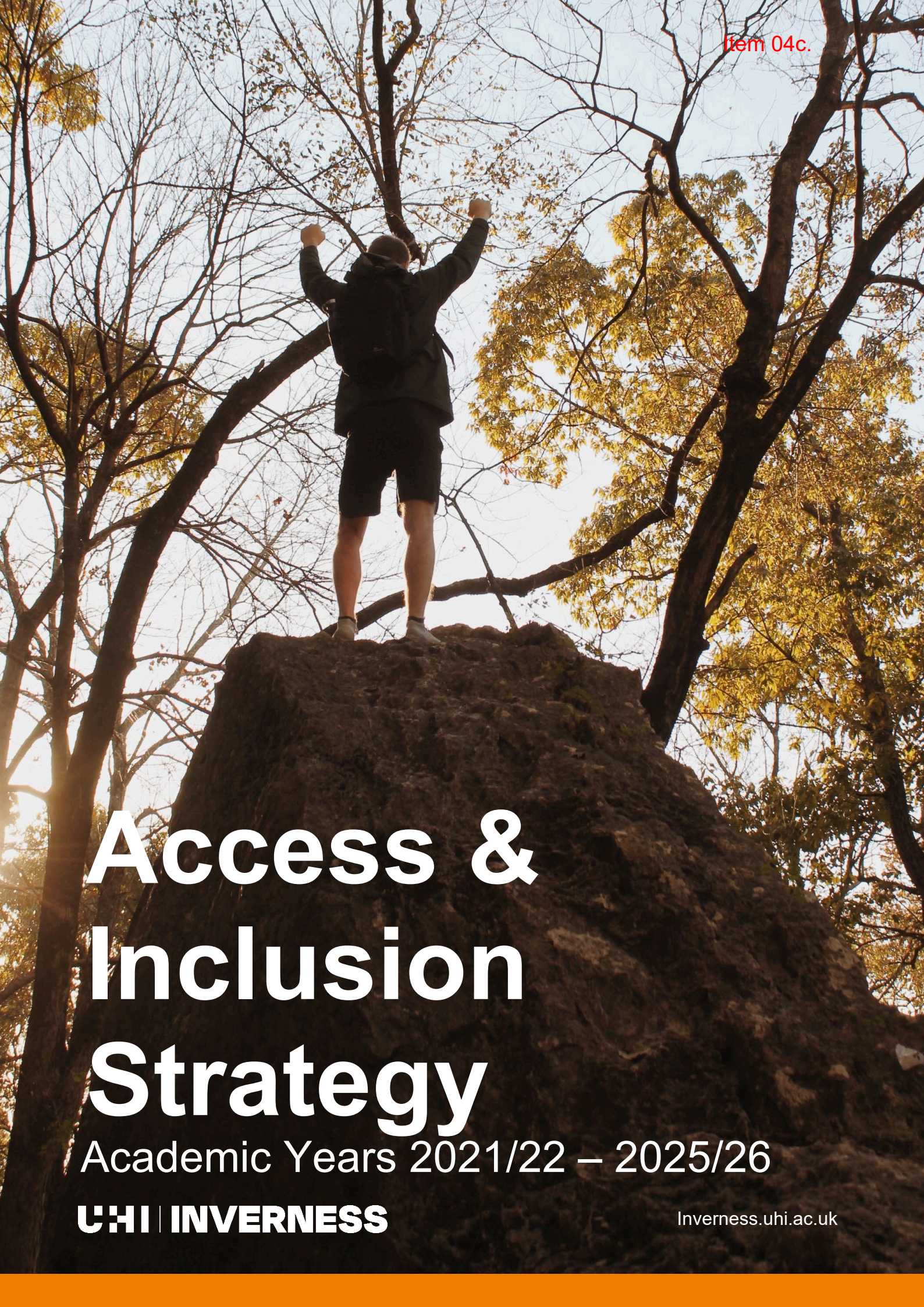Scottish Charity No. SC021197

including support to participate effectively in college forums, committees, and Board of Management.

- Providing informal and formal opportunities for students to liaise with the Principal and college staff, while maintaining the independence and integrity of the student voice.
- Continuing to provide appropriate financial support and resources to the students' association
- Involving elected student representatives in key college committees and on operational working groups to ensure the student voice contributes to and informs operational decision making.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES)
19	National Student Survey (NSS) (previous AY)
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES)
22	Post Graduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

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Access & Inclusion Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Inverness.uhi.ac.uk

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear direction to the Board of Management, staff, and stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches Access and Inclusion. Staff will make use of this strategy when creating their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

Our approach to Access and Inclusion underpins and guides all we do, thus providing an umbrella under which every aspect of the student journey is encompassed. Our students are at the centre of all we do, and we recognise the individuality of students and their intersecting needs. As such, our approach to Access and Inclusion is integrated throughout all services across the organisation and the student journey.

The principles of Access and Inclusion are firmly embedded in our Strategic Plan and embedded across the work and life of UHI Inverness. Our Access and Inclusion Strategy applies to all our students but is of particular importance to introductory and access level provision, up to SCQF Level 4, and to our students from priority learner groups who may require extra consideration:

- Care experienced young people

- Students with caring responsibilities

- Students from the 10% most deprived backgrounds (SIMD10)

- Students with a disability

- Estranged students

- Veterans and ex-armed forces and their families

The objectives in this strategy are ordered under five areas:

- To further embed our effective use of data to support improvement

- To further enhance our accessible curriculum and our approach to inclusion

- To extend early identification and intervention to support the needs of individuals

- To further enhance our suite of on course high quality and tailored support

- To extend the accessibility of our campus facilities

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Strategic Objective 1:
To further embed our effective use of data to support improvement

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining robust and effective systems and mechanisms to gather, process and use student data in line with relevant regulations and guidance.
- Continuing to identify relevant data sets and information for analysis, comparison, and target setting with internal, sector and/or regional benchmarks.
- Continuing to make relevant data on student and college performance readily accessible to staff and presented in a way that supports continuous evaluation and improvement
- Ensuring that staff receive training in line with their role to enable them to access and use data appropriately and effectively to support evaluation, planning and improvement.
- Using national and regional data to identify our priorities around access to learning within our tertiary environment and targeting specialist support where required to achieve outcomes.

Strategic objective 2:
To further enhance our accessible curriculum and our approach to inclusion

We will achieve this by:

- Considering the evolving needs of learners from our priority groups to inform the way we approach curriculum planning, course design, and learning, teaching, and assessment, to best support learner needs and outcomes.
- Creating flexible pathways throughout our courses and programmes to ensure our curriculum is responsive to the needs of individuals.
- Working with external partners to explore further opportunities to expand our curriculum to meet the needs of those furthest from education and individual priority learner groups.
- Extending staff opportunities for professional development around inclusive and trauma-informed practice, and sharing emerging and best practice through the work of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Team
- Continuing to work with the local authority and UHI partners to deliver a coordinated approach to access for Senior Phase pupils, which removes duplication and provides a coherent and comprehensive offer to learners

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Strategic objective 3:
To extend early identification and interventions to support the needs of individuals

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to promote our positive declaration environment which encourages early disclosure of the needs of individuals.
- Maximising applications from disadvantaged learners by proactively promoting the access thresholds to the relevant schools, pupils, parents, local authorities, and teachers.
- Continuing to liaise with external partners and our secondary schools to identify and support applicants and students with enhanced transition needs
- Extending our pre-start engagement with applicants to ensure individuals are ready to continue studying with the appropriate level of early intervention and wrap-around support to meet their needs.
- Supporting our staff to recognise and respond to the needs of individuals through further professional development opportunities and the sharing of best practice.

Strategic objective 4:
To further enhance our suite of on course high quality and tailored support

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing our organisational commitment to, and recognition of, the value of services to support learning as a key element in supporting student successful outcomes.
- Continuing to use Personalised Learning Support Plans (PLSP) and Transitions Plans as the conduits to providing tailored support to individuals.
- Expanding our responsive suite of student support made available to all students throughout their student journey and delivered through *The Bothy* both on campus and online.
- Continuing to be responsive to the wellbeing and mental health needs of our students through the provision of tailored support solutions.
- Reviewing our model of support across our tertiary provision to ensure we remain responsive to changing needs and provide equitable support across the student body.

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Strategic objective 5:
To extend the accessibility of our campus facilities

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to make adaptions to both our campus building and grounds to ensure we maximise accessibility for all students.
- Extending our arrangements for out-of-hours service provision to continue to support students during campus closure periods.
- Extending our provision of flexible learning spaces and the use of technology enhanced learning to maximise accessibility to learning.
- Continuing to be responsive to the demand for quiet spaces on campus providing a supportive environment to learners experiencing mental health challenges or distress.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES) – by priority groups
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES) – by priority groups
27	FE FT Successful Outcomes – by priority groups
30	HE FT Successful Outcomes – by priority groups
38	Mental Health Support appt (non-emergency) offered for within 3 - 10 working days
39	Learning Support appt offered for within 6 - 20 working days

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Digital Transformation Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to UHI Inverness' Board of Management, staff, students, and other stakeholders on our strategic approach to digital transformation and the underpinning development of our digital infrastructure and digital skills of our staff and students.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans, and setting team objectives.

Context

Digital transformation is critical to the sustained development of UHI Inverness. Staff and students evolving the necessary capabilities to support this development is a core aim in our strategy and aligns with the UHI Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy. Digital transformation in this document is intended to encapsulate an organisation-wide effort. Specifically: continuing to develop a robust digital infrastructure, using system and process automation to enhance the experience of the human element within the organisational system, and the development of the wider digital capabilities that will be needed to action the intended digital transformation in the years to come. This means a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning to support staff and students, using research-based approaches that have been evidenced to equip us all to function more effectively in the ever-changing digital world.

The strategy is underpinned by four objectives:

- To equip our students with the digital capabilities - knowledge, literacies, skills - and the self-efficacy they will need to succeed in life, learning and work.

- To equip our staff with the digital capabilities - knowledge, literacies, skills - and the self-efficacy they need to succeed in life, learning and their work at UHI Inverness.

- To continue to develop a digital campus with the technologies to support learning and collaboration in our hybrid learning environment, further enhancing the UHI value of 'connecting learning across communities' both inside and outside the campus.

- To develop the digitisation of our processes, systems, and procedures where they support effective working practices.

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Strategic Objective 1:
To equip our students with the digital capabilities - knowledge, literacies, skills - and the self-efficacy they will need to succeed in life, learning and work.

We will achieve this by:

- Embedding digital skills throughout the curriculum to support the development of students as skilled digital learners.

- Developing students' self-efficacy in digital use via coaching and course development, ensuring users embrace lifelong digital learning.

- Supporting our students across their digital learning journey, from online enrolment to academic research, ensuring the development of an enfranchised and engaged student population.

- Finding the balance between online safety and the experimentation needed to embody the UHI value of supporting 'the development of our students as reflective practitioners, as investigators, and as researchers' [from UHI Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy].

- Educating our students on the implications of their digital actions for their future online life and developing knowledge of digital footprint, online conduct, and data use by digital corporations.

Strategic objective 2:
To equip our staff with the digital capabilities - knowledge, literacies, skills - and the self-efficacy they to succeed in life, learning and their work at UHI Inverness.

We will achieve this by:

- Recognising the value of individual digital skills development as central to ongoing professional learning that enables all staff to successfully fulfil their individual roles.
- Supporting staff to access ongoing learning opportunities, in a variety of formats, contextualised to enhance their individual digital capabilities.
- Providing high quality facilities and resources to support staff learning and skills development across the organisation.
- Enabling our lecturing staff to continue their journey from *Threshold* to *Exemplar* in their teaching practice on the Brightspace VLE in line with the LTA Benchmark information by offering a variety of development opportunities.
- Supporting lecturing staff to embed teaching practice that develops students' digital capabilities and subsequently their independence in learning, in line with the UHI Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy

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Strategic objective 3:
To continue to develop a digital campus with the technologies to support learning and collaboration in our hybrid learning environment, further enhancing the UHI value of 'connecting learning across communities' both inside and outside the campus.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a modern wireless network to support the use of mobile devices across our campuses; supporting staff and students to bring their own devices to study and communicate when in our buildings.
- Providing digital equipment and support to facilitate the hybrid learning environment with flexible learning and working spaces.
- Supporting all students with the equipment and facilities they need so they are not disadvantaged whilst studying.
- Providing online tools and a Virtual Learning Environment which enables flexible and student-centred learning, supporting positive student outcomes.
- Supporting students to ensure that diverse and individual digital needs are met, supporting digital equity.

Strategic objective 4:
To develop the digitisation of our processes, systems, and procedures where they support effective working practices.
To develop the digitisation of our processes, systems, and procedures where they support effective
We will achieve this by:

- Recognising the value of flexibility in the use of technology to support continuous improvement and change.
- Supporting the use of technology as a tool for improving processes and creating efficient systems that seek to ease rather than complicate working, teaching, and learning practices.
- Working with partners and the wider technology sector to share and learn from best practice which we can adapt to our unique context.
- Recognising that digital is not a substitute for human interaction and is a critical tool which can enhance the effectiveness of our work, supporting the wellbeing of our staff and students.

Key Performance Indicators

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KPI	Target
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES)
19	National Student Survey (NSS) (previous AY)
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES)
22	Post Graduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

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Estates & Campus Operations Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear direction to the Board of Management, staff and stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to manager our Estate.

Staff will make use of this strategy when creating their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

Our Estate is made up of 5 properties:

1 Inverness Campus: This is our main campus and is subject to a non-profit distribution (NPD) contract. The hard facilities management is provided GTFM, under the NPD contract. The campus is in excellent condition but there are opportunities to maximise the use of the space for teaching, as our hybrid working plans develop.

Scottish School of Forestry (SSF) in Balloch. The SSF campus building which is subject to an NPD contract and is in excellent condition, is part of a 52-acre site which contains forested areas and a range of separate buildings in varying states of repair. More recently SSF has hosted Joinery courses, as demand has exceeded supply available at Inverness Campus. Student numbers in SSF have declined year on year.

Burnett Road. This building is on a five-year lease, which started in 2021 and is specifically used for Joinery delivery to meet high demand for Apprenticeships in this sector.

WASPS. This city centre space is part of an arts related facility, which provides a suitable environment for our art related course delivery.

An Lochran, Inverness Campus. This is a laboratory facility which supports research in our Centre for Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation. Investment is required in order to maximise opportunities for research in this area.

Because of the impact that the running of our estates has upon our organisational carbon footprint, this strategy should be read alongside the Sustainability Strategy.

Strategic Objective 1:
To ensure that our Estate supports the provision of a progressive, accessible, efficient and relevant tertiary curriculum

To ensure that our Estate supports the provision of a progressive, accessible, efficient and relevant tertiary curriculum
We will achieve this by:

- Working with curriculum teams to develop costed plans to provide the facilities required to deliver their sector development plans.
- Managing approved sector development plan projects.
- Working with curriculum teams and Project Co to ensure accessibility and support room use optimisation.

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Strategic objective 2:
To reduce the carbon emissions against the 2018/19 baseline by 2025/26 and to be carbon neutral by 2040 (objective taken from the sustainability strategy)

To reduce the carbon emissions against the 2018/19 baseline by 2025/26 and to be carbon neutral by 2040 (objective taken from the sustainability strategy)

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a fully costed options appraisal for carbon, energy and water reduction across the college estate.
- Further developing and implementing the Carbon Management Plan, making use of available funding opportunities, working with our Facilities Management company.
- Working with APUC colleagues to ensure that sustainability is considered in all procurement activities.
- Reviewing Highland Council climate change adaptation plans to develop approaches to prepare for the adverse impacts of climate change.
- Reviewing progress to date against our waste reduction targets and setting new targets to be monitored by the cross-college Waste Management Group
- Working with ICOA, develop and implement a Sustainable Travel Plan to maximise opportunities for staff and students to access sustainable travel options – including actions to discourage unsustainable travel options

Strategic objective 3:
To increase biodiversity across the college estate

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a baseline for biodiversity across our estate.
- Working with our Research Centres, develop biodiversity targets for our estate and agree actions, including the further development of the ABC Garden.
- Exploring opportunities for carbon offsetting through actions to increase biodiversity.

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Strategic objective 4:
To maintain an estate, which provides a welcoming and accessible environment, supporting the student experience and enhancing our reputation.

We will achieve this by:

- Managing the NPD contract/contractors, including undertaking audits against key terms.
- Ensuring that the response to Helpdesk requests is prioritised to support the student experience.
- Undertaking regular reviews of our soft facilities management provision against agreed targets.
- Supporting the management of Health, Safety and Environmental (H&SE) issues, in partnership with the H&SE Manager.
- Developing systems to manage the car parks on our two main campuses.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
62	Room Occupancy - Utilisation %
63	CO2 Emissions on Utilities (gross) Tonnes
64	% of waste recycled
65	Estates reactive task completion rate %
66	GTFM % reactive task completion rate
67	Total % of Capital expenditure budget committed (Aug - March)

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Marketing Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Inverness.uhi.ac.uk

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to marketing.

Staff should make use of this strategy and supporting plans when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

- The Marketing Strategy flows directly from key themes identified in the UHI Inverness Strategic Plan and supporting strategies.

- The strategy takes a progressive approach to building capacity for engaging colleagues in support of our student recruitment ambitions and stakeholder engagement. This includes working closely with colleagues in UHI, particularly around the delivery of higher education, international and Rest of UK recruitment to align and coordinate UHI Inverness activities within UHI strategic priorities.

- The demands of an ever-evolving workforce and emerging markets require ongoing analysis of our internal and external environment and innovative student recruitment tactics.

- The Marketing Strategy provides a framework into which annual marketing, student recruitment and communications plans and activities are aligned to support the external and internal requirements of UHI Inverness operations.

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Strategic Objective 1: Data and Analytics
To utilise data driven insights to drive strategic decisions on curriculum portfolio development and analysis of admissions and enrolment trends to help support the development, implementation and monitoring of student marketing and recruitment strategies.

We will achieve this by:

- Producing sector development plans based on local, regional, national and international data, to develop new and modify existing provision based on current and future market demand.

- Undertaking annual curriculum planning reviews, supported by monthly School data presentations focussing on quality, efficiency and compliance.

- Maintaining our full economic costing (FEC)model for all courses.

- Maintaining an understanding of government policy and priorities for the sector, to inform planning activity.

- Capturing information about enquirers, pre-applicants and those who decide not to apply or take up places at UHI Inverness to inform understanding of our markets and enable personalised engagement with prospects.

- Continually capturing and interpreting data to enhance understanding across the student journey, including the ratio of applications to offers, offers to acceptances and acceptances to enrolment.

- Continue to work with our key stakeholders and influencers, including SDS, DYW and teachers, to gain insight and understanding around secondary school pupils, the opportunities and challenges around progression to further study, to inform our activity.

Strategic objective 2: Student Recruitment
To grow the profile, distinctiveness and reputation of UHI Inverness.

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to manage the values, visual identity, messaging and brand architecture consistently across all platforms to our potential and existing stakeholders.
- Producing branding toolkits for consistent implementation across the organisation.
- Supporting and developing the key themes set out in the UHI Inverness strategic plan: tertiary education, organisational development, research and innovation, student experience, and finance and sustainability.
- Using a multi-channel approach to articulate the student experience, amplify success, and our partnerships with communities, particularly employers, to counter any potential negativity or perception issues.
- Working in partnership with staff across UHI Inverness to create thought leadership content.

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Strategic objective 3: Profile and Reputation
To grow the profile, distinctiveness and reputation of UHI Inverness

We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to manage the values, visual identity, messaging and brand architecture consistently across all platforms to our potential and existing stakeholders.
- Producing branding toolkits for consistent implementation across the organisation.
- Supporting and developing the key themes set out in the UHI Inverness strategic plan: tertiary education, organisational development, research and innovation, student experience, and finance and sustainability.
- Using a multi-channel approach to articulate the student experience, amplify success, and our partnerships with communities, particularly employers, to counter any potential negativity or perception issues.
- Working in partnership with staff across UHI Inverness to create thought leadership content.

Strategic objective 4: Marketing Communications
Details of the objective here.

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a student communication plan that delivers relevant and personalised messaging at various touch-points in the student journey, from enquiry and applicant, through to student and graduate communications.
- Focusing on user-generated content and stakeholder 'voices' to tell the UHI Inverness story and encourage advocacy, with a particular focus on social media.
- Creating and sharing transparent and timely communications to keep staff informed of UHI Inverness developments and foster two-way engagement and collaboration.
- Designing engaging and creative written and visual content for print and online channels to attract and inform audiences, including employers and other stakeholders; differentiate our brand and reinforce key messaging.
- Developing and delivering integrated and targeted campaigns, based on insight, data and strategic priorities
- Revising our internal communications tools to be more engaging and easier to access.

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Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
1	HE Active applications
2	FE Active applications
9	HE enrolments
10	HE enrolments
11	HE PPF FTE

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Research and Innovation Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear direction to the Board of Management, staff, and stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to Research and Innovation.

Staff will make use of this strategy when creating their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

The college identified five strategic themes in its Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Each theme has a strategic aim and objectives that will inform operational planning throughout the strategic plan cycle. The five strategic themes are:

· Tertiary Education
· Organisational Development
· Research and Innovation
· Student Experience
· Finance & Sustainability

A suite of strategies underpins these themes to inform and drive policy, procedure, and practice. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy relates to the strategic aims and objectives under all five of the above themes as well as other college strategies.

This Research and Innovation strategy aims to deliver innovative and impactful research that addresses global and local challenges and empowers communities. The strategy shares a vision with the Tertiary Education strategy and this shared vision inspires the way we will deliver an ambitious, bold and creative research environment.

Vision for the Tertiary Education and Research environment

We will be nationally and internationally recognised for impactful, interdisciplinary research and teaching in biodiversity, ecology, sustainability, culture, equity and social justice that informs innovative tertiary education. This will deliver on sustainable development goals which address the biodiversity and climate emergencies and empower communities across our region.

Strategic Aim

Research and innovation will define the tertiary environment and have relevance to and impact upon our staff, students and the communities we serve.

Strategic Objective 1:
To continue to grow our centres of research, their excellence and transformational impact

We will achieve this by:

- Targeting investment in strategic capital projects aimed at enhancing our research environment
- Increasing our capacity to deliver interdisciplinarity across our research centres
- Growing our research excellence through an increased number of world leading research outputs
- Growing our postgraduate researcher numbers, particularly encouraging an increase in project interdisciplinarity
- Ensuring our research centres positively influence learning and teaching across the depth and breadth of our tertiary education curriculum
- Continuing to grow and diversity our sources of research income

Strategic objective 2:
To maximise opportunities for innovation and knowledge exchange, ensuring that our research has relevance and a positive impact on our communities.

We will achieve this by:

- Focusing on development and delivery of impactful research
- Growing our knowledge transfer activity through continuing to work closely in partnership with our stakeholders and communities
- Create opportunities for commercialisation of our research and knowledge exchange outputs
- Working collaboratively with global and local communities
- Ensuring our research is underpinned by recognised standards of ethical principles and practice

Strategic objective 3:
To provide an accessible, engaging and thriving research environment for our students and researcher community.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a supportive and stimulating research experience for our early career researchers
- Ensuring the principles of the Researcher Concordat are implemented across our research environment (https://researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/)
- Implementing stepwise opportunities and progression routes for staff engaging in research and scholarship
- Developing, implementing and reviewing annual enhancement themes for our Post Graduate Research (PGR) student experience

- Ensuring the quality of our student supervision is of an excellent standard through consistent review and monitoring

Strategic objective 4:
To provide opportunities and a supportive environment for our staff to develop their research and scholarship activity

We will achieve this by:

- Facilitating our staff to engage in research and scholarship to further inform our pedagogy and discipline knowledge
- Creating opportunities, pathways, and targeted support and training for UHI Inverness staff to engage in research and scholarship activity as part of their ongoing professional development
- Increasing the number of staff eligible to be submitted to the next Research Excellence Framework
- Diversifying our sources of research and scholarship income, to ensure innovation is embedded across our tertiary curriculum

Key Performance Indicators To be confirmed by UHI Research Office

KPI	Target

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Inverness.uhi.ac.uk

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to Environmental Sustainability.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

- UHI Inverness recognises that climate change is an urgent and significant challenge. The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, requires us to contribute towards: targets to reduce carbon emissions; adapt to climate change and to act sustainably. In 2019, the Principal and Board of Management signed up to the Race to Zero, committing to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040.
- UHI Inverness is committed and has signed up to the Scottish University and College Sectors Supply Chain Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. It has published a Sustainability Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy which is being implemented with support from APUC and advice from EAUC.
- This strategy sets out the key strategic objectives in relation to environmental sustainability for the duration of UHI Inverness' Strategic Plan 2021/22-2025/26.

Strategic Objective 1: Leadership & Governance
To provide leadership and governance conducive to meeting our net zero target
To provide leadership and governance conducive to meeting our net zero target
We will achieve this by:

- Establishing a Sustainability Working Group
- Ensuring that Board Members and leaders are offered carbon literacy training
- Ensuring that leaders at all levels in the organisation are empowered to support the setting and monitoring of targets
- Developing a Sustainability Action Plan based on agreed targets
- Ensuring that sustainability is considered in approval processes for new or revised policies and procedures

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Strategic objective 2: Sustainable Procurement
To deliver best value whilst driving positive impacts on supply chain sustainability.

We will achieve this by:

- Embedding Sustainability as a key factor in all tendering activities and utilising sustainable procurement tools
- Working with Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) Limited to utilise Framework Agreements which leverage buying power to drive sustainable procurement and reduce GHG emission levels
- Supporting the Scottish Government's Sustainable Procurement Action Plan and complying with the <u>sustainable procurement duty</u> as outlined in Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
- Assessing our supply chain with the help of an independent sustainability ratings agency
- Engaging with local suppliers to ensure they are making environmental improvements and exploring circular economy solutions
- Setting, monitoring and reviewing sustainability targets and objectives, exploring solutions to overcome any barriers.
- Reporting on planned activities, targets, and status to tackle the Climate & Ecological Emergency via the Now To 2030 Category Action Plan

Strategic objective 3: Estates & Campus Operations

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a fully costed options appraisal for carbon, energy and water reduction across the college estate.
- Further develop and implement the Carbon Management Plan, making use of available funding opportunities, working with our Facilities Management company to implement the action plan, as part of the Estates & Campus Operations Strategy
- Review progress to date against our waste reduction targets and setting new targets to be monitored by the cross-college Waste Management Group
- Reviewing Highland Council climate change adaptation plans to develop approaches to prepare for the adverse impacts of climate change.
- Working with our Research Centres, develop biodiversity actions for the campus, including the further development of the ABC Garden.
- Working with ICOA, develop and implement a Sustainable Travel Plan to maximise opportunities for staff and students to access sustainable travel options – including actions to discourage unsustainable travel options
- Develop a biodiversity plan, with measurable targets, covering our estate.

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Strategic objective 4: Curriculum: Teaching and Learning
Details of the objective here.

We will achieve this by:

- Utilising sustainable teaching practices, aligned to the Scottish Government's Action Plan for Learning for sustainability
- Ensuring teaching staff are trained to incorporate sustainability into their delivery of teaching and learning
- Working with the procurement team to ensure that teaching facilities and materials are sustainably sourced
- Seeking input from students, employers and stakeholders to promote sustainability in teaching and learning
- Seeking project funding and equipment to promote sustainable practice

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
63	Annual carbon emissions reduction
64	Reduction of waste into landfill

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Talent Management Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to Talent Management.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

UHI Inverness recognises that that its people are its greatest asset and therefore attracting, developing and retaining talented staff is a high priority. Labour shortages across the UK and real terms reductions in government funding for tertiary education require innovative talent management approaches. These approaches support our distributed pattern of leadership, where our people are empowered to work together to achieve our shared goals.

Our new talent management approach encompasses all of our people related activities, as shown in the diagram below:

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Strategic Objective 1: Workforce Planning
To ensure we have an efficient and effective workforce

We will achieve this by:

- Producing sector development plans based on local, regional, national and international data, to develop new and modify existing provision.

- Undertaking annual curriculum planning reviews, supported by monthly School data presentations focussing on quality, efficiency and compliance.

- Maintaining our full economic costing (FEC) model.

- Undertaking an annual budget setting process, encompassing all relevant costs.

- Maintaining an understanding of government policy and priorities for the sector, to inform planning activity.

- Ensuring that Staff Resource Panels are informed by the curriculum plan, FEC model, internal and external data.

Strategic objective 2: Talent Attraction
To attract talented employees committed to achieving our shared goals.

We will achieve this by:

- Reviewing our policies to ensure that we offer progressive terms and conditions of employment to support talent attraction.
- Reviewing and continuously improving our recruitment and selection processes, providing training to recruiting managers.
- Evaluating our hybrid working guidance and developing agile working policies, to widen access to talent.
- Reviewing and developing our recruitment package and talent attraction approaches.

Strategic objective 3: Induction & Engagement
To ensure that all staff are effectively inducted and supported to succeed in their role

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that all staff attend a high-quality corporate induction programme.
- Supporting all new lecturers with a longitudinal learning & teaching induction programme.
- Providing an extended induction to new job roles.
- Providing training for managers to proactively support staff throughout their probation period.
- Engaging with staff through regular written management communications and frequent online and face-to-face forums.

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Strategic objective 4: Professional Development
To ensure that our staff have opportunities to develop and maintain their knowledge and skills to the highest industry and professional standards and are equipped for an increasingly digital world

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring staff have the appropriate time available for their professional development, in accordance with current contractual provisions.
- Providing funding for staff to engage in a wide range of relevant learning opportunities both within and outside of UHI.
- Supporting staff to undertake relevant research and scholarly activities, including additional qualifications.
- Ensuring that all managers and team leaders undertake a certified leadership and management training programme.
- Delivering on our digital transformation strategy.

Strategic objective 5: Organisational Performance Management
To continue to develop our high-performance culture, ensuring professional practice of all staff is aligned to sector standards, industry best practice and our values.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that all staff take part in their Professional Review and Development (PRD) at least on an annual basis.
- Using institutional KPIs and team/individual SMART objectives to set and measure expectations of performance.
- Using data to drive decision making, promoting the understanding of key data across the organisation.
- Supporting staff to work towards attaining professional standard accreditation, including GTCS.

Strategic objective 6: Skills & Succession Planning
To deploy strategies to support our organisational resilience.

We will achieve this by:
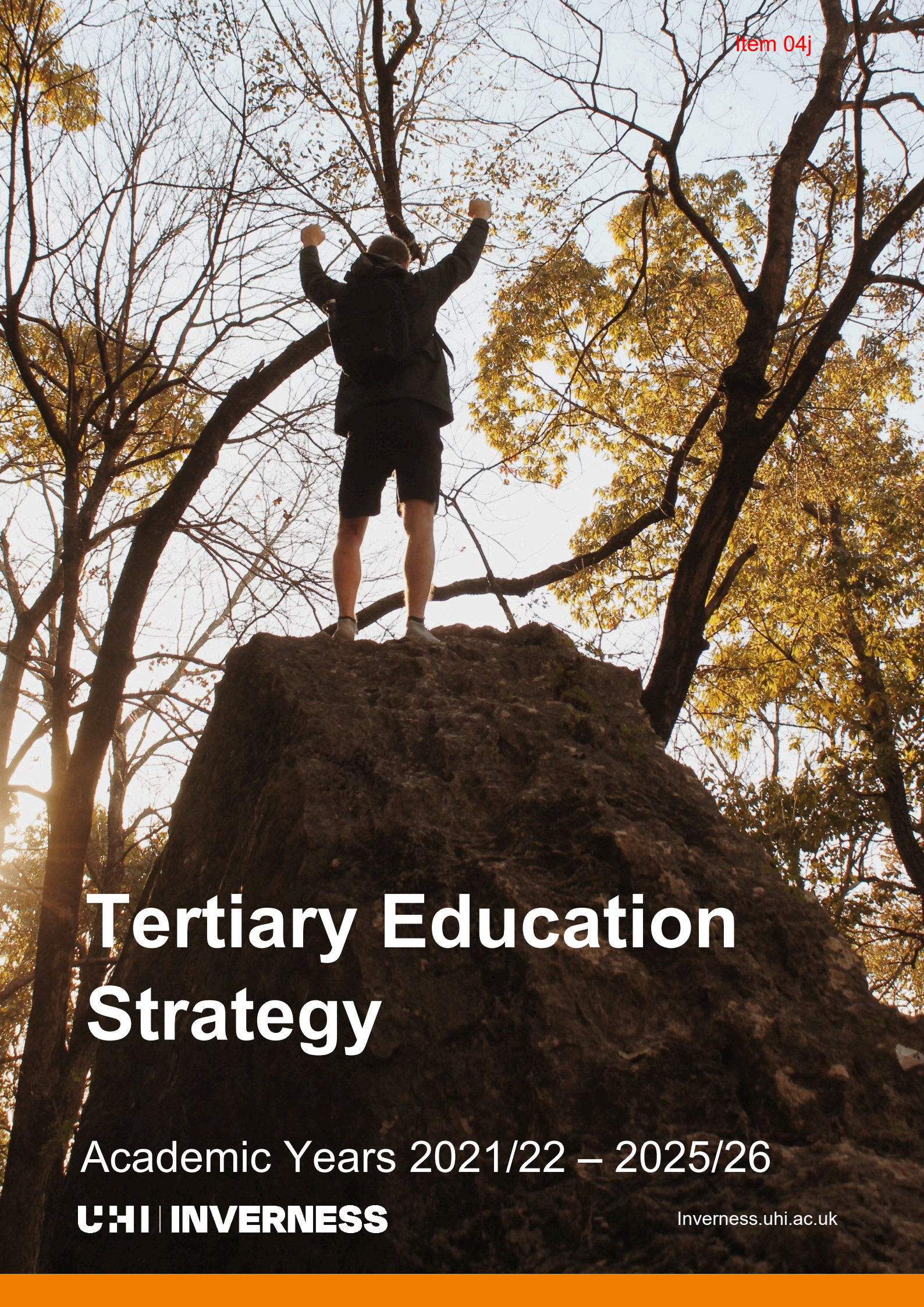
- Developing and implementing departmental succession plans, including skills matrices.
- Continuing the roll-out of a more distributed model for leadership, including a Future Leaders Programme.
- Introducing a process for reviewing role resilience, ensuring that knowledge of key business functions is shared.
- Reviewing and revising contractual notice periods, to ensure a smooth handover when staff exit the business.

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Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
43	Sickness levels
44	- Short Term
45	- Long Term
46	% Staff turnover
47	PRD completion - full or review
48	Student FTE:Academic Staff Ratio

Tertiary Education Strategy

Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

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Academic Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear information to the Board of Management, staff, students and other stakeholders of UHI Inverness on our strategic approaches to working with students as partners in continuous improvement.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating or amending policies and procedures, developing their Enhancement Plans and setting team objectives.

Context

The college identified five strategic themes in its Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Each theme has a strategic aim and objectives that will inform operational planning throughout the strategic plan cycle. The five strategic themes are:

· Tertiary Education
· Organisational Development
· Research and Innovation
· Student Experience
· Finance & Sustainability

This Tertiary Education strategy aims to deliver an innovative, adaptive and flexible curriculum, capable of delivering the education and training needs for growing sector requirements in the region, and to address global and local challenges. The strategy for Tertiary Education shares a vision with the Research and Innovation strategy and this shared vision inspires the way we will deliver an ambitious, bold and creative learning environment.

Vision for the Tertiary Education and Research environment

We will be nationally and internationally recognised for impactful, interdisciplinary research and teaching in biodiversity, ecology, sustainability, culture, equity and social justice that informs innovative tertiary education. This will deliver on sustainable development goals which address the biodiversity and climate emergencies and empower communities across our region.

Our curriculum teams will work towards delivery of the strategy through PARCS:

Pathways
Creating innovative pathways to and through our tertiary curriculum, ensuring seamless progression and preparation for continuing and onward careers.

Academic Excellence
Developing an embedded culture of academic success through our quality enhancement approaches in evaluation, review and continuous improvement in all areas of our Tertiary curriculum

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Research Informed Curriculum

Embedding research and scholarship into the tertiary curriculum, offering routes for staff development and student engagement in research, and ensuring new discoveries and insights through research are enlivening and informing the curriculum at all levels.

Community

Ensuring opportunities for learning reach all people from our local communities and stakeholders

Sustainability

Providing innovative ways in which sustainability is an integral part of learning throughout our Tertiary curriculum

Strategic Aim:

To increase our reputation and reach by offering a progressive and accessible tertiary curriculum that is relevant and attractive to local, national and international students, and which enables personal development, economic growth and social cohesion.

Strategic Objective 1:
To become a destination of choice for local, national and international students, supporting inclusive sustainable development and encouraging inward investment.

We will achieve this by:

- Promoting diversity, inclusion and accessibility throughout our curriculum.
- Creating and informing through research excellence and knowledge exchange unique and high-profile discipline expertise.
- Continuing our active collaborations with sectors and employers ensure our students can contribute to development of sustainable economies.
- Ensuring our curriculum offer for senior phase school pupils is ambitious and creative and provides access to tertiary education.
- Growing our international student community through a unique curriculum offer and excellent student experience.

Strategic objective 2:
To engage with stakeholders to develop a tertiary curriculum which meets the emerging skills, employment and cultural needs of our communities

We will achieve this by:

- Working with our sector advisory groups to identify knowledge and skills gaps.
- Review and implementation of our sector development plans.
- Contributing to national and regional review of curriculum pathways.
- Embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship skills throughout our curriculum.
- Facilitating the growth of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships through our research centres and with sector stakeholders, identifying areas for emerging skills and education needs

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- Ensuring that knowledge creation and exchange with our research Centres fully informs and enhances our vibrant and diverse curriculum

Strategic objective 3:
To deliver a stimulating and innovative tertiary curriculum, informed by research, professional best practice and a recognition of our changing world.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that excellent professional practice is embedded across our tertiary curriculum.
- Enabling our staff to engage in research and scholarship, informing our pedagogy and discipline knowledge.
- Being ambitious and bold in promoting the expertise and excellence of our research informed teaching.
- Delivering education and training that address the twin challenges of the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

Strategic objective 4:
To continually evolve our tertiary curriculum, to provide flexible opportunities for life-long learning.

We will achieve this by:

- Annually reviewing and analysing the curriculum plan with data and modelling.
- Creating opportunities and pathways for training and education enabling our students to fulfil their ambitions.
- Promoting our curriculum, and enthusing communities and sectors with our ambitious, innovative and interdisciplinary approach to education and training.
- Embedding the principles and practice of sustainability throughout our curriculum.
- Ensuring our education and training delivery is flexible and adaptive to fit the needs of life-long learners.

Strategic objective 5:
To ensure that our tertiary curriculum equips every student with the attributes and skills, to support their success in learning, life and work

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring our learning pathways are inspiring and filled with opportunities for career enhancement and personal enrichment.

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- Maintaining and developing a matrix of essential skills across our curriculum including in sustainability, critical analysis and circular economy.
- To embed the evolving needs of learners from our priority groups in all aspects of our curriculum planning and design.
- Enabling our students through their learning journey to connect and contribute to the heart of their communities.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Target
1	HE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)
2	FE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)
3	FE Credits
4	Apprenticeship starts (contract year)
5	Apprentices in Learning (average in year)
6	Apprenticeship Income (Excluding T&A)
7	FWDF Income
8	Commercial Short Course Income
9	HE enrolments (head count)
10	HE enrolments (year one starts)
11	HE PPF FTE (from Oct)
35	FE progression to further FE study
36	FE progression to HE - actual
37	FE FT Engagement - Insight

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Subject/Title:	**Quality Enhancement Planning AY 22-23**
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Vice Principal Student Experience & Quality
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Meeting Date:	27th Sept 2022
Date Paper prepared:	16th Sept 2022
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an overview of our quality enhancement plan for AY 22-23 and the areas of particular focus
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Strategic Plan – Student Experience
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	*Yes* **If yes, please specify:** Operational: risk to operational effectiveness if appropriate improvement and enhancement planning not in place Organisational: risk to organisational reputation, impact on recruitment / finance / student outcomes
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes If yes, please specify: reference to student outcomes across priority groups
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Key managers consulted

Status – [Non confidential]	Non-confidential	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes]	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 organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

Quality Enhancement Planning

Executive summary

To provide a brief overview of our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for AY 22-23 and our key areas of further development. We recognise this is a year of resetting and readjusting and our focus needs to be on recovering from the varying impacts of the pandemic. Our student outcomes, as with other colleges in Scotland, have been negatively impacted since AY 19-20 and therefore need to be our key priority. In addition, we now face a new set of challenges with the cost-of-living crisis which our QEP also takes account of. Although the QEP formally covers our Further Education provision only (HN provision is not included in the scope of Education Scotland's remit for UHI colleges) our plan is truly tertiary and the ethos of our QEP and our quality enhancement processes cover the entirety of our provision.

Background

Education Scotland place importance on the quality enhancement planning process within colleges. During their on-going engagement with us this AY and during their scheduled progress visit, they will want to hear about reflections on the areas deemed to need further improvement and the progress we are making against each. Our key areas of enhancement include:

- An improvement in successful outcomes
- An improvement in student voice representation
- Embedding a common approach to skills development
- Embedding our approach to quality enhancement planning
- Sharing emerging practice in learning and teaching

Education Scotland Quality Assurance Arrangements

Education Scotland published their arrangements for quality assurance, engagement, and enhancement for AY 22-23 (attached) in Sept '22 confirming a similar format to last AY with a combination of on-going engagement activity coupled with a more formal Progress Review. We have had a change in personnel, with our new link HM Inspector now being Joseph Mulholland, who we had our first engagement with on 21st June.

Enhancement Planning for AY 22-23
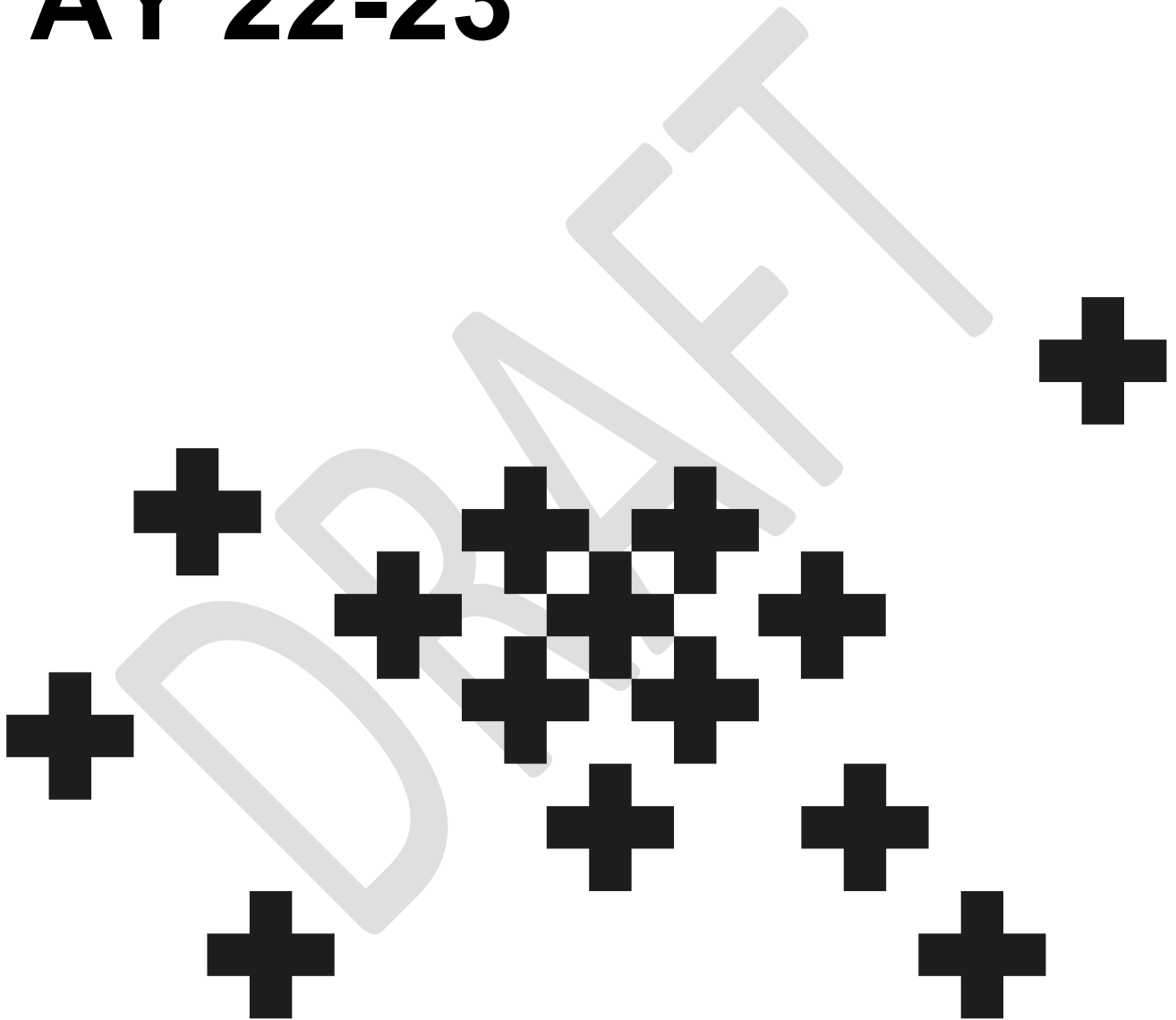
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Context Setting and Reflections

UHI Inverness was impacted significantly by the unprecedented challenges generated by the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-21 and the ongoing restrictions placed upon the sector in the first part of AY 21-22, compounded by the cyber incident in March '21. The impact of the pandemic was felt across the college sector as noted in the [CDN College Leadership in the Pandemic: Learning from Crisis report, 2022](#).

Our ongoing response to the pandemic highlights how effectively colleagues across UHI Inverness work together towards the same goals and in support of our student body. In March 2022 Education Scotland noted our staff as being highly committed and going the extra mile. Our external review was overwhelmingly positive across all five themes of the *How Good is Our College* framework with **circa 47 aspects of positive practice being identified** across various aspects of our work. Some particular highlights included:

- Our ongoing response during the pandemic and flexibility in how learning and teaching and services to support learning were delivered to best support students
- Our use of Brightspace to share learning resources
- Our comprehensive vision for a progressive and reflective learning and teaching culture
- Our effective approach to induction by means of preparing students
- *The Bothy* as a supportive space for students
- Our revised and effective self-evaluation processes
- Our attainment / successful outcome rates for PT FE being significantly above sector average

Our Challenges and Priorities in AY 22-23

Despite such overwhelmingly positive endorsement from Education Scotland, we recognise the **pandemic has impacted negatively on our student retention and our student outcomes**. Since the onset of the pandemic in AY 19-20, our **FT FE early student withdrawals** (those leaving their course before 1st Nov) have increased from **6.8% to 10.8% in AY 21-22**. We have also seen an **increase in our further withdrawals** (those leaving their course between 1st Nov and completion) from **12.9% to 17.5%.** This has had a significant negative impact on our successful outcomes which dropped in FT FE from **67.7% in AY 19-20 to 61.8% in AY 20-21.** Once outcome data is finalised, our final out turn is expected to be **59.44% for AY 21-22**.

We are conscious of the need for a period of **'resetting' and 'readjusting'** as we tentatively move into the post pandemic environment. We are also cognisant of the challenges posed by the **cost-of-living crisis** coupled with a **buoyant local employment market** and on-going **challenges** to the **mental health** and resilience of our student body. **Retaining our students** and supporting them through to **successful completion** will therefore be our **biggest priority**.

In shaping our key priorities for AY 22-23 we have considered our Education Scotland review, our on-going evaluative activity, external horizon scanning, and the priorities identified in the Programme for Government for AY 22-23. Our chosen enhancement themes will provide steppingstones in our recovery to pre-pandemic expectations around student retention and successful outcomes.

Our enhancement themes include:

Theme	Target for AY 2022-23
Improvement in Successful Outcomes	Improve attainment rates / successful outcomes on FT FE and FT HN programmes to return to pre-pandemic levels and in line with sector benchmarks – see Appendix of programme level and Education Scotland category targets for successful outcomes.
	Improve student retention from AY 21-22 across FT FE and FT HN programmes to pre-pandemic levels and in line with sector benchmarks - see Appendix of programme level and Education Scotland category targets for EWs and FWs
	Recognise the challenge posed by student poverty and provide additional proactive support to individuals in need through: - Extending our digital poverty laptop loan scheme - Extending awareness of *The Cubby* - Extend the offer of a free breakfast to students - Introduce our an on-campus food bank, *The Larder*, to provide basic food provisions in conjunction with local food bank support Running regular staff awareness raising campaigns about the support available to students in poverty / how to signpost
	Pilot the use a more flexible approach to support retention and success for students struggling with the demands of SQA units in semester 1
Improvement in student voice representation & working with students in partnership	Recruit a Student Voice Representative (SVR) for every programme of study (160+ hours) in each School to return to pre-pandemic levels of SVRs across Schools.
	Record SVRs on SITs to help identify gaps and target further recruitment at programme level

|	Improve participation / response and satisfaction rates in key surveys and in line with SFC expectations: - Early Student Experience Survey (ESES) response rate target of 50%, overall satisfaction rate of 94% - Student Satisfaction Survey (SSES) – response rate target of 50%, overall satisfaction rate of 94% - National Student Survey (NSS) – response rate target of 75%, overall satisfaction rate target of 80%
	Continue to engage with sparqs to pilot aspects of a tertiary approach to quality assurance and enhancement as part of the '*Evaluating and enhancing student partnership'* project.
Embedding a common approach to Skills development across curriculum	Develop a common skills framework, incorporating meta-skills, across every FT FE and short FT programmes, to improve the visibility and ease by which students can identify where and how they are developing a variety of skills
Embedding the approach to Quality Enhancement Planning and the effective use of the QEP Tracker	Streamline the QEP Tracker to make it more user friendly and intuitive to support continuous improvement
	Extend the use of the QEP Tracker to Professional Services teams who were not included in the pilot
Sharing emerging practice in Learning and Teaching to support retention and successful outcomes	Appoint 2 new Learning & Teaching Enhancement Leads to support the further development of excellent learning and teaching and improved retention and successful outcomes
	Introduce method/s of formally sharing emerging learning and teaching practice, and in particular, the innovative use of digital technologies
	Further embed and extend the programme of peer review through to support the further development of excellent learning and teaching and improved retention and successful outcomes

As a tertiary institution, and in preparation for the development of a new national tertiary quality framework (TQF) being piloted 2022-24, our enhancement themes cover the entirety of our provision, where applicable, and our approach to quality assurance and enhancement is organisation wide. The college enhancement themes will help inform team goals in the QEP and updates will be provided to all staff via Wee Connect, All Staff EMT presentations and via various committees.

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Partnership Working with Students to Support Improvement

To complement the UHI Inverness college wide enhancement themes above, we will also work in partnership with HISA focussing on 3 aspects of the student journey which have been informed by student feedback and chosen in conjunction with HISA. Our 3 partnership themes for AY 22-23 are:

- Student Voice in Partnership
- Student Life
- Tools for Learning
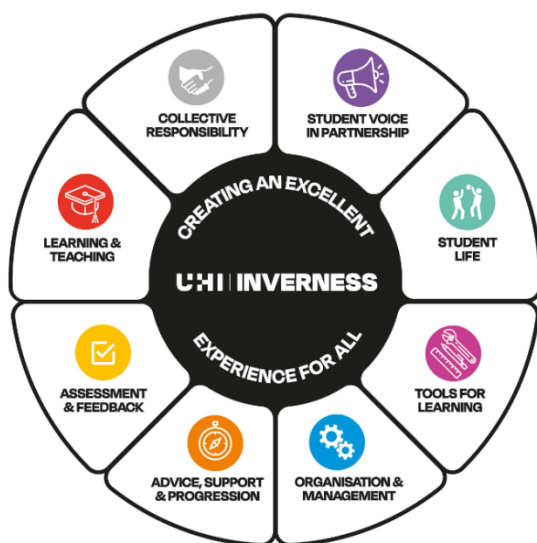
Approach to external quality assurance, engagement and enhancement by HM Inspectors AY 2022-23

Please share this information with staff

This note contains the following information

Arrangements for external quality assurance, engagement and enhancement for AY 2022-23

During AY 2022-23, HM Inspectors will undertake the following activities in colleges:

1. On-going engagement with a link HM Inspector

Link HM Inspectors will continue to engage with all colleges to provide tailored support and challenge in the coming year. This may be undertaken either virtually or through in-person visits as required.

2. Annual engagement Visits

HM Inspectors will undertake an annual engagement visit (AEV) in colleges where, based on the outcomes of previous engagement, satisfactory progress is being made against improvement priorities, or where SFC and/or HM Inspectors have not identified any aspects of performance requiring further exploration.

2.1 Approach to AEVs

AEVs will be short, light touch visits lasting typically one day. AEVs will be undertaken by the college link HM Inspector, supported by HM Inspectors colleagues, Associate Assessors (AAs), and Student Team Members (STMs) as appropriate.

2.2 What do HM Inspectors focus on during an AEV?

AEVs will explore the following themes;

- Learner progress and outcomes,
- Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment,
- Evaluation to facilitate improvement, and
- Learner engagement.

2.3 Notification of the AEV

AEV dates will be planned collaboratively between the college and the link HM Inspector.

2.4 How do we share our findings?

On conclusion of the AEV, the team will provide a verbal report of their findings to the college. It will provide assurance of the quality of the learning experience, and may identify aspects requiring further improvement. For multi-college regions, a representative of the RSB will be invited to attend.

2.5 What happens after the AEV?

Following our internal quality assurance processes, a written report will be produced and shared with the college and SFC. The college will have the opportunity to check the report for factual accuracy within five working days. Three weeks after the AEV is

completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and the college link Inspector will make arrangements to share the report with the college Board. For multi-college regions the report will also be shared with the RSB. At this point, a short statement confirming the outcome of the AEV and any next steps will be published on Education Scotland's website. AEV outcomes will inform future engagement approaches with individual colleges.

3. Progress visits

HM Inspectors will undertake progress visits (PVs) in colleges where areas for improvement requiring further progress were identified during previous engagement, or where both SFC and HM Inspectors identify aspects of performance requiring further exploration. Each visit will evaluate the effectiveness of college approaches to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and consider progress made against identified targets. HM Inspectors will identify what is working well and where further improvement may still be required. Visits will also consider key indicators of performance, and their impact on the learning experience. PVs will commence in autumn 2022.

3.1 Approach to PVs

PVs will be managed by a Lead HM Inspector (LI) who will be accompanied by HM Inspectors colleagues, one of whom will be the college link Inspector. AAs and STMs will be deployed to support PVs.

PV planning will be intelligence-led. Pre-visit planning discussions will be held with SFC and sparqs to establish aspects for exploration in particular colleges. A range of evidence sources will be considered including:

- Previous PV outcomes
- Performance Indicators (PIs)
- College self-evaluation and improvement plans
- SFC intelligence regarding performance
- Learner feedback/sparqs engagement
- Stakeholder feedback re: performance

This will inform the scale and scope for each visit, tailored to the specific circumstances of individual colleges.

Colleges will identify a senior manager to act as college nominee and liaise with HM Inspectors. A visit schedule will be agreed in advance, and will include meetings held with college senior leaders, managers, staff, learners and stakeholders. It is expected that colleges will evidence how stakeholders have been engaged in college arrangements for evaluation and improvement planning. PV teams will be on site to undertake meetings with staff and learners. Colleges will be required to provide a short written context statement in advance of their PV outlining their approach to quality improvement and evaluation along with copies of any relevant documentation, for example, self-evaluation reports and improvement plans. The PV team will meet at the end of each day to discuss their findings and these meetings will be attended by the college nominee.

3.2 What do HM Inspectors focus on during a PV?

PVs will focus on providing assurance of the quality of provision being delivered and of the learner experience. Other than a short context statement, there will be **no requirement** to complete and submit any new documentation in advance of a PV. However, the lead HM Inspector may find it helpful receive copies of existing documentation to help prepare for the visit. PVs will not routinely involve observation of learning and teaching approaches. However, colleges will be required to demonstrate the effectiveness of their arrangements to evaluate the quality of the learning experience including learning and teaching practice. To support this, HM Inspectors may include lesson observations if deemed appropriate. The approaches to improving outcomes for learners and the quality of the learning experience will be a core part of the PVs. The team will engage in professional dialogue and review relevant documentation.

Learner engagement is fundamental to the college's ability to identify areas for development. Colleges should view students as partners in supporting improvement and should have effective processes for engaging students in contributing to enhancement activities. During PVs, HM Inspectors and AAs and STMs will engage in conversations with groups of learners to identify the progress they are making and how effectively they engage in and influence their individual learning experiences.
By focusing on outcomes and impact and observing practice and experiences directly, HM Inspectors support college staff to reflect on what is working well and what needs to improve.

HM Inspectors will encourage colleges to share examples of highly effective practice and, where identified, will disseminate these more widely to support improvement.

3.3 Who carries out PVs?

PVs will be led by HM Inspectors, AAs and an STM.

PVs will usually be carried out across two to three days. The size of team and duration of the visit will be adjusted to recognise the context of the college.

3.4 How will we carry out the PV?

PVs are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors and SFC. Prior to the visit, colleges will have the opportunity to provide relevant PV updates, identified through self-evaluation, to reflect the progress made and highlight any changes in circumstances. PVs are informed by the PRAISE framework which is used to help establish and maintain positive relationships with all involved. HM Inspectors recognise that all discussions and engagements are opportunities to share and develop thinking, and to learn from each other.

Throughout the visit, team members will involve managers and staff in professional dialogue, with the aim of supporting improvement. Through this approach, HM Inspectors will work with college staff and should ensure that the visit experience is a collaborative process.

3.5 Notification of the PV

Colleges will be informed in writing of the planned date for their PV six weeks in advance of commencement of the visit.

3.6 How do we share our findings?

On conclusion of the PV, the team will provide a verbal report of their findings to the college. This will include commentary on the accuracy and effectiveness of a college's self-evaluation approaches, progress made against improvement targets, and the experiences and outcomes of learners. It will provide assurance of the quality of the learning experience, and may identify aspects requiring further improvement. For multi-college regions, a representative of the RSB will be invited to attend.

3.7 What happens after the PV?

Following our internal quality assurance processes, a written report will be produced and shared with the college and SFC. The college will have the opportunity to comment if they with wish within five working days. Three weeks after the PV is completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and the LI will make arrangements to share the report with the college Board. For multi-college regions, the report will also be shared with the RSB. At this point, a short statement confirming the outcomes of the PV and any next steps will be published on Education Scotland's website. PV outcomes will inform future engagement approaches with individual colleges.

4. Thematic reviews

In order to support improvement in aspects of college sector performance, HM Inspectors will undertake a programme of thematic reviews. These will evaluate the following;

- Education and training pathways;
- Curriculum planning, support and delivery, and
- The impact of evaluation on improving outcomes for learners.

Thematic reviews may be carried out at college, regional or national level. The footprint of each thematic review will be adjusted to take account of scale and reach of institutions. This will support the evaluation of approaches and impact, providing depth of intelligence about the individual organisations involved, along with providing information to inform capacity building and future approaches to improvement and enhancement. The thematic reviews will provide opportunities for collaborative working with partner quality bodies, for example QAA Scotland, in evaluating the quality of provision and capacity for improvement.

The symbiotic relationship between tertiary education providers in contributing to the education and skills pipeline is a key component of the proposed arrangements. Early implementation of the thematic assignments will support an incremental approach to strengthening arrangements between providers to avoid unnecessary duplication whilst building on existing strengths.

The proposed arrangements are designed to enable Post-16 providers and national bodies that have a focus in assuring and improving the quality of provision, to adjust and adapt to future arrangements.

The approach seeks to strengthen the collective knowledge of providers to meet current and projected economic priorities at local, regional and national levels. The findings of HM Inspectors and other bodies will be instrumental in developing the focus and scope of reviews. The approach also seeks to build, incrementally, the capacity of practitioners across tertiary organisations to engage collaboratively in implementing future arrangements to improve outcomes for learners. In the longer term, the approach will ensure a coherent and sustainable national approach that is founded on continuous improvement and avoidance of unnecessary duplication.

HM Inspectors will also seek to identify and share examples of highly effective practice, highlight what is working well and make recommendations about what needs to improve.

Aspects for exploration, timing and participation in thematic reviews will be agreed with SFC and colleges in advance.

Education Scotland
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T   +44 (0)131 244 4330
E   enquiries@educationscotland.gov.scot

www.education.gov.scot

UHI | INVERNESS

Subject/Title:	NSS 2022 UHI Inverness Overview
Author: [Name and Job title]	Quality Manager
Meeting:	**Board of Management Learning, Teaching & Research Committee**
Meeting Date:	27th September 2022
Date Paper prepared:	10/08/2022
Brief Summary of the paper:	A summary of the National Student Survey (NSS) results and feedback for UHI Inverness.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Student Engagement
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Student feedback included in the survey results.

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	NSS results are not embargoed at this stage, however, please note that guidelines from the Office for Students/Ipsos Mori state that the data is for **INTERNAL USE ONLY** and should not be distributed outside of the institution. External communications regarding NSS are being coordinated by the Communications team, working with Academic Partner communication leads.
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 confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

NSS 2022 UHI Inverness Overview

Recommendation(s)

The BOM LTR Committee are asked to discuss the National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 results for UHI Inverness.

The BOM LTR Committee are to be aware of the next steps in analysing the NSS feedback.

Main body of information

The National Student Survey (NSS) is a UK-wide annual survey which asks final year undergraduates about their experiences. It is commissioned by the Office for Students (OfS) and the survey is administered by Ipsos Mori, an independent market research agency. All responses are anonymous. The 2022 NSS ran from 6 January to 30 April 2022.

Response Rates

UHI overall had a total survey sample size of 1020, and 766 students completed the NSS which is a 75% response rate. UHI Inverness saw a 1% decrease in response rate in 2022 against the previous year (2021), however the 2022 result was still 1% higher than the overall UHI response rate for 2022.
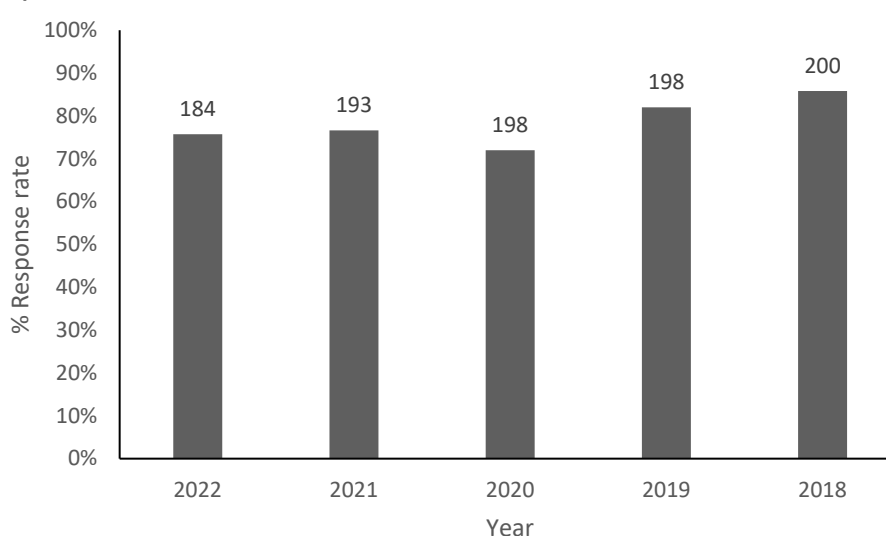
Figure 1. UHI Inverness NSS response rate over the last 5 years with the number of respondents marked at the top of the bars
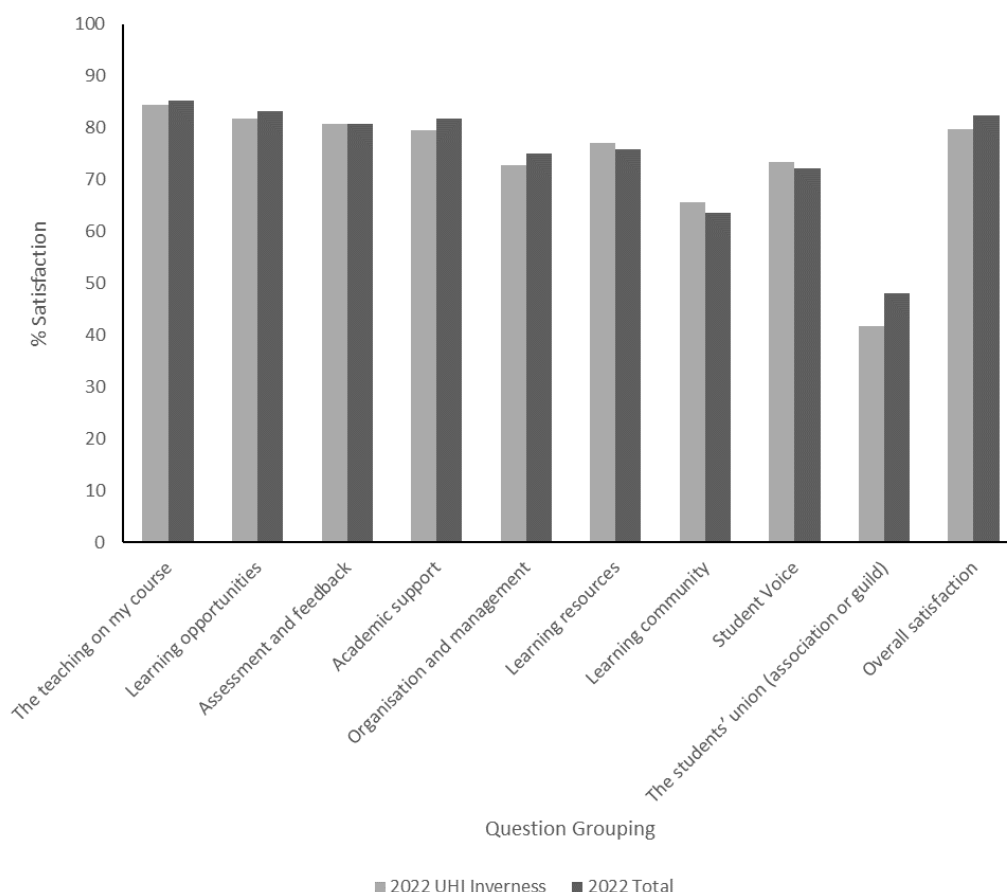
Overall Satisfaction

UHI Inverness has a steady overall satisfaction rate fluctuating by 3% over the last five years. The overall satisfaction for UHI Inverness for 2022 NSS was 80%.
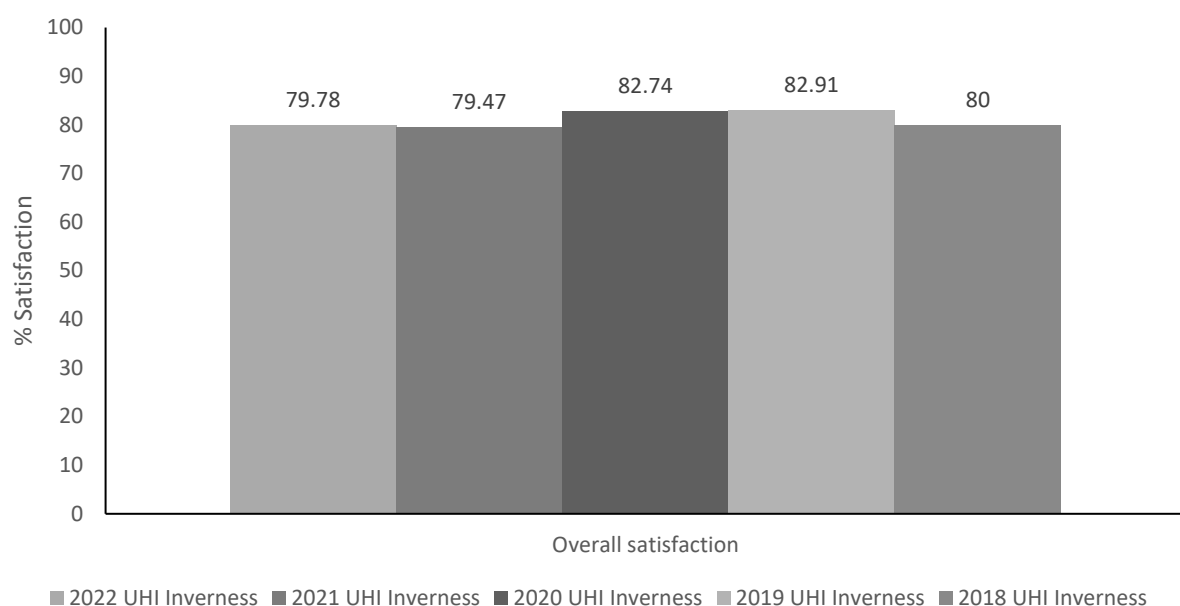
Figure 2. UHI Inverness NSS overall satisfaction over the last 5 years.

The satisfaction by question grouping can be seen in figure 3 below. This has been compared with the UHI overall satisfaction by question grouping.

Figure 3. 2022 UHI Inverness % satisfaction by question grouping compared to UHI overall.

UHI Inverness is below the UHI overall satisfaction percentage for 6/10 question groupings. UHI Inverness greatest percentage difference is for the Student Association grouping. UHI Inverness also had 2% lower overall satisfaction compared with UHI overall.

UHI Inverness saw a higher percentage satisfaction in the following question groupings: Learning Resources, Learning Community, and Student Voice. UHI Inverness matched with UHI overall on the Assessment & Feedback question grouping.

For a full breakdown of the individual question results for UHI Inverness and UHI overall, please refer to Appendix 1.

Free-Text Comments

UHI Inverness received 97 negative free text comments and 109 positive. There were also an additional 73 free text comments that were specific to UHI Inverness.

Figures 4 and 5 below display a word cloud of the positive and negative free text comments to give a feel of what was feedback from the students. Negative comments focussed on disruption due to covid, whereas positive comments centred on support from staff.
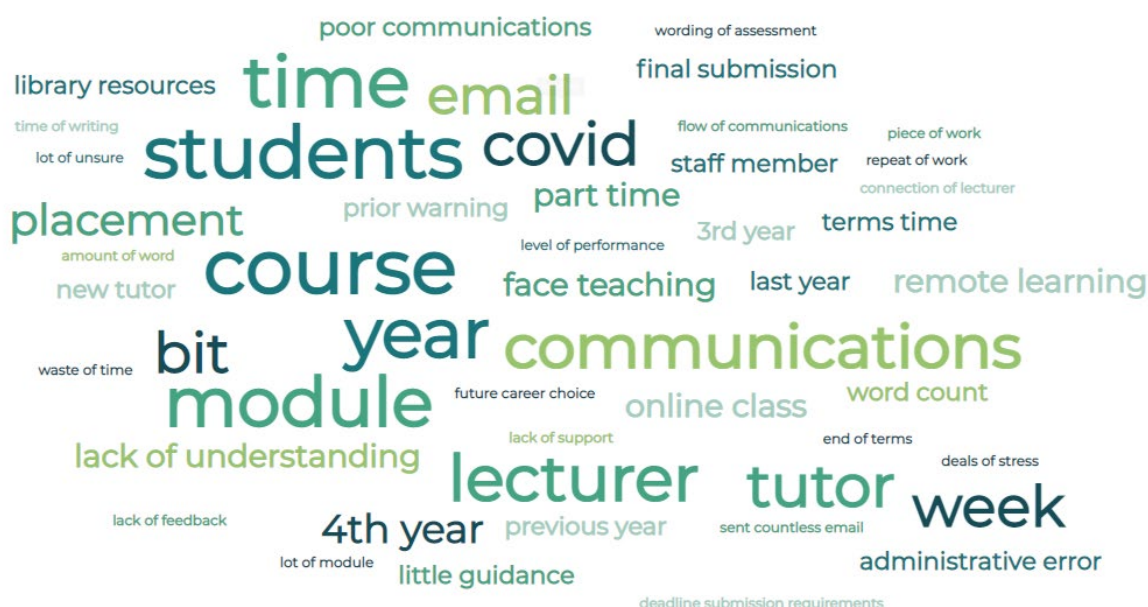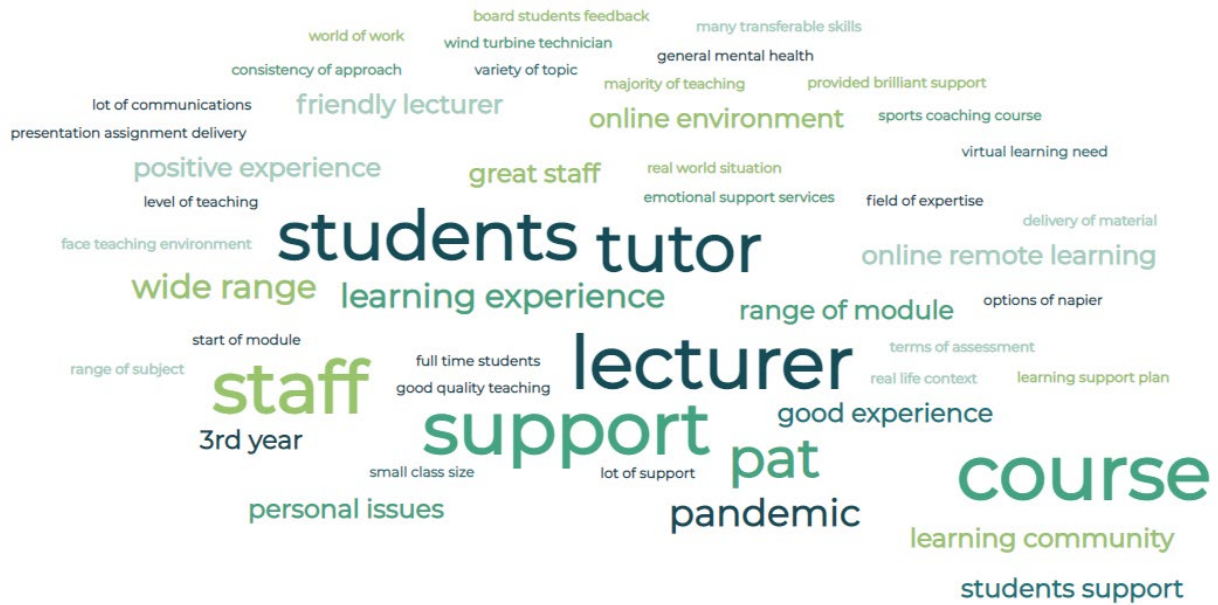

Figure 4. Word cloud of negative free text comments.

Figure 5. Word cloud of positive free text comments.

Next steps
Detailed spreadsheets provided by UHI can be found below:

- [NSS 2022 by Academic Partner](#)
- [NSS 2022 by Subject Network](#)
- [NSS 2022 by Programme](#)

Student comments for UHI Inverness are provided in a separate spreadsheet here: https://myuhi.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/eo-ss/nss/EfCpjBgn02tLkkkyrOmM-n4Bo1UBQryAXjXss5CUKAx4Hw?email=Quality.ic%40uhi.ac.uk&e=xueHMC

NSS results are not embargoed at this stage, however, please note that guidelines from the Office for Students/Ipsos Mori state that the data is for **INTERNAL USE ONLY** and should not be distributed outside of the institution. External communications regarding NSS are being coordinated by the Communications team, working with Academic Partner communication leads.

The full results of NSS will be examined through Enhancement Theme planning and the Quality Enhancement Plan.

UHI will also work with Schools directly where NSS action plans are needed.

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Subject/Title:	**Working in Partnership**
Author: [Name and Job title]	William Campbell, HISA Student President UHI Inverness Lindsay Snodgrass, Vice Principal Student Experience & Quality
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Meeting Date:	27th September 2022
Date Paper prepared:	20th September 2022
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
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Strategic Plan – Student Experience To further embed the student voice to ensure its contribution to all aspects of college life.
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	NA

Status – [Non confidential]	Non-confidential	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes]	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 confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

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

Working in Partnership

Executive summary

To provide a brief overview of our work to date on the partnership enhancement themes and our collective work undertaken by UHI Inverness and HISA locally.

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 levering out improvements across the student journey, as well as helping 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, and aligning with our overarching organisational priorities for improvement. These themes provide a focus for our collegiate improvement work and shape some of the workstreams which the college and HISA work on together to improve the student experience. The themes chosen for academic year (AY) 2022-23 are:

- *Student Life*
- *Student Voice in Partnership*
- *Tools for Learning*
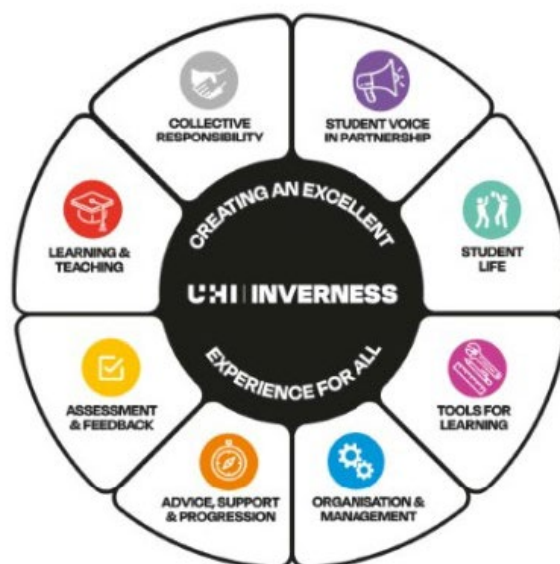
Below is a brief overview of some of the work done thus far.

Student Life

Students back on campus

As we start the new academic year, we have been able to welcome students back on site and we have seen a return to pre-pandemic 'normal' activities. We have been delighted to be able to hold face-to-face inductions for all programmes allowing students the opportunity to meet their peers, their lecturers, and some of the critical professional service teams supporting them on their journey.

HISA have also had a footprint in all inductions providing an overview of the importance of the role of the student's association and signposting the role of Student Voice Representative. We see student clubs and societies as a key aspect of developing a vibrant student community, both on campus and online, and HISA are hopeful of a range of these being available over the coming months.

Freshers

We were delighted to host our first Freshers Fair since 2019 on campus in mid-September which was well attended by our students. A host of local businesses helped to create an excellent buzz in the main atrium with HISA and some professional services teams taking the opportunity to promote their work, the activities students can engage in as part of their wider UHI experience, as well as taking time to gain valuable early feedback. IN addition, a separate Forestry Freshers Fair was held at the Scottish School of Forestry and supported by, for example, a range of related employers and specialist equipment providers.

Graduation

We are delighted to be well underway with planning for our first in person graduation since 2019 to help celebrate the successes of last academic year. HISA will play a key role on the day being part of the platform party and sponsoring the Sporting Blues which will be awarded.

Cost of Living Crisis

We have continued to work hard to consider different ways of supporting students through a period of increasing uncertainly and financial hardship and ensuring everyone is aware of the various support available as they start their learner journey. Collectively we have promoted, for example:

- The Cubby
- Digital poverty laptops
- Free breakfast and lunch
- Discretionary hardship funding
- Free bus travel for under 22s
- Free sanitary products

Extending our free breakfast, introduced in March, to now also include a free soup and a roll lunch, has been a critical decision and an attempt to mitigate against the cost-of-living crisis. We are critically aware of the impact of poverty on our students and aware of the volume of withdrawals last AY which cited financial pressures as the reason for withdrawing. This initiative has gained a lot of local interest as well as interest from across the UHI partnership. Other initiatives are in the pipeline which include, for example, setting up *The Larder*, an on-campus food bank.

We launched our first edition of *The Link* newsletter in September helping to keep our students up to date with what support is available and as well as other useful information. *The Link* will continue to be one of the key tools used in communicating information to students and helping to promote a sense of community.

Student Voice in Partnership

HISA have had a challenging start to the academic year starting it with two vacant Officer posts. These roles are now awaiting nomination and recruitment and we hope to have a full team by mid-October. This however has not stopped work on recruiting *Student Voice Representatives* (SRVs) which is a key priority for us this AY. We are well under way with the recruitment cycle and have implemented a means of tracking which programmes do not have a SRV and can therefore be targeted with additional support to elect one.

A schedule of dates and agenda items have been collectively agreed for the Student Representation Committee (SRC), which begins in October, alongside plans for SRV training.

Tools for Learning

Digital Poverty

Supporting students in digital poverty continues to be a key focus this AY and the induction weeks have provided intensive support to those who need a laptop. We have made a further significant investment in our digital technology to support both onsite and remote learning and as we continue to adjust further to a blended delivery model, and in recognition of the cost-of-living crisis putting additional pressures on student finances.

Mental Health Support

We continue to be acutely aware of the challenge posed by increasingly poor mental health across the student body, a well-documented national challenge, and an increase year on year of the number of students requiring additional wellbeing support. We have continued to extend the different support mechanisms we collectively provide and introduced a new summer club for those suffering from high levels of anxiety about starting their journey with us. This proved to be very popular and effective in supporting individuals to uptake their place.

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Where learning means more

The Link Newsletter

September 2022

Welcome to The Link

Our monthly newsletter for UHI Inverness students to keep you updated on what's happening at UHI Inverness. A message from our principal

"Welcome to our new and returning students. I can't begin to tell you how happy I am to see our campus full of staff and students again. This is an incredibly exciting time for you. As you begin to settle in, I want you to know that we are here to help you succeed in your studies – whether that's support with your studies, health and wellbeing, or cost-of-living crisis. We are here for you. You'll find some useful information below, and remember, you can speak to your Personal Development Advisor (PDA) or Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) if you need anything. If you see me around campus, please come and say hello. I always love to hear how you are getting on and anything we can do to make your student experience the best it can be."

- Professor Chris O'Neil, Principal and Chief Executive, UHI Inverness

Share the Warmth

We're here to support students struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Here's some things that can help:

Free breakfast: All students are entitled to free toast between 8.30am and 11.30am in our Corrie and Lochan canteen (Inverness Campus) and Scottish School of Forestry café. It's self-service so please help yourself.

Free lunch: All our students are entitled to a free soup and roll between 11,45am and 2pm in our Corrie and Lochan canteen (Inverness Campus) and Scottish School of Forestry campus

Laptop loans: If you need access to a laptop for your studies, please speak to your PDA/PAT

The Cubby: Located outside Room 242. You'll find a cupboard here packed full of donations of food and toiletries donated by staff. You'll also find a clothes rail with good quality coats and jackets. Please help yourself.

Free sanitary products: You'll find these in toilets on campus or in our Student Support Centre.

Discretionary hardship funding: Financial support is available for students living in poverty. You can apply for help to pay your rent, accommodation costs, living costs and/or childcare costs.
Find out more: Funding - Discretionary hardship funding (uhi.ac.uk)

Check out The Bothy on Campus, located behind out Student Support Centre, for workshops and drop-ins to help you.

We cover everything from time management and coping with anxiety to study support.

You can also find out more at The Bothy Online in Brightspace.

inverness.uhi@ac.uk

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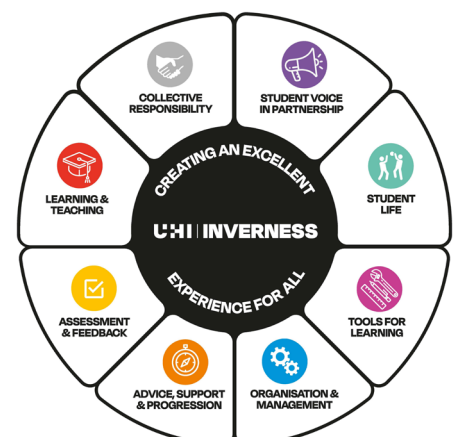
The Link Newsletter

September 2022

Highlands & Islands Student Association (HISA)

Hopefully you've had a chance to meet HISA through your inductions. They represent the views of students across the UHI partnership. At UHI Inverness, you are represented by:

William Campbell – HISA Inverness president william.campbell.hisa@uhi.ac.uk

Sophie MacGregor – HISA Inverness Student Voice Assistant (Staff) hisa.inverness.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Role Vacant – HISA Inverness Depute President for Activities and Welfare. Bi-election coming soon!

Role Vacant – HISA Inverness Depute President for Education. Bi-election coming soon!

"We are here to ensure you have a strong and valued voice at UHI Inverness. Our team of elected student officers and employed staff will represent your views and help you enjoy your time as a student. We're also keen to support you in setting up clubs, starting new societies and organising events." William

Find us opposite reception on the ground floor of our UHI Inverness campus:

+ Facebook: @HISAInverness
+ Instagram: @HISAinverness
+ Twitter: @TeamHISA
+ Email: hisa.inverness@uhi.ac.uk

Look out for our Freshers' Fairs returning to the UHI Inverness campus, Scottish School of Forestry and Centre for Health Sciences in September. Find out more on our social channels.
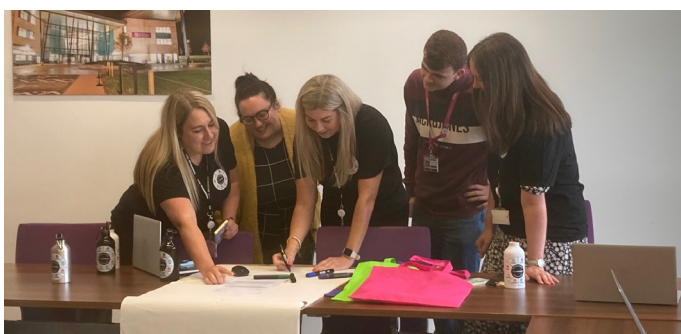
Your Feedback

Our Early Student Experience Survey (ESES) launches on 26th September 2022 and is your chance to tell us about your student experience so far.

Your feedback is really important in helping us make improvements. You will find out more about the survey from your Personal Development Advisor (PDA) or Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) soon.

Our ESES is just one way you can provide feedback. We'll be working with the Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA) Inverness to recruit Student Voice Representatives (SVR) soon. This is an opportunity to learn new skills, develop your CV and represent the views of your classmates with the student association, staff and management.

Our focus this year is:

+ **Student voice in partnership**: working together for continuous improvement.
+ **Student life:** the wider aspects of being a student
+ **Tools for learning:** the resources, tools and skills we use to learn and teach.

We work in partnership with our students to improve the student experience. Our student partnership resource is a tool we use to set out our collective responsibilities and expectations when working together

inverness.uhi@ac.uk

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Where learning means more

The Link Newsletter

September 2022

Keep up to date

Our next issue of The Link will be distributed on Monday 3rd October. In the meantime, keep up to date on what's happening by looking at the MyDay Newsroom and our social media channels:

🌐 www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk

f @UHIinverness

🐦 @UHI_Inverness

📷 @uhiinverness

▶ UHI Inverness

Spotlight - Student Discounts!

We don't want you to miss out on all the fantastic discounts available to students. When you start, you'll receive a digital student ID card, via My Student ID on MyDay, which will help you access these discounts.

+ You can download The UNiDAYS student app which will help you get the most out of being a student.

+ You can also join Totum Digital for free.

+ Locally, lots of businesses, shops, restaurants, bars and cafes also offer student discounts

+ Our campuses are also served by Stagecoach, which offers a student discount.

What would you like to know more about? Let us know and we'll feature something in next month's spotlight. Email: quality.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Key Dates

+ **Tuesday 6th, 13th & 27th** September 1200-12:45: Lunchtime Yoga Class (Inverness Campus Sports Hall)

+ **Wednesday 14th September** 1000-1400: Freshers Fair (Inverness Campus)

+ **Thursday 15th September** 1000-1400: Sports Freshers (Inverness Campus)

+ **Thursday 22nd September** 1000-1400: Forestry Freshers (Scottish School of Forestry)

+ **Monday 26th September:** Early Student Experience Survey (ESES) launch

+ **Thursday 29th September:** Graduation

Useful Links

+ Academic calendar

+ Opening hours: Study - Our campuses (uhi.ac.uk)

The Link is created and distributed by The Quality Team at UHI Inverness.

Let us know your feedback: e-mail quality.ic@uhi.ac.uk

inverness.uhi@ac.uk

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Subject/Title:	Chair and Committee Evaluation Feedback
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lisa Ross Governance Officer
Meeting:	LT&R Committee
Meeting Date:	27 September 2022
Date Paper prepared:	20 September 2022
Brief Summary of the paper:	Feedback on the LT&R Chair and Committee Evaluation
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and Noting

Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: ☐ compliance ☐ partnership services ☐ risk management ☐ strategic plan ☐ new opportunity/change	Governance Compliance
Resource implications:	Yes / <mark>No</mark> **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / <mark>No</mark> **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/<mark>No</mark> **If yes, please specify:**
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/<mark>No</mark> 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

Background

The LT&R Chair and Committee Evaluations were carried out offline during July – August 2022. Four members of the Committee provided feedback and comment on the Committee and five members provided feedback and comment on the Chair.

Chair Feedback

The completed evaluation documentation for the LT&R Chair has been passed to the Chair of the Board of Management for feedback to be delivered as part of the Board Member Evaluation Process. However, there were no issues raised and all present provided positive feedback with regards the Chair.

Committee Feedback

A copy of the feedback from the Committee is attached as Appendix 1. No issues were highlighted as part of this evaluation process.

Next Steps

The feedback received will be presented to the Board of Management on 25 October 2022 as part of the yearly report on Committee Evaluations.

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Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Evaluation (to be completed by the LT&R committee collectively).

Date: Completed Online via Committee Members over July – August 2022

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?	√			
Does the Committee consistently have a quorum?	√			
Do all Committee members attend meetings regularly?	√			
Does the Committee have enough members?	√			Yes, albeit it was felt that there will be a degree of cover lost with the move of the chair.
Does at least one of the Committee members have a background relevant to the remit of the Committee?	√			
Have new Committee members received all necessary training?	√			In as much detail as required and there is additional insight session provided as part of the Board considerations. Induction training for new members is ongoing
Does the Committee report regularly to the Board?	√			

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Terms of reference				
Does the Committee have written terms of reference?	√			
Do the terms of reference include all aspects of the Committee's role?	√			
Does the membership of the Committee need to be changed?		√		No requirements to change but it was noted that a steady through put of new members will always bring fresh ideas and insights.
Are the terms of reference adopted by the full Board and reviewed annually?	√			

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?	√			Emerging issues and changes are regularly brought to the Board

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Internal Control				
Does the Committee monitor to ensure that risk is controlled?	√			
Does the Committee regularly review relevant strategic plans?	√			
Does the Committee consider the level of detail and information it receives appropriate?	√			
Are appropriate internal performance measures monitored by the Committee?	√			KPIs in place to measure and monitor metrics. In depth supporting papers are provided.
Is the Committee addressing all matters delegated to it by the Board and under its terms of reference?	√			

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Administrative arrangements				
Does the Committee have an independent secretary?	√			
Are Committee papers distributed in sufficient time for members to give them due consideration?	√			
Are Committee meetings scheduled prior to important decisions on specific matters being made?	√			
Is the timing of Committee meetings discussed with all involved?	√			Regularly reviewed.

UHI INVERNESS

Subject/Title:	Complaints Report 2021-22 including Quarter 4
Meeting and date:	Sept 2022
Author:	Stephen Wells, Quality Officer
Decision, Discussion or Noting:	Noting
Link to Strategic Plan:	Paper assists with compliance as the College is required to monitor complaints as per SPSO requirements.
Cost implications:	Yes / **No** *(delete as applicable)* **If yes, please specify:**
Risk assessment:	Yes / **No** *(delete as applicable)* **If yes, please specify:** Financial: Operational: Organisational:

Recommendation(s)

Note

Purpose of report
Analysis of complaints received in 2021-22 including Quarter 4

Background
Reports are required to ensure compliance with SPSO requirements and identify are of service than require improvement. Summary outcomes are published on the Inverness College website (FE) and UHI website (HE)

Main body of information
See attached

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Annual Report – 2021 22

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. UHI Inverness uses the SPSO categories and sub-categories to classify complaints, which allows us to feed into sector wide data. The outcomes from complaint resolution are reported to UHI (HE) and published on the UHI Inverness website (FE).

In April 2021 the 'Resolved' outcome was incorporated into the UHI Tertiary Complaints Handling Procedure (TCHP) to reflect changes in SPSO's Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP). The introduction and reporting of this additional outcome category will increase the total number of complaints received so comparisons with previous reports should be considered with this in mind.

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

This report provides an overview of the complaint categories and outcomes across academic year 2021-22 (Q1-Q4) including Q4 statistics and outcomes.

Complaints by Category

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

Complaint Categories by Quarter
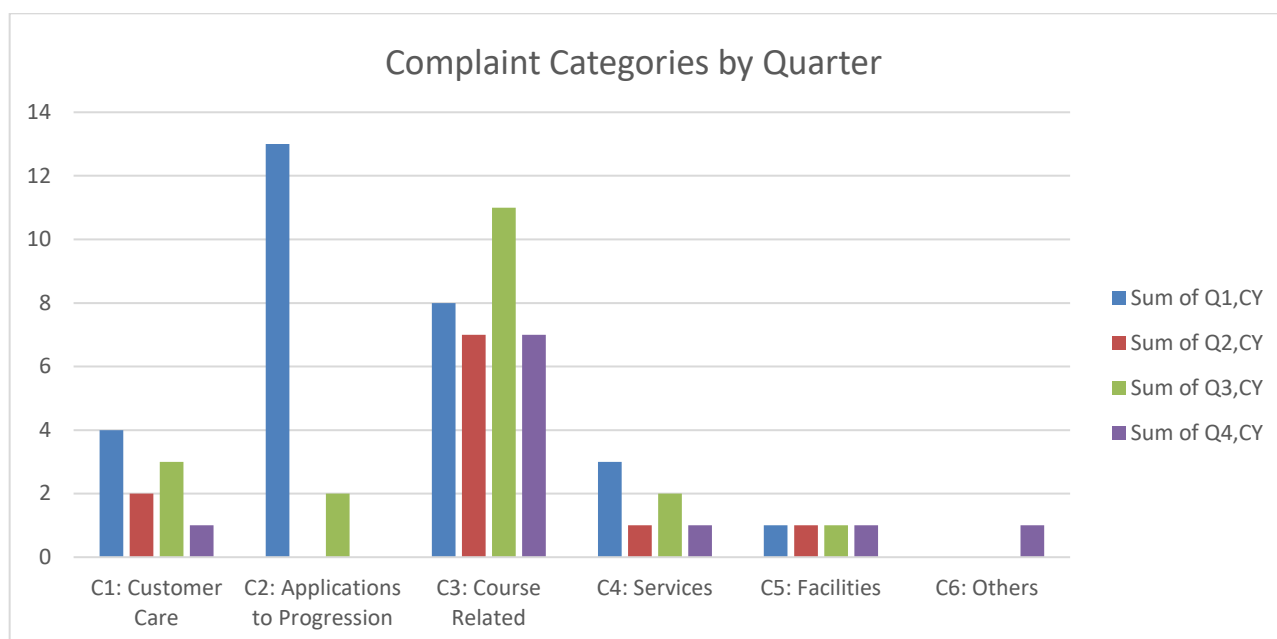
Customer Category: Current Year (Quarter) 2021/22	YTD CY	Q1,CY	Q2,CY	Q3,CY	Q4,CY
C1: Customer Care	10	4	2	3	1
C2: Applications to Progression	16	13	2	1	0
C3: Course Related	33	8	7	11	7
C4: Services	8	3	1	3	1
C5: Facilities	4	1	1	1	1
C6: Others	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	72	29	13	19	11

Customer Category: Previous Year (Quarter) 2020/21	YTD PY	Q1,PY	Q2,PY	Q3,PY	Q4,PY
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

A total of 11 complaints were received in Q4, compared to 21 in the same quarter last year.

The category of *Course Related* received 7 complaints in Q4, which is a 46% decrease compared to Q4 the previous year. The complaints were varied with no discernible over-arching theme.

The categories of *Customer Care, Services, Facilities* and *Others* received 1 complaint each in Q4 and there were no complaints in the *Facilities* category.

In 2021-22 there was a 14% increase in complaints, however 2021-22 was the first full year that the Resolved complaint outcome has been included in the data, accounting for 35% of the total number of complaints recorded this year.

The category of *Course Related* received the most complaints in 2021-22, 76% of which were submitted by HE students. Themes included dissatisfaction with communications from staff, both verbal and written, and elements of the course delivery e.g., dissatisfaction with online delivery, course is delivered too quickly.

The category of *Applications to Progression* received 16 complaints in 2021-22, 22% of the total received. The majority (81%) were received in Q1 focusing on dissatisfaction with communications at a time when the cyber-attack had severely restricted staff access to the essential tools required to undertake their roles effectively.

The category of *Customer Care* received 10 complaints in 2021-22, 50% of which were concerns regarding staff conduct.

The category of *Services* received 8 complaints in 2021-22, 7 of which were issues regarding bursaries or other financial concerns.

The number of complaints received this year remains below pre pandemic levels which averaged 109 complaints per year in the four years between 2015-16 and 2018-19. This compares to an average of 70 complaints for the last three years which have been impacted by Covid restrictions for all or part of the year.

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

Category	2020-21	2021-22	Change
C1: Customer Care	2020-21	2021-22	Change
C1S01: Health & Safety	0	0	0
C1S02: Security	0	0	0
C1S03: Diversity & Equality	2	1	-1
C1S04: Data Protection	0	1	1
C1S05: Environmental	0	0	0
C1S06: Staff Conduct	5	5	0
C1S07: Student Conduct	1	2	1
C1S99: Other	2	1	-1
C2: Applications to Progression	2020-21	2021-22	Change
C2S01: Marketing	1	0	-1
C2S02: Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	3	10	7
C2S03: Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal	2	4	2
C2S99: Other	0	1	1
C3: Course Related	2020-21	2021-22	Change

	2020-21	2021-22	Change
C3S01: Learning & Teaching	6	3	-3
C3S02: Environment/Resources	1	1	0
C3S03: Course Management	19	19	0
C3S04: Facilitated Learning & Support	0	7	7
C3S05: Assessment, Exams & Certification	6	2	-4
C3S99: Other	1	1	0
C4: Services	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**Change**
C4S01: Finance	3	2	-1
C4S02: Funding / Bursary	4	4	0
C4S03: Student Records	0	0	0
C4S04: Providing Learning Support	1	0	-1
C4S05: Library / Learning Technology	0	0	0
C4S06: Quality etc.	0	0	0
C4S99: Other	0	1	1
C5: Facilities	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**Change**
C5S01: Catering	0	1	1
C5S02: Student Accommodation	0	0	0
C5S03: Maintenance, Lifts, Car Parking	1	1	0
C1S05: Environmental	0	0	0
C5S99: Other	0	2	2
C6: Others	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**Change**
C6S01: Others	1	1	0
C6S99:	0	0	0
TOTAL	**63**	**72**	**9**

Complaints by Department

The graph below displays the number of complaints received by department throughout academic year 2021-22. Admissions and Funding received 12 complaints the highest number of complaints overall and an increase from 6 last year, these were focussed in Q1 when communications between staff and applicants were affected by the cyber incident. Care, Health and Wellbeing received 11 complaints, an increase from 3 last year. The key themes were dissatisfaction with elements of the course delivery, lack of support and poor communications. The following departments each received 8 complaints: The Scottish School of Forestry (8 complaints in 20-21), Creative Arts (11 complaints in 20-21) and Education and Applied Science (6 complaints in 20-21).

Complaints Received by Department for 2021-22 (Q1-Q4)

Bar chart showing complaints received by department:
- Admissions and Funding: 12
- Business Solutions: 1
- Business, Computing &...: 4
- Cafeteria: 1
- Care, Health & Wellbeing: 11
- Constuction & Built...: 6
- Counselling & Wellbeing: 1
- Creative Arts: 8
- Education & Applied Science: 8
- Engineering Technology: 3
- Estates & Facilities...: 2
- Finance: 1
- Hair & Beauty Salon: 2
- Human Resources: 1
- Library & LRC: 1
- Scottish School of Forestry: 8
- Student Records: 1

Complaints by Mode of Delivery

In relation to mode of delivery in Q4 only, 73% of complaints received relate to HE programmes, 18% relate to FE programmes and 9% complaints came from Members of Public. The complaint from the Member of Public was a former employee whose contract had been terminated.

In 2021-22 (Q1-Q4), 26.4% of complaints received related to FE programmes, 56.9% related to HE programmes and 16.7% were received from Members of Public, Stakeholders and Others.

The table below provides a breakdown for 2020-21 and 2021-22.

| FE / HE	No. Received 20/21	No. Received 21/22
FE	18	19
HE	32	41
Other	13	12
Total	**63**	**72**

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 – 36.1%
- Not upheld – 23.6%
- Partially upheld – 20.8%
- Upheld – 19.4%

Outcome	Resolved	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Resolved	26 *FE: 7, HE: 13, Other: 5.*			26 *FE: 7, HE: 13, Other: 5.*
Not upheld		11 (44% of St 1) *FE: 3, HE: 5, Other: 3.*	6 (28.6% of St 2) *FE: 1, HE: 4, Other: 1.*	17 *FE: 4, HE: 9, Other: 4.*
Partially upheld		5 (20% of St 1) *HE: 2, Other: 2.*	10 (47.6% of St 2) *FE: 3, HE: 4, Other: 3*	15 *FE: 3, HE: 6, Other: 5.*
Upheld		9 (36% of St 1) *FE: 4, HE: 4, Other: 1.*	5 (23.8% of St 2) *HE: 5.*	14 *FE: 4, HE: 9, Other: 1*
Total	26	25	21	72

Within the academic year 2021-22, one complaint was escalated to SPSO who decided there was no grounds to investigate. An outstanding complaint still under consideration by SPSO at the end of 2020-21 did not proceed for the same reason.
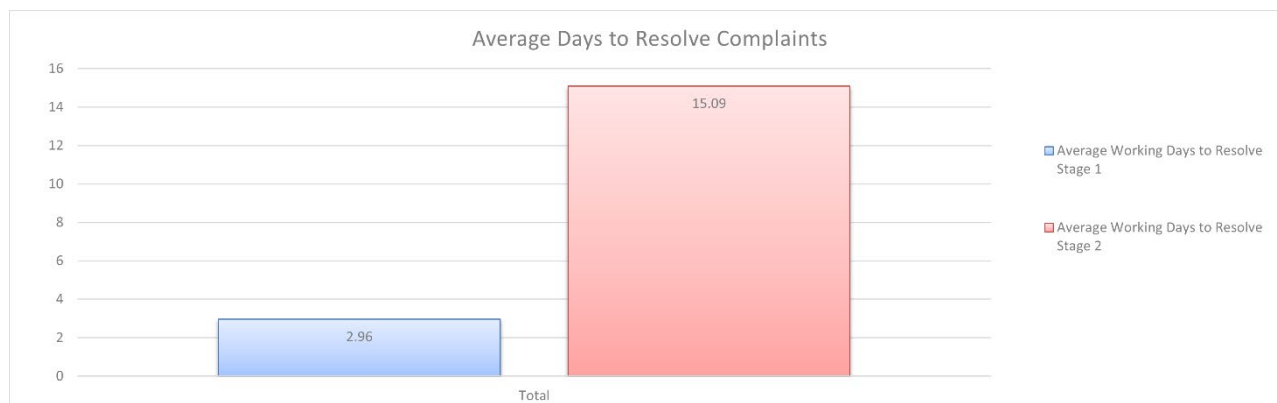

Complaint Timescales
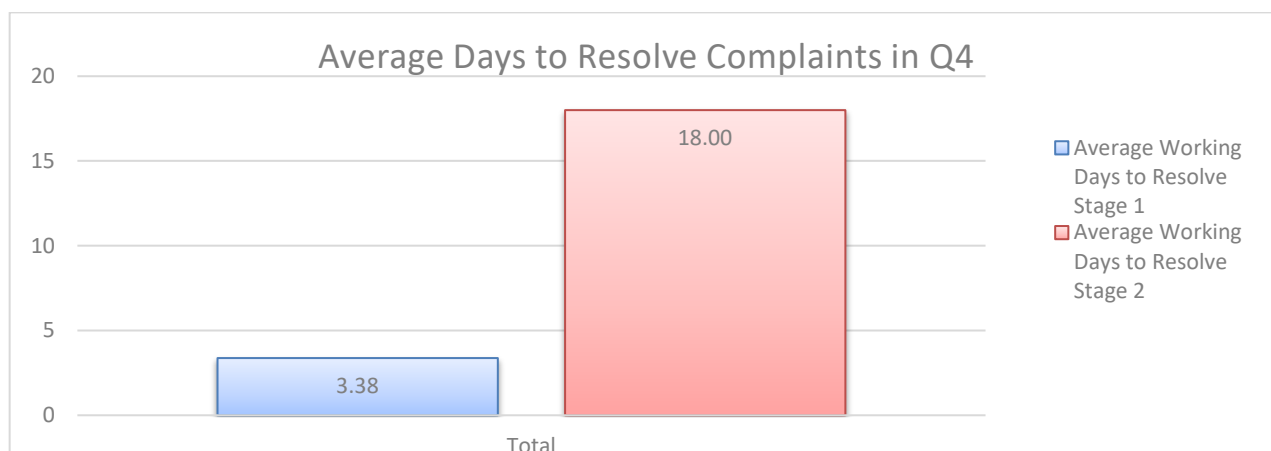
The chart above displays the average number of days taken to resolve complaints in Q4.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in Q4 is between 1 – 7 days.
The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in Q4 is between 14 – 22 days.

The chart below shows the average number of days taken to resolve complaints across academic year 2021-22

One SPSO guidelines state pre-defined timescales of a 5 working day turnaround for Stage 1, and 20 days for Stage 2. An extension of 5 working days is permissible for stage 1 complaints subject to approval from the Quality Manager to complete an investigation but where escalation to a stage 2 is not required. Updates are provided to complainants if the complaint is complex or requires additional time to complete a thorough investigation and will therefore exceed the 5 and 20 working day timeframes.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in 2021-22 is between 1 – 8 days. 46 complaints (92%) were completed within the required 5 days. Staff availability either planned (staff working part time) or unplanned (illness) were the reasons for exceeding the 5 working day timeframe.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in 2021-21 is between 5 – 22 days. 18 complaints (86%) were completed within the required 20 days. Three Stage 2 complaints exceeded the 20-day timeframe and the complainant received notification of the delay.

In 2021-22, 15 complaints were received directly at stage 2, with 6 complaints (28%) escalated from Stage 1 to stage 2.

Complaint Follow Up Survey

Within 6 weeks of receiving the complaint outcome, complainants are sent a link to a short survey (unless the complaint was received anonymously) 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.

Nine responses were received in 2021-22. The outcomes from this small sample are summarised below;

- 55% were not aware of the complaints process prior to submitting a complaint.
- 78% did not find the complaints process easy to access.
- 67% found the complaint form easy to use.
- 67% were able to obtain assistance in making the complaint.

- 67% felt they received a prompt acknowledgement of their complaint.
- 67% did not feel their complaint was taken seriously.
- 89% did not agree that their complaint was thoroughly investigated.
- 78% felt they were not kept informed during the process of the investigation.
- 67% felt they did not receive a fair and objective response to their complaint.
- 55% felt they received a clear response to their complaint.
- 89% received a response within the appropriate timescale.
- 67% felt they were dealt with courteously.
- 78% did not feel that the complaint was closed off satisfactorily.

Six (anonymous) text comments were also submitted, these were largely negative with expressions of dissatisfaction at their complaint outcome, that their complaint was not taken seriously or was a damage limitation exercise by UHI.

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 to identify emerging themes. 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 following complaints received during 2021-22:

- Course details on the website relating to work placements were revised to ensure prospective students are accurately informed prior to applying.
- Courses that are to be cancelled must be agreed by the May preceding the course start date, confirmed by Vice Principal Strategic Development at UHI.
- Duty Manager Process updated to ensure tannoy announcement made in the evenings to notify people that the building and car park will close. Lecturers also reminded to keep students updated on building/car park closing times.
- Delegated staff are to map outstanding course content from S1 and embed in S2, review staff development activities and work with ICT to improve remote delivery.
- The tracking of fees made by students is not available for HE Students. This has been raised by IC Finance to UHI, but no actions taken to date.
- Water temperature checked in washrooms.
- Additional support and consideration given to students when they are working remotely at home and their PLSP updated accordingly.
- The MyDay Childcare logo has been removed and replaced with new logo.
- A new lecturer was given additional support within the classroom.
- Notice boards in the café areas are to include additional food content details where the name of the food item does not specifically mention it.
- To support staff in dealing with harassment amongst students, an action plan has been developed within a specific teaching team, including a behavioural agreement, strategies to support challenging the behaviours as they arise, especially (but not exclusively) in the classroom situation.
- Payment plan introduced to support a student.
- Consideration to allow online Mitigating Circumstance submissions for HN modules in addition to Degree and Postgraduate modules. Ongoing action.

- Curriculum team reminded of the aim to provide prompt assessment feedback within 15 working days.
- HR to review standard letters.

Themes emerging from complaints through the academic year 2021-22:

The introduction of the Resolved complaint outcome option in April 2021 enabled many complaints to be dealt with at source if approached proactively by staff, thereby preventing escalation of the complaint. This approach has been promoted throughout 2021-22, with 36% of all complaints now resulting in a Resolved outcome.

The category of Course Related received the most complaints for the third year in succession with communication issues and challenges with course delivery remaining the overarching themes as in previous years. The reasons for this were many but may reflect the challenges staff and students are experiencing in the third consecutive year disrupted by the pandemic, which have been further complicated by the cyber incident.

Raising Awareness of Complaints Process

All complainants are 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. Only five complainants provided either full or limited details, seven did not provide a response and the remainder entered preferred not to say.

Of the five 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 accessed via the Red Button tile on MyDay. PDA's will be reminded to inform students during their induction how they can access the complaints guidance information and submit a complaint.

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

Staff Training

A training resource is available on the Professional Development Brightspace shell, this is not mandatory (despite being located in the mandatory training area) and so far, ninety-seven staff have completed it with a 90.5% pass rate. The link to the training is here: Complaints Handling Procedure Guidance - UHI Inverness Mandatory Staff Training

Fifteen staff attended a SPSO delivered complaint investigation training course in February 2022. The attendees were selected because they were already undertaking investigations but had not attended SPSO training or had been promoted into a role where they would be

expected to undertake investigations and prepare complaint outcomes. This cohort will complement the eleven staff who have previously completed this training enabling distribution of complaint investigations amongst a larger number of staff. Quality Officers will continue to provide support to investigating officers throughout the investigation process.

Further Information

Further information on the complaint handling process can be found here: About us - Complaints handling (uhi.ac.uk) or by contacting quality.ic@uhi.ac.uk

FE Quarterly and Year End reports can be found here: Complaints handling - Complaints Handling Reports (uhi.ac.uk)

The link to SPSO is here: We are Scotland's Ombudsman | SPSO