

## **UHI | INVERNESS**

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 21 March 2023 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Virtually – via Microsoft Teams

Governance Officer  
14 March 2023

### **AGENDA**

#### **Welcome and Apologies**

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

#### **CREATIVE SPACE SESSION – LEARNING AND TEACHING ENHANCEMENT (Presentation from Enhancement Leads, Professional Development Manager and Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality)**

### **ITEMS FOR DECISION**

- 1. MINUTES**
  - a. Note of the Creative Space Session (CSN-LTR-122022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 06 December 2022
  - b. Minutes of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 06 December 2022
- 2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
- 3. POLICY FOR APPROVAL**  
UHI Student Criminal Offence Data Policy

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- 4. STUDENT RETENTION REPORT**  
Joint Report by Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality and Management Information Systems Manager
- 5. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION STRATEGY 2023-27**  
Report by Directors of Research
- 6. EDUCATION SCOTLAND – ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT VISIT**  
Verbal Update by Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality
- 7. SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUP UPDATE**  
Report by Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality
- 8. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP REPORT**  
Verbal Update by HISA President and Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality
- 9. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON HISA**

**ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- 10. QUARTER 2 - COMPLAINTS REPORT**  
Report by Quality Manager
- 11. MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES**
  - a) Minutes of Student Journey and Enhancement Committee Meeting held on 20 September 2022.
  - b) Minutes of Student Journey and Enhancement Committee Meeting held on 25 October 2022
  - c) Minutes of Student Journey and Enhancement Committee Meeting held on 15 November 2022
  - d) Minutes of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2022.
- 12. AOCB**
- 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 20 June 2023 at 4.30 p.m.**

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



**DRAFT MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 06 December 2022**

**PRESENT:** Dee Bird, Russell Edwards, Chris O'Neil, Stephen Sheridan, Arvinder Kainth, William Campbell, James Millar and Kelly MacKenzie

**CHAIR:** Dee Bird

**APOLOGIES:** Matthew Millward

**ATTENDING:** Vice Principal – Academic and Research  
Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality  
Tertiary Education Leaders  
Information Systems Manager  
Access and Progression Manager  
Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager  
Governance Officer

The Governance Officer confirmed that this meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

**Committee Creative Space**

A creative space session took place which provided the Committee with an opportunity to discuss the work which the Tertiary Education Leaders have undertaken in respect of Sector Development Plans (Note of Session: CSN-LTR-122022).

*The Tertiary Education Leaders left the meeting.*

## **1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

### **a.) Note of the Confidential Closed Session (CSN-LTR-092022) held on 27 September 2022**

The Note of the Confidential Closed Session (CSN-LTR-092022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

### **b.) Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 September 2022**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 were **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

### **c.) Note of the Confidential Session (CN01-LTR-092022) held on 27 September 2022**

The Note of the Confidential Session (CN01-LTR-062022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

*The Vice Principal – Academic and Research left the meeting.*

## **2. SCHOOLS/SENIOR PHASE CURRICULUM**

The Access and Progression Manager provided the Committee with a high-level summary of her report.

The Committee noted that:

- The first senior phase showcase event has taken place.
- Vocational courses have increased and we are continuing to look at ways to further expand these.

## Item 01b.

- The potential for 100 places to be offered next year.
- Increased pupil satisfaction and engagement.
- Partnership Working with the Highland Council in respect of their new initiative 'My Future, My Success' which is based on the same ideology as our LEEP project. The Committee noted that we had set a target of 15 pupils but have recruited 30 pupils to this initiative.
- Applications for the next senior phase will open in January 2023.
- Discussions are being undertaken with the Council around the possibility of the cap on numbers being removed. Committee members highlighted possible additional funding opportunities within the Council.
- The potential for more partnership working with the Council and the possibility of designing an offer akin to a sixth form college.

The Committee welcomed the rate of pupil satisfaction and noted the limitations around the current senior phase offerings and highlighted the importance of this area in respect of the growing local population.

The Committee thanked the Access and Progression Manager for this update.

### **3. WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE**

The Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager provided the Committee with a high-level summary of her report.

The Committee noted that:

- We continue to see an upward trend of mental health disclosures especially in respect of high-level crisis.
- The current staffing levels within the team and funding.
- That the team are focusing on One at a Time therapy appointments which has proved successful in handling the short-term crisis which students are presenting with.
- That we have been able to secure volunteer counsellors this year who are providing counselling to those experiencing low level crisis.

## Item 01b.

- Upskilling of staff to enable them to identify and manage student mental health. This includes trauma informed practice.
- Behavioural issues which are being seen throughout the student population.
- Work which is being undertaken to define the parameters around partnership working and referrals.

The Committee discussed:

- The upward trends in mental health presentation and disclosure and the ratios in respect of those within Higher Education and Further Education.
- The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the actions which we have implemented in order to assist students.
- How we manage risk, our duty of care and external services provided.
- Safeguarding of students.

The Committee welcomed the work which the Wellbeing and Learning Support Team are undertaking and noted that they are cognisant of the scale of the issue within the College and the impact which this has upon external services.

The Committee thanked the Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager for this update.

*The Access and Progression Manager left the meeting.*

*The Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager left the meeting.*

#### **4. STUDENT RETENTION – REVIEW OF EARLY WITHDRAWALS**

*The Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.*

The Information Systems Manager spoke to her report highlighting that:

- Our early withdrawal rates are the lowest that they have been for 5 years. The Committee noted that they are currently sitting at 5.4% and that whilst an additional marginal rise of around 2% is expected before the end of the Academic Year this is still a marked decrease on previous years.

## **Item 01b.**

- Which schools have seen increases and decreases in respect of their withdrawal rates.

The Committee thanked the Information Systems Manager for this update.

### **5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

- Corporate Parenting Plan – The Governance Officer advised the Committee that Corporate Parenting Training for the Board will form part of the Development Plan which is currently being drafted. The Committee noted that the previous LT&R Chair had provided an introduction to the appropriate members of the Council who can provide this training.
- QAA Presentation – The Committee was advised that the Academic Registrar, Faculties and Academic Standards, UHI Executive Office has retired and that we had been unable to engage with her in respect of developing the Tertiary Education Framework. The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality advised that a new role is being developed within Executive Office and the Committee noted that she will follow this up once this position has been filled.
- HISA – The Committee was advised that the CEO of HISA had resigned. It was noted that we will reengage with HISA to present to the Committee once a new CEO has been appointed.

### **6. POLICY FOR APPROVAL**

#### **Safeguarding Policy**

The Committee was advised that updates to this partnership wide policy had been made following the Education Scotland review. The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality took the Committee through the changes in respect of the legislation updates and the definitions of what is considered a child.

The Committee noted that changes had been made in respect of HISA and their Safeguarding Policy and highlighted that this has been updated to make clear that

anything relating to a safeguarding concern at the Campus must follow this policy and procedure.

**Decision:** The policy was **RECOMMENDED** for approval by the Board of Management.

*Arvinder Kainth left the meeting.*

## **7. EARLY STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS**

The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report and highlighted the following:

- The increased outturn for participation in the survey.
- Increased student satisfaction rates.
- Satisfaction rates for care experienced students.
- That out of the unsatisfied students around half identified a disability. The Committee noted that the increasing pressure that the Wellbeing and Learning Support Team are experiencing in response to increasing student mental health crisis has led to increased waiting times for learning support. The Committee noted that this area is being reviewed within the team.
- Teams are going through the appropriate free text comments.
- We are looking at future incentives to ensure a high response rate for next year.

The Committee noted the HISA President for Inverness and the Principal had written to the Council in respect of the problems that students were experiencing because of the bus service.

The Committee was advised that the issue of clubs and societies is being looked at by HISA and it is hoped that these will be back up and running at the start of the New Year.

The Committee discussed the measurable aspects of the feedback and how they can be reported as part of our KPI Matrix.

The Committee enquired as to the gender balance of response and noted that this was equal both in terms of response rates and satisfaction rates.

The Committee noted that the data from the survey was being analysed by each school.

## **8. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT**

The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality provided the Committee with a confidential update in respect of her report.

The Committee noted the range of things in place to safeguard the community and welcomed the Emily Test Charter.

The Committee was advised that because of the Short Life Working Group there have been changes made in respect of communication between ourselves, Halls Staff and Executive Office.

The Committee highlighted the lack of social events within the Halls and on Campus and noted that HISA are looking at implementing student led activities over the upcoming months.

## **9. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

The HISA President for Inverness provided the Committee with a verbal update on the work currently being undertaken.

The Committee noted:

- That applications for grants for new clubs will reopen on 16 January 2023.
- The letter which was sent to the Council in respect of the bus service and how this is impacting on student learning.
- Potential for students being able to have physical ID's if required.
- Exploration of additional social spaces for students on campus.

## **Item 01b.**

- Work being undertaken to increase the numbers of Student Voice Representatives.
- The possibility of students utilising the chat function of Webex rather than using email.
- Improvements to Brightspace.

### **10. QUARTER 1 – COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Committee noted the contents of the Quarter 1 – Complaints Report.

### **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2023 AT 4.30 P.M.**

**Signed by the Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Outstanding Actions from LT&R Committee Meetings

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time Line	ACTIONED
<b>15 March 2022</b>				
<b>Corporate Parenting Plan</b>	The Board Secretary will organise appropriate Corporate Parenting Training for all Board Members. This will form part of the Board Development Plan. The previous LT&R Chair has provided an introduction to the appropriate members of the Council to liaise with.	Gov Off	March/June 2023	
<b>27 September 2022</b>				
<b>QAA Presentation</b>	The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality to liaise with Executive Office, once the new role has been filled in respect of how the Tertiary Education Framework can be developed.	VP – SE&Q	June 2023	
<b>Creative Sessions</b>	We will continue to liaise with HISA over a presentation to the Committee, however this will wait until a new CEO for HISA has been appointed.	Gov Off	June 2023	

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	UHI Student Criminal Offence Data Policy
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	UHI/Suzanne Stewart
<b>Meeting:</b>	LTR Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	21/03/2023
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	03/03/2023
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	The LTR Committee are asked to approve the UHI Student Criminal Offence Data Policy which is a common Policy which has come from UHI
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Approval
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]			
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]			
*If a paper should <b>not</b> 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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)



# Student Criminal Offence Data Policy

POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Vice Principal Student Experience and Quality
Responsible Office/ Department:	Data Control
Responsible Committee:	Learning, Teaching and Research
Review Officer (Post):	Data Controller
Date policy approved:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy due for review:	10/10/2025
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	Click or tap to enter a date.

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

Policy Summary

Overview	<p>Why is the policy required?</p> <p>This policy is required to provide a clear position on processing student criminal offence data across UHI and all partners.</p>
Purpose	<p>What will the policy achieve?</p> <p>The policy will provide a unified approach to processing student criminal offence data across the university partnership and ensure parity of student experience and compliance with data protection law</p>
Scope	<p>Who does the policy apply to?</p> <p>This policy applies to all applicants and students of UHI and all partners, regardless of mode or level of study.</p>
Consultation	<p>Who has been consulted on the policy, and who will be notified?</p> <p>The policy has been developed with feedback from key practitioner groups from the university partnership to ensure that best practice is reflected in the policy and accompanying procedures.</p>
Implementation and Monitoring	<p>Who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy, and what resources/ costs will be incurred?</p> <p>Partners are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed in their own organisation.</p>
Risk Implications	<p>What are the risk implications of this policy?</p> <p>The risk implications exist if academic partners do not comply with the policy. Partner institutions are responsible for monitoring compliance with the policy on an annual basis.</p>
Link with Strategy	<p>How is this policy linked to University strategy?</p> <p>This policy supports the UHI's commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all. It also aims to ensure that all partners comply with the UK GDPR for processing <b>criminal</b> offence data and rehabilitation of offender's legislation.</p>
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Completed 09/08/22. No action required.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 UHI and partners are committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students, staff, visitors, members of the public and external partners. This policy on processing student criminal offence data forms a key part of that commitment, alongside a suite of other policies and procedures.
- 1.2 UHI and partners are committed to the principles of equality of opportunity. This policy has been developed to ensure that applicants and students are treated fairly and transparently regarding admission and/or continuing studies with UHI and partner institutions.

**As a general principle, UHI and UHI Inverness do not ask for student criminal offence data.**

Applicants applying for particular programmes that include a work placement or community-based work e.g. education, health and social care, are required to register with Disclosure Scotland for a PVG check - see our Policy and Procedure on Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme membership for students for further detail. UHI and UHI Inverness reserve the right in certain circumstances to withhold access to certain modules, courses, learning environments (physical and virtual) and placements following completion of a risk assessment if we are unable to provide a safe and supportive learning environment

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **UHI and partners:** The University of the Highlands and Islands is a virtual body, made up of 13 independent colleges and research institutions.
- 2.3 **Duty of Care:** Our responsibility to use professional expertise and judgement to protect and promote the best interests of students, staff, visitors, members of the public and external partners, and to ensure that we exercise an appropriate level of care towards them, as is reasonable within the parameters of our relationship.
- 2.4 **Risk assessment:** A process to assess the risk that may be posed to our community based on the disclosure of criminal activity or conviction (only where it is deemed to be significant and/or relevant to the course of study). In some circumstances this may involve more than one partner from the university partnership if a student engages with multiple campuses either physically or via a virtual platform.
- 2.5 **External agencies:** This may include police forces, prison services, social work departments, health services and support organisations.

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is a consistent system implemented across the UHI partnership for the processing of criminal conviction and criminal offence data when it has been disclosed to a staff member. This policy fits in a broader framework of policies which includes:
  - Fitness to practise guidelines (course-specific)
  - Gender Based Violence Policy (forthcoming AY22/23)
  - Mental Health Strategy
  - Placement and Externally Supported Learning Policy
  - Policy on Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme membership for students
  - Safeguarding Policy

- Support to Study Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Conduct Policy
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Student Mental Health and Counselling Policy
- Suicide Intervention and Risk Management Policy and Guidance

### 3.3 Data Sharing and Privacy

- 3.3.1 UHI Inverness is committed to protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals with respect to the collection and processing of their personal data. Disclosed criminal activity and criminal offence data, is treated in strict confidence and is normally only shared with staff who are directly involved in the risk assessment process or on a need-to-know basis, where applicable.
- 3.3.2 UHI Inverness has a statutory duty arising from the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism', known as the Prevent duty. Established protocols allow the sharing of Prevent-related concerns between relevant public bodies.
- 3.3.4 We encourage all applicants and students to disclose information about any relevant criminal convictions or police proceedings which may affect their ability to take part in/complete key aspects of their programme or placement. This includes personal restrictions or other conditions arising from court orders or parole conditions e.g. travel, contact with others and use of equipment.

### 3.5 UCAS Applications

- 3.5.1 For UCAS higher education applications, on certain courses where criminal convictions are relevant to an applicant's suitability, applicants will be asked to disclose any criminal convictions (including spent convictions).
- 3.5.2 UHI will process any information disclosed via UCAS in accordance with this policy.
- 3.5.3 Should applicants be applying through UCAS for a course where they are not required to disclose the information but are concerned about criminal convictions, they should contact the Admissions Dept to discuss confidentially.

### 3.6 External Agencies

- 3.6.1 UHI Inverness may receive information about an applicant or student from external agencies. Any information disclosed via external agencies will be treated in accordance with this policy.
- 3.6.2 UHI Inverness commits to working with external agencies as necessary, i.e. third sector, social work teams, police forces, Offender Management Units and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), liaising with/being part of Child Protection & Adult Protection Committees locally.

### 3.7 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are carried out where significant concerns exist based on the evidence of student criminal activity. All risk assessments should be completed anonymously e.g. the identity of the applicant/student should not be known and should only be identifiable by a reference number allocated by the Admissions Team. The risk assessment must be undertaken by an independent manager with appropriate training and experience, taking into account:

- Whether admission or retention of the individual would pose a significant and unacceptable risk to our community, including the individual, students, staff, visitors, members of the public and external partners either physically or virtually.
- Whether there are any specific requirements related to the course applied for (or being undertaken) which need to be considered, including placements, future employment, and membership of professional organisations.
- Type/category of offence; date of occurrence; any restrictions in place on the individual.

### 3.8 Support for applicants and students disclosing criminal offence data

3.7.1 We will offer support and guidance to applicants/students disclosing criminal offence data about course selection and career planning and advise on the scope for any potential course or placement adjustments.

3.7.2 Under some circumstances UHI Inverness may have no choice but to advise applicants/students that due to their circumstances supporting an application/retention on a course will not be possible. In this situation UHI Inverness will work with individuals to try to identify suitable alternatives.

## 4 Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all applicants and students of UHI and all partners, regardless of mode or level of study, at any point during application or whilst enrolled.

## 5 Exceptions

5.1 This policy applies without exceptions, exclusions, or restriction.

## 6 Notification

6.1 All staff who are involved in receiving criminal offence data and carrying out risk assessments should be familiar with this policy and procedure.

6.2 In addition to the staff identified in 6.1, Safeguarding Leads and Deputies should be familiar with this policy and procedure.

6.3 The policy will be publicly available on our website.

6.4 Relevant regional groups such as Admissions Sub-group, Safeguarding Group and Student Support Group will include any updates to the policy or procedure as an agenda item to ensure that staff group have an opportunity to discuss changes and best practice.

## 7 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 UHI Inverness is responsible for ensuring relevant staff receive appropriate training and support to aid implementation of the policy.
- 7.2 UHI Inverness Board of Management are responsible for approving the policy, ensuring the legal compliance of the policy and ensuring that it is followed.
- 7.3 The Principal and the EMT are responsible for operational compliance with the policy set by the Board of Management and the Lead and Review Officers are responsible for ensuring the policy is reviewed to ensure currency. The Principal and EMT are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for all staff.
- 7.4 Safeguarding Leads and Deputies are responsible for supporting relevant managers tasked with completion of a risk assessment and providing advice and guidance to Admissions staff in relation to disclosures.

## Legislative Framework

- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Equalities Act 2010](#)
- [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2021](#)
- [Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act \(2003\)](#)
- [Police Act 1997](#)
- [Police and Fire Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#)
- [Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)

## 8 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- Complaints Handling Procedures
- Fitness to Practise Guidelines (course-specific)
- Gender Based Violence Policy (forthcoming AY22/23)
- Mental Health Strategy
- Placement and Externally Supported Learning Policy
- Policy on Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme membership for students
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- Student Mental Health and Counselling Policy
- Suicide Intervention and Risk Management Policy and Guidance

## 9 Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Endorsed/ approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	August 2022	Partnership Council	New single policy	Steven Gregg
1				
2				
3				
4				

DRAFT

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	<b>Student Retention 2022/23</b>
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality  Jane Maclellan, Information Systems Manager
<b>Meeting:</b>	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	21 March 2023
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	10 March 2023
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	To provide the committee with an update on withdrawals for 2022/23.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: a) compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes – quality of the student experience  Financial risk management – retention linked to income
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes – equity of the student experience and learners from priority groups
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

## ITEM 04

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	<b>Non-confidential</b>		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	<b>Yes</b>		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
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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/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

## Student Retention – Review of Withdrawals 2022/23

### Executive summary

The report provides an update on withdrawals for 2022/23.

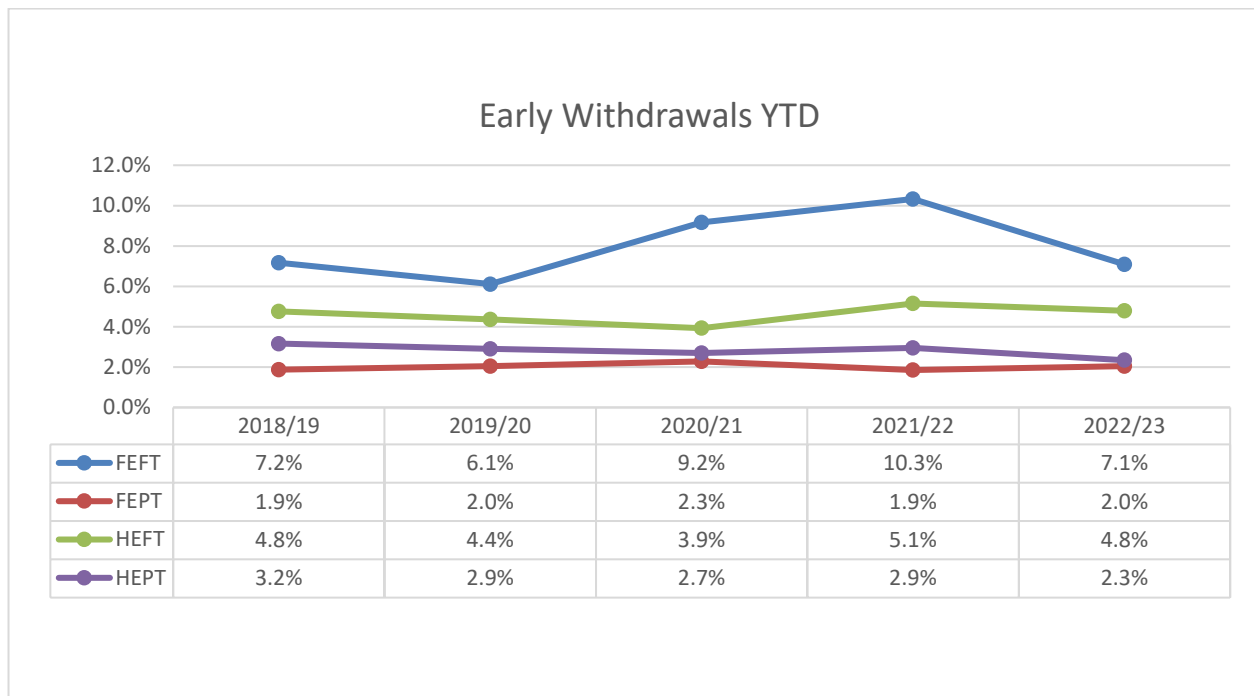
Currently Early Withdrawals for FE Full time students is at 7.1% which is below end of year totals for the past 2 years. A verbal update on the current early withdrawal rates will be provided at the meeting.

Further withdrawals are lower for FE Full time (FEFT) and HE Full time (HEFT) than at the same point last year.

### Main body of information

#### Early Withdrawals

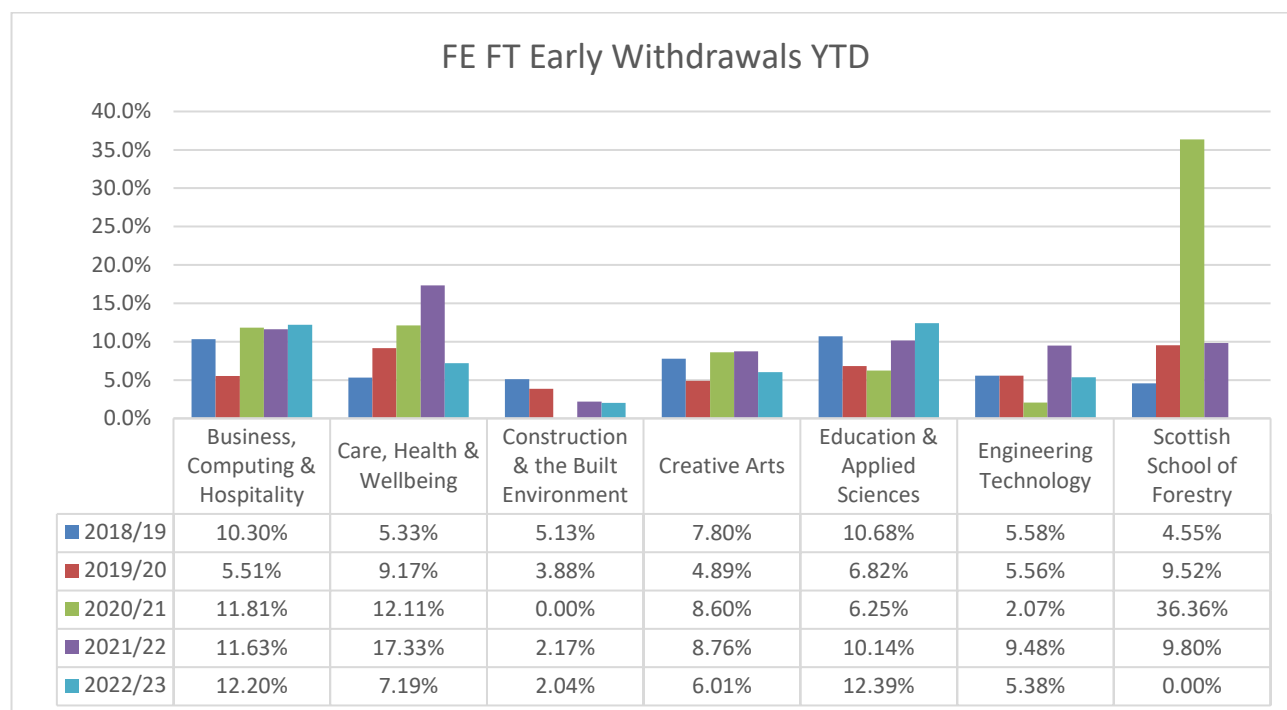
Following a decline, early withdrawals increased for FE full time students for the three years from 2019/20 to 2021/22. The chart below shows the end of year figures for previous years and the year to date for 2022/23 (10<sup>th</sup> March 2023).



At the time of writing the FE full time early withdrawals are below end of year totals of the past 2 years. It is expected that these will remain lower than the peaks of 2020/21 and 2021/22.

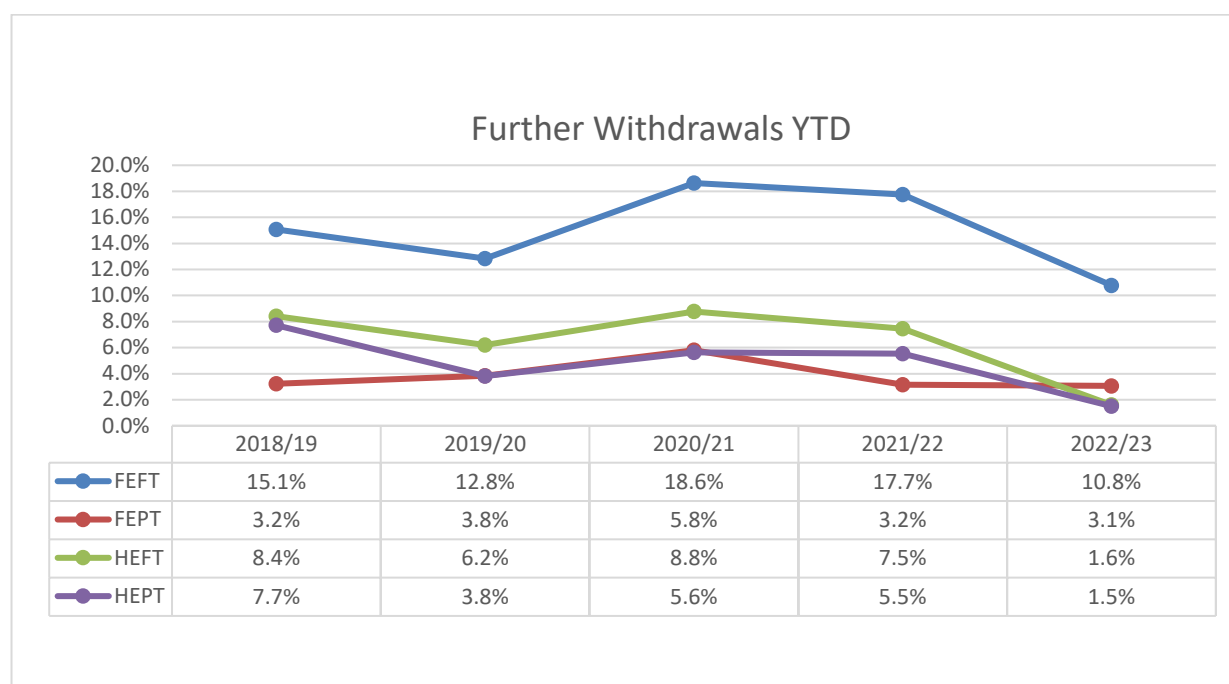
## ITEM 04

For comparison, in the report to LTR on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022, FEFT early withdrawals were at 10.4% and 5% for HEFT. The chart below shows the early withdrawal percentages by Curriculum area over the past 5 years (2022/23 is as at 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023).

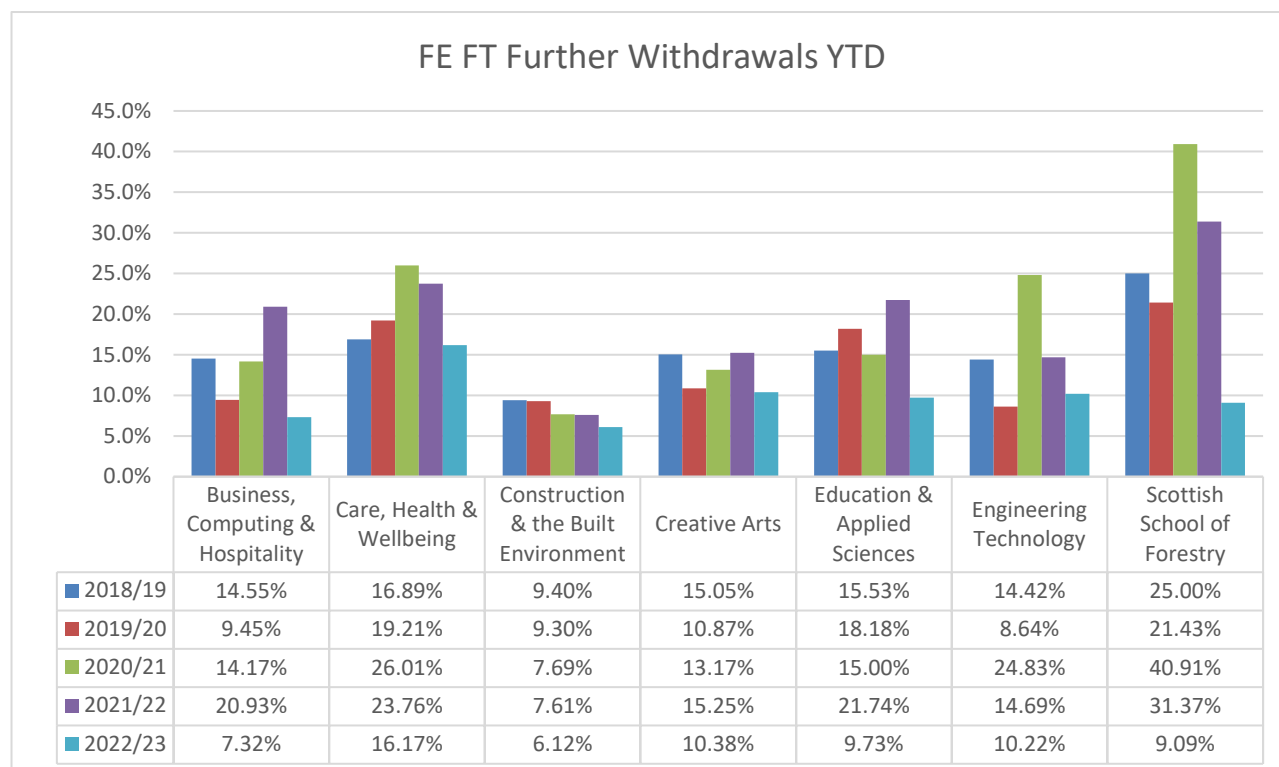


### Further Withdrawals

The chart below shows the end of year figures for previous years and the year to date for 2022/23 for Further Withdrawals (10<sup>th</sup> March 2023).



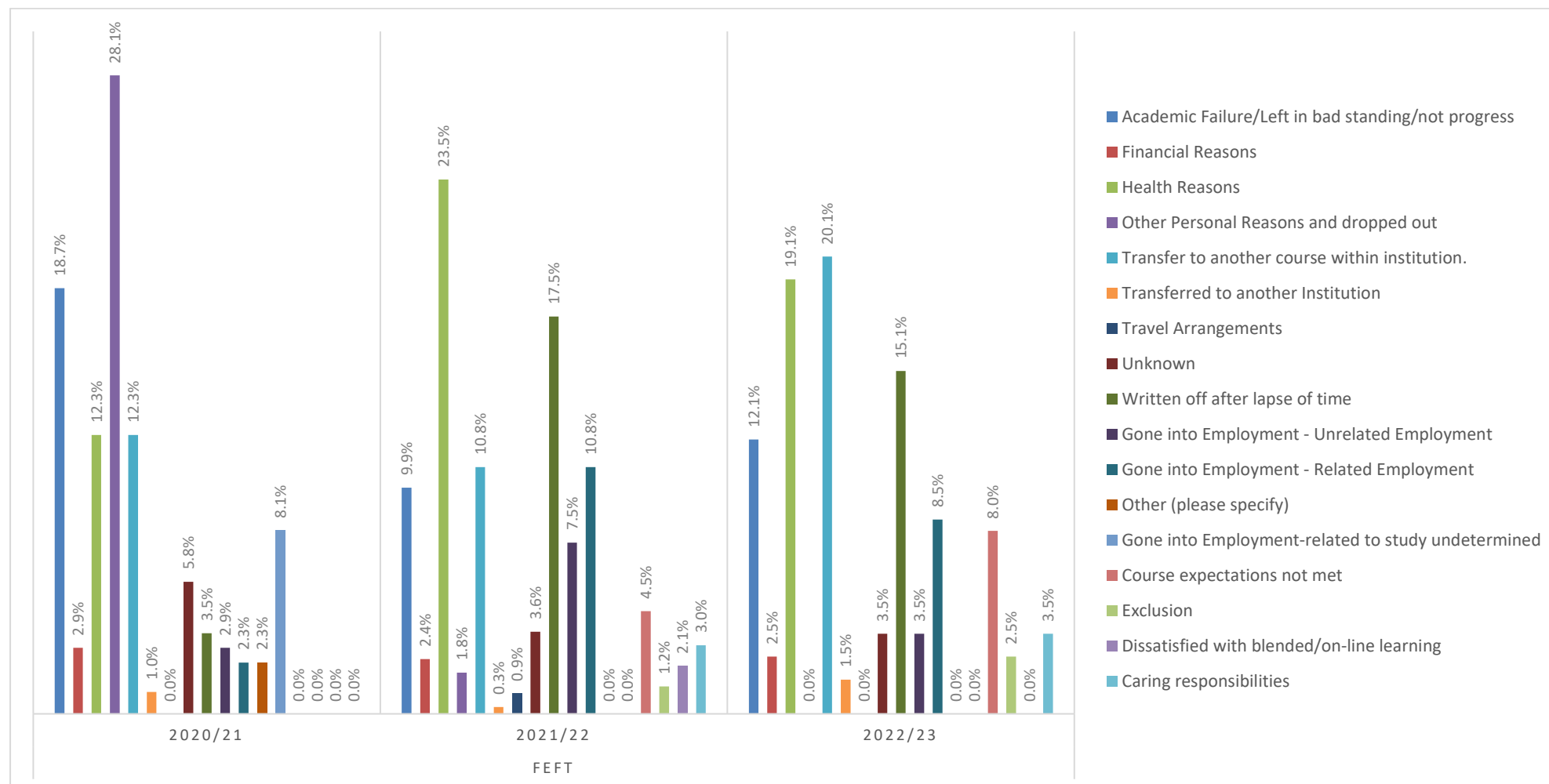
For comparison, in the report to LTR on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022, FEFT further withdrawals were at 11.9% and 4.2% for HEFT.



Both Early and Further Withdrawals continue to be monitored at the monthly data presentations for each School whereby there is analysis of the data by the Head of School and actions identified. We also continue to monitor the reasons for withdrawal at an organisational level:

## FE Full time: Reasons for withdrawal

Whilst Financial reasons dropped from 2020/21 to 2021/22, it has marginally risen again in 2022/23. Health reason continues to remain an issue, and there has been a rise in Course Expectations not met, which was introduced as reasons for withdrawal in 2021/22 in line with SFC guidance.



# UHI | INVERNESS

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Research and Innovation Strategy 2023-27
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Joint Report by Director of Research – Biodiversity and Freshwater and the Director of Research – Centre for Living Sustainability
<b>Meeting:</b>	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	21 March 2023
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	15 March 2023
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	Our strategic approach to research and innovation.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	For Discussion

<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> compliance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> partnership services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> risk management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	This Strategy underpins both the UHI Inverness Strategy and the UHI 2024 Strategic Process.		
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> In terms of finance and sustainability.		
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:		
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>		
<b>Student Experience Impact:</b>	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Consultation workshops held across the research centres in UHI Inverness with all staff and post-graduate research students and with the Centre's Stakeholder Advisory groups.		
<b>Status –</b> [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> 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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

# UHI | INVERNESS

## Research and Innovation Strategy 2023 - 2027



*Version 1.0: last reviewed 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023*

*Next review date October 2023*

## 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.

It is recognized that the research strategy must be adaptive and flexible, particularly given the uncertainties surrounding the framework conditions for REF 2027. Consequently, this strategy will be subject to regular review and updated as required. The next review is scheduled for October 2023.

## Context

The UHI Inverness Research and Innovation Strategy is aligned with the UHI Inverness Strategic Plan 2021-2025, the UHI Research, Impact, and Knowledge Exchange Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and the UHI 2024 strategic process. It will support the achievement of these broader objectives.

The UHI Inverness Strategic plan 2021-2025 identified five strategic themes. 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 UHI Inverness strategies.

## Strategic aim

This Research and Innovation strategy for UHI Inverness 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 of UHI Inverness. This shared vision inspires the way we will deliver an ambitious, bold, and creative research environment.

## Process of developing the Strategy

The development of the Research and Innovation Strategy was guided by the principles of collaborative leadership, which involves a process of consultation with relevant teams during the decision-making process.

This will ensure, the effectiveness of the strategy and empower staff on all levels.

The development process is described below to provide confidence in the approach and to assist future revisions. The steps in chronological order were as follows:

1. Development of a Joint Vision for Tertiary Education and Research. This was co-constructed with the Vice Principle for Research and Education (VP) at that time, the two Tertiary Education Leaders (TELs) and the two Research Directors (RDs). This included a vision statement and the framework for developing specific strategic objectives for research which interlink with those in education.
2. The VP defined the main Strategic Objectives and drafted the subobjectives in consultation with the RDs. This was then provisionally passed by the Board (in the Teaching, Learning and Research Committee), to be built upon and revised to add sub-objectives, activities and key performance indicators.
3. RDs and senior staff from the two research centres drafted revised key Research Themes to align with existing strength, UHI research clusters and KE areas as well as future ambitions for research in UHI Inverness and across UHI.
4. Consultation workshops were held across the research centres in UHI Inverness on Research Themes with all staff and PG research students and with the Centres' Stakeholder Advisory Groups. The final version of the Research Themes is displayed on the CLS and IBFC websites.
5. RDs further refined strategic subobjectives and draft associated activities, enablers and KPIs which align with the UHI Research and Innovation Strategic plan 2022-2025.
6. A consultation workshop was held with active researchers across UHI Inverness on subobjectives, activities, enablers and KPIs with research active staff. Those not attending sent written comments that have been taken into account.
7. The final draft was presented at the LT&R Committee for discussion and approval.

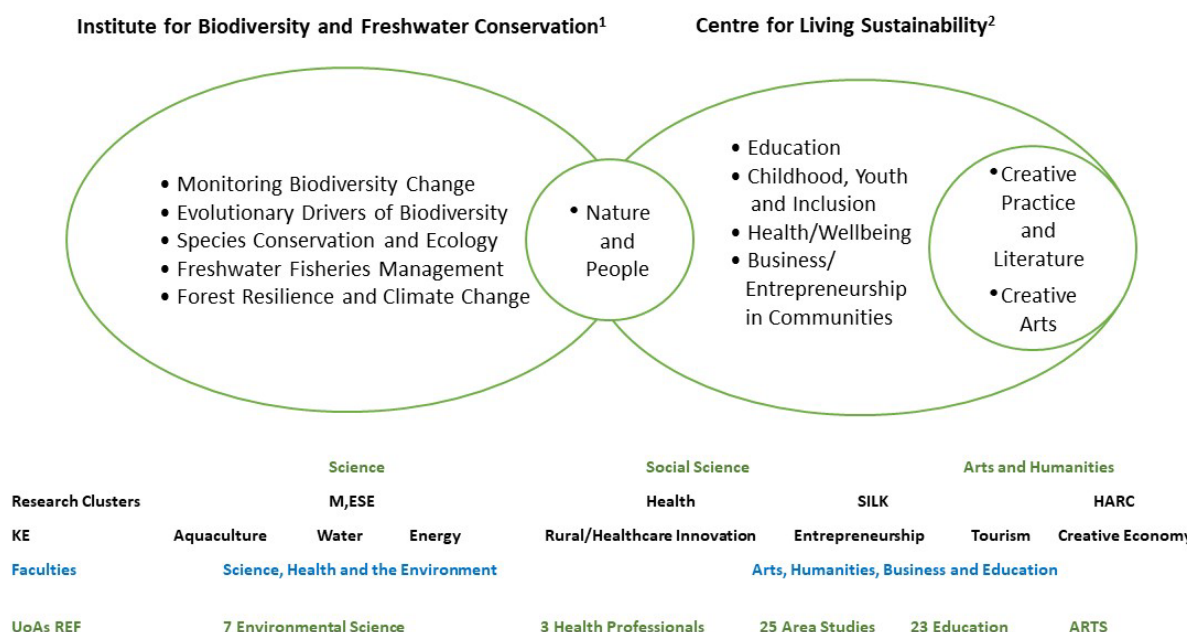
## Vision for the Tertiary Education and Research Environment

*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.*

## Introduction to Research at Inverness

The Institute for Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation (IBFC)<sup>1</sup> and the Centre for Living Sustainability (CLS)<sup>2</sup> host research and innovation across UHI Inverness. We work in partnership with researchers and stakeholders across UHI, the region and internationally. Our research is embedded in the local communities that we serve, and we learn lessons from partners in the global north and south. The diagram below provides an overview of themes covered by the research centres. Full details can be found on the [IBFC](#) and [CLS](#) websites. The diagram also shows how the centres work across the UHI research clusters, KE groups, newly formed faculties, and feed into the Research Excellence Framework Units of Assessment.

## Research at UHI Inverness



The objectives that follow encompass how we are achieving research excellence, transformational impact, a vibrant research culture and capacity-building across academic staff and research students.

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Rivers and Lochs Institute and Forestry Conservation Group

<sup>2</sup> Formerly Centre for Remote and Rural Studies

**There are four key objectives to achieve our vision and strategic aim:**

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

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

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

*Strategic objective 4: To provide opportunities and a supportive environment for academic teaching staff to develop their research and scholarship activity.*

The following section provides details of the sub-objectives with associated activities and key performance indicators.

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

### **Subobjectives**

- 1.1 Enhance research infrastructure including investment capital and human resources
- 1.2 Grow and diversify our research income
- 1.3 Maximise the number and quality of research outputs
- 1.4 Grow our postgraduate researcher student (PGR) numbers

### **Activities and enablers:**

#### 1.1 Enhance research infrastructure including investment capital and human resources

- Review existing environments and identifying spaces and resources through regular consultation exercises including all Centre for Living Sustainability (CLS) and Institute for Biodiversity and Freshwater Conservation (IBFC) research staff, covering the following facilities:
  - Molecular lab
  - Field equipment and specialised equipment
  - Creative and community lab
  - Research hub, meeting rooms, office space
  - Vehicles
- Identify new infrastructure and equipment needs and related funding mechanisms through systematic scanning for capital investment grants using the Research Professional platform.
- Target investment in strategic capital projects and additional staff positions.

#### 1.2 Growing and diversifying Research Income

- Systematic scanning of research income opportunities led by research facilitators
- Time planning and peer review of grant proposals
- Liaison with UHI EO/ clusters/ faculties and regularly update the ROG.  
This must include different types of funders – including international, UKRI (UK Research and Innovation), government, Philanthropic, cooperate and internal, and those appropriate to the research of the centres
- Ensure that all researchers are signed onto Research Professional
- Plan sandpits on writing funding proposals, including allocation of time, proposal review, identification of partners and funders and funding processes
- Disseminate funding opportunities more widely at ROG, centre meetings and through centre Teams spaces
- Identify appropriate tenders and consultancies and develop policies and processes for this.
- Maintain and develop existing industry and stakeholders' partnerships

#### 1.3 Maximise the number and quality of research outputs

- Map staff by unit of assessment for next Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2027 and as potential for following REF.

- Support writing activity through establishing writing retreats and systems for peer review
- Set clear targets for individual research outputs focusing on quality rather than quantity as part of the PRD.
- Increase research collaborations that provide opportunities for co-authorship on high profile publications.
- Encourage researchers to join the UHI mentoring scheme and training opportunities.

### 1.4 Growing our PGR numbers and building capacity in supervision

- Development facilitators to scan for funding opportunities
- Apply for UHI funded doctoral and other postgraduate opportunities (alert through Research Development Committee (RDC) attendance)
- Encourage fuller participation in national Doctoral Training Programmes (DTP) to increase our visibility and gain funded PhDs.
- Develop supervisor capacity within the centres and ensure that they can access UHI supervisor training.
- Work with EMT and TELs to ensure a full recognition of the time commitment for supervision of PGRs
- Include ECRs onto supervisory teams with experienced Directors of Studies (DoS)
- Highlight progression opportunities from undergraduate and Masters programmes to research degrees.
- Highlight progression opportunities for PGRs.

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

**Subobjectives**

- 2.1 Focus on development and delivery of impactful research
- 2.2 Communication and profiling of research and KE
- 2.3 Increase KE funding

**Activities and enablers:**

2.1 Focus on development and delivery of impactful research

- Grow our knowledge transfer activity through continuing to work closely in partnership with our stakeholders and communities, locally and globally.
- Interact with stakeholder advisory groups to develop projects with real world relevance.
- Ensure our research is underpinned by recognised standards of ethical principles and practice
- Develop REF impact case studies and mechanisms/ resources for measuring impact for future REFs

2.2 Communication and profiling of research and KE

- Hold staff and stakeholder engagement events
- Systematically collect case studies to profile our work and disseminating these through websites and social media
- Delivery of the flagship Business Competition each year across Highlands and Islands hosted by UHI Inverness

2.3 Increase KE funding

- Capture Innovation Vouchers, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and opportunities identified with UHI Research and Innovation team at UHI
- Strategic engagement and development of the KE strategy/ Groups/ themes
- Staff training and information exchange within the UHI research community regarding issues of intellectual property and commercialisation of our research and knowledge exchange outputs
- Development Facilitators and CREATE team to attend relevant industry and funders' events and trade shows to build community and business links and identify potential partners for KE funded projects.

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

### **Subobjectives**

3.1 Provide a supportive and stimulating research experience for our researchers including early career researchers (ECRs) and PGRs

3.2 Ensure the quality of our student supervision is of an excellent standard through consistent review and monitoring and providing supervisor training and support

3.3 Facilitate interdisciplinary research

3.4 Enhance the profile of our research through effective communication

3.5: Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Principles are implemented in all aspects of the Research Environment

### **Activities and enablers**

#### 3.1 Provide a supportive and stimulating research experience for our researchers including our early career researchers and PGRs

- Increase awareness of the Researcher Concordat and ensure the principles are implemented across our research environment (<https://researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/>).
- Implement stepwise opportunities and progression routes for staff engaging in research and scholarship.
- Share updates and strategic decisions across the UHI Inverness research community.
- Develop opportunities for research exchange through seminars, discussion forums and workshops.

#### 3.2 Enhance the PG research student experience

- Establish a student led PG committee at UHI Inverness
- Gather and respond to feedback through PG committee and exit interviews
- Develop a strategy for enhancing Research (PGR) student experience through monitoring and action planning.
- Provide supervisory support and mentoring on standard PhD and practise PhD routes

#### 3.3 Facilitating Interdisciplinary research

- Work across CLS and IBFC on interdisciplinary theme of Nature and People
- Engagement in the research clusters – SILK/ HARC/ MESE/ Health as relevant to researchers and thematic emphasis in the centres
- Schedule strategic/information exchange meetings in each centre in advance for inclusion of all associated research staff – regular meetings in diary for CLS and IBFC
- Work with key staff from the other centres on interdisciplinary research
- Set up a research events across the centres and UHI partners
- Submit interdisciplinary grant applications

3.4 Enhancing the profile of our research through effective communication.

- Construct and update websites with themes, projects, and profiled people
- Develop social media strategies

3.5: Ensuring that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Principles are implemented in all aspects of the Research Environment

- Specific activities will be developed alongside the emerging UHI level plan on that issue

## **Strategic objective 4: To provide opportunities and a supportive environment for academic teaching staff to develop their research and scholarship activity.**

### **Subobjectives**

4.1 Facilitate our staff to engage in research and scholarship to further inform our pedagogy and disciplinary knowledge

4.2 Diversify our sources of research and scholarship income, to ensure innovation is embedded across our tertiary curriculum.

4.3 Ensure our research centres positively influence learning and teaching across the depth and breadth of our tertiary education curriculum

### **Activities and enablers**

#### 4.1 Facilitate our staff to engage in research and scholarship to further inform our pedagogy and disciplinary knowledge

- Create 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
- Support capacity building in research skills to enhance research informed teaching
- Increasing student involvement in research e.g., through Create business competition, dissertation opportunities and internships into research programmes and the molecular lab
- Involve staff in celebrations of research/posters/presentations of research e.g. SILK research roadshow, PGR, and staff conferences.

#### 4.2 Diversify our sources of research and scholarship income, to ensure innovation is embedded across our tertiary provision

- Provide support in grant writing, budgeting, ethics applications, methodology, field work protocols, data collection and management and writing-up and monitoring of outcomes.
- Encourage staff to apply for seed funding grants such as the Research and Scholarship Scheme (RSS), Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA), KE challenge funds.

#### 4.3 Ensure our research centres positively influence learning and teaching across the depth and breadth of our tertiary education curriculum

- Identify areas across the curriculum where research-teaching linkages can be enhanced – mapping to be done by end of 2023 – with TELs in quarterly meetings.
- Develop taught Masters by research, taught Masters, professional doctorates, and practice-based doctorates to provide progression in teaching and learning
- Establish how research informed teaching can enhance experience for FE and HE students
- Recognition that research forms and integral part of professional development and meeting GCTS standards
- Delivery of entrepreneurial skill for research and academic teaching staff through enterprising researcher/educator programmes

## UHI Inverness, Research and Innovation Strategy: KPI matrix

Strategic objective	KPI	Targets	Reporting
1	Maintain a consistent output of internationally excellent research papers for all research active staff	Research active staff at least 1 peer reviewed output/ year/ FTE	RIC
	Increased numbers of staff submitted to REF2027	All academic and research staff mapped to UoAs and support mechanisms identified through PRD	RIC/REF steering group
	Increased numbers of proposals to major competitive funding calls	Each research centre to submit at least two major funding bids each year	RIC
	Increased timely submissions of PhDs	At least 80% PhD students achieve UKRI submission and completion deadlines by 2027	RIC/RDC
	Increase in PhD student numbers and supervisory capacity	Demonstrable upwards trajectory of recruitment over the course of the next 5 years	RIC
2	Increased engagement with UHI research clusters and KE groups	All research active staff to be member in at least one cluster and take up engagement and funding opportunities with KE clusters	ROG
	Increased engagement with Innovate UK	One Innovation voucher per year and 2 KTPs over the next 5 years	ROG
	Development of REF impact case studies	Identify cohesive ICS and associated impact monitoring mechanisms	RIC
	Strengthen existing partnerships SMEs/ businesses, charities, government agencies and create new ones	Mapping of links to local national and international partners and research and engagement activities	ROG/RIC
3	Active engagement in interdisciplinary seminars and research events	At least one research event with UHI partners and at least monthly research group meetings	ROG
	Providing a nurturing research culture	Demonstrating compliance with Researcher Concordat	ROG
	Effective communication of research activities	Regularly updated CLS/ IBFC websites	ROG
4	Enable progression of academic staff into research	Increase in steps of people progressing in research by position in research excellence and by points 1-4 for lecturing staff	TEL/RD meeting RIC
	Develop the PG research and taught programme portfolio	Strategy for PG research and taught provision by 2024	ROG

**Confidential**

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	<b>UHI Halls of Residence Short Life Working Group Update</b>
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Vice Principal Student Experience & Quality Lindsay Snodgrass
<b>Meeting:</b>	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	21.03.23
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	14.03.23
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	This <b>confidential paper</b> sets out an update on the working group and joint action plan for UHI halls of residence following the Anderson Strathearn review.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	Compliance Risk Management
<b>Resource implications:</b>	No If yes, please specify:
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes If yes, please specify:  Operational: protection of children and vulnerable adults Organisational: incident management, confidentiality, reputational
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes If yes, please specify: safeguarding vulnerable groups, including children, and creating a safe environment.
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	NA

## ITEM 07

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	<b>Confidential</b>		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	No		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> 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 (S20)	x
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S22)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	x
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)	X	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.)	5 years		

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

[http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

Subject/Title:	Complaints Report for Quarter 2 (Nov-Jan) 2022-23
Meeting and date:	Learning, Teaching and Research – 21 March 2024
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 <i>(delete as applicable)</i> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
Risk assessment:	Yes / No <i>(delete as applicable)</i> <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Financial: Operational: Organisational:

**Recommendation(s)**

Note

**Purpose of report**

Analysis of complaints received in Quarter 2 of 2022-23

**Background**

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

**Main body of information**

See attached

# UHI | INVERNESS

## Summary Report: Complaints 2022-23 (Q2)

### Introduction

Complaints are received all year round from several different sources although the primary source tends to be from students. Complaints are received via a variety of mechanisms including direct emails, complaints forms and the 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).

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 2022-23 for Quarter 2.

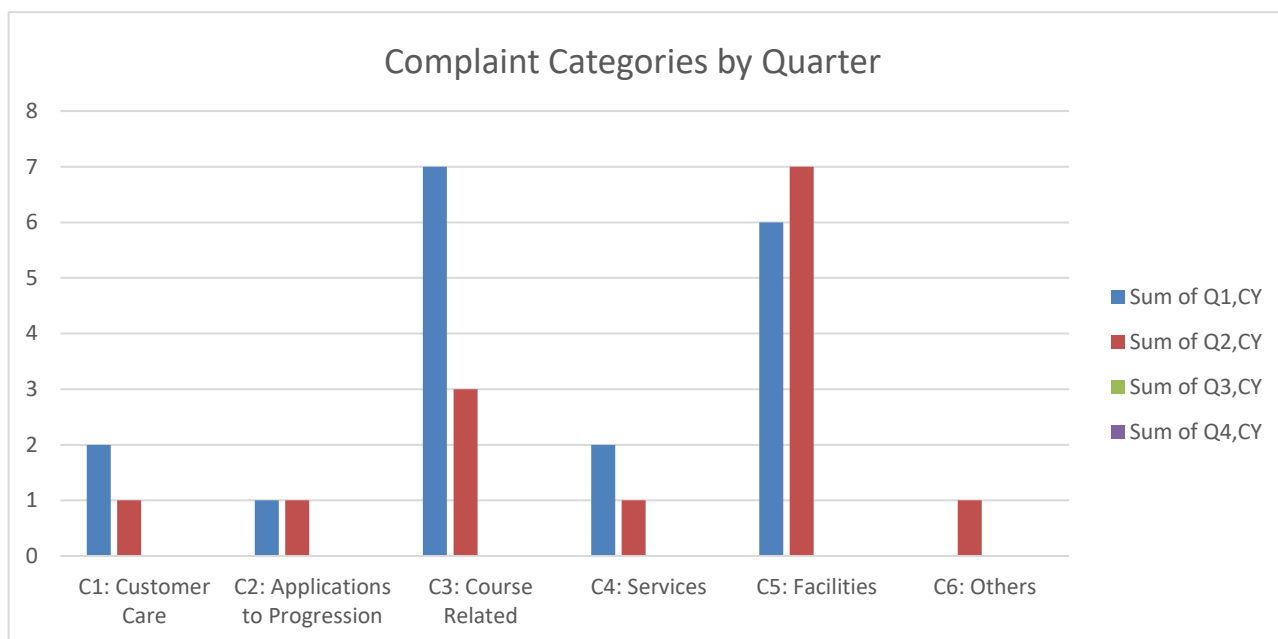
### Complaints by Category

14 complaints were received in Q1 compared to 13 received in the same quarter last year.

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

Customer Category: Current Year (Quarter) 2022/23	YTD CY	Q1,CY	Q2,CY	Q3,CY	Q4,CY
C1: Customer Care	3	2	1	0	0
C2: Applications to Progression	2	1	1	0	0
C3: Course Related	10	7	3	0	0
C4: Services	3	2	1	0	0
C5: Facilities	13	6	7	0	0
C6: Others	1	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Customer Category: Previous 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



The category of 'Facilities' received the highest number of complaints in Q2 with 7 complaints. 6 individual complaints were received from the same cohort regarding the suitability of the classroom (room 204) being used for their studies, the final complaint related to a lack of soap in a toilet. All these complaints were resolved the following day.

The category of 'Course Related' received the second highest number of complaints with 3, this compares with the 7 received in both Q1 of this year and Q2 last year. 2 complaints fell into the sub-category of 'Course Management', one of which was a concern raised by an employer regarding the delivery of an MA which was resolved the following day. The second relates to inaccuracies in course materials and a lack of support from a lecturer, this stage 2 complaint is still under investigation. The last complaint was in the sub-category of 'Other' which was resolved within a day.

The remaining categories all received 1 complaint.

In relation to the level of delivery in Q2, 71.4% of complaints relate to FE programmes, 14.3% of complaints relate to HE programmes and 14.3% of complaints came from members of the public.

## Item 10

Of the 10 FE complaints received, 6 complaints were from the same cohort concerning the suitability of a classroom for teaching, 1 complaint related to a lack of soap in one of the toilet facilities. 1 complainant felt a staff member had not responded appropriately to their concern of being threatened, 1 was a concern over an overdue invoice and 1 was a concern regarding the level of support their class was receiving.

Of the 2 HE complaints received, 1 related to insufficient support and a lack of a fair, equal and positive learning environment. The second related to inaccuracies within teaching materials plus a lack of support from their lecturer.

2 complaints were received from members of public, 1 was from an employer of a MA student with concerns over course delivery and 1 related to a lack of information available on commercial courses.

### Complaint Outcomes

The graph below details the complaint outcomes.

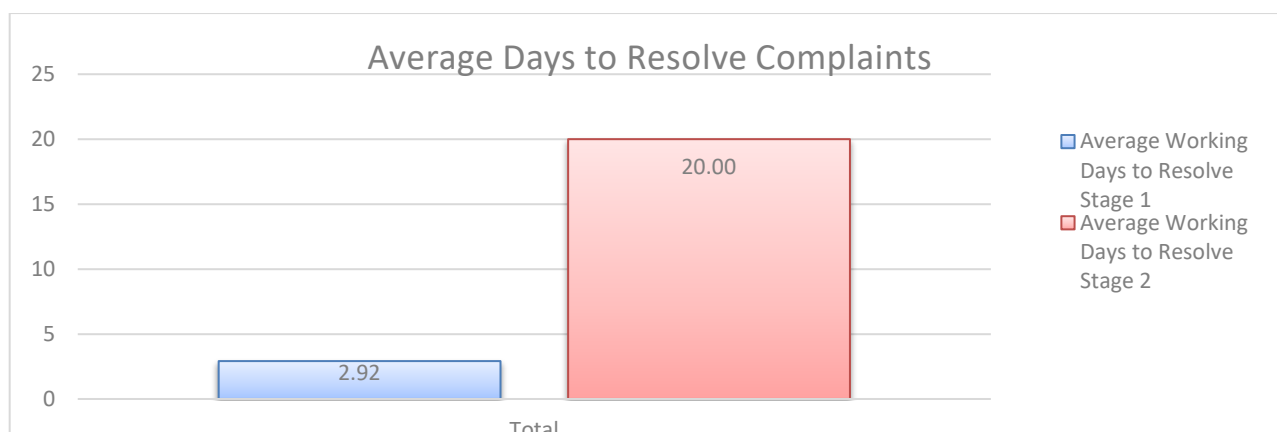
78.6% of the complaints received in Q2 had a Resolved outcome, compared to 30.7% in Q2 last year. 7% of complaints were not upheld, compared to 23% in Q2 last year. 7% of complaints have been partially upheld compared to 46% in Q2 last year. No complaints were upheld, the same as Q2 last year. One complaint (7%) is still under investigation.

2 complaints were dealt with at Stage 2 due to the nature of the complaint. 1 was Partially Upheld and 1 is still Under Investigation.

Outcome	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Resolved	11	0	11
Not upheld	1	0	1
Partially upheld	0	1	1
Upheld	0	0	0
Still under investigation	0	1	1
Withdrawn	0	0	0
Escalated to Stage 2 *	0		0

\* Received at stage 1 and escalated to stage 2. Does not include received directly at stage 2.

## Complaint Timescales



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

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in Q2 is between 1 – 8 days. Just one Stage 2 complaint had an outcome in Q2, this was completed in 20 working days.

SPSO guidelines state pre-defined timescales of a 5 working day turnaround for Stage 1, which can be extended to 10 working days if authorised by the Quality Manager. For a Stage 2 complaint the timeframe for completion is 20 working days. As part of the Stage 2 process, where the complaint is complex and may take longer than 20 working days, an extension can be authorised by the Quality Manager, should this happen updates must be provided to complainants.

Two complaints exceeded the 5 day turnaround for a Stage 1 complaint however both were completed within the 10 day extensions agreed. No Stage 2 complaints exceeded the 20 working day timeframe, 1 complaint is still under investigation and at the time of preparing this report is within the 20 days permitted.

## Complaint Follow Up Survey

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

Just one response was received in Q2. The respondent was not initially aware of the complaints process but subsequently found the process easy, received prompt responses and was satisfied that the complaint was dealt with fairly and was thoroughly investigated. No additional comments were left.

## 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

## Item 10

learning points from each complaint in order to identify themes emerging. Programme and support teams use complaints as part of their evidence bank to inform their evaluative activities aimed at improving the student experience.

Below are examples of actions taken as a result of complaints received in Q2:

- An investigation into the processes and communications for promoting commercial plumbing courses is ongoing with a review due at the end of February 2023
- An ESOL class timetabled to use room 204 has been rescheduled to a different room as 204 has no Smart Board or White Board.
- A focus group was arranged to clarify concerns from students struggling with course work and access to funding.