UHI | INVERNESS

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 09 June 2026 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Microsoft Teams

Governance Officer
06 June 2026

AGENDA

The timings on this agenda are indicative only and may extend beyond times highlighted.

Welcome and Apologies

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

16:30 – 16:45 **CREATIVE SPACE SESSION – RESEARCH**

Presentation by staff from Centre for Living Sustainability

Case studies: Scottish Prison Service

ITEMS FOR DECISION

16:45 – 17:00 **1) HISA REPORT**
Report by Director of Student Engagement & Representation

a) Proposed Revised Articles of Association

17:00 – 17:05 **2) MINUTES**
a.) Minutes of the LTR Committee Meeting held on 10 March 2026
b.) Confidential Note (CN-01-032026) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 10 March 2025

17:05 – 17:10 **3) OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

17:10 – 17:20 **4) POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality

a) Harm Reduction Policy
b) Essential Skills Policy

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

17:20 – 17:30 **5) STUDENT RETENTION OUTCOMES FORECAST FOR FE & HNs REPORT**
Joint Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality and Management Information Systems Manager

17:30 – 17:40 **6) RESEARCH UPDATE – HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES**
Verbal report by Director – Centre for Living Sustainability & Director of Research – Biodiversity & Freshwater

17:40 – 17:50 **7) KPI MATRIX**
Report by Head of Operations and Business Performance

17:50 – 18:00 **8) EQUALITIES REPORT**
Verbal report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality and Access

18:00 – 18:05 **9) QAA QUALITY ENGAGEMENT VISIT**
Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality & Head of Registry & Quality Enhancement

18:05 – 18:15 **10) HISA END OF YEAR SUMMARY REPORT (Inc. HISA elections)**
Report by HISA

18:15 – 18:20 **11) END OF YEAR STUDENT SURVEY (SSES)**
Report by Head of Registry & Quality Enhancement & Quality Officer lead

18:20 – 18:25 **12) SENIOR PHASE & GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE**
Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality & Tertiary Education Leaders

FOR NOTING

18:25 – 18:25 **13) COMMITTEE & CHAIR EVALUATION PROCESS**
Report by Governance Officer

18:25 – 18:25 **14) QUARTER 3 - COMPLAINTS REPORT**
Report by Head of Registry and Quality Enhancement

18:25 – 18:25 **15) HISA REPORTS**
Report by Director of Student Engagement & Representation

a) 2026 HISA Elections Report
b) 2026 HISA Referendums Report

18:25 – 18:25 **16) MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES – CONFIDENTIAL**

a) Approved Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 25 March 20226
b) Approved Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 22 April 2026
c) Draft Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 20 May 2026
d) Minutes of the Research & Innovation Committee tbc & to follow

18:25 – 18:30 **17) AOCB**

18) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
LTR Committee Meeting – 08 September 2026

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.

ITEM 01.

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Subject/Title:	Proposed Revised Articles of Association
Author: [Name and Job title]	Simon Varwell, Director of Student Engagement & Representation
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	29 May 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	A primary purpose of this work was to address information that was missing, outdated, conflicting and contradictory, or unnecessarily complex and duplicating. This "tidying up" exercise aimed broadly not to substantively change our current structures, but merely to express them in a clearer, more readable and more useable manner. At the same time, a small number of minor adjustments have been made, including: 1. The restructure of our Student Officer team (including the removal of the HTC Depute President). 2. The adjustment of our Trustee Board chair role to now sit with an independent member rather than the President. This change reflects good practice and aims to strengthen our governance by allowing an external trustee who is in place for more than one year to help ensure continuity and consistency whilst allowing the elected President to be the vice-chair. This arrangement is seen in the majority of other students' associations in Scotland and is supported in the latest Code of Governance for Students' Unions. Given the workload of the President, the HISA Trustee Board and Executive Committee supported this change as a means of encouraging applicants to the Cross-Campus Officer roles. 3. Continuing to set referendum thresholds at 200 students participating and which reflects current experiences.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Approval

Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: □ compliance □ partnership services □ risk management □ strategic plan □ new opportunity/change	Compliance, Partnership Services & Strategic Plan
Resource implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No **If yes, please specify:**
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

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

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

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

Revised HISA Articles of Association

This paper presents HISA's revised Articles of Association for approval by each of its institutional governing bodies.

The revision is the culmination of a major undertaking begun during the 2024-25 academic year to develop revised governing documents. The documents have been approved by a referendum and Annual All-Student Meeting, and by our Trustee Board and a Special Resolution passed by our Company Law Meeting (21 May 2026).

A primary purpose of this work was to address information that was missing, outdated, conflicting and contradictory, or unnecessarily complex and duplicating. This "tidying up" exercise aimed broadly **not** to substantively change our current structures, but merely to express them in a clearer, more readable and more useable manner. At the same time, a small number of minor adjustments have been made, including:

1. The restructure of our Student Officer team (including the removal of the HTC Depute President).
2. The adjustment of our Trustee Board chair role to now sit with an independent member rather than the President. This change reflects good practice and aims to strengthen our governance by allowing an external trustee who is in place for more than one year to help ensure continuity and consistency whilst allowing the elected President to be the vice-chair. This arrangement is seen in the majority of other students' associations in Scotland and is supported in the latest Code of Governance for Students' Unions. Given the workload of the President, the HISA Trustee Board and Executive Committee supported this change as a means of encouraging applicants to the Cross-Campus Officer roles.
3. Continuing to set referendum thresholds at 200 students participating and which reflects current experiences.

The background to the role of the Association and its need to remain accountable to the University and each Academic Partner remains unchanged.

We welcome broader feedback as to how future revisions of the Articles of Association can help enhance engagement of our diverse student membership in shaping the policies and priorities of HISA.

The HISA Trustee Board have requested ratification of the updated Articles of Association with the aim to complete this process by the 30th June 2026 in order to allow a sound, stable and clear basis for constitutional functioning for 2026-27.

Xander McDade
Chair of Trustees/Student President
Highlands and Islands Students' Association
29 May 2026

The Companies Act 2006

Company Limited by Guarantee and not Having a Share Capital

Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Highlands and Islands Students' Association

To be adopted following ratification by the Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands and by Academic Partners HISA Company Law Meeting Special Resolution, 21st May 2026

HISA is a registered charity (SC046142) and represents the students at the University of the Highlands and Islands, and their academic partners.

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Table of Contents and Comments

Part One: Key Constitutional Provisions — Page 3

This section describes the organisation, its purpose, the activities it can engage in and the boundaries of its work. It describes what happens if the organisation was to be dissolved and how the memorandum and articles can be amended.

It also includes a table of definitions and interpretations.

Part Two: Members — Page 11

This section describes who the members of the Students' Association are.

Part Three: Meetings — Page 15

This section describes how various meetings of the Association (Referendum, Annual All Student Meetings, All Student Meetings, Company Law meetings) are called and what business will take place within them.

Part Four: Trustees — Page 18

This section describes who the Trustees are, how they are appointed, how they can be removed and their powers.

Part Five: Executive Committee — Page 23

This section describes who the Executive Committee are, how they are appointed, how they can be removed and their powers.

Part Six: Decision Making by Trustees — Page 24

This section lays out how Trustee meetings will be called and run and how trustees can make decisions.

Part Seven: Administrative Arrangements and Miscellaneous Provision — Page 28

This section deals with miscellaneous issues.

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HISA is a registered charity (SC046142) and represents the students at the University of the Highlands and Islands, and their academic partners.

The Companies Act 2006 Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital

Articles of Association of the Highlands and Islands Students' Association

BACKGROUND

A The Highlands and Islands Students' Association (the "Association") is a Students' Union within the meaning of the Education Act 1994 (formed in accordance with Article 19.1 of the University's Articles of Association) and is the eligible body to nominate students to the Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI).

The Highlands and Islands Students' Association will represent the interests of all students (FE and HE) at the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners at a cross-campus level. The Association will also represent the local interests of all students at those academic partners whose representative structures are part of the Association as outlined in the Schedules to these Articles.

B The Association will seek at all times to:

(i) ensure that the diversity of its Student Membership is recognised and that equal access is available to all Student Members of whatever origin or orientation;

(ii) pursue its aims and objectives independent of any political party or religious group; and

(iii) pursue equal opportunities by taking positive action within the law to facilitate participation of groups discriminated against by society.

C These Articles have been structured to give the Board of Trustees reasonable authority to manage the affairs of the Association in a professional manner. The Student Members enjoy the right, which must be exercised in accordance with charity law, to elect a proportion of the Trustees and to dismiss all of the Trustees. The Board of Trustees will give the utmost consideration to the views of Student Members.

D Under the Education Act 1994, the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners have a statutory duty to ensure that the Association operates in a fair and democratic manner and is held to proper account for its finances. The Association therefore works alongside the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners in ensuring that the affairs of the Association are properly conducted and that the educational and welfare needs of the Association's Student Members are met.

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Part One
Key Constitutional Provisions

1. Definitions and Interpretation

1.1 The meanings of any defined terms used in these Articles are set out below. If any dispute arises in relation to the interpretation of these Articles or any of the Schedules, it shall be resolved by the Student President or, where appropriate, a nominee appointed by them. Any appeal to their interpretation must be directed to the Board of Trustees who shall make a final ruling.

Term	Meaning
Academic Year	the period between 1st July in one year to 30th June in the following year;
Address	includes a postal or physical address and a number or address used for the purpose of sending or receiving documents by Electronic Means;
Appointments Committee	the committee set up in accordance with the Schedules;
Articles	these Articles of Association for the Students' Association; the governing document outlining what we do;
Association	the Highlands and Islands Students' Association, also known as HISA;
Board of Trustees or Board	the Board of Trustees of the Association;
Chair	the chair of the Board of Trustees, who shall be appointed in accordance with Article [47.1];
Chair of the meeting	in the case of Trustees' meetings means the person chairing the meeting in accordance with Article [47];
Circulation Date	in relation to a written resolution, has the meaning given to it in the Companies Acts;
Clear days	in relation to the period of a notice, that period excluding the day when the notice is given or deemed to be given and the day for which it is given or on which it is to take effect;
Code of Practice	the code of practice relating to the University of the Highlands and Islands' and its academic partners' obligations under Section 22 of the Education Act;
Companies Acts	means the Companies Acts (as defined in Section 2 of the Companies Act 2006), in so far as they apply to the Association;
Company Law Meeting	a general meeting of the Company Law Members of the Association for the purposes of the Companies Acts;
Company Law members	members of the Association for the purposes of the Companies Acts, as defined in Article [13];
Connected person	any person falling within one of the following categories and where payment to that person might result in the Trustee obtaining benefit: a) any spouse, civil partner, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent or grandchild of a Trustee; or b) the spouse or civil partner of any person in (a); or c) any person living with a Trustee or their partner; or d) any company or LLP or firm of which a Trustee is a paid director, member, partner or employee, or shareholder holding more than 1% of the capital;

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Cross-Campus Officer Trustee	a Trustee elected in accordance with Article [25], often referred to as a Cross-Campus Officer;
Deputy Chair	the deputy chair of the Board of Trustees, who shall be the Student President in accordance with Article [47.2];
Document	includes summons, notice, order or other legal process and includes, unless otherwise specified, any document sent or supplied in Electronic Form;
Education Act	the Education Act 1994;
Elected Officers	the Cross-Campus Officer Trustees and Local Officers elected under the Schedules;
Electronic Form and Electronic Means	have the meanings respectively given to them in Section 1168 of the Companies Act 2006;
(the) Executive Committee	means the committee comprising the Cross-Campus Officer Trustees and the Local Officers as further described in Article [37];
External Trustee	a Trustee appointed in accordance with Article [27.1] who for the avoidance of doubt shall not be deemed to be either a major Association office holder or a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee for the purposes of Section 22 of the Education Act;
Financial expert	an individual, company or firm who is authorised to give investment advice under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000;
Hard Copy and Hard Copy Form	have the meanings respectively given to them in the Companies Act 2006;
Local Officers	the Student Members elected in accordance with the Schedules to be Student Officers at the academic partners of UHI;
Members	the Student Members and the Company Law Members;
Positional Policy	representative and campaigning policy set by Referenda in accordance with Article [20] and schedules respectively or by the Student Members at an Annual All Student Meeting or an All Student Meeting in accordance with Article [21] and the schedules;
RAG	the Raising And Giving society which develops students by providing them with an opportunity to raise funds for charitable causes;
Referendum	a ballot in which all Student Members of the Association are entitled to cast a vote, the protocol for which shall be set out in the Schedules;
Schedules	a document outlining the working practices of the Association made from time to time in accordance with Article [52];
Secure Petition	a written request to the Association which shall be fixed in a prearranged place or places or held securely on-line;
Senior Manager	the senior manager of the Association who is appointed by the Board of Trustees;
Student	any individual who is formally registered for an approved programme of study provided by the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners. For the avoidance of doubt, the relevant institution shall determine whether or not an individual has student status;
Student Trustee	a Trustee elected in accordance with Article [26] who is a Student and who, for the avoidance of doubt, shall not be a major Association office holder for the purposes of Section 22 of the Education Act;
Student Members	student members of the Association as defined in Article [11];

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Subsidiary Company	any company in which the Association holds more than 50% of the shares, controls more than 50% of the voting rights attached to the shares or has the right to appoint a majority of the board of the company;
Trustee and Trustees	the directors of the Association as defined in Article [24]; and
Writing	the representation or reproduction of words, symbols or other information in a visible form by any method or combination of methods, whether sent or supplied in Electronic Form or otherwise

1.2 This constitution uses the gender-neutral pronouns “they”, “their” and “them” throughout the document.

1.3 Subject to Article [1.4], any reference in these Articles to an enactment includes a reference to that enactment as re-enacted or amended from time to time and to any subordinate legislation made under it.

1.4 Unless the context otherwise requires, other words or expressions contained in these Articles bear the same meaning as in the Companies Act 2006 as in force on the date when these Articles become binding on the Association.

2. Name

The name of the company is the Highlands and Islands Students’ Association. In these Articles it is called “the Association”.

3. Registered Office

The registered office of the Association is situated in Scotland.

4. Objects

The objects of the Association are the advancement of education of students at the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners for the public benefit by:

4.1 working to enhance the teaching and learning experience of students at the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners by organising, supporting and promoting the role of students, and working in partnership with the relevant institutions and its staff;

4.2 promoting the interests and welfare of students during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising students;

4.3 being the recognised representative channel between students and the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners and any other external bodies;

4.4 providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities, and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students; and

4.5 being the recognised representative body that represents students to the University of the Highlands and Islands as the regional strategic body for further education in the Highlands and Islands.

5. Powers

To further its objects, but not to further any other purpose, the Association may:

5.1 provide services and facilities for Student Members;

5.2 establish, support, promote and operate a network of student activities for Student Members;

5.3 support any Raising & Giving (RAG) or similar fundraising activities carried out by its Student Members for charitable causes, including the provision of administrative support, banking facilities andacting as a holding trustee of any funds raised;

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5.4 alone or with other organisations:

5.4.1 carry out campaigning activities;

5.4.2 seek to influence public opinion; and

5.4.3 make representations to and seek to influence governmental and other bodies and institutions regarding the reform, development and implementation of appropriate policies, legislation and regulations, provided that all such activities shall be confined to the activities which a Scottish charity may properly undertake and provided that the Association complies with the Education Act and any guidance published by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR);

5.5 write, make, commission, print, publish or distribute materials or information or assist in these activities;

5.6 promote, initiate, develop or carry out education and training and arrange, provide or assist with exhibitions, lectures, meetings, seminars, displays or classes;

5.7 promote, encourage, carry out or commission research, surveys, studies or other work and publish the useful results;

5.8 provide or appoint others to provide advice, guidance, representation and advocacy;

5.9 co-operate with other charities and bodies and exchange information and advice with them;

5.10 become a member, affiliate or associate of other charities and bodies;

5.11 support, set up or amalgamate with other charities with objects identical or similar to the Association's objects, and act as or appoint trustees, agents, nominees or delegates to control and manage such charities (including without limitation to act as trustee of any charitable trust of permanent endowment property held for any of the charitable purposes included in the Association's objects);

5.12 purchase or acquire all or any of the property, assets, liabilities and engagements of any charity with objects similar to the Association's objects;

5.13 pay out of the funds of the Association the costs of forming and registering the Association;

5.14 raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person, provided that the Association shall not carry out any taxable trading activities out with the recommendations of OSCR in raising funds;

5.15 borrow and raise money on such terms and security as the Association may think suitable including for the purposes of investment or of raising funds in accordance with the restrictions imposed by the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005;

5.16 purchase, lease, hire or receive property of any kind including land, buildings and equipment and maintain and equip it for use;

5.17 sell, manage, lease, mortgage, exchange, dispose of or deal with all or any of its property;

5.18 make grants or loans of money and give guarantees;

5.19 set aside funds for special purposes or as reserves against future expenditure;

5.20 invest and deal with the Association's money not immediately required for its objects in or upon any investments, securities, or property;

5.21 delegate the management of investments to an appropriately experienced and qualified financial expert provided that:

5.21.1 the investment policy is set down in writing for the financial expert by the Trustees;

5.21.2 every transaction is reported promptly to the Trustees;

5.21.3 the performance of the investments is reviewed regularly by the Trustees;

5.21.4 the Trustees are entitled to cancel the delegation at any time;

5.21.5 the investment policy and the delegation arrangements are reviewed at least once a year;

5.21.6 all payments due to the financial expert are on a scale or at a level which is agreed in advance and are notified promptly to the Trustees on receipt; and

DRAFT

5.21.7 the financial expert may not do anything outside the powers of the Trustees;

5.22 arrange for investments or other property of the Association to be held in the name of a nominee (being a company or a limited liability partnership registered or having an established place of business in the United Kingdom) under the control of the Trustees or a financial expert acting under their instructions and to pay any reasonable fee required;

5.23 lend money and give credit to, take security for such loans or credit and guarantee or give security for the performance of contracts by any person or company;

5.24 open and operate banking accounts and other facilities for banking and draw, accept, endorse, negotiate, discount, issue or execute negotiable instruments such as promissory notes or bills of exchange;

5.25 trade in the course of carrying out any of its objects and carry on any other trade which is not expected to give rise to taxable profits;

5.26 establish or acquire subsidiary companies to carry on any trade;

5.27 subject to Article [6] (Limitation on private benefits), employ and pay employees and professionals or other advisors;

5.28 grant pensions and retirement benefits to employees of the Association and to their dependents and subscribe to funds or schemes for providing pensions and retirement benefits for employees of the Association and their dependents;

5.29 pay out of the funds of the Association the cost of any premium in respect of any indemnity insurance to cover the liability of the Trustees (or any of them) which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default, breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Association, including without limitation any liability to make a contribution to the Association's assets as specified in section 214 of the Insolvency Act 1986 (wrongful trading), provided that no such insurance shall extend to:

5.2.9.1 any claim arising from any liability incurred by the Trustees to pay a fine imposed in criminal proceedings or a sum payable to a regulatory authority by way of a penalty in respect of non-compliance with any requirement of a regulatory nature (however arising);

5.2.9.2 any liability incurred by the Trustees in defending any criminal proceedings in which the Trustees are convicted of an offence arising out of any fraud or dishonesty, or wilful or reckless misconduct;

5.2.9.3 any liability incurred by the Trustees to the Association that arises out of any conduct which the Trustees knew (or must reasonably be assumed to have known) was not in the interests of the Association or in the case of which they did not care whether it was in the best interests of the Association or not; or

5.29.4 in relation to any liability to make a contribution to the Association's assets as specified in section 214 of the Insolvency Act 1986, any liability to make such a contribution where the basis of the Trustee's liability is their knowledge prior to the insolvent liquidation of the Association (or reckless failure to acquire that knowledge) that there was no reasonable prospect that the Association would avoid going into insolvent liquidation; and

5.30 do all such other lawful things as shall further the Association's objects.

6. Limitation on private benefits

6.1 The income and property of the Association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of its objects.

6.2 Except as provided below no part of the income and property of the Association may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise by way of profit to any Member of the Association. This shall not prevent any payment in good faith by the Association of:

6.2.1 any payments made to any Member in their capacity as a beneficiary of the Association;

6.2.2 reasonable and proper remuneration to any Member for any goods or services supplied to the Association provided that if such Member is a Trustee Article [6.3] shall apply;

6.2.3 interest on money lent by any Member to the Association at a reasonable and proper rate;

6.2.4 any reasonable and proper rent for premises let by any Member to the Association.

6.3 Except as provided below no Trustee may sell goods, services or any interest in land to the Association; be employed by, or receive any remuneration from, the Association; or receive any other financial benefit from the Association. This shall not prevent any payment in good faith by the Association of:

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6.3.1 any payments made to any Trustee or Connected Person in their capacity as a beneficiary of the Association;

6.3.2 reasonable and proper out of pocket expenses of the Trustees;

6.3.3 reasonable and proper remuneration to any Cross-Campus Officer Trustee or Connected Person for any goods or services supplied to the Association on the instructions of the Trustees provided that:

6.3.3.1 for the avoidance of doubt, the authorisation under this provision shall extend to the remuneration of Cross-Campus Officer Trustees and Connected Persons under contracts of employment with the Association;

6.3.3.2 subject to Article [6.3.3.1], the authorisation under this provision shall not extend to the service of acting as Trustee;

6.3.3.3 if the person being remunerated is a Trustee the procedure described in Article [50] (Conflicts of Interest) must be followed in considering the appointment of the Trustee and in relation to any other decisions regarding the remuneration authorised by this provision;

6.3.3.4 if the person being remunerated is a Connected Person the procedure described in Article [50] (Conflicts of Interest) must be followed by the relevant Trustee in relation to any decisions regarding such Connected Person;

6.3.3.5 subject to Article [6.5], this provision may not apply to more than half of the Trustees (and for these purposes such provision shall be treated as applying to a Trustee if it applies to a person who is a Connected Person in relation to that Trustee); and

6.3.3.6 at all times the provisions of the Education Act and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 are complied with;

6.3.4 interest on money lent by any Trustee or Connected Person to the Association at a reasonable and proper rate;

6.3.5 any reasonable and proper rent for premises let by any Trustee or Connected Person to the Association;

6.3.6 reasonable and proper premiums in respect of indemnity insurance effected in accordance with Article [5.29];

6.3.7 any payments made to any Trustee or officer under the indemnity provisions set out at Article [60]; and

6.3.8 any payments authorised in writing by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

6.4 For any transaction authorised by Article [6.3], the Trustee's duty (arising under the Companies Act 2006) to avoid a conflict of interest with the Association shall be disapplied provided the relevant provisions of Article [6.3] have been complied with.

6.5 Where a vacancy arises on the Board of Trustees with the result that Article [6.3.3] applies to less than half of the Trustees, the Association may continue to pay remuneration to its Cross-Campus Officer Trustees and any Connected Persons receiving remuneration in accordance with Article [6.3.3] provided that the Association uses all reasonable endeavours to fill the vacancy as soon as possible.

7. Liability of Company Law Members

The liability of each Company Law Member is limited to £1, being the amount that each Company Law Member undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Association in the event of its being wound up while they are a Company Law Member or within one year after they cease to be a Company Law Member, for:

7.1 payment of the Association's debts and liabilities contracted before they cease to be a Company Law Member;

7.2 payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up; and

7.3 adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.

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8. Dissolution

If any property remains after the Association has been wound up or dissolved and all debts and liabilities have been satisfied, it shall not be paid to or distributed among the Members of the Association. It shall instead be given or transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having similar objects to those of the Association and which prohibits the distribution of its or their income and property among its or their members to an extent at least as great as these Articles impose upon the Association. The institution or institutions which are to benefit shall be chosen by the Trustees of the Association at or before the time of winding up or dissolution.

9. Reviewing and amending the Articles

9.1 The Trustees and the Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands shall be required to review the provisions of the Association's Articles of Association at intervals of no more than five years.

9.2 Any amendment to the Association's Articles of Association shall require the following:

9.2.1 A resolution passed at an All Student meeting or in a Referendum by a two thirds majority vote approving the Proposal or the Proposal(s) (as the case may be);

9.2.2 A special resolution of the Company Law Members making the amendments to the Articles that have been approved by resolution of the Student Members in accordance with Article [9.2.1];

9.2.3 Approval at a convened meeting of representatives of Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands, subject to ratification of Court in its entirety.

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Part Two
Members

10. Members of the Association

10.1 The Members of the Association shall be as follows:

10.1.1 Student Members; and

10.1.2 Company Law Members.

10.2 The Association may also have the following associate members:

10.2.1 Student Associate Members in accordance with Article [15].; and

10.2.2 Non-Student Associate Members in accordance with Article [16].

BECOMING AND CEASING TO BE A STUDENT MEMBER

11. Student Members

11.1 The Student Members of the Association shall be as follows:

11.1.1 each and every Student aged 16 and over registered with the academic partners whose representation structures are part of the Association, who has not opted out by notifying the University of the Highlands and Islands Student Records Office of their wish not to be a Student Member of the Association; and

11.1.2 the Cross-Campus Officer Trustees of the Association; and

11.1.3 the full-time Local Officers of the Association.

11.2 A register of students who have opted out of membership of the Association in accordance with these Articles shall be maintained by the University of the Highlands and Islands.

12. Termination of Student Membership

12.1 Student Membership shall not be transferable and shall cease on death. A Student Member shall cease to be a Student Member of the Association if:

12.1.1 they cease to be a student. For the avoidance of doubt, this will include the situation where a Student Member's Student status with the University of the Highlands and Islands or its academic partners is revoked by the University of the Highlands and Islands or its academic partners;

12.1.2 they cease to be a Cross-Campus Student Officer; or

12.1.3 they cease to be a full-time Local Officer; or

12.1.4 they opt out of Student Membership by giving written notice to the University of the Highlands and Islands Student Records Office; or

12.1.5 a decision is made to remove them from Student Membership of the Association in accordance with the Association's Code of Conduct or the Disciplinary Procedure for Members Schedule.

12.2 Any student who has exercised their right to opt out of Student Membership shall not be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of Association services or otherwise, by reason of having done so.

12.3 Any student who has exercised their right to opt out shall not be permitted to engage with the democratic governance structures of the Association.

BECOMING AND CEASING TO BE A COMPANY LAW MEMBER

13. Trustees as Company Law Members

13.1 The Trustees from time to time shall be the only Company Law Members of the Association.

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13.2 A Trustee shall become a Company Law Member on becoming a Trustee.

13.3 The names of the Company Law Members of the Association shall be entered in the register of Company Law Members.

14. Termination of Company Law Membership

14.1 A Company Law Member shall cease to be a Company Law Member if they cease to be a Trustee.

14.2 Company Law Membership is not transferable and shall cease on death.

BECOMING AND CEASING TO BE ASSOCIATE MEMEBERS

15. Student Associate Members

15.1 Students registered with academic partners that maintain independent students' associations are not Student Members of the Association.

15.2 Students registered with academic partners that maintain independent students' associations have a category of membership, Student Associate Member, that enables them to be represented by the Highlands and Islands Students' Association at a cross-campus level.

15.3 This category of membership enables these students to fully participate in all Association business in relation to cross-campus matters. This includes Cross-Campus Officer Trustee elections, committees, referenda, petitions and any other cross-campus activity delivered by the Association.

15.4 Under agreement between the Highlands and Islands Students' Association and these independent students' associations, some services may be shared.

15.5 Student Associate Membership shall not be transferable and shall cease on death. A Student Associate Member shall cease to be a Student Member of the Association if:

15.5.1 they cease to be a Student. For the avoidance of doubt, this will include the situation where a Student Associate Member's Student status with the University of the Highlands and Islands or its academic partners is revoked by the University of the Highlands and Islands or its academic partners;

15.5.2 they opt out of Student Associate Membership by giving written notice to the University of the Highlands and Islands Student Records Office; or

15.5.3 a decision is made to remove their Student Association Membership in accordance with the Association's Code of Conduct or the Disciplinary Procedure for Members Schedule.

16. Non-Student Associate members

16.1 The Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) may establish such classes of Non-Student Associate Membership with such description and with such rights and obligations as they think fit and may admit and remove such Non-Student Associate Members in accordance with the Schedules provided that no such Non-Student Associate Members shall be Members of the Association for the purposes of the Articles or the Companies Acts.

16.2 Non-Student Associate Members shall not be Members for the purposes of these Articles and shall not be entitled to vote on any matter.

MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

17. Rights Of Membership

17.1 Student Members of the Association shall be entitled to;

17.1.1 Engage with the Association's democratic functions;

17.1.2 Utilise the social facilities administered by the Association;

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17.1.3 Access the services and support facilities provided by the Association;

17.1.4 Join registered student groups (for example Sport Clubs and Societies) subject to the conditions of membership of such groups;

17.1.5 Engage in the democratic functions of student groups of which they are members;

17.1.6 Represent the organisation in competitive sport including, but not limited to, BUCS competitions subject to qualification conditions of each sporting body;

17.1.7 Be represented by the Association on academic issues and any other relevant issues that arise as a result of their student status; and

17.1.8 Attend Company Law Meetings as observers at the invitation of the Chair.

17.2 Company Law Members shall be entitled to;

17.2.1 Participate in Company Law meetings subject to their rules and regulations;

17.2.2 Utilise the social facilities administered by the Association;

17.2.3 Access the publicly available services provided by the Association (unless otherwise stated); and

17.2.4 Join registered student groups (for example Sport Clubs and Societies) subject to the conditions of non-student membership of such groups and the approval of their committee.

17.3 Student Associate Members shall be entitled to;

17.3.1 Engage with the Association's cross-campus democratic functions;

17.3.2 Utilise the social facilities administered by the Association;

17.3.3 Access the services and support facilities provided by the Association;

17.3.4 Join registered student groups (for example Sport Clubs and Societies) subject to the conditions of membership of such groups;

17.3.5 Engage in the democratic functions of student groups of which they are members;

17.3.6 Represent the organisation in competitive sport including, but not limited to, BUCS competitions subject to qualification conditions of each sporting body;

17.3.7 Be represented by the Association on academic issues and any other relevant issues that arise as a result of their student status; and

17.3.8 Attend Company Law Meetings as observers at the invitation of the Chair.

17.4 Non-Student Associate Members shall be entitled to;

17.4.1 Utilise the social facilities administered by the Association;

17.4.2 Access the publicly available services provided by the Association (unless otherwise stated);

17.4.3 Join registered student groups (for example Sports Clubs and Societies) subject to the conditions of Non-Student Associate Membership of such groups and the approval of their committee; and

17.4.4 Attend Company Law Meetings as observers at the invitation of the Chair.

18. Responsibilities Of Membership

18.1 All types of membership shall be subject to the Articles, Schedules and Policies of the Students' Association including the Code of Conduct.

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19. Code of Conduct

19.1 The Board of Trustees will establish and monitor a “code of conduct” that all Student Members and all Student Associate Members shall be required to adhere to, including when Student Members are involved in activities or at events that are administered or organised by the Association.

19.2 The code of conduct may include a range of sanctions for breach of the code of conduct by a Student Member or a Student Associate Member, including the suspension or removal of any or all of the rights and privileges of Student Membership or Student Associate Membership, including the holding of office.

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Part Three
Meetings

20. Referendums

20.1 A Referendum may be called on any issue by:

20.1.1 a resolution of the Trustees; or

20.1.2 a majority vote of the Annual All Student Meeting; or

20.1.3 a majority vote of the All Student Meeting; or

20.1.4 A Secure Petition signed by at least 100 Student Members and/ or Associate Student Members

20.2 Subject to Article [31.1.2], a resolution may only be passed by Referendum if at least 200 Student Members and/ or Associate Student Members cast a vote in the Referendum and a majority of the votes cast are in favour of the resolution.

20.3 Referenda shall be conducted in accordance with these Articles and the Schedules.

20.4 Subject to Article [33.3], the Student Members may set Positional Policy by Referendum. Policy set by Referendum may overturn Positional Policy set by an Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or an All Student Meeting (ASM).

21. Annual All Student Meetings

21.1 The Association shall hold an Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) each Academic Year which shall be called and held in accordance with these Articles and the Schedules. The Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) shall be held at such time and place as the Trustees shall think suitable to allow the maximum number of Student Members to attend.

21.2 The Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) shall, but is not limited to:

21.2.1 represent the voice of the Students;

21.2.2 ratify minutes of the previous Annual Student Members' Meeting (AASM);

21.2.3 receive the annual Trustee report and / or an overview of the Association's activities since the previous Annual All Student Meeting (AASM);

21.2.4 receive the accounts of the Association for the previous financial year;

21.2.5 subject to Article [33.3], set the Positional Policy of the Association and refer Positional Policy to Referenda of the Student Members;

21.2.6 ratify the decisions made by the Appointments and Remunerations Committee relating to the appointment of Student Trustees and External Trustees in accordance with Articles [26] and [27.1];

21.2.7 scrutinise the activity of the elected Student Officers;

21.2.8 question the Trustees;

21.2.9 make, repeal and amend the Schedules jointly with the Trustees in accordance with Article [52];

21.2.10 approve the list of affiliations of the Association; and

21.2.11 appoint Non-Student Associate Members in accordance with Article [16] and the Schedules

21.3 The Association may hold additional All Student Meetings (ASMs) in addition to the Annual All Student Meeting (AASM). Such meetings shall be called and held in accordance with the Schedules.

21.4 For the avoidance of doubt, any Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM) held under this Article [21] shall not be a Company Law Meeting of the Association for the purposes of the Companies Acts.

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22. Company Law Meetings

22.1 The Trustees may call a Company Law Meeting at any time.

22.2 Such meetings must be held in accordance with the provisions regarding such meetings in the Companies Acts.

22.2 A Company Law Meeting will only be required where the Association wishes to pass a company law resolution (other than by way of written resolution) in accordance with the Articles and/or the Companies Acts, for example a resolution to amend the Association's Articles of Association.

23. Written Resolutions

23.1 Subject to this Article [23], a written resolution agreed by:

23.1.1 Company Law Members representing a simple majority; or

23.1.2 (in the case of a special resolution) Company Law Members representing not less than 75%;

of the total voting rights of eligible Company Law Members shall be effective.

23.2 On a written resolution each Company Law Member shall have one vote.

23.3 A written resolution is not a special resolution unless it stated that it was proposed as a special resolution.

Circulation

23.4 A copy of the proposed written resolution must be sent to every eligible Company Law Member together with a statement informing the Company Law Member how to signify their agreement and the date by which the resolution must be passed if it is not to lapse.

23.5 In relation to a resolution proposed as a written resolution of the Association the eligible Company Law Members are the Company Law Members who would have been entitled to vote on the resolution on the Circulation Date of the resolution.

23.6 The required majority of eligible Company Law Members must signify their agreement to the written resolution within the period of 28 days beginning with the Circulation Date.

23.7 Communications in relation to written resolutions must be sent to the Association's auditors in accordance with the Companies Acts.

Signifying agreement

23.8 A Company Law Member signifies their agreement to a proposed written resolution when the Association receives from them (or from someone acting on their behalf) an authenticated document:

23.8.1 identifying the resolution to which it relates; and

23.8.2 indicating the Company Law Member's agreement to the resolution.

23.9 For the purposes of Article [23.8]:

23.9.1 a document sent or supplied in Hard Copy Form is sufficiently authenticated if it is signed by the person sending or supplying it; and

23.9.2 a document sent or supplied in Electronic Form is sufficiently authenticated if:

23.9.2.1 the identity of the sender is confirmed in a manner specified by the Association; or

23.9.2.2 where no such manner has been specified by the Association, if the communication contains or is accompanied by a statement of the identity of the sender and the Association has no reason to doubt the truth of that statement.

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23.10 If the Association gives an electronic address in any document containing or accompanying a written resolution, it will be deemed to have agreed that any document or information relating to that resolution may be sent by Electronic Means to that address (subject to any conditions or limitations specified in the document).

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Part Four
Trustees

APPOINTMENT AND RETIREMENT OF TRUSTEES

24. Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees shall be made up of the following persons:

24.1 Cross-Campus Officer Trustees, elected in accordance with Article [25];

24.2 Student Trustees, appointed in accordance with Article [26];

24.3 External Trustees, appointed in accordance with Article [27].

25. Cross-Campus Officer Trustees

25.1 The Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall be elected by secret ballot by the Student Members and Associate Student Members of the Association at an election to be held in accordance with the Schedules.

25.2 Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall be elected in accordance with Article [25.1] to posts specified in the Schedules and each of these Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall also hold office as a Trustee until they cease to be a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee in accordance with Article [31] or cease to be a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee in accordance with Articles [28]. Except where otherwise indicated, references in these Articles to “Cross-Campus Officer Trustees” are to individuals acting solely in their capacity as Cross-Campus Officer Trustees.

25.3 The Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall remain in office for a term of one year commencing in accordance with the Schedules. The term of office may be shorter or longer on a transitional basis to coincide with an alteration of the year start or end. Subject to a transitional change in the year of office, a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee may be re-elected for a maximum further term of one year by the Student Members and Student Associate Members of the Association at an election to be held in accordance with the Schedules. For the avoidance of doubt, a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee’s terms of office may be either consecutive or non-consecutive.

25.4 Each Cross-Campus Officer must either be:

25.4.1 a Student Member; or

25.4.2 a Student Associate Member; or

25.4.3 a first year Cross-Campus Trustee; or

25.4.4 a full-time Local Officer;

at the time of their election.

25.5 In accordance with Article [11], each Cross-Campus Officer Trustee shall become a Student Member of the Association on commencement of their appointment or reappointment as a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee. Such Student Membership shall cease when the Cross-Campus Officer Trustee ceases to be a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee.

25.6 The Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall be deemed to be “major Association office holders” for the purposes of Section 22 of the Education Act.

25.7 At the same time as commencing the term of office, each Cross-Campus Officer Trustee will enter into a contract of employment with the Association for a term to be determined by the Schedules. The duties and method of remuneration of each Cross-Campus Officer Trustee shall be as set out in the Schedules.

26. Student Trustees

Subject to Article [26.1] below, Student Trustees shall be appointed by a simple majority vote of the Appointments Committee provided that the appointment of each Student Trustee is ratified by a simple majority vote of the Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM). For the avoidance of doubt, such appointments shall not take effect until it has been ratified by the Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM).

26.1 Each Student Trustee must be a Student at the time of their appointment (and shall continue to be a Student for the duration of their term as a Student Trustee).

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26.2 Student Trustees shall remain in office for a maximum term of two years commencing in accordance with the Schedules. The term of office may be shorter or longer on a transitional basis to coincide with the alteration of the year start or end.

26.3 A Student Trustee may serve a maximum of two terms which may either be consecutive or non-consecutive.

27. External Trustees

27.1 External Trustees shall be appointed by a simple majority vote of the Appointments Committee provided that the appointment of each External Trustee is ratified by a simple majority vote of the Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM). For the avoidance of doubt, such appointment shall not take effect until it has been ratified by the Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM).

27.2 Unless their appointment is terminated in accordance with Articles [28], [29] or [30], External Trustees shall remain in office for a term of up to four years commencing in accordance with the Schedules.

27.3 External Trustees may serve for a maximum of two terms which may either be consecutive or non-consecutive.

27.4 They may not be Student Members, Associate Student Members, employees of the Association, or serving governors at UHI.

28. Disqualification, Resignation and Removal of Trustees

The office of a Trustee shall be vacated if:

28.1 that person ceases to be a Trustee by virtue of any provision of the Companies Act 2006 or is prohibited from being a company director by law;

28.2 they become prohibited by law from being a charity trustee;

28.3 in the case of a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee, they cease to be a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee;

28.4 in the case of a Student Trustee, they cease to be either a Student Member or Student Associate Member;

28.5 in the case of a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee or a Student Trustee, their Student Membership or Student Associate Membership of the Association is removed in accordance with the Association's code of conduct;

28.6 they resign by notice to the Association (but only if at least three Trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect);

28.7 they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Trustees and in the opinion of the Trustees there are no mitigating circumstances for that failure and the Trustees therefore resolve that they are removed for this reason; or

28.8 they are removed from office under Article [29] or [30].

29. Removal of Student Trustees or External Trustees by an All Student Meeting (ASM)

The office of a Trustee shall be vacated if:

29.1 A motion of no confidence in the Trustee is passed by a two thirds majority vote at an All Student Meeting (ASM). Such a motion shall only be triggered by a Secure Petition of no confidence signed by at least 100 Student Members and, or Student Associate Members.

30. Removal of Trustees by the Board

The office of External Trustee or Student Trustee shall be vacated if a majority resolution of no confidence is passed by the Trustees. For the avoidance of doubt, the Trustee concerned and any Trustee who has a conflict of interest in relation to the matter shall not vote on this resolution and the quorum shall be adjusted accordingly in accordance with Article [46].

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31. Removal of Cross-Campus Officer Trustees

31.1 A Cross-Campus Officer Trustees shall be removed from office if they:

31.1.1 resign or die;

31.1.2 are removed from office by a motion of no confidence: this is passed by a simple majority of the Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members voting in a Referendum, provided that at least 200 Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members cast a vote in the Referendum. Such a motion shall only be triggered by a Secure Petition of no confidence signed by at least 100 Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members;

31.1.3 provided that, such removal shall be subject to the Association having first carried out any steps it is required to take under the Elected Officer's contract of employment and/or the applicable disciplinary procedure and otherwise in accordance with good employment practice.

32. Replacement of Trustees

32.1 If a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee resigns, is disqualified or is removed from office at any time prior to the commencement of the Academic Year, the vacancy that results on the Board of Trustees shall be filled in accordance with the Schedules.

32.2 If a Cross-Campus Officer Trustee resigns, is disqualified or is removed from office after the commencement of the Academic Year the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the Schedules. Any person elected under these Articles may be required to assume the responsibilities of the Cross-Campus Officer Trustee.

32.3 If a Student Trustee resigns, is disqualified or is removed from office, a Student Trustee may be appointed to the vacancy in accordance with Article [26].

32.4 If an External Trustee resigns, is disqualified or is removed from office, an External Trustee shall be appointed to the vacancy in accordance with Article [27.1].

TRUSTEES' POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

33. Trustee's general authority

33.1 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the management and administration of the Association and (subject to the Education Act, these Articles and the Schedules) may exercise all the powers of the Association. A meeting of the Trustees at which a quorum is present may exercise all powers exercisable by the Trustees.

33.2 The Board's powers under Article [33.1] shall include but not be limited to responsibility for:

33.2.1 the governance of the Association;

33.2.2 the budget of the Association; and

33.2.3 the strategy of the Association.

33.3 The Board of Trustees may override any decision or Positional Policy made by the Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members at an Annual All Student Meeting (AASM), or All Student Meeting (ASM), or by Referendum which the Trustees consider (in their absolute discretion):

33.3.1 has or may have any financial implications for the Association;

33.3.2 is or may be in breach of, contrary to or otherwise inconsistent with charity or education law or any other legal requirements (including ultra vires);

33.3.3 is not or may not be in the best interests of the Association or all or any of its charitable objects; or

33.3.4 will or may otherwise affect the discharge of any or all of the responsibilities referred to in Article [33.2].

33.4 No alteration of these Articles or the Schedules shall invalidate any prior act of the Trustees which would have been valid if that alteration had not been made.

33.5 All acts done by a meeting of Trustees, or of a committee of the Trustees, shall be valid, even if it is later discovered that any Trustee who participated in the vote:

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33.5.1 was not properly appointed;

33.5.2 was disqualified from holding office;

33.5.3 had vacated office; or

35.3.4 was not entitled to vote.

34. Trustees may delegate

34.1 Subject to the Articles, the Trustees may delegate any of the powers which are conferred on them under the Articles:

34.1.1 to such person or committee;

34.1.2 by such means (including by power of attorney);

34.1.3 to such an extent;

34.1.4 in relation to such matters or territories; and

34.1.5 on such terms and conditions as they think fit.

34.2 If the Trustees so specify, any such delegation may authorise further delegation of the Trustees' powers by any person to whom they are delegated.

34.3 The Trustees may revoke any delegation in whole or part, or alter its terms and conditions.

35. Committees

35.1 In the case of delegation to committees:

35.1.1 the resolution making the delegation shall specify those who shall serve or be asked to serve on such committee (although the resolution may allow the committee to make co-options up to a specified number);

35.1.2 subject to Article [35.3], the composition of any such committee shall be entirely in the discretion of the Trustees and may comprise such of their number (if any) as the resolution may specify;

35.1.3 the deliberations of any such committee shall be reported regularly to the Trustees and any resolution passed or decision taken by any such committee shall be reported promptly to the Trustees and for that purpose every committee shall appoint a secretary;

35.1.4 no committee shall knowingly incur expenditure or liability on behalf of the Association except where authorised by the Trustees or in accordance with a budget which has been approved by the Trustees.

35.2 The Trustees shall establish and retire committees in accordance with their powers under Articles [33.1] and [33.2]. The remit and authority of such committees shall be defined in the Schedules.

35.3 For the avoidance of doubt, the Trustees may (in accordance with Articles [34] and [35.1]) delegate all financial matters to any committee provided that such committee shall include at least one Trustee. The Trustees may empower such committee to resolve upon the operation of any bank account according to such mandate as it shall think fit provided that the signature of at least one Trustee shall be required for cheques above a certain amount as set out in the Schedules and provided always that no committee shall incur expenditure on behalf of the Association except in accordance with a budget which has been approved by the Trustees.

35.4 The meetings and proceedings of any committee shall be governed by the Articles regulating the meetings and proceedings of the Trustees so far as applicable and not superseded by any Schedules.

36. Delegation of day-to-day management powers to the Association's Senior Manager

In the case of delegation of the day-to-day management of the Association to the Association's Senior Manager:

36.1 the delegated power shall be to manage the Association by implementing the policy and strategy adopted by and within a budget approved by the Trustees and if applicable to advise the Trustees in relation to such policy, strategy and budget;

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36.2 the Trustees shall provide the Association's Senior Manager with a description of their role and the extent of their authority;

36.3 the Association's Senior Manager shall report regularly to the Trustees on the activities undertaken in managing the Association and provide them regularly with management accounts sufficient to explain the financial position of the Association; and

36.4 the Trustees shall provide the Association's Senior Manager with a performance management structure to aid their work plan and development.

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Part Five
Executive Committee

37. The Executive Committee

37.1 Unless the Trustees or schedules determine otherwise, the Executive Committee shall include:

37.1.1 the Cross-Campus Officer Trustees; and

37.1.2 one elected Local Officer from each academic partner.

37.2 The Executive Committee's responsibility shall not include the duties of the Trustees as set out in Article [33] but shall include representation and campaigning work and the implementation of Positional Policy save in so far as these responsibilities have not been delegated to another committee.

37.3 The Association's Senior Manager and the Association's management team may attend meetings of the Executive Committee at the request of the Executive Committee.

37.4 The Executive Committee shall meet in accordance with the Schedules.

38. Local Officers

38.1 Local Officers shall be elected by secret ballot by the Student Members of the Association at an election to be held in accordance with the Schedules.

38.2 The Local Officers shall remain in office for a term of one year commencing in accordance with the Schedules. The term of office may be shorter or longer on a transitional basis to coincide with an alteration of the year start or end. Subject to a transitional change in the year of office, a Local Officer may be re-elected for a maximum further term of one year by the Student Members of the Association at an election to be held in accordance with the Schedules. For the avoidance of doubt, the term of a Local Officer may be either consecutive or non-consecutive.

38.3 Each Local Officer must be a Student at the time of their election; in the case of a full-time Local Officer, they may be a first year full-time Local Officer at the time of their election.

38.4 In accordance with Article [11], each full-time Local Officer shall become a Student Member of the Association on commencement of their appointment or reappointment as a Local Officer. Such Student Membership shall cease when the Local Officer ceases to be a Local Officer.

38.5 Local Officers shall be deemed to be "major Association office holders" for the purposes of Section 22 of the Education Act.

38.6 At the same time as commencing the term of office, each Local Officer will enter into a contract of employment with the Association for a term to be determined by the Schedules. The duties and method of remuneration of each Local Officer shall be as set out in the Schedules.

38.7 A Local Officer shall be removed from office if they:

38.7.1 resign or die;

38.7.2 are removed from office by a motion of no confidence: this is passed by a simple majority of the Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members voting in a Referendum, provided that at least 200 Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members cast a vote in the Referendum. Such a motion shall only be triggered by a Secure Petition of no confidence signed by at least 100 Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members;

38.7.3 provided that, such removal shall be subject to the Association having first carried out any steps it is required to take under the Elected Officer's contract of employment and/or the applicable disciplinary procedure and otherwise in accordance with good employment practice.

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Part Six
Decision Making by Trustees

DECISION-MAKING BY TRUSTEES

39. Trustees to take decisions collectively

Any decision of the Trustees must be either a majority decision at a meeting or a decision taken in accordance with Article [49] (Majority decisions without Trustees' meeting).

40. Trustees' meetings

40.1 The Trustees shall hold a minimum of four meetings in any Academic Year.

40.2 Guests or observers can attend meetings of the Trustees at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.

41. Calling a Trustees' meeting

Two Trustees may, and the Association's Senior Manager at the request of two Trustees, shall call a Trustees' meeting.

42. Length of Notice

A Trustees' meeting shall be called by at least seven clear days' notice unless either:

42.1 all the Trustees agree to shorter notice; or

42.2 urgent circumstances require shorter notice.

43. Contents of Notice

Every notice calling a Trustees' meeting shall specify:

43.1 the place, day and time of the meeting;

43.2 the general particulars of all business to be considered at such meeting; and

43.3 if it is anticipated that Trustees participating in the meeting will not be in the same place, how it is proposed that they should communicate with each other during the meeting.

44. Service of Notice

Notice of Trustees' meetings shall be given to each Trustee, but need not be in writing. Notice of Trustees' meeting may be sent by Electronic Means to an address provided by the Trustee for the purpose.

45. Participation in Trustees' meetings

45.1 Subject to the Articles, Trustees participate in a Trustees' meeting, or part of a Trustees' meeting, when:

45.1.1 the meeting has been called and takes place in accordance with the Articles; and

45.1.2 they can each communicate to the others any information or opinions they have on any particular item of the business of the meeting.

45.2 In determining whether Trustees are participating in a Trustees' meeting, it is irrelevant where any Trustee is or how they communicate with each other.

45.3 If all the Trustees participating in a meeting are not in the same place, they may decide that the meeting is to be treated as taking place wherever any of them is.

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46. Quorum for Trustees' meetings

46.1 At a Trustees' meeting, unless a quorum is participating, no proposal is to be voted on, except a proposal to call another meeting.

46.2 The quorum for Trustees' meetings may be fixed from time to time by a decision of the Trustees, but it must never be less than four. Unless otherwise fixed, the quorum shall be four and such quorum must include at least one Cross-Campus Officer Trustee. Where the resolution or issue under discussion concerns a matter in respect of which some or all of the Trustees have a conflict of interest, the quorum shall be four.

46.3 If the total number of Trustees for the time being is less than the quorum required, the Trustees must not take any decision other than a decision to increase the number of Trustees, including by calling An All Student Meeting (ASM) so as to enable Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members to ratify further Student Trustees or External Trustees, or by calling an election so as to enable the Student Members and/ or Student Associate Members to elect further Cross-Campus Officer Trustees.

47. Chair and Deputy Chair

47.1 The Trustees shall appoint an External Trustee to be the Chair of the Trustees and may at any time remove them from office.

47.2 The Student President shall be the Deputy Chair of the Trustees.

47.3 In the absence of the Chair and the Deputy Chair, another Trustee appointed by the Trustees present shall preside as chair of the meeting.

48. Casting vote

Questions arising at a Trustees' meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of an equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote they may have.

49. Majority decisions without Trustees' meeting

49.1 The Trustees may, in the circumstances outlined in this Article, make a simple majority decision without holding a Trustees' meeting.

49.2 If:

49.2.1 a Trustee has become aware of a matter on which the Trustees need to take a decision;

49.2.2 that Trustee has taken all reasonable steps to make all the other Trustees aware of the matter and the decision;

49.2.3 the Trustees have had a reasonable opportunity to communicate their views on the matter and the decision to each other; and

49.2.4 simple majority of the Trustees vote in favour of a particular decision on that matter;

a decision of the Trustees may be taken by a majority and shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been taken at a Trustees' meeting duly convened and held.

49.3 Trustees participating in the taking of a majority decision otherwise than at a Trustees' meeting in accordance with this Article:

49.3.1 may be in different places, and may participate at different times; and

49.3.2 may communicate with each other by any means.

49.4 No decision shall be taken by the Trustees in accordance with Article [49] unless a quorum participates in the decision-making process. The quorum for Trustees' decision-making in accordance with Article [49] shall be the same as the quorum for Trustees' meetings as set out in Article [46].

49.5 The Chair or such other Trustee as shall be appointed by the Trustees shall be the chair of the process of decision-making in accordance with Article [49]. The process shall include:

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49.5.1 circulation of the proposed decision with an indication of the time period for discussion and the date by which Trustees are asked to cast their votes;

49.5.2 the nomination of a person to whom all Trustees' votes must be communicated;

49.5.3 if a majority of the Trustees vote in favour of the decision, the nominated person shall communicate the decision to all the Trustees and the date of the decision shall be the date of the communication from the nominated person confirming formal approval; and

49.5.4 the nominated person must prepare a minute of the decision in accordance with Article [55].

49.6 In the case of an equality of votes in any decision-making process in accordance with this Article, the chair shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote they may have but this does not apply if, in accordance with the Articles, the chair or specified Trustee is not to be counted as participating in the decision-making process for quorum, voting or agreement purposes.

50. Trustee interests and management of conflicts of interest

Declaration of interests

50.1 Unless Article [50.2] applies, a Trustee must declare the nature and extent of:

50.1.1 any direct or indirect interest which they have in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the Association; and

50.1.2 any duty or any direct or indirect interest which they have which conflicts or may conflict with the interests of the Association or their duties to the Association.

50.2 There is no need to declare any interest or duty of which the other Trustees are, or ought reasonably to be, already aware.

Participation in decision-making

50.3 If a Trustee's interest or duty cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to give rise to a conflict of interest or a conflict of duties with or in respect of the Association, they are entitled to participate in the decision-making process, to be counted in the quorum and to vote in relation to the matter. Any uncertainty about whether a Trustee's interest or duty is likely to give rise to a conflict shall be determined by a majority decision of the other Trustees taking part in the decision-making process.

50.4 If a Trustee's interest or duty gives rise (or could reasonably be regarded as likely to give rise) to a conflict of interest or a conflict of duties with or in respect of the Association, they may participate in the decision-making process and may be counted in the quorum and vote unless:

50.4.1 the decision could result in the Trustee or any person who is connected with them receiving a benefit other than:

50.4.1.1 any benefit received in their capacity as a beneficiary of the Association (as permitted under Article [6.3.1]) and which is available generally to the beneficiaries of the Association;

50.4.1.2 the payment of premiums in respect of indemnity insurance effected in accordance with Article [5.29];

50.4.1.3 payment under the indemnity set out at Article [60]; and

50.4.1.4 reimbursement of expenses in accordance with Article [6.3.2]; or

50.4.2 a majority of the other Trustees participating in the decision-making process decide to the contrary;

in which case they must comply with Article [50.5].

50.5 If a Trustee with a conflict of interest or conflict of duties is required to comply with this Article [50.5], they must:

50.5.1 take part in the decision-making process only to such extent as in the view of the other Trustees is necessary to inform the debate;

50.5.2 not be counted in the quorum for that part of the process; and

50.5.3 withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

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Continuing duties to the Association

50.6 Where a Trustee has a conflict of interest or conflict of duties and the Trustee has complied with their obligations under these Articles in respect of that conflict:

50.6.1 the Trustee shall not be in breach of their duties to the Association by withholding confidential information from the Association if to disclose it would result in a breach of any other duty or obligation of confidence owed by them; and

50.6.2 the Trustee shall not be accountable to the Association for any benefit expressly permitted under these Articles which they or any person connected with them derives from any matter or from any office, employment or position.

51. Register of Trustees' interests

The Trustees shall cause a register of Trustees' interests to be kept.

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Part Seven
Administrative Arrangements and Miscellaneous Provision

52. Schedules

The Trustees and the membership (via either an Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or an All Student Meeting (ASM)) shall have the power from time to time to jointly make, repeal or amend Schedules as to the management of the Association and its working practices provided that such Schedules shall not be inconsistent with these Articles.

53. Communications by and to the Association

Methods of communication

53.1 Subject to the Articles and the Companies Acts, any document or information (including any notice, report or accounts) sent or supplied by the Association under the Articles or the Companies Acts may be sent or supplied in any way in which the Companies Act 2006 provides for documents or information which are authorised or required by any provision of that Act to be sent or supplied by the Association, including without limitation:

53.1.1 in Hard Copy Form;

53.1.2 in Electronic Form; or

53.1.3 by making it available on a website.

53.2 Where a document or information which is required or authorised to be sent or supplied by the Association under the Companies Acts is sent or supplied in Electronic Form or by making it available on a website, the recipient must have agreed that it may be sent or supplied in that form or manner or be deemed to have so agreed under the Companies Acts (and not revoked that agreement). Where any other document or information is sent or supplied in Electronic Form or made available on a website the Trustees may decide what agreement (if any) is required from the recipient.

53.3 Subject to the Articles, any notice or document to be sent or supplied to a Trustee in connection with the taking of decisions by Trustees may also be sent or supplied by the means which that Trustee has asked to be sent or supplied with such notices or documents for the time being.

Deemed delivery

53.4 A Member present in person or by proxy at a meeting of the Association shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and the purposes for which it was called.

53.5 Where any document or information is sent or supplied by the Association to the Members:

53.5.1 where it is sent by post it is deemed to have been received 48 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Public Holidays) after it was posted;

53.5.2 where it is sent or supplied by Electronic Means, it is deemed to have been received on the same day that it was sent;

53.5.3 where it is sent or supplied by means of a website, it is deemed to have been received:

53.5.3.1 when the material was first made available on the website; or

53.5.3.2 if later, when the recipient received (or is deemed to have received) notice of the fact that the material was available on the website.

53.6 Subject to the Companies Acts, a Trustee or any other person (other than in their capacity as a Company Law Member) may agree with the Association that notices or documents sent to that person in a particular way are deemed to have been received within a specified time, and for the specified time to be less than 48 hours.

Failed delivery

53.7 Where any document or information has been sent or supplied by the Association by Electronic Means and the Association receives notice that the message is undeliverable:

53.7.1 if the document or information has been sent to a Company Law Member and is notice of a Company Law Meeting of the Association, the Association is under no obligation to send a Hard Copy of the document or information to the Company Law Member's postal address as shown in the Association's register of Company Law Members, but may in its discretion choose to do so;

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53.7.2 in all other cases, the Association shall send a Hard Copy of the document or information to the Member's postal address as shown in the Association's register of Members (if any), or in the case of a recipient who is not a Member, to the last known postal address for that person (if any); and

53.7.3 the date of service or delivery of the documents or information shall be the date on which the original electronic communication was sent, notwithstanding the subsequent sending of Hard Copies.

Exceptions

53.8 Copies of the Association's annual accounts and reports need not be sent to a person for whom the Association does not have a current address.

53.9 Notices of Company Law Meetings need not be sent to a Member who does not register an address with the Association, or who registers only a postal address outside the United Kingdom, or to a Company Law Member for whom the Association does not have a current address.

Communications to the Association

53.10 The provisions of the Companies Acts shall apply to communications to the Association.

54. Secretary

54.1 A Secretary may be appointed by the Trustees for such term at such remuneration and upon such conditions as they may think fit, and may be removed by them. If there is no Secretary:

54.1.1 anything authorised or required to be given or sent to, or served on, the Association by being sent to its Secretary may be given or sent to, or served on, the Association itself, and if addressed to the Secretary shall be treated as addressed to the Association; and

54.1.2 anything else required or authorised to be done by or to the Secretary of the Association may be done by or to a Trustee, or a person authorised generally or specifically in that behalf by the Trustees.

55. Minutes

55.1 The Trustees shall cause minutes to be made:

55.1.1 of all appointments of officers made by the Trustees;

55.1.2 of all resolutions of the Association and of the Trustees; and

55.1.3 of all proceedings at meetings of the Association and of the Trustees, and of committees of Trustees, including the names of the Trustees present at each such meeting

and any such minute, if purported to be signed (or in the case of minutes of Trustees' meetings signed or authenticated) by the chair of the meeting at which the proceedings were had, or by the chair of the next succeeding meeting, shall, as against any Student Member or Trustee of the Association, be sufficient evidence of the proceedings.

55.2 The minutes referred to in Article [55.1] above must be kept for at least ten years from the date of the meeting, resolution or decision.

55.3 The minutes of the meetings referred to in Article [55.1] above shall normally be considered open and shall be available to the Student Members on the Association's website, except where those minutes relate to any reserved or confidential matters, including without limitation staff-related or disciplinary matters. Copies of the minutes shall also be kept in the Association's offices

56. Records and accounts

56.1 The Trustees shall comply with the requirements of the Companies Acts and of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 as to maintaining a Company Law Members' register, keeping financial records, the audit or examination of accounts and the preparation and transmission to the Registrar of Companies and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) of:

56.1.1 annual reports;

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56.1.2 annual returns; and

56.1.3 annual statements of account.

56.2 Both Student Members and Student Associate Members of the Association have the right to ask the Trustees questions in writing about the content of any documents referred to in Article [56.1].

57. Irregularities

The proceedings at any meeting or on the taking of any poll or the passing of a written resolution or the making of any decision shall not be invalidated by reason of any accidental informality or irregularity (including any accidental omission to give or any non-receipt of notice) or any want of qualification in any of the persons present or voting or by reason of any business being considered which is not specified in the notice unless a provision of the Companies Acts specifies that such informality, irregularity or want of qualification shall invalidate it.

58. Patrons

The Trustees may appoint and remove any individual(s) as patron(s) of the Association and on such terms as they shall think fit. A patron shall have the right to be given notice of, to attend and speak (but not vote) at any Annual All Student Meeting (AASM) or All Student Meeting (ASM) as if a Student Member and shall also have the right to receive accounts of the Association when available to Student Members.

59. Exclusion of model articles

The relevant model articles for a company limited by guarantee are hereby expressly excluded.

60. Indemnity

TRUSTEES' INDEMNITY

Without prejudice to any indemnity to which a Trustee may otherwise be entitled, every Trustee shall and every other officer or auditor of the Association may be indemnified out of the assets of the Association against any liability incurred by them in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in their favour or in which they are acquitted or in connection with any application in which relief is granted to them by the court from liability for negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust in relation to the affairs of the Association, and against all costs, charges, losses, expenses or liabilities incurred by them in the execution and discharge of their duties or in relation thereto.

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Subject/Title:	Outstanding Actions
Author: [Name and Job title]	Ludka Orlowska-Kowal Governance Officer
Meeting:	LTR Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	02 June 2026
Brief Executive Summary of the paper:	This paper provides the LTR Committee with an update on all outstanding actions. The status of the actions has been clearly marked, with updates provided for outstanding actions.
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 / No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No **If yes, please specify:**
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes
*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.	

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

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

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

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

Purpose of the report

To provide the LTR Committee with an update on all outstanding action.

Executive Summary

The LTR Committee oversees and monitors the progress of all actions and recommendations raised to date. The status of the actions has been clearly marked, with updates and comments provided for outstanding actions. The Governance Officer monitors the action progress and contacts all actions owners for updates on a regular basis.

Progress update:

- LTR Committee action list:
  - ✓ 1 action complete
  - ✓ 2 outstanding actions

Action	Academic Year	Status	Finding	Recommendation	Recommendation Significance	Implementation Date	Responsible Officer	Status as at 02/12/2025	Comments	
1	09/09/2025 2025/26	Complete	**KPI Matrix:** Suggestion has been made for Research KPIs to be added to the next report.	Research KPIs to be added to the next KPI Matrix report.	Medium	31/12/2025	Operations and Commercial Manager	Ongoing	**Update at 02/12/2025:** All KPI measures will be reviewed during Board's self-evaluation session in January 2026. Once the format of the new KPI Matrix report has been agreed both Research Directors will be contacted to discuss the specific research KPIs. **Update at 25/02/2026:** Email sent out to Committee Chair to select KPIs within LTR's remit on 18/02/2026. **Update at 02/03/2026:** List of updated KPIs received from the Chair of LTR and shared with both Directors of Research for comments and feedback. Deadline of end of March 2026.	
								Status as at 02/12/2025		
4	02/12/2025 2025/26	Ongoing	**SEAP Report:** The Committee agreed that a partnership-wide approach would be needed to express Boards' concerns to the RSB in regard to the SEAP report.	Meeting to be organised with EO and LTR Chairs from across the partnership to address concerns regarding SEAP report being submitted to the SFC by the RSB on behalf of all partners.	High	March 2026	Chair of the Board	Proposed		
								Status as at 10/03/2026		
5	10/03/2026 2025/26	Ongoing	**Research KPIs:** The Chair asked for a suggested research KPI list to be circulated after the meeting for them to be agreed before June meeting. They will then be added to the KPI Matrix within the remit of the Committee.	Research KPIs to be circulated and agreed before the June meeting.	Medium	August 2026	Gov Officer, Chair of LTR & both Directors of Research	Proposed	**Update at 18/03/2026:** List of proposed KPIs sent out to the Committee Chair and both Directors of Research.	

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Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Policy Approvals
Author: [Name and Job title]	Quality
Meeting:	LTR Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	28th May 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	LTR Board Committee are asked to approve the reviewed **FE Essential Skills Policy**. This was a full review of the document which was delayed due to UHI common policy environment not taking forward. The UHI Inverness Review Officer has conducted an internal review of the lapsed policy. The majority of the policy changes have been made to bring in line with UHI Inverness processes and will be added to the correct Policy Template once approved. LTR Board Committee are asked to approve the newly developed **Harm Reduction Policy**. This is a new policy developed to complement our existing suite of staff and student facing policies, strategies and initiatives to support health and wellbeing. This policy has been developed in conjunction with the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and in line with national policy drivers to prevent and reduce alcohol and drug related harm.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Approval
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Compliance
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational: Policies review and development required to ensure compliance with legislation and awarding body regulations.
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes **If yes, please specify:** Essential Skills Policy Equality Impact Assessment included

Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	**Essential Skills Policy:** PPRP – February 2025 EMT Approval – March 2025 **Harm Reduction Policy:** EMT Approval – April 2026 Staff Consultation – 15 May – 4 June JCC – 15 May Employee Engagement Group – 15 May
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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Harm Reduction Policy

Document Reference Number	TBC
Date Approved	TBC
Review Date	TBC
EIA	Yes
Lead Officer	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience & Quality
Review Officer	Wellbeing & Learning Support Manager
Further Information	In collaboration with the Highland Drug and Alcohol Partnership

Version Control History

Reviewer	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions made
Wellbeing & Learning Support Manager	May 2026	New Policy developed

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1. Policy Statement

UHI Inverness is committed to providing a safe, healthy, inclusive and productive working environment for all students, staff, volunteers and visitors. Personal wellbeing and health and safety are always a priority. UHI Inverness recognises the growing challenge the harmful use of drugs and alcohol pose to our society, and the college are committed to proactively supporting any concerns in relation to drugs and alcohol which may impact on individuals.

UHI Inverness believes that the harmful use of drugs and alcohol is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of individuals and could adversely affect the safe and efficient working of UHI Inverness.

UHI Inverness supports the work of the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and its endeavours to prevent and reduce alcohol and drug related harm in Highland. We recognise that Highland and Scotland face key socio-economic challenges underpinning harmful alcohol and drug use. UHI Inverness want to play a pro-active role in education, prevention and early intervention which are key to promoting informed, healthy choices around alcohol and drug use. As part of our wider commitment to wellbeing, UHI Inverness will:

- Deliver regular awareness workshops / campaigns
- Promote a culture of care and responsibility
- Provide clear referral pathways for students to counselling, health services, and external partners
- Provide support for staff through the employee assistance programme
- Train staff and students to respond supportively and signpost effectively

The aims of this policy are to clearly state UHI Inverness' position on the use of drugs and alcohol and to support our ability to provide a safe environment for everyone who works and learns at UHI Inverness.

The policy also aims to ensure that learners and staff:

- Treat individuals with dignity and respect
- Facilitate the early intervention and support available for any concerns individuals experience associated with the harmful use of alcohol and/or drugs
- Seek advice, help and assistance if they have any concerns
- Have an awareness of the health, wellbeing and legal issues associated with alcohol and/or drug use to enable individuals to make informed choices, along with supportive and caring harm-minimising strategies

2. Legislative Framework / Related Policies

2.1. Legislative framework

- The National Collaborative Charter of Rights 2024
- National Drugs Mission Plan: 2022 - 2026
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021
- Alcohol Framework 2018
- Rights, respect and recovery 2018
- Psychoactive Substances Act 2016
- Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Mental Health Act 2007
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Equality Act 2010

2.2. **Related Policies, Procedures and Guidance.**

Publicly available UHI Inverness policies and procedures can be accessed via our website: About us – Publications. Staff and Board Members can access the full range of internal policies and procedures through the Quality SharePoint site.

- Support to Study Procedure and Guidance
- Gender Based Violence Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Mental Health Strategy
- Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
- Student Mental Health and Counselling Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- PVG Scheme Membership for Students Procedure
- PVG Scheme for New and Existing Staff Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Strategic Plan 2025-2030
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy & Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Staff Wellbeing Policy and Guidance
- General Teaching Council Scotland Code of Professionalism and Conduct

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all learners and staff at UHI Inverness in line with Highland's Drug and Alcohol strategy and the whole systems approach needed to meet the needs of people with problem alcohol and drug use.

3.2. UHI Inverness recognises the Charter of Rights for people affected by substance use and are committed to removing any stigma as a barrier to people getting the support they need. The college will adopt the new approaches outlined in the Charter which prioritise health, dignity and inclusion and will be guided by the international guidelines on human rights and drug policy. All cases which require intervention will be treated confidentially and with sensitivity to protect the rights of individuals.

3.3. The policy applies to observable behaviours both on UHI Inverness campus premises and in external settings where UHI Inverness has responsibility including, for example, UHI Inverness: supported trips, transport, approved work placement. It does not encroach an individual's personal life out with UHI Inverness and respects the right of an individual to a personal life and personal choices within that.

3.4. Reasonable suspicion is based on observable signs and behaviours, not assumptions or stereotypes. Indicators may include but are not limited to:

- Slurred speech
- Unsteady gait or loss of coordination
- Aggressive, hostile, erratic, or inappropriate behaviour
- Confusion or disorientation
- Possession of alcohol / drugs in restricted areas
- Irritability, agitation, restlessness or euphoria
- Confusion, paranoia, hallucinations or delusions

3.5. The policy applies to a range of situations where an individual's behaviour raises concerns due to suspected influence of alcohol or drugs on UHI Inverness campus or in external settings where UHI Inverness has responsibility. Such concerns include, but are not limited to:

- Individuals using / under the influence of drugs, solvents or psychoactive substances ('legal' highs)
- Individuals distributing or in possession of drugs, solvents or psychoactive substances ('legal' highs)
- Individuals disclosing that they or a family member or friend are using drugs, solvents or psychoactive substances
- Individuals consuming and/or being under the influence of alcohol on campus with the exception of sanctioned alcohol use during arranged

events such as graduations and other public events authorised by Executive Management Team (EMT).

- UHI Inverness having a reasonable suspicion of any individuals under the influence of alcohol, drugs, solvents or psychoactive substances ('legal' highs) on UHI Inverness campus or in external settings where UHI Inverness has responsibility.
- Individuals eliciting behaviours giving cause for concern as a result of the inappropriate use of prescribed medication such as those listed above
- UHI Inverness having a reasonable suspicion of any individuals dealing, producing or being in possession of drugs, solvents or psychoactive substances ('legal' highs).
- Police or other credible disclosures made to UHI Inverness concerning an individual and a drug/alcohol related concern.
- Where the health and safety of any member of our learning community is placed at risk or where there is an aspect of criminality, UHI Inverness may consider disciplinary action if deemed appropriate. Any disciplinary action will be taken under UHI Inverness's Student / Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure and the Student / Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

3.6. As outlined in the UHI Inverness Student Code of Conduct, the following behaviours constitute misconduct and may result in disciplinary action:

- The supply, attempted supply, or involvement in the supply of controlled substances or non-prescribed medication
- The supply, or involvement in the supply, of alcohol to individuals under the legal drinking age, or in areas where an alcohol ban is in place
- The use, possession, or consumption of controlled substances on any campus or during college-related activities
- The consumption of alcohol prior to participating in practical activities, where this may impact safety, judgement, or performance
- The failure to inform appropriate staff of the use of prescribed medication where potential side effects may pose a risk to the student, other students, or staff.

3.7. As outlined in UHI Inverness's Staff Code of Conduct Procedure:

- Drugs and alcohol issues within UHI Inverness will be dealt with through the provision of positive support and practical assistance. Staff who believe they have an alcohol or drug related problem are encouraged to seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible. If a staff member notices a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour, they should encourage them to seek assistance through

their line manager or a member of HR. An individual may consult with a HR Business Partner or, alternatively, their line manager.

- It should be recognised that the nature of UHI Inverness's business, particularly in relation to contact with children and adults at risk, is such that incidents relating to inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol whilst within UHI Inverness may also be treated as a disciplinary issue and potentially amount to gross misconduct.
- Any member of staff found to be in possession of illegal drugs may face disciplinary actions in line with the Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Possession of illegal drugs may be regarded as Gross Misconduct which may result in summary dismissal and the matter being referred to the police.

3.8. In relation to both staff and students, where a drug or alcohol issue is connected to an underlying health condition, UHI Inverness will take steps to ensure the staff member is treated fairly and in line with our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. If the condition meets the definition of a disability, UHI Inverness has a duty to consider and implement reasonable adjustments to support the staff member in performing their role safely and effectively. This may include adjustments to duties, working patterns, supervision arrangements, or access to specialist support services.

3.9. UHI Inverness works collaboratively with the UHI halls of residence accommodation team to support any individuals where there is a concern around alcohol or drug use. In addition, our Student Code of Conduct aligns with the UHI halls of residence student tenancy agreement. This provides our students with supportive measures both on campus and within their living arrangements.

3.10. UHI Inverness will support individuals who have concerns of being ‘spiked’ and will encourage victims to report this crime to Police Scotland in addition to accessing our wellbeing services.

4. Compliance

4.1. UHI Inverness recognises and complies with its legal responsibilities under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and will not tolerate the use or supply of any illegal/harmful substances, or the misuse of alcohol or volatile substances, psychoactive substances (‘legal’ highs) on its premises.

4.2. UHI Inverness recognises the potential linkages between problem alcohol and drug use and wider concerns and will comply with its legal and statutory obligations arising from legislation including the Protection of

Children (Scotland) Act 2003, the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and other relevant guidance and regulations.

4.3. In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, UHI Inverness has a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and wellbeing of all its employees, students, and visitors. This includes taking proactive steps to prevent risks associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol within the UHI Inverness environment.

4.4. UHI Inverness will implement appropriate policies, provide relevant training, and take reasonable measures to identify and manage substance use that could impair an individual's ability to study safely. By fulfilling these obligations, the college aims to maintain a safe and supportive environment that promotes the wellbeing of the entire UHI Inverness community.

4.5. Where there is police involvement in relation to students, as per the Student Code of Conduct Policy, 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. UHI Inverness will consult with the police during this period, and appropriate support will be provided to any learners or staff involved.

5. Monitoring

5.1. This is a UHI Inverness wide policy; and all staff and learners must comply. Reporting on this policy will always be anonymised and will come to EMT on an annual basis. The Quality team have oversight of the procedures in place for reviewing and monitoring to ensure currency, implementation and effectiveness are considered appropriately.

5.2. The following performance indicators will be used to monitor implementation of the Harm Reduction policy:

- Number of workshops delivered on harm reduction
- Number of learner referrals to specialist drug and alcohol support services
- Number of incidents recorded on the health and safety reporting system linked to drugs and alcohol misuse

- Number of incidents recorded on student halls tracker associated with drugs and alcohol use
- Number of student disciplinaries associated with drugs and alcohol use
- Further breakdown of these indicators will be used to identify any emerging patterns.

6. Review

6.1. This policy and supporting arrangements will be formally reviewed every year and in an on-going way to ensure currency of content, arrangements, new legislative requirements and to provide a framework for the setting and reviewing of health and safety improvement objectives. The review will include consultation with the Highland Drug and Alcohol Partnership.

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Inverness College UHI/University of the Highlands and Islands

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Further Education Essential Skills Policy

POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Responsible Office/ Department:	Curriculum Leader Computing, Land and Science
Responsible Committee:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Review Officer (Post):	Click or tap here to enter text.
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:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

For all our up-to-date policies, please visit our website.

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request.

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Policy Summary

Overview	This policy is required to set out a regional approach to Further Education Essential Skills for UHI Inverness.~~Inverness College UHI and all academic partners in the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership.~~
Purpose	This policy sets outs a robust and transparent framework for the delivery of Essential Skills in Further Education programmes of study~~, creating parity of experience for students across the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership.~~
Scope	This policy applies to all further education programmes of study. Certain courses are exempt, as set out in ~~Section 4.2.~~the policy
Consultation	The policy has been developed by practitioners from across all partners. The policy received feedback from Senior Management Curriculum Team, before being endorsed by Partnership Council. The policy was then sent to Boards of Management for approval.
Implementation and Monitoring	Staff in Academic Partners will be responsible for local ~~implantation~~implementation~~implementation~~. ~~The Policy Ownership Group will reconvene to review and monitor the policy.~~
Risk Implications	Risk will be mitigated by streamlining the student experience of Essential Skills ~~across the region.~~
Link with Strategy	The policy is aligned to the UHI Strategic Vision and Plan 2015-20 whereby the university is committed to continue to meet the needs of students within the region. The policy supports the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy by contributing to the development of values of Learning for Employment, Assessment and Feedback for Learning and Supporting the Learner as an Individual.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Completed – No action necessary.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 The policy sets out to create a coherent and comprehensive approach to support and optimise the ~~regional and local~~ delivery of Essential Skills~~ in the Academic Partners of the University of the Highlands and Islands providing further education.~~

1.2 Created to meet government policy and facilitate the improvement of outcomes for all students, the policy will raise the profile of Essential Skills amongst both the staff and students. Reinforcement of Essential Skills in the curriculum ~~and colleges~~ will highlight the value of these skills and their lifelong role in development and achieving positive destinations.

1.3 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) state in their 2013 report, *Skilled for Life*, that: 'Skills transform lives, generate prosperity and promote social inclusion. Without the right skills, people are kept at the margins of society, technological progress does not translate into economic growth, and enterprises and countries can't compete in today's globally connected and increasingly complex world'. ~~The University of the Highlands and Islands and its partner colleges aim to be at the forefront of promoting the benefits of skills for students and staff.~~

1.4 ~~All colleges are encouraged to be innovative in their approach to essential skill delivery, and to share successful practice with other Academic Partners.~~ The policy recognises that no single approach or methodology is superior to another, and the optimum delivery will depend on the individual students, subject and local context.

2 Legislative Framework / Related Policies

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Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005
Equality Act 2010
Education Scotland – Curriculum for Excellence
Skills for Learning, Skills for Life, and Skills for Work (2009)
Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (2014)
Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy (2007)

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all further education programmes of study, normally up to and including SCQF Level 6. There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses.

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~~1.4~~

~~2.~~3. Definitions

~~3~~2.1 **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework ("SCQF")** – SCQF is the national qualifications framework for Scotland. The SCQF helps education and training providers of all kinds to identify the level that has been studied in a particular subject and make it easier to transfer credit point between different learning programmes.

~~3~~2.2 **Essential Skills** – as set out in *Skills for Scotland*, Essential Skills consists of the following:
- **Personal and learning Skills** that enable individuals to become effective lifelong learners;
- **Literacy, digital literacy and numeracy**;

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- **The five Core Skills** (see 2.4);
- **Employability skills** that prepare individuals for employment rather than for a specific occupation;

In ~~addition~~addition, Scottish learners should be supported to develop Meta-skills.~~ and skills for employment.~~

3~~2~~.3 **Vocational skills** are specific to a particular occupation or sector.

3~~2~~.4 **Core Skills** – As developed by Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the five Core Skills are the skills most needed in many work environments. In addition to SQA, other awarding bodies may be used for Core Skill accreditation.

Jobs require some level of ability in some or all of these skills. The Core Skills are: Communication, Numeracy, Information & Communication Technology, Working with Others and Problem Solving. Core Skills can be awarded via qualifications between SCQF Levels 3 and ~~6. Please refer to Appendix 1 for a diagram setting out the Core Skills in relation to the other Skills frameworks.~~

3~~2~~.5 **Delivery Models** – The delivery model(s) chosen to deliver Core Skills are dependent on available resources and the vocational content of the course. Optimum delivery may involve elements of different approaches. ~~Further details are given in Appendix 2 of five example delivery models (Discrete, Contextualised, Integrated, Embedded and Cross-Assessed).~~

~~3.~~4. Purpose

4~~3~~.1 This policy sets outs a robust and transparent framework for the delivery of Essential Skills in Further Education programmes of study.

~~3.2 The policy will create a parity of experience for students across the partnership, ensuring that all students~~they ~~have the opportunity to develop the skills required for employment and academic progression. Essential Skills play a crucial role in the academic and holistic development of students, and complement the vocational content and technical skills developed on courses. Development of Essential Skills is priority for each college, across all curriculum areas and involving all staff and students.~~

4~~3~~.2~~3~~ Development of Essential Skills will be ~~explicit~~ included in delivery across all programmes in the Further Education setting.

~~Academic Partners will ensure S~~staff should promote and signpost through planning and delivery ensuring students develop contextually relevant skills, knowledge and understanding to meet their specific vocational and wider skillsets.

~~3.4 **Research and Evidence**~~

~~Skills Development Scotland, in their 2017 publication *Jobs and skills in Scotland*, emphasise the importance of skills: 'Where skills shortages and skills gaps occurred, these were most often caused by a lack of soft skills, for example the ability to manage tasks and people. This suggests that there is a need to place more emphasis on soft skills throughout the education and training system to ensure that it delivers workers who have sufficient hard and soft skills.' This emphasises the importance of increasing the profile and delivery of Essential Skills alongside the vocational content of courses.~~

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- Development of Essential Skills plays a vital role in the lives of individuals during and after their college course. National Numeracy estimate that the cost of poor numeracy to the United Kingdom economy is at least £20.2billion, equivalent to 1.3% of GDP.
- A House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report, *Digital Skills Crisis*, stated: 'Digital skills are becoming increasingly essential for getting access to a range of products and services. However, there is a digital divide where up to 12.6 million of the adult UK population lack basic digital skills. An estimated 5.8 million people have never used the internet at all. This digital skills gap is costing the UK economy an estimated £63 billion a year in lost additional GDP.'
- The Open University Business Barometer 2018 reported that it had cost organisations across the UK £6.3 billion to plug the skills gap, with talented workers benefitting from an additional £2.16 billion due to their in-demand skills. 28% of business reported applicants lacking IT skills, and 20% reported candidates lacking soft skills (e.g. communication and problem solving); these areas are three of the five Core Skills.
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise research showed that 73% of businesses in the region anticipated difficulty in recruiting young talent with highly sought after skills such as communication, being a good team player, a desire to continue their learning/skills development and the ability to work independently.

4.33.5 The Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work agenda set out in Curriculum for Excellence establishes the development of essential skills in our students as a priority. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has also emphasised that colleges have a significant role to play in implementing the Government's skills strategy and college performance will be assessed in this regard through the Education Scotland Quality Framework, How Good is Our College.

3.6 A key element of this policy is that Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology will be included in and certificated in all full time Further Education programmes of study (or reflected in a student's Skills Profile). Certification can be through any awarding body or college certificate. It is expected that Problem Solving and Working with Others will be included but not necessarily certificated.

3.7 For part time courses, teaching staff will emphasise to students the importance of skills, identifying when skills are being taught and highlight transferability of skills. Opportunities will also be created through curriculum design to promote skills development.

4.343.8 Skills development should allows students to meet entry requirements for higher level courses, facilitates pathways into employment and promotes progression in learning.

3.9 Diagnostic assessment activity will be carried out during the recruitment process or at the beginning of the course. It provides valuable information to ensure that students are supported appropriately in their learning by adapting materials and setting the initial pace of learning.

This diagnostic assessment information can be shared across delivery teams to provide a rounded picture of the strengths of a student and their areas for development, to ensure that the existing Communication, Numeracy and ICT skills of the student are used to inform the pedagogy of the course.

4.453.10 **Recognition of Prior Learning** – Regardless of the Core Skills requirement of the main course, students will always be encouraged to improve their EssentialCore Skills profile. for Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology. For example,

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students who require Level 5 and already have Level 5 will be supported to work towards achieving Level 6 through extension or bridging activity. Students who have already achieved Level 6 will be supported to fulfil their credit requirements with alternative modules.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all further education programmes of study, normally up to and including SCQF Level 6. There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses for the purposes of the UHI Partnership.

4.2 The following courses are exempt from the requirement for certificated Core Skills set out in 3.6:

- Short full-time courses (on a discretionary basis in Academic Partners)
- Part-time courses
- Commercial courses
- Leisure courses

5. Notification

5.1 All staff will be notified of changes to the Essential Skills policy through a range of methods, including but not limited to staff meetings, intranet, Academic Partner websites as per normal policy update processes.

5.2 Academic Partners will be notified of any changes, allowing sufficient time to for updates to be made.

5.3 Students will be notified of changes by academic partners working with HISA.

6.5. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 It is the responsibility of everyone in the college to create a positive environment for both students and staff to develop Essential Skills (including Core Skills).

5.16.12 It is the responsibility of managers of all levels within the college to enable staff to deliver this policy, where necessary directing resource or facilitating changes to curriculum and teaching. This includes ensuring all staff are appropriately skilled and qualified for their role.

5.26.3 It is the responsibility of vocational teams to design courses that include Essential Skills and Core Skills as appropriate, following curriculum design principles.

6.4 It is the responsibility of Core Skills and vocational teams to collaborate to include the three certificated Core Skills in programme design, and to adopt an appropriate delivery model for Core Skills on their course and offer support to meet internal and external verification requirements.

6.5 It is the responsibility of students to proactively engage in Essential Skills learning, and work with all staff to ensure new skills are developed or existing skills reinforced.

6.6 It is the responsibility of the Academic Partner to ensure any students in scope of the policy undertake any relevant diagnostic assessments to ascertain Core Skill levels.

6 Compliance

6.1 This policy is a college-wide college policy; and all staff must work to meet the requirements outlined within the policy. Compliance with the Policy will be monitored

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through regular audits, with outcome reports being reported to Student Journey and Experience Committee.

7 Monitoring

7.1 This policy will be monitored, and its implementation evaluated, primarily through the following measures reported to Student Journey and Experience Committee.

7.1.1 Student, staff and employer feedback

7.1.2 Student data e.g. success rates, withdrawal rates and partial success with an analysis of the drivers behind this data.

8 Review

8.1 This policy will be review on a 3-year cycle OR if any new guidance is published by Scottish Government or relevant national body or any qualification providers that UHI Inverness use.

~~7. Legislative Framework~~

~~Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005~~

~~Equality Act 2010~~

~~Education Scotland – Curriculum for Excellence~~

~~Skills for Learning, Skills for Life, and Skills for Work (2009)~~

~~Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (2014)~~

~~Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy (2007)~~

~~8. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources~~

~~College Development Network – The role of essential skills in Scottish national education policy~~

~~Education Scotland – How Good is our College?~~

~~Highlands and Islands Enterprise – Business Panel Survey: Workforce, Skills and Young Talent 2018~~

~~Scottish Funding Council – Outcome Agreement Guidance (2016)~~

~~Scottish Government: Costs of Learning Student Funding Guide~~

~~9. Version Control and Change History~~

~~Version~~	~~Date~~	~~Approved by~~	~~Amendment(s)~~	~~Author~~
~~0~~				
~~1~~				
~~2~~				

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Commented [NG2]: We're unclear what team would carry out these audits and what committee they would report to, or do you mean when we are externally audited?

Commented [CL3R2]: @Natalie Glasgow agreed we need a named committee to monitor this spend.

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Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

ITEM 04.b.2

Policy/Procedure/Strategy	FE Essential Skills	Lead Officer	Craig Lowther
New / Revised / Existing	Revised	Review Officer	
Review Due		Assessment Date	13/03/26

Step 1 – Aim

Aim of proposed activity/decision/new or revised policy or procedure:

The policy sets out to create a coherent and comprehensive approach to support and optimise the delivery of Essential Skills

Who will be affected?	Who will be consulted?	Evidence Available:
Staff and students		

Step 2 – Potential Positive (P) / Negative (N) / Neutral (N/I) impact identified:

Area:	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage/ Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation
Eliminating Discrimination	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Advancing Equality of Opportunity	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Promoting Good Relations	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

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Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

ITEM 04.b.2

Step 3 – Consider the Environmental Sustainability Impact (including Potential Positive (P) / Negative (N) / Neutral (N/I) impact)
N

Step 4 – Outline actions taken to ensure no detriment resulting from change
Managers should monitor the implementation of the policy to ensure that students are treated equally as set out in the policy document.

Summary of EIA Outcome	
☒	No further action to be carried out
☐	Amendments or changes to be made
☐	Proceed with awareness of adverse impact
☐	Abandon process – stop and rethink

Completed EIA Forms to be sent to Quality.ic@uhi.ac.uk.

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Board of Management

Subject/Title:	**STUDENT RETENTION AND OUTCOMES FORECAST FOR FE & HNs 2025/26**
Author: [Name and Job title]	Jane Maclennan, Information Systems Manager Dr Lindsay Snodgrass, VP Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
Meeting:	Learning Teaching and Research
Meeting Date:	9 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	29 May 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide the committee with an update on student retention and progress against targets for 2025/26
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: 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.
Resource implications:	Yes
Risk implications:	Yes – quality of the student experience
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes – equity of the student experience
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 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

STUDENT RETENTION AND OUTCOMES FORECAST FOR FE & HNs 2025/26

Executive Summary

The report provides an update on student withdrawals, and progress against targets for 2025/26.

The early withdrawal rates are lower for both FE full time and HE students than the previous year, they are higher for FE part-time students. It is not expected that there will be further changes to the early withdrawal rates.

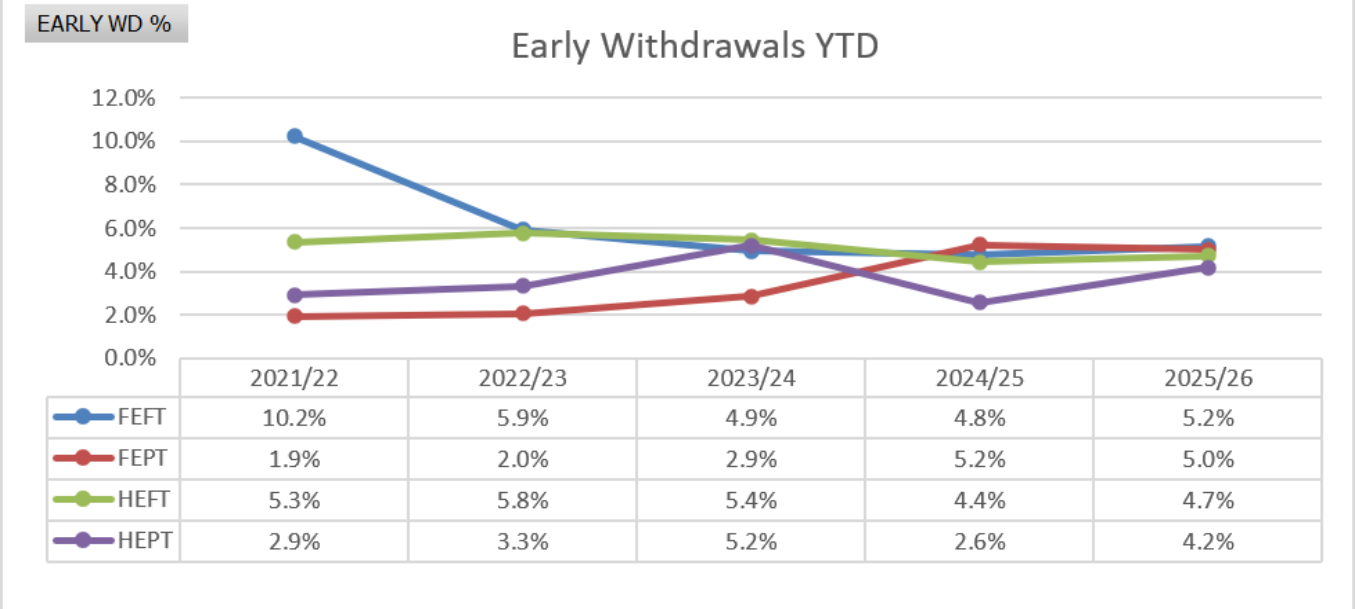
FE further withdrawals are currently higher than the year end position for 2023/24, however they are lower for HE students.

Progress in achieving our full-time FE and HN targets indicates that we are in line with our overall success targets.

Many Body of Information

Early Withdrawals

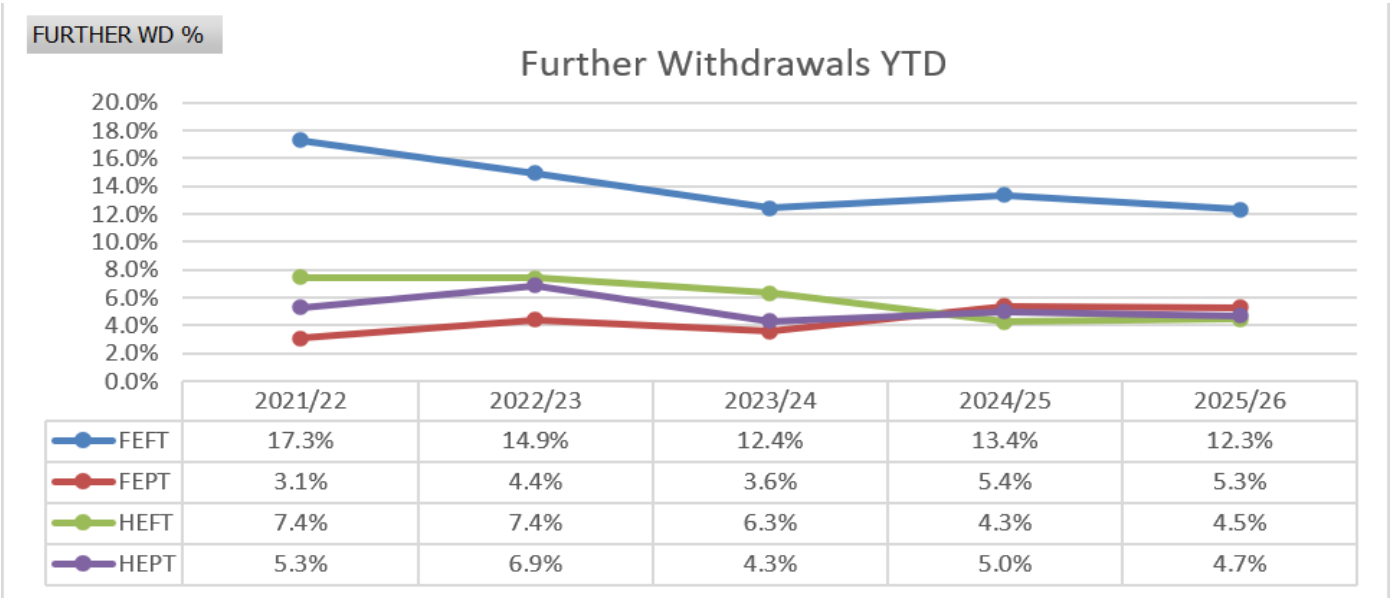
The chart below shows the end of year figures for previous years and the year to date for 2025/26. It is not expected that there will be further change to the early withdrawal rates. Whilst the early withdrawal rates are higher for both FE full time and HE students than the previous year, they are marginally lower for FE part-time students.



	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
FEFT	10.2%	5.9%	4.9%	4.8%	5.2%
FEPT	1.9%	2.0%	2.9%	5.2%	5.0%
HEFT	5.3%	5.8%	5.4%	4.4%	4.7%
HEPT	2.9%	3.3%	5.2%	2.6%	4.2%

Further withdrawals

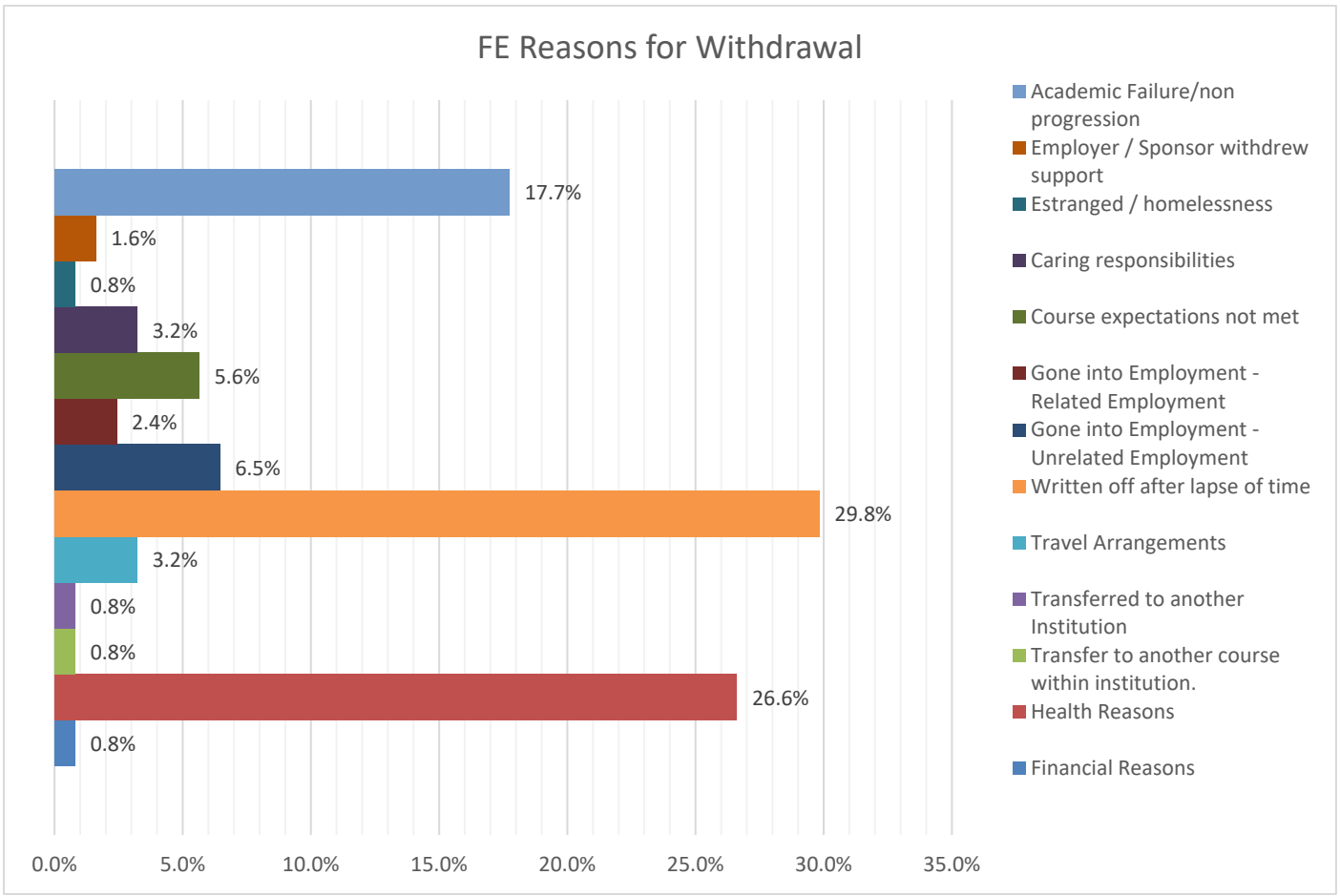
The chart below shows the Further Withdrawal end of year figures for previous years and the year to date for 2025/26. FE further withdrawals are currently lower than the year end position for 2024/25, however they are higher for full time HE students. It is anticipated that there will be minimal further withdrawals given the point in the academic year.



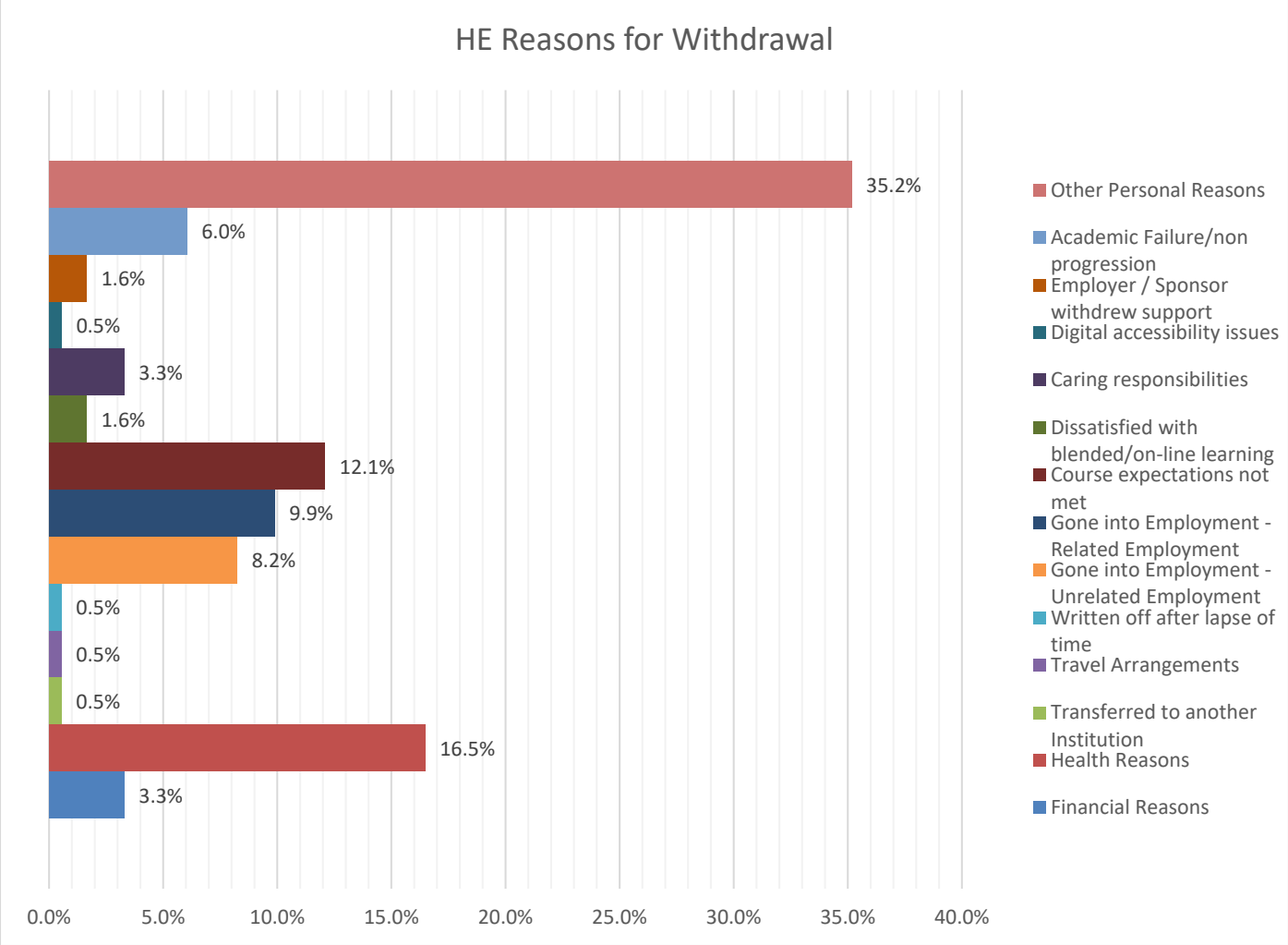
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
FEFT	17.3%	14.9%	12.4%	13.4%	12.3%
FEPT	3.1%	4.4%	3.6%	5.4%	5.3%
HEFT	7.4%	7.4%	6.3%	4.3%	4.5%
HEPT	5.3%	6.9%	4.3%	5.0%	4.7%

Reasons for withdrawal

Where the reason for withdrawal is known, the most frequent for FE students is written off after lapse of time (stop attending/stop engaging), which accounts for 29.8% of withdrawals, followed by health reasons at 26.6%.



Where the reason for withdrawal is known, the most frequent for HE students the most frequent reason is other personal reasons at 35.2% followed by health at 16.5%.



Progress against targets for full time students

The Scottish Funding Council published the 2024/25 Student Outcomes on 27th May 2026, these are summarised below.

Our FE full time success was 5.9% above national average and 2nd to South Lanarkshire college when comparing against colleges of a similar size.

UHI Colleges HE results are not reported by the SFC, however our internal analysis shows that our HE full time success for HNs was 4.3% above national average and 3rd after Dundee & Angus and Edinburgh Colleges. The data also shows that UHI Inverness has the best retention rate in the sector for FT HN.

Outcomes for FE on recognised qualifications (full-time)

	Scotland			UHI Inverness		
Year	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal
2022-23	69.8%	12.1%	18.1%	72.8%	11.2%	16.0%
2023-24	67.0%	12.4%	20.6%	75.4%	11.2%	13.3%
2024-25	70.5%	11.2%	18.4%	76.4%	8.6%	15.1%

Outcome Totals for FE on recognised qualifications (part-time)

	Scotland			UHI Inverness		
Year	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal
2022-23	80.3%	12.6%	7.1%	87.0%	6.9%	6.2%
2023-24	80.4%	12.4%	7.3%	84.8%	10.1%	5.1%
2024-25	81.7%	11.8%	6.5%	86.6%	6.9%	6.5%

Outcomes for HE on recognised qualifications (full-time)

	Scotland			UHI Inverness (HNs)		
Year	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal
2022-23	69.7%	14.9%	15.5%	66.9%	22.0%	11.1%
2023-24	66.9%	16.0%	17.1%	68.4%	20.9%	10.5%
2024-25	72.4%	13.0%	14.6%	76.7%	16.5%	6.8%

Outcome Totals for HE on recognised qualifications (part-time)

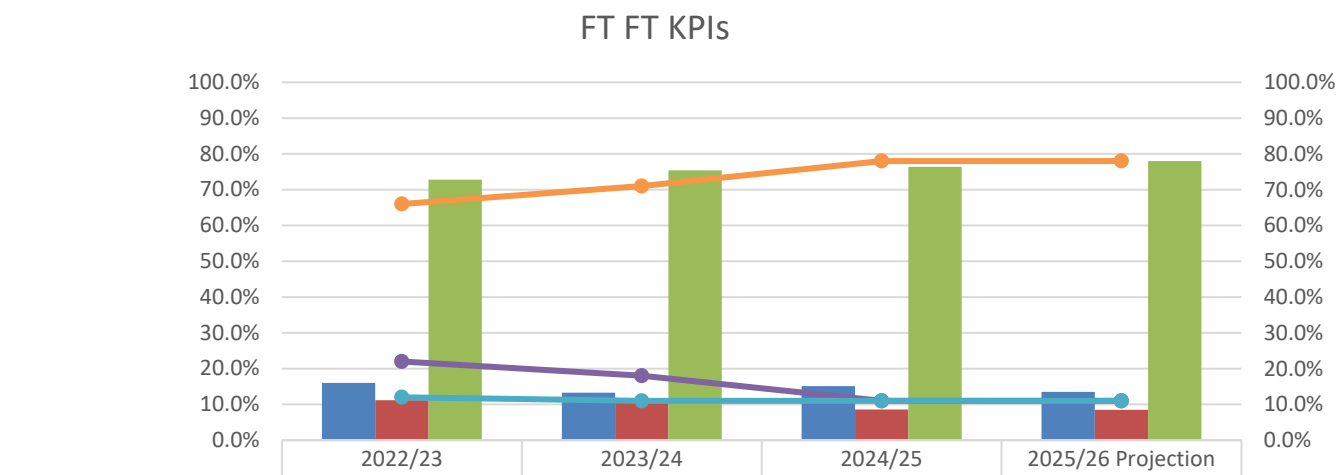
	Scotland			UHI Inverness (HNs)		
Year	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal	% Completed Successful	% Partial Success	% Withdrawal
2022-23	81.4%	12.5%	6.1%	76.5%	14.4%	9.1%
2023-24	81.7%	12.0%	6.2%	82.8%	14.6%	2.5%
2024-25	83.5%	11.3%	5.2%	78.8%	14.7%	6.5%

Targets have been set for 2025/26 as below:

Targets 2025/26	**% Completed Successful**	**% Partial Success**	**% Withdrawal**
FE on recognised qualifications (full-time)	78%	11%	11%
HE HNC & HND (full-time)	77%	16%	7%

In the charts below the bars illustrate the FE full-time and HE HN 3-year figures for Withdrawal, Partial Success and Success. The end column illustrates the projected outcomes. The targets for each year are illustrated as lines.

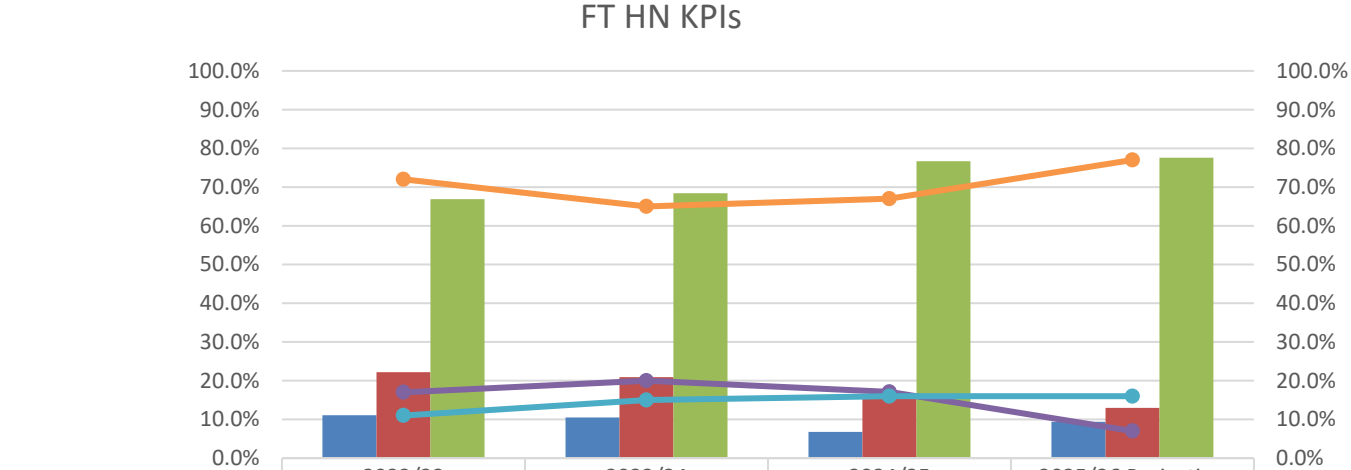
At the time of writing the withdrawal rates for full-time FE students is higher at 13% than the target set of 11%, however the work that has been undertaken to minimise partial success, would indicate that the **targets for success are likely to be achieved for FT FE.**



	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 Projection
Withdrawal	16.0%	13.3%	15.1%	13.5%
Partial Success	11.2%	11.2%	8.6%	8.5%
Success	72.8%	75.4%	76.4%	78.0%
Withdrawal Target	22.0%	18.0%	11.0%	11.0%
Partial Success target	12.0%	11.0%	11.0%	11.0%
Success Target	66.0%	71.0%	78.0%	78.0%

The current withdrawal rate for FT HN students is 9.1% which is higher than the target set, however it is expected that there will be minimal further withdrawals prior to the Progression Boards taking place during June.

The current projection based on information gathered from Curriculum Teams is that the projected partial success rate will be below the target of 16%%. As a consequence, **the projected success rate is 77.6 % which is marginally ahead of the target for FT HNs.**



	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 Projection
Withdrawal	11.1%	10.5%	6.8%	9.4%
Partial Success	22.2%	20.9%	16.5%	13.0%
Success	66.9%	68.4%	76.7%	77.6%
Withdrawal Target	17.0%	20.0%	17.1%	7.0%
Partial Success target	11.0%	15.0%	16.0%	16.0%
Success Target	72.0%	65.0%	67.0%	77.0%

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Subject/Title:	KPI Matrix and Report YTD – Period 9 April 2026
Meeting and date:	Audit Committee 2 June 2026
Author:	Martin Whyte
Decision, Discussion or Noting:	Noting / Discussion
Link to Strategic Plan:	**Links to all strategic objectives**
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 2025-26 year-to-date KPI performance as at period 9, April 2026.

Main body of information

The KPI Matrix for 2025-26 accompanies the paper detailing the annual target, YTD target and actual performance along with a comparison against the same period last year. Narrative for in-scope measures is provided below. 'No change' in parenthesis following the RAG status for a measure confirms that the data has not changed since the previous KPI report.

YTD Summary

Thirty-six measures were in scope as at period 9, April 2026. Two measures that do not have an annual target are also reported; these are shaded blue.

Of the thirty-six measures:
Twenty-one are satisfactory / met (Green).
Ten are unsatisfactory / not yet met (Red),
Five are marginal / not yet met (Amber).

Comment on In-Scope Measures – YTD Period 9, April 2026.

HE Active Applications. Serial 1. 84.4% RED.

HE active applications at 1,139 are below the plan of 1,350 for this point in the year and are 141 fewer applications than the previous year. Weekly admissions meetings review HE application data, including 'no offers', 'offers', 'accepted offers', and their respective proportions. Percentage of offers that have been accepted are at a 7-year high of 75%. However, accepted offers are currently 74 fewer than last year (circa. -£410,000). Additional recruitment initiatives have been launched such as the 'Next Steps' attended stall in the atrium which is attracting interest and has added three HE applications so far. In addition, Business Solutions along with MIS colleagues have increased focus on GA applications, particularly activity to convert 'notes of interest' to named applicants.

FE Active Applications. Serial 2. 96.8%. AMBER.
FE active applications at 2,032 are 78 applications below the profiled expectation as at the end of April. Despite the lower number of applications, the number of accepted offers is 230 greater than the same point last year with 90% of offers accepted (78%).

FE Credits. Serial 3. 102.0%. GREEN.
The college has exceeded its FE Credit threshold with 26,725 FE Credits achieved against SFC threshold of 26,442. It is expected that there will be a small amount of additional credits to be added in the final weeks of the AY.

Apprenticeship Starts. Serial 4. 133.3%. GREEN.
The college achieved 313 new apprenticeship starts in the contract year (to March 2026). YTD performance is 25 greater than the same point last year. Modern apprenticeship recruitment from April – end of July 2026 relates to the new SDS contract year but the figures are reported in the current academic year KPI.

Apprentices in Learning. Serial 5. 106.2%. GREEN.
The average number of apprentices in learning is 717 against plan 675. The figure reflects increased recruitment over the past couple of years with many programmes being 4-year apprenticeships.
Note, the figure does not include apprentices studying at UHI Inverness through managing agents such as SNIPEF and SECTT which raises the average in learning to circa 1,000.

Apprenticeship Income. Serial 6. 115.5%. GREEN.
Apprenticeship Income YTD is £1,204,228 against plan of £1,043,000 and is £121,549 greater than the same point last year. This reflects the work undertaken by assessors and Business Solutions throughout the year to ensure that review claims are completed and claimed in a timely manner and the increased percentage of successful completions YTD (see serial 32).

Commercial Short Course Income. Serial 8. 195.5%. GREEN.
Short course income YTD is £123,205 against profile of £56,250. YTD short course income has exceeded the department target of £75,000. Green Skills Training funding is additional to the income reported in this measure. £65,000 Green Skills Training funding has been claimed for the academic year and will appear under 'Other Grant' funding rather than as Commercial Short Course Income.

HE Enrolments (head count). Serial 9. 100.9%. GREEN.

HE Enrolment head count was 2,119 against the annual target of 2,100 as at the end of period 9. Head count greater than target indicates that a larger proportion of HE students are undertaking part-time study than anticipated.

HE Enrolments (year one starts). Serial 10. 115.6%. GREEN. (no change)
Year one starts are 867 against planned 750. This is positive and reflects the increased recruitment. Increased year one starts provides an opportunity to retain students for two/three more years on undergraduate study and curriculum teams have been gathering 'intention to progress' information to inform expected retention data.

HE FTE (APC figures). Serial 11. 92.5%. RED.
HE FTE (APC figures) stand at 1,463 FTE against plan 1,581 FTE. Unfortunately, 118 FTE below APC target and 203 below budgeted target. Additional information concerning the impacts of the recruitment shortfall are included in the Director of Finance papers. HE Recruitment is 150 FTE greater than the same point last year.

GA Programmes – New Enrolments. Serial 13. 88.5%. RED. (no change)
There were 115 new enrolments to the GA programmes against plan 130. Last year saw 200 new GA enrolments. Overall, GA enrolments were 42 fewer than planned across all years with advanced entry to year 2 of some GAs below expectation.

Senior Phase Enrolments. Serial 14. 96.1%. AMBER. (no change)
We delivered 542 senior phase enrolments against planned 564. Last year we enrolled 574 on senior phase programmes. While below plan and last year's recruitment, the number is not a concern as FE delivery is on track and some senior phase options were curtailed. Senior phase applications received for 2026/27 study are greater than received for this year.

ESES. Serial 18. 100.0%. GREEN. (no change)
First survey of the year conducted in October returned 96% student satisfaction, 0.3 percentage points more than last year.

ESES% Response Rate. Serial 23. 105.0%. GREEN. (no change)
ESES response rate was 63% against 60% objective and 2 percentage points more than the previous year.

MA Successful Outcomes (contract year). Serial 32. 71.7%. RED.
Successful outcomes for the contract year ended March 2026 was 67.8% against plan 75%. This is an improvement of 1.4 percentage points on the same point last year. As mentioned previously, the timing of this objective does not coincide with the academic year and cycle of apprenticeship blocks. Business Solutions and curriculum monitor unit and qualification completions on an ongoing basis to ensure student progress is maintained. Successful outcomes as of the end of March was 67.8% against objective 75%.

FE Progression to Further FE Study. Serial 33. 103.8%. GREEN. (no change)
41.5% of FE students continued to further FE study in 2025-26. This exceeded the objective of 40% and was 1.9% greater than the previous year.

FE Progression to HE Study. Serial 34. 105.1%. GREEN. (no change)

36.8% of our HE students progressed from FE study. This exceeded our target of 35% and was 7.1% greater than the previous year. FE to HE progression is a key element of our student retention and HE growth plans.

Mental Health Support Appt. Serial 35. 103.0%. GREEN.

100% of requests received an appointment within 3-10 working days during the period. The counselling team continue to deliver a valuable and prompt service to our students. Note, UHI have notified us that from 2026/27 they will undertake student support activities for EO enrolled students (e.g. Nursing, Ophthalmology, Centre for History). This includes the provision of counselling services.

Learning Support Appt. Serial 36. 93.6%. RED.

Averaged across the AY, the team has delivered 90.8% of appointments within the timeframe against plan 97%. It is noted that they have achieved 100% in each of the past four months.
Note, UHI have notified us that from 2026/27 they will undertake student support activities for EO enrolled students (e.g. Nursing, Ophthalmology, Centre for History). This includes the provision of ASN and learning support services.

Sickness Levels. Serial 40. 102.3%. RED.
Sickness levels as an average YTD are 3.63% against plan 3.02% YTD which is the same as the same period last year. Absence rates for Q3 were 3.4% against 2.98% expectation. Q3 absence rate is 0.7 percentage points lower than Q3 2024/25. Head of HR and team have additional analysis.

PRD Completion – full or review. Serial 44. 108.0%. GREEN.
PRD completion rates as of Q2 (the period reported) are 27% against 25% objective. Note, the profile/target reporting has been moved by a quarter. HR report PRD completion data a full quarter behind to allow line managers time to upload PRD data to CIPHR after meetings have been completed.

Student FTE: Academic Staff Ratio. Serial 45. 111.5%. GREEN. (no change)
SSR is 22.3 as at the end of semester 1. This is better than the target however the ratio must increase to compensate for cost increases outstripping funding increases.

Number of Workplace Injuries. Serial 47. 110.5%. RED.

116 injuries YTD against planned 105. The HS&S Manager has seen an increase in reporting across all H&S matters with the more user-friendly SafePoint platform. There were 3 injuries reported in April. Note – 2-week academic holiday during the period. HS&S Manager monitors this closely.

RIDDOR Reportable Accidents & Illness. Serial 48. 200%. RED.
Six reportable incidents YTD. Two reported in March 26. One student spiked their leg with tree climbing footwear and attended hospital for stitches. Second student received minor burn from welding slag inside boot. Both departments have updated their activity RA following learning from the incidents. HS&S Manager deals with all RIDDOR cases.

% of Staff completed mandatory IHASCO Trg. Serial 49. 108.8%. GREEN.
87% of staff completed their allocated training within the period. This is 2 percentage points more than the same period last year.

Forecast Outturn Operational Surplus / (Deficit). Serial 53. 214.6%. RED.
Forecast outturn deficit circa. -£1,700,000 against budget deficit of -£792,000. Papers from the Director of Finance and Estates and other supporting papers have been provided with full details and analysis.

Room Occupancy – Frequency. Serial 59. 87.7%. RED.
Frequency of room usage is 37.2% YTD against planned 42.3%. This is 7.8 percentage points lower than the previous year.
Further analysis has been requested to identify if there are patterns emerging in certain rooms / timetable groups.

CO2 Emissions on Utilities (gross Tonnes). Serial 60. 104.7%. AMBER.
457 tonnes YTD against plan 436 tonnes. 21 tonnes more than plan and 38 tonnes more than for the same period last year.
Analysis has been requested from estates to understand the cause of variance between planned and actual.
Public body conversion factors have improved slightly which helps as does the replacement of lighting for LED bulbs.

CO2 Emissions on Waste – Tonnes. Serial 61. 76.5%. GREEN.
0.429 tonnes YTD against 0.560 tonnes planned. Emissions are 0.161 tonnes lower than the same point last year.

Estates Reactive Task Completion Rate %. Serial 62. 100.5%. GREEN
The team achieved 96.4% completion in the period against 96% expectation. Estates Supervisor monitors estates requests and completion rates.

GTFM % Reactive Task Completion Rate. Serial 63. 99.9% AMBER.
GTFM slipped below their objective delivering 95.9% against target 96%. Completion rates are a key part of the contract management discussions that take place each month.

Total % of Capital Expenditure Budget Committed. Serial 64. 100%. GREEN.
The full capital budget has been committed by 31 March.

The information is accessible to all department managers and board members via SharePoint at: IN Management Information > Documents > KPI Matrix

Performance Measures
AY: 2025-2026
Performance Measures- EMT & Board of Management

Measures - Linked to Profile and Actual sheets

AY Start	01 Aug 2025
Today	25 May 2026
Period Month	April
No.Periods YTD	9

Key:

B = Not yet in scope	
R = Not Achieved	
A = Partially Achieved	
G = Achieved	

Serial	Measure	Measurement Frequency	Prior Year Actual	Current Year Target	YTD TARGET	YTD ACTUAL	YTD ACTUAL v TARGET RAG	Prior YTD ACTUAL	Variance - YTD vs Prior YTD
	Measure 1: CORE FE/HE OUTPUTS								
1	HE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)	Monthly	1,418	1,400.0	1,350	1,139	**84.4%**	1,280	-141
2	FE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)	Monthly	2194	2,300.0	2100	2,032	96.8%	2,132	-100
3	FE Credits	Monthly	27085	26,442	26,200	26,725	**102.0%**	26,908	-183
4	Apprenticeship starts	Monthly	409	382	237	316	**133.3%**	291	25
5	Apprentices in Learning (average in year)	Monthly	705	675	675	717	**106.2%**	689	28
6	Apprenticeship Income (excluding T&A)	Monthly	£1,398,960	£1,300,000	£1,043,000	£1,204,228	**115.5%**	£1,082,679	£121,549
8	Commercial Short Course Income	Monthly	£72,508	£75,000	£56,250	£123,205	**219.0%**	£66,200	£57,005
9	HE enrolments (head count)	Monthly	2,074	2,100	2,100	2,119	**100.9%**	2,106	13
10	HE enrolments (year one starts)	Annual	637	750	750	867	**115.6%**	637	230
11	HE FTE (APC figures) (from Oct)	Monthly	1,313.0	1,581.0	1,581.0	1,463.0	**92.5%**	1,313.2	150
13	GA Programmes - New Enrolments	Monthly	191	130	130	115.0	**88.5%**	191	-76
14	Senior Phase Enrolments	Annual	574	564	564	542.0	96.1%	574	-32
	MEASURE 2: SATISFACTION MEASURES								
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES)	Annual	95.7%	96%	96.0%	96.0%	**100.0%**	95.70%	0.30%
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES)	Annual	94.7%	95%	95.0%	95.0%	**100.0%**	94.70%	0.30%
23	ESES % Response Rate	Annual	61.0%	60%	60.0%	63.0%	**105.0%**	61.0%	2.00%
24	SSES % Response Rate	Annual	53.2%	55%	55.0%	53.0%	96.4%	53.2%	-0.20%
	Measure 3: RETENTION, SUCCESS & PROGRESSION								
32	Modern Apprenticeship successful outcomes (contract year)	Monthly	63.2%	75%	75.0%	53.8%	**71.7%**	57.10%	-3.30%
33	FE progression to further FE study	Annual	39.6%	40%	40.0%	41.5%	**103.8%**	39.60%	1.90%
34	FE progression to HE - actual	Annual	29.7%	35%	35.0%	36.8%	**105.1%**	29.70%	7.10%
35	Mental Health Support appt (non-emergency) offered for within 3 - 10 worki	Monthly	98.0%	97.0%	97.0%	100%	**103.0%**	98%	1.89%
36	Learning Support appt offered for within 6 - 20 working days	Monthly	100.0%	97.0%	97.0%	91%	**93.6%**	100%	-9.22%
37	PLSP - completed and accepted by student (within 10 days of meeting)	Monthly	-	85.0%	85.0%	87.7%	**103.1%**		
	Measure 4: HR								
40	Sickness levels	Quarterly	3.63%	2.98%	3.02%	3.63%	**120.3%**	3.63%	0.00%
41	- Short Term	Quarterly	1.53%			1.45%		1.65%	-0.20%
42	- Long Term	Quarterly	2.10%			2.19%		2.45%	-0.26%
43	% Staff turnover	Quarterly	2.35%	2.45%	2.59%	2.45%	**94.6%**	2.39%	0.06%
44	PRD completion - full or review (current quarter -2)	Quarterly	44%	50%	25.0%	27%	**108.0%**	34%	-7.00%
45	Student FTE:Academic Staff Ratio	Biannual	20.2	21	20.0	22.3	**111.5%**	21.7	0.6
47	Number of workplace injuries	Monthly	115	115	105	116	**110.5%**	105	11
48	Number of RIDDOR reportable accidents and illness	Monthly	5		3	6	**200.0%**	5	1
49	% of staff completed mandatory IHASCO (H&S) Trg	Quarterly	84%	80%	80.0%	87.0%	**108.8%**	85%	2.00%
	Measure 5: FINANCE								
53	Forecast Outturn Operational Surplus/(Deficit)	Quarterly	-£842,992	-£792,000	-£792,000	-£1,700,000	**214.6%**	-£967,000	-£733,000
	Measure 6: ESTATES & CAMPUS								
59	Room Occupancy - Frequency %	Monthly	40.2%	38.0%	42.3%	37.1%	**87.7%**	45%	-7.87%
60	CO2 Emissions on Utilities (gross) Tonnes	Monthly	561	532	436	457	104.7%	419	38
61	CO2 Emissions on Waste - Tonnes	Quarterly	0.821	0.780	0.560	0.429	76.5%	0.590	-0.16
62	Estates reactive task completion rate %	Monthly	95%	96%	96%	96.4%	100.5%	94.8%	1.6%
63	GTFM % reactive task completion rate	Monthly	95%	96%	96%	95.9%	99.9%	94.4%	1.5%
64	Total % of Capital expenditure budget committed (Aug - March)	Monthly	100%	100%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%	

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LTR Committee

Subject/Title:	QAA QUALITY ENGAGEMENT VISIT
Meeting and date:	LTR 9th June 2026
Author:	Natalie Glasgow Head of Registry & Quality
Decision, Discussion or Noting:	For Noting and Future Discussion
Link to Strategic Plan:	
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)

The Board are asked to note the outcome of the recent Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Main body of information

ILM

- The ILM took place on 1st April 2026
- Key discussion points were:
  - Strategic Priorities
  - Quality Assurance & Enhancement
  - Student Partnership
- All evidence was requested and submitted in advance of the meeting, and these were referred to throughout our discussions. Attendees from UHI Inverness were Natalie Glasgow, Lindsay Snodgrass, Chloe Young and Sharon Macfarlane.
- The discussions were very positive, and we spoke of all our achievements over the last couple of years, but were also realistic in some of the challenges we are facing.
- The final report has now been received and is attached for your reference.
- There were no escalations, just one outstanding action
  - UHI Inverness to keep QAA up to date with ongoing implementation of the ILQR approach across professional services and curriculum areas.
- This is underway as we are continuing our ILQR pilot for Professional Service Teams across Georgie's team at the start of June and I have been speaking with the CQLs about meeting the requirements for the course teams, i.e. including externals in CCMs

TQER

- The TQER is our Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review
- We are having a scoping meeting with the QAA Review Manager in July 2026
- The timeline for our review is:

Strategic Impact Analysis and Advance Information Set uploaded	W/c 9 November 2026
Initial Review Visit	W/c 1 February 2027
Main Review Visit	W/c 15 March 2027

- At the initial review visit the review team will want to meet with up to 4 student groups to hear about their learning experience. These discussions will inform the agenda for the main review visit and any additional evidence required.
- At the main review visit the review team will meet with a range of stakeholders: staff and students, and may also involve employers, etc.

Next Steps

- Preparation has already started for the TQER and at the start of 2026/27 input from the wider UHI Inverness teams will be required.
- Current considerations are:
    - How do we ensure that externals are included in our ILQR activity across all areas?
    - How do we share best practice, suggestions, projects, successes across the whole staff population?
    - How do we ensure all staff are aware of the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) and the requirements?

Any questions on the TQER should be directed to Natalie Glasgow.

Note of institutional liaison meeting (ILM)

Institution	UHI Inverness
QAA Attendees	Holly Thomas, Quality Assurance Manager & QAA Institutional Liaison contact [QAAIL] (Chair)
Institution Attendees	Natalie Glasgow, Head of Registry and Quality Dr Lindsay Snodgrass, Vice Principal - Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality Sharon MacFarlane, Tertiary Education Leader Chloe Young, Students' Association President
Date and time	Wednesday 1 April 2026, 11.00 – 13.00
Location	1 Inverness Campus, Inverness IV2 5NA

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The QAA Officer opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees as listed above. Participants then took part in a roundtable introduction. It was noted that there were no apologies for absence.

2. Overview of ILM and role in TQEF (QAA)

The QAA Institutional contact provided the following overview of the ILM purpose and the role in TQEF:

- Institutions have been asked to submit more documentation in 2025-26 (as per Appendix A of institutional-liaison-guidance-for-institutions-2025-26.pdf). This is closer to the approach to ILMs that QAA took under previous methods.
- Outside of TQER, the ILMs provide part of the evidence base to support QAA's statement of assurance to the SFC. This provides the annual assurance outside of the periodic review process of TQER. TQER is an enhancement-led approach, so the ILM is in the form of a professional discussion.
- This also forms part of the 'no surprises' (noted on p.4 of the ILM guidance for institutions) approach operating in the tertiary sector in Scotland. This means institutions should seek advice from QAA about approaches they might adopt to avoid potential risks to quality and standards and that institutions should inform QAA of any potentially adverse outcomes in relation to quality and/or academic standards. E.g. critical outcomes arising from institution-led quality review (ILQR) processes or from professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) engagements or from awarding bodies. This approach is designed to engender trust, confidence and

openness.

3. Strategic priorities

The QAA Institutional Liaison (QAAIL) contact noted the following from the institution's submission:

- 2025-26 is Year 4 of 5 of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, with 'robust evaluation' planned for 2026-27.
- The LTES has distributed ownership across the UHI partnership. The LTES is the only sub-strategy which is common across all UHI partner colleges, and all other sub-strategies belong to the College.
- 10 Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) values are the basis of the strategy, with 4 enabling practices.
- The new strategic plan to 2030 for UHI is now live, therefore the current LTES was developed under the previous plan. UHI Inverness have their own strategic plan and are approaching the end of that plan. The College are developing a new strategic plan for publication in August 2026.

UHI Inverness were invited to provide a brief overview of the LTES in their context:

- **Learning and Teaching Review (LTR) –** the College goes through a cycle of LTR with regular intervals for the peer review process whereby teaching staff are observed in session. As part of this process, good practice is identified (e.g. the use of technology in teaching). The College noted good feedback on this process from reviewers and reviewees. Each of the criterion for the LTR are linked to the LTES. When staff are engaging with the LTR, they are engaging with LTES. LTR is a 'live' process, which leads to in-year enhancements in learning and teaching and lecturer professional development.
- **Course approval processes** – course approval processes also have a link with the LTES. Within this process, staff need to identify which LTE values are embedded in the new programme.
- **Professional development policy** – staff have a set number of days to engage with professional development (6 days) per year. This includes one day for the annual staff conference and one for an annual team event. This could be (e.g.) attendance at an external course, which will feed into the strategy. The College also run their own staff conference and professional development days, which are linked to the learning and teaching strategy or other priorities.

How do you interact with the LTES as a quality team?

- There are the LTR and approval processes (noted above). Anything procedural related to learning and teaching will be captured within the academic regulations, which focus on compliance. Academic appeals are also coordinated by the Quality Team. UHI Inverness have a strong focus on learning and teaching which is led by the College's TELs [Tertiary Education Leaders] and the Head of Professional Development. There are therefore two sides to engagement with the strategy (a combined approach): quality (regulations/rules) and support in terms of the learning, teaching and pedagogy in the classroom and programme design.

- **OnTrend Programme** – there are some programmes that have 'stubborn' KPIs, therefore the OnTrend Programme helps staff to reflect and evaluate 'stubborn issues'. There is a panel of staff (lecturing and quality) and students drawn from across the College (not necessarily in the same subject area). This small panel works with the relevant programme team to understand where there are issues or points of concern. The OnTrend programme uses data to inform discussion points, with the panel looking at the same data and all agreeing areas to work on. These meetings take place 3-4 times per academic year with the teams who are part of the OnTrend programme and seek in-year improvements. The College have seen positive impacts as a result of the OnTrend programme. This programme focused on FE first and then the College identified a challenge with HNs and henceforth included HNs. For example, the Accounting HNC/HND success rates were challenging, but the programme has been 'turned around' in terms of outcomes as a result of the OnTrend programme (it led to some redesign in the programme). Hair and Beauty was noted as another area with success as a result of the OnTrend programme, including because of a change in the uploading of portfolios (now done via MS Teams 'on-the-spot' with students receiving more instant feedback).

The LTES notes continuous evaluation and review of progress within the strategy (annual evaluation). *How have you evaluated activity from the previous session(s) against the LTES? (e.g. is this completed by the LTES implementation group?)*

- The Head of Professional Development at the College is part of the LTES implementation group. UHI Inverness also internally [to UHI Inverness] review the strategy and noted that the LTES is the only cross-UHI partnership strategy. The College evaluates all of its strategies annually and reports to the Board of Management on progress. As part of the evaluation, the College identify what needs to be progressed and what can be 'closed off'.

How are students/SAs involved in the development and implementation of the LTES strategy? How does it inform your role [as a student officer]?

- The SA President is on the Board of Management (BoM), as well as the other SA Depute President. Next year (2026-27) there will be one officer (SA President) on the Board of Management, and the College are seeking a voluntary position (student) to sit alongside the SA President on the BoM. The SA President is also on the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee (SJEC) and the Learning, Teaching and Research (LTR) Committee where the outcomes and impacts of the LTES are discussed.

4. Quality Assurance and enhancement

The QAAIL noted the following from the institution's submission:

- Course Committee Model (CCM) and self-evaluation framework, Annual Evaluation Reports (AERs), ILQR pilot.

UHI Inverness were invited to provide a brief overview of their quality processes, with a focus on how all the processes fit together:

- There is a minimum of three self-evaluative activities per year for curriculum teams and professional services. This includes meetings, which will have a discussion and note any actions to take forwards. The three self-evaluation activities feed into an end of year evaluative report from each curriculum and professional services team.
- Students are invited to the CCMs (including Student Voice Representatives – SVRs – and other students). CCMs may also involve employers and other stakeholders.
- Enhancement actions arising from this activity (for curriculum areas and professional services) will be recorded on the Quality Enhancement Tracker (QET), which also notes deliverables, a named owner and the intended impact of the action. All staff at the College have access to the QET, and managers can edit it. The QET actions are discussed in team meetings, and there is a regular standing item at the SJEC.
- Curriculum teams and professional services are also required to do an end of year annual review.
- Outputs from these processes inform 'You Said, We did' activities ('Your Voice, Our Actions') to help students to see the value of these quality processes. These are reasonable and achievable actions to take.
- *Some examples (for Hairdressing) of the Your Voice, Our Actions campaign were demonstrated on the screen during the meeting and are shown around the college.*
- An evaluation of the QET runs once per year, but UHI Inverness noted that they have a culture of continuous improvement.
- The SEAP provides an overarching view of quality, and the college also considered satisfaction, outcomes and student voice as part of the overarching view.
- The OnTrend Programme and the LTR run parallel to the quality processes noted above.
- The SA President noted the development of a social space on the campus as a result of student feedback that there was nowhere for students to go. The previous SA President led on getting a social space on campus between the Learning Resource Centre and the canteen. New furniture will be put in this space, and a TV has recently been installed. This is a student space and provides a space for events.

Institution-led Quality Review

The QAAIL summated the College's approach to ILQR, noting the pilot and further information shared within the evidence submission:

- There is an action in the SEAP to 'further embed the approach to ILQR'.
- Assembled a review panel of staff, student membership (via HISA) and an external to support ILQR, who received: Annual Evaluation Reports from 2023-24 and 2024-25 and put together some questions.
- Professional Services teams receive initial themes that will be the basis for the panel's initial questions [arising from the panel's analysis] before the meeting.
- Each Professional Service developed a 10-minute presentation followed by 15 mins of questions for the review session.
- Professional Services were given a series of prompts to guide their presentation.
- Actions will go into the QET following the meeting.
- The pilot has been evaluated with staff involved and the panel.
- *UHI Inverness confirmed this summation is correct.*

UHI Inverness shared the following information related to the ILQR pilot for Professional Services:

- Professional Services were asked to consider what went well, look ahead to the future and reflect on their annual reports to identify areas they might still be working on.
- Each panel member was allocated a member of the team.
- All of the managers who presented stayed for the whole session, which was beneficial. For example, the Academic Admin team raised an issue about attendance tracking, and the IT Manager could provide a solution to this in the room.
- The ILQR pilot process is being replicated with Vice Principal - Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality's counterpart at the start of June 2026. The process will therefore be rolled out with the 'other half' of professional services this year (2025-26), and next academic year will include the curriculum teams too. The process will be rolled out fully next year.
- In terms of Curriculum teams, ILQR is yet to be formally rolled out but the College has, for the last two years, completed 'sector visits'. The College has identified which programmes would benefit from this (e.g. HN programmes last year). This year there has been a 'narrower focus', with targeted visits across the curriculum to support learning from other practice. Some CCMs have had externals involved, and all have student involvement.

The QAAIL asked the following questions about ILQR:

Will a formal policy/procedure be put together following the pilot of ILQR for professional services?

- UHI Inverness plan to develop guidance documents rather than a policy, similar to the self-evaluation framework and student partnership document in the evidence base for the ILM.
- UHI Inverness noted that some curriculum areas, such as Engineering, will find it easier to find employers to contribute to the ILQR than others (e.g. Social Sciences). The College are considering how industry advisory boards might form part of the evidence for the ILQR evidence base.

Will UHI Inverness be creating a schedule?

- Once the pilot is complete, the College will create a schedule and set dates (similar to the committee meeting calendar).

What did the SA President (as the HISA rep) learn from being involved in the Professional Services ILQR pilot?

- Primarily hear a lot about courses and less about professional services [in the role of SA President].
- The College noted an upcoming proposal for the student engagement strategy including a 'carousel model' as part of an event in ~October 2026. This will be a 'speed-dating' type event with different stands for different professional services at the college, HISA and curriculum. Each stand can share information with students for

a short period of time before they move onto the next stand. The College are looking at ways for professional services to engage more with students.
- The SA President is also developing a video for induction. The SA President does class visits once students are settled. The video would be a way to raise awareness of what the SA do and support recruitment for SVRs.
- The 'Achieved Together' meetings involve the College's Quality Team and the SA. There is an action plan considered by this group, which is how the action above came about.

The evaluations in the evidence base noted that a lot of the Professional Services focused on their most recent annual report (though the guidance was to focus on the last two). How will you ensure a periodic (longitudinal) reflection on trends over time?

- The College noted that they could increase the amount of data used. Currently, past evaluation reports are used. For example, the college could consider looking at trend data from student satisfaction surveys and considering [in the context of Professional Services] information about (e.g.) the library or canteen. The pilot looked at the last two academic years. As part of the further pilot, the college noted that they could look at the past 5 year's trend data from SSES.
- QAAIL noted the college's continuous/in-year evaluative approach.

Some actions from the ILQR are noted in the evidence base. *How did you capture commendations/best practice to share this more widely? Has this been captured?*

- The outcomes went to Executive Management Team (EMT) and the SJEC. Most of the outcomes were actions logged on the QET. Best practice sharing took place more 'on-the-job', but the College will consider a more formal approach to sharing best practice in future and how to share this more widely.
- An example of the informal/'on-the-job' learning included the Learning Support and Wellbeing Team's introduction of an online booking system. From learning this in ILQR, there are other teams who are considering a similar approach for next year.

How are you involved with UHI (central)'s ILQR processes (HE – as the degree awarding body)?

- UHI Inverness have taken the opportunity to be involved in a Quality Monitoring Dialogue on 20 April (UHI central are looking for volunteers – quality managers, officers – to help review HE programmes). There is a lead for each programme review, and the panel will review and put together a series of questions. UHI Inverness engage in this primarily for networked HE. UHI inverness noted that they have more 'control' and a 'firmer grasp' on QA and evaluation of HE that takes place within UHI Inverness only (not networked).
- Curriculum areas included in ILQR at UHI Inverness next year will include HE programmes but will not include networked provision because UHI Inverness do not have the same control/role and are therefore focusing on provision where UHI Inverness can influence change more.
- QAAIL noted that the College's approach to ILQR will be considered as part of the TQER (2026-27).

Action – UHI Inverness to keep QAA up to date with ongoing implementation of the ILQR

approach across professional services and curriculum areas.

Other quality processes

The QAAIL noted that the Academic Evaluation Activity notes template is mapped to TQEF principles. *How effective is this new structure with the mapping to the TQEF principles?*

- UHI Inverness are still getting used to TQEF principles, but it is useful to have the framework (Quality staff will use it regularly). The College are looking at how to deliver and promote it more (e.g. with teams). For example, going into team meetings and using the live poll function to gain an understanding of others' understanding of the TQEF and bring this to life with teams. It will take time for staff to become familiar. The College have very well-established processes and culture.

How are students involved in quality processes?

- The SA President noted that SVRs are the primary feedback and feed forward. The SA has monthly meetings with the SVRs, with ~110 SVRs recruited this academic year. At the monthly meetings, the SA go over activities they are doing. The training is currently being reworked in response to student feedback that the training takes too long. SVRs can also attend CCMs.

What are the 'learning conversations' noted in the SEAP? How do they link with the CCMs?

- The 'learning conversations' run parallel to other mechanisms. A small team of staff may have a chat with the students, if they know of a particular area of provision that is weaker. E.g. exploring of a topic to influence OnTrend conversations (these are run like focus groups). It is helpful for students to have an opportunity to give feedback to someone who is not their lecturer [it is not the lecturer running the learning conversations].
- For example, there are different experiences on the Forestry course (a new degree). Year 1 of the degree course are mixing with HN students. There is a lot of discussion ongoing with Forestry Students on the degree programme with actions coming out of this. Students are finding this useful.
- HISA do a report to the LTR Committee, detailing what the SA have been doing. This takes the form of a PowerPoint and includes (for example) information about freshers' events and SVR recruitment.

STEP

At the introductory meeting between UHI Inverness and QAA in January, the College was considering changing from the Belonging project ['Appreciating Belonging and Enabling Change: From Strategy to Practice'] and considering a new project on neurodiversity ['Supporting Neurodivergent Students with Professional Dialogue in Work-Based Learning Settings']. *Has this been progressed?* The College also noted feeling a 'bit behind' with STEP. *How are you feeling now?*

- The College feel that they have made reasonable progress on STEP. The College have been involved in the Belonging project ['Appreciating Belonging and Enabling

Change: From Strategy to Practice'] (supported by college initiatives such as The Bothy and the student social space).

- The College have signed up to three more STEP projects, including a project led by University of Aberdeen ('Supporting Neurodivergent Students with Professional Dialogue in Work-Based Learning Settings'). The College met with the lead coordinator from the University of Aberdeen, who has started to prepare documentation on this project which the College's Head of Registry and Quality provided feedback on. The College has had a focus on additional support needs for students, including disclosure of additional support needs.
- The College has also become involved in the 'Language Accessibility Promise' (led by HISA) and has already done some work related to the aims of this project: e.g. considering language for applicants to the College, and unpacking terms such as 'part-time', 'block release', 'hybrid', 'fully online'. The College collaborated with the Executive Office at UHI on this. The College had already been working on this and then when it got to the final stage of implementing it, submitted to Executive Office at UHI to take it forwards across the partnership. The College feel they have already done a lot of work relating to the aims of this project.
- The College have also volunteered to support the 'Regional Enhancement and Collaboration in Tertiary Scotland (REACTS)' project via UHI Moray.
- The Head of Registry and Quality has signed up to the STEP events in May 2026.
- The SA Depute President is the current STEP representative, but the SA President will be the representative going forwards. The current UHI Inverness SA Depute President has been elected as the cross-campus SA President.
- To note: there will be a different model for Officer representation at UHI next year. The SA President role will become full-time. There are changes across all academic partners. UHI Perth and UHI Inverness will lose an Officer post but will gain an Officer role that will become full time.

5. Academic standards

Have there been any recent changes in managing quality and maintaining and assessing academic standards that you would like to highlight?

- The previous Head of Quality left UHI Inverness, but the College felt there was a 'seamless' changeover to the role of Head of Registry and Quality.
- UHI hold the higher education regulations, and the Head of Registry and Quality at UHI Inverness will review the further education regulations annually.
- There is a Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee across the whole UHI Partnership (the Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality is a member of this committee). The UHI Inverness equivalent committee is the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee, which considers all provision at UHI Inverness.

Are there any outcomes from awarding bodies to make QAA aware of?

- UHI Inverness are currently in a period of external verification, which is going well. No actions so far, and a few recommendations. The College works with a variety of awarding organisation, including (but not limited to) Qualifications Scotland, IMI, EAL, City and Guilds and UHI. Feedback so far has been positive.

p. 9 of the SEAP noted examples of good practice from EVs in 2024-25: Learner development and support; Learner Access to assessors; Assessment and internal verification procedures. *Were there any themes for any recommendations made? How do you consider recommendations?*

- The College completes an annual EV report, which is created by the Quality Team, which goes to the EMT Committee and SJEC, discussed with curriculum leaders and deputies.
- The College have implemented training for assessors and verifiers and rolled this out to all teams. There is an assessors' group that meet and discuss (e.g.) different e-portfolios and approaches varying by subject area (such as engineering, and Motor Vehicle who have their own e-portfolio via IMI).
- Recommendations from EVs are considered thematically like good practices and commendations.

Action – UHI Inverness to share EV report with QAA. **[See item 12]**

6. External review

Action since last review

The QAAIL set out that any actions from external review should be set out in the SEAP and noted that UHI Inverness had no main points of action from their latest engagement with Education Scotland (April 2024). UHI Inverness discussed the areas for development from the Education Scotland Report (April 2024) at the ILM in 2024-25. At this meeting, the College noted some ongoing challenges in engaging certain student groups (namely Modern Apprentices and students on networked provision) in training last year, noted as a 'work in progress' in the ILM note for 2024-25. *Are there any updates on the College's work in this area, for Modern Apprentices, students on networked provision and hard-to-reach students?*

- Work to engage with work-based and fully online learners is ongoing, and they are hard to engage with (need to be mindful of expectations of engagement with these groups of students).
- The College have started a few initiatives to engage with these groups in different ways – e.g. the College have recently set up an on-campus drop-in for apprentices to drop in and talk about mental health. The drop-in has had limited uptake so far. The College are conscious that the Highlands region has the highest suicide rate in Scotland.
- Obtaining feedback, via ESES and SSES (closing on 2 April) from apprentices has greatly improved. The College considered which learners did not want to go online [to answer the survey] and opened the survey window two weeks earlier. Assessors were given paper copies of the survey to support learners to fill in the survey. Students can complete it on-the-job. ESOL and Supported Education students also used paper copies.
- Apprentices may not have interest in being an SVR, but the College continues to gather feedback from them via the survey. The College can identify specific groups and can filter down to class and cohort level.
- The SSES survey is 'looking quite positive' (response rate) with one more day to go [at the time of the ILM].

- The College has also supported students at SCQF levels 2 or 3, by adapting 'wordy' surveys and using icons such as smiley faces for agree.
- The College is trying to adapt to support engagement with hard-to-reach students.
- As part of the LTR process, all aspects and modes of delivery of programmes are included (e.g. networked provision, fully online delivery) in the selection. Part of the LTR is a conversation with students.
- In terms of SVRs specifically, the groups described above are those who are consistently least interacted with. Apprentices are working and don't have time to be SVRs. It is also challenging for online students.
- The College have observed a shift in student engagement and willingness to engage post-pandemic for lots of different reasons, including financial pressures for students to take on paid employment. There are instances of students dropping out of courses for paid employment.

Arrangements for TQER (2026-27)

The QAAIL noted that UHI Inverness will have a review in 2026-27, and the following dates have been shared with the College:

- Upload of Strategic Impact Analysis and Advance Information Set: w/c 9 November 2026
- Initial Review Visit: w/c 1 February 2027
- Main Review Visit: w/c 15 March 2027

Ahead of the ILM, UHI Inverness noted that they wanted to discuss:

- the possibility of key staff, for example, Wellbeing & Learning Support Manager, attending the TQER
- ensuring that the College's diverse range of learners is included in the student focus groups (UHI Inverness have a wide range of students ranging across SCQF levels 2-12, including school pupils, apprentices etc.).

UHI Inverness shared that a lot of the information in the TQER Guide directs the quality management at the Principal and Quality Team, but there are a broader range of staff (e.g. Tertiary Education Leaders and the Learning Support Management) who have a lot of quality enhancement knowledge in their teams and the College takes a collaborative approach to quality. The College want to involved managers as part of the review.

The QAAIL noted that there are normally between 8-12 attendees per meeting and that the college will have the opportunity to put forward staff who are most relevant and can discuss this with their Review Manager.

UHI Inverness noted the four focus groups with students in the guide (IRV), and asked if this would be enough? The College want all students to be involved in the review, including apprentices who are regularly on block release.

The QAAIL noted that there can be more meetings with students at the MRV, and the review schedule can be flexible to accommodate student timetables and host online meetings.

UHI Inverness asked if the review team will want to visit/be present at each site, as UHI Inverness have multiple campuses.

The QAAIL noted that normally the review team would be based at one campus only, but there was an option to host the Initial Review Visit at one site and the Main Review Visit at another.

UHI Inverness agreed that the main campus (1 Inverness Campus) was the most appropriate location to host the visit.

The QAAIL asked if the College had considered any reviewer specialities for the review, noting that notification of the review team will come after the scoping meeting (~8 months before the review). The College noted the following key features to inform the review team:

- 70% of provision is FE with a large proportion of work-based learning, so the College would benefit from a reviewer who has strong FE experience and involvement in work-based learning.
- The College have Modern Apprentices and Graduate Apprentices so would benefit from someone who has a good understanding of these structures.
- Someone with knowledge and understanding of the UHI partnership, which contains 'significant complexities' of understanding where responsibilities sit in this structure.

The SA President is aware of the TQER and will be involved.

7. SEAP

The QAAIL noted that much of this item has already been covered, and asked several questions:

No actions are identified in the SEAP for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment – *is that correct?*

- Yes, the College did not identify any actions for ELT in their SEAP, but the principles cross over. Therefore, Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment is linked into some of the actions related to Supporting Learner Success (e.g. trauma-informed practice).
- The College asked if all areas need to be covered in the action plan? The QAAIL noted that there would normally be actions against all principles, and in future the College could note if there is an ELT link within other actions.

There are no end dates in the action plan. *Is this because the detail in contained within the QEP?*

- Yes, it is detailed in the QEP, which is regularly discussed at the enhancement committee and at monthly data presentations.

QAA understands that you have had your SFC feedback on your SEAP. *Is that correct?*

- The College noted that they do not receive feedback directly from the SFC and are therefore feeling at a disadvantage compared to other colleges, who do receive feedback directly from SFC. The College did not receive feedback last year, other than from CDN who approached the College about work on behalf of the sector on how the SEAP was developed. The issue of not receiving feedback directly from SFC has been raised for two years in a row with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Committee and the Vice Principals Network (CDN). SFC were in attendance [at the Vice Principals Network], who noted that feedback was shared with UHI centrally which should come back to the colleges. The College feel there is a risk to the quality at the UHI Partners as a result of this approach and would welcome any feedback they can receive on their SEAP.

Action – QAA to raise feedback from UHI Inverness about not receiving SEAP feedback from SFC with QAA colleagues internally.

8. Student Partnership

The QAAIL asked the Students Association to begin this item, who noted some of the features of partnership at UHI Inverness, including SVRs, the Achieved Together Tracker, and SA Officer presence on the Board of Management and Committee.

The QAAIL noted the enhancement themes identified for 2025-26, from the partnership wheel (displayed around the college and in the evidence provided): organisation and management, learning & teaching and student voice in partnerships. *What informs the choosing of the enhancement themes each year?*

- The enhancement themes are discussed at the Achieved Together meetings, and the College usually goes through results from ESES. The College and SA are considering choosing themes earlier based on the SSES rather than the ESES (ESES doesn't come out until October, which can delay the start of this work).
- When the themes are chosen next year, the College is going to consider looking at key bullet points under each theme to capture more specific actions. This will be covered in induction.

Do the themes feature in SVR meetings?

- Each SVR meeting is normally based on themes across all partners, including presentations and discussion about what has come of the previous month's themes and talk of the current month's themes. Themes from the wheel don't come into the meetings.
- Example of themes from the SVR meetings for 2025-26 include: learning and teaching delivery, contact time, Brightspace [VLE] (December); resources, environment and technology (February).

What have been some of the key actions and impact of the enhancement themes for 2025-26?

- Actions will relate to actions arising from student surveys, which are put on the QEP. Individual actions for courses are on the QET. There is also a tracker for the Achieved Together meetings.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy (2021-22 – 2025-26) & student Partnership and Engagement Strategy (2021 – 22 – 2025-26) are due to end this year. *What evaluation will take place?*

- The College has evaluated these strategies and is looking at progress. The College are engaging with staff about what sub-strategies need to be taken forward into the next period, which will involve SA and students more widely.

9. Any other matters

QAA are seeking additional student reviewers. *Would the SA President or any other students be interested in being a student reviewer?*

UHI Inverness to consider this.

Is there anything else you want to make QAA aware of?

UHI Inverness run a student work experience programme (SWEP). Students can get work experience with (e.g.) canteen team, register their skills and receive a certificate. This helps to demonstrate preparation for work for students. This will be rolled out in full next year.

10. Questions and close

UHI Inverness will not have an ILM in 2026-27 due to their TQER. In subsequent ILMs, a large focus of the meeting will be on actions taken following external review. QAA also noted that UHI Inverness can seek advice and support from their QAAIL to develop their action plan following the TQER.

A note of the meeting will be shared within 3 weeks of the meeting. UHI Inverness will have the opportunity to comment on matters of factual accuracy.

11. Summary of actions or escalations

The following actions were agreed:

Action 1 – UHI Inverness to keep QAA up to date with ongoing implementation of the ILQR approach across professional services and curriculum areas. **(Item 4)**

Action 2 – UHI Inverness to share EV report with QAA. **(Item 5) [Completed]**

Action 3 – QAA to raise feedback from UHI Inverness about not receiving SEAP feedback from SFC with QAA colleagues internally. **(Item 7) [Completed]**

Action 4 – UHI Inverness to confirm to QAA how recommendations within the External Verification activity summary report 2024-25 have been taken forwards in 2025-26. **(Item 12) [Completed]**

There were no concerns raised about the timeliness or effectiveness of actions being undertaken in response to external review outcomes.

12. Matters outside of the meeting

UHI Inverness submitted an External Verification activity summary report for 2024-25 after the meeting (received on 1 April 2026). As a result of the External Verification activity summary report and the discussion under items 5 and 7, QAA recommends that UHI Inverness include a high-level summary of recommendations from EV activity in the SEAP going forwards (alongside the good practice that is already included in the SEAP submitted in December 2025). Additionally, building on information shared under item 5, UHI Inverness should inform QAA of how the recommendations within the EV report for 2024-25 have been taken forwards in 2025-26 so far.

Action – UHI Inverness to confirm to QAA how recommendations within the External Verification activity summary report 2024-25 have been taken forwards in 2025-26.

13. Evidence submitted for the meeting

Documentation/evidence	Required for 2025-26
Most recent Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP)	• 01. Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) 2025-26 UHI Inverness • 01a. 2025-26 UHI Inverness QEP
A copy of the full report and action plans emerging from the last external review	• 02. UHI Inverness ILM note 2024.25 • 02a. UHI Inverness - 4000020 - AEV letter for publication - 9 July 2024 • 02b UHI Inverness - 4000020 - AEV Report for publication - 9 July 2024 • 02c. UHI Inverness SNIPEF Publication Final Report
A copy of the current Student Partnership Agreement (or equivalent) with the Students' Association (or equivalent)	• 03a. UHI Inverness Partnership Agreement (PDF from SWAY) • 03b. UHI Inverness Sub-Strategy-Quality-Assurance-Enhancement-Strategy---2021---26 • 03c. UHI Inverness Sub-Strategy-Student-Partnership-and-Engagement-Strategy---2021---26
A copy of the institution's current Learning and Teaching Strategy or equivalent, supported by: • Action plan (or equivalent) supporting the delivery of this Strategy for the current academic session • Evaluation of previous session's action plan (or equivalent)	• 04a. UHI LTES Implementation Plan • 04b. UHI Inverness LTR1 Handbook Nov 2025 • 04c. UHI Inverness LTR Report 2024-25
A copy of an institution's approach to annual monitoring, supported by: • A sample of annual monitoring reports from the last academic year (up to four) • Any summaries or analyses of annual monitoring activity	• 05a. UHI Inverness Presentation for ILQR • 05b. UHI Inverness PS Team Pilot _ 202526 ILQR • 05c. UHI Inverness Pre meet briefing note ILQR • 05d. UHI Inverness ILQR - Meeting Notes

	• 05e. UHI Inverness ILQR Evaluation - Review Team • 05f. UHI Inverness ILQR Evaluation October 2025 PS Managers • 05ff. UHI Inverness Action Log - ILQR LS Team • 05g. UHI Inverness Evaluation & Enhancement (PDF from SWAY) • 05h. UHI Inverness TQEF - Self Evaluation & CCM Guidance • 05i. UHI Inverness SE Guidance • 05j. UHI Inverness Academic Evaluation Activity Notes • 05k. UHI Inverness Academic Annual Evaluation Report • 05l. UHI Inverness Art Drama Humanities Academic Evaluation Activity Notes • 05m. UHI Inverness Extract from Quality Enhancement Tracker
A copy of the institution's approach and process for undertaking institution-led quality review (ILQR), including arrangements for considering Professional Services review, supported by: • A copy of reports and follow up from ILQR undertaken since last ILM • Any summaries or analyses of the completed ILQRs	
Data used by the institution internally for oversight of: • retention and progression • outcomes • complaints and appeals • student disciplinary cases These should include analysis of any trends and attainment gaps for the last five years	• 07a. UHI Inverness Board Paper Retention Mar 2026 • 07b. UHI Inverness Retention and KPI Projection for 2025.6 Jun 2025 • 07c. UHI Inverness 2025-26 Complaints Q2 Report • 07d. UHI Inverness BOM October Outcomes Targets 2025 09 29
Paper from academic governance committee outlining any recent changes to academic processes or regulations	• EV Report 2024-25 **[shared on 1/4/26 after the meeting]**
Enhancement topic-related activity (including STEP)	• No items submitted

Version 1: shared on 22.04.26

Version 2: shared on 14.05.26

ITEM 10.

Board of Management/Committee Meeting

Subject/Title:	HISA end of year summary report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Chloe Young, Inverness Student President Oliver Sweeney, Inverness Student Depute President
Meeting:	LTR Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	2nd June 2026
Brief Executive Summary of the paper:	This paper contains summary report on all the activities and events the local HISA team has been hosting in AY 25/26.
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	Strategic plan and links to student journey
Resource implications:	**If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	**If yes, please specify:**
Equality and Diversity implications:	**If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information	Yes

Can this paper be included in “open” business* [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

HISA End of Year Report

Academic Year 2025-26

Chloe Young and Oliver Sweeney

2026 Election Results

We held our annual Student Officer Elections in March. As mentioned in our previous LTR report both of us ran for re-election: Oliver for Cross-Campus President and Chloe for Inverness Depute President.

We're happy to say that we both won our respective elections! Oliver received 338 votes out of the 700 total and Chloe won with 97 out of the 98 votes cast for the Inverness Depute position.

We both fully start our new roles at the beginning of July with Oliver stepping back from his Inverness responsibilities and Chloe moving into a full-time role at Inverness.

Inverness Officer and Staff Update



Chloe Young

Inverness President

Role from July 2026: Inverness Depute President

Oliver Sweeney

Inverness Depute President

Role from July 2026: Students' Association President





Emily Gallagher

Inverness Local Co-ordinator

Sophie MacGregor

Development Manager – Inverness Region



Student Voice Representatives

This year we had 114 SVRs. This is unfortunately less than last year due to some staffing issues at the beginning of the academic year that prevented us from visiting as many classes as we would have liked to.

We began to remedy this at the beginning of semester 2 with several short class visits, focused on curriculum areas with the lowest awareness of HISA as taken from the ESES results.

SVR recruitment will be further addressed next academic year by hopefully getting some information about HISA baked into the inductions themselves to further increase the awareness of our SVR system, which will now include an updated training system designed by our own Sophie MacGregor.

Events!

We didn’t host as many events on campus as we would have liked to due to a lack of time.

Despite this, the team organised our first ever Refreshers event for the beginning of February which was a huge success and we also ran several competitions for the first time which were a great method of getting students involved.

Our plan for next year is to host more on-campus events, with a particular focus on using the late Wednesday closing times to run events for students at halls, like movie, board game and crafts nights!

Semester 1 Events

We did run a few in-person events in semester 1 – primarily our Freshers week at the beginning of September – but outside of that we ran several drop-ins for students to pop by and pick up some freebies.

We also ran the aforementioned competitions, one for photography and one for creative writing, the winners of which can be seen hanging up in the new student social space on the second floor!

Semester 2 Events

In Semester 2 we did a much better job of hosting in-person events. Our Refreshers day was a huge success and the following week we ran another very successful event – a Valentines craft stall – where we gave away over 40 mystery books to students.

In addition, we ran one further photography competition and a Halls feedback competition where students from the student accommodation gave feedback on their time there and the student with the most informative feedback won a £150 voucher for their whole flat to visit the Vue cinema.

2026 Election Results

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We both fully start our new roles at the beginning of July with Oliver stepping back from his Inverness responsibilities and Chloe moving into a full-time role at Inverness.

HISA-wide Update

HISA's officer structure will be different this coming year, with all academic partners moving down to a single officer, full time for both Perth and Inverness. The cross-campus roles will remain the same, however they will also cover HTC as they are losing their officer position. These cuts are unfortunately due to our increasingly strained budget.

In cheerier news, we welcomed in Colin Munro as our new CEO earlier this year!

Additionally, our NUS referendum was successful, meaning we will no longer be a part of NUS in the upcoming yearly cycle.

Summer Plans

Planning is well underway and will continue throughout the summer for our AY 2026/27 Welcome Week events, with the atrium booked for the 8th, 9th and 10th of September and with the aim to also book the sports hall for use by further stallholders on one of the days (pending hall availability).

Our annual officer training Summer Residential is taking place at Inverness this year at the beginning of July. HISA officers and staff from every academic partner will be meeting in Inverness for 3 days of training and getting-to-know-you activities!

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Subject/Title:	SSES Report 2025-26
Meeting and date:	LTR Committee
Author:	Sarah Caddick, Quality Officer Emma Baillie, Quality Officer
Decision, Discussion or Noting:	Discussion
Link to Strategic Plan:	Student Engagement
Cost implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Risk assessment:	No **If yes, please specify:** Financial: Operational: Organisational:

Recommendation(s)

The LTR Committee are asked to discuss the results of the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES) 2025-26 and to agree on specific next steps regarding areas of collective improvement needed.

Contents

Executive Summary....2
Survey Approach....2
Survey Engagement Analysis – New for this year!....3
Survey Results....3
Free Text Analysis....15
Themes for Improvement....20
Next Steps....21

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES) 2025–26, which captures student feedback on learning, teaching, engagement, and the wider student experience at UHI Inverness.

The overall survey response rate was 52.9% (1,717 responses from a sample of 3,248 students), representing a very slight decrease of 0.27 percentage points compared to 2024-25 (53.17%). Despite this marginal reduction in response rate, overall student satisfaction increased, rising from 94.69% to 95.21%, an improvement of 0.52 percentage points.

The results demonstrate consistently high levels of satisfaction across the majority of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) set core questions, with continued improvement evident in areas relating to teaching quality, feedback, communication, and preparation for employment. Areas with comparatively lower satisfaction - students' sense of community and the perceived influence of the College Students' Association - remain stable but continue to represent opportunities for enhancement.

Survey Approach

Most students were eligible to complete the SSES. The SFC SSES eligibility criteria was:

- Students with a current enrolment status
- Students studying full time or part time of 160hrs or more of learning (4 credits or more)
- Students on courses at SCQF level 4 – 11.

The survey was open for two weeks leading up to the Easter break (23rd March to 2nd April) and was distributed electronically to all eligible students via email with a unique survey link, taking around 5 minutes to complete.

ESOL students were given translated help sheets to aid online completion and Supported Education students were given paper versions of the survey including graphics and symbols. Work based and School students were also able to access paper versions of the survey to enable increased response rates.

The SSES was split into three sections:

- **Satisfaction Survey:** a set of 13 core questions developed by the SFC.
- **Satisfaction Ratings:** section where students can rate the quality of UHI Inverness services which they have used.
- **Additional Free Text Comments:** A comment box was provided for students to add any relevant written comments on learning and teaching at the college. This was included based on feedback from the Working Group suggesting the more valuable data from surveys often came through open text boxes. An additional comment box was provided for students to add any relevant written comments on their overall student experience while at college.

Survey Engagement Analysis – New for this year!

The survey software JISC has recently launched "insights" which provides a deeper dive into respondent's engagement with the survey.

The SSES sample consisted of 3,248 students, of whom 1,717 completed the survey, giving an overall response rate of 52.9%.

A small number of students (104) chose to unsubscribe from survey emails whilst completing their course enrolment via UHI Records and therefore did not receive the survey invitation from JISC. Twenty of these unsubscribed students proactively contacted the Quality team to request a direct survey link as they were unaware that they had chosen to unsubscribe. This highlights the impact of email subscription preferences on engagement and is an area to review to ensure clarity for all students.

Further engagement analysis shows that:

- 1,830 students opened the survey invitation email
- 1,768 students started the survey
- 97% of students who started the survey went on to complete it

This indicates a very strong completion rate once the survey is accessed.

The average completion time was 2 minutes 43 seconds, suggesting that the survey length remains appropriate and accessible for students.

Analysis of drop-out points shows minimal disengagement during the early stages of the survey, with no drop-outs at the introduction stage. The highest proportion of drop-outs occurred during:

- Additional questions (48%)
- SFC set questions (35%)

This pattern is consistent with previous years and suggests that drop-outs are more likely to occur once students reach non-core or extended question sets, rather than due to barriers at entry.

Most students completed the survey using a desktop device (78%), while 22% completed it on a mobile device. Tablet usage was negligible. This continues to support the design and layout of the survey as primarily desktop-friendly, while still remaining accessible on mobile platforms.

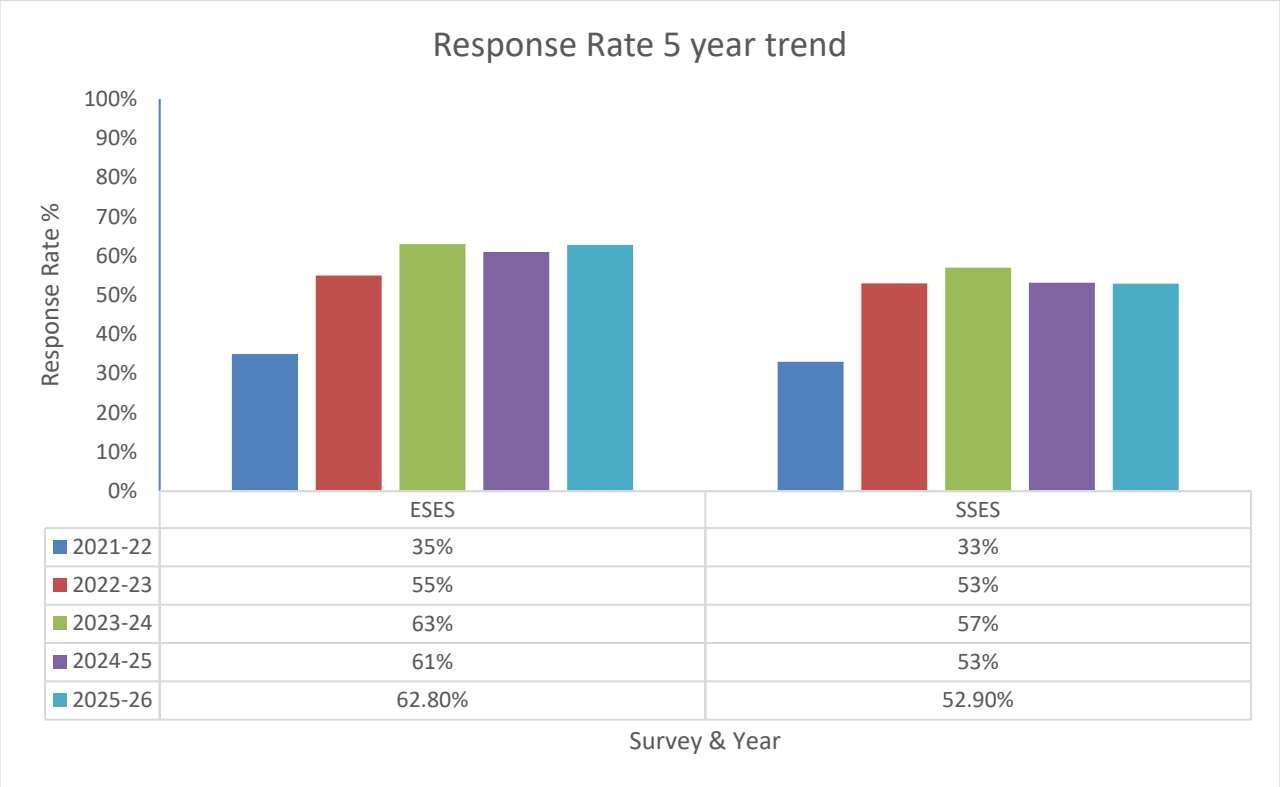
Survey Results

All staff have access to the SSES Results and are asked to reflect upon the response and satisfaction rates and comments in their area to identify potential areas for improvement. The dashboard also includes a 6-year trend analysis which allows teams to drill down to course details / personal characteristics; teams are encouraged to use this tool to further interpret the feedback specific to their areas.

The target response rate was set at 55%, the same target that was set for last year. This year, the SSES response rate marginally missed out on achieving the target response

rate, with 52.9% of the student sample completing the survey (See Figure 1). Whilst marginally down on last year response rate (53.17%), it remains a positive response rate and demonstrates a willingness by students to engage with feedback. It also reflects the effort made by staff to encourage their students to participate.

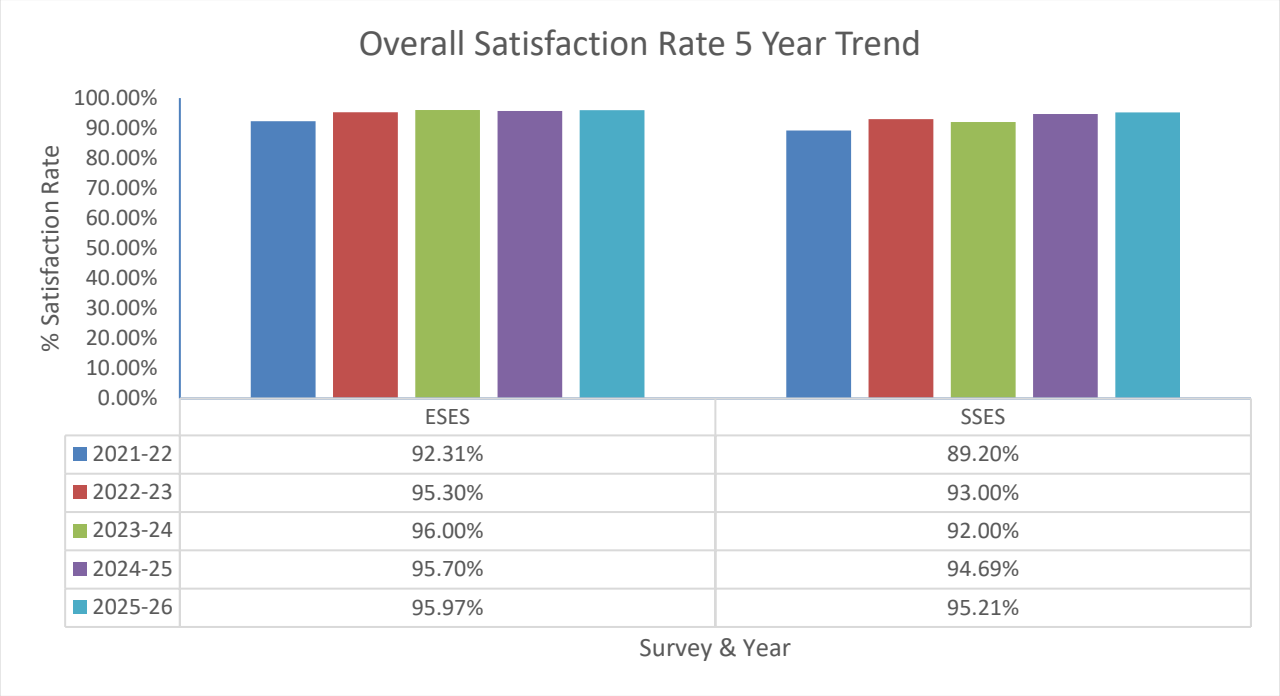
The results also identified 67 courses with a survey response rate of 33% or less, up from 33 courses last year. Of these 67 courses, 22 had a response rate of 0%. Curriculum teams are encouraged to review individual course response rates and liaise with the Quality team to identify reasons for the low responses and take steps to improve the response rates in next AY.



	ESES	SSES
2021-22	35%	33%
2022-23	55%	53%
2023-24	63%	57%
2024-25	61%	53%
2025-26	62.80%	52.90%

Figure 1. Response Rate 5-year trend for ESES & SSES.

Overall satisfaction is measured by respondents selecting “strongly agree” or “agree” with their experience so far. Student satisfaction rate remains high at 95.21%, showing a marginal increase from 2024-25 (94.69%). Figure 2 below displays the five-year trend in overall satisfaction. The 2025-26 result surpassed the 94% target set for overall satisfaction for the SSES this academic year. Over the last five-year period, 2025-26 has seen the closest gap in satisfaction rates between the ESES and SSES, with a difference of just 0.76%, compared to 1.01% last year and 4% the year before.



	ESES	SSES
2021-22	92.31%	89.20%
2022-23	95.30%	93.00%
2023-24	96.00%	92.00%
2024-25	95.70%	94.69%
2025-26	95.97%	95.21%

Figure 2. Satisfaction Rate 5-year trend for ESES & SSES.

Figure 3 below shows the curriculum area response rate and satisfactions rates, along with overall UHI Inverness results.

Response rates varied across Curriculum Areas, with particularly strong engagement in:

- Business & Creative Industries (70.7%)
- Construction, Engineering & Infrastructure (63.5%)

Lower response rates were observed within:

- Computing, Land, Science & Education (40.8%)
- Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities (45.3%)

Overall, it shows a continuing trend that FE students are more satisfied (96.94%) than HE (91.08%). This is the same for all curriculum areas, apart from Engineering & Energy, where HE students are slightly more satisfied than FE students. Overall, FE satisfaction has risen by 1.32% points, from 2024-25, while the overall HE satisfaction has fallen by 1.57% points from 2024-25. The difference in overall FE and HE satisfaction has grown by 5.86% points from 2024-25.

These variations will be considered when planning future engagement and communications activity to support more consistent participation across all curriculum areas.

Curriculum Area	Sample Size	No. of Responses	% Response Rate	% Overall Satisfaction	FE Satisfaction	HE Satisfaction
Business & Creative Industries	564	399	70.70%	97.98%	99.04	93.98
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	1103	500	45.30%	93.20%	95.87	88.7
Computing, Land, Science & Education	682	278	40.80%	94.57%	96.87	89.29
Construction, Engineering & Infrastructure	665	422	63.50%	97.15%	97.64	92.5
Engineering & Energy	234	118	50.40%	88.98%	88.61	89.74
Overall results	**3248**	**1717**	**52.90%**	**94.22%**	**96.94**	**91.08**

Figure 3. Curriculum Area high level results.

Figure 4 below shows the courses with a response rate of less than 20%. Low response rates are widespread across all curriculum areas, suggesting the issue is systemic rather than isolated to a particular subject area or discipline. Many courses have very small sample sizes (1-7 students). In these cases, even one response results in a response rate between 14-17%, while zero responses result in 0%, making the data highly sensitive to individual participation. However, some courses with larger enrolments (e.g. 30-46 students) still recorded response rates below 20%, suggesting that low engagement is not solely driven by cohort size. Several PGDE (Primary and Secondary) and Graduate Apprenticeship courses appear with low response rates. This may reflect challenges for students who are part-time, work-based, or placement-heavy, where completing surveys may be deprioritised.

Broadly speaking, Computing, Land, Science & Education shows the highest concentration of low-response courses, while Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities have the second-highest concentration and widest subject spread. These suggest low engagement hotspots, particularly in practice-based and vocational programmes, suggesting structural rather than course-specific factors. Engineering & Energy has a smaller number of courses, but consistent low response rates, likely linked to work-based delivery models and limited survey availability windows.

The consistency of low or zero responses across diverse subjects and levels suggests that the issue is likely linked to survey visibility, timing, accessibility, or perceived value, rather than solely negative student sentiment.

ITEM 11.

Curriculum Area	Sub-Curriculum Area	Course Name	Course Code	Sample Size	No. of Responses	% Responses
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	National 4 Mathematics	INN4HIGMATH	14	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Social Sciences	UL300	13	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Psychology, Health and Social Care	Social Services	U114L	13	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	National 5 English	INN5HIGENG	11	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	MA Trees and Timber	INV2FORTATMA	11	0	0.00%
Engineering & Energy	Engineering and Energy	Engineering Systems (Graduate Apprenticeship)	UH107	9	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Psychology, Health and Social Care	Health and Social Studies	UL450	7	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	Applied Software Development	UI310	6	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare	INV2HEASSHC	4	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Higher Mathematics	INHIHIGNMATH	4	0	0.00%
Engineering & Energy	Engineering and Energy	Mechanical Engineering	UH301	4	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Applied Science Level 5	INM5SCIAPPS5	3	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	UVL52	2	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Politics	UL240	2	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (NHS)	INV2HEASSNHS	2	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	SWAP Access to Science	INM6SCISWAP	2	0	0.00%
Construction, Engineering & Infrastructure	Engineering Craft	NC Fabrication & Welding L5 MA	INM5NCFWMA	2	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	Child and Youth Studies with Community Learning and Development	UL531	1	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	Sports Management	UC6N2	1	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	SVQ 3 Social Services (Children and Young People)	INV3EDUSSCYP	1	0	0.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare	INV3CARSSHC	1	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Archaeological Science	UF420	1	0	0.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Forestry	U90D5	24	1	4.17%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	Childhood Practice	UX310	32	2	6.25%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Criminology	UL311	15	1	6.67%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	Higher English	INHIHIGENG	26	2	7.69%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	PGDE Secondary (English medium) (Part-time)	UX136	13	1	7.69%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	PGDE Primary (English medium) (Part-time)	UX135	33	3	9.09%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	National 5 Mathematics	INN5HIGMATH	22	2	9.09%
Engineering & Energy	Engineering and Energy	Electrical and Mechanical Engineering	UH361	20	2	10.00%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Acting and Performance	U094W	8	1	12.50%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Psychology, Health and Social Care	Higher Psychology	INHIHIGPSY	29	4	13.79%
Engineering & Energy	Engineering and Energy	Electrical Engineering	U026H	28	4	14.29%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	PGDE Secondary (English medium)	UX133	14	2	14.29%
Engineering & Energy	Engineering and Energy	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	UH601	14	2	14.29%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Art and Contemporary Practices	UW190	7	1	14.29%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Literature and Creative Writing	UQ32W	7	1	14.29%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	Moral and Philosophical Studies with Religious Education	UX104	7	1	14.29%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	Sport & Fitness Level 5	INM5SPOFITL5	13	2	15.38%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	National 5 Applications of Mathematics	INN5HIGAMATH	19	3	15.79%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Forestry and Treescapes Management	UD500	44	7	15.91%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	Child and Youth Studies	UL530	25	4	16.00%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Environmental Science	UF900	24	4	16.67%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Computing and Education	Computing	UG400	18	3	16.67%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Philosophy	UV500	6	1	16.67%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Sport and Early Years	SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare MA	INV2SSHCMA	46	8	17.39%
Computing, Land, Science & Education	Land and Science	Applied Sciences	U0CFG	23	4	17.39%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Psychology, Health and Social Care	Psychology	UC800	44	8	18.18%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Arts, Drama and Humanities	Culture and Heritage	UV900	11	2	18.18%

Figure 4. Courses with < 20% response rate

Equality & Diversity

Figure 5 below provides an overview of the equality and diversity percentage of respondents against percentage of overall satisfaction rates. Observations include:

Age

Overall

- Satisfaction is high across all age groups, but peaks among 16-17 year olds and drops slightly for those aged 20+.
- Younger learners (16-19) report consistently stronger satisfaction than older age groups.

FE only

- FE satisfaction is strongest among 16-19 year olds, with the highest satisfaction scores in the dataset.
- Learners aged 25+ in FE remain highly satisfied, showing no FE age-based dip.

HE only

- HE satisfaction declines steadily with age, with lowest satisfaction among students aged 25+.
- Younger HE students (18-19) are more satisfied than older HE cohorts.

Disability

Overall

- Students without a disability report higher satisfaction than disabled students.
- A clear satisfaction gap exists overall between disabled and non-disabled respondents.

FE only

- Disabled FE students report very high satisfaction, almost matching non-disabled peers.
- FE shows minimal inequality gap by disability status.

HE only

- Disabled HE students report notably lower satisfaction than non-disabled HE students.
- Disability-related satisfaction differences are most pronounced in HE.

Gender

Overall

- Satisfaction is high across all genders, with female respondents marginally more satisfied.
- Students selecting “in another way” show strong satisfaction but are a very small cohort.

FE only

- FE satisfaction is consistently high across all genders, with near-equal outcomes.
- No meaningful gender disparity is evident within FE.

HE only

- Female HE students report higher satisfaction than male HE students.
- Gender differences in satisfaction are more visible in HE than FE.

Care Experienced

Overall

- Care-experienced students report exceptionally high satisfaction, exceeding non care-experienced students.
- Although numbers are small, outcomes are consistently positive.

FE only

- Care-experienced FE students maintain very high satisfaction, on par with peers.
- FE appears to be supportive and inclusive for care-experienced learners.

HE only

- HE care-experienced respondents (very small group) report perfect or near-perfect satisfaction.
- Results should be treated with caution due to very low respondent numbers.

Caring Responsibilities

Overall

- Students with caring responsibilities report lower satisfaction than those without.
- Caring responsibility is associated with a modest but clear satisfaction drop.

FE only

- FE students with caring responsibilities report very high satisfaction, comparable to non-carers.
- FE again shows strong equity of experience.

HE only

- HE students with caring responsibilities report much lower satisfaction.
- This is one of the sharpest inequality gaps in the HE data.

Ethnicity

Overall

- Satisfaction is generally high across all ethnic groups, with many minority groups reporting very high or perfect satisfaction.
- Scottish students form the largest group, with slightly lower satisfaction than some smaller ethnic cohorts.

FE only

- FE shows consistently high satisfaction across all ethnicities, including minority groups.
- Several ethnic groups report 100% satisfaction, though often with small sample sizes.

HE only

- HE satisfaction among minority ethnic groups remains strong but more variable.
- Scottish HE students report lower satisfaction than Scottish FE students, contributing to the HE satisfaction gap.

Key Assurances

- Overall student satisfaction is high across most equality characteristics.
- FE provision demonstrates consistently strong and equitable outcomes, with minimal variation across protected characteristics.
- Care-experienced students report very high satisfaction, indicating effective support mechanisms.
- Many minority ethnic groups report very strong satisfaction, though often based on small cohorts.

Key risks and variations

Age

- HE satisfaction declines with age, with the lowest satisfaction among students aged 25+.
- FE shows no equivalent age-related decline, representing a divergence in experience between FE and HE provision.

Risk: *Older HE learners may face structural or support barriers impacting experience and outcomes.*

Disability

- Disabled HE students report markedly lower satisfaction compared to non-disabled HE peers.
- In contrast, disabled FE students report very high satisfaction, comparable to non-disabled students.

Risk: *Disability-related inequality is significantly more pronounced in HE and warrants targeted review.*

Gender

Gender differences are minimal overall, but:

- Male HE students report lower satisfaction than female HE students.
- FE outcomes are high and balanced across genders.

Risk: *Emerging gender differences in HE satisfaction should be monitored.*

Caring Responsibilities

- HE students with caring responsibilities report substantially lower satisfaction, representing one of the clearest inequality gaps in the data.
- FE students with caring responsibilities report very high satisfaction, indicating good flexibility and support.

Risk: *HE provision may not be sufficiently accommodating students with external caring commitments.*

Care Experience

- Care-experienced students report exceptionally high satisfaction across Overall, FE and HE.

- Sample sizes are small, particularly in HE, but findings are consistently positive.

Assurance: *Existing care-experienced student support appears effective.*

Ethnicity

- Satisfaction is high across all ethnic groups.
- Scottish students (largest cohort) report slightly lower satisfaction than several smaller minority groups.
- FE outcomes are consistently strong; HE shows greater variability.

Note: *Small cohort sizes limit interpretation for some ethnic groups; trends should be monitored longitudinally.*

Conclusions

- FE provision demonstrates stronger equity of experience across all measured characteristics.
- HE provision exhibits greater variation, particularly by age, disability and caring responsibilities.
- The most significant equality risks are concentrated within HE, rather than being institution-wide.

Recommended actions

- A focused review of HE student experience for:
  - Disabled students
  - Students aged 25+
  - Students with caring responsibilities
- Share FE inclusive practice as a benchmark for HE improvement.
- Strengthen monitoring of equality gaps within HE at programme and cohort level.
- Use qualitative insight to contextualise small-cohort findings and support targeted interventions.
- Report progress routinely through Quality and Enhancement or Equality governance structures.

		All Responses			FE Only			HE Only		
		Number of Respondents	% of Total Respondents	% Overall Satisfaction	Number of Respondents	% of Total FE Respondents	% Overall Satisfaction	Number of Respondents	% of Total HE Respondents	% Overall Satisfaction
Age	Under 16	89	5.19%	100%	89	7.36%	100%	0	0	0
	16-17	407	23.75%	98.03%	382	31.59%	98.69%	25	4.96%	88%
	18-19	451	26.32%	94.90%	295	24.40%	95.60%	156	30.95%	93.59%
	20-24	322	18.79%	93.17%	189	15.63%	94.71%	133	26.38%	90.98%
	25 and over	412	24.05%	93.20%	229	18.94%	96.07%	183	36.30%	89.62%
Disability	Yes	416	24.28%	93.27%	306	25.30%	96.73%	110	21.82%	83.64%
	No	1266	73.90%	94.82%	880	72.78%	96.93%	386	76.58%	93.27%
Gender	Female, including Trans woman	752	43.89%	95.61%	481	39.78%	97.09%	271	53.76%	92.99%
	Male, including Trans man	819	47.81%	95.24%	622	51.44%	96.78%	197	39.08%	90.36%
	In another way	27	1.57%	96.30%	18	1.48%	100%	9	1.78%	88.89%
Care experienced	Yes	63	3.67%	98.42%	55	4.54%	98.18%	8	1.58%	100%
	No	1594	93.05%	94.94%	1101	91.06%	96.73%	493	97.81%	91.08%
Caring Responsibilities	Yes	120	7.00%	91.66%	76	6.28%	97.37%	44	8.73%	81.82%
	No	1534	89.55%	95.37%	1077	89.08%	96.84%	457	90.67%	91.90%
Ethnicity	Arab, Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Indian, Irish, Northern Irish, Other background, Other Black background, Pakistani, Welsh	35	2.04%	93%	26	2.15%	91.29%	9	1.78%	100%
	African	11	0.64%	100%	7	0.57%	100%	4	0.79%	100%
	Any mixed background	12	0.70%	100%	10	0.82%	100%	2	0.39%	100%
	British	84	4.90%	91.67%	46	3.80%	93.48%	38	7.53%	89.48%
	English	64	3.73%	96.88%	39	3.22%	94.87%	25	4.96%	100%
	Other Asian background	19	1.10%	94.74%	12	0.99%	91.67%	7	1.38%	100%
	Other	46	2.68%	97.82%	40	3.30%	97.50%	6	1.19%	100%
	Other White background	120	7.00%	95.83%	85	7.03%	97.64%	35	6.94%	91.43%
	Polish	65	3.79%	96.92%	43	3.55%	100%	22	4.36%	90.91%
	Scottish	1004	58.61%	94.72%	667	55.16%	97.15%	337	66.86%	89.91%

Figure 5. Equality and Diversity Results

Figure 6 below shows the summary of % satisfaction for the 13 set SFC questions for the last 6 years.

Across the 13 SFC core questions, results continue to show strong and improving satisfaction trends over the past six years.

Key positive themes include:

- Very high satisfaction with overall college experience (95.21%)

Continued improvement in:

- Staff discussing progress with students (90.12%)
- Useful feedback to inform learning (93.90%)
- Preparation for the workplace (93.59%)

Exceptionally high satisfaction with staff encouragement and teaching approaches, with several questions exceeding 98% satisfaction

Lower-scoring areas remain broadly consistent with previous years, particularly:

- Students feeling part of the college community (83.64%)
- Perceived influence of the College Students' Association (53.08%)

While these scores have improved gradually over time, they remain key areas for continued discussion and enhancement. This is particularly true for question 4 ('I am able to influence learning on my course.'), where satisfaction has dipped from 2024-25.

SFC Set Questions	% Satisfaction by Year					
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	80.46%	89.20%	92.82%	91.63%	94.69%	95.21%
2. Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	73.49%	82.66%	84.62%	85.09%	87.56%	90.12%
3. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	96.27%	94.72%	96.99%	96.83%	97.37%	98.53%
4. I am able to influence learning on my course.	77.22%	84.37%	86.93%	85.01%	89.85%	89.48%
5. I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	83.51%	87.60%	89.79%	90.74%	91.38%	93.90%
6. The way I'm taught helps me learn.	71.94%	86.02%	85.88%	85.92%	89.02%	89.44%
7. My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	79.96%	87.15%	90.03%	90.25%	91.54%	93.59%
8. I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	80.25%	82.90%	83.88%	83.16%	86.40%	88.01%
9. I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	90.07%	89.74%	88.88%	89.28%	90.89%	91.72%
10. Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	78.55%	85.14%	84.91%	84.95%	87.85%	88.91%
11. The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	80.82%	85.71%	86.90%	88.04%	90.16%	91.18%
12. I feel that I am part of the college community.	63.70%	78.86%	80.12%	79.80%	81.99%	83.64%
13. The College Students' Association influences change for the better.	41.39%	51.39%	49.12%	51.79%	52.34%	53.08%

Figure 6. Summary of % satisfaction for the 13 set SFC questions for the last 6 years.

Free Text Analysis

Free text comments have been made available on the SSES Results Dashboard. Each comment has been categorised by Partnership Agreement theme and a note made where a comment related to a Professional Service team's scope of operations. There were 222 comments received around students' learning and teaching experience, and 173 comments were received about the overall student experience.

Comments ranged from a simple 'Thanks' or 'All's good' to longer, more complex comments which made both positive and negative points. The number of positives and negatives was recorded against Partnership Agreement theme, shown in figure 7 below.

Partnership Agreement theme	Learning & Teaching	+ve	-ve	Overall Experience	+ve	-ve
Advice, Support & Progression	22	13	12	11	5	8
Assessment & Feedback	7	4	4	2	1	1
Collective Responsibility	2	0	2	1	0	1
Learning & Teaching	96	76	27	18	10	7
Organisation & Management	29	5	27	35	6	26
Student Life	37	31	5	95	72	36
Student Voice in Partnership	1	0	1	6	1	6
Tools for Learning	28	3	23	5	2	4
Totals	222	132	101	173	97	89

Figure 7. Number of comments by Partnership Agreement theme.

Themes emerging from Learning and Teaching.

The 5 key themes are:

1. Lecturers are highly valued and central to successful learning
2. Students want more practical, applied, and hands-on learning
3. Inconsistency in delivery, staffing, and structure disrupts learning
4. Online learning is valuable but often poorly implemented
5. Assessment clarity, pacing, and feedback need improvement

Looking at each of these themes, the main points are summarised below:

1.Lecturers are the biggest strength of the learning experience
Students frequently describe lecturers as:

- Supportive, patient, approachable, and kind
- Clear in explanations and willing to adapt teaching styles
- Highly knowledgeable and experienced
- Motivating, confidence-building, and inspiring

Overall takeaway: Good teaching staff are the foundation of positive learning and teaching at UHI Inverness.

2. Demand for more practical, hands-on, and applied learning
Students repeatedly ask for:

- More workshop time, practical sessions, and demonstrations
- Stronger links between theory and real-world application
- Opportunities to practise skills (cars, salons, engineering, performance, anatomy, clinics)
- Access to appropriate learning tools (e.g. 3D anatomy models, equipment, software)

Overall takeaway: Students learn best when they can do, practise, and apply, not just listen or read.

3. Inconsistency in teaching, delivery, and course structure
Students raised concerns about:

- Frequent changes of lecturers with little notice
- Different teaching styles between campuses or modules
- Poor alignment between units
- Courses feeling rushed, disjointed, or poorly sequenced
- Repetition of content or unclear learning outcomes

Overall takeaway: Inconsistency undermines learning, even when individual lecturers are excellent.

4. Online and digital delivery is mixed and often challenging
Some students value online learning for:

- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Ability to rewatch recordings

However, many report:

- Low engagement in online lectures
- Poor interaction and overlong sessions
- Lecturers reading slides rather than teaching
- Disorganised or inconsistent Brightspace use
- Lack of alignment in how online tools are used across modules

Overall takeaway*:* Online learning works best when it is structured, interactive, and intentionally designed, not as a default substitute for in-person teaching.

5. Assessment, pace, and feedback need to better support learning
Students frequently mention:

- Courses feeling rushed with insufficient time to embed learning
- Unclear or jargon-heavy assignment briefs
- Delays in feedback and grades
- Vague feedback that doesn't help improvement
- Assessments not always matching how students learn best

Overall takeaway: Learning is strongest where pace, clarity, and feedback are aligned with student needs, especially for neurodivergent, mature, and returning learners.

Themes emerging from Overall Student Experience.

The 5 key themes are:

1. Positive student experience and strong sense of belonging
2. High-quality, supportive teaching (with inconsistency across courses)
3. Weak organisation, timetabling, and communication causing stress
4. Support services are valued but uneven and slow for some students
5. Concerns about student voice, safety, fairness, and practical campus life

Looking at each of these themes, the main points are summarized below:

1. Strong sense of belonging, enjoyment, and personal growth
Across the responses, students frequently describe feeling:

- Happy, valued and welcome
- More confident and independent
- Proud to be at UHI Inverness and keen to return or progress
- Personally and socially enriched

Overall takeaway: The college experience is largely perceived as positive, affirming, and meaningful, with a strong emotional connection to being part of the community.

2. Teaching quality is a major strength, but consistency is an issue
Students regularly praised:

- Supportive, kind, and encouraging lecturers
- Practical, hands-on learning
- Staff who "believe in" students and boost confidence

However, there is a consistent counter-theme around:

- Variation in teaching quality between lecturers
- Poor handovers when lecturers change
- Rushed delivery, reduced class time, and lack of depth

- Weak alignment between modules, theory, and practice

Overall takeaway: When teaching is good, it is excellent and transformative, but inconsistency, staffing changes, and course design issues undermine this for some students.

3. Organisation, communication, and timetabling are core frustrations
Students frequently raised concerns about:

- Late or unclear communication (timetables, changes, deadlines)
- Course structure feeling "cobbled together" or unready
- Insufficient notice for timetable changes (childcare, travel impact)
- Reduced class hours, online delivery expectations, and lack of flexibility
- Confusing systems (funding, Brightspace, apps, UCAS, absence reporting)

Overall takeaway: Poor organisation and communication significantly increase stress and reduce confidence, particularly for working students, carers, and those with additional needs.

4. Support Services matter: gaps have real consequences
Students valued:

- PDAs / PATs who are proactive and supportive
- Learning support plans when they work
- Study support, Bothy, and wellbeing initiatives

But many also reported:

- Long delays in support plans being put in place
- Lack of substitute PDAs
- Inconsistent progression and UCAS guidance
- Disabled and online students feeling overlooked
- International and neurodivergent students needing more tailored support

Overall takeaway: Support works brilliantly when accessible, but delays, gaps, and inconsistency leave some students feeling abandoned or stuck at critical moments.

5. Student Voice, safety, and everyday practicalities are under strain
Students raised serious concerns about:

- Feeling that feedback is ignored or "box-ticking"
- Limited or poorly organised clubs and social spaces
- Cost of living pressures: food prices, travel, accommodation quality
- Campus facilities, cleanliness, tools, and equipment
- Misogyny, harassment, bullying, and lack of effective action

Overall takeaway: Students want to feel safe, listened to, and respected, and for practical realities (food, space, behaviour, facilities) to match the college's inclusive values.

The two key themes emerging from both Learning & Teaching and Overall Student Experience

The 2 key takeaways that cut across both Learning & Teaching and the wider Student Experience are:

1. People make the experience - staff quality is the biggest strength
Across both datasets, the clearest message is that staff are the single most positive driver of student experience.

- Students consistently praise lecturers and support staff as kind, supportive, knowledgeable, patient, and motivating.
- Feeling listened to, believed in, and encouraged directly improves confidence, engagement, and progression.
- When teaching and support are strong, students describe the experience as transformative, even when courses are challenging or students face barriers (disability, language, work, caring responsibilities).

2. Systems and consistency undermine otherwise good experiences
While people are praised, systems and organisation repeatedly let students down in both learning and overall experience.
Common issues include:

- Inconsistent teaching delivery and course structure
- Late or unclear communication (timetables, changes, assessments)
- Variable online learning quality and disorganised Brightspace use
- Gaps in support when staff are absent or overstretched
- Courses feeling rushed, fragmented, or poorly aligned

Even highly positive students note that these issues:

- Increase stress
- Reduce confidence
- Make learning harder than it needs to be
- Disproportionately affect working, disabled, online, and mature students

Themes for Improvement

Based on the combined Learning & Teaching and Student Experience feedback, the five key themes for improvement are:

1. Consistency in delivery, organisation, and communication
Students repeatedly highlight that changes to lecturers, timetables, assessments, and course structure are often poorly communicated and inconsistent. Improving advance notice, alignment between modules, and consistency across campuses and delivery modes would significantly reduce stress and improve trust in the learning experience.

Impact: Very high *Ease of change:* Medium to high

- Better communication, clearer timelines, and more consistency across modules would immediately reduce student stress and dissatisfaction.
- Many improvements are process-based, not resource-heavy (e.g. clearer advance notice, shared standards, aligned Brightspace use).

This is the single biggest opportunity for visible improvement.

2. Clearer, more transparent assessment and feedback practices
Students want assessment to feel fair, understandable, and supportive of learning, not confusing or anxiety-inducing. Common issues include unclear briefs, jargon-heavy instructions, delayed or vague feedback, and inconsistent application of adjustments. Improving clarity, timeliness, and usefulness of feedback would strengthen confidence and progression.

Impact: High *Ease of change:* Medium

- Improvements to clarity, feedback quality, and turnaround times directly affect learning, confidence, and progression.
- Can be addressed through good practice sharing, clearer templates, and consistent expectations.

Strong return on effort and highly visible to students.

3. Course design that better supports learning pace and practical application
Many students feel learning is rushed, overly theoretical, or insufficiently practical, particularly in online or blended courses. Clearer sequencing of learning, more hands-on and applied activities, and sufficient time to embed learning would enhance confidence, engagement, and skill development.

Impact: Very high *Ease of change:* Low to medium

- Redesigning course sequencing, increasing practical learning, and addressing rushed delivery has a major impact on outcomes.
- Requires curriculum review, planning time, and staffing consideration, so change is slower.

High payoff, but longer-term.

4. More reliable and inclusive support for diverse student needs
While individual staff are praised, support systems are experienced as uneven or slow, especially for disabled students, online learners, mature students, and those with work or caring responsibilities. Improving reliability, visibility, and follow-through of support (PDAs/PATs, learning support, feedback) would make the experience more equitable.

Impact: High *Ease of change:* Low to medium

- Inconsistent support disproportionately affects disabled, online, mature, and working students.
- Improvements require system-level coordination, clearer ownership, and capacity planning.

Critical for equity and retention, but not a quick fix.

5. More engaging, inclusive learning environments (On-campus and Online)
Students value learning environments that are interactive, respectful, and engaging, but report disengagement where teaching is overly passive, online sessions are long or uninteractive, or behaviour disrupts learning. Creating more engaging delivery methods, better-moderated spaces, and learning environments that support focus and participation would improve outcomes for all students.

Impact: Medium to high *Ease of change:* Medium

- Engagement can improve through staff development, shared expectations, and better moderation of learning spaces.
- Cultural change and confidence in teaching methods take time, but progress is achievable.

Good supporting priority alongside other actions.

In summary, the greatest gains will come from improving consistency and assessment practices, while longer-term strategic work is needed to strengthen course design, inclusive support, and engagement across learning environments.

Next Steps

- Team level analysis of the SSES results – response rates, satisfaction rates and any areas for improvement. Please encourage staff to speak to Quality if they require support.
- Headline results to be shared with students via Course Committee Meetings (CCMs) and Student Voice Rep Council.
- Quality, HISA and EMT to investigate college level themes for improvement.

- Communicate the headline results to all students along with the actions taking forward using all media platforms.

Thank you to all teams for your continued support in all aspects of the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey. We hope the published results are useful in your evaluation and enhancement activities. We value feedback from all staff in how we can continue to improve our survey processes.

Subject/Title:	**Curriculum Update – Senior Phase & Graduate Apprenticeships**
Author: [Name and Job title]	Sharon Macfarlane & Carrie Higgins, Tertiary Education Leaders, Dr Lindsay Snodgrass, Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience & Quality
Meeting:	LTR committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	02 June 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	**Executive summary** Applications for Senior Phase programmes have continued to see a marginal increase for AY 26/27. There has been particularly high demand for selected NPAs, Skills for Work and Foundation Apprenticeships. The cap on our credit funding means that we cannot fulfil the demand for some programmes. Our Graduate Apprenticeship programmes are being actively promoted and applications data reviewed on a weekly basis.
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 and Tertiary Education
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	*Yes* **If yes, please specify:** Organisational: risk to organisational reputation, impact on recruitment / finance if appropriate curriculum is not developed and offered.
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, learners, 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.)			

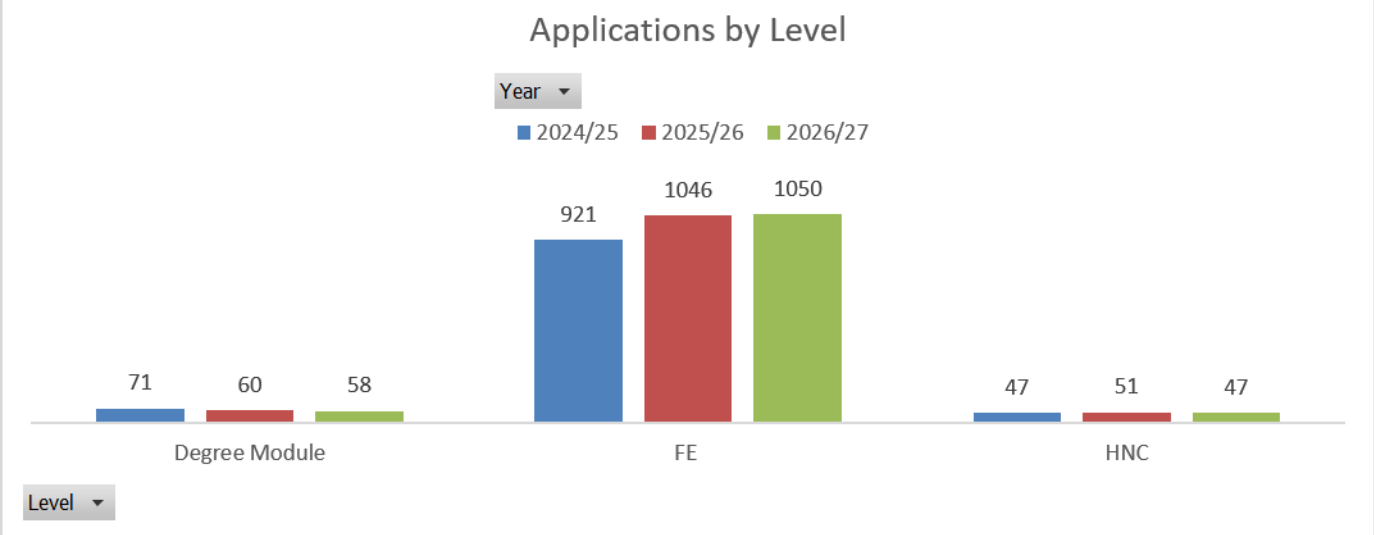
Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

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

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

Main Body of Information

Continued growth Senior Phase applications



We have seen a marginal increase in applications for next AY for our Senior Phase programmes. The data for degrees modules and HNCs for AY 2026/27 is incomplete since applications remain open until the start of September so we anticipate we may attract more applications post results day (4 August). We are continuing our marketing efforts to build a greater understanding of the value of HNC level study for S6 pupils and are aware we have some way to go in shifting mindsets on this. We are actively working with Highland Council to ensure our student outcomes data is linked into school outcomes data. This is particularly important in demonstrating the value of the HNC and the significant UCAS tariff points which are attached to this level of study.

We have continued to hone our admissions, retention and outcomes data for Senior Phase programmes, identifying trend data by school and identifying our main feeder schools as:

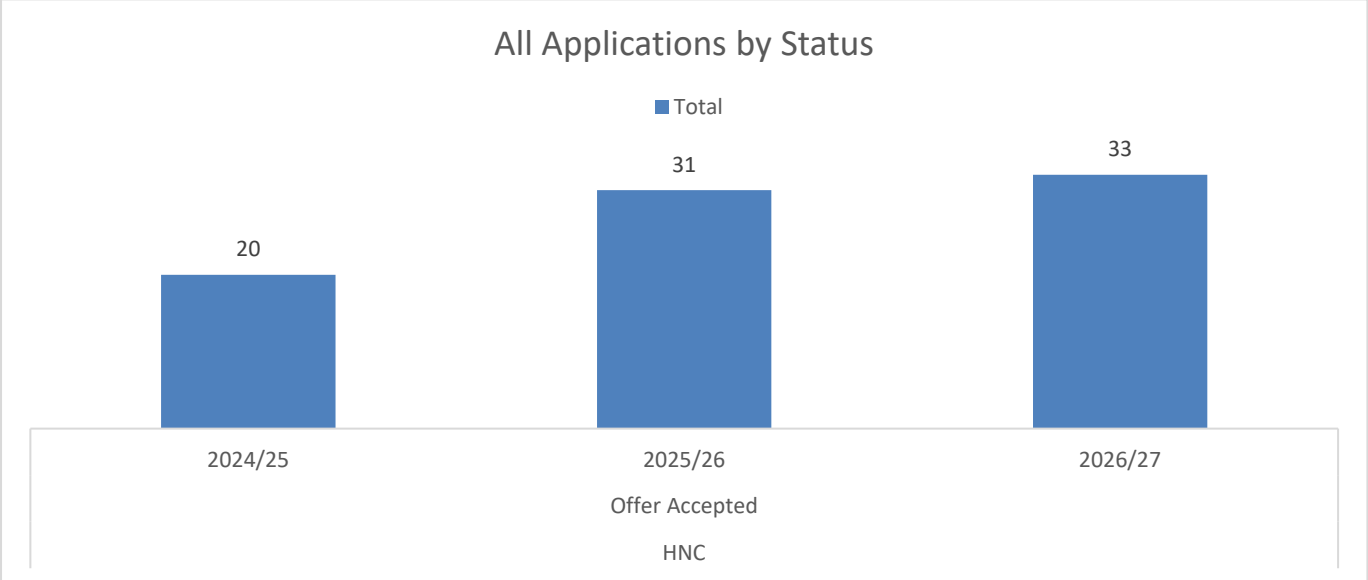
- Millburn Academy
- Inverness Royal Academy
- Charleston Academy
- Nairn Academy
- Dingwall Academy
- Culloden Academy
- Fortrose Academy
- Grantown Grammar School

A summary of applications data has been provided to Highland Council, and we will use this to inform and target our marketing efforts going forward and collectively identifying where our HNC messaging is not yet penetrating. FE shows high demand and capacity issues (waiting lists), especially in:

- NPA courses (e.g. Criminology, Beauty)
- Skills for Work (Early Education, Health & Social Care, Motor Vehicle)
- Foundation Apprenticeships

The continued cap on our FE credit funding has meant that we have had to turn away circa 370 young people from across our Senior Phase programmes. The application data will be used to inform the next iteration of the Curriculum Plan.

We have been able to enhance the offer by adding the HNC Forestry for next AY, and while applications for HNC programmes are slightly lower than the same point last year, our 'active acceptances' have increased.



Highland Pathway to Healthcare: Medicine and Pharmacy

A successful approval was completed on 16th of March 2026, and we are now ready to take forward our first entrants in September 2026 to this new programme which will be delivered in partnership with NHS Highland, Aberdeen University and RGU.

Highland Pathways to Healthcare: Medicine and Pharmacy - UHI Inverness

Graduate Apprenticeships

We are actively promoting Graduate Apprentice (GA) vacancies to our full-time students to support employers in filling current opportunities, with recruitment activity expected to become clearer over the next month. There have been positive developments within the GA Construction and Built Environment programme, originally designed to cover a broad range of career pathways such as Quantity Surveying and Construction Management. This approach has proven successful, and we are now expanding the offer to include new pathways in Architectural Technology and Digital Construction. In addition, we are prepared to roll out the new Year 2 of GA Accounting and Year 3 of GA Engineering. The latter has been slightly enhanced following input from our Industry Advisory Group to incorporate elements of cyber security, ensuring continued alignment with evolving industry needs.

Pre-employment Programmes

We have applied learning from the delivery of the CECA Scotland Academy and the Pre-Apprenticeship in Fabrication and Welding to redesign and reintroduce the Pre-Apprenticeship in Electrical Installation. This development has been strongly supported by our Engineering Employer Advisory Group, and we are further engaging employers through an upcoming employer breakfast event this week to promote the programme. We are pleased that Ross-shire Engineering has committed to sponsoring five students to undertake this new pre-apprenticeship. Demand has been very strong, and as a result, we will deliver two cohorts, a shorter 18-week programme aligned to Modern Apprenticeship recruitment from Easter to Summer 2027, and a second year-long programme designed to provide additional support for those not yet meeting entry requirements, while still enabling progression to a Modern Apprenticeship.

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Subject/Title:	Committee & Chair Evaluation
Author: [Name and Job title]	Ludka Orlowska-Kowal Governance Officer
Meeting:	LTR Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	26 May 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	Annual LTR Committee and Chair Evaluation Exercise
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	The Committee is requested to individually undertake the Committee and Chair Evaluation Exercises which be made available to them via Microsoft Form Survey from beginning of July 2026.
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges establishes standards of good governance practice for all boards and provides the essential foundations for compliance within the legislative framework. One of the five principles around which the code has been developed is effectiveness. Paragraph D24 states that "The board must agree a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the board chair and the committee chairs"
Resource implications:	
Risk implications:	Yes/No Operational: required for the proper Governance of the College
Equality and Diversity implications:	N/A
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)	
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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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As previously agreed, all future evaluations will be completed individually via an online survey. Members of the LTR Committee will be provided with access to these evaluations via the confidential Microsoft Forms Survey with emails being sent w/c 29th June 2026. Members are requested to complete this process by **5.00 p.m. on Friday 21 August 2026.**

Any actions highlighted as part of these evaluations will be brought to the Board of Management and feedback on the Chair will be discussed as part of the separate Board Member Evaluation Process.

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LTR

Subject/Title:	Complaints Report for Quarter 3 (February – April) 2025-26
Meeting and date:	LTR Committee, Tuesday 9th June 2026
Author:	Chloe Ugle, 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)

The committee are asked to note the Quarter 3 Complaints Report.

Purpose of report
Analysis of complaints received in Quarter 3 of 2025-26

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

Main body of information
See attached.

Executive Summary

A total of 18 complaints were received in Quarter 3, representing a slight increase from 16 in Q3 of the previous academic year. Course-related complaints (C3) accounted for the highest proportion (8 complaints), although this marks a decrease compared to the same period last year (14 complaints). Complaints covered a range of themes, including teaching and staff conduct, programme delivery and assessment, student support, communication, and policy compliance.

Most complaints were submitted by students, with HE students representing the largest group. Complaints were distributed across several curriculum areas and departments, with Care, Arts, Sport and Humanities receiving the highest number (9 complaints).

In terms of outcomes, 89% of complaints received in Q3 were closed within the reporting period. Of these, nine were resolved through frontline resolution, with others resulting in outcomes of two not upheld and five partially upheld. One complaint remained under investigation at the end of the quarter, and one complaint did not progress to investigation.

Performance against timescales was mixed. The single Stage 1 complaint was resolved within four days, achieving a 100% completion rate within target. However, Stage 2 complaints exceeded the 20-day target in most cases, with only 28% completed within timescales. This was largely due to the complexity of cases, with five out of seven requiring approved extensions.

Feedback from the complaints survey was limited (three responses) but overall indicated that most respondents felt their complaints were taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and communicated clearly. However, awareness of the complaint's procedure was low, and one respondent expressed dissatisfaction with the fairness and outcome of their complaint

Key themes emerging from complaints in Q3 include communication, consistency in the application of processes, teaching delivery, and student support. Actions have been identified to address these areas, including programme review, enhanced guidance and training for staff (particularly around Support to Study and INSIGHT processes), strengthening data protection practices, and improving communication and student support mechanisms.

Overall, complaints continue to provide valuable insights to support ongoing quality enhancement and improvements to the student experience.

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Summary Report: Complaints 2025-26 (Q3)

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

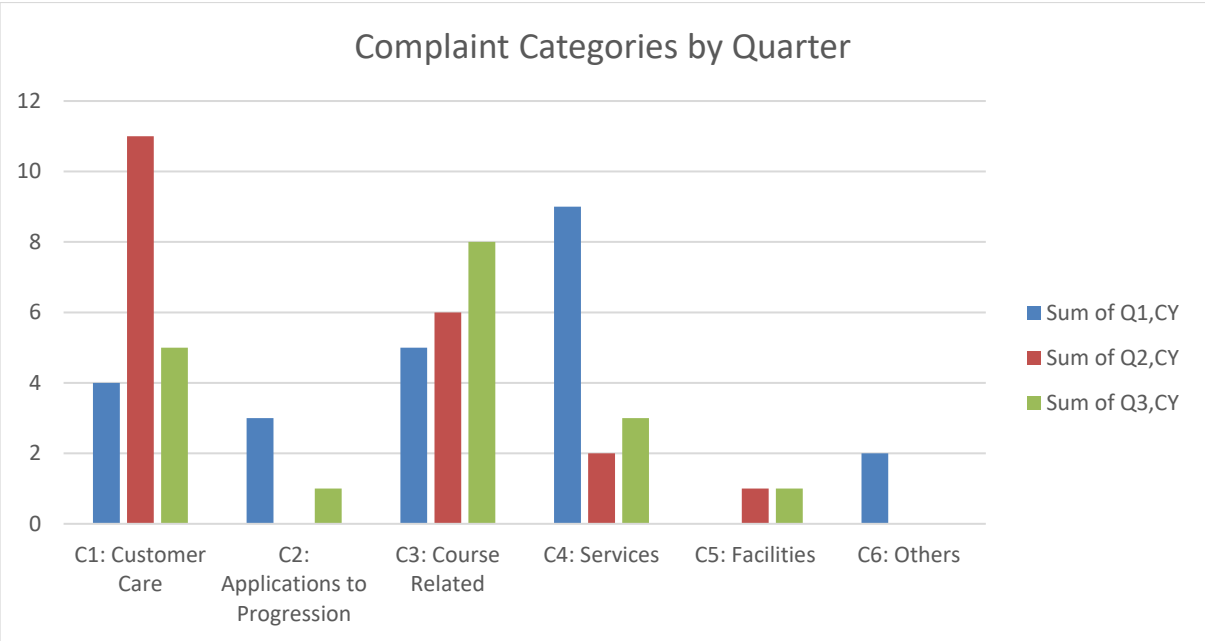
Complaints are grouped into quarters depending on the time of year in which they are received. The quarter dates are:

- 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 in Quarter 3 of 2025–26.

Complaints by Category

The chart below provides an overview of the total quarterly complaints received for each category in the current academic year.



The tables below detail the sum of quarterly complaints received for each category in the current and previous academic year.

Customer Category: Current Year 2025/26 (Quarter)	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1: Customer Care	20	4	11	5	
C2: Applications to Progression	4	3	-	1	
C3: Course Related	19	5	6	8	
C4: Services	14	9	2	3	
C5: Facilities	2	-	1	1	
C6: Others	2	2	-	-	
Total	61	23	20	18	

Customer Category: Previous Year 2024/2025 (Quarter)	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1: Customer Care	11	5	6	-	-
C2: Applications to Progression	3	1	-	1	1
C3: Course Related	24	6	3	14	1
C4: Services	5	2	2	1	-
C5: Facilities	2	1	-	-	1
C6: Others	-	-	-	-	-
Total	45	15	11	16	3

Summary:

- A total of 18 complaints were received in Q3 this year, compared to 16 in the same quarter last year.
- C3: Course related complaints accounted for the highest number this quarter, with 8 complaints, down from 14 in Q3 last year. Overall, complaints for this quarter related to:
    - Teaching and staff conduct
    - Programme delivery and assessment
    - Student support and accessibility
    - Administration and communication
    - Policy and governance
    - Safeguarding, safety and data protection

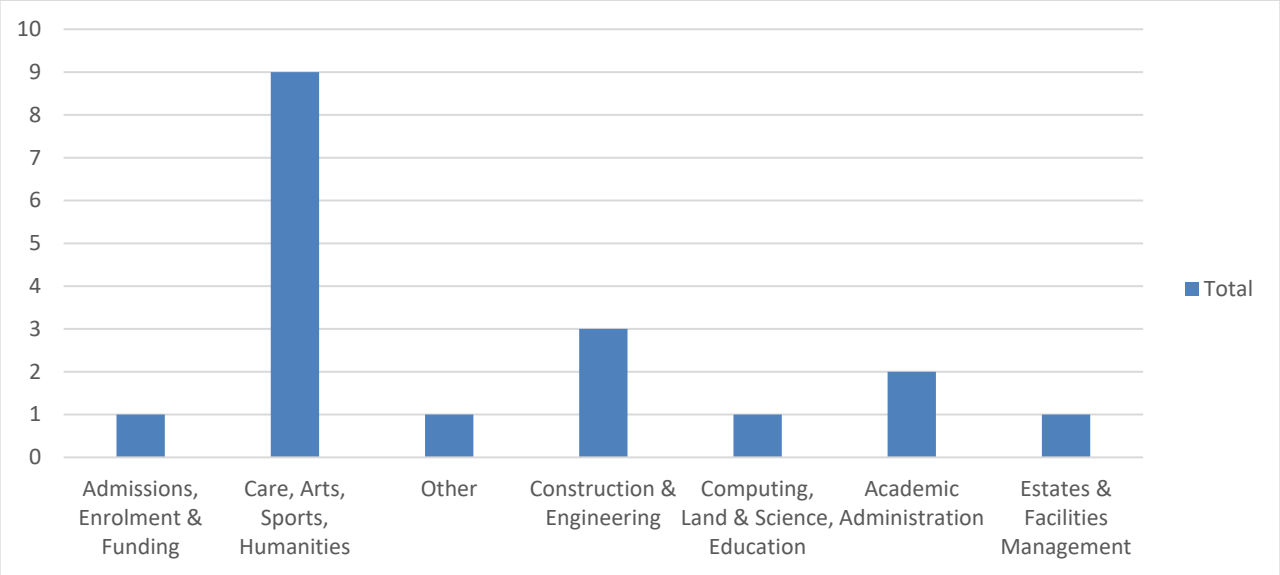
Complaints by Stakeholders

The table below provides a summary of the total number of complaints received from stakeholders across each quarter of the current academic year. HE students continue to represent the highest number of complaints received year to date, with FE students accounting for the second highest. Q3 was the first period in which complaints were received across all stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder	YTD CY	Q1, CY	Q2, CY	Q3, CY	Q4, CY
Member of Public	7	3	3	1	
Other	4	2	-	2	
Stakeholder	1	-	-	1	
Student – FE	17	5	6	6	
Student – HE	32	13	11	8	
Total	61	23	20	18	

Complaints by Curriculum Area and Department

The chart below shows the count of the areas the complaint relates to.



Care, Arts, Sport and Humanities received the highest number of complaints in Q3, with nine in total. This was followed by Construction, Engineering and Infrastructure with three, Academic Administration with two, and both Admissions, Enrolment and Funding and Estate and Facilities Management with one each. Complaints were raised across a range of categories.

Complaint Outcomes

The table below shows the breakdown of Frontline Resolution, Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints in Q3. It identifies whether complaints were resolved, upheld, partially upheld, not upheld, or had another outcome.

From the table, nine complaints were resolved. Of these, two were not upheld and five were partially upheld, equating to 89% of the complaints received and closed in Q3. There was one complaint that was not investigated and one currently under investigation.

Outcome	Frontline Resolution	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Not upheld	-		2	2
Partially upheld	-	1	4	5
Upheld	-	-	-	
Resolved	9	-	-	9
Not Investigated	-	1	-	1
Still under Investigation	-	-	1	1
Total	9	2	7	18

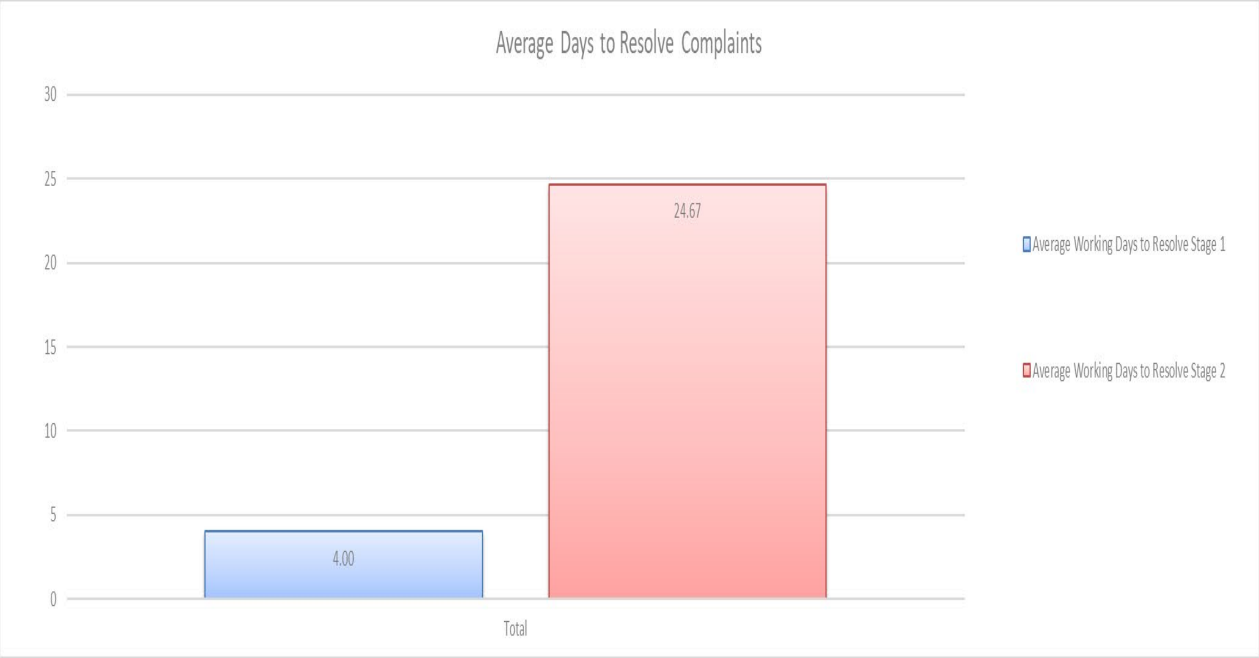
Complaint Timescales

SPSO guidelines state pre-defined timescales of a five working day turnaround for Stage 1 complaints. An extension of five working days to complete an investigation (where escalation to a Stage 2 is not required) is permissible for Stage 1 complaints, subject to approval from 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.

The single Stage 1 complaint in Q3 was resolved within four days, resulting in a 100% completion rate.

For Stage 2 complaints, resolution times ranged from 19 to 31 days, with only 28% completed within the 20-day target. It should be noted that five of the seven Stage 2 complaints required a 10-day extension due to their complexity and in some cases additional issues being added to the initial complaint, which contributed to the average resolution time exceeding the target.

The chart below displays the average number of days taken to determine a complaint outcome in Q3.



Complaint Follow Up Survey

At the point the outcome letter is issued, complainants are also provided with a link to a short survey (unless the complaint was submitted anonymously). The survey gathers feedback on their experience of the complaints process and asks them to rate their satisfaction across thirteen aspects. Responses are anonymised unless the complainant chooses to identify themselves. Three responses were received in Q3. The findings from this small sample are summarised below:

- Only one of the three respondents was aware of the complaints procedure prior to submitting their complaint. This individual reported being able to access information and support to make their complaint.
- Two respondents strongly agreed that their complaint was taken seriously, thoroughly investigated, and that they were kept informed throughout. They reported receiving a fair, objective, and clear response, and were satisfied with the outcome.
- One respondent generally agreed with these aspects but did not consider the response to be fair or objective and was dissatisfied with the outcome.
- One respondent provided positive overall feedback, highlighting a well-managed process, strong support from HISA, and a thorough investigation. They also suggested follow-up actions, such as additional checks or staff retraining, to prevent recurrence.
- One respondent noted that they had submitted separate correspondence outlining concerns about the complaints procedure.

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 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 the actions currently in progress as a result of complaints received during Q3:

- Programme review of modules and delivery to ensure it meets the needs of the student cohort.
- Clarify and strengthen guidance on the Support to Study and INSIGHT processes, including targeted training for PATs to promote consistent understanding and application.
- Provide additional guidance for PATs supporting HE students, particularly around withdrawal implications, aligning with established FE practices.
- Reinforce data protection practices, including incorporating data security into annual reviews and reminding staff to check display settings when accessing sensitive information.
- Enhance student support and communication, including arranging appropriate support meetings (e.g. PLSP), updating assessment schedules, and formalising consistent communication around attendance.
- Continue review and improvement of teaching materials, including supporting staff to appropriately use and reference AI-generated content.
- Ensure consistent application of the UHI Generative AI Policy across all teaching teams.

Themes emerging from complaints in Q3

The main themes from complaints emerging in Q3 primarily highlight issues around communication, consistency in applying processes, teaching delivery, and student support, alongside identified needs for staff training, improved data protection practices, and ongoing quality enhancement.

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Subject/Title:	2026 HISA Elections Report & 2026 HISA Referendums Report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Simon Varwell, Director of Student Engagement & Representation
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching & Research Committee
Meeting Date:	09 June 2026
Date Paper prepared:	29 May 2026
Brief Summary of the paper:	2026 HISA Elections Report: Over the spring of 2026, HISA conducted elections for the 12 Student Officer roles across the UHI partnership for 2026-27. These positions collectively form HISA's Student Officer team and Executive Committee and usually take up governing body positions across UHI. All students were able to vote for two Cross-Campus Officer roles and then one Local Officer role at their academic partner (though three such roles at UHI North, West and Hebrides). 2026 HISA Referendums Report: This report aims to update governing bodies in UHI and the Academic Partners on two referendums held over the spring of 2026, contributing towards their responsibility under the 1994 Education Act to ensure free and fair democratic processes in their students' association.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Approval

Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: ☐ compliance ☐ partnership services ☐ risk management ☐ strategic plan ☐ new opportunity/change	Compliance, Partnership Services & Strategic Plan
Resource implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No **If yes, please specify:**
Student Experience Impact:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
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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

HISA's 2026 elections: Report to UHI Inverness Board of Management



Summary

Over the spring of 2026, HISA conducted elections for the 12 Student Officer roles across the UHI partnership for 2026-27. These positions collectively form HISA's Student Officer team and Executive Committee, and usually take up governing body positions across UHI. All students were able to vote for two Cross-Campus Officer roles and then one Local Officer role at their academic partner (though three such roles at UHI North, West and Hebrides).

This year, we built on substantial revisions and enhancements made for our 2025 elections, including updated candidate training and resources, election rules and publicity. We also continued to benefit from Single Sign-On for the HISA website's voting platform, which aimed to give us up to date access to records of eligible UHI students and enabled students to log into our website as if it was any other UHI platform.

We held our main **Student Elections** from January to March, and then **by-elections** over April and May to fill four posts (three of which remained vacant in the Student Elections and one where the elected candidate declined to take up post). We achieved candidates in all but one of these four by-elections. This gives us a nearly full Student Officer team going into the 2026-27 academic year.

Turnout in the main Student Elections was 3.75%, slightly down on last year's 4.17% but still up on two years ago.

This report aims to update governing bodies in UHI and the Academic Partners on these elections, contributing towards their responsibility under the 1994 Education Act to ensure free and fair elections in their students' association.

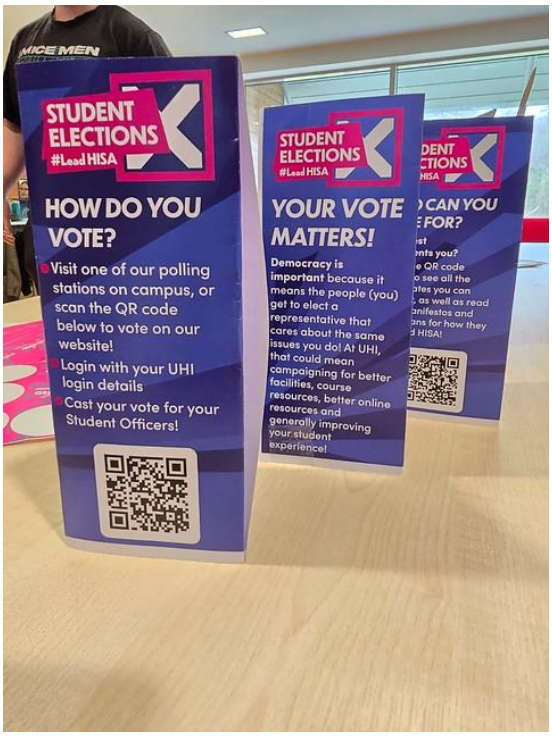
1: Introduction

Under the 1994 Education Act, each further and higher education establishment is required to have a Students' Association that elects its officers through a fair and democratic election. HISA's Articles of Association state that we must hold elections for two Cross-Campus Officers (President and Vice-President Education) and at least one Local Officer from each academic partner.

This Student Officer team was revised over 2025-26 to reduce in number from 16 to 12, maintaining the local link but ensuring a more cost-effective system. At the same time, the HTC Depute President post was removed following discussions with HTC management and a consultative vote of HTC students (meaning HTC students would be represented from 2026-27 directly by the President and Vice-President Education).

Our main Student Elections saw nominations open in January and voting took place during the week of 9th March 2025. Two by-election windows took place in May 2026 with voting 5th to 7th and 26th to 28th May respectively.

Building on redevelopments in 2025, our elections saw a strong communication and outreach plan, including:



1. A clear "brand" for our elections, with graphics specific to each stage (eg nomination and voting).
2. Comprehensive election rules, drawing on effective practice from across the sector.
3. A detailed Nominations pack, providing full information for those interested in the roles.
4. A wide range of training for candidates, including a compulsory introductory session, training on campaigning and expenses, and – after the elections – and employability session run by UHI Futures to enable both successful and unsuccessful candidates to reflect on the skills they developed during the elections.
5. A social media competition with cash reward/prize for voting.
6. The use of Single Sign-On for the HISA website, where nomination and voting took place, enabling students to use their regular UHI login details rather than create a new account. This also has the advantage of enabling students to easily access other member-only functions such as joining a club or society.

2: Preparing for the elections

Working with staff, especially in teaching and support roles, at Academic Partners is crucial to the success of our elections, because of the day-to-day contacts with students that they have. As such, we arranged this year through AP management teams the promotion of our “recommend a friend” form whereby staff (and students) can trigger an anonymous email of encouragement to a student to consider standing, and a busy programme of class visits to promote the opportunities available through nominations. Our local teams have also undertaken promotional work through stalls in campus open spaces, digital communications through our website, social media and newsletter, and through AP-based services such as display screens, plus our various channels of engagement with Student Voice Reps (SVRs) including meetings.

Across UHI, we worked closely with UHI’s data protection and student records teams to ensure Single Sign-On and student data transfers operated smoothly.

This partnership working is further crucial given the roles local officers usually play as student member posts of governing bodies, so liaison with governing bodies and governance professionals is a key part of our election processes – not least in the form of this report.

We were grateful to UHI Inverness staff for their considerable support with the elections, especially lecturers and support staff for enabling us to do class talks and for encouraging students during the nomination and voting periods. We also were able to engage large numbers of students through our polling station at the main campus.

3: Elections process and results

Key dates for our main Student Elections were as follows:

- **Nominations Open**: Noon (12:00) Monday 19th January 2026
- **Nominations Close**: Noon (12:00) Thursday 19th February 2026
- **Candidates Briefing**: 6pm, Thursday 19th February 2026 (plus repeats on request).
- **Candidates Training Workshops**: Friday 20th to Monday 23rd February 2026
- **Manifestos Deadline**: Noon (12:00) Thursday 26th February 2025
- **Online Campaigning Starts**: 9am, Monday 2nd March 2026
- **Physical Campaigning Starts**: 9am, Monday 9th March 2026
- **Voting Opens**: 10am, Monday 9th March 2026
- **Voting Closes**: 4pm, Thursday 12th March 2026
- **Election Results Announcement**: 5pm, Friday 13th March 2026



Due to significant publicity and promotion work the level candidacy was high, albeit there was some candidate withdrawal upon engaging with briefings and training and due to personal circumstances. At the opening of voting, we had 20 candidates in total.

Voting took place by Single Transferable Vote. Voting was available through our website, and at polling stations at four campuses using a desktop polling app from MSL, our website provider.

The National Union of Students acted as Returning Officer, enabling them to provide external validation of results and advice on complaints or complex judgements. HISA's Director of Student Engagement and Representation (Simon Varwell) acted as Deputy Returning Officer, meaning he was responsible for decisions about the elections and declaring the results. Our Insight and Democracy Coordinator (Paul Stalker) was responsible for day-to-day management, and our staff at campuses across UHI organised local promotional work.

The results of the Student Elections voting in March, including our declaration video, are on our website. The names of candidates returned in each role, with the numbers of votes cast in total for each position (not just for the winning candidate), are as follows:

Role	Total votes cast	Winning candidate
President	700	Oliver Sweeney
Vice-President Education	639	Andi Garrity
Argyll Depute President	26	Tsz Chung Tang
Inverness Depute President	98	Chloe Young
Moray Depute President	148	Callum Stepien
North, West & Hebrides Depute President (Hebrides)	87	Alasdair Macleod
Orkney Depute President	33	Esméemilja Mackenna
Perth Depute President	269	Alexandra Paton *
SAMS Depute President	67	Merlin Farrell

* The elected candidate subsequently resigned, triggering a by-election.

By-elections held between 20th April and 7th May led to candidates returned as follows:

Role	Total votes cast	Winning candidate
North, West & Hebrides Depute President (North)	3	Cole Garscadden
Shetland Depute President	3	Jay Bain

Further by-elections were held between 11th and 28th May, in the first case due to a lack of candidates in both the main Student Elections and the above by-election, and in the second case due to the timing of the resignation of the candidate in the main Student Elections.

Role	Total votes cast	Winning candidate
Perth Depute President	60	Corben Bruce

Nominations were sought for North, West & Hebrides Depute President (West) but the one candidate was disqualified due to a breach of election rules. We will explore options for a by-election in the new academic year.

This means we have a nearly complete Student Officer team for 2026-27.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig have their own local students' association, with an entitlement to an appointed place on the Executive; and as stated in part 1 there is now no longer an HTC Depute President.

4: 2026 Student Election statistics

Thanks to Single Sign-On, we were able to extrapolate some useful data about both candidacy and voting via MSL, our website provider.

While our candidacy numbers are too small to explore in depth, one interesting observation is that by far our two highest age ranges for candidates in the main Student Elections were 18-21 (33.33%) and 50-59 (23.81%).

In the main Student Elections in March, 859 members voted (3.75 4.17%), casting 2237 individual votes. This represents a slight decrease on last year (946 members representing 4.17%, casting 2984 individual votes).

Day of polling	Voters
Monday 9th March	223
Tuesday 10th March	260
Wednesday 11th March	187
Thursday 12th March	192

As with last year, voting tailed off slightly over the four days, with a peak on day 2.

Turnout by Academic Partner showed very broad consistency against size of student population, with notable over-representation of turnout at UHI Perth and SAMS, and under-representation where there were no candidates from or campaigning in that location.

Academic Partner or centre	Number of voters	% of total turnout
UHI Perth	286	33.29%
UHI Moray	156	18.16%
UHI Inverness	146	17.00%
UHI North, West and Hebrides	108	12.57%
Scottish Association for Marine Science	67	7.80%
UHI Orkney	35	4.07%
UHI Argyll	31	3.61%
UHI Executive Office	15	1.75%
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig	6	0.70%
UHI Shetland	6	0.70%
HTC	2	0.23%
(Blank – presumably unknown or incompletely registered)	1	0.12%

Some other headlines in voter statistics include:

- Full-time voters represented 81.37% of turnout.
- By level of study, further education students represented 46.33% of turnout, degree students 25.96%, HN students 22.47%, and PGT and PGR less than 2% each.
- 65.42% of voters were on one-year courses and 26.54% on two-year courses.

5: Evaluation and analysis

There are considerable successes we can point to in our 2026 Student Elections:

1. A high level of candidacy across our posts, with a number of contested elections (including, importantly, the posts of President and Vice-President (Education). Indeed only two posts in the main Student Elections had only one candidate.
2. Very high levels of engagement in certain locations (for example 67 votes in SAMS, or three candidates for Argyll Depute President), which can reflect local conditions such as outreach to classes or the mode of learning.
3. Contested posts for both Cross-Campus Officer roles is also something that has not happened often in recent years. The profile and good work of incumbents may have contributed to awareness of these roles. That many stood who were in local roles demonstrates the potential progression paths being recognised by officers.
4. Good standards and depths of manifestos from candidates.
5. Good engagement in our candidate training programme.
6. A healthy number of candidates from online courses (including candidates not based in the Highlands and Islands region).
7. Some significant travel undertaken by candidates for multi- and cross-campus roles.
8. Following two rounds of by-elections, a nearly full Student Officer team for 2026-27.





On the other hand, there remain some continuing challenges:

1. Capacity for polling stations – The main Student Elections came at a time of stretched resources and internal leadership transition. This meant that polling station opening hours were reduced from the previous year which will have had an impact on students being prompted to vote.
2. As such, turnout remains low by our own expectations and sector standards. Our student population includes more students studying online or part-time compared to other institutions, and we must continue to address this through constructive engagement in these spaces. We are addressing specific issues in many parts of UHI where we are not invited to do talks, where students are not routinely encouraged to check their UHI email, or where Brightspace discussion facilities are switched off. These are barriers which impact on other engagement beyond democratic participation and indeed beyond HISA's work.
3. The resource to run by-elections is not insignificant, and the unusual step to run two rounds of by-elections before the summer was in response to specific circumstances. It shows the high importance of achieving candidacy across all posts at the first time of asking in the main Student Elections.
4. While we did not have significant data variance compared last year, there remained some niggling data issues in terms of students not being in our system and thus being unable to vote. We will continue to engage with student records teams on this.

In terms of action for the future:

1. We must be aware of the next phase of UHI Transformation in the coming academic year and its impact on students and their experience at UHI. For instance this is both an opportunity to engage in meaningful and high-profile conversations about what HISA can do for its membership at a time of change, as well as a consideration for our capacity and for Student Officers' abilities to demonstrate delivery on their manifesto commitments.
2. There is increasing stability in our staffing structure, which will allow for clearer planning based on known or predicted capacity.
3. Partnership working with UHI/APs especially in the area of online courses is essential so we can promote our work, impacts and opportunities to students where we often struggle to do so. For instance we are less able in online courses to get into classes for induction talks and Student Voice Rep recruitment.
4. We are beginning work on plans for improved voluntary opportunities within HISA's structures, for instance local committees at some campuses, building up a bedrock of engaged students who may then consider paid elected office in subsequent years.
5. Getting online students on to campuses will help in terms of building that community, and we are engaged in multiple conversations with APs and subject areas about encouraging and enabling students to visit their local campus even when teaching is online.
6. As is always the case, the success of elections depends on HISA's impact and visibility throughout the year and not just a well-run and high-profile election process. We must continue to communicate our impact and value, for instance through our events and activities, work on the enhancement of learning and our reporting. This must be clearly evidenced to both students and to UHI decision-makers.

Simon Varwell
Director of Student Engagement and Representation, and Deputy Returning Officer
Highlands and Islands Students' Association

29th May 2026



HISA's 2026 referendums

Summary

This report aims to update governing bodies in UHI and the Academic Partners on two referendums held over the spring of 2026, contributing towards their responsibility under the 1994 Education Act to ensure free and fair democratic processes in their students' association

1: Context

HISA held two referendums of its membership in the spring of 2026. These were highly unusual events and were believed to be the first referendums HISA or its predecessor organisations have ever run in UHI.

The two referendums were as follows:

1. A referendum to approve our proposed revised Articles and Schedules, which boards are being asked to approve. This referendum followed a resolution of HISA's Board of Trustees on 20th February to seek student approval for the new governing documents. This was held concurrently with the main Student Elections with voting between Monday 9th and Thursday 12th March.
2. A referendum on our membership of the National Union of Students. This referendum followed a motion at an All-Student Meeting in November 2025. It was held between 30th March and 1st April, concurrently with a vote on students' priorities for the next UHI Student Partnership Agreement.

2: Process

Given the precedent of no past referendums, considerable work required to be undertaken to ensure appropriate processes were in place for these referendums. Development of them drew on our relatively new processes for elections as well as wider sector good practice.

Features of the process included:

1. Development of referendum rules, to ensure a free, fair and transparent process.
2. Appointments by our Trustee Board of Referendum Returning Officers, with NUS acting in this role for the Articles and Schedules referendum and an experienced staff member from Dundee University Students' Association for the NUS referendum.
3. A registration and training process for students (and others) to register as campaigners in the referendum.
4. Statements invited from registered campaigners, to be posted on our referendum information bases.
5. Online voting, with polling stations at some major campuses.

3: Results and next steps

Articles and Schedules referendum

This vote was, perhaps unsurprisingly, uncontroversial, and communication and turnout was aided to some extent by concurrent voting with our main Student Elections in March. This meant that HISA staff could promote and explain the referendum at polling stations and in other communications alongside the elections.

The results, published on our website, were as follows:

- For: 200
- Against: 1
- Abstain: 19

Following affirmation of the result by the HISA Trustee Board on 7th May 2026 and noting/ affirmation at our Annual All-Student Meeting on 18th May 2026, these revised Articles and Schedules are now being presented to UHI's governing bodies before final adoption at a Company Law Meeting (consisting of HISA's trustees), so they come into effect for 1st July 2026.

NUS referendum

Candidates were registered for the "Yes" campaign (to disaffiliate), but none applied for the "No" campaign. It is notable that NUS officers did not register as campaigners, despite regular communication with NUS officers and staff. Subsequently, campaigner statements were only presented for the "Yes" case alongside HISA's own neutral guide on the referendum's page.

The results, published on our website, were as follows:

- Yes: 139
- No: 58
- Abstain: 7

Following affirmation of the result by the HISA Trustee Board on 7th May 2026 and noting/ affirmation at our Annual All-Student Meeting on 18th May 2026, the HISA President has taken steps to notify our intention to disaffiliate effective from 1st July 2026.

General observations

While quorum was achieved in both votes, turnout was substantially lower than at Student Elections in the past few years. While this is understandable for a non-controversial and largely technical topic such as our Articles and Schedules, and it might be argued that the profile of NUS among our membership is low, it is nonetheless worth exploring further how HISA can achieve higher turnouts at future referendums should we hold them.

On-campus polling stations were clearly a factor in turnout, as they are for elections. Both referendums took place at a stretched time for HISA including reduced staffing capacity. As we move to stability on this front, staffing of polling stations at more locations can be planned with more certainty.

As stated at the start of this report, holding a referendum was an unusual occurrence, and two of them reflected particular sets of circumstances. While referendums can be called at the behest of

our membership through appropriate processes, and therefore we cannot with certainty predict future occurrences, we do not anticipate any major topics going to referendums in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, it is appropriate that we continue to reflect on our processes for referendums to ensure that they work smoothly and deliver results that are fair and deliver meaningful and convincing outcomes.

Simon Varwell
Director of Student Engagement and Representation, and Deputy Referendums Returning Officer
Highlands and Islands Students' Association

29th May 2026