

# UHI | INVERNESS

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Microsoft Teams

Governance Officer  
20 January 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.

#### ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 16:30 – 16:40    **1) MINUTES**  
 a.) Minutes of the LTR Committee Meeting held on 02 December 2025  
 b.) Confidential Note (CN-01-122025) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 02 December 2025
- 16:40 – 16:50    **2) OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
- 16.50 – 17:00    **3) POLICIES FOR APPROVAL (CONFIDENTIAL)**  
 Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality  
 a) Student Drug & Alcohol Misuse Policy

#### ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 17:00 – 17:10    **4) STUDENT RETENTION REPORT**

Joint Report by Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality and Information Systems Manager

- 17:10 – 17:30 **5) RESEARCH UPDATE – HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES**  
Report by Director – Centre for Living Sustainability & Director of Research – Biodiversity & Freshwater
- 17:30 – 17:40 **6) KPI MATRIX**  
Report by Operations and Commercial Manager
- 17:40 – 18:00 **7) CURRICULUM UPDATE**  
Report by Tertiary Education Leaders for Management, Health & Creative Arts and for Technology, Environment & Education
- a.) UHI Inverness Guide to HNCs for sixth year school pupils  
b.) UHI Inverness Schools programme parent guide
- 18:00 – 18:15 **8) WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP REPORT**  
Report by HISA President and Quality
- 18:15 – 18:25 **9) STRATEGIC PLANING 2026/27 (f2f date)**  
Report by Governance Officer
- a.) Terms and Conditions – LTR Committee  
b.) Scheme of Delegation  
c.) Code of Good Governance 2025-26

#### FOR NOTING

- 18:25 – 18:25 **10) QUARTER 2 - COMPLAINTS REPORT**  
Report by Head of Registry and Quality Enhancement
- 18:25 – 18:25 **11) MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES – CONFIDENTIAL**
- a) Approved Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 19 November 2025  
b) Approved Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 17 December 2025  
c) Draft Minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 14 January 2026  
d) Approved Minutes of the Research & Innovation Committee held on 02 October 2025.
- 18:25 – 18:30 **12) AOCB**
- 13) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**  
LTR Committee Meeting – 09 June 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.

# UHI | INVERNESS

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Outstanding Actions
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Ludka Orłowska-Kowal Governance Officer
<b>Meeting:</b>	LTR Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10 March 2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	02 March 2026
<b>Brief Executive Summary of the paper:</b>	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.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and Noting.
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	Governance Compliance
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/ <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Student Experience Impact:</b>	Yes/ <b>No</b> If yes, please specify:
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

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

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

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

## **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
  - ✓ 3 outstanding actions

LTR Committee - action list

ITEM 02.a

Action	Academic Year	Status	Finding	Recommendation	Recommendation Significance	Implementation Date	Responsible Officer	Status as at 02/12/2025 2025	Comments
1	09/09/2025 2025/26	Ongoing	<b>KPI Matrix:</b> 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	<b>Update at 02/12/2025:</b> 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. <b>Update at 25/02/2026:</b> Email sent out to Committee Chair to select KPIs within LTR's remit on 18/02/2026. <b>Update at 02/03/2026:</b> 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.
								<b>Status as at 02/12/2025 2025</b>	
2	02/12/2025	Complete	<b>Early Student Experience Survey:</b> The Committee would welcome more details added to the scope of the report, e.g. percentage of student population in regard to specific student groups to provide next level of details. The Members suggested that a new column could be added to show percentage levels against the actual numbers to see correlations between both.	Survey reports to be reviewed to include greater detail in regard to student population.	Low	March 2026	VP – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality & AN	Proposed	<b>Update at 26/02/2026:</b> Action discussed with the Head of Registry & Quality with a view to future reporting encompassing more context around the survey data. The college will trial a revised approach and report on it at the June LTR Committee meeting.
3	02/12/2025	Ongoing	<b>Research Update:</b> The Committee would welcome a short Creative Session to highlight the importance of Research within local community based on a small number, 2-3, of case studies.	Research Creative Session to take place in 2026 to showcase a number of case studies highlighting collaboration with local communities.	Low	June 2026	Directors of Research and Gov Officer	Proposed	
4	02/12/2025	Ongoing	<b>SEAP Report:</b> 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	<b>Update at 15/12/2025:</b> Will be picked up ahead of the next student survey in March 2026.

## LTR committee - Board of Management

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	<b>LEARNER RETENTION REPORT</b>
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Dr Lindsay Snodgrass - Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience & Quality & Jane Maclennan - Information Systems Manager
<b>Meeting:</b>	LTR committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	To provide an update on learner retention this AY to date and how this aligns to previous years, sector benchmarking and to our forecasting in relation to successful outcomes for FT FE and HNs
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	Strategic Plan – Student Experience
<b>Resource implications:</b>	No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: risk to operational effectiveness if appropriate maintenance / improvement and enhancement in learner outcomes is not being achieved. Organisational: risk to organisational reputation, impact on recruitment / finance if learner outcomes not as they should be.
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes If yes, please specify: reference to learner outcomes across priority groups/sector benchmarking
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, learners, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Key managers consulted

Status – [Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes]	Yes		
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**LEARNER OUTCOMES**

**Executive summary**

The report provides an update on learner retention to date this academic year (AY) and how this aligns with our forecasting in relation to successful outcomes.

Early withdrawals have increased for both FE and HE learners as compared to AY 25/26. There has been an increase in early withdrawals for FE PT learners. Further withdrawals are currently showing a downward trend for both FE and HE.

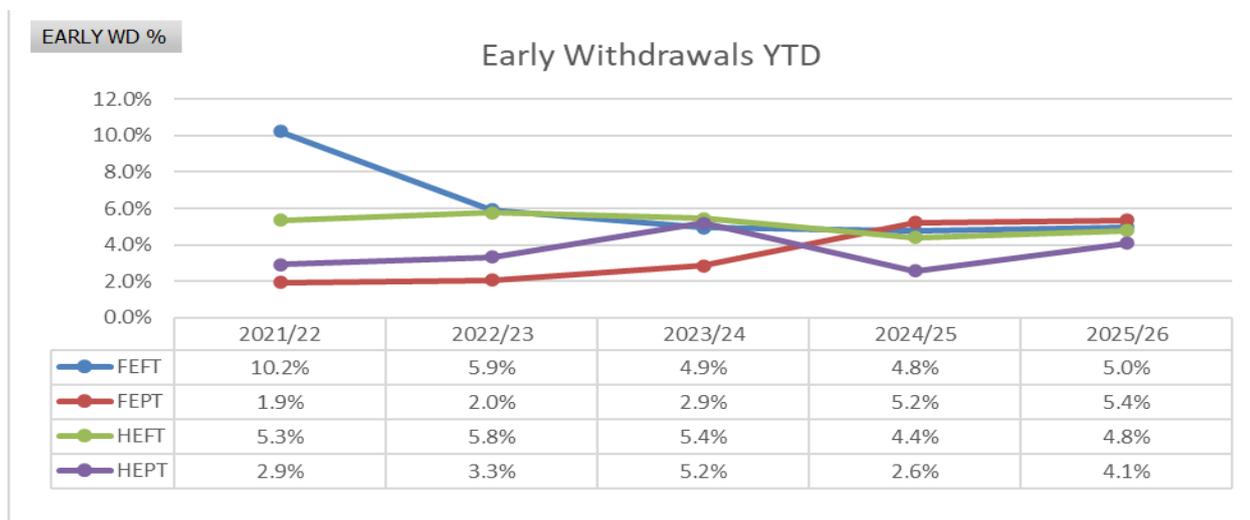
In line with our practice over the last three AYs, target setting has been undertaken for FE FT and HE HN learners to support improved learner outcomes. Curriculum Leaders have been tasked with identifying areas for action to minimise Further Withdrawals and to reduce Partial Success. This has been done at an individual learner level in order to achieve our successful completion targets and has taken account of how we maximise the extended use of Learning Assistants to provide support to where it is most needed.

**Main Body of Information**

**Learner Withdrawals**

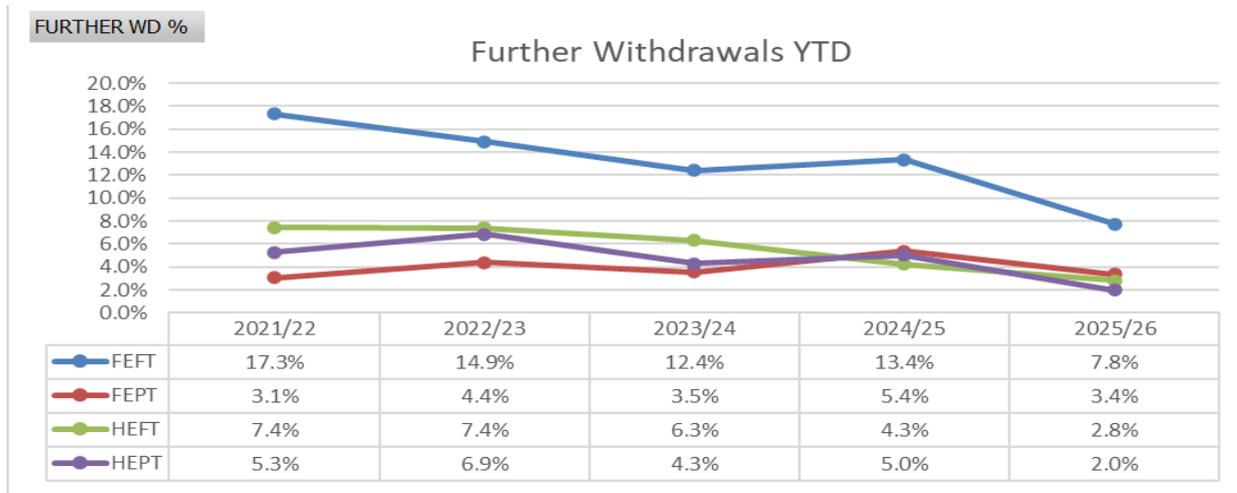
The chart below shows the end of year figures for previous years and the current data for 2025/26. Early withdrawals have increased marginally for both FE and HE learners as compared to AY 24/25.

Whilst the EWs are currently higher, this is not year-end for PT students who will continue to enrol, therefore as the headcount goes up with both FE and HE January enrolments it is anticipated that the % EW will come down.

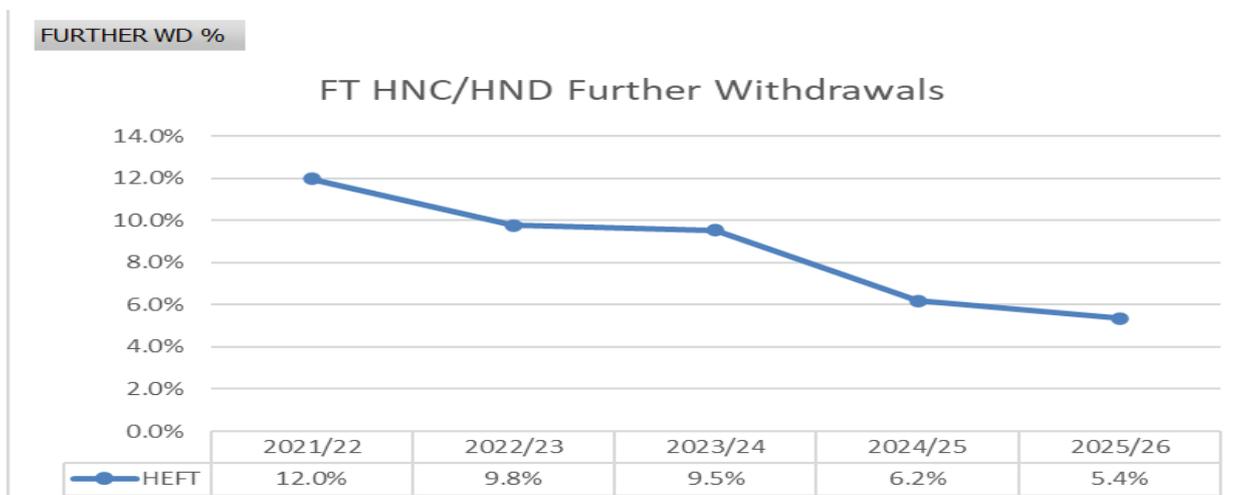
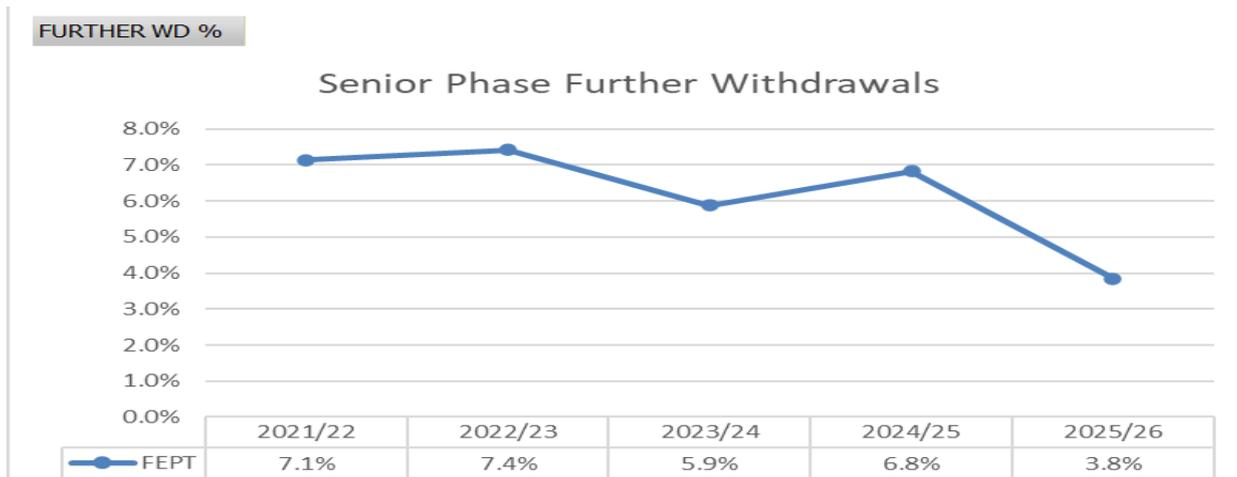


As with the above chart, the data below shows the end of year figures for previous years and the current data for 2025/26. Further Withdrawals are currently showing a downward trend for both FE and HE.

At March 2025 the further withdrawals were higher for FEFT students at 8.1% and HEFT at 2.9%.

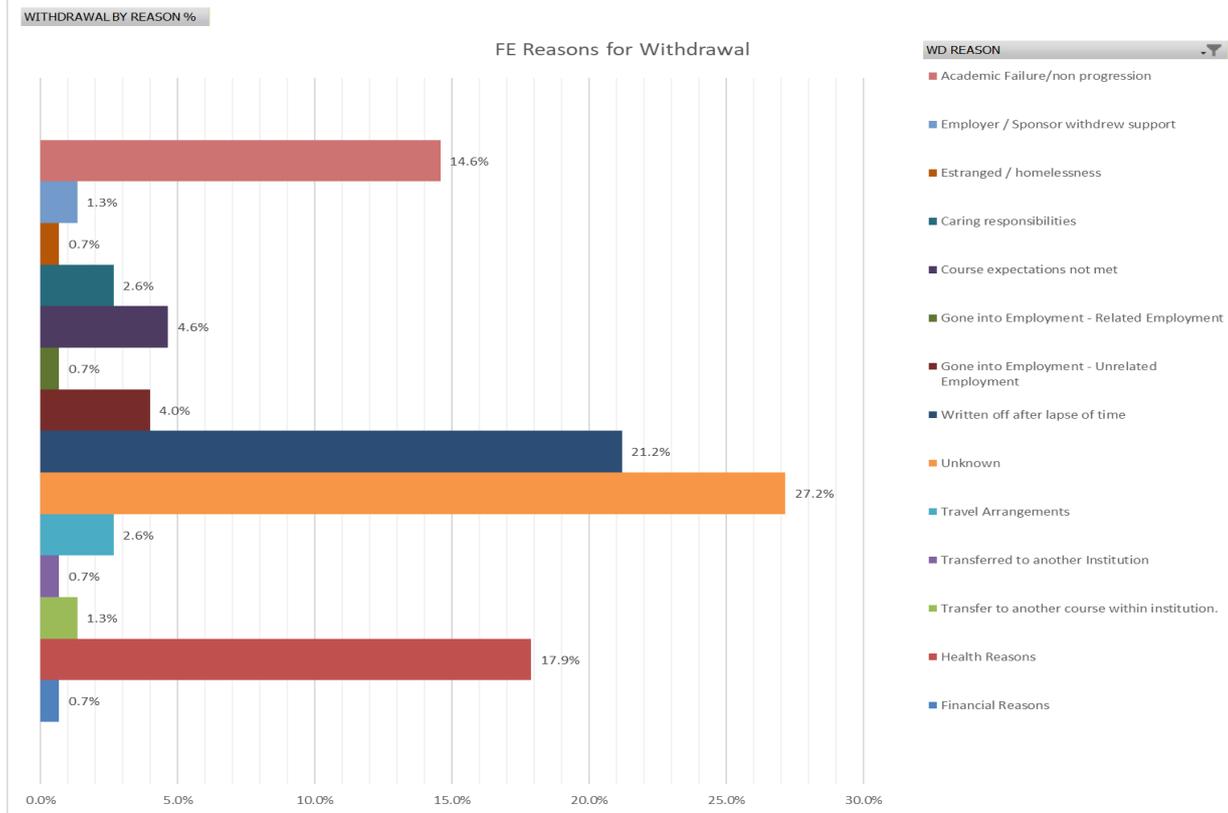


The two charts below illustrate the end of year figures for previous years and the promising current data for 2025/26 for Senior Phase students and FT HNC and HND students.

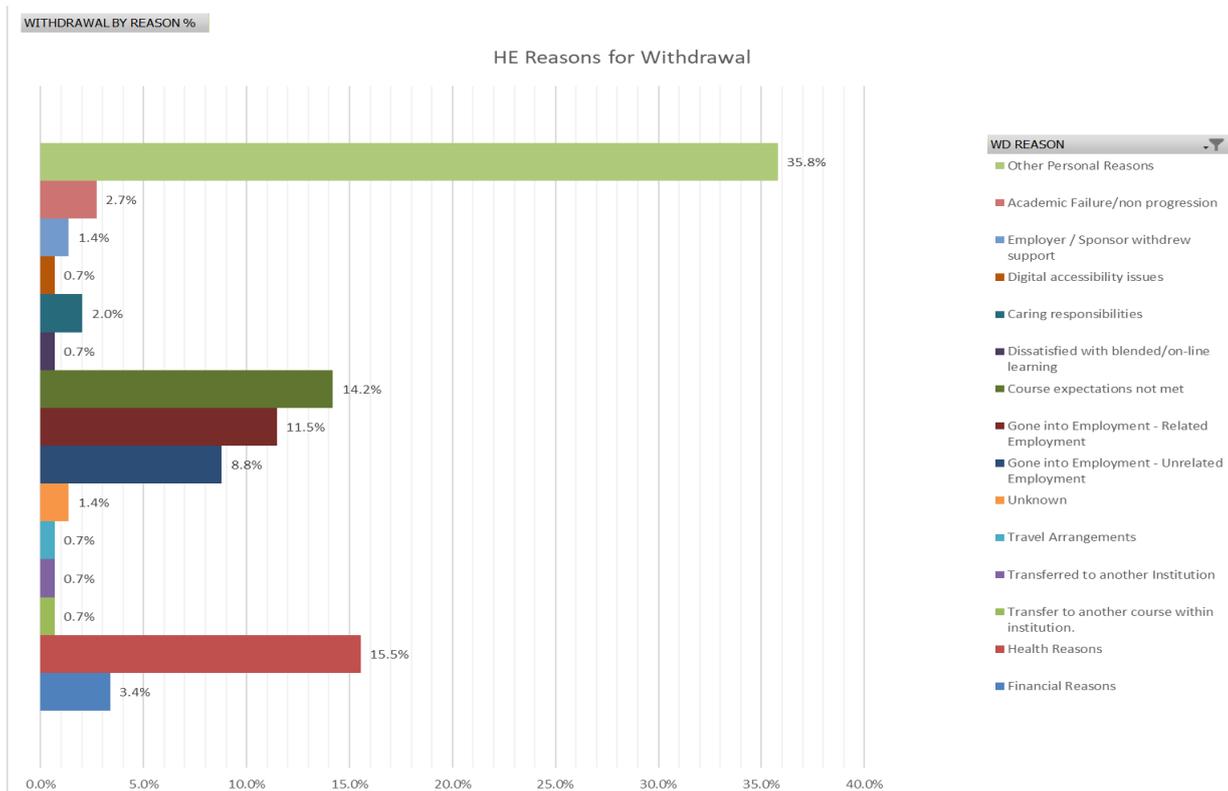


### Reasons for Withdrawal

The following charts below show the reasons learners have withdrawn to date in AY 2025/26, “Unknown” is the most common reason for withdrawal for FE learners, followed by “Written off after lapse of time”. “Health reasons” are the most common known reason for withdrawal.



For HE learners the main reason for withdrawal is “Other Personal Reasons”, followed by “Health”.



**Progress against targets and benchmarks**

UHI Inverness performs very well against the sector benchmark. The latest published benchmark data is based on AY 23/24. In that year, we out-turned as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best performing amongst comparable colleges; UHI Inverness FT FE outcomes were 4.4% above the UHI benchmark; UHI Inverness retention rates for FT FE were +7.3% better than the sector benchmark; and we had the best retention rates across comparable colleges and +3.5% better retention than the UHI benchmark. Last AY we further improved our FT FE student outcomes, so we hope to maintain this excellent position.

If all things remained equal, our AY 24/25 FT FE outcomes would be 9.3% above sector benchmark. Similarly, our FT HN outcomes would be 9.9% above sector benchmark if all things remain equal. As such, our HN outcomes would be the best in Scotland.

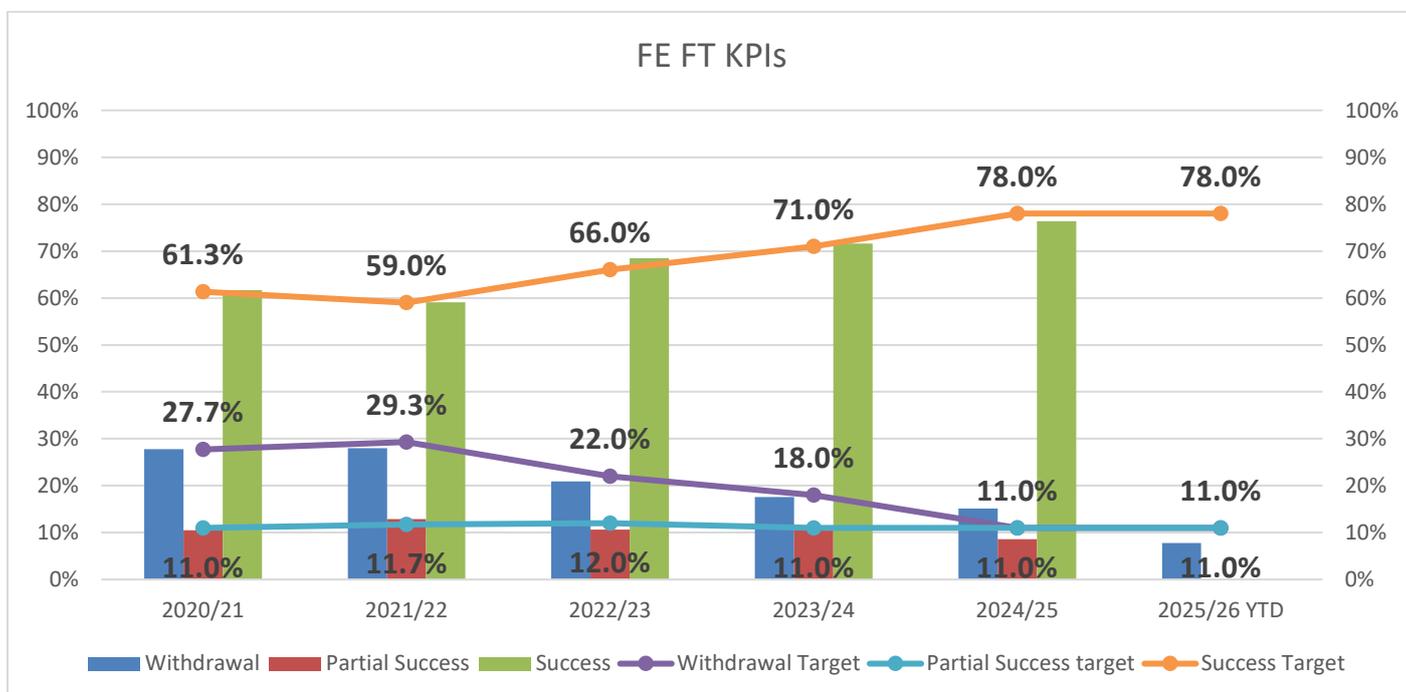
This current AY has therefore been as much about maintaining such positive outcomes as it has been about trying to further improve them.

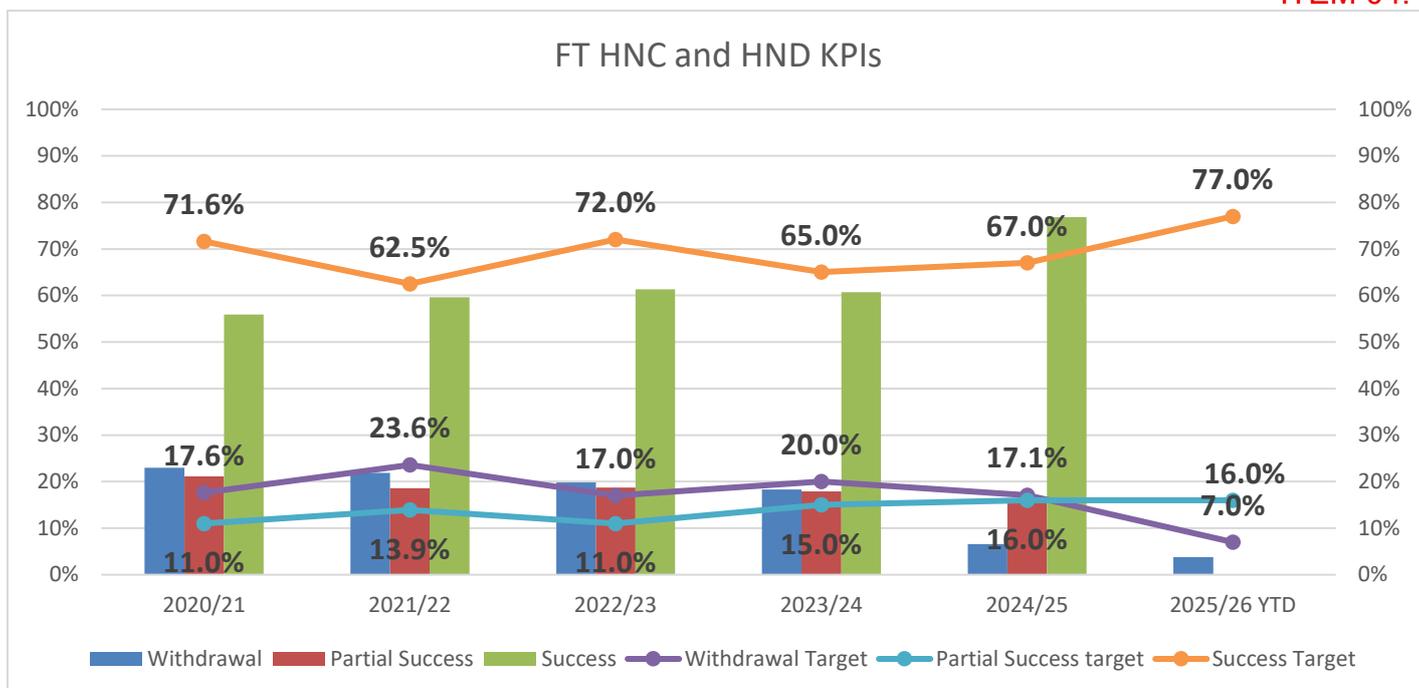
Targets have been set for this AY as below:

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%

The charts below illustrate the actual figures as bars (25/26 YTD) and our targets as lines.

Given the position on Further Withdrawals, which are lower than this point last year, we are on track to achieve the targets set for Partial and Full Success for FT FE and FT HNC/D learners.





### Next Steps

Retention data has a direct link to Successful Outcomes. Retention data is monitored closely in an on-going way through various mechanisms including at a programme and Curriculum Leader area through monthly data presentations, through our Student Journey and Enhancement committee, and through EMT reporting.

### Partial Success

At this point in the year, we also turn our attention to individuals at risk of Partial Success. As well as our target at an organisational level, we are also in the process of asking Curriculum Leaders to set targets at programme level for Partial Success which can then be carefully monitored at a programme level. This exercise supports us in being able to focus our efforts and to carefully deploy our Learning Assistants to support individuals at risk of Partial Success.

### SARUs

We have also had a particular focus this AY on individual SARUs (student achievement ratio by unit). Through identifying selected programmes which have under-performed in individual SARU/s, we have been able to pay greater attention to the smallest denominator of programme design. We hope to see incremental gains in SARU successes which will positively impact on overall successful outcomes.

## SARU Programmes selected

- NC Health and Social care level 6- CASH
- Sport and Fitness level 5- CASH
- NC Social Science level 6- CASH
- HNC Business- B&CI
- SVQ2 Hairdressing-B&CI
- HNC Applied Science- CLSE
- NQ Computing with Esports level 5-CLSE
- CECA Scotland Academy (NPA Construction)-CE& I
- SVQ2 Fabrication and Welding- CE&I
- Foundation Apprenticeship Construction level 4- CE&I
- NC Engineering practice level 6- E&E

### Board of Management/Committee Meeting

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Update on performance of UHI Inverness research centres
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Directors of Research: Professor Bernd Hänfling; Professor Vicky Johnson
<b>Meeting:</b>	Learning Teaching and Research Committee meeting
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/03/2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	02/03/2026
<b>Brief Executive Summary of the paper:</b>	<p>Currently, research income is the only key performance indicator (KPI) used to measure research performance. This does not comprehensively reflect the broad role of research across the college, as outlined in the Research Strategy. Next to the core financial indicators important KPIs should focus on PGR, Research Excellence, Impact and Capacity building.</p> <p>A review of research KPIs at UHI Inverness was therefore discussed at the recent Research and Innovation Committee (RIC) meeting held on 19 February 2026.</p> <p>This paper presents an overview of the proposed research KPIs, alongside the current performance of the two research centres against some these measures in the current financial year.</p> <p>The paper also reports on the current contribution of UHI Inverness to the REF2029 submission to various units of assessment, including numbers of staff submitted to the volume quantification, research paper assessment and impact case studies.</p>
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and approval
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: - compliance - partnership services - risk management - strategic plan	Research and Innovation Strategy 2022-27

- new opportunity/change	
<b>Resource implications:</b>	<b>If yes, please specify:</b> no
<b>Risk implications:</b>	<b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	If yes, please specify:
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	UHI & partners

<b>Status – [Non confidential]</b>	Non - confidential		
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**Performance Measures**  
**AY: 2025-2026**  
 Performance Measures- EMT & Board of Management  
 Measures - Linked to Profile and Actual sheets

AY Start	01 Aug 2025
Today	28 Feb 2026
Period Month	January
No.Periods YTD	6

Key:

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

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
<b>Measure 1: CORE FE/HE OUTPUTS</b>								
1	HE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)	Monthly	1,418	1,400.0	1,200	1,093	91.1%	1,145 ● -52
2	FE Active applications (next AY - Measure from Dec - Jul)	Monthly	2194	2,300.0	400	543	135.8%	435 ● 108
3	FE Credits	Monthly	27085	26,442	24,000	26,371	109.9%	26,374 ● -3
4	Apprenticeship starts	Monthly	409	382	236	295	125.0%	243 ● 52
5	Apprentices in Learning (average in year)	Monthly	705	675	675	746	110.5%	677 ● 69
9	HE enrolments (head count)	Monthly	2,074	2,100	2,000	2,167	108.4%	2,092 ● 75
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	1,400.0	1,446.9	103.4%	1286 ● 161
13	GA Programmes - New Enrolments	Monthly	191	130	130	115.0	88.5%	200 ● -85
14	Senior Phase Enrolments	Annual	574	564	564	542.0	96.1%	574 ● -32
<b>MEASURE 2: SATISFACTION MEASURES</b>								
17	Employer satisfaction survey (even years)	Biennial						
18	Early Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (ESES)	Annual	95.7%	96%	96.0%	96.0%	100.0%	95.70% ● 0.30%
19	National Student Survey (NSS)	Annual		88%				
20	Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES)	Annual	94.7%	95%				
21	Post Graduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) (even years)	Biannual						
22	Post Graduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) (previous AY)	Annual		90%				
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%				
<b>Measure 3: RETENTION, SUCCESS &amp; PROGRESSION</b>								
25	College Retention Overall for FE	Annual	91.0%	92%				
26	College Retention Overall for HE	Annual	93.0%	91%				
27	FE FT Successful Outcomes	Annual	78.0%	75%				
28	FE PT Successful Outcomes	Annual	88.0%	88%				
29	Partial Success FE	Annual	7.0%	5%				
30	HE FT Successful Outcomes	Annual	77.0%	70%				
31	HE PT Successful Outcomes	Annual	67.0%	75%				
32	Modern Apprenticeship successful outcomes (contract year)	Monthly	63.2%	75%	75.0%	68.5%	91.3%	65.70% ● 2.80%
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%
36	Learning Support appt offered for within 6 - 20 working days	Monthly	100.0%	97.0%	97.0%	86%	88.8%	100% ● -13.83%

## Board of Management

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Curriculum Update
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Carrie Higgins, Tertiary Education Leader Technology, Environment & Education Sharon MacFarlane, Tertiary Education Leader Management, Health & Creative Arts
<b>Meeting:</b>	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10 March 2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	16 February 26
<b>Brief Executive Summary of the paper:</b>	UHI Inverness has launched its 2026/27 Senior Phase offer, expanding FE and HNC pathways and introducing a new Highland Pathway to Healthcare developed with the University of Aberdeen and RGU. The college is also progressing national collaboration through the UK FE Freeport Group, strengthening curriculum innovation, digital development, and strategic influence.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: a) compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes – enrolments and staff resource.
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes – relevant of curriculum, recruitment, quality of the student experience.
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes – equity of the student experience.
<b>Consultation:</b>	n/a

[staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	
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<b>Status</b> [Confidential/Non confidential]	-	Non-confidential	
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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### **Senior Phase Offer including HNCs**

Our applications are now open for our 2026/27 Senior Phase offering, with submissions beginning to come in steadily. This year, we are delivering 27 programmes at FE level, including new additions in Introduction to Renewable Energy, Horticulture and Rural Skills, and FA Social Services and Healthcare, broadening progression pathways for learners. A key strategic focus remains our HNC provision, with 17 HNC programmes available, reflecting our commitment to strengthening advanced level opportunities within the Senior Phase. Our School Team, in collaboration with Marketing, has been actively promoting the HNC portfolio, including the development of two new targeted brochures, one aimed at sixth year pupils and a complementary guide for parents and carers, to support informed progression planning.

Both documents listed below have been added to the report as following items:

Item 07.a - UHI Inverness Guide to HNCs for sixth year school pupils

Item 07.b - UHI Inverness Schools programme parent guide

### **Curriculum Development Highland Pathway to Healthcare: Medicine and Pharmacy**

This programme has been developed by UHI Inverness working in Partnership with The University of Aberdeen (UoA) and Robert Gordon University (RGU). The programme has been designed to widen access for non-traditional students and those from rural communities across the Highlands who aspire to pursue careers in Medicine and Pharmacy. It will provide structured preparation in science foundations, academic study skills, and professional competencies, while also addressing barriers such as limited access to advanced science education and university preparation resources in rural schools.

In addition, rural and remote areas often face persistent shortages of medical professionals. By supporting rural students onto medical and health-related degrees, the programme directly addresses Highland workforce gaps and strengthens community healthcare capacity. It advances institutional goals around delivering tangible social and economic impact across our region.

As part of their course of study, students will also attend a number of experiential days with RGU and the UoA. These will be an essential part of the programme and will give students an understanding of what to expect for progression, allowing them to experience some clinical skills and dispensing sessions.

The UHI approval event is scheduled for the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2026 with enrolments being open for September 2026. Applications are restricted to pupils who are currently in S5 (in S6 in August 26) or current S6 pupils leaving school in June 26. This programme is part of our senior phase school's offer.

### **UK Further Education Freeport Collaboration including Study Visit to Rotterdam**

UHI Inverness has joined a new UK-wide Further Education Freeport Collaboration Group, established to share knowledge, develop curriculum, and work collectively on funding bids and strategic influence. The group has created three core workstreams:

- Workstream 1: Curriculum Development
  - Focus: Co-developing relevant curriculum and training in priority areas like Logistics & Supply Chain, Port Management, and Hydrogen.
  - First Activity (The STC Visit): A coordinated study visit to *STC Group, Rotterdam*, launched this workstream and enabled shared learning around port operations, maritime training and logistics education.
- Workstream 2: Digital Collaboration & Immersive Technology
  - Focus: Developing shared digital resources and immersive learning approaches across the collaboration.
  - First Activity (The Xtend Visit): A hybrid visit to USP College's Xtend Digital Campus explored immersive technologies and initiated discussions on a joint digital learning project.
- Workstream 3: Strategic Development, Influence & Impact
  - Focus: Mapping collective assets, strengthening the group's external influence, and planning a potential consortium launch event involving senior leaders and key external stakeholders.
  - First Activity (The Mapping Exercise): Each partner is asked to provide details of key external organisations they engage with in the Freeport landscape.

## Progress to date

Both the Rotterdam study visit (Workstream 1) and the digital collaboration workshop (Workstream 2) have now taken place. Early takeaways include:

- **Curriculum Collaboration:**  
Strong opportunities to work with partner colleges on new curriculum development in logistics and port management—areas identified as skills gaps in the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport early mapping work.
- **Sharing Practice:**  
UHI Inverness has been invited to share its successful experience in delivering pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment programmes, including the CECA Scotland Academy.
- **Joint Funding Bid:**  
Partners have been invited to join a collaborative funding bid expanding an award-winning Welsh model that supports female learners into STEAM pathways.



*Pictured: Carrie Higgins (Tertiary Education Leader, Technology, Environment and Education) and Kirsten Grant (Curriculum Leader, Construction, Engineering and Infrastructure) with the collaboration group during the study visit to Rotterdam.*

# CHI | INVERNESS



## A guide to HNCs for pupils going into sixth year

A wide selection of HNCs will open for applications in January 2026. Pupils going into sixth year in August 2026, who are likely to meet the necessary entry requirements, are welcome to apply.

Our HNC schools programme presents an exciting pathway to study. An HNC qualification is equivalent to studying three Advanced Highers or the first year of an undergraduate degree. For that reason, pupils should not commit to any other studies during their sixth year due to the commitment needed to complete an HNC over an academic year.

All HNCs are delivered in **person on campus** so pupils must be able to travel independently to Inverness on their timetabled days\*

<b>Subjects you can study at HNC level</b>
<b>HNC Accounting</b>
<b>HNC Contemporary Art Practice</b>
<b>HNC Acting and Performance</b>
<b>HNC Engineering Systems (Next Gen)</b>
<b>HNC Administration and Information Technology</b>
<b>HNC Fitness, Health and Exercise</b>
<b>HNC Applied Sciences</b>
<b>HNC Forestry</b>
<b>HNC Architectural Technology</b>
<b>HNC Social Science</b>
<b>HNC Business</b>
<b>HNC Soft Tissue</b>
<b>HNC Beauty Therapy</b>
<b>HNC Sports Coaching and Development</b>
<b>HNC Civil Engineering</b>
<b>HNC Visual Communication</b>
<b>HNC Computing</b>

## Why study an HNC at UHI Inverness during sixth year?

- + Experience college life – study an HNC at our modern campuses, up to three days a week, during your sixth year at school.
- + Learn from the best – you can choose from a broad range of subjects taught by experts with industry experience.
- + Develop independent study skills and transition into university study techniques.
- + Get ahead early – you'll gain a qualification that's the equivalent of the first year of a degree before you leave school.
- + Broaden your options – an HNC is a great addition to your CV. Use it to go straight into a job, move onto an HND or progress to university study.
- + Fast track into uni – an HNC can gain you entry straight into an HND or into the second year of a degree at many universities, including UHI.
- + Open to all – our HNC courses are open to all Highland pupils starting sixth year in August 2026. You must be able to travel independently to campus for classes three days a week.
- + Stay connected with school – you'll still be part of your school community. You'll be able to stay in contact with classmates and take part in social activities.
- + Connect with industry – our links with industry will introduce you to employers and real-world work experiences. An HNC can also be the springboard into a Graduate Apprenticeship (work-based degree).
- + Proven success – an amazing 95% of the schools' pupils who studied an HNC with us in 2024/25 passed their course. More than half of them progressed onto university level study, many staying in UHI. Most of the remainder progressed into related employment.
- + Join a growing community – last year 21 school pupils gained an HNC at UHI Inverness. This year 27 pupils have enrolled on HNC courses and are loving their experiences so far.

\*Transport costs are not provided by UHI Inverness or Highland Council

## Degree modules available to pupils going into sixth year in August 2026

If the HNC is not the right course for you, then UHI Inverness also has a choice of bite-sized part time degree modules that will prepare sixth year pupils for university study.

Degree module	Delivery schedule	Starting Semester
Introduction to Business Law	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Monday 1-3pm	Semester 1
Introduction to Enterprise and Marketing	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Monday 9-11am	Semester 1
Economics for Business	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Wednesday 1-3pm	Semester 1
Introduction to Financial Accounting	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Monday 9-11am	Semester 2
Introduction to Operations Management	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Wednesday 11-1pm	Semester 2
Introduction to Human Resource Management	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Monday 1-3pm	Semester 2
Early Childhood Philosophy and Practice	Online self-directed (study anytime)	Semester 2
Introduction to Health and Social Policy	Online self-directed (study anytime)	Semester 1
Psychology of Individual Differences	Online self-directed (study anytime)	Semester 2
Questions in Psychology	Online self-directed (study anytime)	Semester 1
Nature of Health	Online self-directed (study anytime)	Semester 1
Introduction to Architectural Technology	Face-to-face via Brightspace* Friday 9-1pm	Semester 1

\* Brightspace is the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). All students will be able to access Brightspace once they have been enrolled on their units/modules.

**Our academic year at UHI Inverness is split into two semesters.**

- + Semester 1 runs from August (including inductions) through to the December break.
- + Semester 2 begins in January and continues until June.

## For HNC Applicants:

Pupils who are applying for an HNC while at school are invited to attend one of two information and selection days.

**Friday 6 March 2026, 3.30pm–4.30pm**

**Wednesday 27 May 2026, 2pm – 3pm**

The information day is a great opportunity to ensure you are making the right choice. Meet lecturers and current students, ask questions you may have about the HNC, tour the campus and learn more about the course and department.

**Important information: Please use the schools page on the UHI Inverness website (not the main course page) to make your application for an HNC. We are unable to transfer applications if they are made via the main course page.**

## For all students:

**Open Evening | Wednesday 21 January, 4pm - 7pm**

**Open Evening (With Employers) | Wednesday 11 March 4pm - 7pm**

**Applicant and Information Day | Saturday 16 May, 10am to 2pm**

If you are still undecided and require more information before choosing your path, all applicants and prospective students are welcome to come along.

# For all Schools Programme options, online applications open on Monday 12 January.



Check our schools pages for further information about courses offered to S4 to S6 pupils.



# A guide to our Schools Programmes.

For parents and carers of  
pupils going into S4-S6

**UHI Inverness is an exciting and friendly place to study and socialise. Choosing a Schools Programme course will allow your young person to develop a range of vocational, practical and academic skills. Pupils study with us as part of their school timetable with the majority of our schools programmes being taught on campus on Fridays.**

We have two **modern campuses** – the UHI Inverness campus and the Balloch campus, which is the location of the Scottish School of Forestry. We have recently added an off-site Sustainable Construction Centre to meet the growing demand in this subject area for students who wish to progress to full-time courses.

We encourage school pupils to continue their education with us when they leave school. We offer over 350 courses covering all levels and types of qualifications with full time, part-time, on-campus and online study options.

**Our Early Student Experience Survey in October 2025 returned a**

**96%**

**overall student satisfaction rating for the third consecutive year.**



## **What we offer**

Our schools programme offers S4 to S6 pupils the opportunity to study part-time college courses alongside their school subjects. These courses provide access to a broader range of subjects and count as one of their column choices, fitting into their existing timetable.

Undertaking a course can help pupils gain valuable skills and nationally recognised qualifications that can strengthen their CV, improve their employment prospects, and support applications to college, university or apprenticeships.

**College Certificate** refers to a collection of units that focus on specific skills in a subject area. It will help when moving on to further study or work.

**Skills for Work (SfW)** courses are designed to develop practical, employability, and vocational skills in areas such as hospitality, engineering, and construction. They are often taken alongside school qualifications to prepare learners for work or further study. These courses sit within the SQA framework at SCQF Levels 3-6.

**National Progression Award (NPA)** is a vocational award at SCQF Levels 2-6 with a focus on practical skills and knowledge for specific sectors. An NPA is ideal for progression into further education, employment, or HNC/HND programs.

**Foundation Apprenticeship (FA)** is a work-based qualification at SCQF Level 4-6 that combines classroom

learning with real workplace experience. It prepares learners for Modern Apprenticeships, HNC/HND programmes, or direct employment.

**Higher National Certificate (HNC)** is a higher education qualification at SCQF Level 7, equivalent to 3 Advanced Highers and the first year of a university degree. It typically takes one year full-time to complete, and successful completion can lead to an HND or entry to second year of a degree at most universities.

**Degree module (DM)** refers to a single unit of study within a university degree programme, typically at SCQF Level 7 or above. Each module usually carries 20 SCQF credits and can be included in their UCAS application to meet entry requirements or highlighted in your personal statement to demonstrate commitment to your chosen area of study.

“

**I enjoy seeing people from other schools and going out of my comfort zone. My lecturers create a very nice environment in the class, and they also encourage me to try new things. UHI Inverness is a very calm environment, and I also like being treated like an adult'**



**Abigail Lee**  
Culloden Academy  
NPA Beauty and  
Hairstyling

### Next steps and how to apply

Full details of our UHI Inverness School Programmes can be found in the Schools tab on the website.

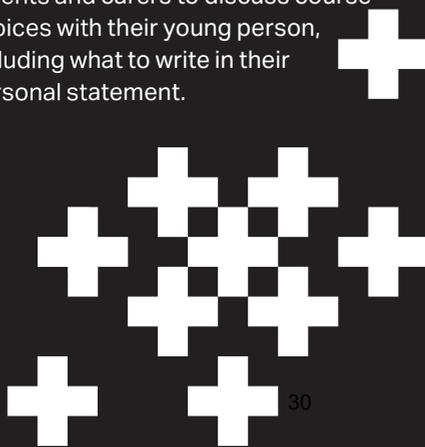


### Our online applications for school pupils opened on Monday 12 January 2026 and close (including references) on Friday 20 March 2026

Courses are listed under year groups and then by course title. Each course listing will give the entry requirements, course details and an application link.

Our website also has information for home-educated young people and details of online courses.

Pupils will need to create an account to complete the application. We encourage parents and carers to discuss course choices with their young person, including what to write in their personal statement.



## Helping your young person with their personal statement

Parents can help a young person with their personal statement by encouraging them to:-

- + Think about interests and experiences around the subject they have chosen
- + Ensure the personal statement is clear, concise and its structure flows well
- + Describe why they are a great applicant for the course
- + Check it over thoroughly before submission

If your young person is home-educated, their supporting statement should be completed by a non-family member who can comment on the young person's suitability for the course applied for.

Please note, pupils going into S4 should list which subjects and levels they are currently studying in the qualifications field even if results are not known.

**It is important that pupils applying for an HNC, Higher or National level qualification, should apply through the Schools page and not the main page to avoid incurring a fee.**

Once the application is submitted, it is sent to the pupil's guidance teacher, who will add a supporting statement.

After the application closing date, offers will be sent to pupils by email a few weeks later. It is important that pupils regularly check the email address used on their application.

Our Admissions team will either: -

- + Issue a conditional offer, which is dependent on exam results
- + Issue an unconditional offer; which can be accepted straight away
- + Issue a waiting place
- + Issue a Course Full notification
- + Reject an application

Whilst we receive a high number of applications for our courses, courses will only run subject to demand.

### Offer Holder Days

If successful in gaining a conditional or unconditional offer, pupils will be invited to attend an Offer Holder Day. This will include sessions on Induction, Enrolment, course information and an opportunity to meet their lecturer and fellow classmates.

**Offer holder day dates for 2026**

**Friday 5 June 2026 & Friday 12 June 2026**

## **Information about Highers and Nationals**

Pupils applying for an online National 4/5 or a Highers programme must be able to travel to UHI Inverness for externally marketed coursework/prelims/final exams. A maximum of two SQA Higher and National subjects can be studied with UHI Inverness in one academic year.

## **Information about Higher National Certificates qualifications for sixth year pupils**

Our HNC Schools Programme is open to all Highland pupils going into sixth year. Pupils will develop independent study skills by managing their time and studies and making the transition to self-directed and university study techniques.

An HNC qualification is equivalent to studying three Advanced Highers or the first year of an undergraduate degree. For that reason, pupils should not commit to

other formal qualifications during their sixth year due to the commitment needed to complete an HNC over an academic year. An HNC gives direct access to many HNDs or into the second year of a degree at many universities, including UHI.

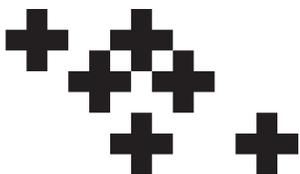
All HNCs are delivered **in person on campus** so pupils must be able to travel independently to Inverness on their timetabled days.

Pupils will study up to three days a week and receive support from both UHI Inverness (academic and wellbeing) and also from school. Pupils are encouraged to continue attending school in some capacity to remain part of their school community, allowing them to stay connected with classmates and take part in social activities in their school.

**Full details of our HNCs and degree modules for sixth year pupils can be found here**



**An amazing 95% of the school pupils who studied an HNC with us in 2024/25 gained a pass.**



## **Responsibilities of pupils as a student at UHI Inverness**

Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and attend all classes. If staff consider that a young person is not yet ready to commit to a school college course due to non-attendance or poor behaviour, we will work with your young person to offer additional support in these areas of concern. If insufficient progress is made this may result in them being withdrawn. This process will involve continued communication with the school.

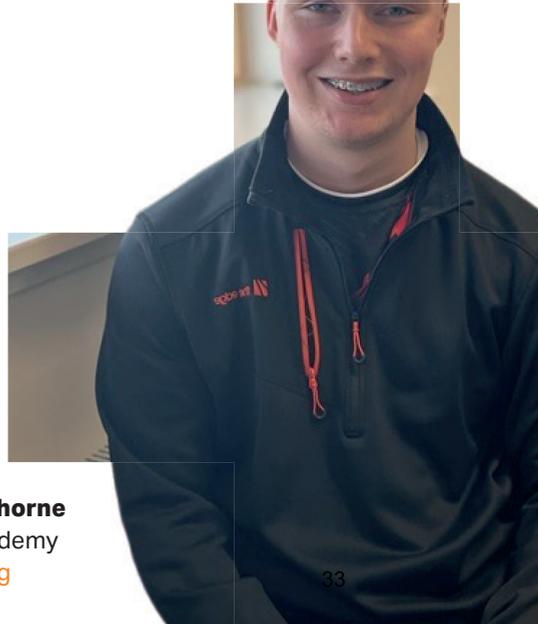
As part of our agreement with Highland Council, our lecturers complete biannual reports about their pupils' progress. These reports will highlight areas of concern and we can then provide the necessary interventions to improve outcomes. These reports can be requested directly from school.

## **Our safeguarding responsibility**

We have a legal duty to care for all young people under the age of 18 attending UHI Inverness. We have several approaches in place to ensure that we offer effective safeguarding, including a team of trained and dedicated staff who will handle any concerns or referrals in a professional manner.

“

**I love the campus building, the atmosphere, the people, the lectures and the course content. It is a fun and engaging course with lots of choice and freedom. I think it offers a very high-quality style of teaching by people who truly understand what they teach.**



**Matthew Dunthorne**  
Charleston Academy  
HNC Accounting

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## Dates for your diary

### Information Days for HNC applicants

**Friday 6 March 2026, 3.30pm – 4.30pm**

**Wednesday 27 May 2026, 2pm – 3pm**

HNC applicants will be required to attend an information day as part of the conditions of offer. These days are an ideal opportunity for pupils to meet teaching staff and ensure they are fully aware of what their HNC course will involve, what to expect and the opportunities it will offer. It also allows them to ask any questions they may have during the application and offer process.

### Offer Holder Days for Schools Programmes excluding HNC applicants

**Friday 5 June 2026 10am - 12pm**

**Friday 12 June 2026, 10am to 12pm**

### Open Day Dates

**Wednesday 11 March 2026, 4-7pm – Open Evening with Employers**

**Saturday 16 May, 10am to 2pm – Applicant and Information Day**

**Wednesday 5 August 2026, 10am to 2pm – Results Open Day**

## Follow us

-  [inverness.uhi.ac.uk](https://inverness.uhi.ac.uk)
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-  [UHI Inverness](https://www.youtube.com/UHIInverness)

**Check our schools pages for further information about courses offered to S4 to S6 pupils**



## Board of Management/Committee Meeting

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	HISA LTR Report - March
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Chloe Young, Inverness Student President Oliver Sweeney, Inverness Student Depute President
<b>Meeting:</b>	LTR Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10th March 2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	4th March 2026
<b>Brief Executive Summary of the paper:</b>	This paper contains a brief update on the activities and events the local HISA team has been hosting, as well as an update on the ongoing student officer elections.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and Noting
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> 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
<b>Resource implications:</b>	If yes, please specify:
<b>Risk implications:</b>	If yes, please specify:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	If yes, please specify:
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	
<b>Status – [Non confidential]</b>	Non-confidential
<b>Freedom of Information</b>	Yes

Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes]			
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

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

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

# HISA Update

March 2026  
Chloe Young and Oliver Sweeney



# 2026 Student Officer Elections

Voting is currently open for the 2026 Student Officer Elections and will close at 4pm on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March before results get announced at 5pm on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March.

Along with Perth and Moray, Inverness will be moving to a single, full time (35 hours per week), student officer as part of cost-saving measures. We're aiming to have more information available about the what the role entails and what this change will mean for the future at the upcoming student-focused Board Creative Session on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April. In the meantime, both of us are running for re-election;

- Chloe is running for re-election to the Inverness Depute President position
- Oliver is running for the Cross-Campus President position



# Refreshers Fayre

We hosted our Re-Freshers Fayre on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February in the Atrium. The turnout was fantastic, in part to our Mystery Music Festival ticket competition. We managed to acquire free tickets to three different music festivals around Inverness including Belladrum, The Gathering and the Inverness Blues Festival.

## Stall Holders Included:

- RASASH
- Highlife Highland
- Roots Café
- Inverness BID
- Highland Pride
- Miele's Gelateria
- Alpacas
- Inverness Disc Golf Club
- Many others!

To enter the competition, students had to fill in one of our feedback forms. common themes in the feedback we received were:

- **Studying abroad (Erasmus)**
- **Class scheduling issues**
- **More student clubs and societies**

We had over 40 feedback forms submitted and something we received the most feedback about were concerns over student misconduct; **“The disrespectful pupils that cause mess and harassing. Mean behaviour towards others”**.



# Events

On the 10th of February, the team spent a day set up in the canteen at the Scottish School of Forestry campus, speaking to forestry students and gathering feedback on their courses and the campus itself.

The feedback we gathered was then given to Craig Lowther, Curriculum Lead for Computing, Land Science and Education, and will be used as evidence for potential improvements to the forestry campus.



Around Valentines Day we hosted a Valentines Craft Stall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing. We had pencils, pens and cards for students to make valentines cards for each other and plenty of biscuits and tea. We also gave away around 40 *mystery* books, which were wrapped in Valentines wrapping paper and had the genre of the book written on the front. The books were donated to us by Munloch Animal Aid and students had a great time opening them up to see what they had gotten!



# HISA

# Campus Developments

## Social Space

The new Social Space between the canteen and the LRC is beginning to take shape! The new furniture that was ordered from IKEA has arrived, been assembled, and is now in place and being enjoyed by students.

## HISA Whiteboard

Our temporary whiteboard outside the office has been converted into a proper one by the estates team! The whiteboard is used as a monthly calendar for events, sports clubs, academic holidays and days of national importance.

## Larder

In collaboration with Kelly of ICT, the HISA and UHI Larder on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing has expanded recently with a new cupboard for storage, it is continuing to be vital for students who are struggling with the cost of living.



## UHI | INVERNESS

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Strategic Planning 2026-27
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Ludka Orłowska-Kowal Governance Officer
<b>Meeting:</b>	LTR Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10 March 2026
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	02 March 2026
<b>Brief Executive Summary of the paper:</b>	<p>This paper provides the LTR Committee with an update on agreed and proposed actions at the Board Away Day on 04/02/2026.</p> <p>Following documents need reviewing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of Reference of the LTR Committee</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>• Code of Good Governance 2025-26</li> </ul> <p>The Committee are asked to review and propose changes to the above documents that would reflect the actual current scope and remit of the LTR Committee.</p>
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion and Noting.
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <input type="checkbox"/> compliance <input type="checkbox"/> partnership services <input type="checkbox"/> risk management <input type="checkbox"/> strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> new opportunity/change	Governance Compliance
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/ <b>No</b> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>

<b>Student Experience Impact:</b>	Yes/No If yes, please specify:		
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	N/A		
<b>Status –</b> [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (s33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confident actionable in court (s36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (s38)		Other (Please give further details)	

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

**Purpose of the report**

The Committee is asked to review and propose changes to the attached documents that would reflect the actual current scope and remit of the LTR Committee.

**Executive Summary**

The Chair of the Board requested at the last Board Away Day in February for all Committees to review the current scope and remit of the individual Committees and reflect any changes in the governance documents. A Strategic Day will take place in May 2026, date/time tbc, to review all feedback received and propose amendments to the governance documents.

The LTR Committee is asked to review the attached documents and provide feedback to the Governance Officer during and after the meeting. Sections related to the LTR Committee had been highlighted with pages listed below.

**Progress update:**

- Item 09.a - Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee
- Item 09.b – Scheme of Delegation - Pages 3 & 5 (pages 71 & 73 of the combined document)
- Item 09.c – Code of Good Governance 2025/26 – pages 3 & 6 (pages 86 & 89 of the combined document)

The LTR Committee members are asked to provide verbal and/or written feedback in regard to the documents above and the highlighted sections by Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. All feedback gathered will be shared with the Committee Chair in early April 2026 and then will be presented at the Strategic Day in May 2026.

Any changes within the governance documents relating to the LTR Committee will be presented to the Committee at the June meeting for consideration and approval. Once approved by the Committee the updated documents will be presented to the Board of Management for comments and approval.

## **Learning, Teaching and Research Committee**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Membership**

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

Co-opted members can sit on the Committee.

The Vice Chair of the Committee or another nominated member of the Committee, may deputise in the absence of the Chair.

A member of the Executive Management Team may deputise in the Principal's absence.

#### **Quorum**

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

#### **Frequency of Meetings**

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

#### **Remit**

The Committee has overall strategic responsibility for developing, monitoring, and enhancing the direction and performance of learning, teaching and research at the College as part of delivering excellence in the overall student experience, research and impact.

The Learning, Teaching and Research Committee shall:

1. Support, challenge and enhance the development and implementation of the various strategies aligned to the committee and monitor their performance against targets.
2. Observe and recognise trends in education and research and recommend

specific areas of focus for the College.

3. Engage with the progress of the annual HISA Partnership Agreement.
4. Monitor data relating to the student experience and performance at the College.
5. Ensure that the college continues to maintain and improve the quality of its provision and supports lecturers in delivering excellent learning and teaching in line with the [GTCS Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges](#)
6. Monitor, develop and enhance the College's preparedness for the ongoing, external scrutiny of its provision.
7. Monitor, develop and enhance the Curriculum to ensure that the College meets the needs of students, stakeholders and the local community and is responsive to opportunities.
8. Receive, consider and discuss information on research activity in the college including Research Excellence Framework (REF), funding, curriculum support, student journey, professional development for staff and stakeholder engagement.
9. Receive regular reports from the Students Association and provide support to the college in order to respond to student concerns.
10. Observe, recognise and encourage sharing from both staff and students of emerging good practice across various aspects of provision at the College

# UHI | INVERNESS

## Scheme of Delegation of the Board of Management of Inverness College UHI

Lead Officer	Chair of the Board of Management
Review Officer	Secretary to the Board of Management
Date first approved by BoM	Mar 2017
First Review Date	Mar 2020
Date review approved by BoM	March 2020
Date review approved by BoM	October 2025
Next Review Date	October 2028
Equality impact assessment	N/A
Further information (where relevant)	

Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact
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Gov Officer & Information Development Officer	July 2025	<p>To comply with the updated Code of Governance the whole document has been drafted anew. The new Code of Good Governance had been re-formatted in terms of sections listed and the previous Scheme of Delegation did not map correctly onto the new Code.</p> <p>No sections of the Scheme of Delegation have been removed but have been rearranged to mirror the updated Code document. Tracked document was confusing with too many sections moved; for clarity the Gov Officer &amp; Information Development Officer decided to create a brand new document that includes all information from the previous document but has also taken the updated Code into consideration.</p> <p>The Secretary to the Board has been replaced with Governance Officer.</p>
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## Preamble

UHI Inverness is at the heart of the community, serving the interests of the community, students, employers, governments and their agencies and other stakeholders.

Colleges receive substantial public funding and operate in an increasingly commercial and enterprising way. Boards are expected to innovate, pursue new opportunities and take measured risks in delivering what is best for their stakeholders.

It is right and proper that the highest standards of governance and propriety are expected of our board and those individuals who serve them.

Scotland's colleges have produced a [Code of Good Governance](#) which we endeavour to follow. It outlines the principles of good governance and promotes accountability and continuous improvement in how colleges are governed.

The role of the Board of Management is:

- to lead the college and set its strategic direction and values.
- ensure effective management and financial controls to support the student experience with a framework of public accountability and transparency.
- deliver high quality learning outcomes.

Key to the overall role of the Board is the leadership of the Chair, the support given to and by the Principal, and the frankness and openness of mind with which issues are discussed re tackled by all board members.

Individual board members have a duty to act on serious concerns about the governance of their body. Guidance is available in [The Guide for Board Member in the College Sector](#).

## Principles

### Section A: Leadership and Strategy

- The Board is collectively responsible for setting, demonstrating and upholding the values and ethos of the organisation.
- Every board member must ensure they are familiar with, and their actions comply with the provisions of the board Code of Conduct.

- The principles of public life will be the basis of all decisions and behaviours of board members. They apply individually and collectively. They are:

Duty/Public Service

Selflessness

Integrity

Objectively

Accountability and Stewardship

Openness

Honesty

Leadership

Respect

- The Board is responsible for determining the college's vision, strategic direction, educational character, values and ethos.
- The Board will develop and articulate a clear vision for the college. This will be a formally agreed statement of its aims and desired outcomes which will be used as the basis for this overall strategy and planning process.
- The Board is responsible for formulating and agreeing strategy by identifying strategic priorities and providing direction within a structured planning framework.
- The Board will ensure effective engagement with all relevant stakeholders in the development of its outcome agreement and monitor performance in achieving the agreed outcomes.
- The Board will contribute constructively to the development of the outcome agreement led by the Regional Strategic Board (RSB) and support the RSB to monitor performance in achieving the agreed outcomes.
- The Board must ensure that a comprehensive performance measurement system is in place which is clearly linked to the regional strategic framework and identifies key performance indicators.
- The Board will demonstrate high levels of corporate social responsibility by ensuring it behaves ethically and contributes to economic development while seeking to improve the quality of life of the local community, society at large and its workforce.
- The Board will exercise its functions with a view to improving economic, cultural and social wellbeing in the locality of the college.

- The Board will provide leadership in equality and diversity.
- The Board will seek to reflecting its membership, the make-up of the community through offering maximum opportunity of membership to a range of potential members and removing potential barriers to membership, in partnership with the RSB (as appropriate).

### **Section B: Quality of the Student Experience**

- The Board will have close regarding to the voice of its student and the quality of the student experience.
- The Board will lead by example in relation to openness, by ensuring that there is meaningful on-going engagement and dialogue with students, HISA, and as appropriate staff and trade unions in relation to the quality of the student experience.
- The Board must consider the outcome of student surveys and other student engagements and monitor action plans that could impact on the quality of the student experience.
- The Board will have regard to the [Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students](#)
- The Board will encourage a strong and autonomous student's association and ensure the students' association is adequately resourced.
- The Board will ensure the student's association operates in a fair and democratic manner and fulfils its responsibilities.
- The Board will review the written constitution of the HISA at least every five years.
- The Board will seek to foster good relationship and ensure it works in partnership with external bodies to enhance the student experience, including employability and the relevance of learning to meet industry needs.
- The Board will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for the effective oversight of the quality and inclusivity of the learning experience in the college.

### **Section C: Accountability**

#### **Accountability and Delegation**

- The Board will ensure delivery of its agreed contribution to the region's outcome agreement.
- The Board will ensure it fulfils its statutory duties and other obligations on it and the terms and conditions of its grant are met.

## ITEM 09.b

- The Board will create and maintain a publicly disclose a current register of interests of all Board members.
- The Board will ensure its' decision making processes are transparent, properly informed, rigorous and timely and appropriate and effective systems of financial and operational control, quality, management of staff, risk assessment and management are established, monitored, continually improved and appropriately impact assessed.
- This includes:

the prompt production, dissemination and online publication of board/committee agendas, minutes and papers to the public.

Every board meeting and committee meeting will have a well-structured agenda circulated timeously in advance.

all key records documenting decisions made by the Board and its sub-committees will be retained as corporate records.

The quorum for each meeting will be set in line with good practice and preferably at 50%o or higher of non-executive members. When considering the quorum, the Chair may be considered as a non-executive member.

- As a minimum, the Board are required to have committees for Audit, Remuneration, Finance and Nominations/Appointments.
- The board will ensure every board committee has a specific member of the management team to provide objective, specialist advice to support it to discharge its remit, including explanation of the matters under discussion and the possible implications of different options.
- The Board will put in place procedures to ensure effective working relationships and constructive dialogue amongst the Board as a whole and ensure effective reporting and two-way communication takes place between the committees and the Board. The Board will ensure discussions and decision of every committee are accurately recorded and reported to the Board, no later than the next meeting of the Board.

## Risk Management

- The Board is responsible for the overall management of risk and opportunity. It will set the risk appetite for the college and will ensure there is an appropriate balance between risk and opportunity, and this is communicated via the Principal to the college's management team.
- The Board will ensure sound risk management and internal control systems are in place and maintained. It will ensure there is a formal on-going process for identifying, reporting evaluating and managing the college's significant risks and review the effectiveness of risk management, business continuity planning and internal control systems.

## Audit Committee

- The Audit Committee will support the Board and the Principal by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances including the college's governance, risk management and internal control framework. The Scottish Government Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook promotes the development of an assurance framework to aid the committee in fulfilling its role [Audit and Assurance committee handbook](#)
- The Audit Committee's work is defined by its terms of reference. It will have engagement with internal and external auditors and must work with management and auditors to resolve any issues in relation to financial reporting.
- The Audit Committee will promptly pursue recommendations arising from audit reports and will monitor their implementation.
- The membership of the Audit Committee will not include the Board Chair, the Principal, nor executive members of the college management team. The majority of members will be non-executive. The role of the college executive is to attend meetings at the invitation of the committee Chair and to provide information for particular agenda items.
- The Audit Committee members will meet with the internal and external auditors without the executive team present at least annually.
- At least one member of the Audit Committee will have recent relevant financial or audit experience.

## Remuneration Committee

- All members will undertake the on-line training module for Remuneration Committees provided by the College Development Network within one month of appointment.

- The Board will put in place a formal procedure for setting the remuneration of the Principal by a designated committee of non-executive members.
- The Board Chair cannot be the Chair of the Remuneration Committee (but they can be a member of it).

### **Financial and Institutional Sustainability**

- The Board will ensure compliance with its Financial Memorandum either with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or the RSB depending on which body is funding it.
- The Board will ensure:  
funds are used economically, efficiently and effectively as possible;  
effective monitoring arrangements are in place;  
college staff report relevant financial matters to it.
- The Board will ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities under Charity legislation and for complying with relevant provisions as set out by the Office of the Scottish Charitable Regulator [Guidance and Good Practice for Charitable Trustees](#)

### **Staff Governance**

- The Board as the employer, is responsible for promoting positive employee relations and for ensuring effective partnership between recognised trade unions and management.
- The Board will comply with the nationally agreed college sector [Staff Governance Standard](#)
- The Board will comply with collective agreements placed on it through national collective bargaining for colleges.

## **Section D: Effectiveness**

### **The Board Chair**

- The chair is responsible for leadership of the board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role. The chair is responsible for setting the boards' agenda and ensuring that adequate time is available for discussion of all agenda items, particularly strategic issues. The chair must promote a culture of openness and debate by:
  - Encouraging the effective contribution of all board members:

- Fostering constructive challenge and support to the Principal, executive team and fellow board members;
- Effective team-working;
- Positive relations between board members.
- The chair will engage with the Principal and the Governance Officer in a manner which is both constructive and effective.
- The Board and its committees will have the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge of the college to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively.

#### Senior Independent Member

- The Board must appoint one of the non-executive member to be the Senior Independent Member to provide a sounding board for the Chair and to serve as an intermediary for the Principal, other board members and the Governance Officer when necessary.
- The Senior Independent Member will also be available where contact through the normal channels of Chair, Principal or Governance Officer has failed to resolve an issue or for which such contact is inappropriate.
- The Senior Independent Member is responsible for holding annual meeting with Board members, without the Chair to appraise the Chair's performance and provide the Chair with relevant feedback. Further guidance on the role can be found in [The Guide for Board Members in the College Sector](#)

#### Board Members

- Each board member is collectively responsible and accountable for all board decisions. Board members must make decision in the best interests of the college and as a whole rather than selectively or in the interest of a particular group.
- Staff and student board members are full board members and bring essential and unique, skills, knowledge and experience to the board. They must not be excluded from board business unless there is a clear conflict of interest in common with all board members.
- All board members, as charity trustees, including staff and student board members, have legal duties and responsibilities under the Charities Act 2005. This includes registering any personal interests that could be seen as conflicting with the interests of the college. The objective test for judging if there is a conflict of interest is:  
*".....whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would*

*reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your decision making in your role as a member of a public body”*

### **Principal and Chief Executive**

- The Board will appoint the Principal, as Chief Executive of the college, securing approval for the appointment and terms and conditions of the appointment from the RSB if necessary.
- The Board will ensure there is an open and transparent recruitment process for the appointment. Students and staff will have an opportunity to contribute to the recruitment process.
- The Board will delegate to the Principal, as Chief Executive, authority for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the college, and will ensure the establishment of such management functions are undertaken by and under the authority of the Principal.
- The Board will ensure there is a clear process in place to set and agree personal performance measures of the Principal. This process will seek the views of students and staff. The Chair on behalf of the Board, will monitor, review and record the Principal's performance, at least annually, against the agree performance measures.
- The Principal as a Board member shares responsibility for good governance with the Chair and all other members of the Board, supported by the Governance Officer. The Principal also enables good governance through supporting effective communication and interaction between the Board and the rest of the college including staff and students.
- The Board will provide a constructive challenge to the Principal and the executive team and hold them to account.

### **Governance Officer**

- The Board will appoint a Governance professional who is responsible to it and reports directly to the Chair in their governance professional capacity. The Governance professional may be a member of the senior management team in their governance professional capacity, but they cannot hold any other senior management team position at the same time. The appointment and removal of the governance professional is a decision for the Board.

- All Board members will have access to the Governance Officer who has an important role in advising the Board, the committees and individual Board members and supporting good governance.
- The distinctive governance professional role includes:  
facilitating good governance and advising board members on:  
the proper exercise of their own powers, including in relation to relevant legislation  
The Boards's compliance with its Financial Memorandum, the Code of Good Governance, its Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation  
Their behaviour and conduct in relation to the Board's Code of Conduct.
- Providing clear advice to the Chair and the Board/committees on any concerns the Governance Officer may have that Board members have not been given:

sufficient information

information in an appropriate form

sufficient time to monitor, scrutinise or make informed and rigorous decisions in an open and transparent way.

- The Governance Officer is responsible for attending all Board and Committee meetings. Where they are unable to attend, they retain overall responsibility and will arrange cover with a person who is fully able to discharge the role effectively.
- The Governance Officer has the unambiguous right to speak at Board and Committee meeting to convey any concerns they may have about governance. This extends to someone substituting for the Governance Officer.
- The Governance Officer is also responsible for reporting any unresolved concerns about the governance of the body to the relevant funding body e.g. SFC or the RSB.
- The Board will ensure the Governance Officer:  
has suitable skills, knowledge and behaviours to carry out their role effectively  
Receives appropriate induction, and if new to the role, is mentored by a more experienced governance professional for at least their first year.  
has adequate time and resources available to undertake their role effectively.
- The Board will ensure arrangements are in place to deal with a Governance Officer's potential or real conflict of interest.

### **Board Member Appointment, Induction and Training**

- The Board is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the conduct of student elections and nominations, and elections and nominations of staff members to the Board. The Board will have regard to the current ministerial guides on the appointments.
- The Chair will ensure that new Board members receive a formal induction on joining the board, tailored in accordance with the individual and collective needs. The Governance Officer will support the Chair in the provision of relevant induction for new Board members.
- The Board will ensure all Board members undertake appropriate training and development in respect of their governance role. The Governance Officer will support the Chair in the provision of relevant opportunities which will be tailored to meet Board members skills and needs. The Governance Officer will retain records of all development activities for Board members including the Chair.
- The Board will ensure that all new committee members will receive a committee induction and have their specific training needs assessed and met.

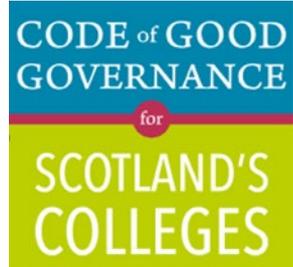
### **Board Evaluation**

- The Board will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to evidence extensions to the term of office of board appointments.
- The Board will put in place an effective, robust self-evaluation process to ensure its effectiveness is reviewed annually. This will be an externally facilitated review, and the Board will determine the timing for this.
- The Board will share its self-evaluation (including externally facilitated evaluation) and Board development plan (including review on previous year's plan) with its funding body (SFC or RSB) and publish them on-line.
- The Board will agree a process for evaluation the effectiveness of the Board Chair and the Committee Chairs. The evaluation of the Board Chair will normally be led by the Senior Independent member.
- The Board will ensure all Board members are subject to appraisal of their performance, conducted at least annually, normally led by the Chair of the Board.
- The performance of the college Chair will also be evaluated by the RSB, as they are appointed by the University Court and are accountable to them.

## **Section E: Relationships and Collaboration**

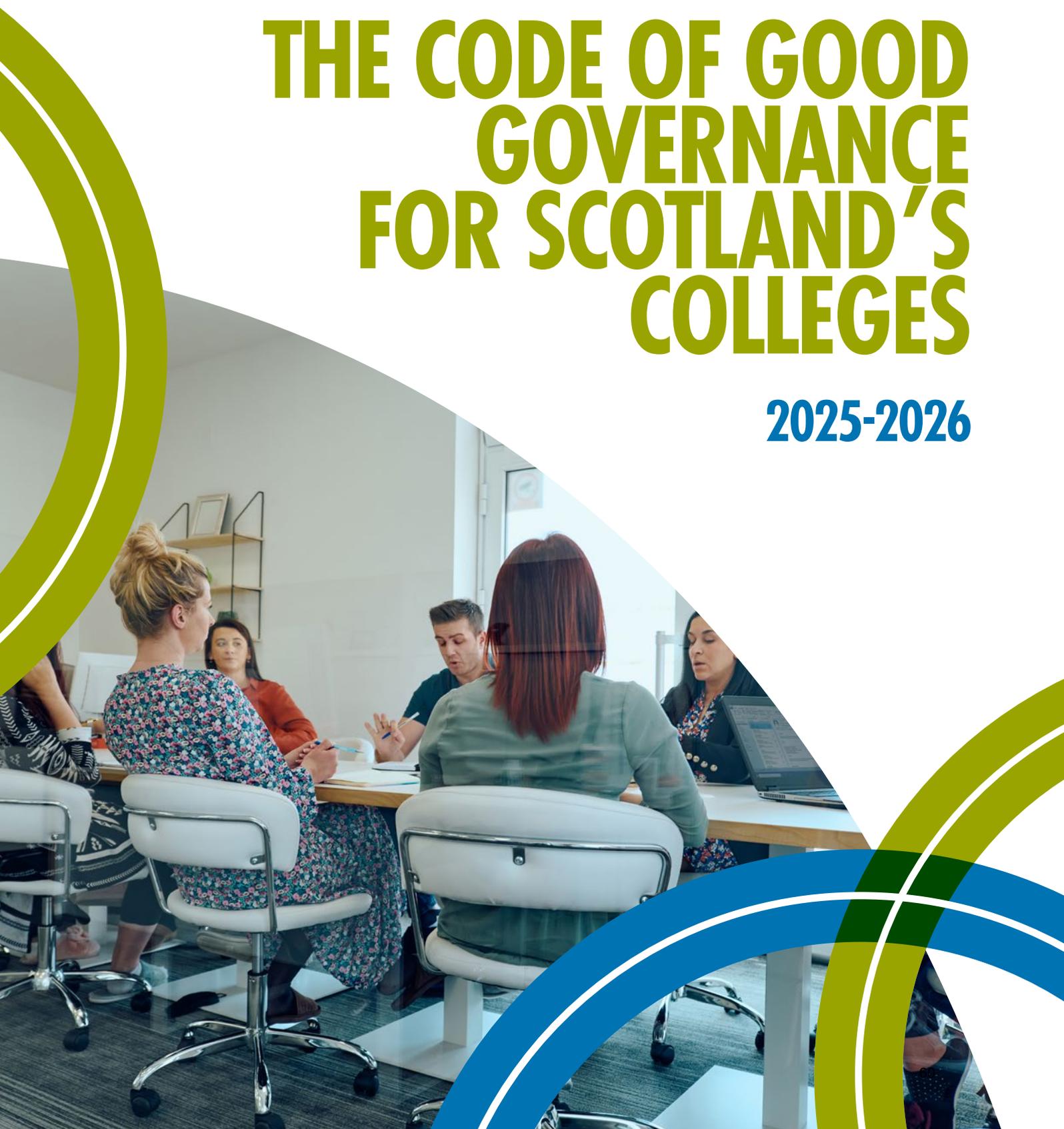
### **Partnership Working**

- The Board will work in partnership to secure the coherent provision of high quality fundable further and higher education in their localities.
- The Board will ensure effective consultation, local and regional planning will follow the principles of effective collaborative working: mutual respect; trust and working towards commonly agreed outcomes.
- The Board will ensure effective partnership working with local and national bodies including businesses, public and third sector organisations to develop commonly agreed priorities following the principles of effective collaborative working.
- The Board will encourage and support effective partnership working and collaboration within and across regions to address local needs and meet national priorities and specialisms.



# THE CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

2025-2026



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# 1. BACKGROUND

The original *Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges* was published in December 2014. The Code is reviewed and updated annually by the Good Governance Steering Group. This is the edition for the 2025-26 session.

Colleges Scotland will act as custodian for any future reviews in liaison with the Good Governance Steering Group and in keeping with the way that the Code was created, the broad range of stakeholders who developed the Code will be engaged fully with any revisions. CDN will take responsibility for the production and dissemination of the Code document.

This Code refers to regional colleges, assigned colleges and regional strategic bodies.

## 2. FOREWORD

Colleges in Scotland thrive in the heart of their communities, serving the interests of those communities, students, employers, governments and their agencies and other stakeholders. They have an essential and valuable role in Scottish society. Colleges deliver 68 million hours of learning each year, and 95% of these learning hours lead to a recognised qualification. Across Scotland colleges employ 14,000 staff and deliver education, skills and training to 248,900 students and 14,830 apprentices. .

Colleges receive substantial public funding and also operate in an increasingly commercial and enterprising way. We value the significant contribution college board members make to governing our colleges and regional strategic bodies, and to their stewardship of taxpayer's money, ensuring its efficient and effective use.

Boards are expected to innovate, pursue new opportunities and take measured risks in delivering what is best for their stakeholders.

Against this background, it is right and proper that the highest standards of governance and propriety are expected of our boards and those individuals who serve them. This Code of Good Governance codifies the principles of good

governance for learners and learning that already exist in our colleges and promotes accountability and continuous improvement in how colleges and regional strategic bodies are governed.

The Code is based on key principles and has been written in a way that is mandatory and anticipates compliance. All colleges that receive funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or from a regional strategic body must comply with the Code as a term and condition of grant. Exceptions should be rare and must be explained publicly.

In addition to demonstrating good governance, colleges and regional strategic bodies must also ensure compliance with their statutory and other obligations. The governance professional role is vital in providing guidance to the board on its legal and other obligations.

Colleges have an important individual and collective role to play in promoting economic, social, and cultural well-being. We expect this Code to provide the essential underpinning to help discharge that role to the highest standards possible.

**Dr David C. Watt OBE**

Chair of the Good Governance Steering Group

# 3. CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

## Governance and the Code

### Corporate governance:

- is the way in which organisations are directed and controlled within a legislative and regulatory framework
- defines the distribution of rights and responsibilities among the different stakeholders and participants in the organisation
- determines the rules and procedures for making decisions on corporate affairs including the process through which the organisation's objectives are set
- provides the means of achieving those objectives and monitoring performance.

Scotland's colleges refer to colleges either funded by SFC or by a regional strategic body for the provision of education. Such colleges can be incorporated or non-incorporated. The overarching purpose of good governance for Scotland's colleges is to:

- lead the college, region or regional strategic body and set its strategic direction and values
- ensure effective management and financial controls to support the student experience within a framework of public accountability and transparency
- deliver high quality learning and outcomes.

The *Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges* has been developed and is owned by the college sector. Colleges are required to comply with it as a condition of grant from either SFC or their regional strategic body. It establishes standards of good governance practice for all boards and provides the essential foundations for compliance within the legislative framework.

Boards must not only follow the letter but also the spirit of the Code to ensure good governance. Boards must think deeply, thoroughly and on a continuing basis about their overall tasks and the implications of these for the roles of their individual members. Key to this is the leadership of the chair, the support given to and by the principal, and the frankness and openness of mind with which issues are discussed and tackled by all board members.

### Statement of Compliance with Good Governance

Each board must state its adoption of the Code in the corporate governance statement contained in its annual financial statement. The chair, on behalf of the board, is expected to report as to how the principles have been applied by the board. Where, for whatever reason, a board's practice is not consistent with any principle of the Code, it should make this known to SFC or, if it is an assigned college, the regional strategic body. This should be done immediately they become aware of an inconsistency and, without exception, in advance of publishing the information. An explanation for that inconsistency must be clearly stated in its corporate governance statement. Boards will be expected to offer a clear rationale for exceptions in the context of their college's operational model and to identify mitigations.

Individual board members have a duty to act on serious concerns about the governance of their body. Information on who board members can approach is included in *The Guide for Board Members in the College Sector* available from the College Development Network.

# 4. PRINCIPLES

## Section A: Leadership and Strategy

### Conduct in Public Life

- A.1 Every college and regional strategic body must be governed by an effective board that is collectively responsible for setting, demonstrating, and upholding the values and ethos of the organisation.
- A.2 Every board member must ensure that they are familiar with, and their actions comply with the provisions of their board's Code of Conduct.
- A.3 The *Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland*, which incorporate the seven Nolan principles, must be the basis for board decisions and behaviour. These key principles, which apply individually and collectively, are:
- Duty/Public Service
  - Selflessness
  - Integrity
  - Objectivity
  - Accountability and Stewardship
  - Openness
  - Honesty
  - Leadership
  - Respect

### Vision and Strategy

- A.4 The board is responsible for determining their institution's values, vision, strategic direction, educational character, , and ethos. Regional strategic bodies must also determine the regional strategy for colleges assigned to them. The board of an assigned college must have regard to the strategy determined by the regional strategic body. Board members have a collective leadership role in fostering an environment that enables the body to fulfil its mission and meet Scottish Government priorities, for the benefit of students and the community it serves.
- A.5 The board must develop and articulate a clear vision for the region or college. This should be a formally agreed statement of its aims and desired outcomes which should be used as the basis for its overall strategy and planning processes.
- A.6 The board provides overall strategic leadership of the region or college. The board is responsible for formulating and agreeing strategy by identifying strategic priorities and providing direction within a structured planning framework.
- A.7 The board (except in the case of assigned college boards) is responsible for overseeing the negotiation of its funding agreement with SFC, to meet the needs of the college or region and make best use of available funding, consistent with national strategy.
- A.8 The roles and responsibilities of the boards of assigned colleges should be undertaken in the context of the roles and responsibilities of their regional strategic body.

## Performance

A.9 The board must ensure that a comprehensive performance measurement system is in place which is clearly linked to the regional strategic framework and identifies key performance indicators. It must ensure that it scrutinises performance measures and reports these on their website in a manner that is both timely and accessible to stakeholders. This will allow the board to determine whether or not the vision and mission of the region or the college are being fulfilled and that the interests of stakeholders are being met.

A.11 The board must exercise its functions with a view to improving economic, cultural and social wellbeing in the locality of the college or region. It must have regard to social and economic needs and social inclusion.

A.12 The board must provide leadership in equality and diversity.

A.13 The board must seek to reflect in its membership, the make-up of the community through offering maximum opportunity of membership to a range of potential members and removing potential barriers to membership, in partnership with its regional strategic body, as appropriate.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

A.10 The board must demonstrate high levels of corporate social responsibility by ensuring it behaves ethically and contributes to economic development while seeking to improve the quality of life of the local community, society at large and its workforce.



## Section B: Quality of the Student Experience

### Student Engagement

- B.1 The board must have close regard to the voice of its students and the quality of the student experience should be central to all board decisions.
- B.2 The board must lead by example in relation to openness, by ensuring that there is meaningful on-going engagement and dialogue with students, the students' association and as appropriate staff and trade unions in relation to the quality of the student experience. Consultation is essential where significant changes are being proposed.
- B.3 The board must consider the outcome of student surveys and other student engagements and monitor action plans that could impact on the quality of the student experience.
- B.4 The college board must have regard to the [Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Association in Scotland](#). It must put in place robust partnership procedures (e.g. partnership agreement) to work together to achieve change and which are supported by regular and open communications.
- B.5 The college board must encourage a strong and autonomous students' association and ensure that the students' association is adequately resourced.

B.6 The college board must ensure that the students' association operates in a fair and democratic manner and fulfils its responsibilities.

B.7 The college board should review the written constitution of its students' association at least every five years.

### Relevant and High-Quality Learning

B.8 The board must seek to secure coherent provision for students, having regard to other provision in the region or college's locality. The board must be aware of external local, national and international bodies and their impact on the quality of the student experience, including community planning partners, employers, skills development and enterprise agencies and employer bodies. The board must seek to foster good relationships and ensure that the body works in partnership with external bodies to enhance the student experience, including employability and the relevance of learning to industry needs.

### Quality Monitoring and Oversight

B.9 The board must ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for the effective oversight of the quality and inclusivity of the learning experience in the college or region. The board must ensure that the college works in partnership with sector quality agencies and other appropriate bodies to support and promote quality enhancement and high-quality services for students.

## Section C: Accountability

### Accountability and Delegation

- C.1 The board is primarily accountable to its main funder, either SFC or its regional strategic body. Through the chain of funding, the body is ultimately responsible to the Scottish Ministers who are accountable to the Scottish Parliament.
- C.2 The board must ensure delivery of its agreed outcomes or in the case of an assigned college, its agreed contribution to the region's agreed outcomes.
- C.3 The board must ensure it fulfils its statutory duties and other obligations on it, and that the terms and conditions of its grant are being met.
- C.4 Scottish Ministers have powers to suspend or remove by order any or all board members of an incorporated college (except the principal) or a regional board for serious or repeated breaches of a term and condition of grant.
- C.5 The board also has a wider accountability to a range of stakeholders including students (both current and prospective), its staff, the wider public, employers and the community it serves, for the provision high quality education that improves people's life chances and social and economic well-being.
- C.6 Incorporated colleges and regional boards must maintain and publicly disclose a current register of interests for all board members. Board members have a personal responsibility to ensure any changes to their register of interests are notified timeously to the governance professional and to declare any specific conflicts of interest in the business of the meeting prior to the commencement of each meeting of the board and its committees and withdraw from meetings as appropriate.
- See section D.6 for the 'objective test' for judging if there is a conflict of interest.
- C.7 The board must ensure that its decision-making processes are transparent, properly informed, rigorous and timely, and that appropriate and effective systems of financial and operational control, quality, management of staff, risk assessment and management are established, monitored, continuously improved and appropriately impact assessed. This includes:
- the prompt production, dissemination and online publication of board/committee agendas, minutes and papers to the public
  - every board meeting and every committee meeting having a well-structured agenda circulated timeously in advance
  - the retention of all key documentation which help justify the decisions made by the board and its committees
  - setting quorum for board and committee meetings in line with good practice and preferably at 50% or higher are non-executive members. A board should satisfy itself that adequate arrangements are in place to ensure that decisions it has delegated to a committee are taken with a non-executive majority. When determining a quorum, the chair of the board may be considered to be a non-executive member. (see Annex 1 for the definition of non-executive)
- C.8 The board may delegate responsibilities to committees for the effective conduct of board business. As a minimum the committees required are Audit, Remuneration, Finance and Nominations/Appointments. Delegation of responsibilities from and matters reserved to the board and its committees must be set out in a scheme of delegation including the functions delegated by the board to the chair, committees, the principal and the governance professional (and any other members of staff).

Incorporated college boards and regional boards have no powers to delegate functions to an individual board member (except the chair who has no authority to act out with their delegated powers).

- C.9 The board must ensure every board committee has a specified member of the management team to provide objective, specialist advice to support it to discharge its remit, including by explaining in an accessible way the matters under discussion and the possible implications of different options.
- C.10 The board must consider and have in place procedures to ensure effective working relationships and constructive dialogue amongst the board as a whole and ensure there are effective reporting and two-way communications between committees and the board. The board must ensure that discussions and decisions of every committee are accurately recorded and reported to the board, no later than the next meeting of the board.

## Risk Management

- C.11 The board of a college or a regional body is responsible for the overall management of risk and opportunity. It must set the risk appetite of the body and ensure there is an appropriate balance between risk and opportunity and that this is communicated via the principal to the body's management team.
- C.12 The board must ensure that sound risk management and internal control systems are in place and maintained. It must ensure there is a formal on-going process for identifying, reporting, evaluating and managing the body's significant risks and review the effectiveness of risk management, business continuity planning and internal control systems.

## Audit Committee

- C.13 The Audit Committee must support the board and the principal by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances including the body's governance, risk management and internal control framework. The Scottish Government Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook promotes the development of an assurance framework to aid the Committee in fulfilling this role. See [Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook](#)
- C.14 The scope of the Audit Committee's work must be defined in its terms of reference and encompass all the assurance needs of the board and the principal. The Audit Committee must have particular engagement with internal and external audit, and must work with management and auditors to resolve any issues in relation to financial reporting.
- C.15 The Audit Committee must promptly pursue recommendations arising from audit reports and must monitor their implementation.
- C.16 The membership of the Audit Committee cannot include the board chair or the principal and, in line with the Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook, 'executive members of the organisation should not be appointed to the Audit and Assurance Committee', and the majority of members must be non-executive. The role of the college executive is to attend meetings at the invitation of the committee chair and to provide information for particular agenda items.
- C.17 The Audit Committee terms of reference must provide for the committee to sit privately without any non-members present for all or part of a meeting if they so decide. The Audit Committee members should meet with the internal and external auditors without the executive team present at least annually.

C.18 At least one member of the Audit Committee should have recent relevant financial or audit experience.

## Remuneration Committee

- C.19 It is essential that members of the Remuneration Committee understand their role and responsibilities. Members must undertake the online training module for Remuneration Committees provided by College Development Network within one month of appointment.
- C.20 The board must have a formal procedure in place for setting the remuneration of the principal by a designated committee of non-executive members. The board may wish to supplement this by taking evidence from a range of sources. In particular, staff and students should have a role in gathering and submitting evidence in relation to the college principal to the relevant committee.
- C.21 The board chair cannot be the chair of the Remuneration Committee (but they can be a member of it).

## Financial and Institutional Sustainability

C.22 The board is responsible for ensuring the financial and institutional sustainability of the body. The board must ensure compliance with its Financial Memorandum (either with SFC or the regional strategic body, depending on which is funding it), including in relation to incorporated colleges and regional boards, relevant aspects of the Scottish Public Finance Manual.

C.23 The board must ensure that:

- funds are used as economically, efficiently and effectively as possible
- effective monitoring arrangements are in place
- college staff report relevant financial matters to it.

C.24 For colleges that are charitable organisations, board members are also charity trustees. The board of a college that is a charity must ensure its members are aware of their responsibilities under charity legislation and for complying with relevant provisions as set out by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. See [OSCR Guidance and Good Practice for Charity Trustees \(02.04.25\)](#)

## Staff Governance

- C.25 The college board as the employer, is responsible for promoting positive employee relations and for ensuring effective partnership between recognised trade unions and management.
- C.26 The board must have a system of corporate accountability in place for the fair and effective management of all staff, to ensure all legal obligations are met and all policies and agreements are implemented and identify areas that require improvement and to develop action plans to address them.
- C.27 The college board must comply with collective agreements placed on it through national collective bargaining for colleges.

## Section D: Effectiveness

### The Board Chair

D.1 The chair is responsible for leadership of the board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role. The chair is responsible for setting the board's agenda and ensuring that adequate time is available for discussion of all agenda items, particularly strategic issues. The chair must promote a culture of openness and debate by:

- encouraging the effective contribution of all board members
- fostering constructive challenge and support to the principal, executive team and fellow board members
- effective team-working
- positive relations between board members.

The chair must engage with the principal and the governance professional in a manner which is both constructive and effective.

D.2 The board and its committees must have the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge of the body to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively.

### Senior Independent Member

D.3 The board must appoint one of the non-executive members to be the senior independent member to provide a sounding board for the chair and to serve as an intermediary for the principal, other board members and the governance professional when necessary (see Annex 1 for the definition of 'non-executive'). The senior independent member should also be available where contact through the normal channels of chair, principal or governance professional has failed to resolve an issue or for which such contact is inappropriate. The senior independent member is also responsible for holding annual meetings with Board members, without the Chair, to appraise the Chair's performance and provide the Chair with relevant feedback

Further information on the role of the senior independent member can be found in [The Guide for Board Members in the College Sector](#).



## Board Members

- D.4 Each board member is collectively responsible and accountable for all board decisions. Board members must make decisions in the best interests of the college and/or region as a whole rather than selectively or in the interests of a particular group.
- D.5 Staff, student and trade union board members are full board members and bring essential and unique, skills, knowledge and experience to the board. Staff, student and trade union board members must not be excluded from board business unless there is a clear conflict of interest, in common with all board members.
- D.6 Where the college is a charity, all board members, as charity trustees, including staff, student and trade union board members, have legal duties and responsibilities under the Charities Act 2005. This includes registering any personal interests that could be seen as conflicting with the interests of the body. The 'objective test' for judging if there is a conflict of interest is:
- "... whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your decision making in your role as a member of a public body".*
- D.9 The college board must delegate to the principal, as chief executive, authority for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the college, and must ensure the establishment of such management functions are undertaken by and under the authority of the principal.
- D.10 The college board must ensure a clear process is in place to set and agree personal performance measures for the principal. This process should seek the views of students and staff. The chair, on behalf of the board, should monitor, review and record the principal's performance, at least annually, against the agreed performance measures.
- D.11 The principal, as a board member, shares responsibility for good governance with the chair and all other members of the board, supported by the governance professional. The principal also enables good governance through supporting effective communication and interaction between the body and the rest of the college including staff and students.
- D.12 The board provides strategic direction for the region and/or college, and the chair provides leadership to the board. The principal provides leadership to the staff of the body.
- D.13 The board must provide a constructive challenge to the principal and executive team and hold them to account.

## Principal and Chief Executive

- D.7 The college board must appoint the principal as chief executive of the college, securing approval for the appointment and terms and conditions of the appointment from the regional strategic body if necessary.
- D.8 The college board must ensure there is an open and transparent recruitment process for the appointment. Students and staff must have an opportunity to contribute to the recruitment process.

## Governance Professional

D.14 The board must appoint a governance professional who is responsible to it and reports directly to the chair in their governance professional capacity. The governance professional may be a member of the senior management team in their governance professional capacity, but they cannot hold any other senior management team position at the same time. The appointment and removal of the governance professional is a decision of the board.

D.15 All board members must have access to the governance professional who has an important governance role in advising the board, the committees and individual board members and supporting good governance. The distinctive governance professional role includes:

- facilitating good governance and advising board members on:
  - the proper exercise of their powers, including in relation to relevant legislation
  - the board's compliance with its Financial Memorandum, the Code for Good Governance, its Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation
  - their behaviour and conduct in relation to the board's Code of Conduct.

- providing clear advice to the chair and the board/committees on any concerns the governance professional may have that board members have not been given:
  - sufficient information
  - information in an appropriate form
  - sufficient time to monitor, scrutinise or make informed and rigorous decisions in an open and transparent way.
- attending and providing support to every board meeting and every meeting of every board committee. Where the governance professional is unable to attend, while the governance professional retains overall responsibility, proper arrangements must be made to cover the role with a person who is fully able to discharge the role effectively.
- having an unambiguous right to speak at board and committee meetings to convey any concerns they may have about governance. This extends to someone substituting for the governance professional.
- reporting any unresolved concerns about the governance of the body to the relevant funding body (i.e., SFC or the regional strategic body).

D.16 The board must ensure the governance professional:

- has suitable skills, knowledge and behaviours to carry out their role effectively
- receives appropriate induction, and if new to the role, is mentored by a more experienced governance professional for at least their first year
- has adequate time and resources available to undertake their role effectively.

D.17 The board must ensure arrangements are in place to deal with a governance professional's potential or real conflicts of interest.

## Board Member Appointment, Induction and Training

- D.18 For boards with responsibility for board appointments, the board must ensure a formal and open procedure is in place for recruiting and selecting new non-executive board members. Boards must have regard to current Ministerial Guidance on board appointments.
- D.19 The board is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the conduct of student elections and nominations, and elections and nominations of staff and trade union members to the board.
- D.20 The chair must ensure that new board members receive a formal induction on joining the board, tailored in accordance with their individual and collective needs. The governance professional should support the chair in the provision of relevant induction for new board members.
- D.21 The board must ensure all board members undertake appropriate training and development in respect of their governance role. The governance professional should support the chair in the provision of relevant training and development opportunities for board members, which should be tailored to meet board members skills and needs. The governance professional must keep records of the development activity of board members, including the chair.
- D.22 The board must ensure that new committee members receive a committee induction and have their specific training needs assessed and met.

## Board Evaluation

- D.23 Extension of the term of office of board appointments requires evidence and the board must ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to support this.
- D.24 The board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years. The board should determine the timing for this externally facilitated review as part of the annual effectiveness review. The board is not required to conduct a self-evaluation of its effectiveness in the same year as an externally facilitated evaluation. The board must send its self-evaluation (including an externally facilitated evaluation) and board development plan (including progress on previous year's plan) to its funding body and publish them online.
- D.25 The board must agree a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the board chair and the committee chairs. The evaluation of the board chair should normally be led by the senior independent member.
- D.26 The board must ensure all board members are subject to appraisal of their performance, conducted at least annually, normally by the chair of the board.
- D.27 The performance of regional college chairs will also be evaluated by the Scottish Government, as regional college chairs are appointed by the Scottish Ministers and are personally accountable to them.
- D.28 The performance of assigned, incorporated college chairs will also be evaluated by the regional strategic body, as they are appointed by the regional strategic body and are personally accountable to them.

## Section E: Relationships and Collaboration

### Partnership Working

- E.1 The board must work in partnership to secure the coherent provision of high quality fundable further and higher education in their localities.
- E.2 The board must ensure effective consultation, local and regional planning and must follow the principles of effective collaborative working: mutual respect, trust and working towards commonly agreed outcomes.
- E.3 The board must ensure effective partnership working with local and national bodies including businesses, public and third sector organisations to develop commonly agreed priorities following the principles of effective collaborative working.
- E.4 The board must encourage and support effective partnership working and collaboration within and across regions to address local needs and meet national priorities and specialisms.



# ANNEX 1

## References and Definitions

- “**college**” means a college funded by either SFC or a regional strategic body.
- “**incorporated college**” means a college with a board of management under part 1 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992.
- “**assigned college**” means a college assigned to a regional strategic body.
- “**board**” means the governing body of the college or to the regional strategic body.
- “**body**” means the organisation in question, i.e., a college or regional strategic body.
- “**principal**” includes where appropriate in the context, the chief officer or equivalent person of a regional strategic body.
- “**non-executive**” means a member who is not the chair of the board and who does not otherwise hold a specific position on the board i.e., is not a student member or a staff or trade union member; and in the case of a college board, is not the principal; and in the case of a regional board is not the chair of an assigned college.
- The reference to a non-executive majority under C.7(d) reflects the underlying governance principle of ensuring an appropriate degree of independence and objectivity in all board decision-making. A board quorum should always require a non-executive majority. When determining a quorum, the chair of the board may be considered to be a non-executive member.
- The Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the region and is the only RSB in Scotland.

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 College Development Network

 @ColDevNet



Subject/Title:	Complaints Report for Quarter 2 (Nov - Jan) 2025-26
Meeting and date:	
Author:	Amanda Duncan
Decision, Discussion or Noting:	Noting
Link to Strategic Plan:	Paper assists with compliance as the College is required to monitor complaints as per SPSO requirements.
Cost implications:	Yes / No <i>(delete as applicable)</i> <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
Risk assessment:	Yes / No <i>(delete as applicable)</i> <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Financial: Operational: Organisational:

**Recommendation(s)**

Note

**Purpose of report**

Analysis of complaints received in Quarter 2 of 2025-26

**Background**

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

**Main body of information**

See attached.

## Executive Summary

Complaints are received all year round from students and several different sources. This report provides an overview of the complaint categories and outcomes in Quarter 2 (Nov to Jan) of 2025–26.

A total of 20 complaints were received this year in Q2 compared to 11 in the same quarter last year. C1: Customer Care saw the most complaints this quarter with 11 complaints compared to six at the same time last year. Most complaints related to staff conduct, with one relating to student conduct and another involving both staff and student conduct. Construction & Engineering received the greatest number of complaints in Q2 with seven in total; six relating to staff conduct and one regarding student conduct. Computing, Land & Science, and Education received four complaints across a range of circumstances. Care, Arts, Sport and Humanities received two complaints also about staff conduct.

Four complaints were resolved and two were partially upheld, equating to 67% of the complaints received and closed in Q2. At the time this report was written, eleven complaints were still under investigation.

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. Some examples of actions taken as a result of complaints received during Q2 were: classroom adjustments and PLSP meetings arranged for students with the Learning Support team.

## Summary Report: Complaints 2025-26 (Q2)

### Introduction

Complaints are received all year round from several different sources although the primary source tends to be from students. Complaints are received via a variety of mechanisms including direct emails, complaints forms and the Red Button. UHI Inverness uses the SPSO categories and sub-categories to classify complaints. The outcomes from complaint resolutions are reported to UHI (HE) and published on the UHI Inverness website (FE).

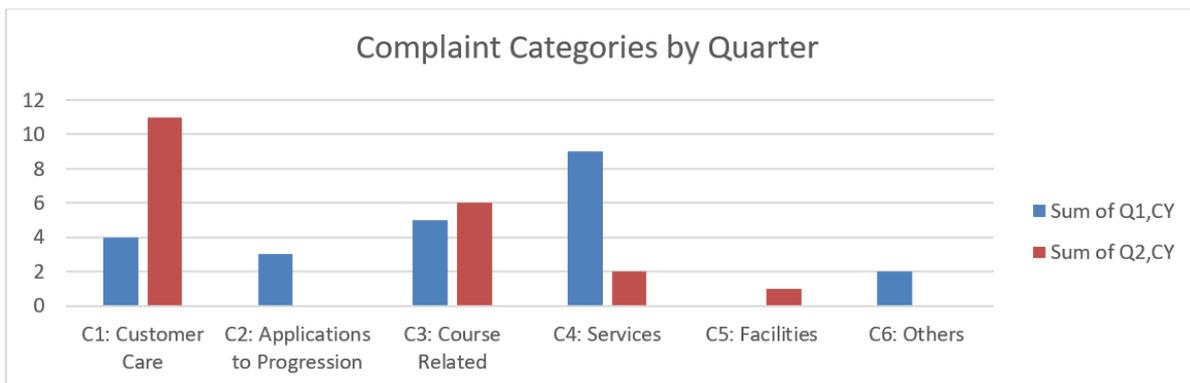
Complaints are grouped into quarters depending on the time of year in which they are received. The quarter dates are:

- 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 2 of 2025–26.

### Complaints by Category

The table below provides an overview of the total quarterly complaints received for each category in the current academic year.



## ITEM 10.1

The graphs below detail the sum of quarterly complaints received for each category in the current and previous academic years.

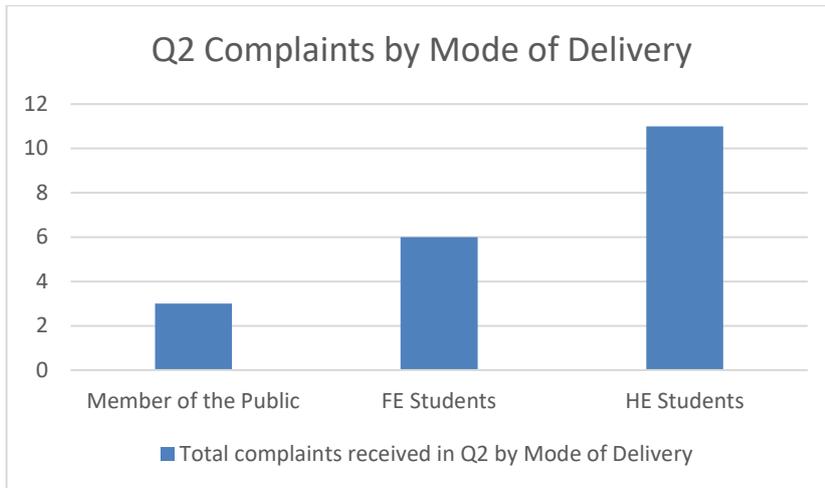
Customer Category:			
Current Year 2025/26 (Quarter)	YTD CY	Q1, CY	Q2, CY
C1: Customer Care	17	4	11
C2: Applications to Progression	3	3	0
C3: Course Related	12	5	6
C4: Services	11	9	2
C5: Facilities	1	0	1
C6: Others	2	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>

Customer Category:					
Previous Year 2024/2025 (Quarter)	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1: Customer Care	11	5	6	0	0
C2: Applications to Progression	3	1	0	1	1
C3: Course Related	24	6	3	14	1
C4: Services	5	2	2	1	0
C5: Facilities	2	1	0	0	1
C6: Others	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>

### Summary:

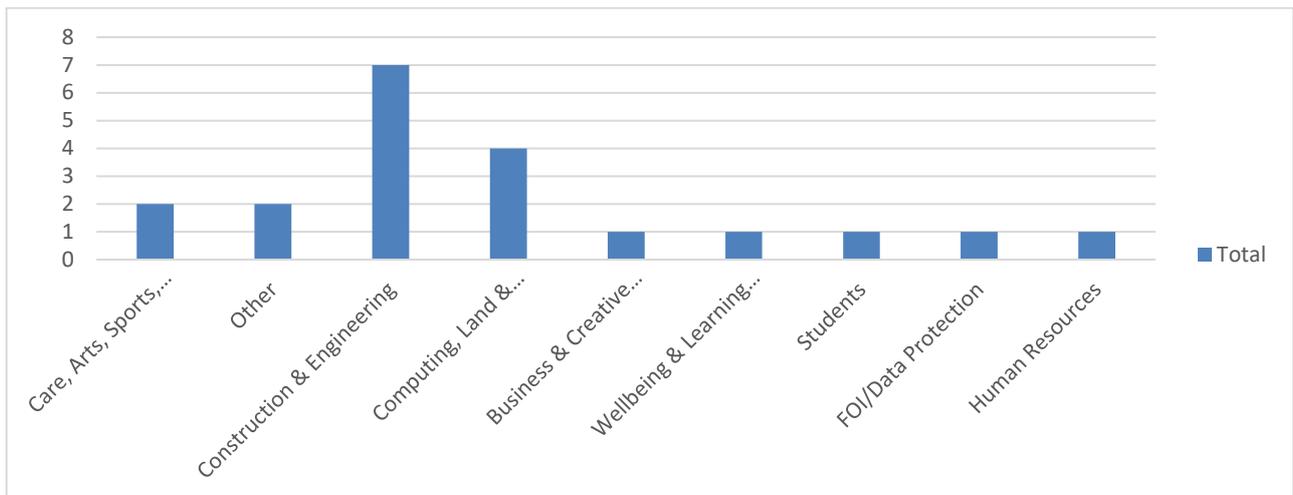
- A total of 20 complaints were received this year in Q2 compared to 11 in the same quarter last year.
- C1: Customer Care saw the most complaints this quarter with 11 complaints compared to six at the same time last year. Most complaints related to staff conduct, with one relating to student conduct and another involving both staff and student conduct.
- C3: Course Related complaints related to inappropriate staff conduct, PC issues, an unsuitable classroom, and a lack of communication regarding class schedules and structure.

### Complaints by Mode of Delivery



### Complaints by Department

The chart below shows the count of the areas the complaint relates to.



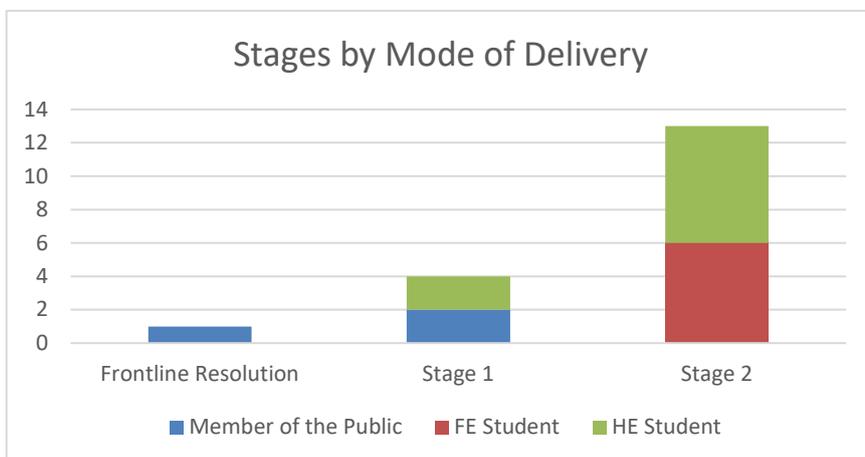
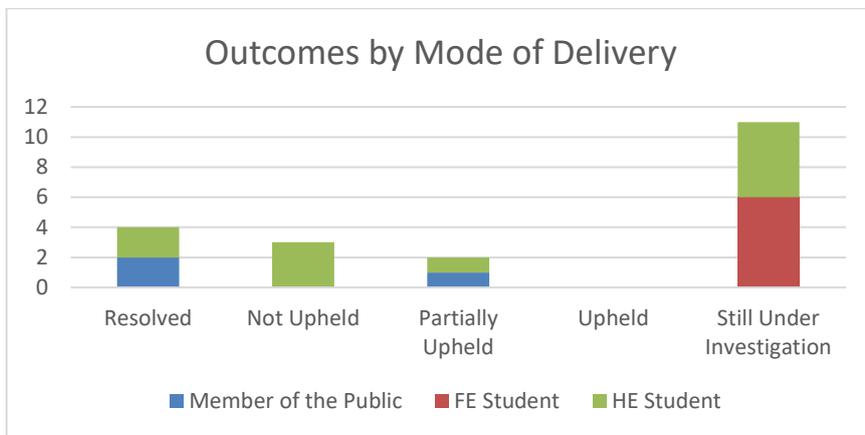
Construction & Engineering received the greatest number of complaints in Q2 with seven in total, with six relating to staff conduct and one regarding student conduct. Computing, Land & Science, and Education received four complaints across a range of circumstances. Care, Arts, Sport and Humanities received two complaints also about staff conduct.

## Complaint Outcomes

The table below shows the breakdown in Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints in Q2. It identifies whether they have been resolved, upheld, partially upheld, not upheld or other outcome, and differentiates between FE, HE, and Member of Public/Other.

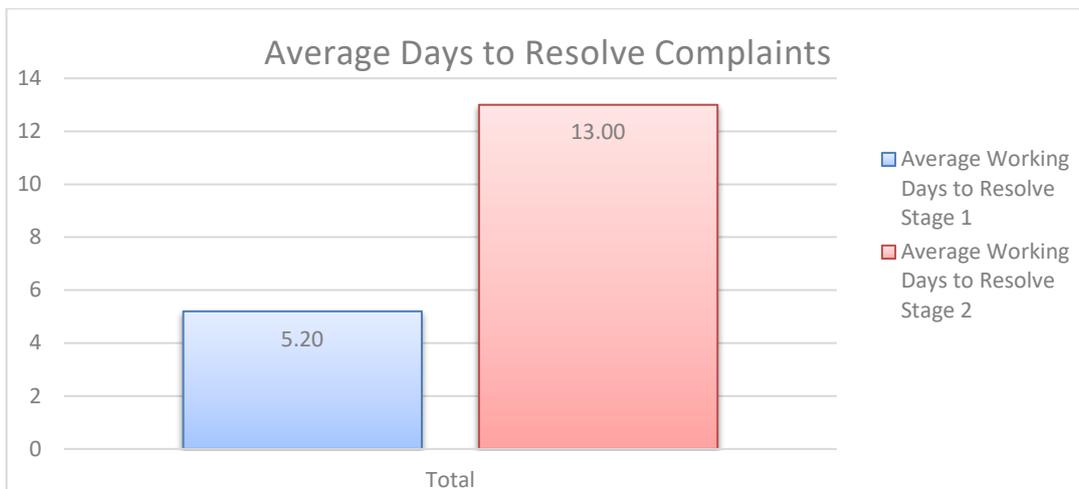
Four complaints were resolved and two were partially upheld, equating to 67% of the complaints received and closed in Q2. There are eleven complaints still under investigation.

Outcome	Frontline Resolution	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Not upheld	-	1	2	3
Partially upheld	-	2	-	2
Upheld	-	-	-	0
Resolved	3	1	-	4
Still under Investigation	-	-	11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>



## 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 chart above displays the average number of days taken to determine a complaint outcome in Q2.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in Q2 was between 2 – 11 days. For Stage 1 complaints, 75% were completed within the 5-day turnaround.

The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in Q2 was between 5 – 21 days. Of the three Stage 2 complaints that were closed in Q2, 66% were closed off within the required timeframe.

A total of 11 complaints were still under investigation at the end of Q2.

## Complaint Follow Up Survey

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

Three responses were received in Q2. The outcomes from this small sample are summarised below:

## ITEM 10.1

- All complainants were aware of the complaints procedure before making a complaint, found the process easy to access, and were able to access information and assistance in making a complaint.
- Two complainants strongly agreed that their complaint was taken seriously, was thoroughly investigated, that they were kept informed during the process of investigation, and that they received a fair, objective, and clear response, and felt their complaint was closed off to their satisfaction. One complainant strongly disagreed with these points.
- One complainant expressed their hope that the outlined follow up actions for staff training would take place to prevent future instances from occurring.
- One complainant noted that they received great assistance from HISA.

### 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 actions taken as a result of complaints received during Q2:

- Classroom adjustments, such as finding more suitable rooms or using areas away from busy or loud environments when using larger spaces
- Staff reminded of appropriate conduct in shared spaces and the importance of minimising disruption to classes
- PLSP meetings arranged for students with the Learning Support team
- Implementation of changes to the Careers Portal

### Themes emerging from complaints in Q2

The main theme from complaints emerging in Q2 was by and large staff conduct. The issues include inappropriate and disrespectful conduct towards students, and a lack of perceived support, acknowledgment, and/or adequate communication.