UHI INVERSNESS

MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 10 June 2025

PRESENT:	Dee Bird, Paul Shanks, Elizabeth Keegan, Holly Pearce, Chris O'Neil & Victoria Erasmus
CHAIR:	Arvinder Kainth
APOLOGIES:	Arvinder Kainth, Wendy Grindle, David Stewart, Quality Manager, Operations and Commercial Manager & Director of Research for Biodiversity and Freshwater
IN ATTENDANCE:	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality Director for Centre for Living Sustainability Tertiary Education Leader (TEL) for Management, Health and Creative Arts Tertiary Education Leader (TEL) Technology, Environment and Education Management Information Systems Manager Head of Registry & Quality Head of Professional Development Digital Learning Lead Electronic Notetaker Governance Officer

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Governance Officer confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

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

CREATIVE SESSION

The Professional Development Manager and the Digital Learning Leader joined the meeting.

Digital Skills for Lecturers presentation took place (CSN-01-062025).

The Professional Development Manager and the Digital Learning Leader left the meeting.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a.) **Minutes of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

b.) Creative Space Session Note (CSS-01-032025) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025

The Creative Space Session Note (CSS-01-032025) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

c.) Confidential Note (CN-01-032025) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025

The Confidential Note (CN-01-032025) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 11 March 2025 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS - none

3. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

The Head of Registry & Quality joined the meeting.

a) FE Academic Appeals Policy

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report and highlighted the recent changes to the policy. Minor changes of job titles and removal of paragraph 7.3 which referenced a group which is no longer in place had been brought to Committee's attention. The policy had come to the PPRP and EMT Committees in May and had been recommended for Board approval.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience & Quality for her detailed report.

Decision: The Committee **APPROVED** the FE Academic Appeals Policy and recommended for approval by the Board.

4. STUDENT RETENTION AND OUTCOMES FORECAST FOR FE & HNs REPORT

The Management Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.

The Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality and the Management Information Systems Manager provided the Committee with an update on student withdrawals, and progress against targets for 2024/25. It has been reported that early withdrawal rates are lower for both FE full time and HE students than the previous year, they are higher for FE part-time students. It is not expected that there will be further changes to the early withdrawal rates. FE further withdrawals are currently higher than the year end position for 2023/24, however they are lower for HE students. Progress in achieving full-time FE and HN targets indicates that the college is in line with its overall success targets.

The Committee welcomed the report and positively commented on the targeted approach to use Learning Assistants to minimise partial success rates. Concerns were raised in regard to the rates of early withdrawals within the Senior Phase provision. The Committee were assured that the Access and Progression Manager is reviewing and monitoring the situation in close collaboration with local schools.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality and the Management Information Systems Manager for their detailed report and congratulated them on all targets met.

5. SENIOR PHASE & GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality & Tertiary Education Leaders spoke to their CONFIDENTIAL report (CN-01-062025).

6. END OF YEAR STUDENT SURVEY (SSES)

The Head of Registry & Quality reported on behalf of the Quality Manager and provided the Committee with a high-level overview of participation and satisfaction rates in the end of year student survey of AY 24 - 25. The report presented the findings of the recent Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES) which was conducted to assess the feedback and satisfaction levels of all aspects of student experience at UHI Inverness. The overall survey response rate was 53.17%, a decrease of 3.95% compared to last year's response rate of 57.12%. The overall satisfaction score was higher than last year with an increase of 1.6% to 94.4% from 92.82%. The high response rate unlocked £1,000 which was donated to college charity partner, charity Autism and Neurodiversity North Scotland (A-ND). The survey was open for two weeks leading up to the Easter break and was distributed electronically to all eligible students via email with a unique survey link, taking around 5 minutes to complete. It has been reported that all staff have access to the SSES Results and are asked to reflect upon the response and satisfaction rates and comments in their area to identify potential areas for improvement. The dashboard also includes a 5-year trend analysis which allows teams to drill down to course details / personal characteristics; teams are encouraged to use this tool to further interpret the feedback specific to their areas.

The Committee welcomed the report and positively commented on the new approaches used to engage staff and students and ongoing successful collaborations with charities to increase response rates.

The Chair thanked the Head of Registry & Quality for her detailed report and congratulated the team on another successful year.

The Head of Registry & Quality and Management Information Systems Manager left the meeting.

7. HISA ELECTIONS

Both HISA officer present provided the Committee with an update on this year's election process. Over the spring of 2025, HISA conducted elections for the 16 Student Officer roles across the UHI partnership. Turnout in the main Student Elections was 4.17%, an increase on last year's 3.02%. In the main Student Elections in March, 946 members voted (4.17%), casting 2984 individual votes. This represents an increase in turnout of around 51.09% compared to the 2024 Spring Elections where 613 members cast 1731 individual votes.

The Chair thanked the HISA officers for their detailed report.

8. HISA END OF YEAR SUMMARY REPORT

Both HISA officer present provided the Committee with an End of the Year presentation which a number of areas highlighted:

- Officers and staff update
- Summary of student inductions
- Student Voice Representatives update
- Completed and ongoing team and officers projects
- Summary of all events held in 2024/25
- Election results
- Examples of feedback received, positive and negative
- Plans and next steps

The Committee welcomed the report and congratulated both officers on another successful year.

The Chair thanked both HISA officers for their engaging presentation and wished them all the best in the future as this was the last Committee meeting attended by them in their roles as HISA Student Representatives to the Board.

Elizabeth Keegan left the meeting.

9. KPI MATRIX

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality reported on behalf of the Operations and Commercial Manager. Brief summary of the report had been provided with the paper taken as read and any comments being sent to the Governance officer.

10. QAA QUALITY ENGAGEMENT VISIT

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report which provided the Committee with a brief summary of activity this academic year to date with the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) and college’s recent first institutional liaison meeting with our link QAA Quality Assurance Manager. Institutional liaison meetings are undertaken with every institution on an annual basis (apart from the year of review) to consider developments in, and impact of, an institution's quality assurance and enhancement approach and progress following external peer review.

The Committee welcomed the report and positively commented on the request from College Development Network (CDN) to develop a new resource for use across the tertiary sector.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality for her detailed report.

11. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY REPORT & AND NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2025-2029

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report which provided the Committee with an overview of our PSED report and the new national equality outcomes which focus on students. UHI Inverness, as a public sector institution, is legally obligated to uphold the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. This duty requires the college to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. The publication of the new National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) by the Scottish Funding Council and the Equality and Human Rights Commission in November 2024 identified the most persistent inequalities which affect both students and staff in Scotland's tertiary education sector.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality for her detailed report.

12. RESEARCH UPDATE – HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES

The Director for Centre for Living Sustainability provided the Committee with a brief update on recent developments within the Research area.
Following items had been highlighted:

- Opportunities to contribute more to the tertiary frameworks with new course provision
- First funded doctorates
- Programme of upskilling staff
- Impact case studies chosen to represent UHI

Discussion about the importance of investment in research, clear progression routes for all staff and concerns about the remission funding for academics took place.

The Chair thanked the Director for Centre for Living Sustainability for her update and suggested that in the future small scale research, Enquiring Minds and Research Connect projects, could be used to demonstrate the wider research culture supported within the college.

Paul Shanks left the meeting.

13. COMMITTEE AND CHAIR EVALUATION PROCESS

Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided the Committee with an update about annual Board and Committee self-evaluation process. In

October/November 2025 UHI Inverness Board of Management will be undergoing an Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review conducted by CDN. The review takes place every 3-5 years and the latest took place in autumn 2020. The CDN confirmed that the Board does not need to conduct its annual Internal Evaluation Process in the year the external review takes place.

14. QUARTER 3 - COMPLAINTS REPORT

The report had been taken as read with comments to be sent to the Governance Officer.

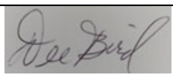
15. MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES - CONFIDENTIAL

The Committee noted the minutes of the Student Journey and Enhancement Committee Meetings held on 19 March 2025, 23 April 2025 and 21 May 2025. The Committee also noted the minutes of the Research and Innovation Committee held on 22 January 2025 and the Research & Innovation Committee paper (June 2025).

16. AOCB

The Committee were provided with a verbal CONFIDENTIAL report (CN-02-062025).

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 9th September 2025 AT 4.30 P.M.

Signed by the Chair: 

Date: 09/09/2025