

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 24 September 2019 at 4.30 p.m.
Location	Board Room, 1 Inverness Campus

Board Secretary
17 September 2019

The timings on the agenda are indicative only and the meeting may extend beyond the anticipated finish time.

AGENDA

TIME

4.30pm **Welcome and Apologies**

4.35pm **Declarations of Interest**

ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 4.40pm **1. MINUTES**
Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 4 June 2019
- 4.45pm **2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
Action List
- 4.50pm **3. POLICIES**
Essential Skills

Covering report by Craig Lowther, PDM Education

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 5.00pm **4. STUDENT SERVICES REPORT**
Report by Director of Student Experience
- 5.10pm **5. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Joint Report by the Depute Principal Academic Development and
the Director of Curriculum

- 5.25pm **6. RESEARCH REPORT**
Report by Director of Research & Innovation
- 5.35pm **7. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND SATISFACTION RATES 2018/19**
Report by Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience
- 5.50pm **8. STRATEGIES – REVIEW OF PROGRESS**
Report by Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience
- 6.05pm **9. STUDENT ACTIVITY 2018-19 AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2019-20**
Joint Report by Depute Principals Planning and Student Experience
and Academic Development
- 6.15pm **10. STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2019-20**
Joint Report by Director of Student Services and Student President
- 6.25pm **11. STUDENT ASSOCIATION (HISA) REPORT**
Report by Student President
- 6.35pm **12. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**
Report by Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience
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ITEMS FOR NOTING

- 6.45pm **13. AUDIT REPORTS - RECOMMENDATIONS**
Research Governance
- 6.50pm **14. EXTERNAL VERIFICATION SUMMARY 2018/19**
Report by Director of Curriculum
- 6.55pm **15. COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**
Report by Quality Manager
- 7.00pm **16. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2018/19**
Report by Quality Manager
- 7.05pm **17. RED BUTTON REPORT 2018/19**
Report by Quality Manager
- 7.10pm **18. AOCB**
- 7.15pm **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 3 December 2019 at 4.30 p.m.

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

Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus on Tuesday 4 June 2019

PRESENT:	Andrew Bowie, Sarah Burton, Robyn Kennedy, Helen Miller, Chris O'Neil, Gavin Ross, Tom Speirs, Tina Stones
CHAIR:	Sarah Burton,
APOLOGIES:	Shawna McKinnon, Fiona Neilson,
ATTENDING:	Depute Principal, Planning and Student Experience Depute Principal Academic Development Director of Curriculum Director of Student Services Quality Manager Secretary to the Board of Management
OBSERVER:	Vivienne Mackie, VP Education elect

The Chair welcomed, as an observer, Vanessa Mackie, VP Education elect, who would be one of the two Student members on the Board in the next academic year.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 26 March 2019 were **AGREED** as a correct record, were **APPROVED** and signed.

Matters arising

It was noted that the action requested following discussion of the complaints report had not been passed to the Quality Manager. This would be progressed.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Committee considered each of the actions and **AGREED** that those which had been completed could be removed from the list.

3. SINGLE POLICY ENVIRONMENT – FE ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

A covering report by the Quality Manager advised that the UHI FE academic appeals policy was part of a suite of new policy/procedures to be drafted as part of the new common policy environment. This policy had IC UHI representation and endorsement.

The Committee asked for clarification on paragraphs 5.4 (appeals not normally being permitted from third parties) and 6.4 (student awareness of the policy). It was confirmed that guidelines on 5.4 would be built within the procedure and awareness of the strategy, 6.4 would be through the induction process.

The Committee asked that reference to the appropriate strategy be included in the report template and **RECOMMENDED** the UHI FE academic appeals policy to the Board of Management for approval.

4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

A covering report by the Board Secretary advised that revisions had been made to the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee TOR in 2017 and 2018.

The Committee **AGREED** that no further amendments were necessary at this time and **RECOMMENDED** the TOR to the Board of Management for approval.

5. **STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UPDATE**

A joint report by the Director of Student Experience and Student President provided an overview of the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) for academic year 2018-19 and a variety of other aspects of student engagement.

The Student President advised that the format of the new course committee meetings (CCM's) had significantly improved student engagement and had transformed the role of the student from being one of passive feedback provider to being one of active and equal participant. Similar meaningful dialogue had also emerged from the new format of the SRC.

IC UHI had won the UHI Student Support Award for its work on the Partnership Agreement, which had been co-created by staff, and students. This was deemed to be sector leading and the value of this piece of work as a partnership wide approach was now being considered by the Programme Board in the student equivalence and experience working group. Plans were underway on how the Partnership Agreement would be made more visible and tangible to both students and staff for 2019/20.

There was a discussion on the areas or programmes where it was most difficult to engage students. This included practical/construction craft courses and apprenticeships. These areas needed to be targeted as well as PT and HE networked courses.

The Committee noted the very positive report and congratulated all those involved in this sector leading piece of work.

6. **HISA END OF YEAR UPDATE**

A report by the Student President provided an update of HISA Inverness activity for the academic year 2018-19. The main areas covered related to

- Class reps - where the number of student reps and the number engaged in training had exceeded the annual targets. The new format of SRC meetings had helped stabilise the attendance numbers from February onwards
- HISA awards – Inverness College was on track to have the highest number of nominations by students across the partnership for the 11 award categories
- Student elections – Across the partnership, a record number of students voted in the elections and 15 of the 19 officers elected were female (79% compared with 47% the previous year)
- Student voice in partnership – a student rep guide would help reps understand their role and resolve student issues more efficiently
- Collective responsibility – a “10 steps to wellbeing” style guide had been produced which, as part of a wider project, aimed to improve the mental health of students

- Student life – student discounts were now available across the city and a new website was currently being promoted online. The inaugural Graduation Ball had been hailed as a resounding success.
- Students' events and opportunities included – 2 fresher's fayres held with over 120 stalls attending, promoting goods services and opportunities, 16 affiliated and operating clubs and societies, drama society show at Eden Court, adventure weekend and planned residences summer excursion.

The Committee noted the excellent progress made in the three focus areas and thanked the Student President for a very positive and comprehensive report.

7. **STUDENT SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT SURVEY**

A report by the Quality Manager provided college wide analysis of the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey. The key findings were as follows:-

- There had been an increase in the overall response rate from 42% to 47%
- Overall satisfaction remained high at 90%
- Satisfaction and response rates were higher for FE students than HE students
- Part time students were more satisfied than full time students
- Younger students were more satisfied than older students
- ICUHI sat above the benchmark for five of the ten SFC questions (last published sector data 2017/18).
- The impact of staffing changes or absences appeared to have impacted on the level of satisfaction within some curriculum areas
- Satisfaction with teaching methods varied across curriculum areas, levels, and modes. Where approaches worked well, students were quick to recognise the value of the teaching method.
- There was greater clarity about the Student Association and the visibility of the class rep

There was considerable discussion on the key findings and the main area of focus which would be engaging students and capturing the student voice to ensure that the College achieved a high quality and consistent approach across learning and teaching. The main theme across learning and teaching was the inclusive classroom which was aimed at closing the attainment gap, thus ensuring a consistent baseline level of teaching practice which would, in turn, mitigate the difficulties encountered across certain groups and lead to overall quality enhancement. Quality improvements had been embedded across the college and the next stage would be to focus on qualitative improvements. This would be a key role for the new Depute Heads of School.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that an interim report on the recommendations from the survey be submitted to the Committee at its meeting in December.

8. **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

A joint Report by the Depute Principals Planning and Student Experience and Academic Development provided an update on student recruitment in 2018-19.

The current student activity indicated that:

- The current forecast for FE activity was that the college would exceed its credit target by a small margin.

- HE undergraduate recruitment (FTE) was forecast to be 14 FTE (<1%) below the funded undergraduate target at the year-end.
- The College's taught postgraduate provision had exceeded target but the financial impact was not yet available.

An analysis of FE enrolments and HE FTE by fee status shows the following:

- FE enrolments included 166 from the EU, 12 from the rest of the UK and 11 international
- Overall HE FTE included 109.3 from the EU, 29.5 from the rest of the UK and 8 international.

The Depute Principal Academic Development advised that the international recruitment arrangements for HE continued to be addressed with EO. The June/July recruitment period was critical for enrolling international students for the next academic year.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

9. **STUDENT RETENTION**

Student retention and student success was a priority in terms of the ongoing monitoring of programmes across the college and a report by the Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience provided a summary and analysis of retention rates for students in 2018-19 across levels and modes of study.

Overall, student retention appeared to have improved this academic year based on current data. Early retention on full-time FE programmes had improved significantly, although further retention had fallen slightly. Retention on full-time HE programmes was better at this stage in the year than it was at the end of 2017-18.

The new Personal Development Advisor (PDA) roles would support students throughout the academic year and it was hoped that this would have a positive impact on the further withdrawal rates. They would also support those students who had achieved partial success.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

10. **LEARNER JOURNEY REVIEW AND SCHOOLS SENIOR PHASE**

A joint Report by the Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience and Director of Student Experience provided information on the Scottish Government's Learner Journey Review and the Highland Senior Phase Strategy. It explained these initiatives, how they were related, and highlighted their importance to the college's strategic direction.

Included in the Highland Senior Phase Strategy and as part of the widening access agenda, the College had heavily promoted the fact that applications would be particularly welcome from specific priority groups – care experienced young people, young carers, under-represented gender and pupils from the most deprived postcodes (SIMD 10). Applications had been prioritised from school pupils from these learner groups for Senior Phase programmes and some positive impact had been seen. Strategic endorsement was required from Highland Council to take these projects forward with a review of funding

methodologies seen as a priority. It was planned that the curriculum review would be extended to include the schools programme in early autumn

The Committee asked a number of questions about the support given to ASN students at the end of their studies and were advised that a new Transitions Coordinator role would support students into employment. To further develop a joined up approach, it was recognised that industry also needed to do more to support students make this transition.

The Committee welcomed this ambitious transition project.

11. ACADEMIC AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

A joint Report by the Depute Principal Academic Development and the Director of Curriculum report reflected on the developments in-hand for the next two academic sessions and was focused on FE and HE. The report highlighted the academic school structure with the new Head of and Depute Head posts and the main curriculum developments which were aligned with the new structure. Most schools, with the exception of Engineering Technology, had clearly identified priority areas for development. An Engineering Task Force, led by Dr. Gary Campbell (VP: Strategic Developments) had been due to report to the recent Partnership Council meeting.

In answering a question by the Chair on achieving targets, the Depute Principal Academic Development suggested that if the identified priority areas were progressed as planned, the college would achieve marginal gains and build capacity for 20/21 rather than for 19/20.

The Committee expressed concern that the Engineering Technology review had taken a considerable time to complete and **AGREED** that Dr. Campbell be invited to speak to the Committee at its next meeting in September.

12. RISK REGISTER ANNUAL REVIEW

A report by the Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience provided details of the risks held within the college risk register and which fell within the remit of the committee.

The Committee considered each of the risks presented and **REQUESTED** the Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience to make the agreed amendments to the risk scores and the text as appropriate for risks
09 - College fails to identify and take opportunities for development and progression

18 - College fails to maintain improvement in performance targets against national targets and outcomes

20 - College does not achieve allocated HE student number targets

It was **AGREED** that risk 31 would be discussed at a future meeting.

13. LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE SELF EVALUATION AND COMMITTEE CHAIR EVALUATION EXERCISES

To comply with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges and good governance best practice, an annual evaluation of the Committee and of the Committee Chair required to be undertaken.

The Committee collectively, completed the annual committee evaluation exercise.

The Chair left the meeting

The Committee collectively, completed the annual Committee Chair evaluation exercise.

The following items were included in the agenda for noting only and therefore no discussion took place at the meeting.

14. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Report by the Quality Manager provided an update to the Quality Enhancement Plan.

15. CURRICULUM PLANNING AUDIT REPORT – RECOMMENDATIONS

The Internal audit report on curriculum planning had been completed and had been presented to the Audit Committee

16. PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION ON LEARNING AND TEACHING (PDLT REPORT)

A report by the Quality Manager presented a summary of the PDLT activity for AY 2018-19.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 24 SEPTEMBER 2019 @ 4.30PM

Signed by the Chair: _____

Date: _____

Outstanding Actions from Learning and Teaching Committee

4 December 2018				
Item	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actioned
Supporting student carers policy	Monitoring of policy to be included within future reports on the access and inclusion strategy	Head of Student Services	Future reports on access and inclusion strategy	
Safeguarding annual report	Resource implications of the increasing number of disclosures to be included in next annual report	Head of Student Services	Dec 2019	
Curriculum review	Review to consider each of the key strategic risks and that stress testing and scenario planning to be undertaken as part of the review process	Head of Curriculum	Ongoing	
4 June 2019				
Item	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actioned
Minutes/Complaints report	E mail committee with information on which sectors the appeals had been made.	Quality manager	By end June	
SSS	Interim report on the recommendations from the survey be submitted to future meeting	Quality Manager	Meeting - December 2019	
Academic and Curriculum development	Invite Dr Gary Campbell to speak to the next meeting	Board Secretary	July invite for meeting in Sept	
Risk Register annual review	Risk 31	Dir of Res & Inn	Next meeting in Sept	

BoM LTR

Subject/Title:	UHI Common Policy – FE Essential Skills
Author: [Name and Job title]	Craig Lowther, PDM Education
Meeting:	BoM LTR
Meeting Date:	24 September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	15 July 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	<p>The FE Essential Skills Policy is part of a suite of new policy/procedures to be drafted as part of the new common policy environment.</p> <p>The new policy has been drafted by an across partnership group and has had IC UHI representation and endorsement.</p>
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	The committee is asked to approve the new FE Essential Skills Policy for progression to the next stage of approval.
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Following approval from BoM LTR committee, the policy will be progressed to full BoM for final approval.

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Confidential/Non confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes/No		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

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

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

[Report title]

Executive summary

Background information



Inverness College UHI/University of the Highlands and Islands

Further Education Essential Skills Policy

POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Responsible Office/ Department:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Responsible Committee:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Review Officer (Post):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date policy approved:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy due for review:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

For all our up-to-date policies, please visit our [website](#).

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request.

Policy Summary

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

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The policy sets out to create a coherent and comprehensive approach to support and optimise the regional and local delivery of Essential Skills in the Academic Partners of the University of the Highlands and Islands providing further education.
- 1.2 Created to meet government policy and facilitate the improvement of outcomes for all students, the policy will raise the profile of Essential Skills amongst both the staff and students. Reinforcement of Essential Skills in the curriculum and colleges will highlight the value of these skills and their lifelong role in development and achieving positive destinations.
- 1.3 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) state in their 2013 report, [Skilled for Life](#), that: 'Skills transform lives, generate prosperity and promote social inclusion. Without the right skills, people are kept at the margins of society, technological progress does not translate into economic growth, and enterprises and countries can't compete in today's globally connected and increasingly complex world'. The University of the Highlands and Islands and its partner colleges aim to be at the forefront of promoting the benefits of skills for students and staff.
- 1.4 All colleges are encouraged to be innovative in their approach to essential skill delivery, and to share successful practice with other Academic Partners. The policy recognises that no single approach or methodology is superior to another, and the optimum delivery will depend on the individual students, subject and local context.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework ("SCQF")** – SCQF is the national qualifications framework for Scotland. The SCQF helps education and training providers of all kinds to identify the level that has been studied in a particular subject and make it easier to transfer credit point between different learning programmes.
- 2.2 **Essential Skills** – as set out in [Skills for Scotland](#), Essential Skills consists of the following:
 - **Personal and learning Skills** that enable individuals to become effective lifelong learners;
 - **Literacy, digital literacy and numeracy;**
 - **The five Core Skills** (see 2.4);
 - **Employability skills** that prepare individuals for employment rather than for a specific occupation;
- 2.3 **Vocational skills** are specific to a particular occupation or sector.
- 2.4 **Core Skills** – As developed by Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the five Core Skills are the skills most needed in many work environments. In addition to SQA, other awarding bodies may be used for Core Skill accreditation.

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

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

3. Purpose

- 3.1 This policy sets out a robust and transparent framework for the delivery of Essential Skills in Further Education programmes of study.
- 3.2 The policy will create a parity of experience for students across the partnership, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to develop the skills required for employment and academic progression. Essential Skills play a crucial role in the academic and holistic development of students, and complement the vocational content and technical skills developed on courses. Development of Essential Skills is priority for each college, across all curriculum areas and involving all staff and students.
- 3.3 Development of Essential Skills will be explicit in delivery across all programmes in the Further Education setting.

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

3.4 Research and Evidence

- Skills Development Scotland, in their 2017 publication [Jobs and skills in Scotland](#), emphasise the importance of skills: 'Where skills shortages and skills gaps occurred, these were most often caused by a lack of soft skills, for example the ability to manage tasks and people. This suggests that there is a need to place more emphasis on soft skills throughout the education and training system to ensure that it delivers workers who have sufficient hard and soft skills.' This emphasises the importance of increasing the profile and delivery of Essential Skills alongside the vocational content of courses.
- Development of Essential Skills plays a vital role in the lives of individuals during and after their college course. [National Numeracy estimate](#) that the cost of poor numeracy to the United Kingdom economy is at least £20.2 billion, equivalent to 1.3% of GDP.
- A House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report, [Digital Skills Crisis](#), stated: 'Digital skills are becoming increasingly essential for getting access to a range of products and services. However, there is a digital divide where up to 12.6 million of the adult UK population lack basic digital skills. An estimated 5.8 million people have never used the internet at all. This digital skills gap is costing the UK economy an estimated £63 billion a year in lost additional GDP.'
- [The Open University Business Barometer 2018](#) reported that it had cost organisations across the UK £6.3 billion to plug the skills gap, with talented workers benefitting from an additional £2.16 billion due to their in-demand skills. 28% of business reported applicants lacking IT skills, and 20% reported candidates lacking soft skills (e.g. communication and problem solving); these areas are three of the five Core Skills.
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise [research](#) showed that 73% of businesses in the region anticipated difficulty in recruiting young talent with highly sought after skills such as

communication, being a good team player, a desire to continue their learning/skills development and the ability to work independently.

- 3.5 The Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work agenda set out in [Curriculum for Excellence](#) establishes the development of essential skills in our students as a priority. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has also emphasised that colleges have a significant role to play in implementing the Government's skills strategy and college performance will be assessed in this regard through the Education Scotland Quality Framework, How Good is Our College.
- 3.6 A key element of this policy is that Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology will be included in and certificated in all full time Further Education programmes of study (or reflected in a student's Skills Profile). Certification can be through any awarding body or college certificate. It is expected that Problem Solving and Working with Others will be included but not necessarily certificated.
- 3.7 For part time courses, teaching staff will emphasise to students the importance of skills, identifying when skills are being taught and highlight transferability of skills. Opportunities will also be created through curriculum design to promote skills development.
- 3.8 Skills development allows students to meet entry requirements for higher level courses, facilitates pathways into employment and promotes progression in learning.
- 3.9 Diagnostic assessment activity will be carried out during the recruitment process or at the beginning of the course. It provides valuable information to ensure that students are supported appropriately in their learning by adapting materials and setting the initial pace of learning.

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

- 3.10 **Recognition of Prior Learning** – Regardless of the Core Skills requirement of the main course, students will always be encouraged to improve their Core Skills profile for Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology. For example, students who require Level 5 and already have Level 5 will be supported to work towards achieving Level 6 through extension or bridging activity. Students who have already achieved Level 6 will be supported to fulfil their credit requirements with alternative modules.

4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all further education programmes of study, normally up to and including SCQF Level 6. There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses for the purposes of the UHI Partnership.
- 4.2 The following courses are exempt from the requirement for certificated Core Skills set out in 3.6:
 - Short full-time courses (on a discretionary basis in Academic Partners)
 - Part-time courses
 - Commercial courses
 - Leisure courses

5. Notification

- 5.1 All staff will be notified of changes to the Essential Skills policy through a range of methods, including but not limited to staff meetings, intranet, Academic Partner websites as per normal policy update processes.
- 5.2 Academic Partners will be notified of any changes, allowing sufficient time to for updates to be made.
- 5.3 Students will be notified of changes by academic partners working with HISA.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of everyone in the college to create a positive environment for both students and staff to develop Essential Skills (including Core Skills).
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of managers of all levels within the college to enable staff to deliver this policy, where necessary directing resource or facilitating changes to curriculum and teaching. This includes ensuring all staff are appropriately skilled and qualified for their role.
- 6.3 It is the responsibility of vocational teams to design courses that include Essential Skills and Core Skills as appropriate, following curriculum design principles.
- 6.4 It is the responsibility of Core Skills and vocational teams to collaborate to include the three certificated Core Skills in programme design, and to adopt an appropriate delivery model for Core Skills on their course and offer support to meet internal and external verification requirements.
- 6.5 It is the responsibility of students to proactively engage in Essential Skills learning, and work with all staff to ensure new skills are developed or existing skills reinforced.
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of the Academic Partner to ensure any students in scope of the policy undertake any relevant diagnostic assessments to ascertain Core Skill levels.

7. Legislative Framework

[Further and Higher Education \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Education Scotland – Curriculum for Excellence](#)

[Skills for Learning, Skills for Life, and Skills for Work \(2009\)](#)

[Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy \(2014\)](#)

[Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy \(2007\)](#)

8. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

[College Development Network – The role of essential skills in Scottish national education policy](#)

[Education Scotland – How Good is our College?](#)

[Highlands and Islands Enterprise – Business Panel Survey: Workforce, Skills and Young Talent 2018](#)

[Scottish Funding Council - Outcome Agreement Guidance \(2016\)](#)

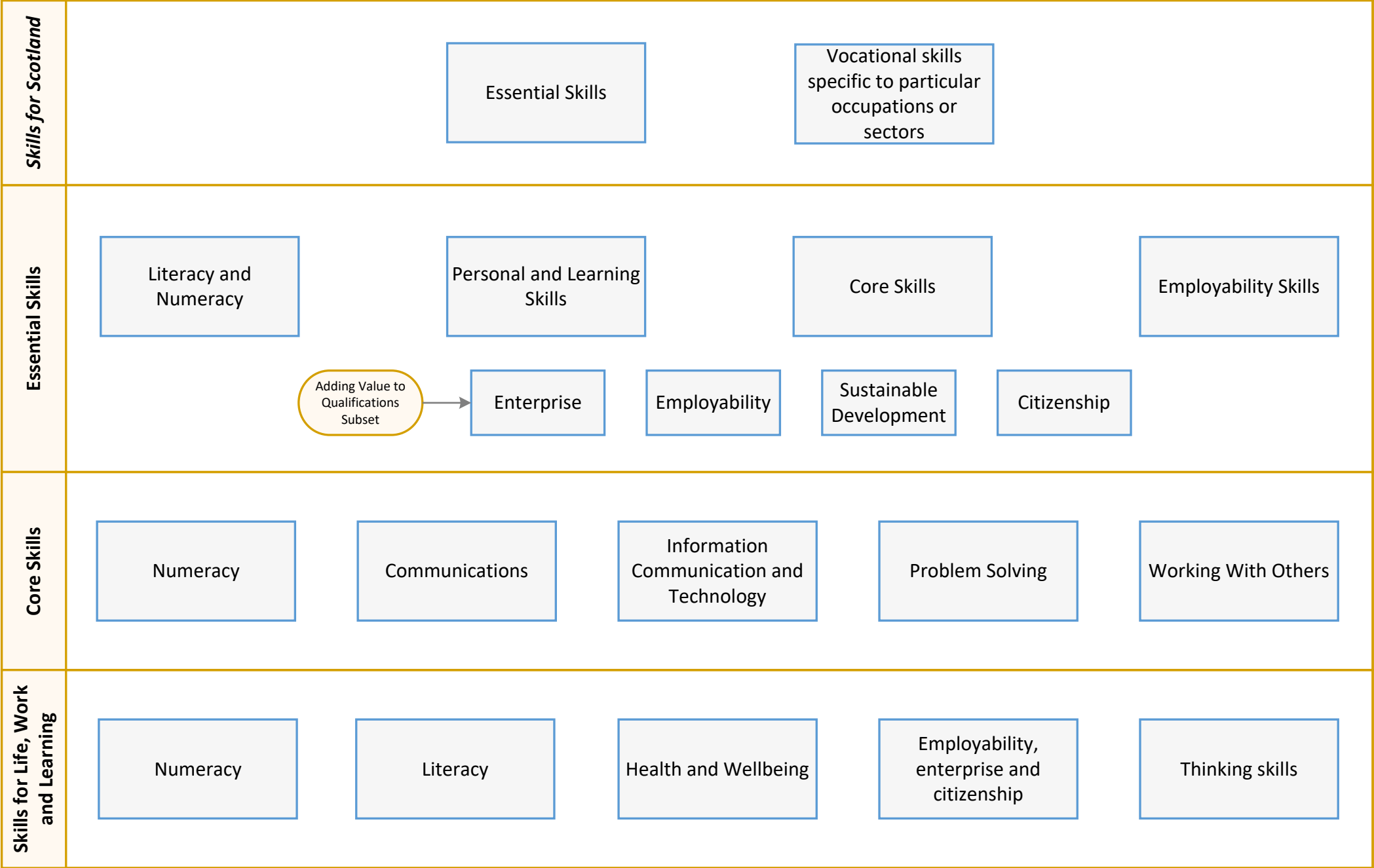
[Scottish Government: Costs of Learning Student Funding Guide](#)

9. Version Control and Change History

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

DRAFT

Appendix 1 - Skills Map



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These definitions are based on the SQA Combined Core Skills Framework.

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Core Skill: Numeracy

To cope with the demands of everyday life, including work and study, people need to be comfortable with numbers and with graphs, symbols, diagrams, and calculators. The skills needed for this involved interpreting, processing, and communicating, quantifiable and spatial information.

Component: Using Graphical Information

- This is the ability to interpret and communicate quantifiable information that is given in writing, diagrams, or pictures. Attainment levels range from:
 - Working in familiar contexts with simple, specified tables, graphs and shapes
 - to:
 - Working in more abstract contexts and with more complex graphical information which may require some analysis, and where decisions have to be made on effective ways to communicate the information

Component: Using Number

- This is the ability to apply numerical and other relevant mathematical and statistical skills. Attainment levels range from:
 - Working confidently with basic numbers in everyday contexts,
to:
 - Working confidently with more complex numerical concepts and techniques in more abstract contexts

Core Skill: Information and Communication Technology

Information and Communication Technology is concerned with the electronic collection, organisation, analysis, presentation, and communication of information. It encompasses all media types and formats as well as all relevant tools.

The Core Skill focuses on the ability to use information and communication technology to process information in a variety of ways which will be necessary for further learning in work and in the home. It is not about developing IT specialists who will act as first-line support for others or install specialist systems.

Component: Accessing Information

- This is the ability to use information and communication technology to support a range of information-accessing activities. Attainment levels range from:
 - Accessing basic information and communication technology to perform simple processing of familiar data and to select information from a local database or a simple internet search,
to:
 - Working confidently with more complex numerical concepts and techniques in more abstract contexts

Component: Providing/Creating Information

- This is the ability to use information and communication technology to provide, create and process information. Attainment levels range from:
 - Using familiar application software to carry out very simple processing tasks and providing/creating very simple information technology,
to:
 - Using a range of information and communication technology in unfamiliar contexts, observing security procedures and the needs of other users. Evaluating and sharing information.

Core Skill: Working with Others

The fact that Working with Others is a Core Skill emphasises the importance of co-operation and teamwork in social, learning, and working situations. Working with Others has two components: Working Co-operatively with Others, and Reviewing Co-operative Contribution.

While achieving a shared goal is the main focus, co-operation with others should be developed through all stages of any collaboration.

Reviewing your own contribution and learning through reflection also has a wider application to personal development.

Component: Working Co-operatively with Others

- This is about using interpersonal skills appropriately, to recognise and value the roles of other people, taking responsibility for your own contribution, and supporting co-operative working in appropriate ways. Attainment levels range from:
 - Identifying, with support, your own role and the roles of other people, and helping to achieve a shared goal, to:
 - Analysing the roles and behaviour of others and adapting your own behaviour to deal with the complexity of challenging and changing dynamics

Component: Reviewing Co-operative Contribution

- This is the ability to discuss the process of working co-operatively with other people, reflecting on and reviewing the collaboration. This might include commenting or resolving issues and handling other people's behaviour.
- Learners should evaluate the outcomes, identify the value of their own contribution, and reflect on any personal learning and development that may be needed to enhance their contribution to future collaborative work. Attainment levels range from:
 - Identifying a strength and weakness in the way you helped achieve things together, suggesting how your own contribution could be strengthened in the future, to:
 - Identifying and gathering evidence, critically evaluating your own contribution, and making appropriate recommendations about future learning and contributions

Core Skill: Problem Solving

The three components of this skill are the stages involved in tackling issues and problems in personal, social, and work contexts. They are often used in sequence, and repeatedly. Each component can also be a focus of activity in its own right.

Component: Critical Thinking

- Critical Thinking is about using analysis and reasoning to make decisions and to create or suggest ideas, courses of action, and strategies.

Attainment levels range from:

- Working in situations that involve a few, easily-identified factors set in familiar contexts,

to:

- Analysing the roles and behaviour of others and adapting your own behaviour to deal with the complexity of challenging and changing dynamics.

Component: Planning and Organising

- Planning and Organising is the ability to plan a task, taking account of available resources, and to manage the task to completion. Attainment levels range from:

- Creating plans involving a small number of steps and using familiar resources,

to:

- Efficient management of a more complex plan, which may include a review of strategy and a degree of research in identifying the resources to be used to deal with difficulties.

Component: Reviewing and Evaluating

- Reviewing and Evaluating is the ability to reflect on and review the process of tackling issues and problems, to evaluate the outcomes, and to identify where alternative strategies might have been used.

Attainment levels range from:

- Identifying a strength and weakness in a strategy,

to:

- Identifying and gathering evaluation evidence, evaluating strategies, and making appropriate recommendations.

Appendix 2 – Delivery Models

	Discrete	Contextualised	Integrated	Embedded	Cross-Assessed
Outline	Groups are timetabled to attend formal non-contextualised classes with generic teaching and discrete summative assessment activities.	Similar to discrete provision but with some delivery and/or assessment activities set in a vocational context.	Where appropriate, delivery and/or assessment may be undertaken by either a Core Skills specialist within a vocational class or by a vocational specialist within a Core Skills class (or a mix).	As per SQA guidance, Core Skills can be achieved where they are embedded in SQA qualifications.	Where appropriate, tools of assessment are created jointly by Core Skills specialist and the vocational specialist, and assessed jointly.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy to timetable. - Easy to track/monitor. - Facilitates transferability. 	<p>As for discrete, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May provide greater motivation. - Can help to emphasise importance/relevance. 	<p>As for contextualised, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can foster greater shared practice and better relationships between teaching staff. 	<p>Automatic certification is awarded on completion of a vocational unit identified as carrying embedded Core Skills.</p>	<p>As for integrated, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners can achieve multiple credits from one activity.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can appear to be non-vocationally relevant. - Difficult to motivate certain groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive to establish. - Difficult to tailor levels appropriately. - Not possible for all components of all core skills. - Contingencies required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive (team teaching). - Timetable challenges. - Contingencies required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-discrete provision can reduce the impact of undertaking Core Skills and may reduce opportunities for specific skill development in a more widely applied context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive at planning stage time. - Timetabling. - Marking.

Department/Section:

Date of Assessment:

Review Due:

Author/Owner:

Signature:

Date:

Step 1

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

New ☐
Revised ☐
Existing ☐

Who will be affected?

Who will be consulted?

Evidence available:

Step 2

Potential Positive/Negative/Neutral Impact Identified. P, N, N/I	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage/Civil Partnership*	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation
Eliminating Discrimination									
Advancing Equality of Opportunity.									
Promoting Good Relations.									

Step 3

Action to be taken:

Summary of EIA Outcome – please tick

No further action to be carried out ☐
Amendments or changes to be made ☐
Proceed with awareness of adverse impact ☐
Abandon process – Stop and Rethink ☐

Please forward completed EIA forms to Nicholas Oakley, Governance and Policy Officer.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Student Support Services Report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Director of Student Experience
Meeting:	Learning & Teaching Committee
Meeting Date:	24 th September '19
Date Paper prepared:	10 th September '19
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an overview of some of the key support services, development and challenges
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	<i>To make IC UHI a study destination of choice, providing an excellent student experience across every aspect of the student journey and maintaining high rates of student satisfaction, achievement and positive outcomes</i>
Resource implications:	No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

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

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

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

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

Student Support Services Overview

Background information

Student support services encompass:

- Access and Progression – widening access agenda; transition support for vulnerable learners; schools' engagement / Senior Phase programmes; on-course on-going support through the new Personal Development Adviser team (FE FT only)
- Student Admissions
- Student Funding
- Wellbeing and Learning Support
- Learning Resource Centre, Library and Skillzone (study support)
- Front of House and Administration Team
- Student disciplinary

The Access and Inclusion strategy is the key policy driver for the student support services and the onus to provide equity of opportunity to help close the attainment gap across learner groups.

The front facing student support teams have **undergone significant internal review** since 2017-18 and have also been subject to revisions in policy and procedure. This has been as a result of many factors including a **growing awareness** at a national level around the importance of **services to support learning in learner success**. This shift has been consolidated with the inclusion of Services to Support Learning as one of the four aspects for evaluation in the How Good is our College, Education Scotland quality framework in 2017.

Student support services have also been the focus of the **common policy environment** to bring about equivalence in approach and experience across the UHI partnership -

- FE Admissions
- Tertiary Learning Support
- Promoting a Positive Learning Environment (Disciplinary)
- Fitness to Study
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Student Support Funds
- Mental Health Strategy

The following provides a brief overview of *some* of the services as well as the trends and associated challenges emerging.

Student Admissions:

Challenges - the Admissions team are being looked on to cover more networked admissions including –

- PGDE Primary and Secondary for all UHI partners and Borders Council;
- Oral Health Science for Inverness, Lewis and Dumfries;
- BSc (Hons) Geography
- Optometry for Inverness and Moray

The team also handle any PVG requirements for a variety of courses making applications to Disclosure Scotland. Although the number of PVG applications has not significantly increased over the last 3 years, we need to be mindful of resource as we develop new curriculum and take over more networked admissions which may have this as a requirement. This will be the case for Optometry for example. In AY 18-19 we revised our PVG process for continuing students who still require their PVG to be checked / updated. This streamlined process has also led to a significant reduction in costs. 198 PVG applications were processed in 2018-19.

We have had an **increasing number of applicants who are under the supervision of Criminal Justice** and Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and who require a risk assessment at point of application. This was captured in the safeguarding report which came to committee in December '18, our next annual report is due in December.

Student Funding:

Student funding has been a focus since 2017-18 to ensure we **front load the funding process** to secure funding for individual's as part of their pre-start journey. Through a variety of mechanisms, we are now confident that funding applications are processed timely and, in most cases, ahead of course start.

Challenges - student funding has faced significant change over AY 18-19 which has led to a need for new processes and procedures being developed. Significant change was made by Scottish Funding Council in June '18 to Bursary guidelines which came into effect in AY 18-19. Despite new processes being put in place to meet this change, we have seen an impact on the **complexity and workload around making funding decisions** which are now based on 'engagement' and not straight attendance. We have also inevitably seen an **increase in the bursary payments** being made to students.

AY 18-19 also saw new guidelines around bursary for care experienced learners which has seen the payment increased for individuals. Whilst being a positive step, this change has led to **unintended consequences and difficulties for individual students** and has also been resource intensive to oversee.

The introduction of **Universal Credit in AY 2017-18** has caused the college and our students' difficulty due to the inconsistent responses and outcomes from the Department of Work and Pensions. This has impacted on our decision making around funding for individuals. **Future challenges** will come if student loans are introduced for FE students.

Wellbeing and Learning Support:

Mental ill-health is an ever-increasing challenge to learning and often has overlap with other additional support needs. In AY 2019-20 we have taken the opportunity to redefine our Additional Support Needs team to encompass student wellbeing and mental health. The **Wellbeing and Learning Support team** therefore came into being in August '19. Bringing the two facets of support for learning together is very timely.

Challenges – there are increasing expectations of colleges and HEIs around scrutiny of outcomes and **closing the attainment gap** between learner groups which has driven the SFC intensification agenda since AY 2017-18. Through the widening access agenda and through promotion of our positive declaration environment, we have seen an **increase in the number of students coming to college who would not previously have accessed formal education**, including from the deaf and blind communities; wheelchair users; and those with complex mental health and or other complex support needs. This diversity among the student body has been very positive but has brought some **challenges around making reasonable adjustments** as well as availability and cost of interpreters and adaptations to the building. This is something we need to be cognisant of as we expand as an inclusive institution attracting more students with complex needs and as the provision of education by third sector providers shrinks.

The HE:FE ratio of those disclosing a support need and coming forward for support is changing – there is a **clear upward trend in support needs being disclosed amongst HE students** which creates the need for an assessment by the team for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). This increasing pressure on the team has been compounded by UHI taking over the Nursing degrees and IC UHI providing the student support for the Inverness based students.

Access and Progression:

This team encompasses a very broad remit and have seen an increase in national initiatives and developments to respond to over the course of the last three years – Gender based violence; free sanitary products; priority status students, Learner Journey

Review, to name but a few. In **AY 2019-20 we moved to a new model of student support** for our FE FT students. This has been in response to the growing needs of students; the inability of lecturing staff to meet this growing demand in the time assigned; and the need for a specialist skill set to support individuals. Through releasing 'support' time back into the curriculum we have been able to recruit a team of **Professional Development Advisers (PDAs) who provide full time support to students** across each curriculum area. This new model is in its infancy but it is anticipated that the full time nature of the roles will be of benefit to students and have a positive impact on both our retention and attainment rates. We need to monitor how this new model is embedded and look at whether this should be extended to include HN programmes.

As part of our widening access agenda and to meet the demands of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and the Learner Journey Review, we **continue to intensify our work with the schools** across the local authority. We have learners enrolled this year from **21 of the 29 schools** in Highland and have also, for the first time, **engaged with the home educated community**. In the recruitment cycle for Senior phase programmes for AY 19-20, we heavily promoted our widening access agenda to **prioritise applications from care experienced young people, young carers, SIMD 10** (Inverness High School) and from the **under-represented gender** on specific courses. This has had some success but will continue to be a priority:

AY	18/19	19/20
Inverness High School:		
Applications	41	57
Offers made	19	32
Waiting List	10	12
Rejections	9	8
Did not attend interview	3	5
Enrolled		40
% conversion from application to enrolment	46%	70%

Applications for AY 19-20 from all schools for programmes with severe gender imbalance:

Programme	Applications		Offers		Enrolments	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Civil Engineering	4	10	2	7	4 (31%)	9 (69%)
Higher Environmental Science	6	2	3	1	5 (71%)	2 (29%)
Automotive Skills SFW	1	8	4	23	4 (13%)	26 (87%)
Rural Skills	3	10	2	9	3 (25%)	9 (75%)
FA Children and Young People	2	8	2	9	10 (83%)	2 (17%)
Higher Care	1	7	7	1	7 (87%)	1 (13%)
Higher Childcare & Development	1	33	9	1	33 (97%)	1 (3%)
SFW Early Education & Childcare	58	2	39	2	42 (95%)	2 (5%)
SFW Hairdressing	25	3	16	2	17 (89%)	2 (11%)
NPA Cosmetology	58	2	19	0	19 (100%)	0

Challenges – despite our direct schools’ engagement, with both primary and secondary, we are very much challenged by the **impact of significant and ongoing re-structuring within the Highland Council**. We have never been able to fulfil our applications for school-college programmes due to the Council restricting our numbers, due to transport costs, and thus make offers to approx. only half of those who apply. With increasing budget cuts in Highland, we are therefore looking for **alternative ways of growing our Senior Phase** opportunities for pupils including:

- Increasing our online / virtual delivery
- Increasing our ‘in school’ bespoke delivery
- Different delivery models for the Foundation Apprenticeships
- Creating a curriculum hub model across the five city schools

Student Disciplinary:

The current IC UHI Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is due to be replaced later this semester by the new Promoting a Positive Learning Environment Policy and Procedure which is common across the partnership. This will supplement our positive approach to

working with students as partners under the umbrella of the Partnership Agreement. We have had a real focus on **developing collective responsibility** with our students over the course of AY 2018-19 alongside campaigns such around gender-based violence. We have witnessed a **significant reduction in the number of incidents warranting disciplinary action**. Whilst it is not clear if there is a link to the Partnership Agreement and to the campaigns which have run, it is useful to note the **potential correlation** between this reduction and the focus on working more closely in partnership with students and in promoting respectful behaviours.

Academic Year	STAGE 1 Formal Verbal Warning	STAGE 2 Formal Written Warning	STAGE 3 Exclusion from Studies
2017-18	16	12	7
2018-19	1	6	3

We have identified two areas which we need to focus on with students to support behavioural / cultural change – gender-based violence and drugs. We are working in partnership with Rape and Sexual Abuse Service Highland (RASASH) to provide an input into curriculum areas – Police Scotland are scheduled to visit every FT FE group over the course of October / November to provide sessions on safe partying, social media and drug misuse; RASASH will be invited in to specific groups where we note there is potential for gender based violence, an approach which has been piloted in AY 18-19.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Academic and Curriculum Development September 2019
Author: [Name and Job title]	Ken Russell (Depute Principal – Academic Development) and Gill Berkeley (Director of Curriculum)
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	24 th September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	18 th September 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	This report, produced as a Power Point presentation, reflects the developments in-hand for the management of the academic schools. We present curriculum developments in the HE arena (especially at Masters level) alongside anticipated numbers (and in some instances, actuals where the (re)approved provision has commenced this academic year).
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	Strategic Aim: Opportunity & Growth in the Curriculum Strategic Aim: Opportunity & Growth in Research & Innovation Strategic Aim: Opportunity & Growth in Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue to develop our research, commercial and international income streams through relevant curriculum that is aligned to our strategic growth objectives
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Draws on discussions with internal (IC and UHI) stakeholders including SMT, Heads and Deputies, Subject Network Leaders as well as external ones such as ESP for the engineering developments. Additionally formal dialogue within Academic Planning and Development Committee.

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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START TOMORROW TODAY

Strategic Direction: Academic and Curriculum Development Ken Russell & Gill Berkeley



START TOMORROW TODAY

We simultaneously need to:

- Fulfil our Mission and deliver local economic impact
- Generate surplus on investments to be sustainable through re-investment in growth areas
- Operate within credit envelope for SFC funded delivery (marginal leeway)
- Grow income from full fee-paying students (currently this will be RUK and International students on HE programmes)
- Grow income through profitable commercial courses
- Grow income from research/innovation/knowledge exchange to maximise the research into teaching linkage to inform the curriculum

START TOMORROW TODAY

At the same time we need to:

- Maximise the utilisation of learning and teaching spaces without compromising Health & Safety or the learning and teaching experience
- Continue to use workload analysis to control staffing and maximise efficiency
- Challenge delivery models to ensure that we are cost effective
- Maximise the utilisation of staff without infringing contractual arrangements or causing well-being issues
- Make selective use of "supply staff" to support peaks in demand or provide specialist input

START TOMORROW TODAY

Current actions to achieve desired outcomes:

1. Greater emphasis on financial accountability for Schools
- Formal quarterly review of budgets and outturns (with Finance, Deputy Principal (AD) & Director of Curriculum).
 - Challenging the funding group that modules are in to maximise revenue from SFC (HE Programme Leaders and Subject Network Leaders).
 - Ensuring that proposed developments are fully scrutinised for costing purposes (Finance team & course development team).
 - Training & Development in financial management & procurement (APUC support) for Heads & Deputies.

START TOMORROW TODAY

Current actions to achieve desired outcomes - continued:

2. Tighter staff resource control
 - Enhanced information requirements for Staff Resource Requests to enable panel to be more effective in decision-making (Director of Organisation Development & requesting Head of School).
 - Making full use of workload analysis to determine if leavers should be replaced (Director of Curriculum & Heads).
 - Training and development on workload analysis and staff requests delivered by Director of Curriculum.
 - Ensuring that contractual remissions from teaching are managed through PDR process and intended outcomes are delivered (Heads and Deputes).

START TOMORROW TODAY

Current actions to achieve desired outcomes - continued:

3. Improving business processes
 - Improving MIS to support decision-making e.g. Automating the link between the Curriculum Plan and Workload Analysis (Director of Curriculum).
 - Improved use of databases to support curriculum development (HEIDI+ and SFC).
 - Enhancements to clarity of value proposition being developed (DP (AD) and Programme Leaders) to inform prospective students about studying at IC.

START TOMORROW TODAY

Current actions to achieve desired outcomes - continued:

4. Delivery efficiencies (including support for delivery)
 - Combining classes e.g. HN Built Environment – common first/second year to replace years 1 & 2 of degree
 - FT FE PDAs – more cost effective than using academics – in place for this academic session (Director of Student Experience)
 - Increasing use of trainer assessors – more cost effective than using academics (Director of Curriculum/Director of External Relations and Heads of School)
 - Increased scrutiny of procurement costs for consumables used in delivery (Finance + Director of Curriculum)

START TOMORROW TODAY

Update on International Recruitment Process:

- Steering Group established (2 meetings held to date to confirm ToR and Project Initiation Documentation)
- DP (AD) is work stream owner for Internationalising the Curriculum.
- DP (AD) has been working on Value Proposition (VP) for Forestry with Business Improvement Team and Head of Forestry – Initial target is Japan and this builds on a successful Scottish Experience with students from NODAI.
- Next VP steps will involve Construction courses.
- IC International Executive will also be involved in work streams.

START TOMORROW TODAY

UG Developments:

Optometry accreditation panel (London) 8th October 2019

BSc Software Development launched with IBM 11/9/19, intake 24 in September 2020; bid with SDS for Graduate Apprentice (GA) route. Further (GA) developments include:

- GA Engineering – Bid with SDS for approval, Curriculum Development Fellow post being advertised
- GA Business & Management – Bid with SDS – delivery dialogue underway via Subject Network Leader (SNL)
- GA Social Work – at scoping stage, dialogue with SNL
- GA Occupational Therapy – at scoping stage, dialogue with SNL

START TOMORROW TODAY

PG Developments – online:

Title	Initial Stage	Approval	Enrolment date proposed	Anticipated student numbers
MSc Oral Health Science	Programme team meeting Oct 19 to discuss feedback from advisory panel	Approval event 22nd January 2020	Students enrol September 2020	14(proposed)
MSc Engineering Scheme (networked)	Completed	Approval event took place Nov 2018	Students enrolled September 2019	1 @ICUHI – expect growth across network
Masters in Environmental Data Science	Completed	CDF recruited Approval in 19/20	September 2020	15 (proposed)

START TOMORROW TODAY

PG Developments – online continued:

Title	Initial Stage	Approval	Enrolment date proposed	Anticipated student numbers
MRes (Science Fiction and Fantasy)	Completed	Completed	September 2020	6 initially, due to dissertation supervision
PGCert in Heritage and Festival Management	AD0 and 1 completed and passed to SN	Date not yet agreed	September 2021	12 proposed for first intake
MSc HRM	Completed	Re-approved & no conditions	Enrolled September 2019	27

START TOMORROW TODAY

PG Developments – online continued:

Title	Initial Stage	Approval	Enrolment date proposed	Anticipated student numbers
MSc Psychology conversion	Completed	Approved subject to BPS SSR being satisfied	Enrolled September 2019	15FT + 2PT
MEd Critical Enquiry	Re-approved	Completed but with further developments in prospect	Enrolled in September 2019	29 to date

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Subject/Title:	Research centre succession planning
Author: [Name and Job title]	Melanie Smith Director Research and Innovation
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 th March 2019
Date Paper prepared:	26 th February 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	To present an update on the Research and Innovation activity against the strategy and KPIs...particularly with regard to potential challenges to aims for 2019/20.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	Research
Resource implications:	If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes/ No If yes, please specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - with regard to implications of a no-deal BREXIT - unsuccessful recruitment of replacement staff for key roles Operational
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a
Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	No

*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
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For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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Progress update in key areas

Research staffing

There have been a number of key staff changes in research over the last few months, resulting in a significant amount of time taken and resource to manage and mitigate impact:

- Critically, the senior researcher (population genomics) in the Rivers and Lochs Institute resigned his post at the start of June. Recruitment to replace has been underway, with a closing date for applications extended to the 16th September. Informal discussion with colleagues across the HE sector suggests that recruitment for specialist science roles, such as this one, are increasingly difficult to recruit to and it is thought BREXIT is a factor.
- The Research Development Facilitator (RDF) role has been very successful in furthering operational and day to day functions of research across all areas, and has been particularly important in working with the Finance and HR departments. The role holder unfortunately left the post at the end of June. Replacement recruitment resulted in two appointees to a job share. While this has been taking some time to settle in, it is now starting to work well.
- Research administrator – one half of the successful applicants for the RDF role was the research administrator – thus leaving the administrator role vacant. An opportunity was thus created to form new role of Depute PA SMT and Research. This role will be recruited over the next few weeks.
- RLI Director – recruitment for this role was planned to occur over the summer, however, with the unexpected resignation of the senior researcher, it was put on hold until applications for the SR position had closed. The intention is to progress with the Director position over the coming months, with a plan for that full time permanent position to be filled by spring 2019 at the latest (ensuring REF outputs are captured). The existing role holder has indicated he is happy to continue in his current contract until the new Director is in place.

Research Excellence Framework

- The target for ICUHI REF submission is 10fte. With changes in staffing in the RLI (see above) and a number of changes in staff in the academic teaching complement, it is unclear at this point in the year if this target will be reached. The second round of the staff scoping exercise is currently underway, so this position should be much clearer after the end of October.
- The UHI Mock REF was undertaken at the end of the Spring. It is clear that across the university there has been much progress in REF preparation, but there is still work to do on impact case studies, and ensure environment statements reflect a 'joined up' approach to research activity across the partnership. The REF is being led by the UHI VP Research and Impact. The IC Director of Research and Innovation is on the REF Managers Group and Core working Group.

Research projects

- Current projects continue to directly fund both fixed term and research permanent staff.
- There is considerable concern that a no deal BREXIT will result in funding being discontinued for some areas of European funding, notably NPA. While the UK Government have provided reassurance with regard to continuation of support for the H2020 programme, it is still unclear exactly how this would work under a no-deal scenario.
- ICUHI was very well placed to take advantage of the remainder of the H2020 programme and the new Horizon Europe programme, having put a lot of resource into networking and building upon existing collaborations. However, this strategy was only going to be even moderately successful under a deal with the EU. Alongside continuing engagement with valued EU partners, the IC strategy has also been to reach out to international connections...notably in New Zealand, Canada and South Africa.

Innovation and Knowledge Exchange

- ICUHI has been successful in securing one KT project in the last 6 months, with another application pending an outcome. There has also been a successful pilot innovation project with Forest Enterprise. Application to the second phase of this project was made at the end of August 2019.
- Innovation funding has become a focus for Scottish Government support, and ensuring research activity and research staff are able to take advantage of this funding, with appropriate support (for example in understanding of IP issues etc.) is being addressed.

Research postgraduates

- Three MRes students have successfully completed and been awarded their MRes in the last 6 months.
- There is increasing awareness of PGR health and wellbeing issues, particularly mental health and learning support. UHI Graduate School have been reviewing practice elsewhere and implementing greater support through a central support officer. However, it is clear from concerns raised by the PGRs at IC, that there is still a need for specialist support in local APs.

Research & Curriculum

- The two areas for research development focus in the curriculum for 19/20 are:
 - o Literature (with associated applied drama and arts)
 - o Education

Literature

- Four MRes (with a taught component) in literature were approved earlier in the year
 - o - MRes (Creative Practice)
 - o - MRes (Eco-Literature)
 - o - MRes (Renaissance Drama)
 - o - MRes (Science Fiction and Fantasy)
- The literature team will be submitted c.3 staff to the REF (exact number to be confirmed in the scoping exercise undertaken this Autumn)
- Objectives to grow the research activity of the team over 2019/20 are as follows:
 - o Becoming an approved area for award of research degrees
 - o Secure 3 research grants
 - o Attend international conferences

Education

- The teacher education team have moved into the Research hub to foster a closer connection with research and enable more immediate support for research development of the team
- Objectives to grow the research activity of the team over 2019/20
 - o Work with the team (and more widely with the research education leads in UHI) to implement a strategy for education research
 - o Submit 1 member of staff to the REF
 - o Support development of research grant applications to secure at least 1 in 2019/20

Funding

- Funding targets for 2019/20 are based on last year, with little anticipated growth in funding income over 2019/20.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Student Outcomes and Satisfaction Rates for 2018-19
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience
Meeting:	<i>Learning, Teaching and Research Committee</i>
Meeting Date:	24 September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	This report provides the committee with a provisional summary of high-level performance indicators (PI) relating to student outcomes and a summary of student satisfaction rates for the academic year 2018-19. At the time of writing, most of the outcomes have still to be finalised and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting on 24 September.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

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

Student Outcomes and Satisfaction Rates for 2018-19

Executive summary

The report provides a summary of provisional performance indicators (PI) for student outcomes and satisfaction rates for 2018-19.

Student outcomes are still in the process of being finalised. FE outcomes, for both full-time and part-time students, look to be similar to last year when they were among the highest in the sector. Overall pass rates for Higher and National 5 awards have fallen, although they are still above the sector average: national pass rates for these awards have also fallen.

Student satisfaction rates remain high overall, with the National Student Survey (NSS) returning a 3 point improvement.

Main body of information

The calculations used for student outcome PIs are those applied by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and by Education Scotland for all colleges in Scotland, enabling national benchmarking and the tracking of trends over time:

PI	Calculation
Early withdrawal	% of enrolled students leaving before 25% of course
Further withdrawal	% of enrolled students leaving between 25% and the end of course
Completed: partial success	% of enrolled students completing the course but not achieving the award or progressing
Completed: successful	% of enrolled students completing the course and achieving the award or progressing
The sum of all four PIs above = 100% (taking account of the rounding-up to whole numbers)	

It should be noted that the above PIs are used across colleges and not universities. Therefore, the national college data set for HE relates largely to HN awards and not degrees.

Student satisfaction is monitored and collated annually through a variety of mechanisms, including the Student Representative Council (SRC), focus groups and student surveys. The annual measures of student satisfaction are drawn from the National Student Survey (NSS) of final year HE students from qualifying programmes, and from the college's pre-exit student survey for all other students, now known as the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES). The NSS is a UK-wide survey of final year university students. The colleges FE returns from the SSES form its submission to the college sector national SSES return.

Provisional Student Outcomes

Note: all student outcomes have still to be audited through returns to the SFC and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and are be subject to change. The figures below were taken from the college system on 17 September 2019.

At the time of writing, only full-time FE outcomes are near final. A significant number of outcomes across the other levels and modes of attendance have still to be finalised. An update will be provided at the committee meeting on 24 September. A summary of provisional/current PIs across full-time and part-time, FE and HE programmes is provided in the table below.

LEVEL/ MODE	ENRs	EARLY WD %	FURTHER WD %	PARTIAL SUCCESS %	SUCCESS %	OUTCOMES TBC
FEFT	1254	6.79%	15.73%	7.11%	70.29%	1
FEPT	3364	2.59%	4.20%	5.42%	78.54%	311
HEFT	1528	4.65%	6.94%	0.00%	38.29%	943
HEPT	1072	1.96%	4.20%	2.43%	26.03%	767
TOTAL	7218	3.66%	6.78%	4.12%	60.77%	2022

At this stage in the data cleansing and resulting processes, only the full-time FE outcomes are near final (pending final return to SFC). Due to the nature and duration of some of the part-time provision, not all of the FE part-time outcomes will be reflected in the published data set for national benchmarking. The HE resits Boards concluded in early September and, at the time of writing, the final outcomes are not yet pulling through on the student records system.

Success rates on the college's full-time FE programmes look to have remained fairly static overall at around 70%, having been among the best in the sector in 2017-18. Part-time FE outcomes look on track to stay above sector levels in 2018-19.

As usual, the finalised outcomes and a further analysis of them will follow in due course and should be available in time for the full Board meeting in October.

Higher and National 5 Results

The overall pass rate for students taking Higher exams at the college this year was 64.5%, a drop of 9.5 points on last year. However, the national pass rate for students taking Higher awards at Scottish colleges fell by 4.7 points to 56.3%.

Higher passes	Overall pass rate			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
ICUHI	58%	69%	74%	64.5%
College sector	63%	67%	61%	56.3%

The overall pass rate for students taking National 5 awards at the college this year was 69%, a drop of 7 points from last year. The overall pass rate for all college students taking National 5 exams in Scotland also fell, by 3.4 points to 67.6%.

National 5 passes	Overall pass rate			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
ICUHI	74%	76%	76%	69.0%
College sector	68%	70%	71%	67.6%

The college sector results were released on the day this report was written and analysis by award is ongoing. However, Higher Psychology was the only area for concern for the college, with the pass rate dropping from 71% last year to 39% in 2018-19. From wider discussions, this issue seems to have been replicated across the sector and the national figures back this up – the national pass rate for 2018-19 is 37.7%.

Student Satisfaction Rates

Student satisfaction rates remain high overall. In terms of the SSES results, satisfaction rates remain high although both FE and HE rates fell slightly compared to 2017-18 (see the table below).

Overall satisfaction expressed in the NSS improved by 3 points to 83%. The overall rate for the university fell by 1 point to 84%, and is in line both the Scottish and UK sector levels.

Survey/level	Overall student satisfaction rate			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
SSES: FE	89%	87%	95%	93%
SSES: HE	87%	88%	90%	85%
NSS	82%	75%	80%	83%

The committee discussed the SSES findings at their June meeting. The Executive Office report on the NSS results is included in the items for noting on the agenda.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Strategies: review of progress
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience
Meeting:	<i>Learning, Teaching and Research Committee</i>
Meeting Date:	24 September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	<p>This report provides a summary of progress against the college strategies that come under the oversight of the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Innovation • Learning and Teaching (L&T) • Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QA&E) • Student Engagement (SE) • Access and Inclusion (A&I)
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

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

Strategies: review of progress

Executive summary

This report provides a brief summary of progress against the college strategies that come under the oversight of the committee:

- Research and Innovation
- Learning and Teaching (L&T)
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QA&E)
- Student Engagement (SE)
- Access and Inclusion (A&I)

The progress report on the Research and Innovation Strategy is contained within the research report (item 6 on the committee agenda). The committee is asked to refer to the papers for agenda items 10 and 11 as evidence of progress against the Student Engagement Strategy.

Each strategy identifies a number of key performance indicators (KPI), however the data to inform the KPIs is not yet complete. The accompanying KPI report will therefore come to the committee meeting in December.

Main body of information

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Curriculum development is addressed under item 5 on the committee meeting agenda.

The values of the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy have been embedded in a revised lesson observation process that has been adopted across the UHI partnership. The process is largely built on the existing Inverness PDLT model. The college's engagement in the Scottish Government's *College Improvement Project* (CIP) led to specific enhancements in pedagogy in a few areas including computing, forestry and hairdressing. The standardisation of teaching practice and technical skills in hairdressing had a significant impact on the SVQ3 programmes, with student success rates rising from 62% to 96% in 2018-19.

Success rates on FE programmes remain high overall, although it is disappointing that they have not improved further on last year. HE outcomes are pending at the time of writing. Overall student satisfaction with the college experience also remains high overall. Early indications are of improved success rates for FE learners from most of the specific learner groups we are asked to monitor, with the exception of the 16-19 year old cohort. The planned work on an 'inclusive classroom' project to ensure all staff have the skills and approaches to ensure their practice is inclusive has not progressed sufficiently.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

The college continues to maintain a comprehensive and relevant set of information to help us maintain and improve the quality of the student experience. The Dashboard Reporting

Project aims to ensure that all data collected by and relevant to the university is collated and accessible via Power BI software. The project made a good start, however staff resignations in EO mean that progress has stalled until the recruitment of appropriately skilled personnel. Meanwhile, the college's own dashboard continues to provide essential information for planning, monitoring and review.

The self-evaluation process continues to develop and has been informed by the college's involvement in the CIP and a *sparqs* project. The Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan, published in January 2019 and endorsed by SFC and Education Scotland, carried one grade of *Excellent* and two of *Very Good*, the joint best grades in the sector. The Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award was maintained in December 2018, with no partial compliances, 24 areas of good practice and 20 instances of 'compliance plus' identified, illustrating sector leading practice. The new School structure will be utilised to ensure the further embedding of our already strong quality culture to effect further improvement of the quality of provision at programme and team level.

Access and Inclusion

The college is progressing well with regards to our ambitions for closing the attainment gap for specific learner groups. The holistic approach taken to supporting students as part includes the early identification of learner needs through promotion of a positive declaration environment and improvements to process which have resulted in individuals from priority groups being closely monitored through our INSIGHT system. Closing the attainment gap for these groups will continue to be an area of focus for AY 2019-20.

In AY 2018-19 we were successful in attracting more students from our most deprived postcodes (SIMD10) – a detailed report on all A&I KPIs will follow in due course. As part of our widening access agenda with schools we have heavily promoted that we particularly welcome applications from specific priority groups – care experienced young people, young carers, under-represented gender, SIMD 10. We have prioritised applications from school pupils for Senior Phase programmes and have seen some positive impact of that work. We also move into our second year of our ambitious project with Inverness High School and its associated primary school group to raise the aspirations of young people within this area.

Collated by Roddy Henry, Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience

Enhancement Plan 2018-19 (June 2019 update)

The themes and actions in the college's Enhancement Plan will contribute to the regional strategies for improvement.

Enhancement Theme	Actions (EREP)	Anticipated Outcomes 2018-19	Progress against anticipated outcomes
Continued improvement in full-time success rates overall (FE and HN particularly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed and monitor effectiveness of revised approach to self-evaluation Introduce an HN Enhancement Theme to ensure reasons for the decline in HN outcomes are understood and addressed Complete the review of the early learner journey; implement and monitor impact of changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain FE success rates at sector leading levels overall and improving year-on-year Ensure HN success rates return to sector levels or above in 2018-19 Tests of change implemented and monitored, and effective practice captured 	<p><i>FTFE EW decreased from 8.51% in 2017/18 to 6.81% in 2018/19</i></p> <p><i>FTFE FW currently exceeding 1718 figure. Success rates (including PS) in year unknown – PGB pending. Focus on PS to ensure there is no increase from 2017-18.</i></p> <p><i>HN EW rates have fallen slightly this AY from 7.37% to 6.87%. FW are currently slightly under last year's figures at 11.62%. Focus for the remainder of the year on reducing level of PS.</i></p> <p><i>Enhancement Group approach raised awareness of the need to drive improvement although cross college ToC were limited. ToC for improvement were seen through a number of curriculum areas.</i></p> <p><i>New approach to self-evaluation implemented through AY by</i></p>

			<p><i>programme teams. Monitored through MORAG and individual curriculum area meetings, implementation has been varied across the teams. Early impact seen in some areas. This will be further embedded in AY2019/20.</i></p> <p>A range of questions within the SSES focus on learning and teaching – teaching methods, discussion of progress, receiving feedback, influencing learning. Satisfaction rates range from 81.1% to 96.6%, and are comparable levels to the previous AY.</p>
<p>Summary: <i>It is likely SR will be maintained for 2018/19. The focus on EW has worked, although this appears to be at the expense of FW. The revised arrangements for self-evaluation will continue to be further embedded into 2019-20.</i></p>			
<p>A continued focus on closing the attainment gap between those learners facing additional barriers to learning and those who do not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot the revised approach to the PAT role; implement and monitor the impact of the change • From the early learner journey review, identify and implement further interventions to support specific learner groups • Further develop learning and teaching approaches to ensure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New PAT role piloted during the year • Early identification and intervention approaches identified and piloted • Programme of professional learning developed, linked to the UHI Learning and 	<p><i>PDA role confirmed, and new team recruited ready for start mid-June 2019. Early activities will focus on ELJ through the summer leading up to AY 2019/20.</i></p> <p><i>CIP ELJ review has had a broad focus through the majority of the AY. Some merging ToC focus on specific learner</i></p>

	a positive learning environment for all	<p>Teaching Enhancement Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further progress made in closing the attainment gap across learner groups 	<p><i>groups. Impact anticipated for 2019/20 AY.</i></p> <p><i>Inclusive Classroom project – self-reflection tool developed and rolled out to staff. Early reflections to inform discussions at S&R4 meetings. PIs at subject level to inform reflections and inform planning for 2019/20.</i></p> <p><i>87.3% students feel all students are treated equally and fairly by staff (87% 2017/18AY)</i></p> <p><i>Success rates in year unknown – PGB pending. See commentary in first theme.</i></p> <p><i>Progress has been made against A&I Strategy and Gender Action Plan.</i></p>
<p>Summary: Very good foundations have been put in place this year for the forthcoming AY 2019/20.</p>			
A continued focus on embedding career management skills across the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop and embed career management skills across the curriculum as part of the Curriculum Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrable increase in uptake of career guidance workshops 	<p><i>Curriculum review focus was primarily aimed at currency of offer. CMS will be considered as</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of career guidance workshops • Agree and plan the implementation of the regional Essential Skills Policy • Gather and consider good practice from across the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable increase in career guidance appointments 	<p><i>part of the introduction of the new PDA role.</i></p> <p><i>There has been a shift in anticipated outcomes for the current AY away from the focus on increasing career guidance workshops and appointments. This is in conjunction with the implementation of the PDA role. In AY 2019/20 My World of Work Skills Profile to be implemented with FTFE learners.</i></p> <p><i>Essential Skill Policy has been developed and is going through due process for approval. Implementation in AY 2019/20 will see the requirement for all learners continue to achieve core skills as part of their programme.</i></p> <p><i>87.6% students feel their time at college has helped them develop knowledge and skills for the workplace. (89% in 2017/18AY)</i></p>
<p>Summary: Good foundations have been put in place this year for the forthcoming AY 2019/20.</p>			

Enhance the sharing of good practice across the college and across the region to support improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the recently established, monthly Programme Coordinator Forum to share the outcomes of tests for change on an ongoing basis • Utilise the developing Communities of Practice model to identify and share effective practice across the college and the region • Ensure effective practices and interventions are identified and embedded to support improvement across the college and the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established systematic approaches to sharing effective practice across curriculum areas • Contribute to establishing cross-regional subject reviews to share practice and support improvement 	<p><i>The monthly Programme Co-ordinator Forum continues to embed, and has been a platform for sharing practice in relation to the new approach to self-evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>CCMs support the sharing of practice across college by better enhancing the link between curriculum and support teams.</i></p> <p><i>The college continues to make use of critical friends where the need is identified, for example, Engineering.</i></p> <p><i>The college has played a key role in the regional QA harmonisation project and the regional approach to data use.</i></p> <p><i>The first round of cross-regional subject reviews were held in year, highlighting common themes for improvement.</i></p>
<p>Summary: Good use has been made of networks across the sector to share practice, both in and external to the organisation. Cross college sharing of practice will be further enhanced in AY2019/20.</p>			

Enhancement Themes 2019-20

No.	Theme	Focus	College Targets for 2019-20
1	Continued improvement in full-time success rates overall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving retention, particularly early retention Early learner journey – CIP workstreams Pre-course information and funding Identifying and responding to needs as early as possible Engaging and motivating learning and teaching Monitoring progress week-by-week and making effective interventions Programme design and curriculum architecture Digital Skills Framework – staff and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce early withdrawal on FTFE programmes to 5% overall <p>Success rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTFE - 74% overall and sector leading in each subject area FTHN - 75% overall and sector leading in each subject area
2	Closing the attainment gap between those learners facing additional barriers to learning and those who do not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the new PAT model 'Earliest' intervention and effective transition arrangements Inclusive learning and teaching practices Capacity and effectiveness of student support arrangements Digital Skills Framework – staff and students 	<p>FTFE overall success rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Experienced – 60% Carers – 75% Disability – 70% SIMD10 - 70% <p>PTFE overall success rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Experienced – 78% Carers – 82% Disability – 80% SIMD10 - 80% <p>FTHN overall success rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Experienced – 60%ⁱ Carers – 75% Disability – 75% SIMD10 - 70%

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase 75%
3	Embedding career management skills (CMS) across the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme-level arrangements to ensure min 40 hours workplace experienceⁱⁱ in FE programmes • College-level arrangements and services • Partnership working, eg with employers and SDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMS embedded in all full-time FE and HN programmes • Minimum 40 hours workplace experience embedded in every full-time and short full-time FE programme and recorded in SITS
4	Enhance the sharing of good practice across the college and across the region to support improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests for Change: implementing, monitoring and capturing good/effective practice for sharing • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests for Change shared at team meetings (support and curriculum), PC forum and MORAG • Each area/team identifies effective practice quarterly for sharing, collated by Staff Development Manager • College fully engaged in regional attainment strategy
5	Embedding skills for learning, wellbeing and academic resilience across the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme-level arrangements (discreet workshops and/or within unit delivery) • Utilising SQA Positive Mental Health units • College-level arrangements and services • Partnership working with external agencies e.g NHS, third sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic resilience embedded in all full-time FE and HN programmes
6	Enhance effectiveness of operational processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial and WBL course administration • Additional Support Needs – process timeliness • Course Information Sheet (CIS) accuracy and timeliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient and effective course admin processes in place • CIS accurate and completed on time

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recruitment process – from resource approval to contract completion • Room utilisation and timetabling • Core Skills – development of procedural effectiveness • Continue to build on data accessibility and awareness raising across the college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear timeline for staff recruitment in place and adhered to • Efficient and effective timetabling process and room utilisation (measures tbc) • College fully engaged in regional harmonisation activity • Tests for Change shared at team meetings and MORAG
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ⁱ Dependent on enrolments. Total CE enrolments = 11 or fewer per year in each of the preceding 3 years

ⁱⁱ “Colleges should deliver a range of activity – complementing and adding value to course requirements so as to maximise opportunities for contextualised learning and practical skills development. This may include:

- Learning in simulated work environments.
- Enterprise activities.
- Volunteering in a social enterprise or charity.
- Employer presentations.
- Practice interviews.
- Research tasks.
- Site visits.
- Personal skills analysis activities.
- Careers events.
- Paid part-time employment.
- Pitches to peers and expert advisers.
- Mentoring & coaching.
- In-house business start-ups.
- Presentations from previous students who have moved into employment.
- Employer led master-classes.
- Business competitions. “

DRAFT

(SFC, *Work Placement Standard for Colleges*, 2016:2)

Briefing note for colleges: progress visits

Please share this information with all staff

This note contains the following information

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4. What does Education Scotland focus on during a progress visit?	2
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1. Introduction

Education Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) have worked collaboratively to develop Progress Visits (PVs) for assuring and improving the quality of provision delivered in Scotland's colleges.

PV arrangements have resulted from extensive consultation discussions held with the sector. They are predicated on colleges continuously improving the quality of their provision and the services they provide through a cycle of evaluation and enhancement planning. PVs incorporate and signpost links to SFC Outcome Agreement requirements and the Student Engagement framework.

2. What is the purpose of the progress visit?

During PVs colleges can demonstrate how well they are delivering on the targets and milestones identified in their Enhancement Plans (EPs). They allow colleges opportunities to outline any changes to their circumstances resulting in revisions to their original objectives. PVs provide reassurance to key stakeholders on the effectiveness of improvement actions undertaken by individual providers. Whilst undertaking PVs, Education Scotland HM Inspectors (HMs) take close account of the context and nature of individual colleges.

3. How often do we carry out progress visits?

PVs are scheduled for all colleges annually.

4. What does Education Scotland focus on during a progress visit?

The PV enables college staff, learners and HMs to discuss and explore the agreed actions from the EP. The team will gather evidence about the progress the college is making towards delivering against the targets and milestones identified within the college EP. The approaches to improving outcomes for learners and the quality of the learning experience will be a core part of the PVs. The team will engage in professional dialogue, review relevant documentation, and where appropriate, undertake observations of learning.

The college EP is informed by the quality improvement framework for Scotland's colleges: How good is our college? (HGIOC?) and the PV will focus on the three key principles of **outcomes and impact, delivery of learning and services to support learning and leadership and quality culture**.

Learner engagement is fundamental to the college's ability to identify areas for development. Colleges should view students as partners in supporting improvement and should have effective processes for engaging students in contributing to the development of the Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP).

During PVs, HMs and Associate Assessors (AAs) will engage in conversations with groups of learners to identify the progress they are making and how effectively they engage in and influence their individual learning experiences.

By focusing on outcome and impact and observing practice and experiences directly, HMs support college staff to reflect on what is working well and what needs to improve.

5. Who carries our progress visits?

PVs will be led by HMs, AAs and may include the SFC Outcome Agreement Manager and a where required, a Student Team Member (STM).

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

6. How will we carry out the progress visit?

PVs are planned collaboratively between the college, Education Scotland and SFC. They will focus on the objectives and timelines identified within colleges own EP. Prior to the visit colleges will have the opportunity to provide relevant PV updates, identified through self-evaluation, to reflect the progress made and highlight any changes in circumstances. PVs are informed by the [PRAISE framework](#) which is used to help establish and maintain positive relationships with all involved. Education Scotland recognises that all discussions and engagements are opportunities to share and develop thinking, and to learn from each other.

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

7. Notification of the progress visit

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

8. What happens during a progress visit?

The starting point will be the college's own evaluation and EP. We will ask the college to outline the progress they have made and the impact it has had on achievement of improvement actions and the experience of learners. Thereafter the team will review relevant documentation, and engage in professional dialogue with managers, staff, student representatives, other groups of learners and, where required, other key stakeholders.

Discussions will focus on their involvement in delivering the targets and milestones set out in the college devised EP. The team will also discuss with learners the impact of improvement actions.

9. How do we share our findings?

At the end of the PV, the team will provide a verbal report of the findings to the principal, senior managers and student representatives including an provisional statement regarding overall progress. For multi-college regions, a representative of the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) will be invited to attend.

10. What happens after the progress visit?

Following our internal quality assurance processes, we will provide each college with a draft report of our findings including statement a regarding overall progress. The college will have the opportunity to comment if they wish within five working days. Three weeks after the PV is completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and shared with the Board. For multi-college regions the report will also be shared with the RSB.

The outcomes of the PV will inform a refreshed Evaluative Report (ER) and EP (2020-23) due to be submitted by all colleges in October 2020.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Student Activity 2018-19 and Student Recruitment 2019-20
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience
Meeting:	<i>Learning, Teaching and Research Committee</i>
Meeting Date:	24 September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide the committee with a summary of student activity in 2018-19 and an update on student recruitment so far in 2019-20.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

Student Activity 2018-19 and Student Recruitment 2019-20

Executive summary

The outturn for FE student activity (credits) in 2018-19 is currently just over 100% of target, pending the final return to the Scottish Funding Council. The outturn for HE funded undergraduate FTE is 97.5% of target.

Early indications of the recruitment for the current academic year are of a negative variance on this time last year.

Main body of information

Student activity against targets 2018-19 as at 17 September 2019

The core credit target for 2018-19 is 28,915, with an additional ESF credit target of 296, making a total target of 29,211 credits.

FE	2018-19
Core Credit Target	28,915
ESF Target	296
Total Target	29,211
Total Credits as at 17 September 2019	29,436

The total credit outturn of 29,436 (post-audit and pending FES return) is 29,436 credits, which is 100.8% of our target.

HE

The PPF target (undergraduate students, excluding PGDE, with a fee status of Scottish or European) is 1,618 FTE. The final outturn is 1578.2 FTE, 97.5% of target.

PPF Target HE FTE (Undergraduate students, including SC and EU fee statuses, excluding PGDE)	1,618.0
Current HE students as at 28/06/2019 - count by Module attachment.	1,578.2

Student Recruitment 2018-19

Student recruitment targets for 2018-19 are shown in the table below:

Target	2019-20
FE Credits	29,211
HE FTE	1,602

At the time of writing, student enrolment for Semester 1 and for most full-time programmes has just completed and a significant number of part-time FE and HE full-time enrolments are still sitting at 'provisional' status. Early indications are of a significant **negative variance** for full-time FE and HE enrolments compared to this time last year across the board.

Student recruitment will be discussed at the Senior Management Team meeting on Thursday 19 September.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Student Partnership Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Director of Student Experience George Gunn, Student President
Meeting:	Learning & Teaching Committee
Meeting Date:	24 th September '19
Date Paper prepared:	10 th September '19
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an update of developments around student partnership and student engagement
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	<p><i>Strategic Plan</i> - Opportunity and growth in student life</p> <p><i>To further embed the student voice to ensure its contribution to all aspects of college life; to create a lively community of staff and students; and develop further student participation in clubs, societies and other activities, and engagement with the wider community</i></p>
Resource implications:	No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Non confidential]			
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes]			
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Student Partnership

Executive summary

To update the committee on the progress made with the Partnership Agreement for session 2019-20 and a variety of other aspects of student engagement.

Background information

The way in which we work in partnership with our students has evolved over the course of AY 2018-19 and this has been reflected in many aspects of work over the course of last session.

We have seen a continuously high level of satisfaction among students:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
ESES (Early Experience)	92%	91%	95%
NSS (IC results)	75%	80%	83%
SSES (Exit)	87%	94%	90%

The way in which we work with our students as partners has therefore evolved in response to this positive context. The Partnership Agreement was created to reflect this shift and to encourage the development of a more collegiate culture between staff and students.

The Partnership Agreement sets out student entitlement alongside our expectations of students studying at IC UHI. The 8 themes encompass every aspect of the student experience:

- Collective Responsibility
- Organisation and Management
- Assessment and Feedback
- **Student Voice in Partnership**
- **Student Life**
- Tools for Learning
- **Advice, Support and Progression**
- Learning and Teaching

We are continuing to work on the visibility of the Partnership Agreement through our Brightspace module for all staff and students as well as visual prompts around the building.



Utilising data and feedback from our various surveys, from our new model of course committee meetings, and in discussion with HISA, we have jointly chosen the enhancement themes for AY 2019-20:

- Student Voice in Partnership
- Student Life
- Advice, Support and Progression

We are in the process of composing an action plan for each theme and the three HISA Officers will collectively oversee these workstreams with support coming from the Student Engagement Officer, the Quality Manager and the Director of Student Experience in the first instance.

The Early Student Experience

We have worked hard to continue to enhance the early student experience through improving our processes and procedures and our pre-start information. Our Fresher's Fair is an important aspect of that. The new HISA team have worked hard to support a positive early student experience extending Freshers fair from three days to five across the week of 9th September. Freshers was an overwhelming success and included:

- Fresher's Fayre featuring over 100 stalls, maximum capacity, across all three floors of the college providing an all-encompassing showcase of local business, clubs and societies, student offers, and opportunities offered to learners by the college. This was comfortably the best attended fresher's event since moving to the new campus, both in terms of number of stalls, and students.
- At the moment HISA are taking notes of interest for the clubs and societies which students would like to see run.

HISA have hosted a range of different activities and social for students including:

- Pub Quiz night
- Comedy night
- Dolphin cruise
- Pub takeover night
- Sports tasters

We now start planning for our Re-fresher's event to mark the beginning of the new semester is scheduled to take place at the beginning of February 2020.

Student Representatives

In AY18-19 we worked hard to ensure that we have student representatives elected across the entirety of the student body and at an early point in the semester who can act to represent their peers. We have extended the window for the election of class representatives to support us recruiting the right people for this important role, update to come on this at our next meeting.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of Class Representatives	227	260	302	320 (target)
Number of Class Representatives who engaged in training	87	106	142	175 (target)

The local HISA officers have now undertaken the relevant training to allow them to deliver Student Rep training to those who have signed up to be student representatives for their classes this year. The programme of class representative training begins on 7th October and will be jointly run by HISA and the Student Engagement Officer.

Student Representative Council

We revised and refreshed the format of the student representative council in AY18-19 to ensure there was greater opportunity for quality dialogue amongst the class representatives and greater opportunity for feedback to be gathered and solutions to be discussed. This proved successful so we will continue with this new format this year. HISA are also keen to introduce different ways of engaging with class representatives and gaining feedback. One key topic for discussion will be our new strategic planning process and the opportunity for students to feed into our 2020-2025 strategic plan.

Campus Cycling Officer

In May '19 we were successful in our bid to Cycling Scotland for a fully funded campus cycling officer to be based on site. We have successfully recruited to this, one of our own students, who will take up post on 23rd September. The key purpose of the role is to develop cycling as an alternative means of travel to college for both students and staff and to tackle the various barriers to this.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Quality Enhancement
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience
Meeting:	<i>Learning Teaching and Research Committee</i>
Meeting Date:	24 September 2019
Date Paper prepared:	17 September 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	The report provides an overview of the college's Enhancement Plan and activities to monitor progress and set priorities for 2019-20.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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Quality Enhancement

Executive summary

The attached Enhancement Plan provides a summary of progress against actions identified in the *Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan* (EREP) for 2018-19, and provides a basis for further discussion at the Committee meeting.

Main body of information

A three-year Enhancement Plan was submitted to Education Scotland and SFC at the end of October as part of the *Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan* (EREP) required under the revised quality arrangement for Scotland's Colleges.

The Enhancement Plan (EP) is high level and covers the years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21. It is recognised by Education Scotland that the plan will change and develop over the three-year period. The plan was accepted at the pre-endorsement meeting as being appropriate in terms of the areas for further development identified through the college's Evaluative Report.

Appendix I is a summary of progress against the 2018-19 activities up to June 2019: a workshop involving a cross-section of staff was held in June to assess our progress against the plan utilising relevant evidence available at that time. The progress is now being updated as student outcomes for 2018-19 are finalised.

Appendix II is the draft Enhancement Themes for inclusion in the 2019-20 EP. The EP 2019-20 will be finalised when the student outcomes are updated, and further refined after the Education Scotland Progress Visit.

Appendix III is the Education Scotland briefing note to colleges relating to the new Progress Visits that form part of the external college quality arrangements for 2019-20. The college's PV will take place on 27 and 28 November 2019. A schedule is currently being drafted for agreement with the College HMI. The outcome of the visit will be discussed at the December committee meeting.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal – Planning and Student Experience

Enhancement Plan 2018-19

The themes and actions in the college's Enhancement Plan will contribute to the regional strategies for improvement.

Enhancement Theme	Actions (EREP)	Progress: November 2018	Anticipated Outcomes 2018-19
Continued improvement in full-time success rates overall (FE and HN particularly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed and monitor effectiveness of revised approach to self-evaluation • Introduce an HN Enhancement Theme to ensure reasons for the decline in HN outcomes are understood and addressed • Complete the review of the early learner journey; implement and monitor impact of changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New approach rolled-out to all CCMs in Oct/Nov 2018 and feedback from teams is positive. Drop-in sessions on the methodology have been scheduled and work is ongoing with PCs and teams to further embed and develop the techniques. Need to ensure that 'tests for change' are being rigorously monitored and impact captured via PC forum. • HN Enhancement Theme underway and led by a PC. First report on key issues and interventions at future PC forum. • Review of the early learner journey (ELJ): working groups formed and tests for change emerging. Next steering group meeting scheduled for 28 November. Resilience workshops x 2 delivered to every FT FE and HN cohort; 'learning to learn' workshops delivered to FTFE cohorts with <70% attainment in 2017-18. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain FE success rates at sector leading levels overall and improving year-on-year • Ensure HN success rates return to sector levels or above in 2018-19 • Tests of change implemented and monitored, and effective practice captured

<p>A continued focus on closing the attainment gap between those learners facing additional barriers to learning and those who do not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot the revised approach to the PAT role; implement and monitor the impact of the change • From the early learner journey review, identify and implement further interventions to support specific learner groups • Further develop learning and teaching approaches to ensure a positive learning environment for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New role costed, discussed and due to be approved by SMT on 7 December. • Professional learning programme still to be devised, discussions underway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New PAT role piloted during the year • Early identification and intervention approaches identified and piloted • Programme of professional learning developed, linked to the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy • Further progress made in closing the attainment gap across learner groups
<p>A continued focus on embedding career management skills across the curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and embed career management skills across the curriculum as part of the Curriculum Review • Increased uptake of career guidance workshops • Agree and plan the implementation of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions started with SDS on embedding their support and digital tools across the curriculum. • Career guidance workshops under review. • Regional Essential Skills policy being finalised. • Good/effective practice being collated on embedding career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable increase in uptake of career guidance workshops • Demonstrable increase in career guidance appointments

	<p>regional Essential Skills Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and consider good practice from across the sector 	<p>management skills across the curriculum.</p>	
<p>Enhance the sharing of good practice across the college and across the region to support improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the recently established, monthly Programme Coordinator Forum to share the outcomes of tests for change on an ongoing basis • Utilise the developing Communities of Practice (CoP) model to identify and share effective practice across the college and the region • Ensure effective practices and interventions are identified and embedded to support improvement across the college and the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC forum and sharing of practice underway. • CoP model being utilised for the HN enhancement theme. • Regional 'FE attainment' event held in September and a follow-up scheduled for January. Three subject areas identified for further review in 2018-19: care, computing and hospitality. • Proposal on a regional approach to the observation of learning and teaching near finalised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established systematic approaches to sharing effective practice across curriculum areas • Contribute to establishing cross-regional subject reviews to share practice and support improvement

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	External Verification Summary 2018-19
Author: [Name and Job title]	Liz Cook, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	
Date Paper prepared:	28 th August 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	The attached report provides a summary of the External Verification outcomes from academic year 2017-18.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement.
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	None

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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Summary of External Verification Report

Purpose of report

The report provides an overview of the outcomes of external verification by awarding bodies during the academic year 2018-19.

Background

Every year, the College receives external verification visits on behalf of a number of awarding bodies. These visits provide assurance to awarding bodies that standards are maintained for qualifications across a wide variety of subject area(s), and that ICUHI has the necessary resources and management structures in place to support the ongoing delivery of the qualifications it offers.

Main body of information

External Verification Activity

There were 73 engagements with ICUHI during 2018-19, resulting in 71 external verification activities. A breakdown of the visits by awarding body, which included visits from SQA for Graded Units and round 1 and round 2 verification for National and Higher awards, is shown in the table below:

Awarding Body	EV Visits
EAL	2
IMI	2
SQA	64
BPEC	1
CITY & GUILDS	2
SJIB / ECI	1

Pre-EV Checks

A number of pre-EV checks were carried out by the quality team prior to EV activity. Pre-EV checks are useful in identifying the delivery teams readiness for the forthcoming EV activity.

Outcomes from EV activity

Twenty three visits were initiated relating to **HE (non-degree) provision**, two of which will be carried forward to next year. These visits were co-ordinated by the EO UHI SQA Co-ordinator. There was a change in the way SQA chose to work with UHI in 2018-19. From visiting one site to provide assurance across the partnership, SQA required UHI individual Academic Partners to submit evidence to the hosting site. This placed a considerable

burden on APs. Through the course of the academic year a number of improvements to the internal process were implemented, for example, a checklist for the hosting AP receiving evidence, making arrangements to VC into EV feedback.

The majority of visits resulted in a 'High Confidence' outcome. Three resulted in a Reasonable Confidence outcome, with required actions. All required actions were completed within the specified time and the confidence level was amended to 'High'. The good practice and recommendations provided within the Table 1a represent findings across APs involved in the delivery of the provision sampled. The themes emerging are:

Good Practice

- Some examples of good learner support evident through EV activity – materials and staff related
- Some good examples of standardisation activity

Recommendations

- Interpretation of standards and robustness of evidence
- Strengthen aspects of the audit trail
- Strengthen standardisation activities

51 visits were initiated relating to **FE provision**, 3 of which did not take place. This was either because the provision selected by the Awarding Body was not running in the academic year, or the visit was able to be subsumed into an existing visit.

Of the 48 activities that took place, 4 were systems verification visits from EAL, IMI, C&G and BPEC. On the whole, the systems verification visits had a successful outcome, with a minor non-compliance noted, and three recommendations made across the four visits. Of the remaining EV visits all, except one, achieved an outcome of 'High Confidence' or equivalent depending on the AB. The required actions relating to the outcome of 'Reasonable Confidence' were addressed satisfactorily and a level of 'High Confidence' reinstated.

The areas of good practice and recommendations are captured in Table 1b. The themes emerging are:

Good Practice

- Examples of good use of the IV process
- Staff development supported through CPD, standardisation and membership to professional bodies
- Good level of student engagement

Recommendations

- Confirmation of the authenticity of student work to be strengthened
- Aspects of audit trail to be strengthened –
 - Content and quality of information captured on documentation to be improved
 - Demonstrable assessment decisions

Next Steps

- Continue to work across the partnership to reduce the administrative and time burden created by SQA EV arrangements (HE non-degree provision)
- Use the outcomes of EV activity in 2018-19 to inform mandatory pre-EV checks in 2019-20
- Work with curriculum teams to highlight the themes emerging from the recommendations being made by EVs – through staff briefings, team meetings, pre-EV checks, working with Heads of School and Deputes

Summary from EV Visits 2018/19

Table 1a HE (non-degree) provision

SQA Criteria		Good Practice Recognised	Recommendations Made
2.1	Assessors and IVs must be competent to assess and IV in line with the requirements of the qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff CPD • Staff commitment to Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff CPD more industry focussed to confirm competence
2.4	There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good guide to support audit trail • New online / blended learning allows candidates to work at own pace • High standard of learning support materials • Regular team meetings support standardisation • Face to face meetings across 3 sites • Strong links between course and quality team • Masterfolder structure • Request for SQA development visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record outcomes of informal meetings • Consider cross-UHI partner working to support standardisation
3.2	Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement sheets • Clear selection and progression for candidates • Flag of PLP on register of assessment for each unit 	
3.3	Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good level of support for candidate by ICUHI and employer • Good preparation given to learners for assessment • Good quality assessor feedback (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record assessor feedback more formally
4.2	Internal assessment and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive IV feedback • Regular yet informal standardisation meetings (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IV records to capture exactly when IV takes place • Formalise meetings to capture pre/mid/post IV (2)

	verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of multi-site standardisation activity (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular standardisation meetings – store in Masterfolders • Review timeline for assessor feedback (suggest 2 weeks, not 1 week) • Pre-delivery network event • IV audit trail needs enhancing • APs to use single candidate assessment sheet
4.3	Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IV confirmation of accurate assessment judgements (2) • Development of second paper to support results • Excellent use of proof positive (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact SQA in relation to soon to expire unit • Electronic evidence to be submitted using a template – pass requirements and authenticity • Develop formalised second attempt assessments • Approach externals for support with exemplars for GU submissions • Adopt standard approach to additional marks over APs
4.4	Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable accurate use of assessment instrument • Good general use of Turnitin across APs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure hard copy templates have sufficient space • Standardise approach to instrument of assessment across APs • Gather more direct evidence to ensure NOS are met • Develop observation checklist and use digital video to support assessment decisions regarding candidate reflective reports
4.6	Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassessment required to ensure accurate judgements against SQA unit requirements • Level of detail in IV documents (IC) demonstrably helpful to assessor and candidate • Evidence for Intro to Vis Com unit specification across all APs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action required relating to oral remediation (not ICUHI) • range of recommendations (5) around full use of treatment records to develop bespoke therapies for clients to better meet standards • introduce pass requirement for each outcome • ensure learners access additional support for academic writing • review application of additional marks • more rubric in instrument of assessment to better support learners

4.7	Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of candidate SCN number on evidence is in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use candidate SCN number on evidence to support GDPR requirements
4.9	Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor and IV meet frequently to discuss feedback from audits 	

Table 1b FE Provision

SQA Criteria		Good Practice Recognised	Recommendations Made
2.1	Assessors and IVs must be competent to assess and IV in line with the requirements of the qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff hold a good range of practical and technical qualifications • Membership to external professional bodies supports CPD • Annual observation of all assessors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD more industry focussed
2.4	There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardisation – running minutes on shared drive • Regional meetings support standardisation • Development of mapping tools to support robust audit trail • Learner support materials of high standard • Complaint with new HSE guidelines on fume removal 	
3.2	Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good working relationships with employers • Culture of continuous improvement beyond industry expectations 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional 'stretch' work put in place once candidates have completed an are of the qualification • Students encouraged to feedback on assessor feedback • Practical skills try outs for FAs • Additional needs highlighted by coloured flag system 	
3.3	Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PATs • Candidates fully involved in CCMs • Good opportunity for regular feedback on language skills • Teaching team ensure students do not progress beyond levels of safety and competence • The degree of optionality (with texts) is a strength • Feedback feedforward document • Video evidence of professional discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School schedule of contact • Preparation before video of professional discussion to slicken approach
4.2	Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good IV sampling strategy per assessor • Collegiate approach to delivery and assessment counselling assessments • Written feedback from assessor to learner, IV to assessor • Regular team communications support IV and CPD requirements • Monthly standardisation • Two yearly progression boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise documentation of informal meetings • Provide schedule of skills tests to SQA • Use standardised approach to assessment • IV and standardisation of assessment to take place prior to final assessment decisions • Document all aspects of IV process • Increase level of detail on prior verification form • Construct future IV plans to effectively standardise assessed evidence from workplace
4.3	Assessment instruments and methods and their		

	selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.		
4.4	Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates highlight factors which may impact on skills test prior to starting work on assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates to sign plagiarism statement • Authenticity statements to be included and signed • Signed declaration by candidates • Gather more direct evidence to support decisions made against NOS
4.6	Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality assessor feedback • Good preparation for recording of assessment • Excellent approach to IV gives confidence regarding robust assessment decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand level of knowledge demonstrated by learners on record card • There should be evidence of marking student work • Hold assessment records securely with candidate evidence • Logbooks to be signed by assessor • Learners to wear hard hats whilst in workshop
4.7	Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use candidate SCN numbers across all evidence
4.9	Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor and IV meet regularly to standardise 	

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Complaints annual Summary Report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Liz Cook, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	
Date Paper prepared:	28 th August 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	The report provides an analysis of the complaints received in academic year 2018-19.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	None

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
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Complaints Report 2018-19 (Q1 – Q4)

Introduction

Complaints are received year round, from a number of different sources although the primary source tends to be from students. Complaints are received via a variety of mechanisms including direct emails, complaints forms, Red Button. IC UHI uses the SPSO categories and sub-categories to classify complaints, which allows us to feed into sector wide data. The outcomes from complaint resolution are reported to UHI (HE) and published on the IC UHI website (FE).

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

- Quarter 1 (Q1): August – end of October,
- Quarter 2 (Q2): November – end of January,
- Quarter 3 (Q3): February – end of April,
- Quarter 4 (Q4): May – end of July.

This report provides an overview of the complaint categories and outcomes across academic year 2018-19 (Q1-Q4) including Q4 statistics and outcomes.

Complaints by SPSO Category

Overall 110 complaints were received across Q1-Q4 in academic year 2018-19. This represents an increase of 5 from 2017-18. The category of Customer Care is the highest occurring category of complaint with an increase in 24 seen since the same time last year. The Course Related category remains the second highest; yet has experienced a decrease of 14 incidents since the same time last year. Complaints regarding Services have fallen from 12 to 4 at the same time last year; complaints regarding 'Facilities' have increased from 14 to 17.

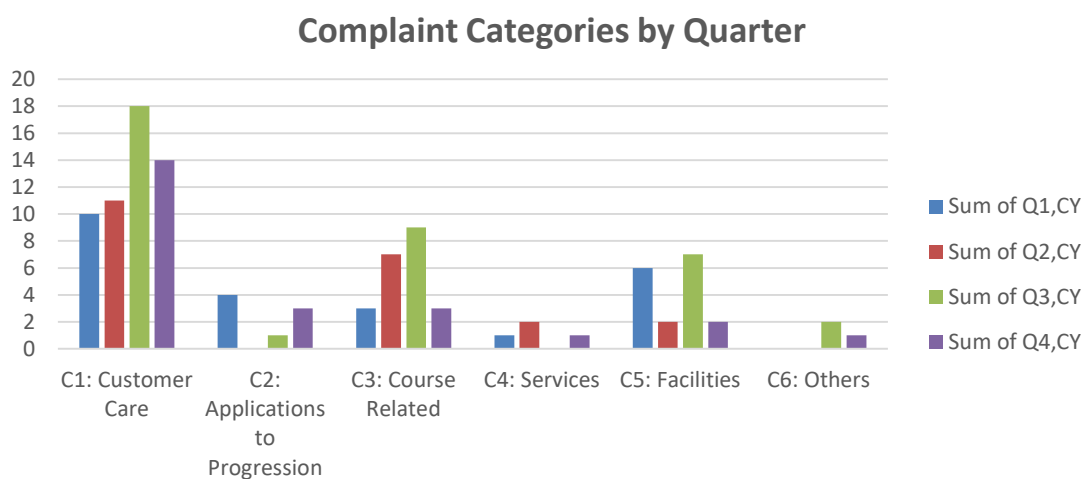
2018-19 complaints classified by category:

Customer Category: 2018-19	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1: Customer Care	54	10	11	18	15
C2: Applications to Progression	11	4	0	1	6
C3: Course Related	21	3	7	9	2
C4: Services	4	1	2	0	1
C5: Facilities	17	6	2	7	2
C6: Others	3	0	0	2	1
TOTAL	110	24	22	37	27

Previous year (2017-18) complaints classified by category:

Customer Category: Previous Year	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1: Customer Care	30	4	9	9	8
C2: Applications to Progression	8	7	0	0	1
C3: Course Related	35	8	11	9	7
C4: Services	12	2	5	1	4
C5: Facilities	14	4	7	1	2
C6: Others	6	0	0	1	5
TOTAL	105	25	32	21	27

The graph below displays the sum of quarterly complaints each category received.



The table below details the complaint subcategories and the difference of complaints received from the previous year (2017-18) to those received across Q1-Q4 in academic year 2018-19.

Within C1: Customer Care, 'Staff Conduct' saw the highest increase in complaints received within this category. Of the 28 complaints received in this category, seven were from externals; the remainder represented complaints from students about members of staff, one of which was a collective complaint. Similarly, 'Student Conduct' saw an increase of 9 complaints. Of the 12 complaints in this category, 3 were received from externals; and the remainder represented student to student complaints. C3: Course Related category of 'other' saw the biggest decrease of incidences. C6: Others saw an overall reduction which meant more complaints were categorised within the other defined categories C1 – C5. This was part of an in-year strategy to classify complaints with a greater level of consistency across the organisation.

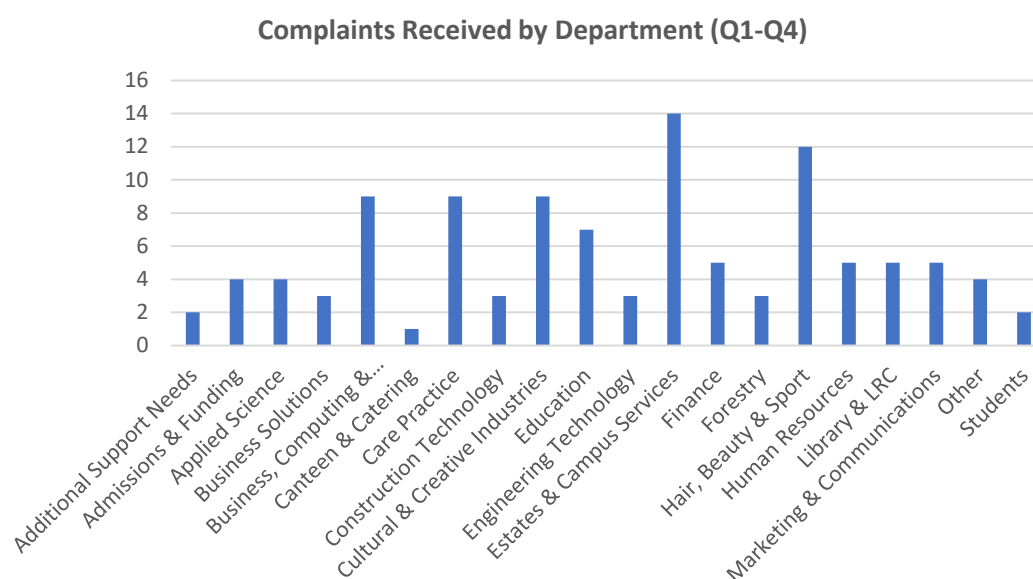
Category	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C1: Customer Care	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C1S01: Health & Safety	1	0	1
C1S02: Security	0	0	0
C1S03: Diversity & Equality	0	1	-1
C1S04: Data Protection	1	1	0
C1S05: Environmental	0	3	-3
C1S06: Staff Conduct	28	18	10
C1S07: Student Conduct	12	3	9
C1S99: Other	12	4	8
C2: Applications to Progression	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C2S01: Marketing	2	0	2
C2S02: Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	2	6	-4
C2S03: Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal	3	2	1
C2S99: Other	1	0	1
C3: Course Related	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C3S01: Learning & Teaching	9	9	0
C3S02: Environment/Resources	2	5	-3
C3S03: Course Management	2	7	-5
C3S04: Facilitated Learning & Support	1	0	1
C3S05: Assessment, Exams & Certification	7	3	4
C3S99: Other	1	11	-10
C4: Services	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C4S01: Finance	1	3	-2

C4S02: Funding / Bursary	1	2	-1
C4S03: Student Records	0	0	0
C4S04: Providing Learning Support	1	0	1
C4S05: Library / Learning Technology	1	5	-4
C4S06: Quality etc.	0	0	0
C4S99: Other	0	2	-2
C5: Facilities	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C5S01: Catering	2	4	-2
C5S02: Student Accommodation	0	0	0
C5S03: Maintenance, Lifts, Car Parking	4	8	-4
C5S99: Other	11	2	9
C6: Others	2018-19	2017-18	Change
C6S01: Others	3	6	-3
C6S99:	0	0	0
TOTAL	110	105	5

Complaints by Department

The graph below displays the number of complaints received by department throughout academic year 2018-19. Estates and Campus Services was the department which received the highest number of complaints overall (14 complaints).

Of the curriculum areas, Hair, Beauty and Sport received the highest number of complaints (12 complaints) across 2018-19. Business, Computing & Hospitality, Care Practice, and Cultural & Creative Industries had the next highest number of complaints, each receiving 9 complaints.



Complaints by Mode of Delivery

In relation to mode of delivery, 44.5% complaints received relate to HE programmes, 32.7% complaints were received related to FE programmes, and 22.7% of complaints were received from members of the public across academic year 2018-19 (Q1-Q4). The table below details the number of complaints received by FE, HE, and Other.

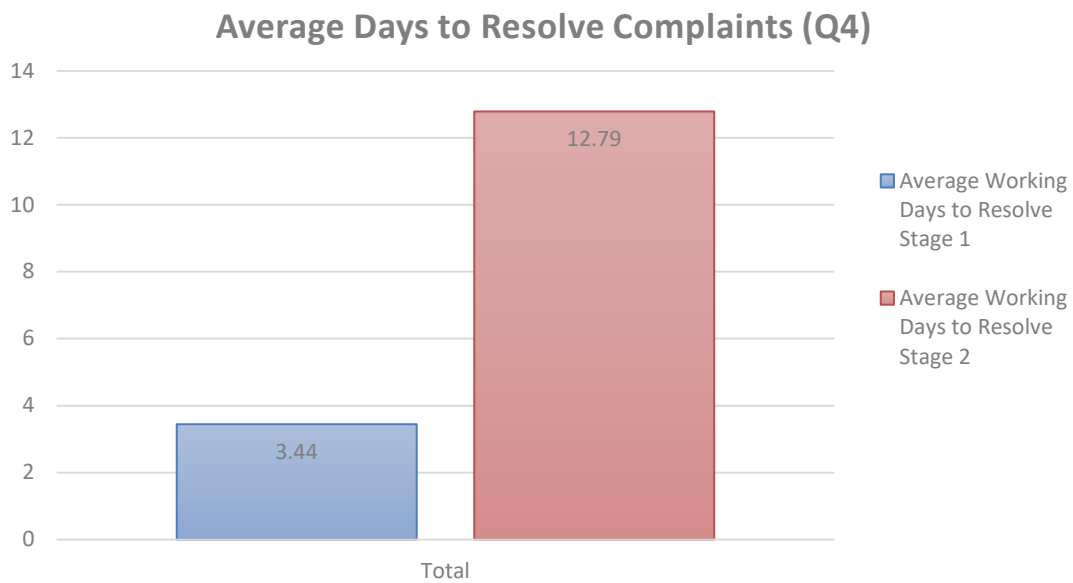
FE / HE	No. Received
FE	36
HE	49
Other	25
Total	110

Complaint Outcomes

The table below shows the breakdown in stage 1 and stage 2 complaints and whether they have been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. Two complaints received from parents of students in Q3 were not investigated as permission from student was not received and are therefore not displayed on the table below.

- Not upheld – 31.5%
- Partially upheld – 26.9%
- Upheld – 38.0%

Outcome	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Not upheld	14 <i>FE: 3, HE: 9, Other: 2.</i>	20 <i>FE: 10, HE: 7, Other: 3.</i>	34 <i>FE: 13, HE: 16, Other: 5.</i>
Partially upheld	6 <i>FE: 4, HE: 2, Other: 0.</i>	23 <i>FE: 9, HE: 9, Other: 5.</i>	29 <i>FE: 13, HE: 11, Other: 5.</i>
Upheld	34 <i>FE: 9, HE: 18, Other: 7.</i>	7 <i>FE: 1, HE: 3, Other: 3.</i>	41 <i>FE: 10, HE: 21, Other: 10.</i>
Still under investigation	0 <i>FE: 0, HE: 0, Other: 0.</i>	4 <i>FE: 0, HE: 1, Other: 3.</i>	4 <i>FE: 0, HE: 1, Other: 3.</i>
Total	54	54	108



The chart above displays the average number of days taken to resolve complaints in quarter 4.

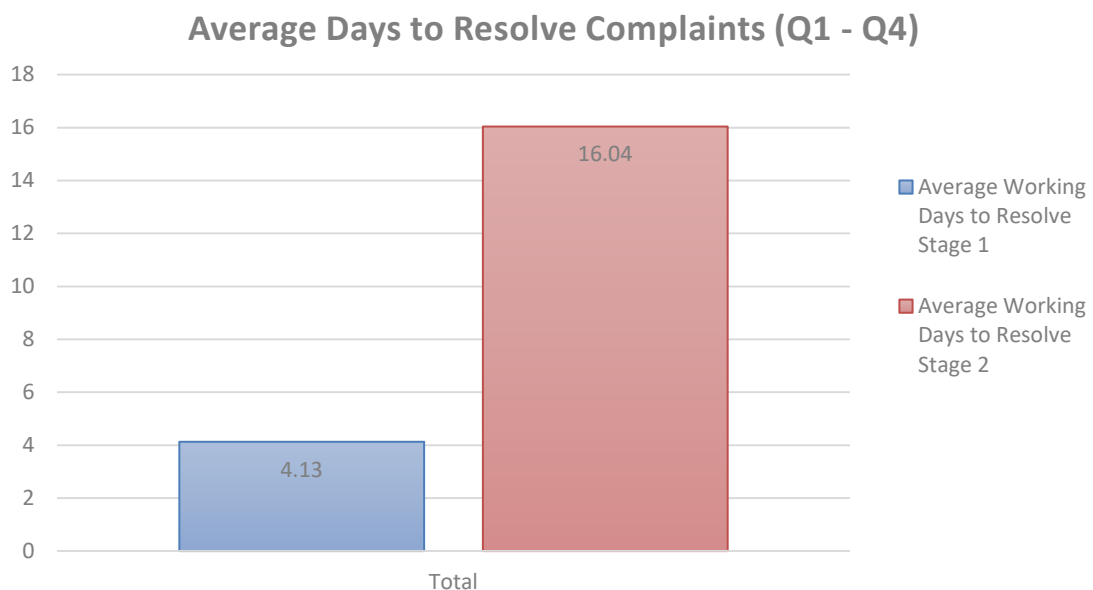
The range of days taken to resolve Stage 1 complaints in Q4 is between 1 – 7 days.
The range of days taken to resolve Stage 2 complaints in Q4 is between 2 – 29 days.

Across academic year 2018-19 the timescales to resolve complaints are detailed below:

Stage 1 complaints 2018-19 (Q1-Q4): 1 – 17 days.

Stage 2 complaints 2018-19 (Q1-Q4): 1 – 143 days.

The chart below shows the average number of days taken to resolve complaints across academic year 2018-19.



SPSO guidelines state pre-defined timescales of a 5 day turnaround for Stage 1, and 20 days for Stage 2. As part of the Stage 2 process, updates are provided to complainants where the complaint is complex and may take longer than 20 working days. Promotion of the timescales involved in complaint responses has been raised with relevant managers in order to ensure future compliance.

Within academic year 2018-19, three complaints were escalated to SPSO. To date, Inverness College UHI has not had any complaint appeals upheld by the SPSO. Details of the individual complaints escalated to SPSO are noted below:

1. Q1 – Progression to year 3 of Degree

A student had failed a core unit within year 2 of their degree and was unable to progress on to year 3 of their degree. The decision taken at Exam Board was not communicated to the student before they had arranged accommodation and attempted to enrol online. In light of this complaint, UHI will be reviewing their Exam Board process when there is a question as to student progression.

SPSO contacted UHI for further information on this complaint when carrying out an initial investigation. This complaint appeal was not upheld/not investigated by SPSO.

2. Q3 – Refund of ESOL Course Fees

A student had enrolled onto ESOL Level 2 course. The KET (Key English Test) A2 exam qualification was part of the ESOL level 2 course. The student had already achieved the KET A2 exam before attending Inverness College UHI. The student requested a refund of the ESOL Level 2 course fees. The complaint outcome included a refund for the KET A2 exam, not the entire course fee refund due to the range of other topics covered across the course.

SPSO contacted UHI for further information on this complaint when carrying out an initial investigation. The complaint appeal was not upheld/not investigated by SPSO.

3. Q4 – Post-Graduate Certification

Student complaint regarding their overall Post-Graduate Certificate in Health Leadership and Management not stating, “Pass with Merit”. Student felt that the “Merit” should be distinguished on the qualification certificate. Scottish Higher Education Institutions have the autonomy to determine their own assessment regulations. The University of the Highlands and Islands have chosen only to

distinguish Distinction on postgraduate award certificates. The award transcript details the individual module results.

SPSO decided not to investigate this complaint as there was no evidence to suggest the university have failed to follow the complaints procedure correctly and the SPSO cannot achieve the outcome the complainant sought.

Learning from Complaints

Complaints often result in reviews of processes and procedures and they also allow us to identify opportunities for staff development. In order to maximise the opportunities to learn from complaints received, teams are required to consider the learning points from each complaint. 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 some examples of improvements made as a result of complaints received during Q4 2018 - 19:

- The automatic email response applicants receive has been amended to accommodate evening classes, which fall out with the timescales for August / January start courses.
- Option to bring a friend to final INSIGHT meetings offered to students
- Students who retake units following end of year progression boards must be tracked by curriculum areas and student records to ensure resulting and certification happens in a timely way
- Clearer communication to lecturing staff/PATs about directly reminding students about any changes to operating hours in future.
- Option provided to complainant for graduation commemorative certificate to be conferred by army official as they were unable to attend any UHI ceremony due to joining the Army.
- Introduced and implemented a new process where pre-employment documentation will now only be collected from successful candidates

Themes of complaints and learning points across academic year 2018-19:

- Breakdown in communication is a main theme of complaints received. With continued development of Customer Service Excellence Standards across the organisation and further SPSO complaints handling training it is anticipated this will assist in the reduction of complaints in the future.
- Facilities complaints received focussed mainly on the car park stickering, disabled spaces availability, and smoking in prohibited areas. The Manager of this

department is aware and continues to work with students, staff and visitors to build a culture of safe use of the car park and smoking regulations.

- On occasions, complaints have triggered multiple processes (Academic Partner Complaint, UHI Complaint, Freedom of Information) at the same time. We continue to ensure that one single point of contact approach for complaints that are received.

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	National Student Survey full report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Liz Cook, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	
Date Paper prepared:	28 th August 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	The attached report provides analysis of the National Student Survey results 2019.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement.
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	None

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
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National Student Survey results 2019

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1 Executive summary

RESPONSE RATE

The **response rate** decreased by 3% compared to 2018 with 80% (692 of 865) targeted students responding to the survey. This compares favourably with the average response rates for Scotland (73%) and the UK (72%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION

There has been a very slight decrease (less than 1%) in the university's score for **Overall satisfaction to 84.49%** in comparison to 2018 results. This score remains **above both the Scottish and UK average**.

RESULTS BY QUESTION SCALE

Scores for **five of the eight question scales** have seen a slight increase compared to 2018. For 2019, the university score equals, or exceeds **the Scottish average** for **all question scales** except Learning Resources and Learning Community.

RESULTS BY ACADEMIC PARTNER

Of the ten Academic Partners that published results in 2019, four have improved Overall Satisfaction scores compared to previous years: **Highland Theological College UHI** achieved 100% overall satisfaction. **West Highland College UHI (96%)**, **Lews Castle College UHI (93%)** and **Inverness College UHI (83%)** all achieved increased rates in comparison to 2018.

SUBJECT NETWORKS

Overall satisfaction increased in two of the six subject networks. **Applied Life Studies** went from 88% in 2018 to 90% in 2019. Another notable increase is for **Energy and Technology** (83% from 75%) with high programme scores for the Electrical and Electronic Engineering BEngH and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering BEngH contributing to this.

PROGRAMMES

Results were received for 23 programmes in 2019 with six programmes achieving **100%** overall satisfaction: **Music Business BAH (for the third consecutive year)**, **Theological Studies BAH**, **Literature BAH**, **Geography BScH**, **Applied Music BAH** and **Adventure Tourism Management BAH**. Other notable increases in Overall Satisfaction were achieved by: **Accounting and Finance BAH (96%, +13% on 2018)**; **Psychology BScH (95%, +12% on 2018)**; and **Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy DipHE (90%, +23% on 2017)**.

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Of the 692 students who responded to the main survey, 583 (**84%**) chose to leave comments for at least one of the three open-ended questions. The three categories relating to teaching (quality, content and mode of delivery), and Academic Support attracted the greatest number of positive comments. Organisation and Management, Teaching on my Course (content) and Assessment and Feedback attracted the largest number of negative comments

2 Background

2.1 The survey

The National Student Survey (NSS) is an annual survey of final year undergraduates, which has been conducted by Ipsos Mori on behalf of the UK Funding Councils since 2005. The University of the Highlands and Islands took part for the first time in 2013.

The survey (revised in 2017) consists of 27 multiple-choice questions relating to eight aspects of the learning experience, including one question about overall satisfaction. There are three additional questions chosen from a bank of optional questions. For each question, students are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with various statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale (Definitely Agree/ Mostly Agree/ Neither/ Mostly Disagree/ Definitely Disagree). Students are also invited to leave comments about particularly positive or negative aspects of their experience.

2.2 Results

Anonymised results for the multiple-choice questions and student comments are made available to the university in July via a password protected intranet facility. The data relating to the multiple-choice questions is publicly available through 'Key Information Sets' (KIS), which are published on the websites of universities and colleges and the Unistats website. The release of these results is subject to meeting a threshold of ten respondents and a 50% response rate (at any level of disaggregation). Results meeting the threshold of ten respondents but not the 50% response rate are made available to the university but not to the public. These thresholds are set in order to protect the anonymity of respondents and ensure the statistical robustness of the data. Students' comments are released to the university only and are redacted prior to this release to remove the names of any individuals.

3 Response rates

865 students were eligible to participate¹ in the survey this year. The overall response rate achieved was 80% (**692 respondents**) compared with 73% across Scotland and 72% for the UK. Table 1 shows the comparable average response rate for all UK and Scottish HEIs.

	2019	2018	2017
University of the Highlands and Islands	80%	83%	80%
Scottish HEIs	73%	73%	74%
UK HEIs	72%	70%	68%

Table 1: NSS response rates: UHI vs. Scotland and UK, 2017-2019

Response rates by academic partner and subject network are shown in tables 2 and 3 below:

By Academic Partner	2019 NSS sample	2019 no of responses	2019 response rate
Argyll College UHI	11	9	82%
Highland Theological College UHI	29	27	93%
Inverness College UHI	244	200	82%
Lewis Castle College UHI	38	30	79%
Moray College UHI	103	89	86%
North Highland College UHI	54	36	67%
Orkney College UHI	11	9	82%
Perth College UHI	289	219	76%
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI	20	14	70%
SAMS UHI	24	22	92%
Shetland College UHI	10	9	90%
West Highland College UHI	32	28	88%
Total	865	692	80%

Table 2: NSS 2019 Response rate by academic partner

Subject Network response rates	2019 NSS sample	2019 no of responses	2019 response rate
Applied Life Studies	195	157	81%
Business, Management and Leisure	183	144	79%
Creative and Cultural Industries	153	122	80%
Energy and the Built Environment	69	53	77%
Humanities, Education and Gaelic	159	133	84%
Science, Technology and the Environment	106	83	78%
Total	865	692	80%

Table 3: NSS 2019 Response rate by subject network

¹ The NSS sample is identified using data from the annual submission to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). A flow diagram for identifying eligible students can be found in Appendix 1.

4 Overall satisfaction: Results for question 27

4.1 UHI vs. Scotland/UK

The result for Question 27 ‘Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of my course’, is the key measure of the survey. Table 4 shows that **84%** of the respondents agreed with this statement² against a benchmark of 84%. Benchmarks reflect the sector average percentage agree scores but are adjusted to reflect the mix of students and subjects at the provider. The adjustment takes account of the following factors: subject of study, age, sex, ethnicity, disability, and the mode of study. The column headed ‘+/-’ shows where a score is statistically significantly above/below its benchmark.

Institution	2019	Benchmark 2019	+/-	2018	2017
University of St Andrews	95	86	+	94	94
University of Dundee	90	84	+	88	90
Robert Gordon University	89	83	+	85	86
University of Abertay Dundee	87	83		79	84
University of Aberdeen	87	85		86	87
University of Strathclyde	86	84		84	87
University of Glasgow	86	85		88	89
Heriot-Watt University	85	83		81	83
University of the Highlands and Islands	84	84		85	79
University of the West of Scotland	84	83		85	83
Scottish HEI Average	84			83	85
UK HEI Average	84			83	84
University of Stirling	83	84		84	86
Queen Margaret University	82	83		82	77
Glasgow Caledonian University	81	82		81	81
Edinburgh Napier University	79	82	-	74	80
University of Edinburgh	78	85	-	77	83
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	73	80		77	0
SRUC	72	84	-	70	77
Glasgow School of Art	69	80	-	67	71
Ballet West	62	73			

Table 4: NSS 2019 % agree for question 27 ‘Overall Satisfaction’ for Scottish HEIs (including national averages)

² ‘% agree’ rates referred to in this report are calculated as the number of students responding ‘definitely agree’ or ‘agree’ to each of the items, expressed as a percentage of the total number of respondents to that item.

4.2 By academic partner

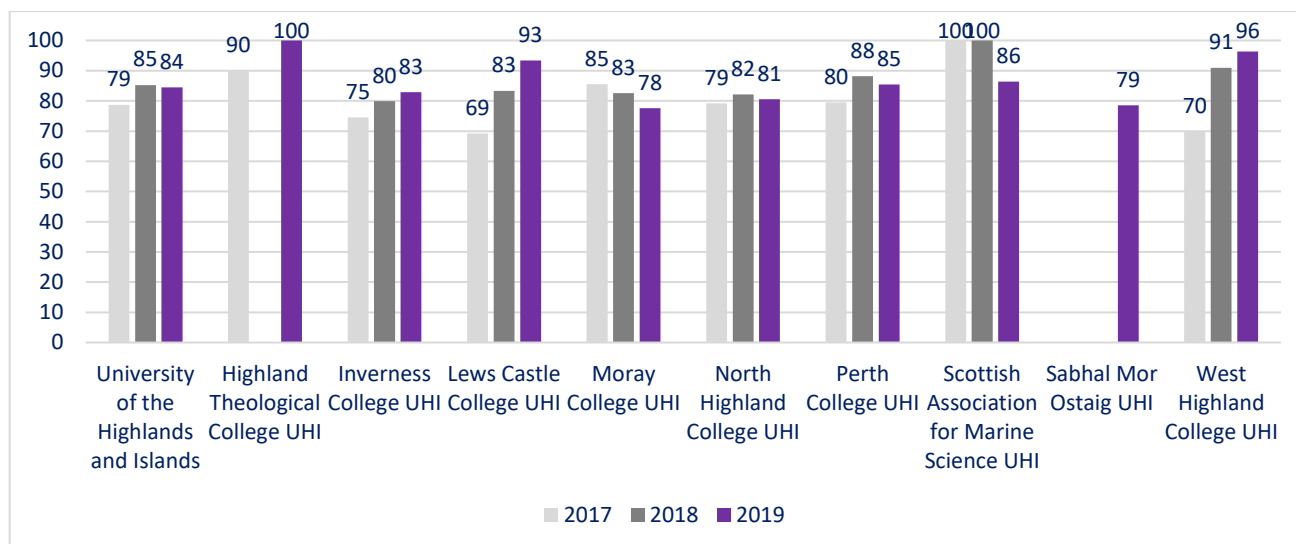


Figure 1: NSS 2019 % agree for question 27 'Overall satisfaction' by academic partner³

Of the ten Academic Partners that published results in 2019, four have improved Overall Satisfaction scores compared to previous years: **Highland Theological College UHI (100%)**, **West Highland College UHI (96%)**, **Lews Castle College UHI (93%)** and **Inverness College UHI (83%)** all achieved increased rates in comparison to 2017 and 2018. **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI** published results for the first time achieving **79% for Overall Satisfaction**. Satisfaction dropped to 86% at **SAMS UHI** (from 100% in 2018) and decreases were also reported at **Moray College UHI (78%)**, **North Highland College UHI (81%)** and **Perth College UHI (85%)**.

4.3 By subject network

Overall satisfaction increased in two of the six subject networks. Applied Life Studies went from 88% in 2018 to 90% in 2019. Another notable increase is for **Energy and Technology** (83% from 75%) with high programme scores for the Electrical and Electronic Engineering BEngH and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering BEngH contributing to this.

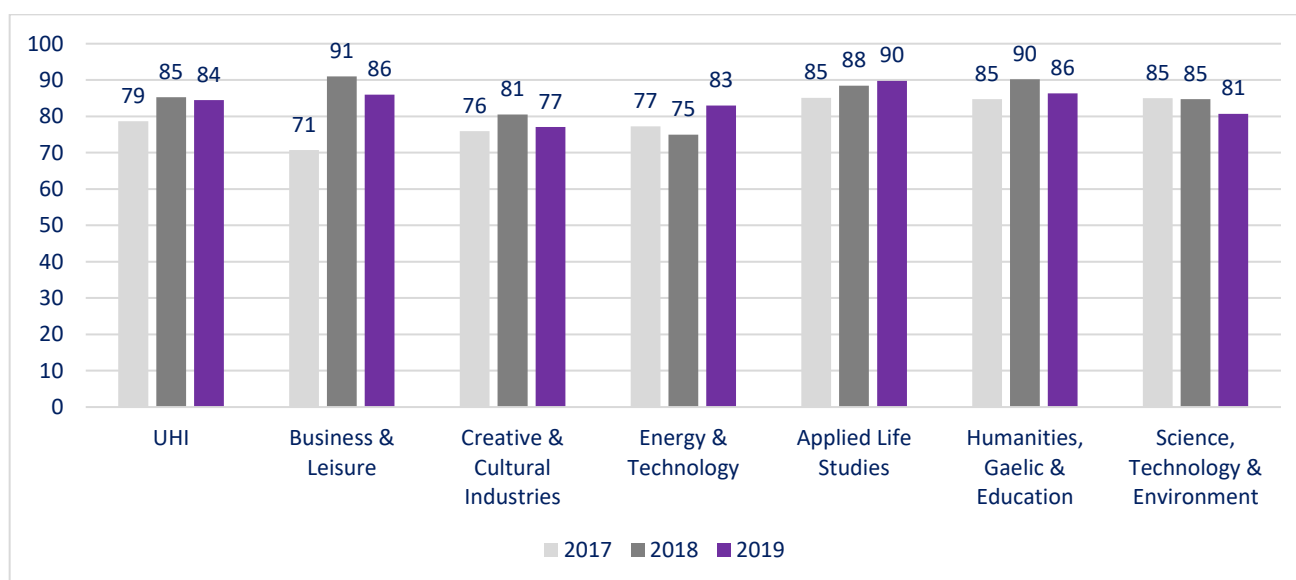


Figure 2: NSS 2019 % agree for question 27 'Overall satisfaction' by subject network.

³ Results are not included for Argyll College UHI, Orkney College UHI or Shetland College UHI as the number of responses at these partners fell below the 10 required for data publication. There were no students at NAFC UHI within the NSS pool for 2019.

4.4 By programme

Results were received for 23 programmes in 2019 (only results for programmes with more than 10 respondents are released by HEFCE). The notable success stories are six programmes that reported **100%** overall satisfaction: **Music Business BAH (for the third consecutive year), Theological Studies BAH, Literature BAH, Geography BSCh, Applied Music BAH and Adventure Tourism Management BAH**. Other notable increases in Overall Satisfaction were achieved by: **Accounting and Finance BAH (96%, +13% on 2018; Psychology BScH (95%, +12% on 2018); and Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy DipHE (90%, +23% on 2017).**

Literature BAH (100%) had results published for the first time this year, alongside **Contemporary Art and Contextualised Practice BAH (69%) Sociology and Criminology BAH (67%) and Sport and Fitness BSCh (58%).**

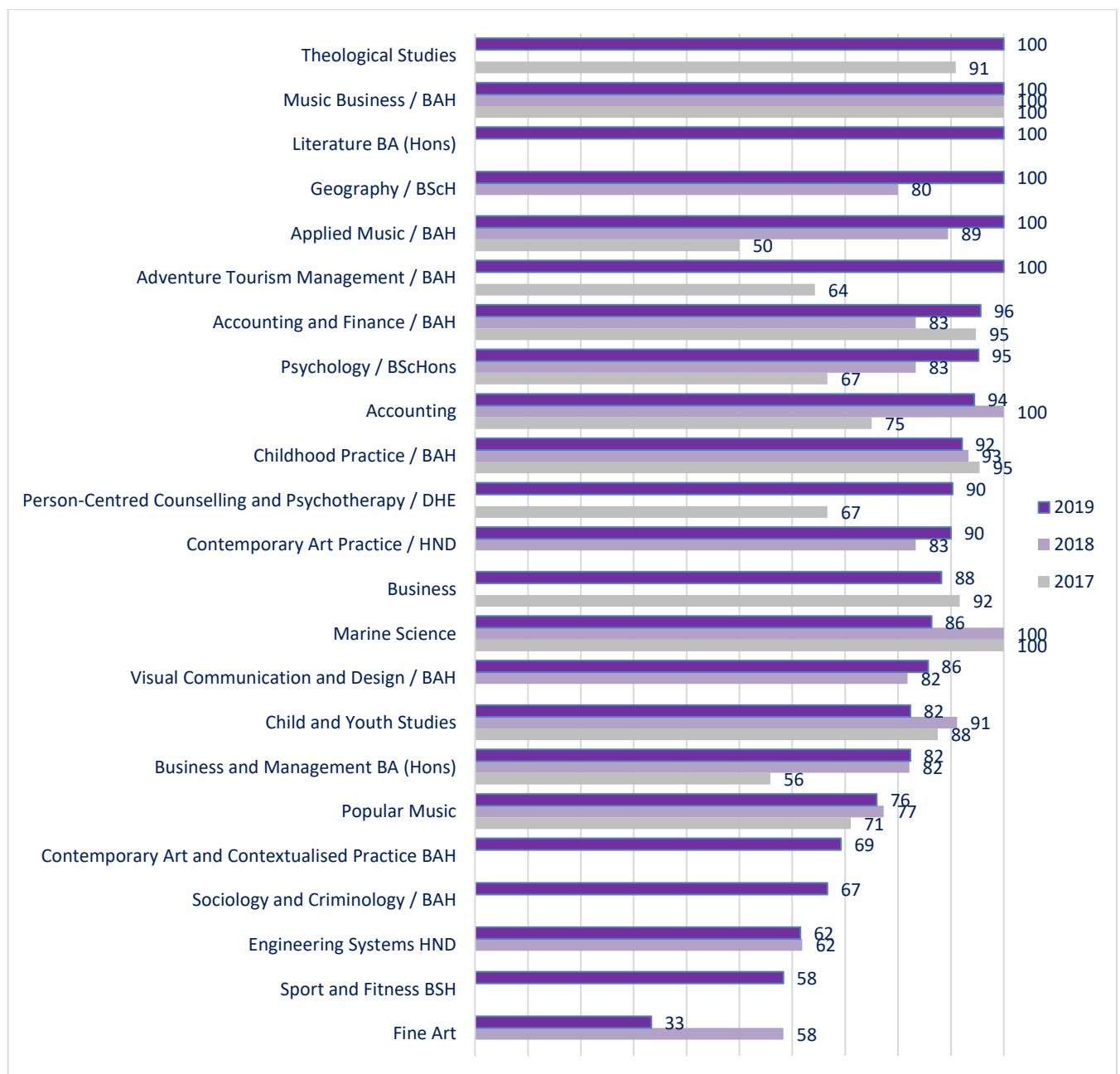


Figure 3: NSS 2019 % agree for question 22/27 'Overall satisfaction' by programme

4.5 Action planning programmes

An NSS action planning process has been in place since 2015 to help improve NSS scores. Programmes are included in the process if the % agree score for Overall Satisfaction (Q27) is either:

- below the University score for that year or
- has fallen 10% or more from the previous year.

Of the nine programmes who were included in action planning after NSS 2018 (and for which we have results for NSS 2019) five have shown an increase in Overall Satisfaction ranging from +4% to +20%. Results for action planning programmes are summarised in Table 5 below:

Programme	2018 Q27 % agree	2019 Q27 % agree
Accounting and Finance BAH (12)	83	96 (+13%)
Business and Management BAH (28)	82	82 (no change)
Contemporary Art Practice HND (13)	83	90 (+7%)
Engineering Systems HND (21)	62	62 (no change)
Fine Art BAH (12)	58	33 (-25%)
Geography BScH (15)	80	100 (+20%)
Popular Music BAH (22)	77	76 (-1%)
Psychology BScH (18)	83	95 (+12%)
Visual Communication and Design BAH (11)	82	86 (+4%)

Table 5: Action planning programmes; comparison of Overall Satisfaction in NSS 2018 and 2019

Programmes action planning in advance of NSS 2020 will be:

Below University score for Overall Satisfaction:

1. Fine Art BAH
2. Sport and Fitness BSH
3. Engineering Systems HND
4. Sociology and Criminology BAH
5. Contemporary Art and Contextualised Practice BAH
6. Popular Music BAH*⁴
7. Child & Youth Studies BAH*
8. Business and Management BAH*

Drop of more than 10%

9. Marine Science BScH

An established process supports action planning programmes, initiated by a meeting between Faculty Deans, programme teams (including curriculum managers), academic partner quality staff and student representatives at the beginning of the academic year, and overseen by the NSS Strategic Steering Group thereafter.

⁴ Programmes marked with an asterisk are also included in the programme dialogue pilot for 2019/20. The NSS action planning process will be integrated into the programme dialogues for this pilot year.

5 Results for all question scales

5.1 UHI vs. Scotland/UK

The 27 questions are divided into themes or 'scales'. Overall 'percentage agree' scores for these scales are calculated according to the extent to which each respondent agreed with all questions within that scale⁵. Scores for the university are given in Figure 4 below, alongside the Scottish and UK scores (results for all 27 questions can be found in Appendix 3).

Scores for **five of the eight question scales** have increased compared to 2018. For 2019, the university score equals, or exceeds **the Scottish average for all question scales** except Learning Resources and Learning Community. After NSS 2018 an institutional level action plan was created to address the low score for Learning Resources. This appears to be having an impact with an increase of 3% for this area, although with some work remaining to attain the Scottish average. Learning Community is an area for which scores are quite low across the sector, but where the University still lags behind, perhaps due to the amount of networked and online delivery that we offer. Within Learning Community, the two questions are: "I feel part of a community of staff and students" (67% agree) and "I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course" (76% agree). Suggestions of how to improve in this area have emerged from responses to the open-ended questions, where the theme of student community emerged strongly this year (see section 6.7).

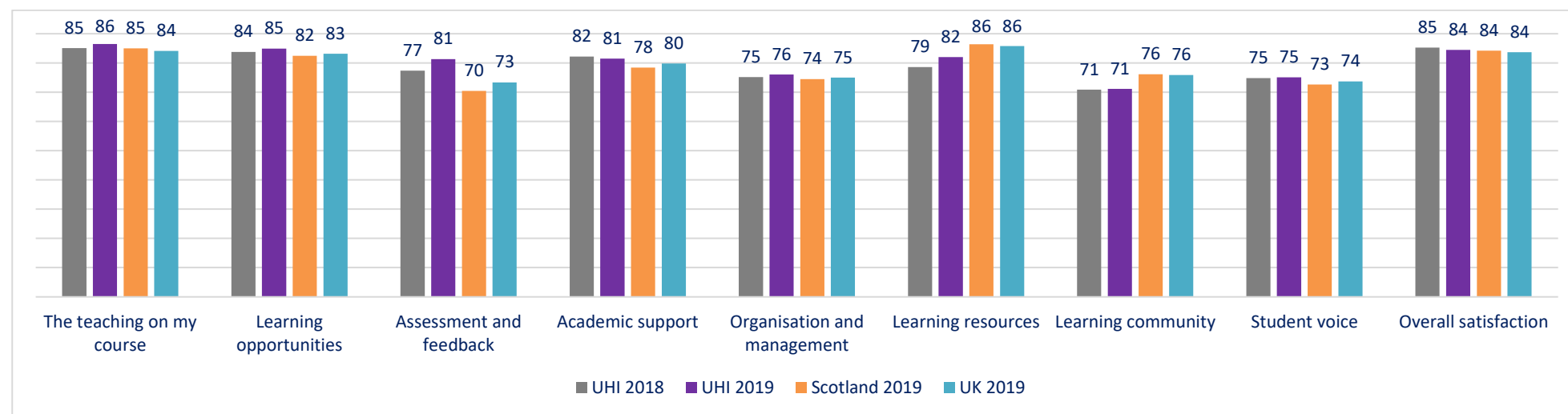


Figure 4: NSS 2019 % agree for all question scales, University of the Highlands and Islands, plus Scotland and UK figures

⁵ A more detailed explanation of the % agree calculation for question scales can be found on the Office for Students website here: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss/questions-about-the-nss-data/>

5.2 By subject network

Figure 5 below shows the scores for NSS 2018 and 2019 for the five question scales in which there is the greatest variation between Subject Networks. Whilst there has not been a great deal of change in institutional scores between 2018 and 2019, there have been some sharp increases and decreases at Subject Network level. For Assessment and Feedback, Energy and Technology scores increased by 12% in 2019, and Applied Life Studies by 9%. Humanities, Gaelic and Education, and Science Technology and Environment scores dropped for Learning Community in 2019 although the institutional score remained the same due to increased score in other Subject Networks.

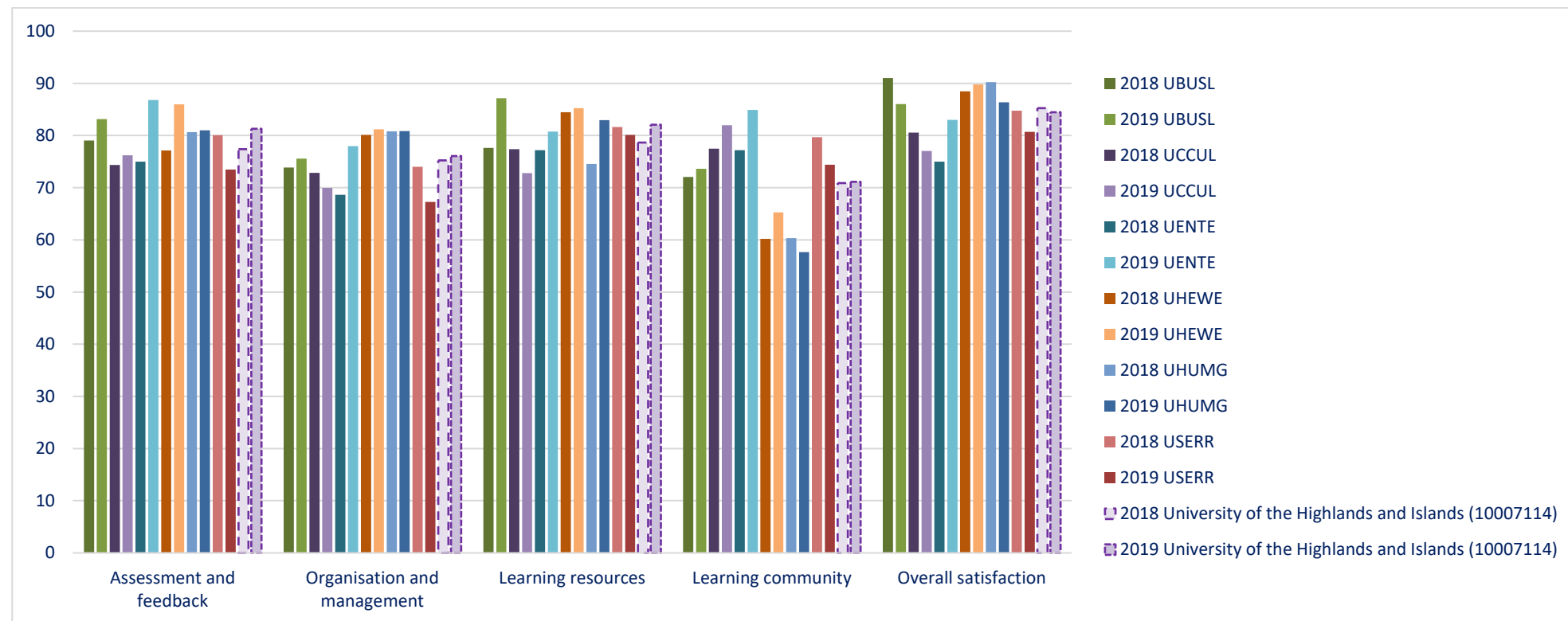


Figure 5: NSS % agree for selected question scales, by subject network 2018 and 2019

5.3 By academic partner

Scores for Teaching, Learning Opportunities and Learning Resources are generally consistent across the partnership with greater variation for Assessment and Feedback, Learning Community and Student Voice.

West Highland College UHI and Highland Theological College UHI have performed excellently across all question scales for 2019. Lower scores for SAMS for Assessment and Feedback and Organisation and Management will have contributed to the drop in Overall Satisfaction to 86% for 2019 (from 100% in 2018). Despite relatively low scores for Moray College UHI in some question scales (particularly Learning Community and Student Voice), these seem not to be related to the drop in Overall Satisfaction since 2018 as their scores for all other question scales have increased. Looking to programme level, decreases in Overall Satisfaction for Fine Art and Child and Youth Studies may well have contributed to this.

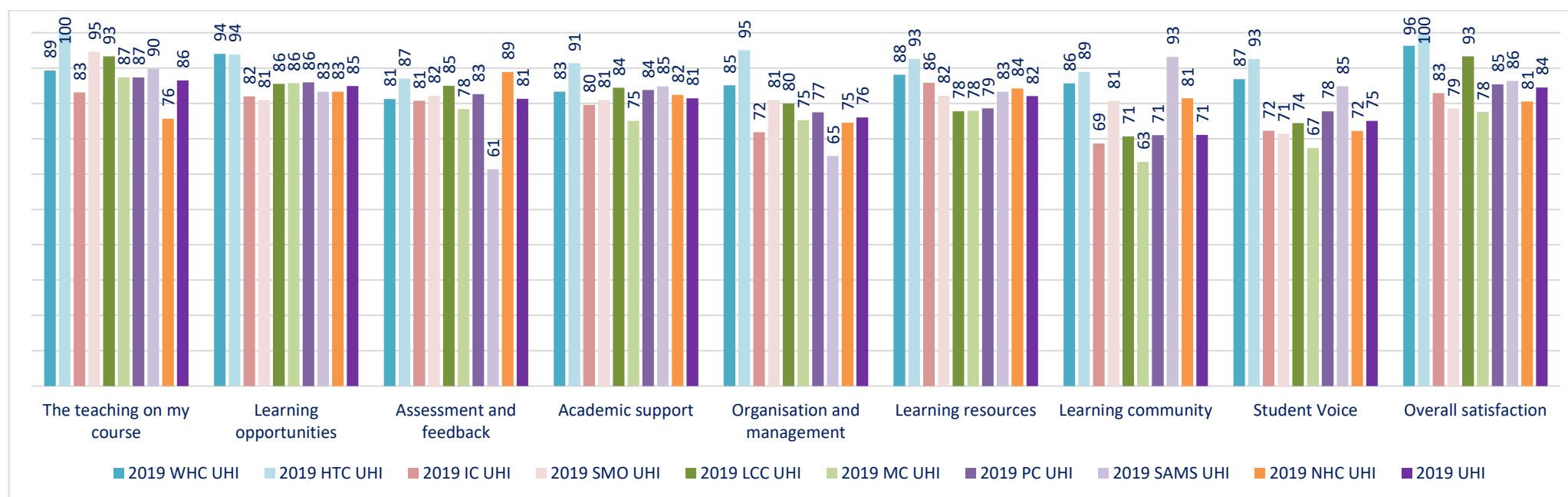


Figure 6: NSS 2019, % agree for all question scales, by academic partner

5.4 Optional question banks

In addition to the 27 questions in the main survey, students, the University selected some additional questions from a list of optional banks (provided by the Office for Students). Results for these questions are shown in Table 7 below:

	2019	2018	2017
B2. Students' Union (Association or Guild)	26	28	18
The Students' Union (Association or Guild) has had a positive impact on my sense of belonging to the university or college.	30	30	21
The Students' Union (Association or Guild) has had a positive impact on the local community.	27	30	17
The Students' Union (Association or Guild) has helped me develop useful life skills.	21	21	15
B3. Careers	74	73	74
As a result of my course, I believe that I have improved my career prospects.	90	87	84
Good advice is available for making career choices.	64	63	64
Good advice is available on further study opportunities.	67	68	73
B6. Social Opportunities	45		
I have had plenty of opportunities to interact socially with other students.	63	NEW FOR 2019	
I am satisfied with the range of clubs and societies on offer.	37		
I am satisfied with the range of entertainment and social events on offer.	34		
B7. Course Delivery	82	79	78
Learning materials made available on my course have enhanced my learning.	86	86	84
The range and balance of approaches to teaching has helped me to learn	81	78	76
The delivery of my course has been stimulating	78	77	72
My learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research.	86	82	80
Practical activities on my course have helped me to learn.	80	74	76
B9. Welfare Resources and Facilities	71		
There is sufficient provision of welfare and student services to meet my needs.	72	NEW FOR 2019	
When needed, the information and advice offered by welfare and student services has been helpful.	70		
<i>Number of Respondents (headcount)</i>	<i>440</i>	<i>357</i>	<i>344</i>

Table 6: NSS '% agree' for optional bank survey questions

6 Open-ended questions

6.1 Methodology

In addition to the 27 multiple-choice questions in the core survey, students are also invited to respond to three open-ended questions:

- Are there any particularly positive aspects of your experience on your course that you would like to highlight?
- Are there any particularly negative aspects of your experience on your course that you would like to highlight?
- 'Institution own' question: If you could change one specific thing about your experiences on your course, what would it be?

Responses to these questions are analysed using a taxonomy whose primary categories reflect the themes ('scales') in the NSS. Secondary categories have been created underneath each primary category for a more thorough analysis (see Appendix 2).

As in previous years, many comments are lengthy and address several aspects of the student's university experience. In analysis, these responses have been counted in more than one category. Where reference is made in the remainder of this section to the numbers of comments it is therefore important to remember that these will not equal the number of individual students making these comments.

6.2 Overview

Of the 692 students who responded to the main survey, **84%** of those (582) chose to respond to at least one of the three open-ended questions. After analysis, the total number of comments was 1839 (803 positive, 652 negative, 384 institution own) with distribution by primary category shown in Figure 7 below:

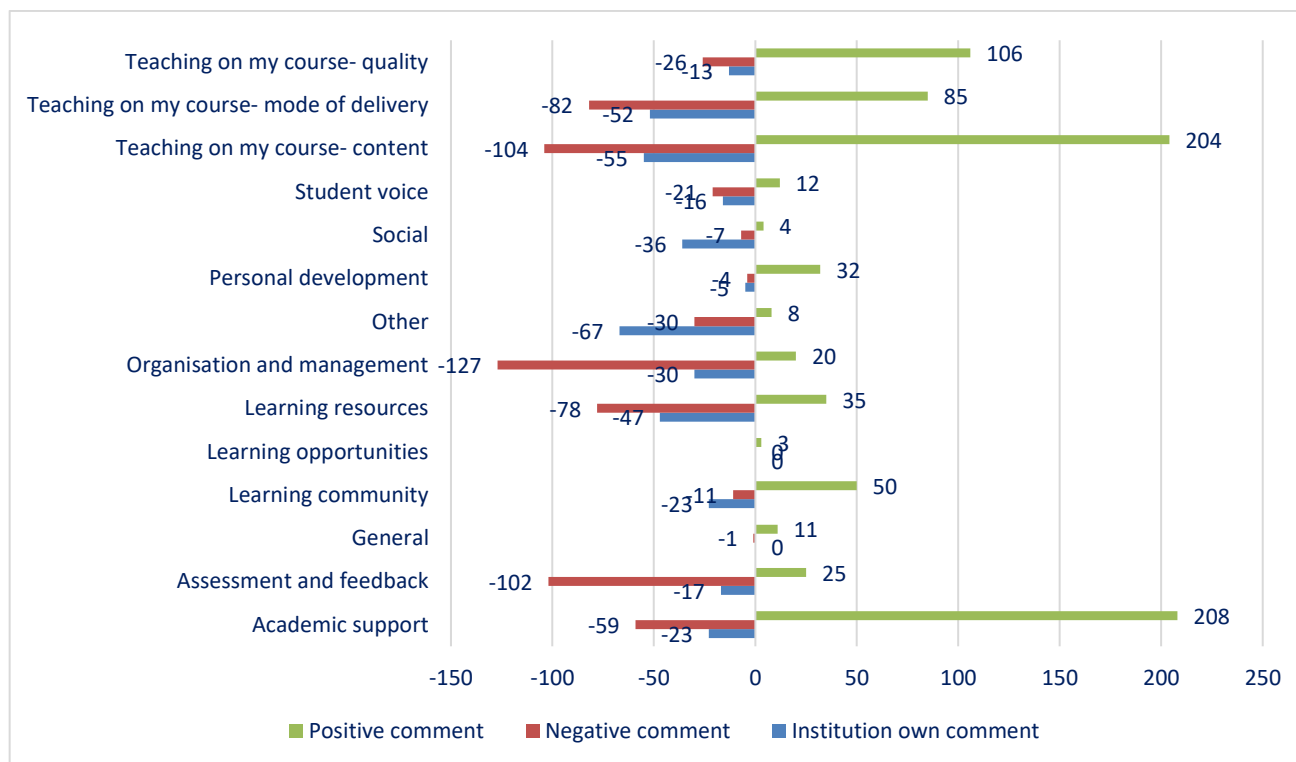


Figure 7: Distribution of student comments by primary category, NSS 2019

As in previous years, the three categories relating to Teaching (quality, mode of delivery and content), and Academic Support attracted the greatest number of positive comments. Positive comments concerning teaching quality mentioned the high level of enthusiasm and dedication from academic staff, as well as appreciating the fact that much of the teaching was experience- or research-led. Both academic staff, PATs and specialist staff (library, careers, IT) were highlighted in positive comments concerning academic support. Students commended the fact that staff are supportive, helpful and approachable, as can be seen in the word cloud based on comments within this category in Figure 8 below.



Figure 8: Word cloud, based on comments within the category ‘Academic Support’

Organisation and Management, and Assessment and Feedback attracted a large number of negative comments. There were also many negative comments concerning teaching content, and mode of delivery), and Learning Resources. These, and other themes of interest are explored in the following sections.

6.3 Teaching on my course: content

This was the category for which the largest number of comments was received overall. Positive comments greatly outnumbered negative ones and these predominantly concerned:

- Breadth of content (including module choice and course structure);
- Currency, relevance, interest of course content;
- Practicals, placements, fieldwork within the course.

Negative comments were spread across various secondary categories, with the dissertation experience emerging as a new category this year given a cluster of negative comments (14) concerning how this key aspect of final year study was experienced.

Positive comments

- I found a freedom to explore subjects tailored to my interests and in relation to my career goals. Specifically the freedom to complete assignments with flexibility for the topic selection.
- The course is very modern, and accurately prepares you for working in the industry in its current form. Optional modules in later years are well split into different specialist areas, and I was able to take modules that were relevant to my chosen career.
- Residential time provides a good face-to-face period of study where students can meet and interact over an intensive 2-3 day period
- Field trips were loads of fun and really helped with the learning experience
- (Staff) do a lot with local business and industry to create opportunities for us, they arrange employment fairs and mock interviews and good contacts with firms in the area.

Negative comments

- Quite a bit of the course seemed to be repeated
- Lack of module options.
- Most courses do not have internships and thus not connected to the job market.
- Getting students involved and working out in the community can be encouraged more.
- I feel that we are sometimes not encouraged to ask questions, which pertain to stuff that are not relevant to the course. They want us to stick to the course subject matter, which is fair enough, but sometimes we need a wider context.
- Lack of research experience when it comes to how to do a dissertation - I have gotten to fourth year and haven't had experience with the data I am expected to know.
- I feel that the way the dissertation module is 'put out there' for us to learn and read about and basically stagger through a mire without much support other than 'you're 4th year now, you should know'. I find it has been and continues to be shocking. This is the module that basically decides our future (present pass, pass or fail) and this is the module that basically doesn't have any tutorials or a leader or tutors to steer us in the right direction.

Table 7: NSS 2019, Selection of comments from category Teaching on my course- content

6.4 Teaching on my course: mode of delivery

There were over 200 comments within this category including 85 positive comments and 82 negative comments. Often both positive and negative comments addressed the very same aspect of the learning experience, and were similar in number, revealing a split in opinion concerning the merits of various teaching methods. For example, positive comments concerning videoconferencing (VC) highlighted the quality of the VC sessions and the fact that this mode of delivery made higher education accessible from rural locations. Negative comments referred to technical issues, difficulty of contributing to classes taught by this method, and feelings of disengagement from the tutor and other students. A similar division was found within comments relating to wholly online study with feelings of isolation mentioned as negative aspects of their experience, although the flexibility of online study was a distinct positive:

The flexibility - being able to fit studying around my own schedule. As a parent and somebody who works part-time, this has been vital.

Student comment, Applied Life Studies



Figure 9: Word cloud, based on comments within the category ‘Teaching on my course: mode of delivery’

A clear message emerging from comments within this category is a preference for the use of synchronous over asynchronous technologies. Discussion boards were heavily mentioned in negative comments (as can be seen from its prominence in the word cloud in Figure 9 above). Comments spoke of discussion boards not functioning particularly well: students did not interact with them enough; posts were too long and formal, and difficult to use to generate genuine ‘interaction’. Often discussion boards were mentioned as the only or main form of peer-to-peer communication within a course or module and, the perception is that:

“Online discussion boards inhibit learning experience”

Student comment, Applied Life Studies

In terms of synchronous technology, in addition to VC being valued by students as outlined above, Blackboard Collaborate was mentioned in several comments:

Found that for some tutors/modules did not offer Collaborate chat, etc. and this impacted on study. It would be really beneficial if this was in every module to be honest.

More Collaborate sessions would help if they were available at night or weekends, when the majority of students who work can attend.

Not enough Blackboard Collaborate lectures. This is a very beneficial part of the course and should be more frequent.

6.5 Organisation and management

This has been the category for which the largest number of negative comments has been received in previous years, and the same is true for NSS 2019. The breakdown of comments by secondary category is shown in Figure 10 below.

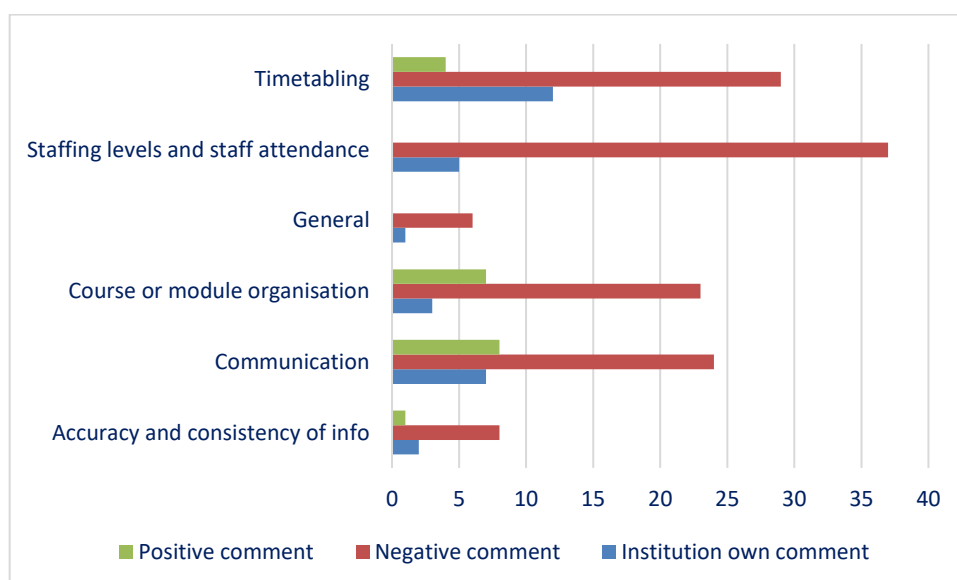


Figure 10: NSS 2019, comments by secondary category within Organisation and Management.

Staffing levels and staff attendance attracted the highest number of negative comments and many of these concerned the strike action that took place during the academic year. Others spoke of the disruption that mid-year staff changes caused to the learning experience. Comments regarding timetabling revealed a dislike of the long Christmas break, and frustration at the last-minute cancellation of classes.

Comments within Communication concerned both staff-student communications (predominantly the length of time taken to respond to student emails) and communications between teaching staff, where lack of such communication led to student confusion.

Lecturer communication between each other could be better, especially for shared teaching modules. Some cases where one lecturer says one thing and another lecturer says something else, which impacted the quality of the final piece of work.

Student comment, Creative and Cultural Industries

Comments categorised as 'course or module organisation' were more general in nature, highlighting levels of organisation/disorganisation at this level, but not specifying the source of this.

6.6 Assessment and feedback

Despite an improved performance for Assessment and Feedback this year, the number of negative comments in this category was again high. Themes within this category are familiar from previous years:

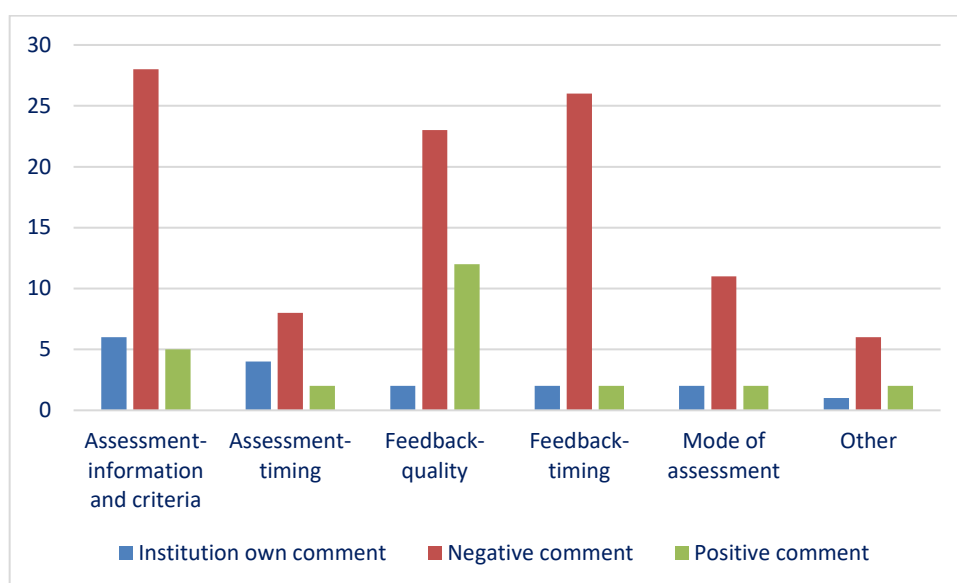


Figure 11: NSS 2019, comments by secondary category within Assessment and Feedback.

As in 2017 and 2018, the largest number of negative comments concerned assessment information and criteria, closely followed by the timing and quality of feedback. The issues mentioned are very familiar:

- Unclear assessment criteria;
- Late release of assessment requirements and marking criteria;
- Changes being made to assessment dates and criteria;
- Late receipt of marks and feedback;
- Feedback not being helpful or detailed enough;
- Inconsistencies between marking amongst academic staff.

Assessment and Feedback has been an area of focus for the university over the past two years through the programme action planning process, and the embedding of values within the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy through the activities of the Learning and Teaching Academy. Over this period, scores within this question scale have increased and now exceed the Scottish average by 8%. The number of negative comments within this category serves as a reminder of the need for a continued review and enhancement of assessment and feedback practices given how a fundamental part of the student experience they are.

6.7 Student communities

There was a noticeable strand emerging in this year's comments that has been previously absent concerning the extent to which students work and socialise with one another both within and across courses. Always present in NSS comments every year, particularly for students studying online, has been the wish for more peer interaction, but striking this year were comments asking for wider collaboration with other student groups. Respondents suggested the addition of shared social spaces, events specifically for HE students, and opportunities to work with students in other subject areas as a way to facilitate this:

Negative comments

- The student association feels more targeted towards college students not at a university level. There are also no afterhours meeting places or activities, such as a pub/union, that we could go and meet other students more freely
- I think one of the challenges of the rural network though is creating a social space in which people can connect online - the online course facilities are excellent and I have felt very connected with the course and staff at all times, but it is a bit harder to connect with fellow students when we're all placed all over the Highlands.
- Only six hours a week scheduled time on campus means that it is difficult to work with other students on your course.

Institution own comments

- There should be events/activities involving the whole university/college, by gathering all HE students together with other students from different classes and departments to socialise, participate in team building activities and communicate between each other's (...) The atmosphere of a 'student community' or 'friendship social groups' is non-existent at our university and needs to get established.
- I feel there should be more interactions with other courses that are mutually beneficial to each other. For example, having the audio students, music theatre students and popular music students work collaboratively on their respective projects. I feel that by doing this there could be a good opportunity to produce a large and successful piece of work that can be used as a great 'real-world' learning experience for everyone involved.
- I think the University would develop if a Student Union bar was on campus in Inverness as it still has College feel about it. A Student Union bar encourages communication between different students on different courses which can lead to further collaboration. I experienced this by living on campus in the halls but this is only is a small proportion of the student body that experience this. This helped me to collaborate with architecture students to develop a business plan idea and make it more visual.
- Offer more student related events and mandatory meetings across all of the UHI campuses. There is poor contact between the campuses.
- I find that it's really difficult to meet people from other courses, because there is little to no collaboration or social events that bring everyone together
- I would like to have a platform allowing asking questions to students of other faculties, the possibility of a discussion between faculties.

Table 8: NSS 2019, Selection of comments relating to student communities

7 Conclusion

NSS results for 2019 are very positive. In scrutinising scores for individual programmes, and focussing on negative comments it can be easy to lose sight of this overall picture which is that our students are, on the whole, extremely satisfied, and the high scores for teaching and academic support, and the number and content of the positive comments attests to the high quality of their experience at UHI. There was a very small decrease in Overall Satisfaction (less than 1%) but the university achieved the benchmark for our institution and still sits above the Scottish and UK average for this measure. The university is doing well in the national rankings, with only two other post-92 universities scoring above us, and we exceed the Scottish average for all but two of the question scales.

Areas for development are those question scales for which the university scored below the Scottish average for this year, namely Learning Resources and Learning Community. As in 2018, an institutional action plan for Learning Resources will be created (led by John Maher, Director of LIS) and monitored by the NSS Strategic Steering Group. It is also suggested that an institutional focus is placed on improving scores for Learning Community. The Learning and Teaching Academy will be taking a lead on this through various strands of activity:

- Events and webinars to encourage embedding of one of the [values from the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy](#): 'Providing a connected learning experience'.
- A Learning Communities Special Interest Group to promote best practice in this area (particularly for students studying predominantly online).
- Continuing existing work taking place under the current [QAA Enhancement Theme](#)

In addition, the following issues are highlighted as areas for further discussion at appropriate committees and fora:

- Increasing and improving the use of synchronous technologies (such as virtual classroom and videoconferencing)
- Tackling the staffing issues that are often at the heart of negative experiences concerning Organisation and Management

8 Next steps

We will work with Academic Partner senior managers, Quality Managers, Faculty Deans, Subject Network Leaders, programme teams and HISA on a number of activities and events to reflect on NSS 2019 and to work towards improved results for NSS 2020, including:

- Targeted action planning: Given the proven efficacy of action planning, programmes with overall satisfaction scores for Q27 below the University score and/or drops of 10% or more, will meet with relevant AP senior staff, Faculty Deans and Subject Network Leaders to agree an action plan for the coming academic year;
- NSS 2019 Programme Leader Forum 01 October 2019; to bring together Programme Leaders; including those from action planning programmes to reflect on results and consider enhancements;
- The Dean of Students will run bespoke workshops and briefings with students and staff at a local level;
- NSS Strategic Steering Group: This group will meet three times in the academic year to oversee actions from the programme action plans and provide leadership on institution-wide strategies to improve NSS satisfaction scores;
- NSS Process Management Group: This group will continue to oversee the day-to-day running of the NSS including finalising the sample for NSS 2020, and staff and student communications.

Dr Heather Fotheringham, Evidence-Based Enhancement Lead
August 2019

9 Appendix 1: HESA flow diagram for NSS-eligible students

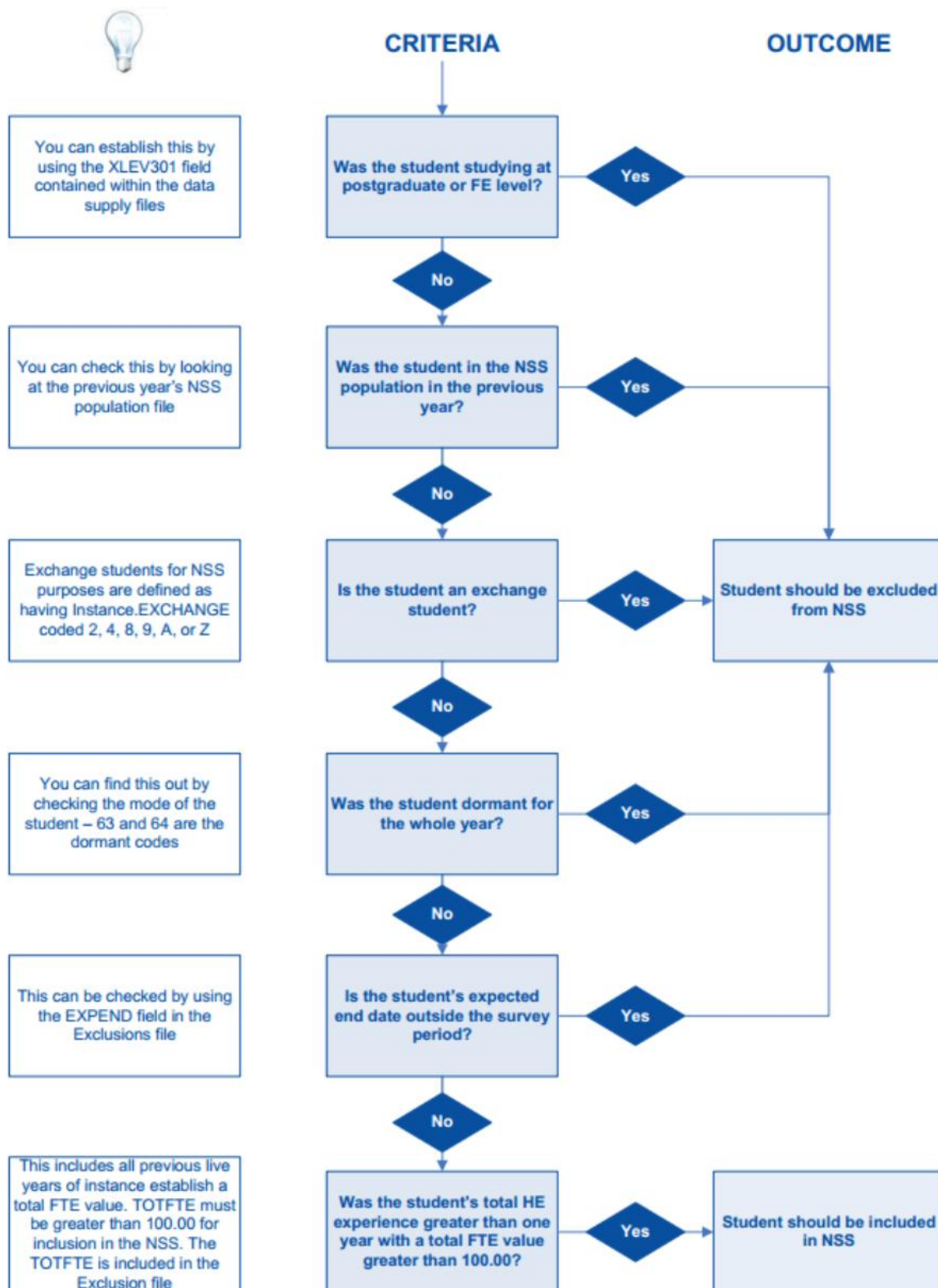


Figure 12: HESA flow diagram to identify NSS-eligible students

10 Appendix 2: Taxonomy for analysis of open-ended questions

Primary category	Secondary category
Academic support	General or unspecified support
	Lecturer or tutor support
	PAT support
	Specialist support
Assessment and feedback	Assessment- information and criteria
	Assessment- timing
	Feedback- quality
	Feedback- timing
	Mode of assessment
	Other
General	
Learning community	Feeling part of a community
	Staff-student relations
	Working with other students
Learning opportunities	Applying what I have learnt
	Bringing ideas together
	Exploring ideas in depth
Learning resources	Course-specific resources
	General
	IT
	Learning spaces
	Library
Organisation and management	Accuracy and consistency of info
	Communication
	Course or module organisation
	General
	Staffing levels and staff attendance
	Timetabling
Other	Funding, finance
	Local, college resources
	Other
	Other students
	Personal
Personal development	Career direction
	Course-specific skills
	Interpersonal employability skills
	IT skills
	Networking
Social	Clubs and societies
	General
	Online students
	Social activities and events
	Social spaces

Student voice	Complaints and feedback
	Student Union
Teaching on my course- content	Breadth, module choice, structure
	Course resources- quality or availability
	Currency, relevance, interest
	Dissertation or keystone module
	Other
	Practicals, placements, fieldwork
	Workload, academic challenge
Teaching on my course- mode of delivery	Class sizes
	Contact hours
	Location
	Online, distance learning
	Other
	Synchronous technology
	VLE
Teaching on my course- quality	Research, experience-led teaching
	Staff enthusiasm, interest, knowledge

11 Appendix 3: Results for all questions

NSS item	UHI 2019	UHI 2018	UHI 2017	Scotland 2019	UK 2019
The teaching on my course	86	85	83	85	84
Q1. Staff are good at explaining things	89	89	86	90	89
Q2. Staff have made the subject interesting	86	85	83	83	82
Q3. The course is intellectually stimulating	87	86	82	86	85
Q4. The course has challenged me to achieve my best work	84	82	81	81	81
Learning opportunities	85	84	82	82	83
Q5. My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth	89	84	84	84	84
Q6. My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics	86	88	85	85	85
Q7. My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt	80	80	77	79	81
Assessment and feedback	81	77	72	70	73
Q8. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance	80	78	69	72	73
Q9. Marking and assessment has been fair	85	81	79	73	73
Q10. Feedback on my work has been timely	76	72	64	66	74
Q11. I have received helpful comments on my work	84	79	75	70	74
Academic support	81	82	79	78	80
Q12. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	87	87	83	87	86
Q13. I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course	82	81	80	77	79
Q14. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course	75	78	73	71	75
Organisation and management	76	75	70	74	75
Q15. The course is well organised and is running smoothly	70	65	61	68	70
Q16. The timetable works efficiently for me	81	83	78	79	78
Q17. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	77	77	69	76	77
Learning resources	82	79	78	86	86
Q18. The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well	81	78	76	84	83
Q19. The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well	82	78	78	88	87
Q20. I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to	84	80	81	88	87
Learning community	71	71	70	76	76
Q21. I feel part of a community of staff and students	67	67	66	67	68
Q22. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course	76	76	75	86	84
Student voice	75	75	70	73	74
Q23. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course	87	86	81	87	85
Q24. Staff value students' views and opinions about the course	80	77	77	74	76
Q25. It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on	59	61	53	56	61
Q26. The students' union or guild effectively represents students' academic interests	45	47	41	52	56
Q27. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this course	84	85	79	84	84

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Red Button Report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Liz Cook, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	
Date Paper prepared:	28 th August 2019
Brief Summary of the paper:	The attached report provides analysis of the content of issues logged via the Red Button 2018-19
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change 	The report assists with a number of strategies' including Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Learning and Teaching, and Student Engagement
Resource implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Risk implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes / No If yes, please specify:
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	None

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should not be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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

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

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

Red Button Report

Executive summary

The attached report provides analysis UHI wide of the content of issues logged via the Red Button 2018-19.

The table below shows the number of issues logged by category for ICUHI.

Number	Category	Topics emerging
2	Accommodation	
18	Course Administration and advice	Issues raised around VC class size and location; 3 enquiries were made; issues raised regarding pre-course information
6	Exams and assessment	Access arrangements
10	Facilities	Catering; access; car parking
5	IT	Signing in; access
11	Lecturing staff	2 situations reported multiple times; poor teaching
6	Libraries	Use of multi search tool; noise and space in LRC
9	Positive	Staff
16	Student Services	5 uses as a reporting service; fees; awareness of free sanitary products;
2	Student Association	NUS registration

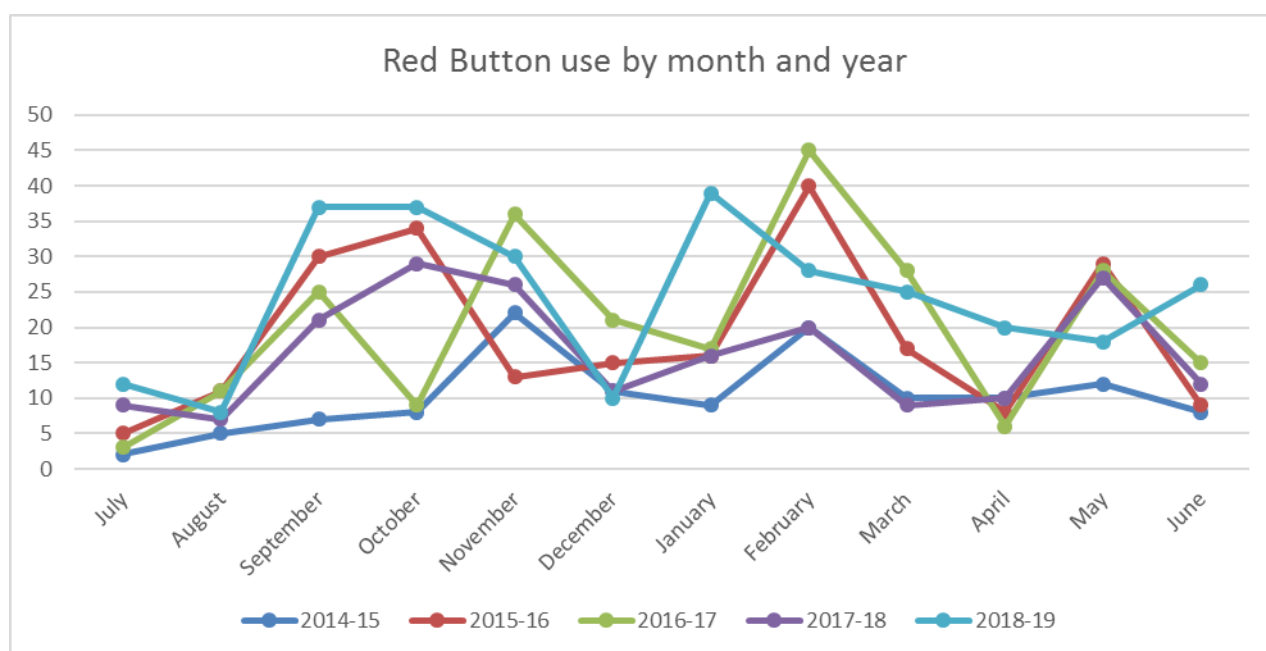
As the full report notes the issues are actioned as they arise and a response is sent directly to the student, as they reflect individual circumstances.

The issues raised through the Red Button usually reflect those raised in the other student surveys.

Red Button annual report, 2018-19

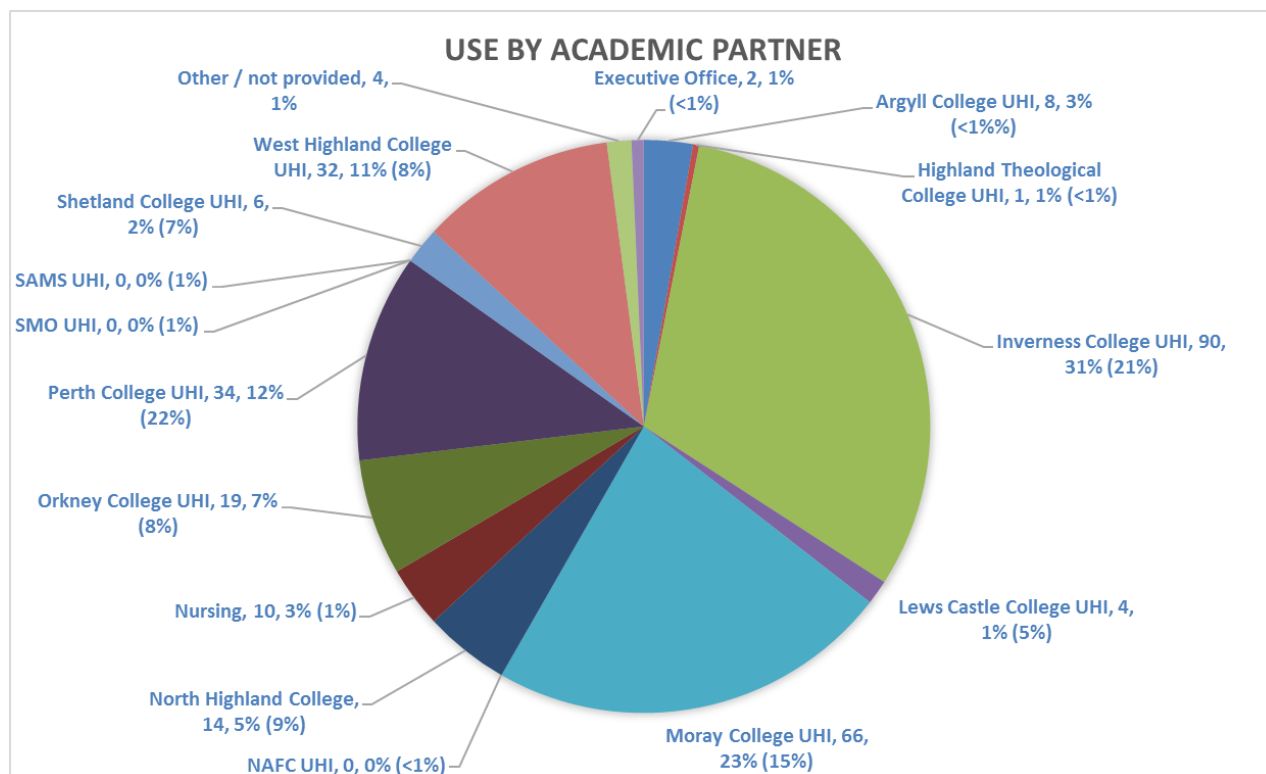
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the use of the Red Button student feedback system during the 2018-19 academic year.
- 1.2 The Red Button is an informal feedback and problem resolution mechanism. Students are encouraged to submit questions, suggestions, issues of concern and positive feedback. Students are advised that they should raise any concerns with staff directly at their HAP in the first instance.
- 1.3 The number of Red Buttons relating to a particular Academic Partner or Subject Network should not necessarily be viewed as an indicator of poor quality: increasingly, students are using the Red Button to express satisfaction and a higher number of contacts can also reflect effective promotion of the service to students. Providing an early opportunity for student feedback and problem resolution through the Red Button is an important way to improve the student experience, and can affect measures of satisfaction, such as the NSS.
- 1.4 A total of 290 enquiries were made to the Red Button during this academic year, and this report highlights the overall themes. In the 2017-18 academic year, 197 enquires were received.
- 1.5 User satisfaction with the service continues to be extremely high.
- 1.6 The chart below shows use of the service by month and year:



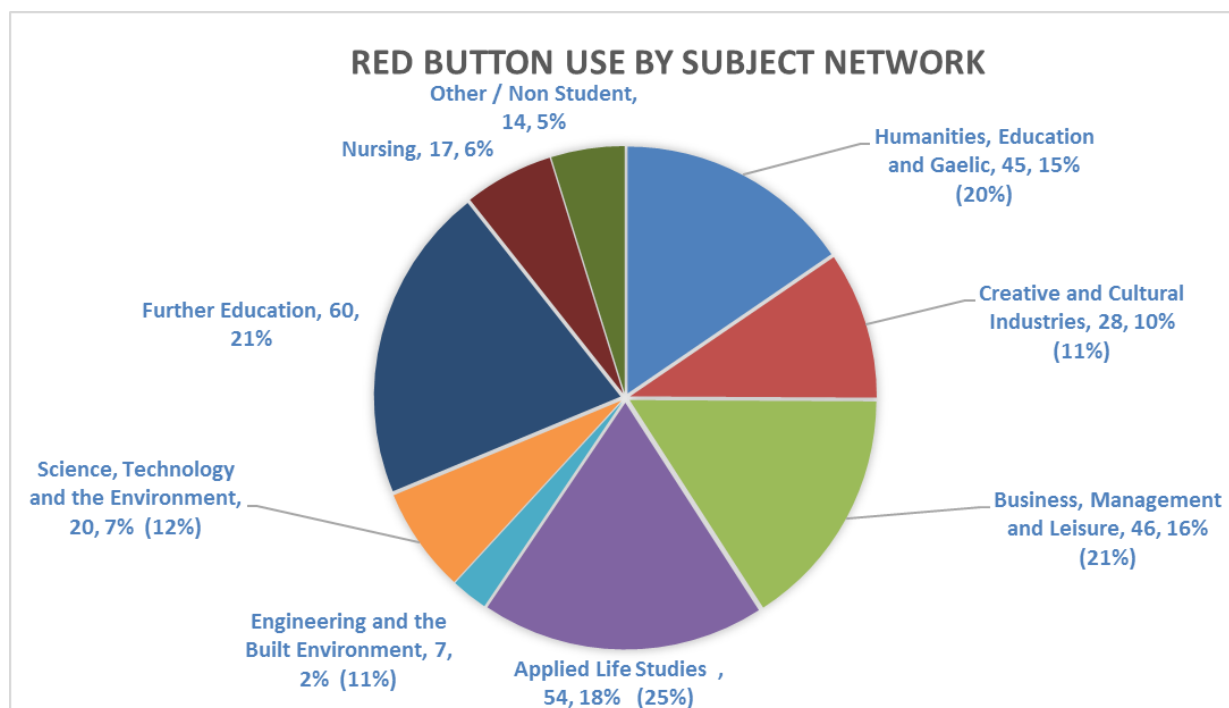
2.0 Red Button Use by Academic Partner

2.1 The chart below shows use of the Red Button by academic partner. All users were FE and HE students. The number of enquiries followed by percentage for each category is shown. The proportion of students (FE and HE) registered at each academic partner is shown in brackets.



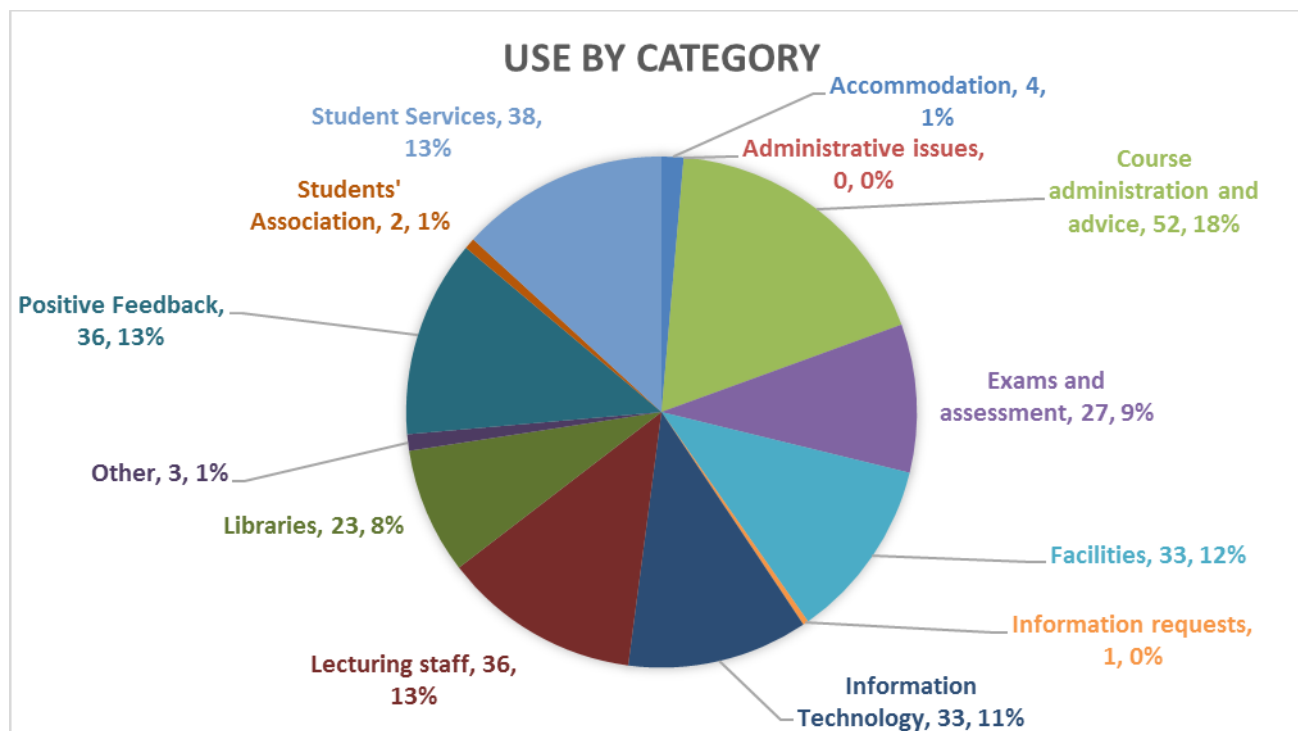
3.0 Use by Subject Network

3.1 Data is provided below on the use of the Red Button by subject network. The number of enquiries followed by percentage for each subject network is shown. The proportion of students in the subject network is recorded in brackets, other than for non-students, nursing and further education.



4.0 Use by Category

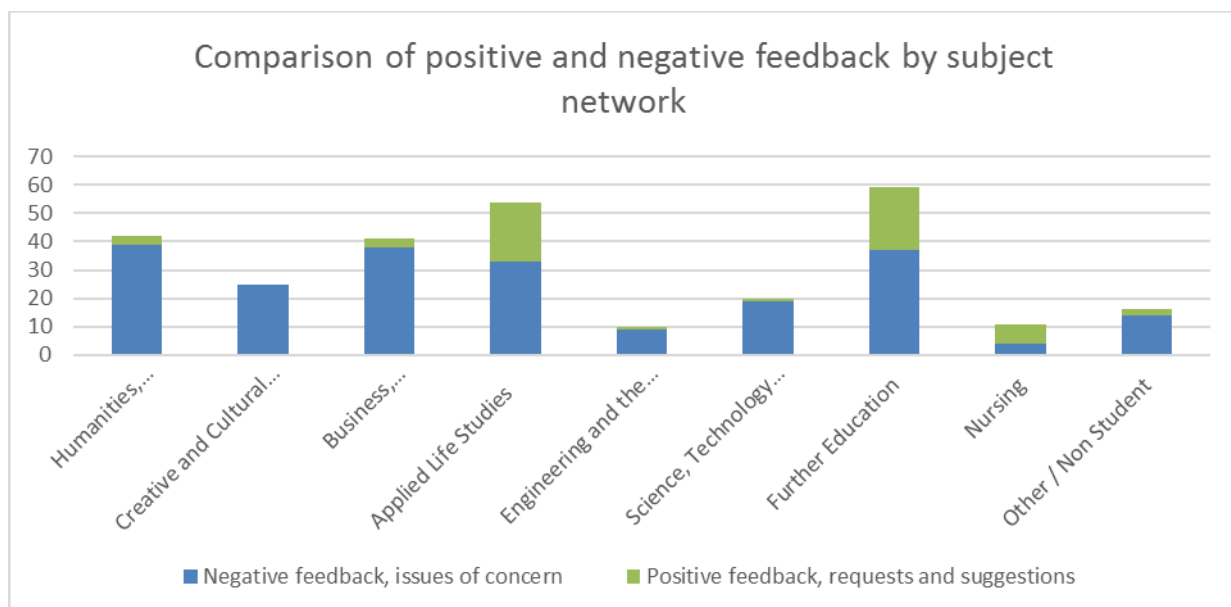
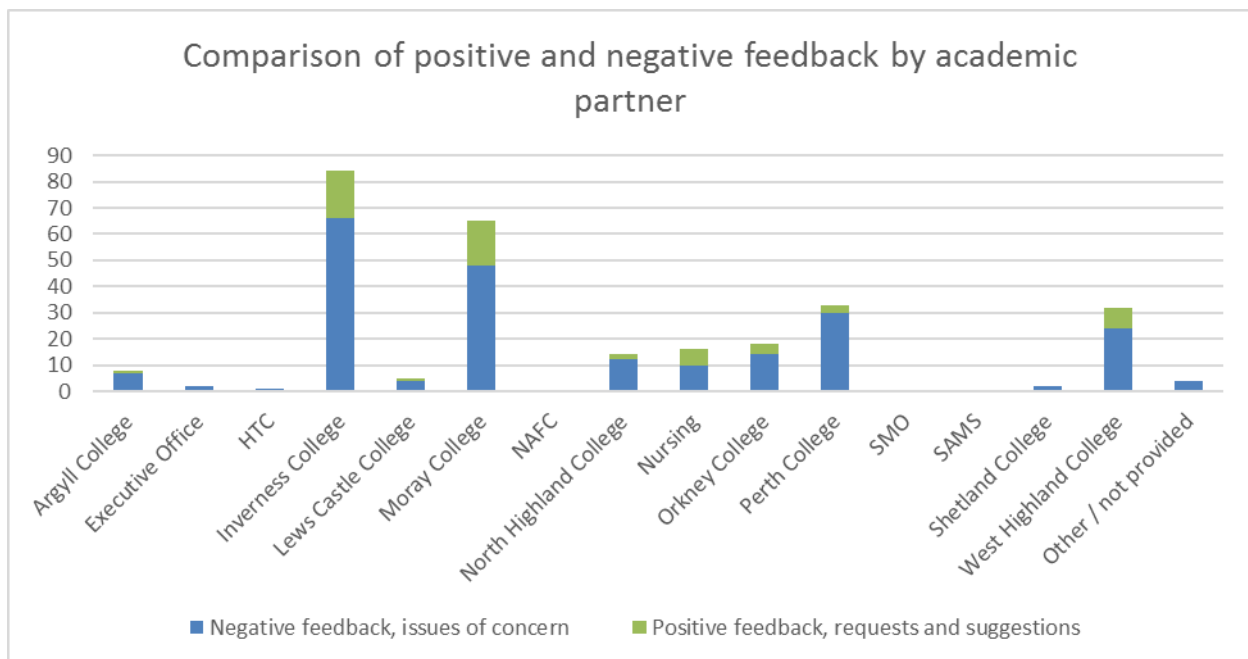
- 4.1 Almost every Red Button enquiry is different from the next: very individualised and personal to the students. However, it is important that we try to identify generic themes and issues which might point more systemic issues that might need to be addressed. The following chart categorises enquiries by theme. The number of enquiries followed by percentage for each category is shown below for the 2018-19 academic year.



- 4.2 Because of the widely varying nature of the issues, a complete table of enquiries received in quarter 4 , together with the resolutions to the issues presented, is included in **Appendix 1**. Details of issues received during the rest of the year are contained within quarterly reports already issued.
- 4.3 Analysis of enquiries. A brief analysis of enquiries this quarter is provided below:
- 4.3.1 Course administration and advice. A number of enquiries this quarter related to course staffing and organisation.
 - 4.3.2 Lecturing staff. A number of enquiries related to perceived issues related to lecturers in class, or communications with teaching staff. A number of students from a particular class made enquiries related to strike action.
 - 4.3.3 Positive feedback. A significant proportion of enquiries were to express appreciation for an aspect of the university. This is usually in relation to teaching staff.

5.0 Comparison of positive feedback and issues of concern

- 5.1 As well as being a method of raising issues of concern, students may also use the Red Button to provide feedback, ask questions, offer suggestions or express thanks. The following table shows the number of 'positive' and 'negative' enquiries received by academic partner. 'Positive' enquiries include questions, suggestions, praise and general requests for information, while 'negative' includes all instances where the student expressed dissatisfaction about an aspect of their university experience.



Dr Iain Morrison and Kevin Sinclair
August 2019

Appendix 1 – Summary of Red Button Enquiries and Resolutions

The following table contains enquires received during the forth quarter of the year. Other enquiries have previously been published in quarterly reports which are available to view on our Sharepoint site:

<https://myuhi.sharepoint.com/sites/eo-ss/se/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewpath=%2Fsites%2Fseo-ss%2Fse%2FShared%20Documents%2FForms%2FAllItems.aspx>

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Information Technology	Student has been trying to access Blackboard however it is stating their password is incorrect. Their account was recently involved in the phishing incident and they are worried it has something to do with that. The student requires urgent access for exam revision and assignments.	The student was advised that the Red Button is not ideal for reporting technical issues and they should contact Servicedesk directly to resolve any urgent I.T. problems.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student is unhappy that their study has been affected by the lecturing staff going on strike. This has delayed their results, which is causing problems with their applications to university.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student feels lecturing staff striking has had a negative impact on their studies and that this is unfair given they have worked exceptionally hard on their course.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student feels that lecturing staff should not have gone on strike and should have attempted to resolve the issue by other means.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student feels the strike action is severely disrupting their learning experience and will affect their ability to complete the course and progress to university.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student finds the strike action 'selfish' as it is directly affecting the classes, who have put a lot of effort into their course.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student wishes the college to honour the EIS deal and 'stop gambling with their education'.	The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations between the relevant union and employers organisations. Staff have the right to take industrial action, and the college is trying to minimise the impact on students.
04/19	Orkney College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Information Technology	Student suggested it would be useful to require staff and students to change their passwords every year, with reminder emails in advance, to avoid phishing incidents.	Student was advised that UHI have been formally certified as a Cyber Essentials Plus organisation, which recommends that password changes are not forced at fixed times. Instead, users are encouraged to create a complex password which involves numbers, symbols, and a capital letter to improve security.
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Libraries	Student reported they were trying to get an assignment finished but were disturbed by a group in the LRC who were making a lot of noise. They have asked the group to be quiet	The student was advised that, if the issue arises again, they should speak directly to the staff in the LRC who will be able to address this.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				previously, but do not wish to get involved in a confrontation.	
04/19	Moray College UHI	Creative and Cultural Industries	Course administration and advice	Student raised a number of issues with their course, including insufficient space to build a large installation/sculpture or use spray paint, a limited selection of tools, other courses now utilising space intended for Fine Art, out of date technology, and problems with staffing. The student feels it is a fantastic environment in which to study but is 'let down' by lack of investment in the course.	Following investigation, it was confirmed a number of things are planned to address the issues including use of space in the department with a view to ring-fencing a room as a workshop space, the purchase of protective equipment to allow for spray painting, investment in IT, and the arrangement of more talks and workshop opportunities. The student was thanked for the feedback they had provided.
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Lecturing Staff	Student reported they have struggled with their lectures, as they often end earlier than expected and the information is the same as in the notes, with very little discussion. There have also been issues with the VC, which have meant they cannot hear the lecturer very well or the discussion taking place in Perth. Due to the distance the student has to travel, and the cost of public transport, they do not feel this is an appropriate method of study. In addition, the student is unhappy with the options available for the second semester, as they do not find them relevant to the subject.	Following an investigation, it was acknowledged that it is difficult for the class in Inverness to interact by VC due to the room they have been assigned. It is hoped it may be possible to move the class to a different room, which would resolve the issue and improve the sound quality as well. Going forward, the team in Perth will set group tasks during VC time, which should mean the lectures last longer and give the students a chance to engage. Other aspects of the feedback will also be considered by the course team.
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Creative and Cultural Industries	Information Technology	Student could not sign in to their university webmail. They changed their password after the recent Phishing incident, and have not had any problems with other applications.	The issue was passed to Servicedesk, for investigation.
04/19	Argyll College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Positive Feedback	Student reported their lecturer had gone 'above and beyond' when teaching their class and has been extremely helpful, ensuring everyone is fully	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				confident in what they have been taught.	
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Nursing	Student Services	Student reported they missed the morning lecture due to a family emergency.	The information was passed on, and the student advised how they should report absences in future.
04/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student finds the course is 'good' and the lecturers are there to help, although it was noted they do not have a lot of time to finish projects.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
04/19	Shetland College UHI	Postgraduate research	Course administration and advice	Student reported continual late notice of training events organised for PhD students and although an events calendar is on Blackboard, this simply gives the title without further details. The student does not feel that one weeks notice is sufficient when they have other commitments to consider. The cost of travel from the islands can also be significant if it is not booked in advance.	Following investigation, it was confirmed that the Graduate School sent out emails 3-3.5 weeks ahead of any training events, and sometimes longer. The only event which was advertised with 2 weeks notice was due to staff annual leave, and this will be addressed for future events. It is expected that the move to Brightspace will allow for additional functions within the events calendar, to provide more detail.
04/19	Moray College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Course administration and advice	Student questioned why the course is not going ahead, as they said there is a demand for it.	It was confirmed that there is a one year hiatus for the programme and it will return in 2020/21. The course was not advertised as being available in 2019/20.
04/19	West Highland College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student reported that the lecturer is very 'condescending and sarcastic' and makes them feel uncomfortable. They stated a number of people have left the course because they felt 'bullied'.	The Depute Principal investigated the complaint and took into account other student feedback, student retention data, and achievement on the course. They also examined email correspondence between the lecturer and the student. It was concluded that the lecturer is providing a good level of support and delivers the course effectively, however it was acknowledged that at times the manner in which they address

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
					students needs to be considered as it may require adjustment.
04/19	West Highland College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student finds the lecturer 'rude and condescending' and reported low attendance in class with a high level of withdrawals.	The Depute Principal investigated the complaint and took into account other student feedback, student retention data, and achievement on the course. They also examined email correspondence between the lecturer and the student. It was concluded that the lecturer is providing a good level of support and delivers the course effectively, however it was acknowledged that at times the manner in which they address students needs to be considered as it may require adjustment.
04/19	Perth College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Positive Feedback	Student wished to compliment their lecturer for the support they have provided. In particular, the student recently failed an assignment and would have left the course if it was not for the positive feedback they received. The lecturer is always on hand to offer assistance, and the student feels they have gone 'above and beyond' to help them.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
04/19	Moray College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student feels they have been let down by staff having missed six weeks of learning due to staff absence. In addition they have also been impacted by union strikes, which has had a severe effect on the amount of teaching provided.	Staff met with the group of students and it was acknowledged that the class had been affected by staff illness as well as legitimate strike action, which resulted in lectures being cancelled. Moving forward, the class will have weekly progress meetings to discuss teaching and the students are encouraged to attend all lectures even if they are rearranged.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Student Services	Student wished to report a lack of mental health support, having struggled with anxiety and depression. They felt that having told their PATit had not been taken into account with regard to issues with their attendance.	Following an investigation, the student's complaint was not upheld. Although the college empathised with the student's issues, they had been offered support and had not responded to communications regarding

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				Due to these issues, the student has now been removed from the course, and they are very angry about the way it has been handled.	their attendance before the decision was made to remove them from the course. The student also did not take up the offer of a referral for mental health support made by their PAT.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Course administration and advice	Student is having their work included in a fashion show however when they tried to find information about times and how to obtain tickets, they could not find anything on MyDay. Although the event was advertised on social media, the student does not use that and requested that a tile be added to MyDay for such things.	The student's feedback was acknowledged and the teams organising the event are looking at how to improve communications in future. The suggestion regarding a tile on MyDay was passed to the appropriate team, for consideration.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Exams and assessment	Student claimed that learning support requests were not actioned for their exam and that procedure was not followed by learning support with regard to a recent exam, which left them feeling even more stressed than usual.	Following an investigation, the student's complaint was not upheld. It was confirmed that the Additional Support Needs team had arranged for the student to receive 25% extra time for the exam, and this was communicated to the invigilator. Arrangements regarding medication taken into the exam had not been made prior, at the student's explicit request.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank their lecturer for their support and guidance. They have found the lecturer's calm and flexible approach in helping the student to tweak things in their written work to be very educational and motivational.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student feels their lecturer does not take their disability seriously and has found them to be dismissive of the reasons for the student being late or having to leave early.	It was confirmed that the Guidance Team had invited the student for a meeting in January, however the student did not attend. The student was encouraged to rearrange this, to discuss the support they require.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Student Services	Student reported a number of complex issues between them and other students they were sharing accommodation with. The student has been very upset by what has happened, and this has exacerbated their Autism symptoms and affected their mental health, particularly as it occurred shortly after a disclosed suicide attempt.	Following discussions with support staff at the college, it was established that the student is already receiving appropriate support and the issues will be addressed when they return for the start of the academic year in 19/20.
05/19	Moray College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Exams and assessment	Student reported they had submitted their assessment on time, however after receiving their results realised they had accidentally submitted the question rather than the assessment. They requested help to rectify this, as they are dismayed they may receive a mark capped at 40% due to the error.	The student was advised of the correct Appeals process and provided with links to the relevant Academic Regulations, along with the Appeal proforma documents.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Course administration and advice	Student wished to apply for an extension, due to family ill health.	The request was forwarded to the student's PAT for consideration.
05/19	West Highland College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank the tutor for their enthusiastic teaching skills and their patience when dealing with the student's mental health problems. They found the tutor to be very approachable and courteous at all times, and the course 'brilliant'.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was be passed to relevant staff.
05/19	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Course administration and advice	Query regarding teaching qualifications.	Link provided to the course information webpage.
05/19	Argyll College UHI	Creative and Cultural Industries	Lecturing Staff	Student reported their tutor had stated that 'I don't give As, only Bs'. The student said this caused concern as it could make it impossible for them to obtain a first class degree.	It was confirmed that the programme is rigorous in its grading and the comment from the tutor was a misrepresentation of something said as an anecdote, which was meant to encourage the class to

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
					give a bit more and aim for excellence to achieve an A.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student was a class rep and wished to praise a lecturer on behalf of the entire class. They stated the lecturer does regular reviews, provides clear deadlines, and runs a disciplined learning environment. They are also totally approachable and provides help and support, even if it is for something not in their department.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
05/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Course administration and advice	Student is concerned that grades will not be entered into the system due to staff strike action. They are worried this will mean they will not receive their award qualification, which could impact on them being able to study elsewhere without that proof.	The college acknowledged the anxiety the current strike action is causing students, and confirmed measures are being put in place to mitigate the impact. Should a student be without proof of their qualifications, the college will do whatever it can to provide as much information as possible to support their progression.
05/19	Orkney College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank a member of the college I.T. support for going 'above and beyond' to help them with issues on their personal laptop. The student was provided with a college laptop on loan for two weeks, and is very impressed with the service they have received.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
05/19	Orkney College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Suggestion	Student is moving to Dumfries and Galloway and believes that it would be beneficial for the university to consider a campus or hub in this area. They value their experience with the university, and think it should be available to students outside of the Highlands and Islands.	The student's comments were passed to senior management, for consideration in future planning initiatives.
05/19	West Highland	Creative and Cultural Industries	Information	Student is irritated by the recent stream of spam emails which have resulted from some university accounts being	Student was advised that Servicedesk are active in blocking these attacks and all efforts are being made to reduce

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
	College UHI		Technology	hacked. They are also concerned that the system could be vulnerable to more serious threats.	risk. The student was also directed to the university phishing awareness advice which is on the website.
05/19	Not provided	Not provided	Lecturing Staff	A request was made for the correct email address to raise a formal complaint about a tutor.	Links to the Complaints Process webpage as well as the Complaints email address were provided.
06/19	West Highland College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student reported they have 'loved' the course and would recommend it highly. They believe it gives a good start to becoming a cadet, although this is not the route they have taken as they now have a job with Calmac which is a result of taking the course.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	Perth College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Course administration and advice	Student enquired what would happen to their Masters certificate, as they are not attending graduation.	It was confirmed the certificate had been issued using Royal Mail's signed for service. The student was provided with a tracking number, for reference.
06/19	Moray College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Lecturing Staff	Student feels that lecturers are leaving marking too late and this is leading to a build up of corrections. The delay is preventing them from submitting other work, and without passing all modules they cannot progress to HND.	Following an investigation, it was acknowledged that the unit began late due to staffing issues and a number of teaching weeks were lost due to Blue Sky Days and holidays. The lecturer has allocated time during remediation week which will allow students to complete the work.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Lecturing Staff	Student has found the course to be 'poor' this year and does not feel the lecturers have sufficient teaching experience, and that they are lacking enthusiasm. The also said that quality of VC lecturers has also been poor, and general communication has been haphazard.	After reflection, the student decided to contact the local Quality Team directly to discuss their concerns and also speak to their tutors.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Libraries	Student is trying to search for resources on multi-search but is getting an error message	The issue was logged with Servicedesk, and the student was advised to contact them directly in future.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				advising them to report the issue.	
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Creative and Cultural Industries	Information Technology	Student was trying to access their results and had difficulty navigating Blackboard. They were frustrated they couldn't find any clear instructions within the Student Hub on how to do so.	Student was advised that instructions were available on the UHI website, and that all online services (including UHI Records) could be accessed via MyDay.
06/19	Perth College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Exams and assessment	Student is unhappy with the feedback they have received for the Child and Youth Studies module and the overall grade they received. They do not feel it has been marked fairly, and do not understand (from the feedback) what issues with the assessment led to such a low mark.	Student was advised the Red Button is not an appropriate mechanism for querying an academic mark and provided with a link to information about the Academic Assessment Appeal process and regulations.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Course administration and advice	Student has found a module to be 'unorganised' and the assignments confusing. Support from the tutors has been 'inconsistent, repetitive, and formal' and they do not feel their concerns are being listened to.	The student subsequently retracted their complaint, although the comments were forwarded to the team as anonymous feedback.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Positive Feedback	Student wished to formally thank their tutor for the kind support during their studies. They have found the assignments clear and with good guidance, and noted that if they continue their studies the tutor will be one of the reasons they do so.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	Moray College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank everyone involved in the course for their professionalism, time, compassion, and understanding. As a mature student they had been 'terrified' of returning to education but the staff involved have made the experience better than expected. They are now continuing to the next course as a result.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
06/19	Moray College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank their lecturers, who provided a great deal of support and were an inspiration. The student felt that without them they would not have completed the course.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student had been under severe stress due to family circumstances and felt they had not received support from their PAT. They were not given the correct information about Mitigating Circumstances and due to a capped mark from a resit they are being prevented from progressing to the PGDE Teaching Course, which they believe is unfair.	Following a full investigation, the student's complaint was partially upheld. Some issues were acknowledged with regard to the responses from the PAT. The issue relating to Mitigating Circumstances is being investigated in a separate process by the Exam Board.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student wished to thank the technicians who have helped them and their classmates through the course. They have made the classes interesting and relevant, the extra effort they have made has allowed the students to complete.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Positive Feedback	Student reported they had found the course inspiring and met some 'nice people'. They also wished to thank staff for their help, and they are looking forward to returning in August.	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	North Highland College UHI	N/A	Positive Feedback	Feedback was provided following a short Manual Handling course delivered in the workplace by a member of NHC staff. They found the staff member to be extremely knowledgeable, upbeat, and funny and it made the experience very lively.	The person was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.
06/19	Moray College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Positive Feedback	Student expressed their enjoyment of the course, and the knowledge and experience gained has provided them with a huge amount of confidence going forward. They also found the lecturers to be very	Student was thanked for their feedback, which was passed to relevant staff.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				supportive, encouraging, and approachable throughout.	
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Science, Technology and the Environment	Accommodation	Student is staying in the college accommodation over summer, as they are on an accelerated degree course. There have been numerous issues with staff letting themselves into the room as they think it is being used for tourist accommodation. Tourists have also been given the room number by mistake, and the temporary staff on Reception have been unhelpful. The student is finding it stressful not knowing if/when someone is going to come into their room unannounced.	CityHeart responded but did not address all the issues raised by the student, and did not acknowledge the seriousness of the student's concerns. The matter was taken up by the HISA Inverness President, who will meet with a representative from CityHeart and a member of staff from UHI to discuss this further.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Exams and assessment	Student requested an extension for their portfolio.	The request was passed to the programme team, for a direct response.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Course administration and advice	The student's mother was unhappy they would not be able to attend the graduation ceremony as it is not being held until October, and they are joining the Army in August. It was felt it is a 'disgrace' that the ceremony is being held so late, preventing the student from celebrating after all their hard work.	Staff at the college will be contacting the complainant directly to discuss available options. It was noted that none of the UHI ceremonies will be taking place before August.
06/19	Shetland College UHI	Creative and Cultural Industries	Positive Feedback	Student had missed the deadline for module feedback but wished to highlight that the tutor was very supportive and encouraging, and they found the module hugely beneficial to their confidence and practice. They did however express disappointment that a separate module did not prove interesting or useful and had little to do with research skills and methods. The student believes it would be	The student was thanked for their feedback, which will be passed on to relevant staff.

Date	Academic Partner	Subject Network	Category	Issue	Resolution
				helpful to the course if more staff were employed.	
06/19	Perth College UHI	Further Education	Accommodation	Student had reported several issues with their accommodation, including excessive noise from other rooms and bullying from other residents. They have now left the accommodation and found room at a nearby hotel for the remainder of the course. They requested a refund of the final two months rent, to allow them to pay for the hotel.	Following an investigation, it was noted that the student had been moved to a different room within the residences three times, in an attempt to resolve the issues raised. It was felt that some of the accusations were unreasonable and it was suggested the student may be hypersensitive to noise. The student had not spoken with staff nor officially informed them they were going to move out to a hotel. Since the college made every effort to offer suitable alternative accommodation, the complaint was not upheld and the rent will not be refunded. The student was advised that the room is still available to them, should they wish to return for the remainder of the course.
06/19	Perth College UHI	Applied Life Studies	Course administration and advice	The student's results are delayed due to industrial action, which they feel is unacceptable. There have also been delays with earlier results, and the tutor has not responded to requests to meet from the student.	It was acknowledged that the delays were due to unforeseen circumstances with staff absence, as well as industrial action. The student was advised that neither the college nor the university has any direct influence over the negotiations and staff have the right to take industrial action, however an apology was given for the stress this has caused them. The student's tutor has left the employment of the college, so it was not possible to investigate the issue with the meeting requests.
06/19	Lewis Castle College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student has been having problems completing their coursework due to a lack of feedback from the lecturer. In some cases they have not received any feedback for over 2 months, and the lecturer is now	The student was contacted by local Student Services staff to discuss the situation and ensure they were adequately supported. The student completed their coursework shortly afterwards, and attended

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				highlighting issues which should have been dealt with earlier in the course. The student believed they had completed the course and found employment, however they have now been informed the entire class is going to fail. They have been locked out of their UHI email account due to the Phishing attack and are very concerned they will not get their award, and may lose their job. This is causing them a great deal of stress and they are afraid they may do something 'stupid' as a result.	the FE ceremony following successful completion. The Head of Department is addressing the issues identified with the lecturer and this is an ongoing matter.
06/19	Orkney College UHI	Humanities, Education and Gaelic	Course administration and advice	Student is a distance learner and was unclear how to find out more information about their module choices. In particular, they were keen to find out what the core reading is for each module.	The student was advised that the new version of the programme is being finalised, and a member of the course team will contact them once the information is available.
06/19	Inverness College UHI	Further Education	Lecturing Staff	Student reported that the lecturer 'told them off for no reason and complains about them being off'.	Staff met with the student and it was acknowledged that they have been absent quite often. It was agreed that the lecturer was trying to encourage the student to complete the tasks and achieve the award, and as such the complaint was not upheld.
06/19	North Highland College UHI	Science, Technology and the Environment	Lecturing Staff	Student reported concerns at a particular location, which they feel are being ignored. They claim that a member of staff was observed verbally abusing students and the class feel under stress because of disorganisation, favouritism, gossip, and unprofessional attitudes.	A member of the Quality Team met with the student to discuss their concerns, which were passed anonymously to the Assistant Director of Learning and Teaching for further investigation. The situation is being closely monitored, and some actions have already been taken to address the issues raised.

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06/19	Inverness College UHI	Business, Management and Leisure	Exams and assessment	Student reported several errors with the arrangements which should have been in place for their exam, including inadequate software on the laptop they were using, issues with the sockets in the room, conflicting information from the invigilators, and no extra time given despite being previously agreed. This caused them significant stress and they feel it affected their performance in the exam.	Following an investigation, elements of the student's complaint were upheld although others were not. It was agreed the student would be allowed to resit the exam, which would be treated as their first attempt. After reviewing the evidence it was noted that it was not the intention of any Department to make the student feel disadvantaged, and an apology was given for any distress caused.