

Committee	Board of Management		
Agenda Item Number	7		
Date paper prepared	28/05/2024	Date of committee meeting	26/06/2024
Subject	Principal's Report		
Author	Jane Lewis, Principal with members of SMG		
Action requested	For discussion		
Purpose of the paper	<p>To update the board on activities across the College. These contribute to our fulfilment of the Regional Outcome Agreement*. The Regional Outcome Agreement covers aspirations around: Fair access and transitions; High quality learning, teaching and support; Partnership participation and student experience; learning with impact; equalities and inclusion; Responsive institutions; Climate emergency; Knowledge exchange and innovation; Research excellence and sustainability.</p> <p>Outcomes for students include our targets for FE credits; our UG and PG targets and our Schools delivery. It also highlights work on fair access; articulation and work with care experienced students.</p> <p>Outcomes for economic delivery and social renewal includes responding to employer and industry needs for example through upskilling and reskilling the workforce. It also includes our work on Islands Deal projects and knowledge exchange</p> <p>Outcomes for research includes our work to maintain and increase research excellence</p> <p>*The present ROA is for 2022-23.</p>		
Brief summary of the paper	The current position on student numbers and credits is provided. Activities of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee are provided. An update is given on activity related to the Islands Deal. Updates are given on research activities and other college activities and achievements.		
Consultation	SMG members provide the updates in the report		
Resource implications	n/a		
Risk implications	n/a		
Link with strategy	Links to all parts of the college strategic plan		
<u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</u>	n/a		
Island Community Impact	n/a		
Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction.		

	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].</p>
Freedom of information	<p>Choose an item.</p> <p>If closed/ withheld, select date this will become 'open': Enter a date.</p>

1. UHI Updates

The UHI senior leadership team has been developed –

Lorna Walker has served as Vice Principal Strategy, Performance, and Culture for the past 18 months, leading many of the university's professional services. Moving forward, her role will be retitled Vice Principal Strategy and Chief Operating Officer. This refocused role encompasses responsibilities from the vacant, and now deleted Vice Principal Operations position and consolidates the student recruitment and admissions functions from the Deputy Principal Academic and Research role.

Sheena Stewart will continue as University Secretary.

Mike Baxter, who recently joined UHI as Executive Director of Finance, will now have a retitled role as Chief Financial Officer for UHI.

Neil Simco has announced his retirement and UHI has commenced the process to recruit the next Deputy Principal Academic and Research. In the interim, **Professor Peter Francis** will join UHI as Interim Deputy Principal Academic and Research. Peter has a deep affinity and respect for the regions UHI serve and brings extensive senior academic and research experience, most recently from Birmingham City University, and his leadership will ensure continuity and stability for UHI during this transition.

2. Update on enrolment figures (FE/HE)

		12/06/24	31/05/23	Enrolments		
				2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
FE	Full time (FT)	89	54	57	72	76
	Part time (PT)	2085	2135	2469	2585	2235
HE	Full time (FT)	121	139	140	128	163
	Part time (PT)	219	223	227	273	255

Shetland UHI enrolments at 12/06/2024 (data extracted from Metis)

Our student numbers are now likely to remain fairly constant up to the end of this academic year.

12/6/24	Total credit figures				
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
4866	4698	4383	4337	4276	4572

Shetland UHI credits at 12/06/2024 (data extracted from Metis)

Our credit target for AY 2023-24 is 3902 and we were initially planning for 4118 credits delivery to provide some over delivery margin. We are reporting credits over target, largely due to an increase in full time students, and it is usual for us to continue to deliver additional credit bearing activity through the remainder of the year particularly in the areas of MA and school programmes. Current predictions for our end of year position are at around almost 5000 credits. This is despite taking action to reduce the credit claim for full time courses, moving short courses to full cost recovery, and reducing the credits claimed against modern apprenticeships by 20%. Current indications are that we will have the same

credit target and funding level for 2024/25 as for this academic year, although we continue to seek additional credit funding from the RSB and SFC.

HE numbers (APC papers May 2024)	May 24	May 23	22/23	21/22
Undergraduate Taught 'home' fee status – FTE target 140.1				
Total FTE	139.6	150	131.7	113
Total Heads	247	237	194	211
Postgraduate Taught – FTE target 16.4				
Total FTE	14.3	15.5	15.5	24
Total Heads	25	26	26	36

HE FTE levels have improved over the last few months and we are now much closer to both of our HE targets for this AY. In the case of UG students, this is largely due to work that has been carried out at EO to maximise the FTE that can be claimed.

Applications

Applications for HE are currently 30% lower than at this point last year. Applications are up across the partnership but 79% of the overall growth is coming from two of the large partners. On the other hand, applications for FE FT courses are 80% higher than last year, suggesting a continuing upwards trend in full time students at FE level.

New Courses

Aquaculture

- Started to deliver new courses – 5 day day-skipper theory, 1 day Power Boat L1
- New CPD Sustainable Aquaculture Management (Diploma L8) and CPD Sustainable Environmental Management approved by UHI to start delivery August 2024
- Rebranded online course, Introduction to Aquaculture
- Training / assessment documents written for new CBQ L5/7 Aquaculture to replace existing SVQ L2/3 for MA Aquaculture
- First senior phase maritime/aquaculture academy completed – 9 students in total classroom and full-time enrolment. At least 4 have gone into full time employment and 2 enrolled on maritime courses. Excellent feedback from students

3. Update on Apprentices

The Skills Development Scotland (SDS) apprenticeship contracts are awarded in financial years – 1 April to 31 March. 2023-24 was a successful year for apprenticeships offered through our Vocational team. In total, we had 176 new starts (total contract award 178 places) and we were able to claim £556,031 of funding – which was within £80 of our full award. Funding is claimed at specific intervals – start payment (£150 each for 16-19 year olds only), milestones (when an apprentice completes a unit or shows progress at quarterly reviews), outcome payments (when the apprentice completes the full programme) and rural uplift (usually claimed at the end of the programme, for longer programmes at the beginning too) representing an extra payment for the higher costs of remote delivery. Part of the funding (£90000) was also used to support apprentices who need to travel off-island for their travel.

Our achievement rate for the contract period was an excellent 83.4%. For context, in February the UHI contract was at 72% overall. According to SDS data the Scottish average for the period was 76%. During a presentation to the College based working group, SDS reported that for the last 5 years, the college average for achievement rate has been 67%. This is therefore an excellent result.

A new contract was awarded in April 2024 with the potential to be extended for an additional 2 years. It is a rolling contract based on performance against SDS's KPLs. We were awarded a slight increase in places (183) and funding (£564,982). We were satisfied with the contract although some occupational areas did not receive as many places as others. There are some flexibilities within the contract to move between occupational areas. As of 4 June 2024, 10 starts have already been added as apprentices and £92000 of funding has been claimed. The first KPL date will be 1 September and there is already healthy demand. We anticipate that we will be well placed to meet our contractual targets again in 2024-25.

4. Update on Research

a. Marine Sciences

New Projects (Funded)

- The start date for the Blue Connect Project is now planned for September.
- Fair Isle Survey- the Fair Isle survey work habitat contract has now been agreed and Tanya Riley will be undertaking the work in June (weather dependent).
- Aqua-Plankton (BBSRC funded project) runs from May 24 – for 24m (involves SAMS, UoA, SRUC, UHI-S).

Publications

- Shucksmith and Withouck (2024) Barriers and opportunities for improved governance of fisheries within the context of marine spatial planning. In: Governing Oceans Publisher: Edward Elgar Publishing
- Withouck I, Tett P, Doran J, Mouat B, Shucksmith R (2024) A value tree approach to integrate policy and legislation into spatial decision support tools for siting offshore renewables. In: Governing Oceans Publisher: Edward Elgar Publishing
- **Riley, T.G.**, Shucksmith, R., and Mouat, B., (2024). Distribution modelling of the benthic habitats within the Fair Isle Demonstration and Research Marine Protected Area. *UHI Shetland report*. p36
- **Riley, T.G.**, Shucksmith, R., and Mouat, B. (2024). Distribution modelling of the Shetland Islands benthic habitats. *UHI Shetland report*. P91.

Key Meetings

- Dr Kathryn Fradera is presenting at the SSMR conference in Bristol on the research outputs from the Diverse Values Project.
- 3/4/24 Shaun Fraser was invited, along with others from the Smartrawl team, to present latest developments in the Smartrawl system. The meeting was held at the National Robotarium and was attended by FIS Board members, SGMD and invited guests.
- Katie Brigden attended 9th World Fisheries Congress, Seattle, USA, March 2024 and presented on the pelagic workstream.
- Marine Science Seminar on Imaging Flow Cytobots and monitoring Harmful Algal Blooms, Scalloway.
- Joint Aquaculture Hub and Water Hub Steering group and Scotland's World Water Day, Dynamic Earth.

- “Addressing Aquaculture Challenges, Supporting Solutions” Shetland Workshop, Scalloway (UHI Aquaculture Hub and Roslin with aquaculture industry stakeholders)
- Aquaculture UK 2024 (exhibition/conference), Aviemore (UHI Aquaculture Hub)
- One Health Workshop, Carrbridge (UHI Aquaculture Hub)

Staffing Updates

- KF will be finishing her contract at the end of month and has a new role as a PDRA at Glasgow University. She is interested in becoming a visiting researcher at the UHI to maintain connections.
- CA has accepted VSS and will leave SUHI on 28th June.
- Tom Blasdale joined as Fisheries Scientist – Ling project on 1st April and will lead the ongoing workstreams.

b. Centre for Island Creativity

Project Updates

- REG funding for time for Roxane Permar to undertake fieldwork in Lapland, Finland for the **Living in the Landscape (LiLa)** project. Accommodation and travel to Finland is paid for by the project. The 6 virtual days of lectures, discussions, research and development on the theme ‘rivers and energy’ have been completed along with fieldwork in Finland hosted and organised by the University of Lapland 20 – 25 May.
- REG funding – **Landscape in Pain** – travel and accommodation to go to the Arctic Congress in Bodø where Roxane Permar has organised and Chaired an interdisciplinary panel considering how art and social based practices can help young people in the North deal with issues that threaten society, such as climate change, environmental pollution, and contamination from plastics as part of Congress’s themed section ‘Inclusion and Empowerment of Young People of the North’.
- REG funding - **Cold War Projects** – a presentation, ‘Art and Engagement with the Cold War in Shetland and its Northern Neighbours’ with Roxane Permar’s collaborative partner, Susan Timmins, at the international conference *Cold War: Collective Memory and Identity* at the National Aviation Museum, Bodø with Susan Timmins.

Publications

- **Cold War Scotland** – 10 photographs co-created with Susan Timmins in our collaboration *Cold War Projects* is included in this exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland, opens to public on 13 July 2024 (<https://www.nms.ac.uk/exhibitions-events/exhibitions/national-museum-of-scotland/cold-war-scotland/>)
- **Landscape in Pain**. This stop action animated digital film (00:03:30, played as loop) in the exhibition, *New Genre Arctic Art* is part of a multi-layered visual and social response to construction of the industrial scale Viking Energy Wind Farm in Shetland.
- Carden, S, 2024. ‘Islandness, Nations and ‘Peerie Places’: Shetland and Ireland as Archipelagic Neighbours’, *Irish Journal of Anthropology* (in press).

Key Meetings

- Roxane Permar was interviewed together with Siún Carden, Nicola Naismith and Mara Marxt Lewis (2021 *alumna*) about the MA Art and Social Practice for the podcast ‘MIAAW: conversations about community, creativity, cultural democracy and the commons’ hosted by

Dr Sophie Hope. (05/03/24; see miaaw.net/1086/highlands-islands/?fbclid=IwAR1rA-wNJCGPe-Ubaa0uiQcirgG0LVNUEqXdYoDbZC0RiTdtTxl1NFZO0Ps).

- Siún Carden has attended monthly Meids (Shetland Corporate Parenting Board) meetings and has joined an SMT meeting about the UHI Shetland Corporate Parenting Plan, to use the Meids connections and learning from Home and Belonging to feed into the development of the new Plan.
- The British Council invited Siún Carden to lead an in-person roundtable discussion on the subject of 'Rethinking communities outside of cities: national and international case studies' at their London conference 'Taking Place: inspiring vibrant communities' on 14/03/24.

5. Update on merger related topics

No further progress on MOU. A new data sharing agreement for UHI Shetland and the SIC Education department has been sent to SIC for consideration.

6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The new PC based phone system should be fully installed by the end of July. The lifts in both campuses used to be connected by phone lines to call centres, however, they will shortly be fitted with new units that will contact our contractor company in case of emergency. In the meantime, we have signs up asking people not to use them outside normal office hours.

The company Asset Register was completed in February and will be shared with line managers at the start of next term in order that they can update it as and when they replace, remove or purchase assets.

The Site Security Policy and the Energy Policy have both been approved and issued.

First Aid lists have been updated.

No accidents have been reported since our last update.

7. Islands Deal

Presentation made to Scottish Affairs Committee on Islands Deal Projects, included Shellvolution and Campus redevelopment.

Campus redevelopment

Architects have been appointed and final discussions are taking place on the projects to be taken forward within the project.

Shellvolution

The full business case has been submitted to the programme board ahead of submission to the government for consideration.

Creative Islands and Wellbeing

Further version of the full business case has been submitted to government.

Talented

Full business case has been submitted.

8. General activities and achievements

a. Student achievement

Last modified: 21/06/2024 13:39

Music students at Mareel held a lunchtime concert at Briggistanes, as a warmup for their Student Music Night at Mareel. This was well attended and enjoyed by the Briggistanes diners. The subsequent Music Night was very successful and well attended, and featured on both UHI Shetland and Shetland Arts social media platforms.

MA Art and Social Practice was the subject of a recent podcast by the MIAWW podcast – conversations about community, creativity, cultural democracy and the commons.

The NC6 Professional Cookery students staged two separate four course meals for staff at Briggistanes, with delicious meals including crab cocktail starters, new season lamb and Shetland rhubarb with ginger shortbreads.

Textile students Sue Imrie and Julia Nairn held their *Warped* student textiles exhibition at the Shetland Textile Museum in April. Beatrice Wishart MSP has further lodged a motion to congratulate the students on their achievements.

Vision 2024, this year's Art Exhibition opened on Friday 7th June. The exhibition was open to the public and featured artwork from the six final year BA (Hons) Fine Art and Contemporary Textiles students, as well as work from Contemporary Textiles, National Certificate Portfolio, MA Art and Social Practice, Core and Life Skills, and Skills for Work Art.

b. Staff achievement

Shaun Fraser, Fisheries Team, presented the Shetland Field Trials at the National Robotarium with the SmartTrawl team alongside the Fisheries Innovation and Sustainability Board Members in March.

Tracy Riley was featured on Radio Shetland to explain more about the Fair Isle Benthic Habitats Distribution Modelling research project.

Andrew Jennings was part of the organisation of the St Magnus Conference 18-20th April with a theme of *The Northern Isles and the Arctic: Environment, Heritage and Tourism*.

A number of staff were involved in the Smart STEM with SSE event for nearly 90 school children to attend and find out more about science and get involved with some hands-on activities.

Howie and Eleanor, along with cadets Tommy and Callum, represented UHI Shetland at the Shetland Celebration of STEM event held at the Museum in May. This well-attended event brought together senior primary school pupils from across Shetland to tackle exciting STEM challenges.

Stuart Fitzsimmons completed his TQFE.