

Board of Management

Minutes

Meeting reference: Board 2025-26/01

Date and time: Tuesday 07 October 2025 at 5.00pm

Location: Boardroom (Braham 019)

Members present: Alistair Wylie, Interim Chair, Board of Management
Sarah Cordwell, Board Member
Mary Fraser, Board Member
Deirdre Joy, Board Member
Chris Lusk, Board Member
David Macluskey, Board Member (from Item 6.1)
Debbie McIlwraith-Cameron, Board Member (from Item 6.1)
John McMullen, Board Member
Laeq Rehman, Board Member
Ian Robotham, Board Member
Chris Whatley, Board Member
Catherine Etri, Interim Principal & Chief Executive
Andi Garrity, Student Board Member
Millie Foster, Student Board Member
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member
Richard Fyfe, Staff Board Member
Ronnie Dewar, Trade Union Board Member (until Item 7.1)

In attendance: Lynn Murray, Depute Principal (Operations)
Fiona Cameron, Interim Director of Finance
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Rosie Howie, Board Member
Liz Stewart, UHI Court Observer

Chair: **Alastair Wylie**
Minute Taker: Ian McCartney
Quorum: 10

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We will act with integrity in everything we do

Student Centred + Innovative + Ambitious + Respectful + Inclusive + Collaborative

MINUTES

Item		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Interim Chair welcomed all to the meeting, with particular reference to those new Board Members who had received approval of their membership since the last meeting.</p> <p>Interim Chair noted the recent resignation of Elaine Piggot from the Board and recorded thanks for her contribution to the Board. Ian Robotham would take on the role of Chair of Finance & Resources Committee, however Vice Chair of Board and Vice Chair of F&R were still to be appointed.</p>	
2.	<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>There were no additions.</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest noted.</p>	
4a	<p>Minutes of the Extraordinary Board Meeting held on 30 July 2025</p> <p>Pending minor typographical errors supplied by Depute Principal (Operations), minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
4a	<p>Minutes of the Extraordinary Board Meeting held on 27 August 2025</p> <p>Minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
5	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p> <p><u>Extraordinary Board, 30 July 2025</u></p> <p>Interim Chair noted that the External Report commissioned under Item 7.2 had not been progressed at this stage.</p> <p><u>Extraordinary Board, 27 August 2025</u></p> <p>Board noted that certain actions relating to Item 4.1 (Financial Recovery Plan) had not necessarily been included in the final version of the FRP due to being overtaken by other events.</p>	

6.1	<p>Interim Chair's Report</p> <p>Interim Chair presented Paper 3, which was taken as read, adding that there had been a robust exchange of correspondence with UHI which will need to be considered before further response was provided.</p> <p>Board NOTED Paper 3.</p>	
6.2	<p>Interim Principal's Report</p> <p>Interim Principal presented Paper 4, which was taken as read.</p> <p>Interim Principal added that no feedback had yet been received from either UHI or SFC re the FRP, but this is expected by the start of November. Staff were remaining positive and those changes that can be implemented continued to be delivered, eg restrictions on unnecessary expenditure and putting forward ideas for generating income; the challenge with the latter is being able to turn ideas into actions quickly due to limited staff resources.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether there would be any potential impact from clawback with respect to the HE numbers. Interim Principal advised that this was unlikely as there was confidence that targets would be achieved and staff were looking to maximise additional student recruitment.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether there was any potential in a "Refer A Friend" campaign for this year's intake. Interim Principal advised that it was quite late in the recruitment cycle to implement such a scheme, but this would be looked at for future intakes.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether the NSS results should be resulting in more positive press coverage for UHI Perth. Interim Principal noted that press do not often cover positive stories, and this was coupled with UHI guidance around press coverage of this nature being focused on UHI rather than individual colleges, therefore the local focus tends to concentrate on promotion via social media.</p> <p>Board NOTED Paper 4.</p>	
6.3	<p>HISA Perth Report</p> <p>Student Board Member presented Paper 4, highlighting the number of SVRs recruited and changes within Clubs and Societies, where a number of sports clubs been lost due to moves to Active Campus.</p> <p>Student Board Member noted that the HISA CEO had submitted their resignation, but would remain in post until a successor is appointed.</p>	

	Interim Principal noted congratulations to HISA re increased SVR numbers. Board NOTED Paper 4.	
6.4	<p>UHI Transformation Project</p> <p>Interim Chair provided a verbal update around UHI Transformation Project, noting that the recent resignation of the former Vice Chair had created an opportunity for another Board Member to become involved in some of the specific workstreams supporting the Project.</p> <p>Interim Principal provided more detailed information on some of the key elements ahead of the Full Business Case being completed by December noting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling on target for completion by end of month other than Activity-Based Costing and Financial Baseline • Tertiary Academic Structure has HE structure in place, but proposed collective FE Structure requires more work to meet local needs; further testing is to be taken forward • Shared Services model agreed in principle however further modelling still required prior to inclusion in FBC <p>Interim Chair noted that the timelines to complete within proposed timescales still seem ambitious, and reminded Board re the UHI Briefing to Board Members scheduled for November.</p> <p>Staff Board Member queried what the plans were around academic contracts. Interim Principal advised that these had not been discussed in the meetings attended.</p>	
7.1	<p>UHI Perth Management Accounts to 31 July 2025</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) presented Paper 6 for information, highlighting that the estimated outturn to July 2025 was close to the deficit budget that had been agreed.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) advised Board that the External Auditors had determined that AST accounts would require to be consolidated into the Group accounts, which is work that had not previously been expected to be required; this will also result in an increased level of audit fees, however a quote for the additional work was still to be received.</p> <p>Board NOTED Paper 6.</p>	
7.2	<p>UHI Perth Financial Monitoring</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) presented Paper 7 for endorsement, noting that the paper outlines a revised format for financial monitoring going forward based on previous Board feedback.</p>	

	<p>Depute Principal (Operations) noted that August and September management accounts would be processed together with a view to these being supplied by mid-November, and highlighted the need for the FRP to be formally approved to allow conclusion of the budget process and provide a meaningful mechanism to measure performance again.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) noted that the Finance Team were delivering business as usual, however there was no capacity to make required improvements, however various alternative options were being looked at to deliver specific improvements around financial controls, software and development time to automate some financial processes.</p> <p>Chair F&R recognised work being done to address issues but challenge was around delivering within option available.</p> <p>Board ENDORSED Paper 7.</p>	
<p>7.3</p>	<p>Section 22 & Wider Scope External Audit Reports</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) presented Paper 8 for information, noting that the Section 22 report was due to be presented to Parliamentary Audit Committee the following morning. Depute Principal (Operations) advised that comms had been prepared with UHI in advance of the hearing to deal with likely press interest.</p> <p>Chair Audit advised Board that the Internal Auditor had advised Audit Committee that Section 22 reports tend to straddle financial years therefore there is a likelihood that the process will be repeated next year.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) updated Board on the current status of the Wider Scope Audit Report</p> <p>Board NOTED Paper 8.</p>	
<p>8.1</p>	<p>Annual Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report (including H&S Policy Statement)</p> <p>Board received Paper 9 for information, with the H&S Policy Statement requiring formal approval.</p> <p>Board Member noted that the Report is more detailed than a Board would normally require, and that greater assurance levels should ideally be provided within the Report. Board Member offered services to assist in the preparation of future Annual H&S Reports.</p> <p>Board discussed the challenges around retention of staff, particularly within specific departments, and discussed the rationale</p>	

	<p>and impacts around current policies for working from home and flexible working agreements.</p> <p>Board NOTED Paper 9 and APPROVED the H&S Policy Statement.</p>	
8.2	<p>Procurement Strategy – Commercial Associate Trainers</p> <p>Board received Paper 10 for approval.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion, Paper 10 was APPROVED.</p>	
8.3	<p>Procurement Strategy – Waste Management</p> <p>Board received Paper 11 for approval.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion, Paper 11 was APPROVED.</p>	
8.4	<p>Learner Experience Committee – Terms of Reference</p> <p>Chair of Learner Experience Committee presented Paper 12 for approval, noting that the changes being proposed would assist in moving the culture towards excellence.</p> <p>Board APPROVED Paper 12.</p>	
8.5	<p>Recruitment of Principal & Chief Executive</p> <p>Interim Chair provided a verbal update around the recruitment process for the permanent Principal & Chief Executive role, noting that a Nominations Committee would be convened to take the matter forward with a view to advertising the post in December 2025/January 2026. Outline discussion had already taken place with UHI re shape and fit of the role within the context of UHI Transformation, and this will be taken into account.</p>	
9.1	<p>Strategic KPIs</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) presented Paper 13 for approval, which proposed reconsidering UHI Perth’s approach to Strategic KPIs within the planned Strategic Review to be conducted with the current Academic Year.</p> <p>Board APPROVED Paper 13.</p>	
9.2	<p>Annual Board Member Review</p> <p>Interim Chair provided a verbal update on the Annual Board Member Review, advising that the standard format of Board Members completing a form and receiving a one-to-one meeting had not been possible over the summer due to operational priorities,</p>	

	however if any Board Member wishes a confidential one-to-one discussion, this would be organised.	
10	<p>Standing Committee Summaries</p> <p>Board received and NOTED summary reports from the following Committee meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairs Committee – 01 September 2025 • Learner Experience Committee – 10 September 2025 • Recovery Plan Monitoring Committee – 22 September 2025 • Finance & Resources Committee – 29 September 2025 • Audit Committee – 30 September 2025 <p>Board were advised that a summary of collated responses re the Commercial Opportunities element of the Board Development Session held on 15 September 2025 would be distributed to Board for comment and future consideration.</p>	Clerk
11	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 16 December 2025, 5:00pm 	
12	<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>Board confirmed that the meeting had been conducted in line with the Terms of Reference.</p>	

Information recorded in College minutes are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A). Certain exemptions apply: financial information relating to procurement items still under tender, legal advice from College lawyers, items related to national security.

Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

Status of Minutes – Open

An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018? **Yes** **No**