

Learner Experience Committee

DRAFT Agenda

Meeting reference: Learner Experience 2023-14/01

Date: Wednesday 06 September 2023 at 2:00pm

Location: Boardroom (Braham Building Room 019)

Purpose: Scheduled meeting

*Denotes items for discussion/approval.

Members should contact the Clerk in advance of the meeting if they wish to request an item be starred.

	Agenda Items	Author	Led by	Paper
1	Welcome and Apologies		Chair	
2	Additions to the Agenda		Chair	
3	Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item		Chair	
4	Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2022		Chair	Paper 1
5	Actions arising from previous minutes		Chair	
6	Strategy & Policy			
6.1	Policy for approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None to come to this meeting 	Quality Manager		
7	Student Experience			
7.1	HISA Perth Strategic Update	HISA Perth	HISA Perth President	Verbal
7.2	HISA Board Project	HISA Perth	HISA Perth President	Paper 2
7.3	HISA Elections Report 2023	HISA Perth	HISA Perth President	Paper 3

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7.3	Student Satisfaction and Experience Survey	Quality Manager	Head of Student Experience	Paper 4 (to follow)
7.4	Student Funding Update		Head of Student Experience	Verbal
8	Curriculum			
8.1	Student Completion & Progression - update		Head of Student Experience	Verbal
8.2	Student Recruitment update		Head of Student Experience	Verbal
9	Committee Minutes (for noting)			
9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement Group, 03 May 2023 • Student Engagement Group, 20 June 2023 		Head of Student Experience	Paper 5 Paper 6
10	Date and time of next meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed 15 November 2023, 2:00pm 		Clerk	
11	Review of Meeting (to include check against Terms of Reference)		Chair	Paper 7

Learner Experience Committee

DRAFT Minutes

Meeting reference: Learner Experience 2022-23/04

Date: Wednesday 26 April 2023

Location: Boardroom (Braham Room 019)

Members present: Margaret Cook, Principal
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member
Liam Fowley, Student Board Member
Rosalind Bryce, Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee

In attendance: Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board

Apologies: Jenny Hamilton, Board Member
Alistair Wylie, Board Member
Todor Pavlov-Kennedy, Student Board Member
Catherine Etri, Vice Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Deborah Lally, Head of Student Experience

Chair: **Margaret Cook**

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 7

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Minutes:

Item		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies.</p> <p>Chair noted that meeting was not quorate due to there being no Independent Board Members present, therefore any decisions reached would not be binding until approval at the next Board of Management meeting on 07 June 2023.</p>	
2.	<p>Additions To The Agenda</p> <p>None</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 08 February 2023</p> <p>The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p> <p>6.2 Safeguarding Policy & Procedure</p> <p>Action: Head of Student Experience to prepare annual report on safeguarding issues for each Cycle 4 LEC, then feeding to June Board</p> <p>Status: Not tabled – to be followed up for June Board</p>	<p>Head of Student Experience</p>
6	<p>Strategy</p> <p>Chair tabled Paper 2, and advised that the HMI would be in attendance at the June Board meeting to present the findings contained therein.</p> <p>Depute Principal noted the strengths listed and advised that there were no major points for action arising from the report.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 2</p>	
7	<p>Learner Experience</p>	
7.1	<p>HISA Perth Plan of Work 2022-23</p> <p>Student Board Member presented Paper 2, highlighting a number of recent and ongoing activities and campaigns. Principal noted the positive movement in areas where concerns had been previously expressed.</p>	

	<p>Student Board Member summarised the appendix to Paper 3, which provided a brief summary on the recent HISA elections ahead of a full analytic report to be subsequently tabled, noting that Perth voting had increased on 2022, but was still very low. There was some confusion over the total numbers of valid voters which was exacerbated by the Data Sharing Agreement with UHI meaning that HISA was not in control of this data.</p> <p>Depute Principal queried whether moving to target-driven performance measures re levels of feedback from and engagement of Student Voices Reps would be worth considering. Student Board Member responsibility noted that clarity would need to be provided around accountability as HISA Perth does not retain control over the systems in use and are required to direct matters via Quality; the ideal solution would be fully delivered by HISA Perth with a level of support from Quality, that way 100% responsibility would be married against 100% control.</p> <p>Chair queried how other Academic Partners deal with the control v responsibility issue. Student Board Member advised that Moray was similar to Perth, Inverness have full control, and some other APs are fully controlled by the College, so it's not a straightforward picture to compare and contrast within the Partnership, however HISA Perth were looking at other College SA's to find out what works elsewhere.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 3.</p>	
<p>7.4</p>	<p>Perth Partnership Project 2022-23 - update</p> <p>Depute Principal introduced Paper 4, noting that a Short Life Working Group had reviewed the local Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) and concluded that Perth should not proceed with a localised SPA and instead adopt the Regional SPA. This was mainly due to capacity issues around the delivery of multiple workstreams.</p> <p>Committee AGREED with the recommendations in Paper 4. Chair noted that approval would be required at the June Board of Management, however Committee's recommendation would be noted to the Board.</p>	
<p>7.3</p>	<p>Student Destinations</p> <p>Depute Principal referred to Paper 5, which had been prepared by the Head of Student Experience, advising that the Paper was part of a statutory return, and comprised of data for FE students only.</p> <p>Depute Principal highlighted the 87% response rate, and advised that the report will be correlated against the Regional Outcome Agreement.</p>	

	Committee NOTED Paper 5.	
8	Curriculum	
8.1	<p>Student Recruitment</p> <p>Depute Principal presented Paper 6, noting that UHI Perth had met and surpassed its 2022/23 FE credit target, however HE FTE numbers were 400 behind target.</p> <p>Depute Principal further noted that SFC had announced a reduction in FE credit targets for UHI. Confirmation from UHI re the funding impact of this for Perth was still awaited, particularly given that Perth had surpassed 2022/23 targets. 2023/24 HE targets will be reduced from previous year, however Perth are still likely to provide around one-third of targeted HE numbers across UHI.</p> <p>Depute Principal advised that HE application numbers were encouraging, however conversion rates need to be looked at given previous experiences.</p> <p>Teaching Staff Member queried whether virement was a possibility for Perth. Chair confirmed that it is, but that it is in the gift of the Regional Strategic Body to allow virement.</p> <p>Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement suggested that Perth should explore options around reverse articulation and targeted promotion of HND options.</p> <p>Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement queried the figures on Page 66 of the Papers as it appears there is no consistency in the usage of target figures (both 1818 and 761 have been used in data tables. Depute Principal agreed to check and follow up on this.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 6.</p>	Depute Principal
8.2	<p>Curriculum Review</p> <p>Depute Principal summarised the main findings noted by the Vice Principal (Academic) in Paper 7, and advised that a mapping process re credits still needs to take place around the recommended actions. In addition, the Vice Principal (Operations) is conducting a course profitability exercise as financial constraints will have an impact on courses offered.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 7.</p>	

9	Committee Minutes Committee noted the following minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement Group, 19 January 2023 	
10	Date of Next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tbc 	
11	Review of Meeting Committee confirmed the business of the meeting had been consistent with the Terms of Reference.	

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**

Committee Cover Sheet**Paper No.2**

Name of Committee	Learner Experience Committee
Subject	HISA Board of Management Project Report
Date of Committee meeting	06/09/2023
Author	HISA
Date paper prepared	11/08/2023
Executive Summary Please provide a concise summary of the Paper outlining the purpose, impact and recommended future actions if approved	<p>This paper details a students association wide report on Board of Management support for student board members with a view to improving the effectiveness of the student voice at said meeting.</p> <p>An appendix is attached to show UHI Perth's progress against the Action Plan.</p> <p>It is asked that the committee both endorse this paper and approve the implementation of the Action Plan so it can be taken to Board for endorsement and approval.</p> <p>After this HISA will work with UHI Perth Board to implement.</p>
Committee Consultation Please note which Committees this paper has previously been tabled at, and a brief summary of the outcomes/actions arising from this.	n/a but board clerk, Principal and previous Board Chair part of consultation process
Action requested	<input type="checkbox"/> For information <input type="checkbox"/> For discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For endorsement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended with guidance (please provide further information, below)

Committee Cover Sheet

<p>Strategic Impact</p> <p>Please highlight how the paper links to the Strategic Objectives of UHI Perth or the UHI Partnership.</p> <p>If there is no direct link to Strategic Objectives, please provide a justification for inclusion of this paper to the nominated Committee.</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>In line with HISA strategy</p>
<p>Resource implications</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require the use of College resources to implement?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>Time of relevant committee members and UHI Perth staff to implement in partnership with HISA</p>
<p>Risk implications</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal come with any associated risk to UHI Perth, or mitigate against existing risk?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Equality & Diversity</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require an Equality Impact Assessment?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p>
<p>Data Protection</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require a Data Protection Impact Assessment?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Island communities</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities)?</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Committee Cover Sheet

<p>Status (ie confidential or non-confidential)</p>	<p>Non-Confidential</p> <p>If a paper needs to remain confidential for a prescribed period of time before being made 'open', please advise how long must the paper be withheld:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
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Freedom of Information

Please note that **ALL** papers will be included within 'open' business unless a justifiable reason can be provided.

Please select a justification from the list, below:

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research	<input type="checkbox"/>	Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other [please give further details] Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

The Board of Management Project Report

HISA

UHI

Executive Summary

This report outlines the HISA Board of Management Project, the findings from conversations had with each Academic Partner (AP) within UHI that has HISA representation, and recommendations arising from these findings.

The paper highlights the following topics:

- The resourcing for Boards of Management in terms of staff and student input
- The value of the student voice across the UHI Partnership
- The ways in which support has been offered to student board members but not always taken up
- The importance of these meetings as seen by HISA officers, despite initial intimidation
- How key relationships between AP's and HISA in the success of student board member contributions
- The need for training and support for student board members and new local staff within HISA
- The need for a standardised process for recruiting 2nd student board members (where applicable)

Based on these findings, this report recommends the establishment of a Board of Management Support Action Plan, to be negotiated and signed off by HISA and Boards, to ascertain responsibility on both the students' association and academic partners for supporting student board members and a clear timeline of completion. Recommendations are also suggested for HISA staff, HISA officers and Boards of Management:

HISA Officers

- Proactively ask for support for board meetings from board representatives and HISA staff
- Fully utilise training opportunities
- Build good relationships with board representatives
- Attend and fully contribute to board meetings
- Regularly update board of HISA activity both locally and regionally, ideally through a written report

HISA Staff

- Ensure officers are prepared for board meetings and understand their role
- Help support officer to develop skills relevant to board
- Staff to take part in relevant training
- Build a relationship with board representatives, specifically secretary
- Ensure have a strong knowledge of AP and HISA party lines
- Support officers to regularly update board on HISA activity both locally and regionally, ideally through a written report

Board of Management representatives

- Invite incoming HISA officer/student member to shadow board meeting
- Set up an introductory meeting with board chair and secretary as part of officer induction
- Build a relationship with HISA staff based locally
- Ensure student member can attend meetings around study commitments
- Set up a regular meeting with HISA Officers prior to board meetings
- Make selves available to officers for support
- Prepare an induction for student board members either separately or as part of other board member inductions.
- Consider use of CDN resources.
- Set up an introductory meeting with board chair and secretary as part of officer induction



Introduction

In November 2021, the Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA) began a project examining the experience of student representatives on Boards of Management within the academic partners (APs) that make up the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) where HISA have representation.

UHI is a multi-campus tertiary education provider operating across the Highlands and Islands, Perthshire and Morayshire. It is made up of 12 academic partners who have their own governance models that interlink with the overall governance of UHI, run by Executive Office (EO).

UHI is a post-1992 institution and has been designated as a university under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 (the "1992 Act"). Within this legislation, the duties of Boards of Management are listed.

Many academic partners within UHI operate under the governance linked to the Education Act 1994 and either are a merged or non-incorporated college. Most are also members of the College Development Network (CDN) and follow guidance produced by the organisation, including Get into Governance training and the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.

"Adherence to the Code which has been developed by the sector and its key stakeholders through the Good Governance Steering Group is obligatory for every board that receives money from the Scottish Funding Council."

Some academic partners are registered as 'Company Limited by Guarantee' who deliver education so must operate under the governance of the Companies Act and the rules within this.

UHI also has an academic partner that does not have a separate Board of Management making sole decisions on behalf of the AP but is a sub-committee of the local authority's Education, Leisure and Housing Committee and has members of the local council, members from the local committee as well as staff and students from the college. Decisions can be made by this committee to suggest approval on items but these need to be finalised and approved through the council's committee structure.

Project Outline

With an overarching objective to ensure that each Board of Management has effective and supported student members, this project aims to resolve the following:

- Assessing resources/training from HISA in supporting officers and students on Boards
- Assessing resources/training within the sector for student board members
- Assessing how to support local HISA staff in Board of Management queries
- Ascertain relationships between local HISA teams and their respective boards
- Ascertain expectations of student board members across the partnership
- Ensuring equity across the partnership in terms of student support, training, expectations, obligations, and relationships related to board of management

In November 2021, HISA staff began a consultation to help inform this project further. With support from local governance practitioners and HISA officers and staff, perceptions, expectations, and potential actions have been gathered across the partnership to ensure Boards with HISA representation have effective student membership on its board.

Resources available to Boards of Management across UHI and HISA are extremely varied in terms of staff allocation to board administration, working hours of both HISA officers and staff as well as the number of HISA officers and staff at each AP alongside what committees HISA officers sit on. The full table can be seen in the appendix (Appendix 2) but from this overview we can see:

- Not all boards have more than one student member (regardless of governance model followed)
- Not all APs have the same resourcing for Boards in terms of staff and officer hours
- There is inconsistency around what other committee meetings student Board members sit on that feed into local boards.

What follows are general themes that came out of these conversations, which involved evaluating current practice across the partnership. Recommendations for Boards and HISA to take forward for improvement will follow to ensure both Boards and the students' association can take action to ensure student representatives and students themselves are at the heart of decision making.

Method

HISA conducted semi-structured interviews with each local HISA officer who has a place on their local AP's Board, HISA staff based locally and representatives from local Boards, including secretaries, clerks, Chairs and AP Principals.

General notes were taken around set questions put to each type of consultee with space for additional comments. Discussions were led by a member of the project team not affiliated to that specific AP to allow for open and honest conversation so that a full picture could be gathered and suggestions that would benefit across the partnership would come forth. Notes were made available to those who took part in the consultation and not shared beyond the project team.

To protect the honesty of these conversations, general themes will be brought up and discussed to establish any patterns and to ensure anonymity. The only instance that AP's will be specifically mentioned will be to illustrate an example of good practice.

Participation

Below is a summary of who we consulted with and what methods to show the widespread consultation that took place during this project:

	HISA Officer Conversation Method	HISA Staff Conversation Method	Conversation With	Board Representative Conversation Method
Argyll	VC	VC++	Chair, Secretary	VC
HTC	VC	VC+	SMT Member	VC
Inverness	VC	VC	Secretary	VC
Outer Hebrides*	VC	VC	Secretary	VC
Moray	Y	VC	Secretary and two Board Members (One chair of board sub-committee)	VC
North Highland	Y	VC	Secretary and Chair of Board sub-committee	VC
Orkney	Y	VC	Principal	VC
Perth	Y	VC	Chair, Clerk and Principal	VC
SAMS	Y	VC++	Secretary	VC
Shetland	Y	VC	Secretary	VC
West Highland	Y	VC	Clerk	VC

* Changed from Lews Castle College during project. + Prior to project commencing due to staff member leaving HISA

++ Prior to project commencing due to staff member leaving HISA (Same staff member covered Argyll & SAMS)

Consultation Findings

What follows is a summary of key themes that came out during the consultation. These have been grouped into the following categories:

- Support
- Recruitment
- Training and Resources
- Relationships, Expectations and Perceptions
- Board meetings
- Other Comments



Support

Officer Support from Board

Most officers reported they had some form of support from a member of Board, whether this be the Chair, Secretary or Principal of their academic partner. When these were in place, officers commented this support was extremely helpful and that staff were very approachable ensuring that officers knew to ask for help if needed.

Where there was little or no support from specific board members, officers commented that they would like to see this in place.

Where they were aware of support taking place or being from board representatives, HISA staff raised concerns that officers did not take up support offered by individuals and about the objectivity of this support when they were not fully aware of what support was offered – as will be seen throughout this report, this depended on the information given by HISA officers and staff’s relationship with board secretaries. Staff also highlighted the challenges in providing equitable support for officers across HISA due to how different each board was.

In terms of other ways in which officers or student board members could be supported, it was suggested by Board representatives that when recruiting for new officers or Board members, HISA should let candidates know of support available to them and the value the student voice has on Boards. Some board representatives acknowledged timing meetings was a challenge with student board members and that they have tried to accommodate this where possible, but this has not always led to the student board members attending said meetings.

Officer Support from HISA staff

Each AP and HISA officer will have a dedicated member of HISA staff. As well as helping officers achieve their objectives and other key HISA activities, staff members are also able to provide support for officers when attending board meetings. HISA staff predominantly work part time hours and can support more than one local officer, but a key role in this support to officers is preparation for board meetings – this can be from ensuring the officer knows when the meeting is, to helping them interpret papers and how this can impact students.

The support staff at HISA can provide, based on the conversations with officers, is dependent on their access to board papers. Where staff were able to access board papers, officers felt they were better supported and prepared for board meetings due to the

impartial stance all HISA staff members take. Where staff had limited or no access to papers, officers either accepted this due to the confidential nature of boards or understood this confidentiality but felt it would be more beneficial in terms of aiding understanding and getting information based on prior knowledge of the AP which HISA staff based locally have. For those HISA staff who were able to access papers were conscious of the levels of support they provided officers and avoided giving specific notes on each paper by setting expectations on officers to read papers and ask questions at pre-meetings with their HISA staff member or whomever they met with go over papers.

Beyond the training provided at Executive Training, HISA staff would provide new officers with a briefing on Boards with the knowledge they had but many acknowledged that new officers would get information about boards through the handover from the previous officer.

HISA staff also highlighted that it would be good for all student board members to be able to have a pre-meeting with either the Board Clerk or Chair alongside their support from local staff to help aid student member understanding, allow them to ask questions and as another avenue of support. Post-meetings were also highlighted as useful, so officers were clear of next steps and any actions or requests for student input on decisions being made by Board.

Activity	AP Takes Place In	Facilitated by	Impact of Activity
Meeting with Chair and HISA officers prior to meetings to go through agenda/student concerns	Inverness, Orkney, SAMS, Perth	Chair, Secretary	Officers feel listened by chair, feel able to contribute to meetings, board see significant officer contribution
Acronym cheat sheet	Inverness, North Highland	Chair, Secretary	Officers have a better understanding of acronyms used and able to better understand and contribute to meetings
Incoming officers shadowing meetings	Moray, Shetland, Inverness, Perth, North Highland	Secretary, HISA Staff	Offers get insight into structure of meetings, better understanding and confidence in board, effective contributions to board
Overview of Board and subcommittees/members of board	Perth, Orkney	HISA Staff	Officers have better understanding of board and its members, empowered to establish better working relationship, more effective contributions to board

Examples of best practice across UHI - not inclusive of all examples given

Support

Awareness of HISA party lines

As an independent political organisation, HISA members will vote to have stances on various issues within society and the wider UHI. There are referred to internally as party lines. Some of these party lines may clash with topics going to board so knowledge of these is important, especially when declaring conflicts of interest at the start of board meetings.

As these 'party lines' are decided within Executive Committee or at HISA Con, knowledge of these among HISA staff depended on their length of service within the organisation and how much their officers passed onto them from Executive meetings. All staff agreed that it would be good to have consistent reminders of these so that everyone within the organisation was aware – not just those who supported officers locally.

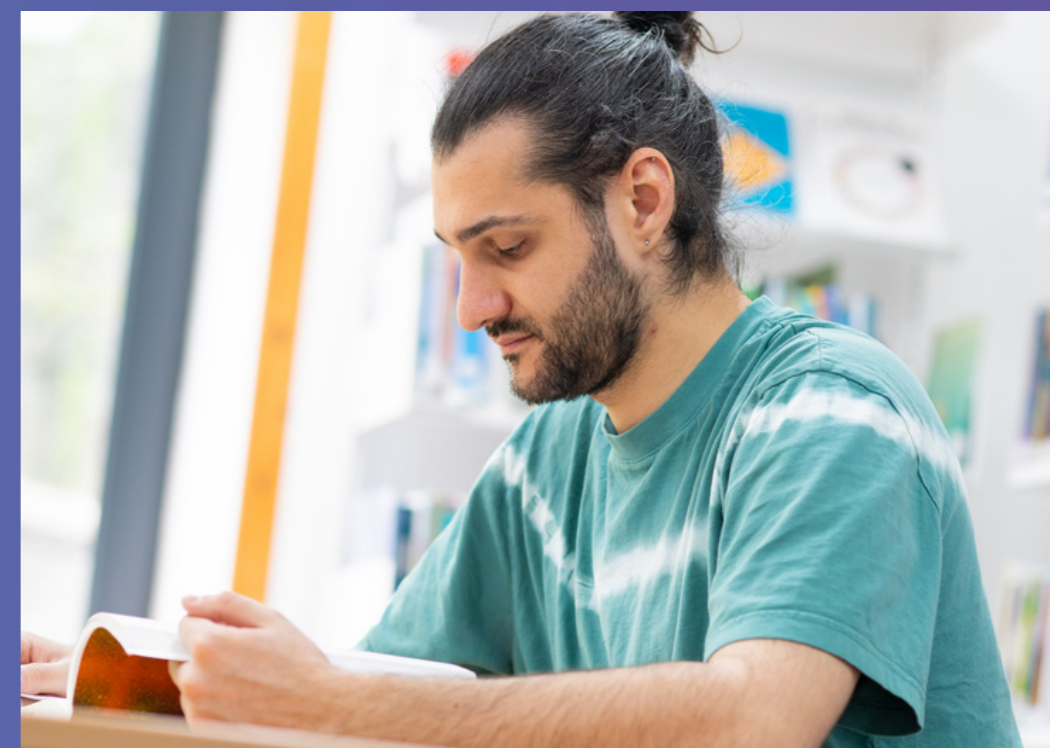
Support suggestions and advice from HISA Officers

In other parts of the conversations had in this consultation, some HISA Officers made suggestions as to what could be done that would be useful for them in terms of supporting student officers in their Board role. Below is a summary of some of the suggestions made:

- Observing other Boards of Management within UHI to see the experience of other officers in HISA
- Publishing legislation and rules in place for boards so student board members understand the process and what to ask questions about
- HISA staff to be supported with understanding board so can help HISA officers and student board members
- Board members to sit down with student board member and offer support in pre-established format as officers may not be confident in asking for help
- Officers should get simplified version of notes – beneficial for new board members
- Board members should not make assumptions about knowledge simply due to being on the same committee as the student member
- Board to be mindful that student board members may have clashes due to their timetables when planning calendar of meetings

Officers were also asked what advice they would give to new HISA officers about Board of Management. Here are some examples from the advice given:

- Know the commonly used acronyms
- Actively listen to the conversations
- Get to know and research boards and board members and respect others' roles of board due to their experience
- Don't be afraid to speak up or challenge something affecting the student experience – it can be intimidating space, and may get talked over but keep calm and show through your comments and your work you have a right to be there
- Asking yourself "how will this affect students?"
- Read everything and come to the meeting prepared
- Ask for help when you need it
- Be confident to speak up as students are members of the board as well – do not get intimidated
- Student board members should not be held accountable by board – not their responsibility
- Do not say yes to anything in the room
- Good to have evidence wherever possible – get facts, figures or comments from students
- Do not be disheartened if things go slow or not the way anticipated



Recruitment

In some APs, due to one local depute in role, there may be a need to recruit a second student board member. This is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act for those who follow this governance model.

The project team spoke to current officers, HISA staff and board representatives where this applied about this topic and how to recruit a second student board member.

Several key themes emerged from these conversations, including identifying an engaged student to encourage them to step forward alongside wider promotion of the role, promoting the benefits to the AP and the individual of getting involved in Board as well as the support offered, raising awareness of boards at local SVR meetings, a formal standardised process across the partnership with local contextualisation and exploring if the role can be incentivised.



Training & Resources

Skills Audit – HISA Officers and Staff

When officers were asked what skills they felt were needed to take part in board meetings, the top responses were confidence in themselves and their position as a student member, communications skills, understanding the papers and what was being discussed, knowing and speaking on behalf of the students, and politeness. The full list of skills given can be found in Appendix 3.

To mirror the question asked to HISA officers, their staff counterparts were asked what skills they felt were needed by their officers to take part in board meetings. The top responses were close reading or reading papers, understanding their remit and priorities as a student board member as well as the politics of their local Boards. The full list can also be found in Appendix 3.

HISA staff were asked about the skills they felt they needed to support their officers at board meetings. The following skills were highlighted:

- Experience of UHI
- Experience of committees and board meetings
- Seeing and close reading of papers
- Training for new staff
- Patience
- Knowledge of board
- Relationship building with board secretary/other board representatives
- Same skills officers need
- Being able to summarise key points
- Objectivity
- Strong awareness of AP
- Report writing
- Supporting reading and writing skills

Local inductions to Board

In relation to AP-specific inductions, most of our officers had some form of induction to their local board. This would either be in line with induction received by other board members or have additional elements specific to the student board member(s). Three of the officers interviewed stated they had no formal board induction. Of the three, two mentioned they wished they had had some form of induction.

Examples of induction activities mentioned in conversations with HISA officers included:

- Induction with all new members of board
- Introductory meeting with Chair
- Introductory meeting with Board Secretary/Clerk
- Introductory meeting with Principal

Training & Resources

Activities and suggestions mentioned by officers that they would have like in their induction included:

- Introductory meeting/people to introduce themselves and their role at the start of the first meeting officers attended
- Information on board activities and how meetings took place
- Induction to take place later in role once more knowledge about the officer role is known
- Formal explanation of processes and what committees do
- To have the same induction as new board members (where this did not take place)

Discussing this topic with Board representatives, where inductions and training were in place across the partnership, this would be made available to student board members. This would be in line with inductions and training other board members would receive, with others doing bespoke inductions or training for new student members.

Training for Board – HISA

For the last two years, HISA have run a simulation exercise for officers as part of Executive Training where they can experience a board meeting to get familiar with the structure, how to prepare for meetings and what issues may be important for students. As part of these conversations, the officers were asked about their thoughts on the exercise.

Positives that came out about this exercise from officers included:

- Useful –gave an idea of what happens at meetings
- Good to highlight when things can go wrong/when need to be observant
- Enjoyed it/was good
- Helped with board meetings at AP
- Helped when trying to explain terminology or what to look for in papers
- Most useful training – still refers to it/learned a lot from it
- Felt like a chance to face fears before going into board

Something that was picked up from these conversations was that the individuals within the simulation – who were purposefully created to be combative individuals – were not reflective of the experience of their board members and interactions, giving them confidence that the simulation was the “worst it could be.”

Suggestions were given by officers on how to improve this exercise going forward:

- Have a way to step out of the simulation
- Emphasise importance of papers given so officers will read
- More time to prepare with staff member
- Ensure roles of all involved are clear
- Make characters less antagonistic/make simulation more neutral or positive
- Ensure enough time to debrief so know what did well and what can be improved on
- Make exercise an observed scenario to comment on, featuring returning officers.

Training for Board – College Development Network

The College Development Network (CDN) have a suite of resources for board members to take part in, including a specific induction for student board members. Six of the officers recalled going to the Student Board Member Induction. The majority said that it was useful, but they preferred HISA’s training or found it more useful as the CDN training was generic.

Some officers mentioned doing online modules as part of their CDN training which included Audit training and Remuneration training. Officers who took part in this found the training quite vague and that it had an assumption they already understood these areas. Some officers suggested it would be useful to have a tailored one for students, linked with the Student Board Member Induction training that had more accessible language would be a lot more useful.

The rest of the officers either said they had not done any CDN training or training had been done via Brightspace or other training programmes.

Although not all APs are part of CDN, most board representatives were aware of the resources CDN had and the value they could bring to all board members, not just student members.

Comments were made by some board representatives that the resources need to be developed further and to be made more accessible for all board members.

Specifically mentioned was the workbook around working with student board members and how valuable this resource was and that it would be beneficial to see this rolled out wider and expanded upon.

For those APs not aware of CDN resources, this would be because they were not part of CDN, but these APs did mention that a resource like this could be useful.

One board represented suggested that UHI could add to CDN resources. They suggested that as soon as a student rep is signed up, that either UHI, APs or HISA could keep a log of activities, training, and attendance of meetings so that recognition could be given at the end to give added value to the local HISA officer and for those student board members from the wider student population.

Training & Resources

Advice for new HISA staff

As with the officers, HISA staff were asked for advice they would give people starting within the organisation. Here is what was provided:

- Help officers/student board members think critically as a board member and stand up for student opinion
- Help officers prepare for board so nothing is missed, including making sure they are aware where a decision may need to be made
- Make officers aware of motivations of board members and where to take things “with a pinch of salt”
- Make clear to officers to ask for help when needed
- Make sure you have everything you need to support officers and student board members – ask for updates, access to papers or to observe a board meeting to strengthen their role and contributions to board
- Build a good working relationship with board clerk
- Make sure your officer sees the value of your contributions and support – this makes it more likely that your officers will come to you for help and fight for you if there are any challenges e.g., access to papers
- Research your AP and make sure you are familiar with their dynamic within the partnership and any major political ambitions
- Ask other HISA staff for advice or support if needed for supporting and preparing your officer/student board member



Relationships, Expectations and Perceptions

Officer perceptions of board meetings so far

When asked their perceptions of board meetings so far, HISA officers remarked that they felt intimidated at their first meeting due to the strong personalities and discussions being held. They also felt nervous or unprepared due to the volume of pages they were to read, and the high level of decision-making taking place on boards and wished they have more confidence in themselves. What was clear was that boards were welcoming and supportive to new officers which helped put them at ease. A fuller list can be found in the appendix (Appendix 4).

Expectations of student members

Board representatives were asked what expectations they had on the student members of board. Many mentioned they were aware of the conflicting priorities that student board members had with studies and other HISA-related duties but stressed that due to the importance of decisions made at board meetings, that duties relating to it should be a focus. Every board representative mentioned the value of the student voice on board. Below are other expectations listed:

- Attending and contributing to meetings
- Asking questions
- Update Board on what is happening with students and what is relevant to students – preferably through a report
- Depends on the individual and what they want to get out of being on board
- Undertaking relevant training
- Ability to use software required to access board papers/board discussions
- Keep in touch with board contact and respond to emails relating to board
- Reading papers prior to meetings
- Same expectations as any other board member (where following Code of Good Governance)

Perception of student members so far

When asked how they had perceived student members on board to date, the answer depended on the personalities and interactions previous officers had with board so there was a lack of consistency in this way. Where there had been limited interaction, board representatives commented that it was hard to know what work the officers, and therefore HISA, were undertaking to due to the officer not attending all meetings or a lack of verbal or written reports being given to board.

Relationships, Expectations and Perceptions

Where there had been a lot of interaction from officers, some board representatives commented on how these officers would contribute to meetings and provide good insights or present good queries. Other board representatives mentioned that although coming along to meetings, student member contributions were less than those of other board members.

Some board representatives recognised that confidence to speak and to interact with board members would be a significant contributing factor in how well that officer engaged with board meetings. A few suggested that insight into how to help student members overcome this would be appreciated, with one suggesting that bringing in some form of mentoring scheme, in line with CDN guidance, could be beneficial. HISA staff commented that due to them not sitting on board that they could only go by the information provided by their officers about board.

When information was provided, HISA staff said that the officer's confidence levels, or experience would impact their attitude to board meetings but that they would support officers as much as possible with the resources and support given.

Staff who have supported more than one officer at boards were asked for consistent challenges they had seen with officers. Challenges mentioned were officers feeling comfortable and confident in role, not having an idea of the bigger picture, communication issues and not being able to fully support officers depending on staff's access to papers.

Relationships with HISA

When asking about the relationship board representatives had with the HISA staff member based locally, this was split into either having no relationship or a positive one.

Where board representatives did not have a relationship with HISA staff, this would be attributed to not understanding the role HISA staff play, the staff member not reaching out or being proactive in building a relationship.

Where there was a relationship, board representatives noted they enjoyed the positivity of this relationship and the open channels of communication alongside the benefit staff had on helping officers prepare for board meetings.

As highlighted in the summary of Board Representative conversations, HISA staff echoed that this was either non-existent or a strong relationship. Where no relationship existed, some staff members cited this was dependent on the governance structure but all staff this applied to said this affected the support they could provide their officer.

Where a relationship did exist, HISA staff highlighted they could make contact when needed with any queries and that board secretaries were always keen to offer support to staff and officers when needed. With this relationship in place, staff members noted that satisfaction with HISA at a local level would increase.

Understanding of HISA

When asked about their understanding of HISA as organisation, the conversation split into two areas – understanding of local HISA activities and understanding of regional HISA activities.

In terms of local HISA activities, some board representatives mentioned they were not given a lot of information on this so did not have an awareness of how HISA interacted with their students. These board representatives mentioned that they would like to see some form information around local objectives to be updated upon throughout the year. Where information or reports were given, board representatives said they understood what HISA did locally.

How local activities fitted into wider HISA activity, how HISA worked and its wider impact on students were cited as areas where board representatives' knowledge lacked. Suggestions on how to improve this would be a summary paper of HISA's structure and policies or even a presentation on HISA.

Board Meetings

Paper circulation timelines / Understanding of papers/ Preparedness for board meetings

In terms of the timeline for papers to be circulated prior to meetings, there was not a lot of consistency. Overall, officers said that papers would "usually" be circulated 7 days before board meetings, which would give them adequate time to read and prepare for meetings.

Relationships, Expectations and Perceptions

Other officers mentioned that papers could be circulated less than a week before meetings, with a few mentioning papers from board could be circulated the day before meetings – this would occur for either late papers or for full board papers.

When this occurred, officers mentioned this would make it hard to understand some papers, depending on the subject matter and the language in which it is written.

Regardless of when papers were received, if officers were unsure of content, they reported that there were people that they could ask – staff members of board, chairs, secretaries, or HISA staff. Officers that were able to have pre-meetings noted these were incredibly helpful in terms of understanding papers and feeling prepared for board meetings.

HISA staff further verified the timelines of papers being circulated usually a week prior to meetings. Staff commented that if papers came out later this was not enough time for officers to read and prepare for meetings alongside their other HISA duties and studies. When asked if HISA staff had access to papers, this was mixed.

Many staff were reliant on the information their officers provided them, some were able to see some papers due to the relationship they had built with the board secretary and others had no access to papers so felt unable to support their officer prior to these meetings.

As covered in the conversations with HISA officers, board representatives verified papers for board would be circulated generally a week before the meeting took place if they were responsible for paper dissemination.

The only exception to this was Orkney as their Board (known as College Management Committee) is overseen by employees within the local council but timelines are well known. Reasons given as to why papers would be circulated later included late papers being submitted or the capacity of the secretary given their hours or additional responsibilities.

Communicating Board decisions to Student Voice Reps

As a key group linking HISA officers to the student body, Student Voice Representatives (SVR) need to be aware of what is happening at APs so this can be communicated to the wider student body.

The way in which officers felt the best way to do this was mixed. For those officers who communicated board activities already used a variety of methods like discussion boards, meetings with SVRs or via email. Many officers mentioned that engagement issues with students meant it was challenging to share information this academic year, but some suggestions were made, such as signposting SVRs to where board papers were published online, having an idea of what can or cannot be share or circulating minutes electronically.

Similarly, to HISA officers, staff highlighted that engagement had been a challenge this academic year but that key information like board activities should be fed back to SVRs in some way.

Anything returning officers wish they knew before starting to attend Board meetings

Officers who were sitting on boards for their second year were asked if there was anything they wished they knew before they started attending board meetings. The following examples were given:

- Acronyms!
- More contextualised information about AP
- Board is not intimidating as it may have appeared at first
- It's ok to make mistakes
- A clearer statement of expectations for student board members
- Declarations of interest in relation to HISA policies



Relationships, Expectations and Perceptions

Other Comments within conversations

This final section is additional comments left within the report that do not fit in with any sections but is useful to include.

HISA local officers

- Board members should not make assumptions you know all the stuff just because on same meeting

Board Representatives

- Getting feedback on how student rep feels coming to board and what they have gotten out of it would be beneficial
- Board surgeries could be beneficial
- This exercise should be run every 2-4 years
- Strategies to increase student engagement with Boards – both student members and the wider body of students
- Age of student can skew student view – needs to be balanced between FE and HE, young and mature etc.
- Good MSYP representation and lots of people pushing the agenda for students – is there scope to look at 14-16-year olds represented through HISA/board?

HISA Staff

- Timing of meetings – some are great and have meetings around 4 o'clock or out with student time, others held during class time that the officer could not get out of. Need to take into consideration of everyone who attends board – make standard to early evening so all students can get to it.
- Cannot try to play down the board or treat it as unimportant – the meetings would not happen if they weren't important, so prioritise getting officers to a place where they are confident, know what support is available, and can thrive on the board to the best of their abilities despite the additional challenges that the board environment can pose.

Recommendations

Based on these conversations, the following recommendations are being made based on the contents of the interviews with the different participants. These recommendations have been made taking the differing governance models across the UHI, but additional recommendations have been made that can also be taken into consideration where applicable.

Our main recommendation is for a Board of Management Action Plan to be utilised across the partnership. This action plan will include key elements for each of the three main bodies of people mentioned throughout this report as outlined below to ensure uniformity of support and accountability towards our officers and student board members across the partnership:

HISA Officers

- Proactively ask for support for board meetings from board representatives and HISA staff
- Fully utilise training opportunities
- Build good relationships with board representatives
- Attend and fully contribute to board meetings
- Regularly update board of HISA activity both locally and regionally, ideally through a written report

HISA Staff

- Ensure officers are prepared for board meetings and understand their role
- Help support officer to develop skills relevant to board
- Staff to take part in relevant training
- Build a relationship with board representatives, specifically secretary
- Ensure have a strong knowledge of AP and HISA party lines
- Support officers to regularly update board on HISA activity both locally and regionally, ideally through a written report

Board of Management Representatives

- Invite incoming HISA officer/student member to shadow board meeting
- Set up an introductory meeting with board chair and secretary as part of officer induction
- Build a relationship with HISA staff based locally
- Ensure students members can attend meetings around study commitments
- Set up a regular meeting with HISA officers prior to board meetings
- Make selves available to officers for support

Recommendations

Board of Management Representatives (Continued)

- Prepare an induction for student board members either separately or as part of other board member inductions
- Consider use of CDN resources

As well as HISA staff, officers and board representatives taking on and implementing the recommendations of this report, we hope to see the following as indicators of the project being a success:

- Positive feedback from HISA officers around training and induction run by HISA
- Positive feedback from HISA officers and HISA staff around training and induction run by APs/external organisations
- Positive feedback from new HISA officers about their first Board of Management
- Positive feedback on improved relationships between local HISA officers and board representatives
- Positive feedback from board representatives about student member input and contribution
- Full attendance at board meetings from at least one student member
- Increase in board's awareness of HISA as an organisation

The proposed action plan can be seen in Appendix 5.

Next Steps

This report will be presented within HISA's own committee structures, with input and approval from HISA Management Board and Executive Committee. It will also be circulated to members of General Practitioners Quarterly for comment before going to each AP's board of management for discussion and approval of recommendations. The report will also be circulated to participants in the consultation.

Action plans, much like the Student Voice Rep Working Agreement, should then be completed with actions allocated to local HISA teams and local Boards, with clear timelines of completion to be reported within appropriate committees in APs. HISA teams, especially Assistant Voice Managers (AVMs), will provide support in this to ensure consistency across the partnership.

The outputs of this project will also be shared with sparqs, NUS (National Union of Students) Scotland and CDN as part of their ongoing developments in supporting college students.

Acknowledgements

The project team would like to thank each board representative, especially members of GP's Quarterly, for their enthusiasm for the project's aims and for coming to the conversations with an open mind. Thanks also go to local HISA staff for being forthright in their views and have their students interests at the heart of everything they do. Finally, thanks go to the HISA Officer Team 2021-2022 – Board of Management is a great responsibility that has its challenges but by participating in them to the best of your ability and being honest in these conversations, you will help make sure that student board members are fully supported and effective for their students for years to come.

Appendix One

Board of Management Project Plan

Aim

For each academic partner to have full and effective student members on their Boards of Management.

Objectives

- To create guidance and resources that support student members, HISA staff and boards.
- To have boards play an active role to ensure the student voice is heard

Intended Outputs

- Guidance for HISA officers, HISA staff, students, board clerks and boards.
- Working Agreement between HISA and Academic Partners (APs) on supporting student board members.
- Training and/or resources for HISA officers/staff/boards.
- Recruitment of 2nd student board member at relevant APs.
- Better attendance, contribution and engagement by student board members.

Impact

- Stronger partnership between HISA and its APs.
- More powerful student voice on Boards of Management.
- More effective student experience for students across UHI.

Resources required

- Time of HISA project team
- Time of local HISA officers/staff/clerks/members of boards/student board members

Conclusion

This plan considers the benefits of partnership working with the value and importance of the student voice to develop then evaluate resources relating to student board members. It integrates the importance of staff input, the increasing complexities of the representative role and motivations for students taking up such roles whilst also addressing challenges for students within governance from both the staff and student perspective. The significance placed within the Scottish sector of student involvement within decision-making alongside key developments and resources for student board members, this project is both timely and appropriate.

With full participation along with thorough consultation, the resources created will be useful and address concerns stakeholders may have. Although challenging to find resources that suit the needs of all involved, with guidance and support, testing of resources and subsequent feedback and evaluation can ensure suitability and enable consistent application. The outputs of this project will benefit student board members, boards and HISA, line up with strategic priorities and will ultimately amplify the student voice, giving students across UHI effective representation at the highest decision-making body at their academic partners.



Appendix One

Board of Management Project Plan

Stage	Actions	Success Indicators	Target	Who	Challenges	Mitigations	Original Timescale
Research	Read Literature	Literature identified	5	HISA Project Team	Not finding adequate resources	Liaise with College Development Network/sparqs	Nov-Jan
	Identify best practice across sector/UHI	Best practice identified	1		Not finding examples of best practice	Input from stakeholders/CDN/sparqs in consultation stage	
Investing	HISA staff to support	HISA staff identified	2	HISA Project Team Board Clerks/Chairs	No volunteers/lack of buy in	Sharing project rationale/research	Nov-Jan
	Boards to support/participate	Board members identified	2				
Consultation	Create consultation question	Consultation designed	1	HISA Project Team HISA staff/ officers Board Clerks/Chairs	Availability of consultees	Project team to be flexible in consultation	Dec-Feb
	Consulting with HISA local officers	HISA officers consulted	21/21		Lack of interest	Sharing project rationale/research	
	Consulting with Chairs/Clerks of Boards	Boards consulted	12*		Lack of information in consultations	Ensure thorough consultation	
	Consulting with HISA Staff	HISA staff consulted	11**			Use of CDN/sparqs resources/training	
	Identify resources to be created	Additional resources created	1			Resources not identified as useful	
Creation	Resources for HISA officers/students	Resources created	1	HISA Project Team	Adequate resources not created	Address all points raised in consultation where possible	Feb-April
	Resources for HISA Staff	Resources created	1				
	Resources for Board clerks/chairs/members	Resources created	1				

Appendix One

Board of Management Project Plan

Stage	Actions	Success Indicators	Target	Who	Challenge	Mitigations	Original Timescale
Initial feedback	Resources shared with HISA officers/staff/board members/students	Resourced shared	1	HISA Project Team HISA staff/ officers Board Clerks/Chairs HISA Trustee Board UHI Student Engagement Team	Resources not shared in ample timeframe for implementation	Deadline set for start of new board meetings in 2022/23	May-July
	Gathering initial feedback	Feedback gathered	46^		Resources not reaching appropriate people	Regular updates given to board contacts for wider dissemination	
Implementation	HISA to implement resources for officers/staff/students	Officers/HISA staff/board members receiving resources	44	HISA Project Team HISA staff/ officers Board Clerks/Chairs	Resources not implemented	Local HISA teams to work with local staff at AP to implement	Aug-Oct
	Clerks/Chairs to implement resources	Local HISA teams implementing resources	12*		Resources not implemented fully	Feedback gathered after implementation/findings from consultation addressed/acted upon	
		AP boards implementing resources	12*		Resources not useful		
			12*		Unable to recruit 2 nd student board member	Create effective promotional plan supporting recruitment based on consultation findings	
					Inequality of staffing resources across partnership	HISA Project Team to provide additional support to local teams/APs	
					Reputational risk to HISA as effective students' association	Regular updates to key stakeholders to ensure transparency/project remains fit for purpose	

Appendix Two

BoM Resources across UHI 2021/2022

AP	Secretary/Clerk	HISA Officers/ on board	Hours	Committees other than Board	HISA Staff	Hours	2 nd Student Member?
Argyll	Yes	1/1	12	Learning Teaching and Enhancement (LTE)	1	17.5*	N
HTC	Yes - undertaken by VP	1/1	8	Learning and Teaching	1	8	n/a
Inverness	Yes	3/2	16 12 12	Course Committee Learning, Teaching & Resource Student Journey & Enhancement Health Safety & Wellbeing	1	FT	n/a
OH	Yes	1/1	12	Finance	1	12	Y
Moray	Yes	2/2	14 14	Audit Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee Finance and General Practice Health and Safety	1	FT	n/a
NHC	Yes	1/1	12	General Finance Learning and Teaching	1	12	N
Orkney	Yes - part of council	1/1	10	Access and Inclusion CONTEST Committee Learning Teaching and Qualifications (LTQC) Induction Committee	1	15	N
Perth	Yes	3/2	35 10 10	Learner Experience Strategic Development Finance and Resources Audit Health and Safety	2	FT and 21 hours	n/a
SAMS	Yes	1/1	8	Education Quality and Assurance Committee (EQAC) Programme Meeting Group Education Committee	1	17.5*	n/a - companies act
Shetland	Yes - dual role as Assigned Colleges Support Officer	3/1	8	Senior Management Group Academic Board Quality Improvement Committee Operations and Estates	1	21	N
WHC	Yes	1/1	12	Finance	1	12	n/a - unincorporated

*Same staff member supporting each AP

Appendix Three

Full List of Skills Identified by officers and HISA Staff for Board of Management

Skills from Officers	Mentions	Skills from HISA Staff	Mentions
Confidence	6	Reading/close reading	5
Communication skills	6	Understanding their remit/priorities as student member	3
Understanding papers/what is being discussed	6	Understanding politics of board	3
Knowing/speaking for your students	3	Confidence	3
Politeness	3	Understanding role of board	2
Getting to know board/skills of members	2	Organisation	1
Being there	2	Resilience	1
Time management	2	Calm under pressure	1
Note taking	2	Respecting difference of opinion	1
Listening/active listening	2	Communication	1
Knowing what can/cannot get away with	1	Politeness	1
Knowing own limitations	1	Report writing	1
Preparation	1	Negotiation	1
Being a critical friend	1	Active Listening	1
Knowledge of abbreviations	1	Self-awareness	1
Managing others	1	Public speaking	1
Knowledge of AP	1		
Knowledge of UHI	1		
Writing and summarising	1		
Close reading	1		
Organisation	1		
Focus	1		
Punctuality	1		
Resilience	1		
Chairing meetings	1		
Knowing when to speak	1		

Appendix Four

How officers have found board meetings so far

- Scary at the start
- Good to have another officer/student there
- Board members supportive/fantastic – good people/environment and welcoming
- Good, great to get views across (when been in one), enjoyable
- Difference between local and merger boards
- Expectation officers already aware of what is going on – would be better to understand this
- Can be hard to understand discussions/information on papers at all times– e.g., finance, data – sometimes can't concentrate
- Informing and interesting/ one of the things enjoy most about role/found diversity interesting
- Feel able to interact and listened to – able to come in and speak if in person or online
- Regard as most important meeting in the college
- Can feel nervous going into meetings considering the people that sit on them and their experience
- Felt was not prepared at the start – am now
- Well run but long!
- Some sections feel irrelevant e.g., business
- Transparent, forgiving if unsure/misstep
- Once understood what board was and who members were made sense – Board Meeting for Dummies!
- Wish had more confidence before starting!
- As time gone on feel more respected and voice is valued – first meeting was laughed at although asked a good question!



Appendix Five

Board of Management Action Plan

Academic Partner _____ Date _____

Key theme	Action	To be actioned by	Person(s) Responsible	Measure of success	Action to be completed by	Status	Comments
Support	HISA Staff and Boards to create joint support for HISA officer/student board member to be able to participate in Board meetings	HISA Staff and Boards		Joint support plan and action plan completed	July 2023		
	Student Board Member to utilise the support relevant to their needs	HISA Officer		Officer attending pre-meeting support	October 2023		
Recruitment	Create standardised process and promotional materials for recruiting 2 nd Student Board Members	HISA		Process Created	July 2023		
	Support recruitment of 2 nd Student Board members	Boards		Promotional materials created 2 nd student board member recruited	October 2023		
Induction and Training	Student Board Member (s) induction to AP and AP Board	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Induction attended	September 2023		
	Student Board Members to attend relevant training	HISA and Boards		Training attended/undertaken by student board member	June 2024		
	Student Board member to have introductory meetings with Chair/Clerk/other relevant AP Boards	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Introductory meetings held	September 2023		
Relationships, Perceptions and Expectations	Boards to have awareness of HISA, including local team	Boards		Introduction to HISA presentation circulated/delivered to new and existing board members	September 2023		
	Boards to support HISA in providing regular updates to Board	Boards		Deadlines for updates given to student members at start of year Regular communication with HISA and board around updates	June 2024		
	Boards to relay expectations of Student Board members in line with governing guidelines	Board with support from HISA Staff		Expectations document created Expectations given during introductions/training	September 2023		

Appendix Five

Board of Management Action Plan

Relationships, Perceptions and Expectations (Cont.)	Local HISA team and Boards to have an effective and collaborative working relationship	HISA and Boards		HISA officers having effective channel of communication with Chair/Clerk	June 2024		
				HISA staff having effective channel of communication with Clerk			
	HISA to have regular meetings with Boards to discuss Board and relevant student matters	HISA and Board		Meetings set up and attended by both HISA and Board members	September 2023		
Board Meetings	HISA to provide regular updates to Board	HISA Officer with support from HISA Staff		Regular HISA update given at each Board meeting	December 2023		
	HISA to actively engage and participate in Board Meetings	HISA Officer with support from HISA Staff/Boards		Attendance at meetings by HISA	June 2024		
	Boards to be able to ensure student board members can attend and fully participate in meetings	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Chair and Clerk offering support to student board members	June 2024		
				Student board member contributions noted			

Appendix Six

Feedback from 2022/2023 Cohort

Considering the feedback for this project in academic year 2021/2022 and changes to offices and personal since this time, to ensure the feedback still resonated and the projects outcomes was still appropriate for the organisation, staff and officers were consulted on the first draft of the report. HISA staff were asked for general feedback on the report and its recommendation alongside any challenges they foresaw at their academic partners in the implementation of the project.

As HISA has a lot of new staff joining the organization since the initial consultation, those newer staff members did not have a lot of firsthand experience with local boards. That being said, all staff were complimentary of the work that went into the report, the recommendations made were reasonable, achievable and could make the project successful as well as benefit all within UHI and how key the relationship with the board secretary could be. Staff also liked the idea of further training, support and development for themselves and officers alongside a standardized process for second student board member recruitment.

Challenges identified by staff included time resources of officers and staff, those on board and how they perceive HISA officers, officers proactively taking any help offered or not being able to engage fully due to other commitments in their role and class attendance. One of the biggest challenges was staff's ability to support officers with preparation for meetings if they were unable to access the paper's for said meetings. Staff were also unsure of the best way to feedback board updates to Student Voice Reps, but did feel that this would be a useful exercise.

Some additional suggestions coming from staff were local staff being able to attend or observe board meetings as a way to help them understand how the meetings worked and to better enable them to support local officers and second student board members. Some staff also suggested that it would be more useful for officers to meet with their staff member as an impartial adviser prior to any meetings. When HISA officers were asked for their feedback, there were asked within an Executive Committee meeting and for those who either did not give direct feedback during the meeting or where unable to attend, feedback was asked for via email.

For those in attendance at Executive Committee, the responses were that they thought there were a lot of good points made that reflected their own experience, whether a new or returning officer, that this report would go down well at academic partners whether or not a good relationship already existed and it gives more clarity for the student member's role on boards. Officers also liked the idea of reporting local and regional work to boards so they had a better understanding of the role of HISA as an organization and the differences in the work of local and regional officers.

For those who responded via email the responses mirrored those of the officers at Executive Committee, with some officers commenting they were still new to the role and getting to grips with their Boards of Management but that the report was constructive with tangible action points, they agreed with what was written and it had a lot of information that was useful.

Suggestions made by officers included revising officer training so it is accessible for all, including a standardized approach to training around governance, especially for those officers who are elected after Spring Elections, through exploring the use of Brightspace, UHI's Virtual Learning Environment, for this training.

As well as feedback sought within HISA, members of BGPG were kept informed of the progress of the report throughout as this group were instrumental in the research and a way to sense check the recommendations from a board perspective. Feedback from BGPG members included an appreciation for the work that hand been done, that it would be important to distinguish the difference between an officer and a student board member and that an opportunity to develop on what is currently happening across the partnership is appreciated. BGPG members did raise concerns around the delivery of these recommendations due to changes within HISA including officer contracts and the departure of the Chief Executive Officer but, after reassurances from HISA on work being done as well as stressing that this project did not just impact HISA officers but student board members, BGPG members liaised with their individual boards and updated them on the progress of the report, with the aim of sharing the report during Cycle 4 of Board meetings in academic year 2022/2023.



HISA

CHI

HISA is a registered charity (SC046142) and represents the students at the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Highlands & Islands Students' Association,
Centre for Health Sciences, Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road, Inverness
IV1 1DY

Board of Management Student Member Action Plan

Academic Partner _____

Date _____

<u>Key theme</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>To be actioned by</u>	<u>Person(s) Responsible</u>	<u>Measure of success</u>	<u>Action to be completed by</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Support	HISA Staff and Boards to create joint support for HISA officer/student board member to be able to participate in Board meetings	HISA Staff and Boards		Joint support plan and action plan completed	July 2023		
	Student Board Member to utilise the support relevant to their needs	HISA Officer		Officer attending pre-meeting support	October 2023		
Recruitment	Create standardised process and promotional materials for recruiting 2 nd Student Board Members	HISA		Process Created Promotional materials created	July 2023	N/A	N/A at UHI Perth
	Support recruitment of 2 nd Student Board members	Boards		2 nd student board member recruited	October 2023	N/A	N/A at UHI Perth
Induction and Training	Student Board Member (s) induction to AP and AP Board	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Induction attended	September 2023	COMPLETE	Done in partnership with AVM and Clerk
	Student Board Members to attend relevant training	HISA and Boards		Training attended/undertaken by student board member	June 2024	COMPLETE	Attendance at CDN training arranged

	Student Board member to have introductory meetings with Chair/Clerk/other relevant AP Boards	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Introductory meetings held	September 2023	COMPLETE	Intro meetings set with chair, clerk and SMT as part of officer induction
Relationships, Perceptions and Expectations	Boards to have awareness of HISA, including local team	Boards		Introduction to HISA presentation circulated/delivered to new and existing board members	September 2023	NOT STARTED	
	Boards to support HISA in providing regular updates to Board	Board		Deadlines for updates given to student members at start of year Regular communication with HISA and board around updates	June 2024	COMPLETE	Done by clerk and SA
	Boards to relay expectations of Student Board members in line with governing guidelines	Board with support from HISA Staff		Expectations document created Expectations given during introductions/training	September 2023	NOT STARTED	
	Local HISA team and Boards to have an effective and collaborative working relationship	HISA and Boards		HISA officers having effective channel of communication with Chair/Clerk HISA staff having effective channel of communication with Clerk	June 2024	PARTIALLY COMPLETE	Monthly catch ups arranged with Chair Clerk introduces self and makes clear support available but nothing formally arranged
	HISA to have regular meetings with Boards to discuss Board and	HISA and Board		Meetings set up and attended by both HISA and Board members	September 2023	COMPLETE	Supported by SA staff in this.

	relevant student matters						Attendance monitored as per all board members and SA emphasise importance of making aware of attendance
Board Meetings	HISA to provide regular updates to Board	HISA Officer with support from HISA Staff		Regular HISA update given at each Board meeting	December 2023	COMPLETE	Local Plan goes to each both – rethinking format in line with BoM Project
	HISA to actively engage and participate in Board Meetings	HISA Officer with support from HISA Staff/Boards		Attendance at meetings by HISA	June 2024	COMPLETE	Supported by SA staff in this. Attendance monitored as per all board members and SA emphasise importance of making aware of attendance
	Boards to be able to ensure student board members can attend and fully participate in meetings	Boards with support from HISA Staff		Chair and Clerk offering support to student board members Student board member contributions noted	June 2024	COMPLETE	Meetings mainly scheduled at times officers can attend (except LEC as in afternoon), most chairs bring in officers

Signed by

On behalf of _____ Board of Management

On behalf of HISA Team based at _____

On behalf of HISA

Committee Cover Sheet

Paper No.3

Name of Committee	Learner Experience Committee
Subject	HISA Spring Elections Report
Date of Committee meeting	06/09/2023
Author	Elliot Stradling, Democracy and Student Governance Coordinator, HISA
Date paper prepared	01/05/2023
Executive Summary Please provide a concise summary of the Paper outlining the purpose, impact and recommended future actions if approved	This paper provides an update on the HISA Spring Elections including candidates, turnout and lessons learned.
Committee Consultation Please note which Committees this paper has previously been tabled at, and a brief summary of the outcomes/actions arising from this.	n/
Action requested	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For information <input type="checkbox"/> For discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> For approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended with guidance (please provide further information, below)
Strategic Impact Please highlight how the paper links to the Strategic Objectives of UHI Perth or the UHI Partnership. If there is no direct link to Strategic Objectives, please provide a justification for inclusion of this paper to the nominated Committee.	n/a In line with HISA strategy

Committee Cover Sheet

<p>Resource implications</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require the use of College resources to implement?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p>
<p>Risk implications</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal come with any associated risk to UHI Perth, or mitigate against existing risk?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Equality & Diversity</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require an Equality Impact Assessment?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p>
<p>Data Protection</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal require a Data Protection Impact Assessment?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Island communities</p> <p>Does this activity/proposal have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities)?</p>	<p>Yes/ No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Status</p> <p>(ie confidential or non-confidential)</p>	<p>Non-Confidential</p> <p>If a paper needs to remain confidential for a prescribed period of time before being made 'open', please advise how long must the paper be withheld:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Committee Cover Sheet

Freedom of Information

Please note that **ALL** papers will be included within 'open' business unless a justifiable reason can be provided.

Please select a justification from the list, below:

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research	<input type="checkbox"/>	Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other [please give further details] Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

2023 HISA Elections – UHI Perth Board of Management Report

Executive Summary

HISA conducted elections for 19 roles across the UHI region, six of which could be voted on by UHI Perth students: HISA Regional President, HISA Regional Vice-President Communities, HISA Regional Vice-President Education, UHI Perth President, UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare, and UHI Perth Depute President Education. These elections were conducted both online and in person, with some candidate recruitment, campaigning and voting, taking place virtually. Three of these six roles were successfully recruited for, with both the Regional Vice-President roles, as well as the UHI Perth Depute President Education position, receiving no candidates.

The election performance at UHI Perth saw a 1.77% turnout across all modes of study, while turnout across UHI was 2.9%. UHI Perth had the eighth highest turnout per unit of population, of any Academic Partner during the 2023 election.

Introduction

Under the 1994 Education Act, each further and higher education establishment is required to have a Students' Association that elects its officers through a fair and democratic election. HISA's Articles of Associations states HISA must hold elections for three Regional Officers (President, Vice-President Communities, and Vice-President Education) and at least one representative from each academic partner.

The 2023 elections were held between 6th February 2023 and 24th March 2023. In order to best reach all of the candidates for the election, HISA took measures to support the election process by conducting all of the candidate training and support, online. As in the last few elections, HISA utilised the turnout dashboard and the fast-track email function, in order to inform students and staff of important elections information, and provide students the opportunity to vote, as quickly as possible.

HISA uses the Single Transferable Vote system, following the Electoral Reform Society guidance. Voters select candidates in order of preference for each role they are able to vote for. HISA's website, provided by OneVoice Digital, has a built-in E-Voting module that allows HISA to conduct our elections entirely online. For every role in the election, voters had the option to Re-Open Nominations (RON), should they wish to reject the candidates on the ballot and call for the election to be re-run.

Posts and Results Summary

Elections for the following positions were held concurrently, resulting in the corresponding individuals being elected. Full results for each role are detailed in the [results section](#).

Position	Elected	Candidates*
HISA President	William Campbell	2
HISA Vice-President Communities	N/A	0
HISA Vice-President Education	N/A	0
UHI Perth President	Fiona Smith	1
UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare	Rebecca Bond	3
UHI Perth Depute President Education	N/A	0

*The option of Re-Open Nominations (RON) is not included in candidate numbers. Voters had the option to vote for (RON) in addition to any candidate.

Elections Co-ordination and Oversight

The 2023 Elections were overseen by National Union of Students, who served as our Returning Officer. The Returning Officer is responsible for the good governance of the election on behalf of HISA's Board of Trustees, to make judgements on appeals and to give guidance to the Depute Returning Officer, as and when required. Appointed internally, Natalie Bates served as HISA's Depute Returning Officer. This role is designed to manage the election process and make formal decisions regarding rules and regulations, including the ability to disqualify any candidate. This role also oversees the delivery of the elections project.

Elliot Stradling served as Elections Co-ordinator, leading on the operational delivery of the elections project across the UHI region, organising training for staff/candidates and advising staff throughout the elections process. Both members of the Student Voice and Advocacy team, along with the Communications Manager, Student Advisor & relevant local staff, supported the elections process throughout. Local staff were responsible for the implementation and delivery of the elections locally: promoting the elections to students, engaging with local UHI staff, assisting in the recruitment of candidates, delivering local training to candidates and supporting the voting process. The announcement of results was done via a YouTube video that was pre-recorded with all possible outcomes. After the results had been calculated, the video with the correct results was scheduled to go live at 6pm and a link was provided to all staff and students.

The Elections Process

Dates

Nominations Open	6 th February 2023 (10:00)
Nominations Close	3 rd March 2023 (14:00)
Announcement of Candidates	3 rd March 2023 (16:00)
	6 th March 2023 (12:00)
Rules, Ethics and Campaigning Candidate Training	7 th March 2023 (18:00)
	8 th March 2023 (10:00)
Video Training	(Provided to candidates via email)
Regional/Local Awareness Training	(Various sessions throughout March)
Voting Opens	21 st March 2023 (10:00)
Voting Closes	24 th March 2023 (13:00)
Results Announced	24 th March 2023 (18:00)

Nominations

HISA undertook nominations entirely online via a Microsoft Form available through the HISA website. All the information we required from students at this stage (including an option to submit their photo, poster and manifesto) were provided through this form. Prior to and during nominations, drop-in sessions were run for any student that was thinking of standing, but who were unsure of what it might entail or how they might go about nominating themselves.

The table below provides the number of nominations received at the close of each period.

Position	Nominations Received	Number of Candidates at voting week
HISA President	2	2
HISA Vice-President Communities	0	0
HISA Vice-President Education	0	0
UHI Perth President	1	1
UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare	5	3
UHI Perth Depute President Education	2	0

Of the four total candidates that were removed before voting week, one of them withdrew due to work and study commitments, while the other three did not respond to HISA correspondence. The candidate who withdrew was contacted and a meeting was put in place to see what support HISA could offer them in order to assist them in undertaking an officer role. While this candidate expressed gratitude for the meeting, after it had concluded, they still withdrew their nomination. The three candidates who did not respond to communication were given a warning to inform them that they would be removed if they didn't not respond. After no response was given by any of these candidates, they were subsequently removed from election materials before voting week began.

Preparing the Candidates

Candidates received training materials electronically, with training sessions conducted entirely on Microsoft Teams. All Candidates were invited to three live training sessions: The Rules, Ethics and Campaigning Training, which was mandatory for all candidates and was attended by all 20 candidates across three days, with an additional day added to catch the few students who missed the three scheduled training days. Regional Demographics Training, which was not mandatory, was only available to regional candidates and was attended by 1 candidate, and Local Awareness Training which was led by local staff; attendance for these sessions varied over the academic partners. As well as these training sessions, candidates were provided with video training via email so they had the option to access it at their own convenience.

The concept behind the Rules, Ethics and Campaigning Training was to enhance candidates' ability to reach out to and engage with students, while the Regional Demographics Training was designed to inform regional candidates of the various demographics at UHI; where they study and what previous voting patterns looked like. The Local Awareness Training was based around providing local candidates with an enhanced picture of the nature of their academic partner, who they would likely be working with and what is expected of an officer at their academic partner.

Throughout the supported campaign period, candidates' materials were uploaded to the HISA website, enabling students to make informed decisions ahead of voting week. These materials included: candidate images, manifestos, videos and posters (where provided.) These materials remained live until voting had closed in an effort to promote considered voting choices.

Students were offered the opportunity to take part in a live hustings event, where they answered the following pre-prepared questions:

- If you could only achieve one manifesto promise this year, which would you choose?
- What, in your opinion, is the best way to increase student engagement with HISA (either regionally or at your local AP)?
- Why do you believe you are the best person to achieve the goals set out in your manifesto?

- What was your reason behind running for your chosen position?
- If your elections campaign had a theme song, what would it be?

There were two different hustings events scheduled for students to attend; one for the regional candidates, and another for the local candidates. This was intended to give the candidates an opportunity to promote themselves and their campaign to students, in a slightly less formal and more engaging way. As well as this, it was a good opportunity for candidates to answer questions from the students in attendance.

These hustings events were recorded with candidates' permission and once the event had ended, the candidates' answers were then edited down and posted on the HISA website. If candidates were unable to attend the hustings event for the role they had chosen, they were offered the opportunity to pre-record their answers to each of the questions. These would then be added to the HISA website, alongside the other candidates.

Unlike in previous years, HISA did not organise class visits for candidates. Instead, candidates were informed that if they wished to conduct class visits, they must inform the elections coordinator, who would then check that the lecturer was also happy for the other candidates in this election, to also speak to their class. They would then inform the other candidates, in case they also wanted to conduct a visit to this class. This was intended to ensure that all candidates were given the same opportunity to speak to classes, even if they didn't choose to do so.

Voting

Once voting went live, students were emailed a direct fast-track voting link to their UHI student emails, which gave them a one-click route to their ballot paper, by-passing the login process. Voting was advertised clearly on multiple areas of the HISA website. On the homepage, a large banner featuring the Student Elections design linked students directly to their emails, where they could find their fast-track voting email. Emails were also utilised locally to engage staff and Senior Management Team support in encouraging voters.

Virtual polling stations were set up alongside physical polling stations in order to engage students both online and in-person, with the hopes that this would help us reach as wide a demographic of students as possible. The physical polling stations were run by local HISA staff, who would engage with students on campus, encouraging them to vote. HISA also managed class visits with staff members, facilitating the need to engage a captive audience of students, while reducing the number of requests lecturers might receive from candidates.

Once voting had closed, HISA provided voters with the opportunity to give feedback on the election process, receiving 422 responses. When asked how they found out about the elections, 320 surveyed students cited emails, while 71 cited that MyDay was the main way in which the election caught their attention. In terms of candidate awareness, 244 surveyed students said that manifestos were the main way in which candidates caught their attention. Students gave an average score of 4.20 out of 5 when asked to rate the voting

process and 60% of students said they were somewhat likely or very likely to engage with HISA in the future.

Marketing

The messaging of the 2023 Student Elections Campaign revolved around encouraging and nonintimidating language that was intended to motivate students to take a proactive stance in improving the student experience, in the hopes that this would help with the lack of elections engagement HISA has seen in recent years. Alongside the core and key word designs, HISA staff were provided with email signature graphics that they were encouraged to use throughout various stages in this election cycle. This aimed to help promote and raise awareness for the elections and HISA as an organisation.

In conjunction with this, a variety of the designs were produced bilingually with the Gaelic translation present on each material and approved by the HISA Gaelic Communities Coordinator. By increasing the presence of Gaelic in the Student Elections campaign, HISA was subsequently better able to engage with students studying at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and remind voters across the partnership that they are studying in a community where Gaelic is spoken.

During the Student Elections period, a variety of communications activity was undertaken to support the campaign and maximise student engagement. This included utilisation of the HISA website, local and regional social media channels, MyDay and email.

Complaints

One complaint was received regarding the UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare position. This issue stemmed from a candidate's name not being featured on the voting ballot. This was discovered early, on the first day of voting. After investigating this issue, the decision was made by the Depute Returning Officer, to make all votes cast for that position invalid, due to a candidate being missing from the ballot. At this point, a new election was created, and the previous one was removed.

At the point of removal, four votes had been cast in the original election, for the above position. It was ruled that these votes would be considered null and void. The voters were then contacted directly by HISA staff, who explained the situation and asked them to re-cast their vote on the new, full ballot. Once these voters had been contacted, an update email was sent to all staff and students at UHI Perth, apologising and informing them of the steps HISA had taken to resolve the issue.

After this, the original complainant was satisfied that the issue had been resolved and the complaint was closed. This complaint was not appealed.

Results

Table one details the result of the HISA Regional Presidential election. William Campbell was elected for his first term in this role.

Table 1: HISA Regional President Election Result

Candidate	Votes	Elected?
William Campbell	706	Yes
Matthew Freeman	227	No
Reopen Nominations	39	No
Spoilt	1	N/A
Non-Transferable	0	N/A
Differential Loss	0	N/A
Total	972	N/A

Table two details the result of the UHI Perth President election. Fiona Smith was elected for her first term in this role.

Table 2: UHI Perth President Election Result

Candidate	Votes	Elected?
Fiona Smith	159	Yes
Reopen Nominations	20	No
Spoilt	0	N/A
Non-Transferable	0	N/A
Differential Loss	0	N/A
Total	179	N/A

Table three details the first preference result of the UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare election. Rebecca Bond was elected for her first term in this role.

Table 3: UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare Election Result

Candidate	Votes	Elected?
Rebecca Bond	94	Yes
Charlea Jefts	60	No
Natasha Eltarabishi	49	No
Reopen Nominations	6	No
Spoilt	0	N/A
Non-Transferable	0	N/A
Differential Loss	0	N/A
Total	209	N/A

Historic Election Overview

Table four details the past performance of UHI Perth during HISA elections. The 2023 election turnout was the lowest in the last four years. This can likely be attributed to the sudden increase of enrolled students at UHI Perth, as well as the lack of regional candidates for the Vice-President roles. This can be evidenced by the fact that UHI Perth had more overall voters than in the 2022 election, despite having a lower turnout. Regardless, HISA has seen a noticeable decline in student interest and overall engagement with regards to the elections, post-Covid. UHI Perth especially saw a decline in voter share, with their students holding roughly 21% of the voter share, despite having 31% of UHI students.

Table five details the number of unused votes there were for each of the HISA Regional roles, as well as for the UHI Perth President role. From this data we can see that there were considerably fewer unused votes for HISA Regional President than in the last four elections. This can likely be attributed to the on-campus presence of both Regional President candidates at multiple UHI campuses. Contrary to this, the UHI Perth President role received considerably fewer votes than in the 2022 election. This may be attributed to the lack of candidates for this role.

Table six highlights candidate numbers. 2023 saw a reduction in candidates for the UHI Perth President position and Depute President Education position, but an increase in candidates for the Depute President Activities & Welfare position, when compared to the 2022 election. Candidate interest in the Perth President role has steadily declined over the past 4 elections, while both of the Perth Depute President roles fluctuate year by year.

Tables seven and eight highlight election engagement for the role of UHI Perth President and UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare. This tables shows that the decline of student engagement has stopped falling as drastically as it has in the past few elections. Although it had 10 less votes than in the 2022 election, the decline in votes for the Perth President position is a lot less than compared to the decline between the 2022 and 2021 elections, as well as between the 2021 and 2020 elections, respectively. The increase in votes for the Depute President Activities & Welfare can either be attributed to the increase in overall enrolled students, or the fact that this role was contested by 3 candidates, all of which had a strong on-campus presence.

Local Reflection

One of the issues noted by students trying to vote at UHI Perth, was that the QR code and vote url did not work. Despite being on printed materials and tested before voting week began, once voting had opened, the link to vote automatically linked students to their emails, instead of the voting page. Although the cause of this is unknown, HISA suspects that it is related to our use of Union Cloud's digital interface. Due to the issues we have previously had with attaining analytic data and election results while using Union Cloud's services, HISA will be moving over to MSL later on in the year. We are hopeful that this will help to curb some of the technical issues we have been experiencing in previous elections. Other than this,

students expressed minimal technical or process-related issues, with regards to voting in the 2023 Spring Election.

Local staff reached out to curriculum staff at the earliest opportunity to arrange class visits during the elections period, so that HISA local staff could speak to as many students as possible and encourage them to vote. A variety of in-person and online class visits took place over the course of the 2023 Election, hosted by various members of the HISA team.

A HISA staff member who was running a polling station at UHI Perth, stated that the number of students on campus, fluctuated greatly from day to day, with the last day of voting especially, seeing a distinct lack of on-campus students for staff to engage with. As well as this, staff noted that many students seemed to be disinterested in the elections and reluctant to vote. When asked why they were reluctant to vote, students gave a variety of reasons: from an inability to access their emails, to a general disinterest in the results of the election and a lack of understanding for why an election taking place to begin with.

On the last day of voting, HISA announced that they would be offering an incentive to all students who voted in this election. All students who had voted (before and after the announcement) would be entered into a prize draw where they would have the opportunity to win £250. This prize was to be drawn after voting had concluded and the winner would be announced on the HISA Website and social media channels. The winner was then contacted so that they could be delivered their prize. This incentive proved to be a very successful means of encouraging votes. After the incentive was announced, HISA saw an increase of more than 50% across all campuses, when compared to the previous three days of voting. This increase of voters was especially noticed at UHI Perth, who also saw a large increase in voters, on a day where there was a noticeable lack of students on campus.

In terms of the candidate for the UHI Perth President role, they were noted by UHI Perth staff to have campaigned less than the three UHI Perth Depute President Activities & Welfare candidates. However, this may well be due to the fact that they were running unopposed. Staff have observed in previous UHI Perth elections, that when candidates campaign more actively on campus, they have a higher success rate with achieving votes than when the staff themselves attempt to get students to vote. This can be evidenced by the fact that the Activities & Welfare position received more votes in this election. With this in mind, staff are keen to find a way to motivate or encourage candidates to campaign, without being seen as favouring a particular candidate (especially the ones who are already eager to campaign.) This was discussed in the post-election feedback session. As a result, a “dos & don’ts” list has been created by the elections coordinator, with the hopes that this will serve as a reference to help staff who wish to encourage candidates, get a better picture of what is and isn’t doable. This is a live document and will continue to be developed as we move towards the next election, in order to cover as wide a variety of situations as possible.

The overall voter turnout has noticeably declined in comparison to previous years. This decline in votes, candidate nominations and overall engagement, was noted in the 2021 and the 2022 election, but it has continued to decline in the 2023 election. Although this year’s decline in turnout can be attributed to an increased number of enrolled students, increasing engagement on all fronts has been a key focus for the last few elections and will continue to

be an important factor in the 2024 elections. HISA have recently been looking at reviewing and re-writing the schedules and rules for the elections, in order to re-structure and design the elections around student engagement. It is our hope that through this re-vamp, we will find a solution to the continued lack of engagement HISA has seen in the last few elections.

In previous elections, HISA staff contacted candidates directly via phone calls, to inform them they had been either unsuccessful, where staff would then follow-up regarding the support structures that are in place for students. Or to inform them that they were successful, where they would then ask them if they will accept the role. For this election, HISA provided candidates with support info via email and the results were announced via a scheduled YouTube video. There were a few reasons for this: The first was to try and create a greater sense of community, where students, staff and candidates could all find out the results together and use the YouTube chat function to share their thoughts and opinions. As well as this, it was intended to streamline the results announcement process, where in previous elections the announcement has been delayed due to staff struggling to get in contact with candidates. This way, once HISA had all the relevant forms handed in by candidates on the last day of voting, we were able to make one big announcement, instead of a bunch of smaller ones. This method proved to be popular with both staff, students and candidates and HISA will likely utilise it for future elections.

Moving forward HISA aims to strengthen our already good working relationships with UHI Perth staff, continue to use targeted, consistent and encouraging communications, and work in partnership with key staff to increase awareness and engagement in the elections process. We will, as always, continue to consider new ways to engage with a wide range of students and seek to improve engagement via class visits (where applicable), as well as develop and test new methods of engagement, in order to best promote the elections to students. Creating more awareness (both on and off campus) well in advance of nominations opening, boosting HISA's social media reach, streamlining the entire elections process and helping to strengthen engagement with students through various different means, will be our main focus in the run-up to the 2024 election.

Appendices

Table 4: Overall Past Election Performance

UHI Perth	2020	2021	2022	2023
Voters	591	421	207	227
Turnout	8.67%	7.13%	3.05%	2.04%
Voter Share	23.43%	25.18%	27.49%	21.76%
Student Numbers	6814	5908	6777	11,109
Perth Students as a Percentage of UHI	23.21%	25.45%	22%	31.84%

Table 5: Unused Votes by Students

Unused Votes	2020	2021	2022	2023
Did not vote for HISA Regional President	509	370	139	40
	20.18%	22.13%	18.41%	3.95%
Did not vote for HISA Regional Vice-President Education	622	370	155	N/A
	24.66%	22.13%	20.53%	N/A
Did not vote for HISA Regional Vice-President Communities	639	350	118	N/A
	25.34%	20.93%	15.63%	N/A
Did not vote for UHI Perth President	18	32	15	48
	0.71%	1.91%	1.99%	21.15%

Table 6: Candidate Numbers

Role	2020	2021	2022	2023
HISA Regional President	4	3	2	2
HISA Regional Vice-President Education	1	2	1	0
HISA Regional Vice-President Communities	4	2	1	0
UHI Perth President	4	2	2	1
UHI Perth Depute-President Activities and Welfare	4	6	1	3
UHI Perth Depute-President Education	3	5	1	0

Table 7: Perth Students Votes for HISA Perth President

Votes for HISA Perth President	2020	2021	2022	2023
Votes	555	356	189	179
Turnout	8.14%	6.03%	2.79%	1.61%

Table 8: Perth Students Votes for HISA Perth Depute-President Activities and Welfare

Votes for HISA Perth Depute-President Activities and Welfare	2020	2021	2022	2023
Votes	518	351	182	209
Turnout	7.60%	5.94%	2.69%	1.88%

Student Engagement Group Meeting**Minute****Date and time:** Wednesday 03 May 2023, 11.00am – 1.00pm**Location:** By MSTeams VC or Room 019**Members present:** Liam Fowley (LF), Mandy McDonald (MM), Erin Grant (EG), Nick Green (NG), Sam Monie (SM), Jess Borley (JB), Gerald McLaughlin (GMcL), Aimee Cuthbert (AC)**Apologies:** Kathleen Connor (KC), Lesley Sutherland (LS)**In Attendance:****Chair:** Deborah Lally**Note Taker:** Nicola McAulay**Summary of Actions**

Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
4	New student voice manager recently – Natalie Bates to be invited to the next meeting – taken forward and will also invite the new estates manager Gavin to future meetings.	Nicola McAulay	Next Meeting
18	DL to follow up about attendees – email staff to see if they still want to be on the group. SPARQS are updating their student strategy and models.	Deborah Lally	Next Meeting

Minute**We will act with integrity in everything we do**

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Item	Action
<p>1. Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>DL welcomed the Committee members.</p> <p>Apologies were noted.</p>	
<p>2. Additions to the Agenda for AOCB</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Paper 1</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2023, were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions that had taken place.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Review of actions from previous meeting / Matters arising that are not included elsewhere on the agenda:</u></p> <p>13. Not complete – Nicola will take forward and will also invite the new Estates Manager to the group.</p> <p>Natalie will be invited to the next meeting to talk about what the student voice rep process will be next year. Agenda item to be added for JB ad AC.</p> <p>16. Complete 16. Complete</p>	NM
<p>5 Corporate Parenting Strategy</p> <p>Paper was provided – went to board and approved.</p>	
<p>6. British Council Inspection</p> <p>Inspection done last week – DL was involved from a safeguarding point of view for students under 18 who are from overseas countries.</p> <p>JB had a meeting with them in regards to a quality view, they asked about how we monitor student feedback. Excellent provision, our campus is very nice and impressed with support mechanisms.</p> <p>John Small had put a lot of work into this – one of the best centres they had been to.</p>	
<p>7. UVU and Stetson University – Summer School</p>	

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Item

Action

The process for this has been ongoing for a year. EG and SM have been involved. Students will be coming over as part of a summer school. Some students will be coming on the 5th of June and the rest will arrive a few days later – 34 altogether. Hostelling Scotland will get some rooms ready for these students early and are in the process of getting the deep clean done before they arrive.

The international team have been organising this alongside Catherine Etri.

Trips have been planned for the students.

8. Hostelling Scotland (extension to contract)

Contract has been extended – very good service has been provided.

9. Safeguarding

Nothing new to report.

SM has been working with Police Scotland with regards to PREVENT and is working on material for students. Awareness sessions will also be provided for staff.

PREVENT is now known as Martyn’s Law. Where there will be requirements for places, including Education, to follow.

10. Student Engagement Service - Update

14 drop offs with Tesco for items to be provided for students and staff on campus. Hit and miss with certain items. Trying to change around which items are provided.

Workshops ending for now – exams taking place. 160 workshops provided throughout the year.

Prevent workshop – waiting for materials for this – SM will follow this up

SM helping work on student’s services newsletter – been running for 3 months.

Carers week 10th of June PKAVS coming to do their event on campus.

Working closely with the intern on students’ services posters.

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Item

Action

US students – SM been asked to be involved – Ceilidh band booked for the 9th of June in the webster building.

Working on student inductions for 23/24.

Student engagement tombola which had run for 3 weeks – 700-1000 students took part.

11. Period Dignity Regional Working Group Update

Disbanded group.

Hoping to launch the availability of period products more successfully but nothing has arrived at the same time, new company supplying the period products, range of sizes available.

Have yet to purchase cups and pads but will be launched for next session. Have asked joinery department to make a holder for the products and automotive students will be spray painting them.

For period products that are more expensive, we will deploy a request and pick up at Reception for these items.

12. SLWG Student Induction 23-24

DL has previously asked for anyone interested in this, an invite will be sent out for a meeting.

13. Student Residences

Degree students will be moving out on the 14th May and the rest of students will be out for the 4th of June.

Applications open for new academic year – 80 applications already. Sending offers out around the 18th of May.

Questionnaire has been produced about the students experiences for any students leaving.

Terminology changed to student accommodation rather than student residences.

14. Digital Accessibility

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Item

Action

Expecting all devices to be extended or returned by Friday 16th of June. Room 033 will be used to store these devices.

15. Student Voice

HISA have their final SRC meeting next month.

Student voice reps have been quite engaged – feedback from PATS subject leaders, very responsive to giving feedback.

Final end of year survey is out, quite poor figure of responses at the moment.

SRCG plans have been made for a planning day for SV reps. Natalie Bates has created a template for a plan for student voice reps for next semester.

16. HISA Updates:

16.1 SRC meeting last week, last one next month. Gail from Aramark attended for a Q & A session. Still ongoing concern about the food but Gail is very quick at responding to feedback.

Student funding has been brought up.

16.2 HISA Elections 2023 are done – Fiona Smith was appointed as Perth President, Rebecca Bond was elected as Depute President (Activities and welfare). The Depute President (Education) will be elected in the by-elections at the end of this month.

Pulling together an elections report – higher turnout than last year.

Working on data sharing agreement with UHI.

16.3 HISA end of year bash - Hoping to host one – pushing ticket sales as they are not where they should be, have a target to hit by next week.

16.4 Perth Partnership Project - Recommended its dropped and HISA Perth adopts UHI HISA project.

17. Student EG Member updates – not included elsewhere on the agenda.

Item	Action
No Updates	
<p>18. AOCB</p> <p>Deborah to follow up on attendees for this group – email staff to see if they still want to be on the student EG group.</p> <p>SPARQS are updating their student strategy and models.</p>	DL
<p>19. Date of Next CMT Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 May 2023 	
<p>20. Date of next Student Engagement Group Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 June 2023 	

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Student Engagement Group Meeting

Minute

Date and time: Tuesday 20 June 2023, 11.00am – 1.00pm

Location: By MSTeams VC

Members present: Gavin Wigham (GW), Deborah Lally (DL), Lesley Sutherland (LS), Sarah Wood (SW), Lisa Findlay (LF), Suzanne Miller (SM), Sam Monie (SM), Gerald McLaughlin (GMcL), Erin Grant (EG), Aimee Cuthbert (AC), Kathleen Connor (KC), Jen Austin (JA)

Apologies: Nick Green (NG), Jess Borely (JB)

In Attendance: Natalie Bates (from 12 noon onwards)

Chair: Deborah Lally

Note Taker: Nicola McAulay

Summary of Actions

Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
4	DL to follow up about attendees on the group – on going.	Deborah Lally	Start of new academic year

Minute

Item	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies	
DL welcomed the Committee members.	
Apologies were noted.	

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Item	Action
<p>2. Additions to the Agenda for AOCB</p> <p>Action short of strike action - DL</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Paper 1</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 03 May 2023, were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions that had taken place.</p>	
<p>4. Review of actions from previous meeting / Matters arising <u>that are not included elsewhere on the agenda:</u></p> <p>4 Complete</p> <p>18 DL to follow up about attendees on the group – on going.</p>	DL
<p>6. Safeguarding</p> <p>Nothing to report at this stage with regards to students. Safeguarding awareness sessions have been scheduled for August Staff CPD Programme. DL also commented on the British Council recent audit and how advanced training for Safeguarding Leads is difficult to source.</p>	
<p>7. Student Engagement Service - Update</p> <p>From the 30th of January 23 – 7th of June 23 there has been 20 deliveries in total – 4000 items given out to students and staff. A lot of work to do with ordering the items. Not sure what can be done with remaining funding, SM will look into this. GW will talk to Aramark about possible funding for this going forward.</p> <p>Breadalbane academy transitions sessions – SM visited to give sessions on transitioning from S4-S5 and S5-S6. The pupils were down here doing a 3 day sports coaching course.</p> <p>SM has carried out 15 pre induction sessions and some of these were for school partnership programmes.</p> <p>Crieff high school on campus down at Goodlyburn doing a little filming.</p> <p>American students were over and there was ceilidh held, SM is currently finishing the editing of the videos, brilliant night. The students will hopefully be back next year.</p> <p>PKAVS had their wellbeing event on campus which went well.</p>	

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Item

Action

8. Period Products

Construction Team have produced up to 8 holders and will produce more after the summer recess. These will be put up in the toilets, prioritising toilets that are used more than others.

Will be launched for students returning in the summer. DL is working with procurement to order more expensive items such a period cups and period pants which will be a click and collect service for these. Working with a few companies to come in during fresher's week to show how these products work.

Products will also be available in male toilets.

DL will also make products available in the residences.

9. SLWG Student Induction 23-24

The group met for the second time last week, talked about a spreadsheet for inductions dates and times. Planning on sending postcards again inviting them for induction week.

Working on 2 communications – all staff communication, ready to go and an E leaflet – welcome booklet for students.

Camhs offering a calm tent, Sarah Wood has passed this on to the relevant people within the college. This could maybe be provided for freshers or induction week.

Everything should be coordinated now.

10. Student Residences

Full now for 23/24, 28 on waiting list, applications now closed.

Starting to send out tenancy agreements now.

AM will liaise with EG about moving in BBQ
11 rooms for the cohort of students from China coming across to study.

11. Digital Accessibility

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Item

Action

Had a busy few week, about 300 laptops and dongles handed back so far. 234 students who have equipment needing handed back. And 108 have extended their loans. Any further extensions requested may be delayed as we need confirmation from the PAT that this is still a requirement.

Storage is still in 033 until mid October. DL asked GW if it is possible to change the key lock code on the door to ensure robust security.

GW

12. Student Voice

UHI student voice rep group meet for a planning session last week to discuss the SVR system this year and potential plans for the next three. Full plan is to be circulated for comment - Sam Monie and Jessica Borley sit on this for UHI Perth

13. HISA Updates:

16.1. OBI Update - great to see ceremony be part of celebration week (thanks given to Christiana's area for our performers), more nominations this year, more paper nominations, not all sectors getting nominations - need to continue looking at this.

16.2. SVR - update on system as previous, HISA been working with Jen Austin and gathering feedback in PAT sessions for Sport and Fitness area. report being compiled but would be good to look at rolling out - HISA will speak to PAT C's about this. HISA gathering feedback from students on restructuring of UHI Perth and compiling this to share with SMT - gathering information and making sure student voice is heard.

16.3. Officer Inductions - new officers starting 1st August, training being planned by HISA and will include training from NUS, sparqs and CDN. will do Brightspace training as well.

16.4. Freshers - planning in place, will take place during inductions with Freshers fair 30th and 31st august. Any interested parties please forward onto HISA Perth. Other events/plans tbc

14. Student EG Member updates – not included elsewhere on the agenda.

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Item

Action

Sarah Wood – Mainstreaming report published end of March. Staff training rolled out trans and pronoun awareness training. Concerns raised that we don't have gender neutral toilets available on campus.

PAS been providing drop-in sessions in the College also- very well attended.

Suzanne Miller – Asked if the training could be rolled out when academic staff come back in August or on staff conference day. Sarah said next staff conference will be about inclusivity so these should be included.

15. AOCB

Action short of strike – DL SDD and Catherine Etri met about results being entered for progression boards. Don't want students impacted negatively so all students will progress but if they do have anything outstanding, they will need to complete it on top of the 23/24 coursework.

Up on website – DL has shared this in the chat. Meeting at 1pm with UHI colleagues regarding potential students who have applied, making decision on allowing these students to study at UHI Perth on the basis they have achieved what's needed. Communication will go out to students about this.

Natalie Bates – Student voice manage at HISA. Started roll in November 2022, SVR system, working on 3-year development plan, out to member of the student voice rep group for feedback. Aim is to create the freedom for development in each institute and what local delivery can look like. Keep Natalie on the group invite list for future meetings.

16. Date of Next CMT Meeting:

- TBC

17. Date of next Student Engagement Group Meeting:

- TBC

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Board of Management

Learner Experience Committee

Membership

- Principal – Chair
- No fewer than 2 Representatives of the Board of Management (one to be Vice-Chair)2 Academic Staff Representatives (Board Teaching staff representative plus one other nominated teaching staff representative)
- 2 Student Representatives nominated by HISA PerthDepute Principal (Academic)
- Vice Principal (Engagement) Associate Principal (Academic)
- Chair of Scholarship and Research CommitteeHead of Student Experience
- Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement

By invitation

Student Services Manager, Student Records Manager, Quality Manager

Quorum

The quorum shall be 7 including the Chair or Vice Chair and must include one Board of Management Member

Frequency of Meetings

Normally 3 times per academic session, and as required.

Terms of Reference

1. To maintain an overview of academic quality assurance and outcomes by reviewing reports from the Quality Assessment Committee and other relevant internal and external sources including feedback and evaluation from student and stakeholder surveys.
2. To consider the implications of reports and updates from other relevant College and UHI Committees and, where appropriate, act to ensure the relevance and currency of the academic offer.
3. To review and approve College's policies and strategies that relate directly to the student experience.
4. To receive regular reports from Management and HISA Perth on progress with student engagement in the operation of the College.