UHI | INVERNESS

Board of Management

MINUTES of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ONLINE MEETING held via Microsoft Teams on 01 October 2024.

PRESENT:	Dee Bird, Chris O'Neil, Rojan Kumar Subramani, Sally Blyth, Janette Campbell, Jane Davidson, Arvinder Kainth, Matthew Millward, Gillian Galloway, Holly Pearce, Donald MacKenzie, Elizabeth Keegan
CHAIR:	Dee Bird
APOLOGIES:	Amy Goodbrand, Russell Edwards, Innis Montgomery, Wendy Grindle, Pauline Tuthill & Angus Campbell (UHI Court)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality
	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Operations and External Relations
	Director of Finance and Estates
	Operations and Commercial Manager
	Professional Development Manager
	Tertiary Education Leader – Management, Health and Creative Arts
	Information Systems Manager
	Director of Student Engagement & Representation
	Governance Officer

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

The Governance Officer confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed the Director of Student Engagement & Representation as an Observer and informed him that he will be requested to leave during confidential items, and he agreed to that.

Enquiring Minds Scheme 2023/24 – Board Creative Space

The Professional Development Manager & Tertiary Education Leader – Management, Health and Creative Arts joined the meeting.

The Board was provided with an Enquiring Minds Scheme 2023/24 presentation from Professional Development Manager & Tertiary Education Leader – Management, Health and Creative Arts (Note of Session: CSN-01-102024).

Sally Blyth joined the meeting.

The Professional Development Manager & Tertiary Education Leader – Management, Health and Creative Arts left the meeting.

Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest, statements of connections or transparency statements were noted.

1. **MINUTES**

   a.) Meeting of the Board of Management held on 25 June 2024

   Decision: The minutes of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED.**

   b.) Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-01-062024) held on 25 June 2024

   Decision: The Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-01-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

   c.) Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-02-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-02-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

d.) Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-03-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CSN-BoM-03-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

e.) Confidential Note (CN-BoM-01-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Confidential Note (CN-BoM-01-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

f.) Confidential Note (CN-BoM-02-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Confidential Note (CN-BoM-02-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

g.) Confidential Note (CN-BoM-03-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Confidential Note (CN-BoM-03-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

h.) Confidential Note (CN-BoM-04-062024) held on 25 June 2024

Decision: The Confidential Note (CN-BoM-04-062024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 25 June 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

i.) Meeting of the Extraordinary Board of Management held on 19 September 2024

Decision: The minutes of the Extraordinary Board of Management Meeting held on 19 September 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED.**

j.) Confidential Note (CN-EBoM-01-092024) held on 19 September 2024

Decision: The Confidential Note (CN-EBoM-01-092024) of the Extraordinary Board of Management Meeting held on 19 September 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED.**

2. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

- **Confidential Annex - Partnership Working – COMPLETE -** The Principal advised the Board that we are continuing to look at partnership working. The Board noted that a collective decision had been made to cease the move to ITrent and that we are currently going through the procurement process again, in conjunction with others in the partnership, in respect of a combined Payroll and HR System.
  Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.

- **Principal's Report: Enquiring Minds Scheme Update – COMPLETE -** An update on Enquiring Minds project to be presented to the Board during the Board Creative Space session on 01 October 2024.
  Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.

- **UHI Inverness College Annual Audit by Deloitte – COMPLETE -** We are in the first year of contract with the new provider. An action has been proposed to monitor and evaluate the failure by new external auditors Deloitte to complete audit reports on time.
  Action: Audit approved on 10 September 2024.
  Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.

- **Communication to Audit Scotland – SUPERSEDED** - Direct communication to be sent to Audit Scotland to ask for stronger intervention in regard to Deloitte's delay.

  Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.

3.   RISK REGISTER UPDATES (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Director of Student Engagement & Representation left the meeting.

The Director of Finance and Estates spoke to the CONFIDENTIAL report (CN-BoM-01-102024) which provided the Board with Risk Register update.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Risk Register Updates report.

4.   FINANCE UPDATES

The Director of Student Engagement & Representation joined the meeting.

The Director of Finance and Estates spoke to his report which provided the Board with the final financial forecast return for 2024 which was sent to SFC on 30 June 2024. The report also included the forecast for 2023/24, the budget for 2024/25 and the financial forecasts for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Donald MacKenzie left the meeting.

Discussion about associated risks, future income streams and Research activities had taken place. The Board welcomed all targets met and expressed concerns in regard to risks listed in red. The Board had acknowledged that some risks are outwith college's control and welcomed the assurance by the Director of Finance and Estates that all risks are being closely monitored.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and Estates for his detailed report.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** Finance Updates report.

5.   **GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

a.) Annual Audit Committee Report

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided the Board with the Annual Audit Committee Report for Academic Year 2023-24.   Board Members had been informed that the Audit Committee approved the report on 10th September 2024 and recommended for Board's final approval. In accordance with Scottish Funding Council guidance the Audit Committee is required to report annually to the Board of Management.

The Board welcomed the confirmation of all internal reports being carried out by BDO as scheduled for the academic year 2023/24. The Members also congratulated the Director of Finance and Estates on the completion of the external accounts for financial year 2022/23.

The Chair thanked the Governance Officer for her detailed report.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Annual Audit Committee Report.

b.) OSCR Return

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided the Board with the final return which was submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) in respect of the College Financial Year 2022-23 on Friday 13th September 2024. The Board had been asked for their retrospective approval for this information to be submitted to OSCR along with a copy of the signed Annual Accounts.

The Board welcomed the report after the submission being delayed for a number of months due to incomplete financial accounts report carried out by Deloitte.

The Chair thanked the Governance Officer for her detailed report.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the OSCR Return Report.

Elizabeth Keegan joined the meeting.

6. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

a.) UHI Safeguarding Policy (Reviewed Policy)

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality asked the Board to approve the Reviewed Safeguarding Policy. The policy was approved at Policy & Procedure Review Panel on 6th August, EMT Committee in September, and LTR Board Committee in September.

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality confirmed that any changes done had only added greater clarity in regard to confidentiality aspect.

The Board welcomed the policy and confirmation by the Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality that robust training had been put in place for the safeguarding officers and that is being underpinned by detailed procedures. The team is also linked to the Highland Council and Child Protection Agencies.

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

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the UHI Safeguarding Policy (Reviewed Policy).

b.) UHI Generative AI Policy (NEW Policy)

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality asked the Board to approve the UHI Generative AI New Policy. The policy was approved at Policy & Procedure Review Panel on 6th August, EMT Committee in September, and LTR Board Committee in September.

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality confirmed that this is a new common college policy with next review date scheduled for April 2025.

Board Members expressed their concerns in regard to confusing SQA AI guidelines currently in place; the use of AI by students had been highlighted as a new risk to the policy. It had been agreed that the review in April will be of great importance to staff and students in terms of AI.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the UHI Generative AI Policy (NEW Policy).

Officer's Note: Elizabeth Keegan sent an email after the meeting for it to be noted in the minutes that she does not agree with the rolling-out of the new AI policy at UHI Inverness while it directly contradicts that of the SQA.

7. KPI MATRIX

The Operations and Commercial Manager spoke to his report to provide the Board of Management with a review of KPIs for academic year 2023-24 and a review of measures to be used for KPIs in 2024-25. It had been confirmed that the KPI Matrix reports will be presented in a new simplified format this academic year.

Discussion regarding areas for improvement, risks outwith college's control and the importance of KPIs within the education sector took place.

The Chair thanked the Operations and Commercial Manager for his detailed report.

8. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Director of Student Engagement & Representation left the meeting.

The Principal spoke to his CONFIDENTIAL report (CN-BoM-02-102024) which provided the Board with an overview of new and continuing activity.

9. OUTCOMES AND SATISFACTION RATES

The Information Systems Manager and the Director of Student Engagement & Representation joined the meeting.

The Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report which provided the Board with an update on student outcomes and satisfaction for 2023/24 and targets for 2024/25.

Early withdrawals have decreased for both FE and HE full time students as compared to 2022/23. There has been an increase in early withdrawals for Part Time students. However, further withdrawals have decreased across both FE and HE students as compared to 2022/23. Student Outcomes are currently indicative for 2023/24 following the final FES submission to the SFC and some outcomes are yet to be determined for HE students. The partial success rates have increased for FE Full Time and Part Time students and for HE Part Time students in 2023/24. As further outcomes are entered for HE students this will change. The success rates have increased for Full Time students in 2023/24. The college has achieved the target of 71% for FE Full time students.

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

10.   STUDENT ACTIVITY AND RECRUITMENT

The Information Systems Manager spoke to her report which provided the Board with the final student enrolments for 2023/24, and the status of current recruitment for 2024/25.

The original 2023/24 FE Credits target for UHI Inverness of 26,657 was rebased to 26,442. The credits audit is complete, the outturn is 26,523 which is just over 100% of target. The UHI Academic Partnership target for HE undergraduate students was not achieved. The 2023/24 target for Undergraduate students who are fundable was 1,418 fte, our delivery is estimated at 1,259 fte which is 88.8% of the target. Early withdrawals decreased for FE and HE full-time students in 2023/24 but increased for part-time students. Further withdrawals have reduced for both FE and HE full-time and part-time students. Enrolment for 2024/25 is ongoing for FE and HE students. The majority of full-time students have enrolled and is ongoing for part-time students and apprentices.

The Board welcomed the report and congratulated the Information Systems Manager on achieving positive figures in terms of a successful recruitment campaign.

The Information Systems Manager left the meeting.

11.   GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided members with updates regarding Chair and Board recruitment, Committee and Board evaluations and rules regarding college staff emails and communications.

The Chair thanked the Governance Officer for her detailed report.

12.   UHI Court – Quarterly Update - UHI Court minutes - to follow

Angus Campbell, UHI Court, provided a short verbal update in regard to UHI Court. The report highlighted the importance of financial transparency, number of credits allocated per partner and their responsibilities to deliver courses tailored to the needs of local communities and rising costs of student accommodation. All present agreed that efficient communication channels are needed between UHI and all partners to keep them updated and informed of new developments within the OBC process.

The Chair thanked Angus Campbell, UHI Court, for his detailed update and agreed that effective communication is key within the OBC process.

13.   DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Board noted the contents of the DRAFT meetings of the:
- Search & Nomination Committee held on 23 August 2024
- Chairs Committee held on 29 August 2024
- Joint Audit & Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 September 2024
- Audit Committee held on 10 September 2024 – to follow

- Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12 & 24 September 2024 – to follow
- HR Committee held on 19 September 2024 – to follow
- Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 24 September – to follow

The Chair has asked members to send any comments regarding minutes attached to himself and the Governance Officer.
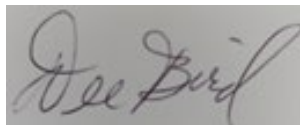
13.   AOCB

Nothing raised.

14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 17 December 2024 at 4.30 p.m.

Signed by the Chair:

Date: 17/12/2024