

North, West & Hebrides College.

Feedback Report Summary

Annual Appraisal of Chair's Performance, June 2025

1. Purpose of Summary Report

The main purpose of this summary report is to provide the Board with an overview of the process adopted and the findings arising from the second annual appraisal of the Chair's (Derek Lewis) performance by the Senior Independent Member (Shona MacDougall).

2. Background.

The Code of Good Governance, for Scotland's Colleges, sets out the requirement for all College Boards to have a Senior Independent Member (SIM). The College Development Network has a standard role description for a SIM, and this has been formally adopted by North, West & Hebrides (NWH), along with an appointed SIM, namely Shona MacDougall as a non-executive Board member. One of the key duties of the SIM is to appraise, on an annual basis, the Chair's performance. The second annual appraisal of Derek Lewis, as Chair of NWH, was undertaken during May 2025, for reporting to the Board of Management in June 2025.

3. Appraisal Process.

The appraisal process adopted reflected the principles as set out in the Guidance Notes for Boards in the College Sector – a Development Framework, including Evaluation of Chair. Cognisance was taken of the context surrounding this appraisal, namely year two of post-merger, with a Board which is more established but still facing strategic and operating challenges of a relatively new single organisation.

The SIM, in agreement with the Chair, Vice Chairs and Committee Chairs, chose a relatively discussive approach – fully reflecting the principles of the Board Development Framework and Evaluation of a Chair. The two Vice Chairs, along with the other two Committee Chairs met individually with the SIM to discuss and evaluate the Chair's performance. The findings from these individual meetings thereafter being shared with the Chair at his annual appraisal meeting, held with the SIM on Tuesday 20th May 2025. The Chair of the HR Committee also in attendance at this meeting.

4. Appraisal Findings and Conclusion.

The SIM provided feedback from the discussions as held with the Vice Chairs and Committee Chairs – all of which being hugely supportive and positive in respect of the Chair's leadership, wealth of experience and accessibility to Board members. The Vice

Chairs and Committee Chairs also fully acknowledged the very challenging leadership environment of year two post-merger that faced the Chair. Without exception, the Chair demonstrated strong leadership capacity and high professional standards, with personal integrity in all instances.

As we enter year three of NWH the Chair fully recognises the exceptionally challenging environment that both UHI and NWH face. Transformation and financial sustainability being at the forefront. As specific to NWH strong leadership by the Chair and the Board / Committees will be required in many areas progressing all our enabling strategies and delivering the financial sustainability plan. The Vice Chairs and Committee Chairs highlighted the following areas of support to the Chair in further developing:

- Improving governance in the quality Board and Committee reporting.
- Board recruitment and succession planning.
- Training and mentoring for new Board members.

In conclusion, the Chair of NWH has, during the pre-merger transition period and the first two years of post-merger, demonstrated an exceptional and outstanding leadership performance. Derek continues to bring a wealth of experience to his Chair's role and to NWH. His networking reach continues to be significant and he remains a highly respected member of UHI Court. His work ethic and personal commitment is immense. We are very fortunate to continue to have Derek Lewis as the Chair of NWH.

