

UHI North, West and Hebrides – Local Joint Committee

Local Dispute Resolution Meeting, 7 October 2024

Proposal for a Review Framework of the UHI North, West and Hebrides Organisational Structure Post-Implementation

Context

As discussed in recent meetings with both UHI North, West and Hebrides (UHI NWH) EIS and Unison trade union representatives, the following offer is made as a way forward to resolve the current joint local dispute.

Whilst the final details of this offer can be agreed as part of concluding the local dispute, the offer is contingent on the local dispute to be resolved so that the new organisational structure can be fully implemented.

Proposed Framework for Review and Evaluation of the integrated organisational structure

We propose the following framework of review and evaluation processes for our new post-merger organisational structure:

I. Full implementation of the new integrated organisation structure

Following agreement to resolve the local dispute raised on 26 June 2024, the college will immediately move from the interim organisation structure to the full organisation structure as presented in the report to the Board of Management at its meeting on 27 June 2024. This is the integrated organisation structure which was fully consulted on with trade union representatives and almost all individual college staff members.

As part of this implementation, the six staff members whose individual consultation is incomplete at present due to the local dispute will resume the consultation process as a matter of priority, using the agreed processes for transfer of staff, organisational change and re-deployment of staff. Whilst every effort will be made to retain employment under these agreed procedures, we confirm that VSS is still available as an outcome for this small number of staff, should these staff members wish to consider this voluntarily.

Full implementation of the integrated organisational structure will mean that a number of staff will be on conserved salaries for four years as per national bargaining agreements [file \(njncscotlandscolleges.ac.uk\)](#) & [file \(njncscotlandscolleges.ac.uk\)](#), as per their individual consultation outcome.

Implementation of the structure will also trigger review of pay mapping, pay structures and individual job evaluation for support staff where required locally, assuming the national job evaluation exercise will not be enacted in this timeframe. Timeframe for

these further actions is estimated to be 12 working weeks from the date of resolving the local dispute. (We propose to use FEDRA and will seek support from a specialist agency to undertake for any job evaluation. Exact timelines for this will depend the agency).

A full implementation plan regarding the next required HR processes in the context of implementing the integrated structure will be provided for consultation at the first regular Joint Consultative Committee meeting following resolution of the dispute.

II. 6-Month Interim Review

- **Timeframe:** To be conducted 6 months after the merger implementation (insert date based on formal resolution of local dispute)
- **Duration:** 2 weeks
- **Panel Composition:**
 - 2 representatives from staff – one each from
 - 1 HISA representative
 - 2 trade union representatives (1 each from EIS and Unison)
 - 2 ELT representatives
 - Facilitator: Director of People and Culture
- **Scope:** Initial assessment of structure effectiveness and identification of immediate concerns/mitigating actions
- Targeted focus groups based on a set of agreed questions, with teaching and support staff across Tiers 6-3, and across all 19 college locations
- **Reporting and Outcomes:**
 - A report will be compiled and presented to the Principal and the Board's HR Committee, including findings and recommendations for immediate action and further investigation/review at the 12-month formal review point.
 - Immediate actions will be implemented within 8 weeks from agreement by the HR Committee.

III. 12-Month Full Review of the integrated organisation structure

- **Timeframe:** To be conducted 12 months after the full implementation of the integrated organisational structure (insert date based on formal resolution of local dispute)
- **Duration:** 4 weeks
- **Panel Composition:**
 - 1 representative from each staff tier, both teaching and academic, Tiers 6-3 (8 staff representatives in total)
 - 3 HISA representatives
 - 4 trade union representatives (including branch advisors) – 2 from each recognised trade union
 - ELT representatives
 - One external (UHI or other tertiary education sector) representative with professional expertise in Organisational Design

- Facilitator: Director of People and Culture
- **Scope:** Comprehensive evaluation of the first 12 months' performance of the integrated organisational structure. The review will investigate the following: including efficiency, communication, and staff satisfaction
- The formal review will seek to evaluate:
 - Efficiency of operations against the design principles set out for the integrated structure and including the following areas suggested:
 - Management structure effectiveness
 - Communication across campuses
 - Resource allocation and sharing
 - Curriculum alignment, delivery and development
 - IT systems integration
 - HR policies and practices
 - Marketing and branding consistency
 - Financial performance as per college three-year sustainability plan
 - Student satisfaction and outcomes
 - Staff satisfaction, wellbeing and retention
 - Cross-campus collaboration
 - Delivery of UHI NWH merger benefits as stated in the college's strategy
 - Alignment with UHI regional strategy and Scottish Government tertiary education priorities
 - Community engagement and impact
- The review will seek to benchmark performance evaluation against
 - The objectives and design principles set out in the UHI NWH Organisation Design proposed structure
 - Pre-merger data (as available)
 - Similar multi-site colleges in Scotland (including UHI)
 - Any sector standards and best practices as available (CDN/Advance HE)

The review will utilise both quantitative and qualitative evaluation mechanisms, including:

- Anonymous staff survey with questions and methodology agreed by the review panel
- Open feedback sessions based on agreed set questions with all staff tiers (1-6), both teaching and support
- Open feedback session with HISA based on agreed set questions with student representatives (school-college, FE, HE, research, work-based) across all teaching campuses
- Data analysis on key performance indicators (agreed by panel, but to include KPIs outlined above)
- Individual interviews with identified key stakeholders, including the three local advisory groups, local authority, HIE

Reporting and Outcomes:

- Findings and recommendations from both reviews will be presented to the Principal and via the HR Committee to the Board. Findings will also be made available to all staff and shared with HISA.
- We commit to implementing agreed-upon changes within 3 months of the acceptance of the review report by the Board.

IV. Long-Term Monitoring Beyond 12 Months

Given the college's external context is subject to ongoing change, we are open to agreeing a format of annual evaluation with the Joint Local Committee going forward.

Conclusion

We invite UHI NWH trade union representatives to accept this proposal as part of the resolution of the local dispute. We consider this proposal to be in line with Scotland's Fair Work framework. The collaborative processes outlined will ensure that our new integrated structure will deliver UHI North, West and Hebrides merger ambition and benefits, including a positive new working culture, and that this integrated structure is sustainable and effective for all of our staff, students and stakeholders.