

UHI | NORTH, WEST AND HEBRIDES A TUATH, AN IAR IS INNSE GALL

NWH Learning, Teaching & Research Committee Meeting

Chair – Willie Macdonald

Wednesday 3rd June 2026 at 16:15 via MS Teams

Present

Abby Teague, HISA Board Member
Ally Macleod, EIS Board Member
Debbie Miller, VP Strategic Developments
Derek Lewis, Chairman of the Board of Management
Diana MacLeod, Head of Curriculum & Student Services
Ellen Campbell, Board Secretary
Fiona Hamilton, Head of Student Experience
Hannah Ritchie-Muir, Vice Principal Academic
Jayne Macleod, Gaelic Officer
Michael Foxley, Independent Board Member
Rupert Marshall, Independent Non-Executive Board Member
Shaun Escott, Teaching staff member
Stuart Gibb, Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange
Susan Maclean, Engagement Manager
Tracy Kerr, Head of Performance and Planning
William Macdonald, Interim LT&R Chair & Vice Chair Board of Management (WM)

Apologies

Lydia Rohmer, Principal & Chief Executive, Alasdair Macleod, HISA Board Member

Quorum, Welcome and Apologies (WM)

The meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest and Connection (WM)

None

3. Minutes 11th March 2026 (WM)

Approved

4. Action Tracker

Reviewed

Action: Meeting with council and partnership working updates were requested for the next meeting of this committee.

5. Requests to star unstarred items

None

6. Gaelic Officer Update – Jayne Macleod (JM)

JM gave a quarterly update, informing that she had been establishing connections and relationships. During her first week in post, she had visited Cnoc Soilleir to deliver her report and attended a meeting updating the NWH aims in relation to the future Gaelic Language Plan (GLP). The launch of the North Lewis GLP was scheduled to take place on 19th June 2026. There would be a CNES meeting on 15th June 2026, which may give more information on the areas of linguistic significance. JM had become a member of the Pride and place Board. There would £20m of funding over the next 10 years with gaelic being central to the initiative.

A careers fair for gaelic speaking students had recently been held at UHI Stornoway campus. JM had been working closely with the short course provider and reported that courses were fully subscribed. BBC Alba had students learning “speed gaelic.”

Support would be required from HR and Marketing teams to get the GLP steering group up and running. Funding applications had been submitted to Bord na Gaidhlig (BNG) to support the continuation of short courses and a residential course on the west side of Lewis.

JM reported that she had visited centres in the North including Ullapool, Thurso, Dornoch, and Alness, where she had been well received and supported. She had identified many gaelic orientated community organisations, which gave potential for future engagement.

The Gaelic notice board in Alness could be mirrored in other locations to point persons towards learning opportunities.

Next steps would be to visit learning centres on Skye, Mallaig and Fort William, researching organisations in these areas that could be engaged with. Connections had been made with Highland Council.

The Executive congratulated JM, she had shown great enthusiasm in starting her visits across the geography of NWH.

Michael Foxley (MF) also congratulated JM, adding that he would like to see three points given emphasis;
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- Gaelic Medium Education (GME) – 50 new teachers would be required per year, what was being done to fill vacancies?
- MF asked for clarification on the ToFR and named point of contact for the current survey being conducted by UHI to ascertain demand for GME.
- The Highland Council was about to approve the whole of the Highlands as areas of linguistic significance, which may bring a legal challenge to BNG and the government.

Derek Lewis (DL) congratulated JM on a very active initiation to her new role. JM Listed her priorities going forward to be establishing the steering group, visiting all NWH centres, revising the GLP curriculum team to extract year on year objectives and targets. NWH were already achieving in terms of courses being offered to children. Visual reports would be available in the future for reporting to this committee.

The Chair advised that UHI NWH should be at the table during the gaelic curriculum planning stage.

Noted

Action: What is being done to fill vacancies for GME teachers

Action: Clarification of ToFR and point of contact for person(s) conducting UHI survey

Action: visual reports on gaelic language targets and objectives to be brought to this committee

7. HISA report – Abby Teague (AT)

AT reported that new student officers had been elected. There had been 640 nominations. To address the issues with Student Voice Representative (SVR) attendance, HISA NWH had created a dedicated online space, with meetings also continuing in person and in the classroom. There was a lot of work currently on campus focusing on the end of year celebrations.

Noted

8. Research and Knowledge Exchange (R&KE) quarterly report – Stuart Gibb (SG)

Standard format –

Same report to students, staff and other committees.

UHI had been successful in securing two bids from UKRI (research and innovation) There had been several hundred applications, 32 were funded. UHI NWH had secured two funding bids, worth £2.4m collectively. The projects would start on July 1st, 2026.

[News - UHI researchers secure major UKRI funding to tackle pharmaceutical pollution from rivers to oceans](#)

8.1 Wellbeing report

It was requested to defer this item to the next meeting of the LT&R committee, when a presentation would be ready to accompany the report.

Approved

Action: Wellbeing report to come to September 2026 LT&R Committee

8.2. * Confidential item - withheld

9. * Erasmus Charter – Debbie Miller (DM)

The Turing scheme had been in place during the interim after Erasmus ended and it's return which was anticipated to be in January 2027. DM had applied to the charter on behalf of NWH and would find out in September 2026 if the application had been successful. Perth and Moray would like to work with NWH if a positive outcome is received.

RM voiced that he was delighted to see the application going forward, there would be welcomed opportunities for staff. RM looked forward to seeing the plan and strategy if the application was successful.

The Chair and committee fully supported DM's application.

Noted.

10.* Curriculum and Student Experience Performance Report - Hannah Ritchie Muir/Tracy Kerr / Fiona Hamilton (HRM/TK/FH)

Core funded activity – both FE and HE FTE targets had been met.

Student satisfaction rates remained positive. The team were looking at how to encourage students and help them understand how important their voice was in completing the survey. The majority of question responses scored high 80s and low 90s.

The student association rate was 93% and thanks were extended to AT for all her hard work. Complaints through red button remained low. Students were speaking to their lecturers and support staff in the first instance.

Student services matrix – The team were monitoring trend data. Funding applications had been increasing. Student engagement and wellbeing officers were proving to be beneficial in Stornoway, it was hoped to roll out same throughout our other areas. Student attendance at events was increasing.

HISA had been working hard on their strategy. Staff had engaged in CPD via The University of West of England which provided training on ADHD for NWH staff to support students through their learning.

Applications continued to increase across FE & HE. Conversion to offers were being accepted earlier. NWH was performing higher than the average across the partnership.

RM commented that it was good to see NWH moving in a positive direction.

NWH could ask for an increase for recruitment to HE but must have strong evidence that we could achieve that increase.

The use of Brightspace within learning and teaching was helping to achieve consistency for the learning experience throughout the college (HISA). DM would be meeting with Scarlett Fox during the next week to look at the shape of Brightspace to understand what points are being raised and how these could be addressed.

The Chair advised that E-Quip may be an option for online training for students.

Noted.

11. * Restricted - Curriculum delivery plan for 2026/27 - Hannah Ritchie-Muir / Diana Macleod (HRM / DM)

NWH had undertaken a major curriculum review soon after merger. The paper presented today was a lighter touch plan as there would be a deeper dive again next year 2026/27. The HE target was still to be confirmed though it was hoped there would be an increase.

There may be changes in modes of attendance for FE delivery, NWH were expecting to enrol more full time than they had done in previous years.

There would be a wider range of subjects for delivery in schools' delivery. A summary of courses delivery could be found on the final page of this report. Qualifications Scotland had made changes which NWH had to follow.

Where course uptake was low, NWH made efforts to share delivery with Argyll rather than remove the course entirely. There had been one removal – lower-level horticulture.

RM commented that the report had been interesting.

The team were looking to improve the progressions pathway to retention for further course delivery for students.

The committee asked that the figures showing student demands v what the inhibitors were to be detailed at the next meeting.

The Chair referenced digital delivery and asked that information be returned to this committee on how much delivery was currently in place or could be provided in this manner.

Noted

Action: figures showing student demands v what the inhibitors were to be detailed at the next meeting.

Action: Digital delivery information was requested to be returned to this committee on how much delivery was currently in place or could be provided in this manner.

12. * NWH Learning and Teaching - examples of positive practice – Ally Macleod (AM)

AM's report looked at how our students could feed into the curriculum and into changes.

Students gave feedback using three main avenues: through SVRs, verbally to lecturers and through social media.

AI images being used for “locked screens” on devices raised some ethical questions. NWH responded by using photographs taken by media students to appear on “locked screens”. Students using meta skills felt disconnected.

The workload for Year one students had been difficult for students, the workload was revised.

Survey engagement and school leavers survey participation – Informal face to face produced better levels of feedback. SVRs had poor representation from apprentices, this was thought to attributed to apprentices being off campus for prolonged periods of time with their employers. Shyness and survey fatigue may also be a factor.

SG contributed that there was a CEMAS initiative, where students were responsible for leading and designing the curriculum, which was an interesting concept.

The Chair was conscious of time over running and asked that this discussion be continued at another point.

13. Performance and planning report – Tracy Kerr (TK)

Noted

14. Health and Safety quarterly report – Doug Rattray (DR)

Noted

15. A.O.B

HRM drew attention to recent awards won and articles of note for NWH. These can be viewed on the College website via these links; -

[News - UHI North, West and Hebrides celebrates exceptional staff in 2026 HISA Awards](#)

[News - UHI North, West and Hebrides professor wins Outstanding Contribution award at Herald Education Awards 2026](#)

[News - More than 100 students have explored the archaeology of the Highlands and Islands with UHI North, West and Hebrides](#)

[News - Artistic stream of achievements celebrated at Fort William End of Year Art Exhibition](#)

[News - UHI North, West and Hebrides event sparks proposal for Outer Hebrides Peatlands Forum](#)

Thanks were extended to AT for her year representing HISA on the LT&R Committee.

Meeting closed 1801