

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

NWH Learning, Teaching & Research Committee Meeting

Chair – Willie Macdonald

Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 16:15 via MS Teams

Present

Abby Teague, HISA Board Member

Alasdair Macleod, HISA Board Member

Ally Macleod, EIS Board Member

Dave Campbell

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

Michael Foxley, Independent Board Member

Rupert Marshall, Independent Non-Executive Board Member

Shaun Escott, Teaching staff member

Susan Maclean, Engagement Manager

Tracy Kerr, Head of Performance and Planning

William Macdonald, Interim LT&R Chair & Vice Chair Board of Management (WM)

Apologies

Stuart Gibb, Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange, Lydia Rohmer, Principal & Chief Executive

Quorum, Welcome and Apologies (WM)

The meeting was quorate. There had been a request to take items 9,10 and 11 prior to items 7 and 8 - **agreed**

2. Declarations of Interest and Connection (WM)

None

3. Minutes 19th November 2025 (WM)

Approved

4. Action Tracker

Reviewed

5. Requests to star unstarred items

None

6. HISA report – Abby Teague (AT)

The highlights from this paper included that voting had commenced this week for new HISA reps, a new CEO would start in post and there had been a large amount of student feedback. AT had been holding sessions with students twice per week and at varying times of day / night to make herself accessible. AT reported that class visits have been very successful, in supporting SVRs. Issues identified at the last meeting of this committee in terms of confusion over bursary funding applications had been improved greatly. This had mainly been attributed to extra support staff and more clarity in the communications of emails and applications through portal.

AT would ask for individual student examples to share their student journey stories. In all the examples that she had come across so far, any issues had always been actioned.

The curriculum team were keen to support HISA colleagues. There was an initiative “You said – We did”, where actions are identified and the team pick out anything needing further investigation. Feedback from HISA was that this had worked quite well. HISA also provided a tracker from their meetings to see what actions were needing attention.

Action: DM - The Chair asked that these actions and investigations be fed back to this committee.

The Chair acknowledged that a huge amount of information had been contained within the video submitted and encouraged all attending to view it in full.

Noted

9. * Update report on smaller rural centres – Susan Maclean (SM)

SM introduced her report on The FE / HE student numbers, short course delivery numbers and enrolments, school link work, room bookings and other activities, which demonstrated the level of activity in each of the NWH smaller rural centres. All were very different, but all contributed to the life of the wider college. Referring to her report, SM described activities in smaller centres, with a higher level of face-to-face activity with students. There had been ongoing support throughout the year and invigilators for exams. First aid courses were being trialled. There had been 175 enrolments to date for 30 courses, it was hoped that these numbers would escalate. Progress had been made encouraging local community uptake for room bookings.

The committee comments included a request for a column to be added detailing income on the table within the report, that perhaps the website could be clearer in advertising “you can rent a room from us”, the website was not centre specific when looking at courses that could be studied in person. Rurality funding and applications to the multiple avenues of funding which may also be available from SSE and other sources should also be explored.

The Chair thanked SM for her very informative report.

Noted

10* Restricted item – Maritime training courses – Dave Campbell (DM)

DM presented an overview of UHI North, West and Hebrides’ (UHI NWH) maritime training portfolio, showing both the current course provision (2026 baseline) and the expanded future portfolio anticipated following MCA approval and increased instructor capacity. The current provision was strong but uneven across centres due to instructor availability, location specific approval requirements, and variable market demand. The future portfolio would offer a consistent, multicentre maritime training network with significantly expanded capability across MCA STCW, RYA, and Seafish approved programmes. A comparative table had been included to summarise the shift from the current baseline to the expanded future state. There was a lot of potential for the navigation and radar courses.

The committee encouraged that all avenues be explored in terms of funding for these courses. It was stressed that any opportunities to use digital delivery also be considered. E-sgoil may be able to assist in digital delivery.

Noted

11. * Restricted item – Gaelic Update – Diana Macleod (DM)

DM referred to the highlights from her report. There had been a staffing issue at e-sgoil which had let down enrolment numbers slightly, however this had now been resolved. The Gaelic Language Plan had been successfully launched. Nine thousand pounds had been received from Bord na Gaelic to develop a module for level 11 Post Graduate Certification, which was currently under development. Senior phase applications were open, though a final count of applications / acceptances was not ready. The new Gaelic Officer, Jane Macleod, was now in post. There were 14 students undertaking the BA honours course. The uptake numbers in primary and secondary classes were described as impressive.

The Chair commented that there were a number of engagement officers throughout the islands who would need to communicate and have a clear vision to promote the gaelic language. There was potential for Cnoc Soilleir to consider digital delivery across Scotland.

Noted

7. R&KE – Debbie Miller (DM) for Stuart Gibb

DM gave a brief update from SG’s paper. Twenty-one Post Graduate students enrolled with NWH.

The REF was expected to come into effect in 2029, when it was expected that 17 NWH would be eligible.

The EMEC college partnership had been successful and the KPIs monitored by this committee were on track.

The Chair and committee extended their appreciation for the range and quality of work across Stuart’s remit.

Noted

8. * Wellbeing economy – Stuart Gibb

Deferred to next session

12. * Restricted - Curriculum and student experience performance report – Hannah Ritchie-Muir (HRM) and Curriculum Team

HRM reported that actual v target numbers were progressing to target for FE credit, with 95% of target already achieved. HE undergrad taught was currently at 709. HE Post Grad was at risk for the third year in a row, though this may increase slightly. There had been a new staff member appointed to the planning department who would assist in producing good quality plans.

Student numbers for next year were showing an increase in applications. NWH had the highest increase across.

There had been a review meeting of the overarching framework which

was overtaking the Education Scotland review. It was identified that a plan was required internally for quality review. The team would bring observations from their planning meeting on reviews moving forward to the next meeting of this Committee. The team were navigating new systems that were once SQA but were now QS.

The Chair acknowledged that change could be uncomfortable at times. Engagement with students and staff was a good idea as information sharing was key.

The Curriculum Team were monitoring funding applications. Counselling referrals had dropped this year. There had been good engagement with thera-pets. It was hoped that breakfast clubs would continue into next year.

Noted

13. Health & Safety report

No questions raised.

Noted

14. A.O.B.

Meeting closed at 1735