‘Physical UHI Student ID Cards For All’ Policy

The Highlands & Islands Students’ Association shall…

- Lobby UHI develop a standard UHI physical student ID card with access to library and printing services for use across the UHI Partnership.
- Lobby UHI to issue all students a physical ID card for students enrolled on in-person courses and to be available on request for students enrolled on online courses.
- Lobby UHI to advertise any physical student ID cards to students.

Start Date: 03/11/2026 **End Date:** 02/11/2028

Motion Title: Physical UHI Student ID Cards For All

Proposer: Andi Garrity

The Situation

Since the COVID-19 lockdowns UHI have stopped issuing physical student ID cards and moved exclusively to use digital student IDs, accessible via student records in myDay. Physical student ID cards are not available in most places across the partnership and are sometimes only available on request for set reasons.

It is standard practice for staff to get issued physical ID cards which link to their UHI Print account so they can use it like contactless card to login. Students are not provided a similar card and must manually enter their login.

Currently Scottish Association of Marine Sciences (SAMS) is the only UHI Academic Partner with physical student ID cards use for keycard access due to security of laboratory facilities. Some students from the Centre for Rural Health Sciences (CfRHS) are issued student ID cards from the NHS.

At some UHI Academic Partners physical student ID cards are available on request, however this is not advertised & cards are only granted under “exceptional circumstances”.

Other institutions delivering further and/or higher education competing with UHI largely do have physical student ID cards. Some have restrictions for it only being in-person students or on courses longer than 16 weeks. In places that do have physical cards some have cards that also can be used with library & printing services.

The Solution

- Have a single physical student ID card available to students across the UHI Partnership which has the same barcode as the existing digital student ID.
- Have a contactless UHI Print card available to students across the UHI Partnership.
- Have a consistent approach for how to request a physical student ID card across the UHI Partnership

The Importance

A physical student ID card would help create a sense of belonging, community, and identity for our students. This compliments the 2026-29 Student Partnership

Agreement between HISA and UHI under the key theme “Improved Student Community”.

Having a physical student ID card increases security on campuses as staff & students can easily recognise each other; reducing the risk of safeguarding issues.

When a students’ phone screen is cracked or slightly broken the barcode can be distorted and unrecognised by scanners when trying to access library services including LapSafes on campuses.

Digital student IDs have consistently been an issue in being recognised when trying to get student discounts externally to UHI; most notably digital student ID not being recognised for public transport discounts for students aged 22 and over.

Not having a physical student ID card disproportionately affects students from lower socio-economic backgrounds who may be unable to fix or replace their screens and mature students ineligible for free travel in Scotland with a Young Scot National Entitlement Card (Young Scot NEC).

The Action

- Lobby UHI develop a standard UHI physical student ID card with access to library and printing services for use across the UHI Partnership.
- Lobby UHI to issue all students a physical ID card for students enrolled on in-person courses and to be available on request for students enrolled on online courses.
- Lobby UHI to advertise any physical student ID cards to students.