



# Meeting Minutes

Meeting	Trustee Board	X
	Management Board	
	Executive Committee	
	Finance & Commercial Development	
	Appointments & Remuneration	
	Compliance, Governance & Risk	
	Other:	

Meeting Date	28 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Meeting Time	10:00-13:00
<b>Attendance</b>	
Present	William Campbell (President (Chair)) Rachel Burn (Chief Executive Officer) Janet Hackel (External Trustee) Neil Stewart (External Trustee) Irene Hynd (External Trustee) Edward Abbott-Halpin (External Trustee) Carly-Skye Fraser (Student Trustee) Wendy Day (Director of Finance and Operations) Simon Varwell (Director of Student Engagement and Representation) Emma Miller (Community Engagement Manager) Keith Smyth (UHI Dean of Learning, Teaching and Students) (Observer) Hannah Laycock (Operations and Governance Coordinator) (minute taking 'Normal Business')
Apologies	Shannon MacCallum (Vice President (Education)) Max Brown (UHI Director of Transformation & Business Planning) (item 3.1)

## SECTION A: RESERVED BUSINESS – Attendees and Observers Do Not Join

Section	Minutes
<b>1. Welcome and Meeting Management</b>	
1.1 Apologies	Apologies were received from SM and MB.
1.2 Declarations of Interest	N/A
1.3 Minutes from 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	[Paper: HTB0325-01] Minutes from 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 were <b>approved</b> .
1.4 Action Log from 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	[Paper: HTB0325-02] 5.1 Student Engagement and Representation - Advice Service Reciprocal Agreement with Strathclyde - Ongoing - Conversations with new Chief Exec as they are getting

	<p>caught up with the agreement and whether the agreement needs to go to their Union Board of Trustees or just be approved by the team at the Union.</p> <p>4.2 Communications and Commercial HISA Ethical Policy - Complete - Ethical Policy on website now.</p> <p>Actions of the previous meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were <b>approved</b> as read.</p>
<b>2. RESERVED BUSINESS</b>	
2.1 HISA Financial Position 2025/26 and Budget Update	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-03]</p> <p>No minutes were taken.</p>
2.2 Chair's report including OBC update	No minutes were taken.
<b>SECTION B: NORMAL BUSINESS – Attendees and Observers Join</b>	
<b>3. Opportunities</b>	
3.1 UHI Transformation Update from Max Brown	<p>Before the meeting Normal Business commenced everyone introduced themselves to Keith Smyth who was new to the Trustee Board as an Observer.</p> <p>Due to MB being on annual leave at short notice, RB summarised the item on his behalf.</p> <p>Transformation launched publicly on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025. HISA has a page on our website, which directs students to the UHI Transformation website, but also provides FAQs to breakdown some of the language used and explain more directly to students and encourage to get involved.</p> <p>William has recorded a video, which has been edited by the Transformation team, to encourage students to engage with the process. There is a separate student survey as part of this process, which is very different to the main survey and tries to capture issues that students would want UHI to take into account when considering change. Students have an opportunity to win a voucher as part of completing the questionnaire, and they can complete both surveys if they also want to complete the generic one. Student Engagement and Representation teams will also take this detail to some SVR meetings to capture what they would like preserved from their student experience to feed into UHI. WC added that he had spoken at the first SVR meeting to discuss the Transformation project. There was a sense that students weren't aware of the project yet, but the hope was that students could see that these changes were to mitigate future financial challenges in the sector and were designed to instead create financial sustainability.</p>
<b>4. CEO Update</b>	
4.1 CEO Report and HISA Media Pack	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-04a and HTB0325-04b]</p> <p>RB took the paper as read and summarised key points.</p>

	<p><b>New Trustee Legislation</b></p> <p>New legislation is being implemented for Trustees this summer in Scotland. Papers will be brought to Compliance, Governance and Risk (CGR) Committee and possibly next Trustee Board regarding checks, rules etc. HISA needs to maintain compliancy with the changes.</p> <p><b>Block Grant</b></p> <p>RB was informed earlier that day that the Block Grant paper needed to be submitted asap.</p> <p><b>HISA Successes</b></p> <p>Successes across the team were noted by Board, especially around Elections, SVR numbers, Comms work, Sporting Societies, EDI etc. Thanks were given to the Directorate and their wider teams.</p> <p><b>Media Pack</b></p> <p>This is the first draft of a media pack for HISA, which was created with support from UHI. Longterm the plan is to refine the design of the pack. It has been used as is at present, so it is a working document.</p> <p>WC gave note of thanks to Directorate and their wider teams. Comms especially have had a lot to work on and adjustments to make.</p> <p>NS asked whether the current iteration of the Media Pack could be used. RB clarified that the pack could be used in its current iteration.</p> <p>IH noted the pack was brilliant, and queried the benefits to the sponsors and whether there would be specific targeting or general. RB clarified that the media pack would be tailored to the potential sponsor.</p> <p><b>DECISIONS</b></p> <p>The media Pack was <b>approved</b> by Board as a working document to be improved in the future.</p>
<p><b>5. Departmental Updates</b></p>	
<p>5.1 Student Engagement &amp; Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update</li> </ul>	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-05]</p> <p>SV summarised the SER update.</p> <p><b>Elections</b></p> <p>Strong new Executive Committee, especially with continuing officers. There were two vacancies for SAMS and Argyll, and therefore a by-Election would take place later in the year.</p>

	<p>Turnout was much better than last year. Single sign-on voting was successfully implemented.</p> <p>Feedback is to be looked at, specifically the student data. Some students did not appear to be registered with HISA.</p> <p><b>Advice Service</b></p> <p>Elena Arroyo’s work was highlighted, specifically improving UHI regulations, and making steps clearer for students, along with staff development on the regulations.</p> <p><b>Quality</b></p> <p>There had been discussions amongst the SER team around the Subject Intern, and whether this could be a Faculty Intern with two in post, rather than six. The risks of not having interns to help bridge gaps across campuses would be investigated.</p> <p>WC gave thanks for the detailed report and annex report of the Advice Service. Thanks, were also given to SV as Deputy Returning Officer for the Elections for making the process free and fair. Along with the amount of work Paul Stalker did in reshaping the Elections in such a positive way. Big thanks also to Comms throughout the Elections.</p> <p>JH noted point about student numbers for engagement with Elections, which had had increased, and gave thanks to SV and his team. The numbers needed to a key future focus especially for funding.</p> <p>SV noted that the first issue was around data, and the second issue was that majority of votes were cast on campus rather than online. The third is to continue providing good student engagement throughout the year ahead of an election. RB noted that getting into online classes to discuss Elections can be incredibly challenging. RB also noted that many students who are registered are there for one day of training in a course. All agreed that student data needs more understanding to be improved to make our turnout figures meaningful, but also help HISA target the right student groups.</p> <p>KS noted that there is now a new process called Institutional Review, which applies to all Colleges and Universities across Scotland. UHI has had lots of discussions with SFC and QAA. UHI has requested to the SFC and QAA that no part of UHI undergoes the review until year 2027 so that integrated data sets can be reviewed.</p>
<p>5.2 Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update</li> </ul>	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-06]</p> <p>EM took the paper as read.</p> <p><b>Digital Content Coordinator</b></p>

	<p>An offer had been made for the Digital Content Coordinator (DCC) successful candidate. The successful candidate has Digital Marketing experience with some Commercial Development background.</p> <p><b>HISA Awards</b> HISA Awards will launch on Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This is a huge project and will be a joint effort with UHI.</p> <p><b>Comms Plans</b> Rebuilding the department, extensive research into best practice in the sector. Remaking Comms in the best way possible. Big step will be to increase followers on social media.</p> <p>EM acknowledged Interim Communications Manager for his hard work in the new role. WC gave thanks to him as Interim Comms Manager.</p> <p>EM noted the strong candidates for the DCC, one of them being a fluent Gaelic translator, and the other one an expert in accessible communications. If funding allowed would be beneficial to work with them on a freelance basis. WC was set to speak with UHI Gaelic Officer (GO) within the next week regarding Gaelic Trust Fund, which was set to go live again. UHI GO has noted he felt this could be a good opportunity for HISA, and the potential for freelance opportunity.</p>
<p>5.3 Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update</li> </ul>	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-07] WD took the paper as read and summarised the paper.</p> <p><b>Employee Handbook</b> There had been a lot of focus on project work with one of them being the Employee Handbook being updated.</p> <p><b>SharePoint Upgrade</b> Operations Resource Coordinator has been supporting WD with the transition, along with contributions from HL. WD gave thanks to UHI Archivist &amp; Information Governance Manager for her support.</p> <p><b>Minor Operations Restructure</b> WD announced that she will be reducing her working hours for personal reasons. WD clarified that she did not want to leave HISA and would focus on finance in her reduced hours. Finance and Compliance Coordinator was successfully moving forward with her bookkeeping training and taking on more day-to-day responsibilities. RB and WD have been in discussions about backfill. WD would focus on financial modelling, FCDC.</p>

6. Sub-Committee	
6.1 Finance and Commercial Development	<p>JH noted the new payscales. All of them have been incorporated into the Finance papers.</p> <p>Audit papers have approved and sent to Companies House.</p>
6.2 Appointments and Remuneration Summary	<p>IH noted to Board that there were two candidates for the Student Trustee roles who look to be interviewed between April and May.</p> <p>There was also discussion around External Trustee membership. WC noted that there was nothing stated in the Articles which caps number of External Trustees. As Articles over rules ToRs, this meant that Committee could appoint more Trustees.</p> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b> Board approved next steps for appointing an additional External Trustee. Board are looking for someone who understands the Higher Education sector.</p> <p>NS suggested updating the Trustee Skills Matrix, and queried whether Cost of Living would stay under cost and finance, rather than remuneration. This would mean adjusting ToR to clarify which sub-committee deals with what pay increases. Pay scales needs to go to ARC. A suggestion was made to attach pay scales to the minutes as appendix/for information. WD advised that Board needed to announce a decision before the 1<sup>st</sup> April for the increase.</p> <p><b>DECISIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board approved having a 5<sup>th</sup> External Trustee who could provide knowledge on Transformation, Higher Education sector, and funding.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HL to circulate Skills Matrix to TB</li> </ul>
6.3 Compliance, Governance and Risk Summary	<p>Nothing to report.</p>
7. Executive Update	
7.1 Cross-Campus Officers Report	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-08] WC summarised the report.</p> <p>Personal Academic Tutor review – SM as VP-Ed steering this.</p> <p>NUS Charity to discuss forthcoming events and key issues. Continued lack of events etc beyond the central belt. Democratic processes concerns with NUS Scotland – single day event focused on network and campaigning</p>

	<p>NS asked about highlights about Cross-Campus successor from the campaign. WC noted that they were big on students receiving a fair offering. Will be a lot more forthcoming to UHI as to what students need. Will be a critical friend. Both Cross-Campus Officers have experience as Local Officers, which will be beneficial to the roles.</p>
<b>8. Governance</b>	
8.1 HISA Sexual Harassment Policy	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-09]</p> <p>RB summarised the paper and noted that this new policy is to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace as per new legislation introduced in 2024.</p> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board approved the Sexual Harassment Policy</li> </ul>
8.2 HISA Safeguarding Policy HISA Safeguarding Reporting Procedure	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-10a &amp; HTB0325-10b]</p> <p>RB noted the papers as read.</p> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board approved the Safeguarding Policy, and Safeguarding Reporting Procedure</li> </ul>
8.3 HISA Freedom of Speech Policy	<p>[Paper: HTB0325-11]</p> <p>WC summarised the policy and paper was noted by Board.</p> <p>EAH noted that this was more than a policy and was a human right.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WC to take the final draft to CGRC, and TB for information.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Any Other Competent Business</b>	
10.1 University of Kent: How to Fundraise	<p>[HTB0325-12a, HTB0325-12b &amp; HTB0325-12c]</p> <p>RB asked Trustees to take a look at the papers with the potential to bring this back to Board in the future for workshopping.</p>
10.2 Final Thoughts	<p>KS gave thanks to Board for inviting him to the meeting and noted how insightful and useful it was.</p>