



Meeting Minutes

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

Meeting Date	26 th September 2024
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Meeting Time	14:00-17:00
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Attendance

Present	<p>William Campbell (President (Chair)) Shannon MacCallum (Vice President (Education)) Janet Hackel (External Trustee) Irene Hynd (External Trustee) Edward Abbott-Halpin (External Trustee) Carly-Skye Fraser (Student Trustee) Rachel Burn (Chief Executive Officer) Simon Varwell (Director of Student Engagement and Representation) Dr Emma Miller (Community Engagement Manager) Dr Iain Morrison (Observer (UHI Dean of Student Experience)) Amanda Fleet (Sports Development Coordinator (attended for item 7.1)) Méabh O'Connor (Local Coordinator (attended for item 7.1)) Sophie MacGregor (Development Manager (attended for item 7.1))</p>
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Apologies	<p>Victoria Hutchinson (Student Trustee) Neil Stewart (External Trustee) Wendy Day (Director of Finance and Operations) Mark Stanley (Communications and Commercial Development Committee)</p>
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SECTION A

Section	Minutes
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1. Welcome and Meeting Management

1.1 Apologies	Apologies were received from VH, NS, MS and WD. IM noted that he would attend the meeting during the second half. Due to conflicting meetings, SV attended from 3pm.
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1.2 Declarations of Interest	None declared.
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1.3 Minutes from 27 th June 2024	[Paper: HTB0924-01]
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	Minutes of the previous meeting on 27 th June 2024 were approved as read.
1.4 Action Log from 27 th June 2024	[Paper: HTB0924-02] Approved and all complete on the agenda except for the PVG checks where the Board have not yet had any correspondence after submitting their documents. Action on WD and NH to chase urgently.
2. RESERVED BUSINESS	
2.1 24/25 Budget and Reserves	[Paper: HTB0924-03] Approved with a reforecast of departmental budgets required by WD
2.2 Chair's report including OBC	[Paper: HTB0924-04] Noted
3. CEO Update	
3.1 CEO Report	[Paper: HTB0924-04] The paper was noted by Board. RB summarised her report by stating that summer had been busy getting ready for Freshers' across the Partnership. Rachel had visited several places including Thurso Freshers' with EM, and SMO on Skye. There were many events happening simultaneously across the Partnership with huge efforts across the team, with good engagement and better numbers than the previous year. Online Freshers' was run for the first time in conjunction with in-person events. Attendance numbers were not huge, however, this could be improved with more marketing and promotional strategies next time. Students in attendance were very happy that HISA hosted an online event. EM has had good sign-up for the subsequent online Dungeons and Dragons events. The HISA webpage in Gaelic has gone live again, after being kindly edited by DJ MacIntyre, UHI's Gaelic Officer. Board highlighted Sports Scotland funding for our Sports Development Coordinator post, where the current funding ends in December 2025. Funding is currently split three ways between an EO budget, Sport Scotland and HISA. Board were keen to see funding for the post continue beyond its current timeline to ensure all the valuable work is retained.
4. Departmental Updates	
4.1 Student Engagement & Representation Update	[Paper: HTB0924-05] The paper was noted by Board. Update SV highlighted the success of the summer officer training and noted that there were limitations with the budget in terms of not employing officers for 12 months of the year, which created a slight disconnect with the training and August programme. The Development Managers did a fantastic coordinating

	<p>materials from across the team, such as Community Engagement, and the Advice Service. Officer evaluation illustrated how much they appreciated getting to know the team across HISA.</p> <p>The new Insight and Democracy Coordinator, started in post in July and brought a fresh perspective within the department, and highlighted areas of improvements regarding compliance and organisational papers. Meetings had started for the 2025 elections and ways to improve.</p> <p>Recruitment was now live for one-off Co-Option of Designate Deputes. Vacancies were at NWH, HTC and Moray. One of the Academic Parter (AP) College's vacancies were very popular.</p> <p>The Advice Service was continuing to develop and broaden its capacity and awareness.</p> <p>Development Managers had done a wonderful job on the SVR system following advice from Education Scotland, QAA, and AP management about improvements to our SVR process. Plans were in place to get officers into more SVR training sessions, so they could have even more meaningful conversations with SVRs.</p> <p>Reflective questions from the student learning experience model had been passed onto the UHI Quality Forum, which was met with positivity.</p> <p>The HISA Subject Intern pilot was underway with the Learning and Teaching Academy. Charlotte Usher, the newly appointed Subject Intern was presenting her project plan to the CSG Committee this week.</p> <p><i>[IM joined the meeting]</i></p> <p>SV had attended a meeting with QAA about the shape of reviews in the coming years. Officers with staff support put a submission together for QAA consultation on what the review should look like.</p>
<p>4.2 Communications & Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Report • Native Non-Exclusive Media Contract • HISA Ethical Policy 2024 	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-06a, 06b and 06c]</p> <p>RB presented the papers in MS absence.</p> <p>Impact Report</p> <p>RB was delighted to present an almost complete report for 2023/24 at such an early stage in the 24/25 academic year. A few minor changes were still needed then the final version will go out to APs, onto our website, and a few copies will be printed for EO and one for each Principal.</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p>

- Board is to review the Impact Report and forward comments and thoughts to RB by 27/09/2024

DECISIONS:

The Board approved the Impact Report in-principal with all final amendments completed.

HISA Ethical Policy 2024 and Native Non-Exclusive Media Contract

RB noted that the Ethical Policy had been drafted in conjunction with the Native non-exclusive media contract, in consultation with the Management Board and reviewed by Executive Committee. Inevitably there is a concern that purchases cannot always be traced back to the source every time. However, there will always be consideration as to the source, and reasonable decisions would be made to reflect this. It was recommended that there is a line to say, “please contact us, if you have comments about a supplier”, to cover HISA if there were to be a connection the organisation wasn’t aware of that might cause issues with students. Once the HISA Policy is approved the Native contract would then be cross referenced with the HISA Policy so that Native had a copy and commercial decisions would be made within this framework. RB noted the keenness to finalise the contract to see what kind of income the Native contract generates. WC noted that this was a great move forward to diversifying income strands, even if the income was not significant, but worth trialling.

EAH noted his background in Human Rights and brought attention to the human trafficking element regarding exploitation of workers, and that this should be included in the HISA ethics policy. The second point was about arms trading, both points EAH requested that these are included in a future iteration of the contract, which he advised that there is standard wording for. RB responded, with agreement from Board that this iteration could be included in the current draft of the policy. IH noted that reference to the Anti-Slavery Act statement from the Modern Anti-Slavery should be included in the Policy. IH also noted that this was challenging territory, which would need to be carefully considered when including the statement, which could make it a challenge when making commercial development decisions.

JH posed the question of whether Native were an ethical company. RB confirmed that Native were an ethical company which works with a significant number of other student unions, which was one of the reasons the decision was made to work with them, as many of their values are the same.

IM posed the question about procedure and whether there was an underpinning procedure for making the decision as to who to accept as a commercial partner, and if a student were to put forward that they felt HISA had made an unethical decision, how would they take this forward. RB responded that this would be brought to the CEO’s attention and then Management Board for discussion and

	<p>decisions on the matter. IM requested that this was mentioned in the Policy somewhere. EAH suggested that part of the procedure is that it is brought to Compliance, Governance and Risk Committee (CGRC).</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RB to include the line about Anti-Slavery Act in the Ethical Policy. • Board to have ongoing discussions about arms trade. • RB to include a line regarding contact details in case students want to raise any complaints about HISA’s affiliations. • RB to include line about who HISA is going to promote and not promote, which will not be just one person’s decision. <p>DECISIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board approved the Ethical Policy in-principal to the final amendments being actioned. • The Board approved the Native Media Contract.
4.3 Community Engagement	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-08] EM presented the update and took the paper as read.</p> <p>EM summarised that there were new additions to the department such as Community Opportunities Directory, increase in sporting and networks, online activities for students. Capacity was stretched within the department but with the good news being that all activity was still being successfully delivered, with lots of contact with students, especially via Freshers’ which was very positive. Freebies ran out at each AP due to number of students attending. EM highlighted that it has been hard for students to sign up to Clubs and Societies via the online system due to not having single sign on. To get round this they having been signing up to the club directly, which EM then has relied on the club providing accurate membership lists.</p> <p>EM highlighted that Sports Scotland was being approached for 3-years of funding to fully fund HISA’s Sports Development Coordinator role, since they are fully funding the UHI Active Campus Coordinators. There were challenges as to what the Active Campus Coordinators thought their role is in sporting, and what HISA thinks their role is. On the ground this was not something students were seeing.</p> <p>EM noted that Student Interest Surveys had been a new addition to Freshers’ this year in paper form. Questions such as “what activities would you join, if you had them?”. This generated information around what our students are interested in doing. The data was being fed back to local teams to create momentum to create new clubs. There had been 300 responses to this paper form at Freshers.</p>

	<p>Online Freshers' was great, but not as well attended as had been hoped for. Doing activities online were deemed as being successful for the future.</p> <p>WC gave a big thanks to the Community Engagement team for the impact they have had on student engagement during Freshers'. Thanks, were also given to the wider team for all their hard work. Extra thanks were given to AF for her continued work in sports. WC suggested a report to Trustee Board regarding newly formed clubs and societies due to the Freshers' engagement.</p> <p>IM acknowledged the team's hard work and asked for clarification on the Community Operations Directory and whether this was on the website. EM confirmed it was and currently in beta format which still needed work to include additional information. IM thought this was a great resource.</p>
4.4 Operations	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-09]</p> <p>In the absence of WD, RB presented and took the paper as read.</p> <p>RB highlighted the details about staffing; that the Virgin Money account was very nearly in place; mandatory training and finance training; Trustee training proposal is in discussion with SCVO; Student Trustee recruitment, which was soon to go live, and the appointment could align well with date for Trustee training in 24/25.</p>
5. Sub-Committee	
5.1 Finance and Commercial Development	JH highlighted the changes to the budget and the Audit was going forward with the correct timings.
5.2 Appointments and Remuneration Summary	<p>IH reported that a Student Trustee recruitment pack had just been signed off.</p> <p>WC noted that CSF was happy to join the committee as part of the Board and would also sit on the interview panel for the current Student Trustee recruitment.</p>
5.3 Compliance, Governance and Risk Summary	No items needed to be discussed.
6. Executive Update	
6.1 Principal Officers Report (covered in 2.2)	<p>WC highlighted that all Executive Committee members had started to engage with the UHI Transformation Business Case as Student Board members.</p> <p>WC noted that Committee had agreed to a Cross-Campus campaign for the current Academic Year (AY) around mental health and wellbeing, which links with the work that a joint HISA/UHI team is doing around Student Mental Health Agreement refresh, and links with other student unions campaigns regarding the cut of Mental Health Councillors in Scotland by the Scottish Government.</p>

	<p>Considerations are still underway for a second Cross-Campus campaign either on water safety, or assessment and feedback. A decision was being made whether to run both events.</p> <p>SM and WC are currently touring across APs attending Freshers' and graduations.</p> <p>WC noted that early student engagement had been a very positive one. Students had approached Cross-Campus officers asking how they can be supported by HISA. Staff on the ground had been phenomenal too.</p> <p>Multiple consultations have taken place, including Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review. Discussions with other Unions regarding democracy reviews, which is beneficial to our own current reviews.</p> <p>Relationships with NUS Scotland have improved greatly over the past few months. NUS Scotland President attended the Perth Freshers', and they are looking to visit Inverness in October.</p> <p>IM welcomed the campaign on mental health and counselling, which is a critical issue across the country.</p>
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7. Bringing Our Work to Life	
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<p>7.1 Freshers', Sports, Clubs, and Networks</p>	<p>SM, MO, and AF introduced themselves to Board delivered a presentation focused on Freshers and wider student engagement activities which included highlighting the following areas to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in the number of Networks and Online Clubs Including activity in the Pride Student Network and other networks beginning to grow in size. The reopened UHI Christian Union club, was highlighted with a video from the club about their activities. • Growth in Sports activity across the partnership SnowSports Club in Fort William were highlighted, with a video shown about their experiences. AF highlighted the Student Beach Party in Perth at Willowgate Activity Centre; Watersports Festival in Oban; and Boccia by the beach in Fort William in partnership Scottish Disability Sport, and HighLife Highland. • Freshers' The three-day freshers' fayre at UHI Inverness was highlighted, and noted the increase in student engagement, fun activities, Sports Day, and the provision of local information. Information was being gathered for a Stagecoach campaign. Affiliation with a local Inverness bar was also highlighted, Tooth and Claw, which is now in place as the official student bar for UHI Inverness, which was deemed as a safe space for students and will be offering 10% discount to students on Mondays and Wednesdays.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcoming Events and Campaigns Feedback and petitions were currently being gathered for the Stagecoach campaign due issues with buses not running or being cancelled causing issues with students attending class. Event planning was underway for 2024/25 such as Halloween Prop Hunts, Action against domestic violence, and Cash for Kids. <p>WC and RB remarked on how great it was to see and hear about all the fun activities and hard work happening across the Partnership and suggested that this type of presentation happened more often during Board meetings.</p>
8. Finance	
8.1 Budget Updates with RF1	This item was covered in 2.1.
9. Governance	
9.1 New HISA Strategy and KPIs 2024-2027	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-09] RB presented and took the paper as read.</p> <p>RB summarised that the paper was as broad as possible to allow for the ebb and flow of the next three years, and consolidated into three main areas, including an infographic. Once the paper is approved a table of KPIs would be created and taken to the Board.</p> <p>JH responded that the opening paragraph should be used at the start of every report. Her second point noted that there was no mention of the Board, and perhaps should be in Communities, as a user. RB responded that Board are also enablers.</p> <p>ACTIONS: RB to work with the team to include details about Trustee Board in the strategy and KPIs. RB to include a reference to the Trustee Board in the final version of the strategy.</p> <p>DECISIONS: The Board approved the New HISA Strategy and KPIs 2024-2027 in principle of including a detail about Trustee Board in each of the documents.</p>
9.2 2024-25 Officers/Executive Key Manifesto Aims	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-10]</p> <p>This item was deferred until the December Trustee Board meeting.</p>
9.3 New Risk Register	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-11]</p> <p>In WD's absence RB presented and took the paper as read.</p>

	<p>RB noted the huge amount of work WD put into re-writing the Risk Register, and asked Board to comment with any thoughts in terms of format, and information included on the register.</p> <p>WC responded that the register looked more consolidated. EAH responded that it was a lot more succinct and gave thanks to WD for her hard work.</p> <p>DECISIONS: The Board approved the rewritten Risk Register.</p>
<p>9.4 Democratic Changes and Approvals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Returning and Deputy Returning Officer 2. Length of Term of Officers 3. Review of Articles and Schedules 	<p>The papers were noted and seen as read.</p> <p>1. Returning and Deputy Returning Officer RB noted that approval was needed annually for the Returning and Deputy Returning Officer, and asked Board for their approval. NUS is appointed as the Returning Officer, and the suggestion was Simon Varwell as Deputy Returning Officer.</p> <p>DECISIONS: The Board approved Director of Student Engagement and Representation as Deputy Returning Officer, and NUS as Returning Officer</p> <p>2. Length of Term of Officers RB noted that there had been conversations about it being clear that Cross-Campus officers' roles are for two years under the Education Act, but that there was ambiguity of Local Officer length of terms, and whether these could be two years or longer, and whether it was two-plus-two or two in total. The way the Insight and Democracy Coordinator, thinking was towards the two-plus-two model; up to two years as Local Officer, plus up to two years as Cross-Campus Officer. This made more sense in terms of enabling people to go on to become a Cross-Campus officer. It was important this was made clear and could be detailed in the Articles of Association.</p> <p>WC confirmed this was the current thinking, but that Executive Committee would be fully consulted throughout the process and would have the ultimate say.</p> <p>3. Review of Articles and Schedules PS had reviewed these HISA documents, and it was highlighted that a number of inconsistencies had been found which required resolution. RB noted that PS would likely attend Board in December to present his findings in full and make recommendations for changes moving forward. SV responded that this would be an ideal time for PS to attend ahead of Elections to provide an update on that work at the same time.</p>
<p>10. Any Other Competent Business</p>	

<p>10.1 HISA Appraisal System Policy and HISA Appraisal System Form</p>	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-12a and 12b] The papers were noted and seen as read.</p> <p>RB advised that she had inherited HISA without either of these procedures in place, and how this was an early first step and that staff training would be provided.</p> <p>JH noted she would send RB suggestions on the papers.</p>
<p>10.2 Employee Code of Conduct</p>	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-13] The paper was noted and seen as read.</p> <p>IN WD's absence RB noted to Board that as well as a Student Code of Conduct, it was crucial to have a Staff Code of Conduct developed in consultation with staff. RB noted that it was good to set in stone what is and isn't acceptable behaviour.</p>
<p>10.3 Draft UHI Student Mental Health Agreement</p>	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-14] The paper was noted and seen as read.</p> <p>WC noted that staff, students, NUS Think Positive had worked together on this document, and it was almost ready to launch to students and practitioners across UHI. He remarked how great the document was and wouldn't have come to be without the Student Policy that came to the All-Student Meeting from Liz Keegan and without the support of Allie Scott and Laura Ferguson in UHI and the HISA team.</p>
<p>10.4 Student Partnership Agreement – Objectives and Student Partnership Agreement 2024-2026</p>	<p>[Paper: HTB0924-15a and 15b] The papers were noted and seen as read.</p> <p>RB summarised the papers noting that these were in place last year, and further work has now been done to update the SPA with the return of HISA name, updated context and objectives, and new Directorate roles in the organisation. This would then need to be communicated to APs.</p> <p>WC responded that it was great to have our legal name on the documents, and that it would be shared with APs for noting. IM gave special thanks to RB's leadership and the current state of our objectives. IM contacted UHI Comms team to create a comms plan to get the message out about these documents.</p>
<p>10.5 HISA's NSS results</p>	<p>On behalf of the Board JH wanted to acknowledge formally HISA's 2024 National Student Survey results. In addition, the Board gave thanks to all the work put in by IM's team that contributed to the excellent results.</p>