

STUDENT ELECTIONS

#Lead HISA

NOMINATIONS PACK 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Want to meet new people across the Highlands and Islands?

Want to improve the student experience within UHI?

Want to undertake a years funded work experience leading one of Scotland's biggest Students' Associations that will make you stand out to future employers?

If the answer is yes to any of the above, have you thought about nominating yourself to run in HISA's 2026 Student Elections?

The Student Elections is an annual election to elect the Student Officer Team that leads the Highlands & Islands Students' Association (HISA).

We have put together this booklet to give anyone who might be interested in nominating themselves an idea about the roles up for elections, the elections process, and the support available to candidates.

We hope you find this booklet helpful.

HISA Elections Team



THE ROLES

HISA is led by twelve elected students, known as Student Officers.

There are two types of Student Officer within HISA;

- Cross-Campus Officers; full-time roles that have a remit that cover the whole of UHI partnership.
- Local Officers; full-time or part-time roles that have a remit that cover a specific UHI academic partner.

CROSS-CAMPUS OFFICERS

In addition to being a member of HISA's Board of Trustees, the body ultimately (and legally) responsible for the running of HISA, Cross-Campus Officers are responsible for taking the lead in campaigning to improve the student experience at UHI.

HISA's Cross-Campus Officers are:

Students' Association President

The Students' Association President provides leadership for HISA in its campaign to improve the student experience across the UHI partnership.

The Students' Association President acts as the main ambassador and external spokesperson for the Students' Association and works with senior staff members within UHI and each of the academic Partners as well as with local councils, local MPs, local MSPs and other external stakeholders across the Highlands & Islands.

The Students' Association President supports and empowers HISA's team of Student Officers and works closely with the Students' Association's senior management team to make sure the organisation is working towards its vision and values.

The Students' Association President is a member of both Court and Partnership Council, two of the highest governance bodies within UHI.

The Students' Association President is also the Chair of the Board of Trustees and, as such, is responsible for overseeing the performance management of the Students' Association's Chief Executive.

Vice President Education

The Vice President Education is HISA's lead Officer for academic representation and cross-campus education campaigns.

The Vice President Education works in partnership with UHI's Deputy Principal Academic and Research, UHI's Deans of Faculty and Associate Deans, and UHI's Department of Learning, Teaching & Students, as well as with CDN, QAA Scotland, sparqs and other external agencies to enhance learning and teaching across the UHI partnership.

The Vice President Education supports and empowers HISA's Local Officers and network of over 400 Student Voice Reps (SVRs) to improve the learning experience within their academic partner.

The Vice President Education sits on UHI's key learning and teaching committees, including Academic Council and Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC), to ensure that students' interests are represented and defended when decisions about learning and teaching are being made. The Vice President Education also sits on UHI's court.

What is the Board of Trustees?

As a charity, HISA is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees are those who are ultimately legally responsible for the running of HISA. Although ultimately responsible for the running of HISA, the Board of Trustees are not involved in the day-to-day running of the Students' Association, but instead take a more strategic overview to ensure that the Students' Association is run effectively and for the benefit of all UHI students.

LOCAL OFFICERS

In addition to being a member of their academic partner's Board of Management (BoM), the body legally responsible for the running of their academic partner, Local Officers are responsible for taking the lead in campaigning to improve the learning experience and the wider student experience at their academic partner.

Local Officers work in partnership with HISA's Cross-Campus Officers and senior UHI staff members as well as senior staff members and Student Voice Reps (SVRs) at their academic partner to ensure that the interests of students studying at their academic partner are represented and defended when decisions learning, teaching and student support are being made.

Local Officers support the development, delivery and promotion of both local and cross-campus activities, campaigns, and events for students at their academic partner. Local Officers also support the promotion of extra-curricular/co-curricular opportunities available to students studying at their academic partner, including HISA's Sports Clubs, Societies, and Student Networks.

HISA's Local Officer are:

Argyll Depute President	Inverness Depute President	Moray Depute President
North, West & Hebrides Depute President (Hebrides)	North, West & Hebrides Depute President (North)	North, West & Hebrides Depute President (West)
Orkney Depute President	Perth Depute President	Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) Depute President
Shetland Depute President		

What is a Board of Management (BoM)?

Every college in Scotland is governed by a Board of Management that has a legal responsibility to manage and conduct the affairs of the college. Although responsible for managing and conducting the affairs of the college, Board of Management members are not involved in the day-to-day running of their college, but instead take a more strategic overview to ensure that the college delivers quality education in a way that offers value for money.

Going National!

As a Local Officer you will also have the opportunity to get involved in national activities and campaigns to improve the student experience of college and university students in Scotland. Opportunities to get more involved on a national level include the spars National Education Officers' Network (NEON), Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP), and NUS Scotland activities.

THE BENEFITS OF GETTING INVOLVED

AS A STUDENT OFFICER YOU WILL GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO...

Meet new people across the Highlands and Islands

As a Student Officer you will have the chance to network and get more involved in both local and cross-campus activities and events taking place across the Highlands and Islands, including Societies, Sports Clubs, and Student Networks.

To Improve the student experience within UHI

As a Student Officer you will be in a position to drive improvements to the student experience inside and outside the classroom, as well as ensure that HISA is campaigning on the matters that are most important to students.

Undertake a year's funded work experience leading one of Scotland's biggest Students' Associations that will make you stand out to future employers.

As a Student Officer you will get the opportunity to gain skills and experience in leading a campaigning membership charity whilst receiving a real living wage.

NOT SURE YOU'RE THE RIGHT TYPE OF PERSON TO BE A STUDENT OFFICER?

If you have one or more of the qualities/ skills/ attitudes below, then becoming a Student Officer could be for you!

Passion

- Good Listener
- Good Communicator
- Approachable
- Public Speaking
- Supportive
- Problem Solver
- Inclusive
- Enthusiastic
- Team Player
- Adaptable
- Creative Leadership
- Confident Empathy
- Pragmatic Flexible
- Time Management
- Honest Beliefs

THE ELECTIONS PROCESS

Here is a timeline of the whole election process;

Nominations Open:	Monday 19th January, Noon (12:00)
Nominations Close:	Thursday 19th February, Noon (12:00)
Candidates Briefing:	Thursday 19th February, 6pm
Candidates Training Workshops:	Friday 20th February, 2pm to 5pm & Monday 23rd February, 5pm to 8pm
HISA Staff Speed Meet:	Tuesday 24th February
Manifestos Deadline:	Thursday 26th February, Noon (12:00)
Online Campaigning Starts:	Monday 2nd March, 9am
Physical Campaigning Starts:	Monday 9th March, 9am
Voting Opens:	Monday 9th March, 10am
Voting Closes:	Thursday 12th March, 4pm
Election Results Announcement:	Friday 13th March, 5pm



CANDIDATE SUPPORT

Never done anything like this before? Don't worry, we've got you covered!

We are here to support you every step of the way, both during and after the elections process.

SUPPORT DURING THE ELECTIONS PROCESS...

You don't need to be a seasoned campaigner or elections guru to nominate yourself in the Student Elections. We will be providing extensive training and support for all election candidates throughout the elections process.

Candidates Briefing

Thursday 19th February, 6pm to 7pm

To help you start planning and preparing your election campaign you will receive a briefing on the timeline of the elections process, as well as a rundown on the election rules.

An Introduction to Manifesto Writing

Friday 20th February, 2pm to 2.45pm & Monday 23rd February, 5pm to 5.45pm

To help you get started on your manifesto writing journey you will receive practical resources and tools as well as top-tips on how to draft the two core components of a manifesto: policy pledges and story statements.

An Introduction to Online Campaigning

Friday 20th February, 3pm to 3.45pm & Monday 23rd February, 6pm to 6.45pm

To help you hone your online campaigning skills you will receive tips and suggestions on how to use digital tools and platforms to get a message across in cyberspace effectively.

An Introduction to In-Person Campaigning

Friday 20th February, 4pm to 4.45pm & Monday 23rd February, 7pm to 7.45pm

To help you hone your in-person campaigning skills you will receive training on how to identify potential voters as well as tips and suggestions on how to create a creative campaign that will make you stand out of the crowd on campus.

HISA Staff Speed Meet

Tuesday 24th February 2026

To help answer any questions you might have while putting the finishing touches to your manifestoes you will have the opportunity to Speed Meet with the key HISA Staff members that are relevant to the role that you are running for.

Candidates Catch-Ups

Monday 9th March to Thursday 12th March, 9.15am to 9.45am

To help you kick-off your campaigning for the day you will receive up-to-date voting stats and elections updates from the HISA's Election Team, including any election rulings and/ or clarifications from the Returning Officer (RO) or Deputy Returning Officer (DRO).

Elections Employability Skills Sessions

Thursday 26th March, 12pm to 1pm

Following the election, all candidates will be invited to attend an Elections Employability Skills Session delivered by UHI Futures to ensure that regardless of the result you will be able to identify and put to use the skills you have developed during the elections process to help you get where you want to go next.



SUPPORT AFTER THE ELECTIONS PROCESS...

If elected, we will provide you with all the training and support you need so you can undertake your role as a Student Officer.

Student Officer Induction (Part One)

Wednesday 1st July & Thursday 2nd July

You will have an opportunity to meet your fellow Student Officer and key Students' Association staff members from the comfort of your own home!

In addition to meeting your new colleagues you will have the opportunity to attend interactive online training session to learn more about your role and how it fits into HISA's mission to improve the student experience.

Student Officer Residential Training

Week Commencing Monday 6th July

You will have the opportunity to spend time away in Inverness getting to know the rest of the Student Officer Team and planning out what you want to do over your term in office.

In addition to getting to know your fellow Student Officers and planning personal objectives during your time in the capital of the Highlands you will have an opportunity to attend interactive in-person training sessions for your role, including how to be an effective member of a Trustee Board or Board of Management.

Student Officer Inductions (Part Two)

Monday 13th July to Friday 24th July

To help you settle into your new role you will have the opportunity to attend a range of induction activities relevant to your role, including training workshops and meetings with key members of staff at UHI and at your academic partner.

The training and support doesn't stop there!

Throughout your time as a Student Officer you will receive on-going training and support. You will receive continual personal support and mentoring from HISA staff, as well as the opportunity to attend conferences and accredited training courses.

FAQs

Who can run for Cross-Campus Officer roles?

Any member of HISA can nominate themselves to run for a Cross-Campus Officer role in the 2026 Student Elections. It doesn't matter if you are on a college course or a university course, whether you are a Home Student or an International Student, or what year of your studies you are in, you can nominate yourself for a Cross-Campus Officer role.

If you are not in your final year of your course, you will be able to take a year out from your course (a 'sabbatical') to undertake the role and then be able to continue with your studies once your time in the role ends.

Who can run for Local Officer roles?

Any member of HISA can nominate themselves for any Local Officer role in the 2025 Student Elections where they meet the role's eligibility requirements.

Below are details on eligibility requirements for each Local Officer role.

Local Officer Role	Eligibility Requirements
Argyll Depute President	Registered at UHI Argyll or based near one of UHI Argyll's campuses or learning centres. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year.
Inverness Depute President	Registered at UHI Inverness or based near one of UHI Inverness's campuses or learning centres.
Moray Depute President	Registered at UHI Moray or based near UHI Moray's campuses. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year.
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (Hebrides)	Registered at UHI North, West & Hebrides and based at either the Barra Centre, the Benbecula Centre, the Broadford Centre, Cnoc Soilleir, the North Uist Campus, the Portree Centre, or the Stornoway campus. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year.
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (North)	Registered at UHI North, West & Hebrides and based at either the Alness Campus, the Dornoch Campus, the Rural Studies Centre (Halkirk) or the Thurso campuses. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year.
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (West)	Registered at UHI North, West & Hebrides and based at either the Auchtertyre Learning Centre, the Fort William Campus, the Gairloch Centre, the Kilchoan Centre, the Kinlochleven College Centre, the Mallaig College Centre, the Strontian College Centre, or the Ullapool Centre. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year.

Local Officer Role	Eligibility Requirements
Orkney Depute President	Registered at UHI Orkney or based near one of UHI Orkney's campuses. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year
Perth Depute President	Registered at UHI Perth or based near one of UHI Perth's campus.
Scottish Association for Marine Sciences (SAMS) Depute President	Registered at the Scottish Association for Marine Sciences (SAMS). Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year
Shetland Depute President	Registered at UHI Shetland or based near one of UHI Shetland's campuses. Will be continuing their studies at UHI during the 2026-27 academic year



Am I a member of HISA?

If you are currently registered on a course at UHI or one of the below UHI academic partners you will automatically be a member of the Highlands & Islands Students' Association (HISA).

UHI Argyll / Highland Theological College (HTC) / UHI Inverness / UHI Moray / UHI North, West & Hebrides / UHI Orkney / UHI Perth / The Scottish Association for Marine Sciences (SAMS) / UHI Shetland.

What experience do I need to run for a Student Officer role?

None. All you need is an interest in campaigning to improving the student experience at UHI.

Can I run for more than one Student Officer role?

No. You can only run for one role in the 2026 Student Elections as you can only hold one Student Officer role at a time.

If you would like some more information before making a decision on which role to nominate yourself for, please get in touch with us at elections.hisa@uhi.ac.uk.

How long will the role last for?

Twelve months, between the 1st July 2026 and 30th June 2027.

How many hours a week would I work as a Cross-Campus Officer?

Cross-Campus Officers are contracted to work 35 hours a week. This includes occasional evening and weekend working.

How many hours a week would I work as a Local Officer?

The number of hours that you will be contracted to work each week will depend on your role. Below are details on the number of contracted hours per week for each Local Officer role.

Local Officer Role	Hours Per Week
Argyll Depute President	12 Hours
Inverness Depute President	35 Hours
Moray Depute President	16 Hours
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (Hebrides)	12 Hours
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (North)	12 Hours
North, West & Hebrides Depute Officer (West)	12 Hours
Orkney Depute President	12 Hours
Perth Depute President	35 Hours
Scottish Association for Marine Sciences (SAMS) Depute President	7 Hours
Shetland Depute President	12 Hours

How much will I get paid as a Student Officer?

You will receive the Real Living Wage rate of £13.45 per hour; a full-time equivalent salary of £24,479 per annum!

In addition to receiving the Real Living Wage, as a HISA employee you will also receive 36 days of annual leave (pro-rata) inclusive of Bank Holidays and the Christmas closure period.



How much will it cost me to run in the Student Elections?

Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles are able to claim and spend £40 of funding from HISA for campaigning materials. Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles may also spend up to £20 of their own money on campaigning materials, however this is not compulsory.

Candidates for Local Officer roles are able to claim and spend £20 of funding from HISA for campaigning materials. Candidates for Local Officer roles may also spend up to £10 of their own money on campaigning materials, however this is not compulsory.

Additionally, candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles and Local Officer roles within UHI Argyll and UHI North, West, and Hebrides can claim and spend an additional £75 of funding from HISA on pre-authorised travel costs to campaign. Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles and Local Officer roles within UHI Argyll and UHI North, West, and Hebrides may also spend up to £50 of their own money on pre-authorised travel costs to campaign, however this is not compulsory.

If you have any concerns about funding your campaign, please get in touch with us at elections.hisa@uhi.ac.uk.

How much time commit is required to run in the Student Elections?

As a minimum you will need to commit to attending the compulsory meetings during the elections process. We recommend that you commit as much time as you can to your campaign as the more time and effort you spend on your campaign, the more likely you are to engage with voters and receive their votes. However, make sure you still make enough time for your studies as your course takes priority!

Is there anything else I need to know?

Elected Student Officers must complete HISA's onboarding process, which includes proving the right to work in the UK and successfully applying for Disclosure Scotland PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check, before they can sign their contract of employment with HISA and start their role. HISA will cover the costs of your Disclosure Scotland PVG application.

If you have any concerns about your right to work in the UK, please get in touch with us at elections.hisa@uhi.ac.uk.



HOW TO NOMINATE YOURSELF... IT'S EASY!

You can nominate yourself online by logging on at www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/elections/

Once logged in scroll down the page to the '2026 Student Elections' section.

Next click on 'Stand in Election', and after confirming your details you will be taken to a screen where you can nominate yourself.

Nominations will close noon (12:00) Tuesday 19th February 2026.

Having problems nominating yourself? Get in touch with us by email elections.hisa@uhi.ac.uk

WARNING

You can only nominate yourself for one role in the Student Elections! After the close of nominations, any candidates who have nominated themselves for more than one role will be disqualified from the election!



WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Want to know more about HISA, about the elections process, or about the student Union moment in general before nominating yourself?

Here a few websites where you can find out more;

www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/about

Here you can find out more about HISA and how it works, including information about the Students' Association's charitable purpose, strategy, and the Board of Trustees.

www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/electionrules

Here you can find a copy of our election rules as well as find out more about the voting process used in HISA's elections.

<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk>

Here you can find out more information about student partnerships in quality Scotland (sparqs) and the National Education Officers' Network (NEON).

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/>

Here you can find out more about The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland (QAA Scotland) and Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP).

<https://www.nus-scotland.org.uk/>

Here you can find out more about the National Union of Students Scotland (NUS Scotland) including information about its current and past campaigns

