

University of the Highlands and Islands

Committee Further Education Regional Board (FERB)

Date & Time Thursday 11 May 2017 at 14000

Location EO1 Ness Walk, Inverness

Purpose Scheduled meeting

Quorum Half plus one.

Present **Michael Foxley (Chair)**

Irene Peterson

Andrew Campbell

Blair Sandison

Calum Macpherson

Crichton Lang

David Sandison

Fiona Larg

Garry Coutts

Grant Myles

John Hutchison

Luke Humberstone

Neil J Stewart

Niall McArthur

Peter Graham

Seonag Campbell

In attendance Diane Rawlinson

Lydia Rohmer (VC)

Donald Macbeath (VC)

Iain Macmillan (VC)

Ken Milroy - Chair of Colleges Scotland Board

Holly Scrimgeour (VC)

Callum Stevens (VC)

Linda Stewart (for item 4.2)

Nicholas Oakley (*minutes*)

Apologies

Aideen O'Malley; Clive Mulholland; Gordon McGuinness; Ash Major; Lisa Massie; Max-Haddow-Mendes; Wilf Weir; Clive Rowlands; Carroll Buxton; Fiona Ambrose.

Item		Action
1	<p>WELCOME</p> <p>The Chairman opened the meeting and noted that a quorum was present.</p> <p>The Chair reported that this would be Luke Humberstone and Calum MacPhersons's final meeting and FERB thanked them for their valuable contributions to the work of the committee</p> <p>Declarations of interest: None</p>	

	AOCB: None.	
2	MINUTES	
2.1	The minute of the FERB meeting held on 08 February 2017 (FERB17-014) was approved.	
2.2	The minute of the special FERB meeting held on 24 March 2017 (FERB17-016) was approved.	
2.3	<p>Matters Arising: FERB noted paper FERB17-017. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vice Chair of Court is currently leading an initiative to consider how to improve gender balance on governing bodies. • Skills Investment plan - Currently awaiting this year's data, An update is expected in June. • FE Governance Code - SFC new risk based monitoring approach under development. A paper will be presented to the next meeting. 	
2.4	Review of delegated decisions: None.	
3	<p>CHAIRMANS REPORT</p> <p>The Chair provided members with a verbal update in relation to his recent activities. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop would take place on 23 May to consider any issues arising from Brexit for the college sector. The Chair requested FERB and college perspectives in advance of the meeting. • The Commissioner for Fair Access (Universities Scotland) had been invited to the region at the end of June to speak about how the University took people from level 1 to post-graduate – the Learner Journey. • SDS are progressing some work on Brexit implications nationally and regionally, and are keen to work, and share data with, UHI. 	
4	GOVERNANCE PLANNING & FUNDING ISSUES	
4.1	<p>Student Activity Levels - Core & ESIF Credits Update 2016-17</p> <p>FERB reviewed paper FERB 17-018. Whereas the region had exceeded its core credit target of 110,968, the regions colleges still needed to generate 2479 credits to achieve the overall core and ESIF credit target for the year.</p>	
4.2	<p>Developing Scotland's Workforce Update</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-019 providing an update on the above initiative and implications for academic partners.</p> <p>FERB noted that final confirmation on whether or not SCQF level 6 activity would be eligible for ESIF funding.</p>	

4.3	<p><i>Scottish Funding Council Communications</i></p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-020 comprising confirmation from SFC of the final FE Funding Announcement for 2017/18. It was noted that the total amounts had not changed from the figures reported to a special meeting of FERB on 24 March.</p>	
4.4	<p><i>Scottish Government Letters of Guidance</i></p> <p>FERB considered paper FERB17-021 comprising Guidance to the Enterprise and Skills Bodies for 2017-18. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short life working group had been set up to consider the allocation of funding between bodies and review strategic direction. • SFC and SDS had presented a joint plan – this recommended a single joint director accountable to the joint skills working group and reporting into a new governance body OR a joint skills working group. It was anticipated that changes and new structures would be in place from autumn 2017. 	
4.5	<p><i>Developing the Young Workforce</i></p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-022 providing an update on activities of the Highlands and Islands Work-based Learning Hub. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment is patchy and currently at 50% of target. However, this is better than previous years, and targets are double from previous year. • Need a final push from each AP to ensure 80% of target to avoid contract variations. • Single regional contract (contracted by framework) to minimise and mitigate risk, but this means greater interdependency. • Bids were invited for other frameworks in March 17. This process is delayed, start of programmes will be delayed and an autumn start date is now likely. • Computing frameworks are regarded to be priority and discussions with employers are ongoing. 	
4.6	<p><i>Scottish Government 15-24</i></p> <p>FERB discussed paper FERB17-023 providing a brief outline of the Learner Journey Review and regional engagement events. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review was started in February and would continue until December 2017. • Key areas include: careers guidance, access, provision, transitions and funding. • UHI have engaged with the review in a number of ways including hosting a regional engagement event with Scottish Government on 13th June. • SDS to provide regular updates to FERB 	

4.7	<p><i>Audit Scotland Section 22 Reports</i></p> <p>FERB considered paper FERB17-024. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FERB noted an update on actions taken by LCC provided by the Principals of LCC. • Noted that FGPC and PC would also consider the reports. • LCC were minded to seek additional funding from SFC. FERB considered that this request should be reviewed by PC prior to submission to SFC. • Need to develop better training for board members in UHI financial processes. • Need better early warning mechanisms and trigger points to identify potential issues as soon as possible. • The 5 incorporated colleges have different requirements and their position is particularly challenging. • The SFC’s new risk based assurance model for consideration at the next FERB meeting may provide appropriate early warning mechanisms. 	
4.8	<p><i>College Financial Information and Monitoring</i></p> <p>4.8.1 FERB noted paper FERB17-025.</p> <p>4.8.2 Student Support Funding 2016-17 and Proposed Distribution 2017-18</p> <p>FERB received a verbal report in relation to student support funding. It was noted that a paper would be circulated to members following the meeting.</p> <p>4.8.3 FERB considered paper FERB17-027 Capital and Maintenance Funding Proposed Distribution 2017-18</p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FERB requested that PC look at both FE and HE capital funding. It was noted that 6 partners prefer option 2, 3 partners prefer option 1. • A revised approach was requested for next year that was not based on pro-rata credit allocation but instead on need and expressed requirements. • FERB agreed to request PC to consider the distribution in knowledge that Option 2 is most popular. <p>[S Campbell leaves the meeting 1545)</p>	
4.9	<p>Update re FE Funding Bid to SFC for additional Credits from 2017-18</p> <p>FERB received an update on a bid to SFC made in January 2017 for additional credits. FERB noted that the bid was unsuccessful. SFC had responded to advise that the University should wait for final funding allocation and then revisit its bid. SFC had indicated that there are no additional credits available for the sector but that some colleges in other regions may not deliver and these credits could be reallocated in appropriate circumstances.</p>	
4.10	<p>Estates – HESA/SFC Condition survey</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-028.</p>	

4.11	<p>Implications of National Bargaining and Industrial Action</p> <p>FERB received a presentation from Colleges Scotland in relation to the ongoing National Bargaining discussions. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class contact time is a big issue and there is currently a wide variation between the expectations of EIS position and the employer’s association. • Any national bargaining agreement will need to be fully funded by SG and SFC. • Significant pay rises for college lecturers are likely to impact on support staff and senior management pay levels. • There is a need to consider impacts on quality and to model what compliance will be required for the H&Is region – including for colleges that have not opted in to national bargaining. • Information on likely implementation costs needs to be gathered and collated from all partners ASAP. • Mixed feedback from students has been received – HISA have taken a neutral stance. And desire a rapid resolution. 	
4.12	<p>SFC Strategic Dialogue Meetings 2016-17</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-029.</p>	
4.13	<p><i>Education Scotland</i> Quality and Improvement in Scottish Education 2012-2016</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-030.</p>	
4.14	<p><i>Scottish Government</i> Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - STEM - Consultation on a Strategy for Education and Training - report draft STEM Strategy</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-031.</p>	
4.15	<p>FERB External Effectiveness Review</p> <p>FERB discussed paper FERB17-032. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FERB suggested a maximum paper length of 5 pages with background papers available on BoardPad. 	
4.16	<p>Assignment of Argyll College UHI</p> <p>Not discussion.</p>	
4.17	<p>Gender Balance</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-033.</p>	
5	AUDIT, RISK MANAGEMENT & REPORTING	

FERB17-035

5.1	<p>Risk Management - FE Risk Register</p> <p>FERB considered paper FERB17-034.</p> <p>FERB noted that the cost of implementing National Bargaining posed a significant financial risk to the institution – potentially with a score of 5*5.</p>	
6	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 13 September 2017</p> <p>The meeting closed at 16.32.</p>	