

University of the Highlands and Islands

Committee Further Education Regional Board (FERB)

Date & Time Wednesday 13 September 2017 at 1400

Location EO1 Ness Walk, Inverness

Purpose Scheduled meeting

Quorum Half plus one.

Present Michael Foxley (Chair)

Blair Sandison

David Sandison VC

Peter Campbell VC

Grant Myles VC

John Hutchison VC

Neil J Stewart

Murray Easton

John Colston

Aideen O'Malley Telephone

Diane Rawlinson

Patrick O'Donnell

Gary Coutts Independent Chair of Court

In attendance Clive Mulholland

Fiona Larg

Niall McArthur

Donald Macbeath VC

Willie Shannon VC

Graeme Kirkpatrick

Fiona Mustarde

Roger Sendall

Apologies Gordon McGuinness; Clive Rowlands; Carroll Buxton; Scott John Ross, Holly Scrimgeour, Peter Graham, Wilf Weir, Andrew Campbell, Seonag Campbell, Callum Stephen.

	Action
1. WELCOME The Chairman opened the meeting and noted that a quorum was present. Declarations of interest: None AOCB: None.	
2. MINUTES The minute of the FERB meeting held on 11 th May 2017 was reviewed and approved subject to minor amendment/clarification(FERB17-035). The following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.11 – The Chair of FERB had conveyed the committees concerns in relation to the impact of National Bargaining and the particular issues this presented for the smaller partners.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.15 - the externally facilitated effectiveness review had not been considered in detail by FERB at the last meeting. It was noted that this item would be considered as a substantive item at the next scheduled meeting. 	Chair/VPFE
<p>2.2 Matters Arising: FERB noted paper FERB17-036.</p>	
<p>2.3 Review of delegated decisions: None.</p>	
<p>4.4 National Bargaining</p> <p>FERB received a presentation from Fiona Mustarde in relation to the implications of National Bargaining for the University. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Bargaining will result in significant financial challenges for the University with a potential increase in delivery costs of £10M per annum. There is a significant risk that the University will need to cut back services in remote and rural areas if additional funding is not available. Scottish Government have indicated that implementation costs will be met by Government for a period of three years only. There is an urgent need to prepare for the impact of national bargaining across a variety of fronts including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbying government for special funding on the basis that the regions colleges as full partners of a tertiary University are markedly different to other FE colleges and must be regarded as a special case. Identifying the likely impacts on services if funding is not made available so that stakeholders are fully apprised of likely consequences. Actively seeking to remove University partners from National Bargaining and ONS requirements and developing flexible tertiary contracts for staff who deliver both HE and FE courses as a possible alternative. Rapid progress with regard to implementing efficiency savings across the partnership. 	Exit F Mustarde
<p>3. 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"> Active engagement in discussions relating to National Bargaining and identifying accurate data in relation to likely implementation costs. Hosting the Commissioner for Fair Access (Universities Scotland) during a visit to Fort William and Mallaig. Participating in meetings with the Shetland Islands Council with a view to progressing the tertiary review. Liaison with the Chair of Audit in relation to concerns raised about a perceived culture of non-compliance amongst partner colleges with regard to mandatory information security training and governance requirements. 	

4. GOVERNANCE PLANNING & FUNDING ISSUES	
4.1 Student Activity Levels Monitoring FERB discussed paper FERB 17-037 providing a report on performance against core and ESIF credit targets.	
4.2 Student Activity Targets 2017/18 FERB considered paper FERB17-038 and noted that it was unlikely that partners would exceed core targets in 2017/18. This was due to a number of factors including demographics/reducing school rolls.	
4.3 ESIF DSW Work Stream Update FERB considered paper FERB17-039 and noted that there was an urgent need for clear guidance from SFC in relation to eligibility requirements and criteria as partners were currently wary of committing to investing in projects when grant funding was uncertain.	
<i>4.4 Item discussed prior to 3 above.</i>	
4.5 Quality Monitoring Arrangements FERB discussed paper FERB17-041 in relation to new quality monitoring arrangements. FERB highlighted the need to ensure that a regional approach was pursued in preference to focussing attention on individual partner's activities.	
4.6 Colleges Scotland Matters 4.6.1 Flexible Working Development Fund FERB noted paper FERB17-042.	
4.6.2 Rural and Remoteness Funding Future Consultation FERB noted paper FERB17-043.	
4.7 Academic Partner Governance Matters 4.7.1 Moray College Recovery Plan The Principal of Moray College UHI presented paper FERB17-044. FERB was pleased to note the good progress made by management including completion of the Voluntary Severance Scheme and an improved financial forecast following a difficult and challenging period.	
4.7.2 Perth College UHI – ET Review Update The Chair of Perth College UHI introduced paper FERB17-045 in relation to a recent employment tribunal that had identified some significant issues and the subsequent actions taken by the college board including progressing an independent internal review.	

<p>4.7.3 Shetland Tertiary Review</p> <p>FERB received a brief progress report from the Chairs of Shetland College and NAFC Marine Centre in relation to the ongoing review. It was noted that some good progress had been made with further meetings planned for September 2017.</p>	
<p>4.8 Academic Partner Financial Monitoring Reports</p> <p>FERB considered paper FERB17-047 indicating a forecast deficit for 2021/2022 of approximately £5M resulting primarily from the impact of implementing national bargaining.</p> <p>It was noted that FERB would prefer to receive financial reports in an alternative format in future with an increased level of analysis and commentary to highlight any key issues and concerns as opposed to receiving spreadsheets of financial data.</p>	DOCR
<p>4.9 Partnership Activity</p> <p>4.9.1 FE Workstream Update</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-048.</p>	
<p>4.9.2 SFC Strategic Dialogue Meetings</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-049.</p>	
<p>4.10 Work based learning hub</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-050.</p>	
<p>4.11 Compliance with FE Code of Governance</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-051.</p>	
<p>4.12 Capital Projects Updated Priorities Report</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-052.</p>	
<p>4.13 Forthcoming Changes to Data Protection law.</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-053. It was noted that FERB supported the concept of appointing a shared Data Protection Officer for the University.</p>	
<p>5 Audit and Risk Management</p> <p>5.1 Corporate Risk Register and Policy Statement</p> <p>FERB noted paper FERB17-054.</p> <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 22 November 2017.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 16.30</p>	