

UHI | NORTH, WEST AND HEBRIDES A TUATH, AN IAR IS INNSE GALL

Local Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The approved business case for the merger of UHI North Highland, UHI Outer Hebrides, and UHI West Highland committed to the creation of Local Advisory Committees to help ensure that the right learning provision is in place to meet the needs of local communities, to achieve effective local accountability, and to ensure that the new college is effectively connected into local developments, opportunities, projects and partnerships. Initial membership is expected to be drawn significantly from former members of the boards of the three colleges who retired from the Boards at merger on 1st August 2023, but with the addition of other members to ensure good and wide communication with communities and stakeholders. It will be the responsibility of the Chair of the LAC to ensure the duplication of remits and potentially competitive behaviour across the different organisations is avoided.

The remit, constitution, operating practices and membership of the LACs will be reviewed one year after vesting. This review will consider issues such as communication between the LACs and the Boards of Management, whether some LACs should have sectoral remits across the college area, and the potential for nominations to LACs from key stakeholders.

The LACs shall be independent of the Board of Management of UHI North, West and Hebrides, and shall report to the Board of Management on matters defined in its list of duties in Section 6 below.

2. Constitution and Membership

1. There shall be three Local Advisory Committees (LACs), one covering each of the geographical areas covered by the merging partner colleges, to be known respectively as the North Highland Local Advisory Committee, the Outer Hebrides Local Advisory Committee and the West Highland Local Advisory Committee.

2. The initial members of each LAC will be identified by the Board of Management of UHI North, West and Hebrides (the Board) and formally appointed after vesting date.

3. There shall be between seven and eleven members on each LAC.

4. The initial membership of the LACs will be recruited with an effort to include:

- former members of the merging college boards,
- members of the public with an interest in education or industry,
- representatives of key stakeholders, in particular a representative from each local area based office of Highlands and Islands Enterprise,
- a local councillor or other local authority representative,
- representatives from employers, schools and community groups, and other key local organisations such as Developing Young Workforce, Skills Development Scotland, the local Chamber of Commerce.
- a college staff member and
- a college student member

5. In order to be eligible for membership of the LAC, a person must be:-

- Aged 16 years or over;

- Able to demonstrate an interest in education or industry in the geographical area covered by the LAC;
- Resident in the area covered by the LAC

6. The first Chair of each LAC will be selected by the LAC members at the first meeting of the LAC, and will be a former member of a merging college board who is not a member of the Board of Management of UHI North, West and Hebrides. The Chair will hold office for a period of one year and will be eligible for re-election. The Chair or another representative of the LAC may in some areas be appointed to the Community Planning partnership.

7. The Board of Management of UHI North, West and Hebrides will designate one Board member and one substitute Board member who will be invited to attend all meetings of the LAC. The Board of Management member who attends the LAC meetings will not be a member of the LAC.

8. Each member of a LAC will serve for a maximum term of four years at which point the member will be eligible for reappointment for a maximum of one further four-year term.

9. The Chair of the Board of Management, will arrange for initial vacancies on the LACs to be advertised. Advertisements will be in English and where deemed appropriate advertisements will also be in Gaelic. The selection process and recommendations for appointments to the initial membership of the LACs will be undertaken by the Nomination Committee of UHI NWH and the appointments will be made by the Board of UHI NWH.

10. Once established, the LAC itself will have a greater role in the selection of its membership. Applications to become a member of the LAC shall be submitted in writing to the Clerk of the LAC. The LAC will consider all candidates, and will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to appoint or not to appoint the candidates. Decisions as to whether to recommend applicants for appointment by the Board of Management shall be made only on the approval of a majority of the members present and voting at a meeting.

11. Members of the LACs are volunteers. It is anticipated that most meetings will be held online although reasonable and necessary travel expenses for attending meetings will be reimbursed where it is deemed necessary for a meeting to be held in person. Expenses will be paid at the discretion of the Board of Management.

3. Authority

3.1 Each LAC is authorised by the Board of Management to undertake any activity within its list of duties.

3.2 Each LAC may seek any information it reasonably requires from the Board of Management or the Principal Designate/Principal of UHI North, West and Hebrides.

3.3 At each Board of Management meeting there will be an agenda item for items raised by LAC.

3.4 In the event that a LAC is not satisfied with a Board response to an item placed before the Board, a representative of the LAC will be invited to address the Board Committee Chairs on the item in question. At the option of the Chairs Committee, the matter may be referred back to the Board for further consideration.

4. Proceedings

4.1 Each LAC shall normally meet at least twice per year at a date and time appointed at the previous meeting.

4.2 Meetings will be held over Teams or by other electronic means, in person or on a hybrid basis, but always giving consideration to the costs of in-person attendance.

4.3 The Clerk of the LAC, who will normally be a member of staff of UHI North, West and Hebrides, will provide an agenda at least five days in advance of the meeting.

4.4 LAC Members who are not able to attend a meeting shall submit apologies to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

4.5 If any member of the LAC fails to attend three successive LAC meetings, with or without submitting apologies, the LAC may terminate their membership provided that the termination of the membership must be an item on a meeting agenda and must be carried by a majority vote of those present and voting.

4.6 Meetings of the LAC are to be chaired by the elected Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair. In the event that the Chair and Vice Chair are unable to attend a meeting, the LAC members present may appoint an acting Chair to chair the meeting.

4.7 The Chair or a Vice Chair of the Board of Management of UHI North, West and Hebrides and the Principal Designate will attend one meeting of each LAC annually.

4.8 A quorum shall be no less than one half of the voting members and in any case not less than four. No business can be conducted at a meeting unless a quorum is present. If after 10 minutes from the appointed start time for a meeting, a quorum is not present, the Chair shall adjourn the meeting. It shall be recorded that, owing to a lack of the necessary quorum, no business could be transacted.

4.9 Brief minutes of each meeting of the LAC will be kept by the Clerk to the LAC, see paragraph 7.3.2 below.

4.10 Each member present at a meeting will be entitled to one vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair (or Vice Chair if chairing the meeting or any member chairing the meeting) will be entitled to a casting vote.

5. Accountability

Each LAC is accountable to the Board of Management.

6. Duties

The duties of the LACs shall be to:

1. Provide a strong link into the communities the college serves, providing local oversight and to ensure information passes between the Board of Management and local stakeholders.
2. Through the LAC Chair or Vice Chair, provide the Board with advice from a local perspective in an effort to ensure that
 - (a) the right learning is in the right place, to meet the needs of the local community and its principal organisations
 - (b) there is local accountability for the quality of the learning experience and the delivery of strong outcomes for learners, and
 - (c) the college is effectively linked into relevant local developments, strategic opportunities, priority projects and partnerships.
3. Submit an annual report to the Board of Management giving its assessment of the work of the college in relations to its community and setting out any recommendations it may have to improve the college's effectiveness
4. Act as ambassadors for the college and UHI in the local community, including representing the college at local events where necessary

The Board of Management will be responsible for responding to any formal recommendations made or advice given by one of the LACs.

NB - It is not the duty of the Local Advisory Committee to act in any official decision-making capacity. The Local Advisory Committee has no delegated authority. It is an advisory body.

7. Conduct of Meetings

7.1 Chair's Duties

7.1.1 To preserve order and ensure that LAC member has a fair hearing.

7.1.2 To decide on all matters of competency and relevancy.

7.1.3 To decide between two or more members of the LAC indicating a wish to speak by calling on the member who has first caught his or her eye.

7.1.4 The Chair will attempt to reach agreement among LAC members but if this is not possible the Chair's decision will be final.

7.2 Conduct of LAC Members

7.2.2 Every member of the LAC shall have the opportunity to participate and be heard. When a member is <https://app.admincontrol.net/Reports/speaking>, he or she shall be heard without interruption; all other members shall give way.

7.2.3 In the event of any LAC Member disregarding the authority of the Chair, or being guilty of obstructive or offensive conduct, a recommendation may be moved and seconded to suspend such member for the remainder of the sitting. The recommendation shall be put without discussion and, if carried on a two-thirds majority, such a member shall leave the meeting forthwith. This recommendation shall take immediate precedence over any business which is taking place.

7.3 Agendas and Minutes

7.3.1 Any items to be included in the agenda for meetings of the LAC shall first be submitted to the Clerk of the LAC no later than 14 days prior to the date of any scheduled meeting.

a) Other items may be included in the agenda at the discretion of the Chair.

7.3.2 The Clerk of the LAC shall take brief Minutes of every meeting of the LAC, the draft shall be circulated to the members, and to the Board of Management at its next meeting. The minutes will include:-

a) the names of those present at each meeting, as well as those who have submitted apologies; and

b) brief notes of topics dealt with, but not the details of discussions.

7.3.3 Minutes shall be approved at the next meeting and before concluding the agenda discussed for the next meeting. Approved minutes shall be available for inspection up to two years after each meeting of the LAC.

8. Annual General Meeting

8.1 The Annual General Meeting of the LAC shall take place in the months of September to December each year.

8.2 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:-

- a) an annual report from the Chair;
- b) the appointment of the Chair for the forthcoming year; and
- c) the appointment of additional members.