



Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2024 - 2026

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1.1 Mission

To have a transformational impact on the people, communities and economy of our regions.

1.2 Vision

We will attract, nurture and retain talent in our communities, supporting innovation and social and economic prosperity. We will do this through the innovative delivery of flexible lifelong learning focused on employability and skills and impactful research.

1.3 Values

Collaboration | Openness | Respect | Excellence

2.0 Executive Summary

This document sets out our refreshed approach to jointly implementing our strategic plan for sport and physical activity.

We are delighted with the progress already made through the students' association and at Academic Partners in encouraging and providing activities and opportunities that aim to inspire all students, staff and local communities to be active more on a regular basis to improve health and wellbeing.

However, we are ambitious to reach higher and wider, increasing our reach of service provision across all our academic partners to help more students and staff be active more regularly and reach their potential through sport and physical activity.

We believe in the power of sport and physical activity. As advocates, we know it changes lives for the better. We know that our health and wellbeing is improved through being active and moving more often. We know students who take part in sport regularly that their confidence, leadership and social skills are all enriched and improved. We know that being active adds to students' enjoyment and success, helping them to cope with the pressures while at University. Through community sport volunteering, we also know that our students can help transform local communities.

Through the commitment and actions of sound collaboration across the partnership we hope to achieve a better balance in the services that we provide. This will make a significant contribution to an excellent student experience and making the University of the Highlands and Islands a great place to work and study.

3.0 UHI Strategic Vision, Mission and Values for Sport and Physical Activity

3.1 Vision

Ensure Sport and Physical Activity are at the heart of the UHI experience, bringing positive, lifelong impact on health, learning, careers and community engagement. To be recognised for the quality of our students' experience and for their achievement through sport and physical activities.

3.2 Mission

To provide high quality inclusive sport and physical activities for all students, staff, graduates and our communities

3.3 Values

Collaboration - Maintaining and developing new internal and external relationships, focused on the implementation of the Universities strategic plan for students, alumni, student/staff/community health and wellbeing, employability and sustainability.

Openness – Willing to allow change, respectful expression and acceptance of others and meaningful reflection.

Respect - Encourage positive ethical sports conduct in all roles contributing to the implementation of the strategic plan.

Excellence – Encourage excellence in all our endeavours.

3.4 Scope

Executive Office

Your Students' Association

UHI Argyll

HTC

UHI Inverness

UHI Moray

UHI North, West and Hebrides

UHI Orkney

UHI Perth

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

SAMS

UHI Shetland

4.0 Message from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor

This new strategy demonstrates our commitment to enhancing the health and personal development of all of our students and staff, through a collective vision and aims that will help unleash the potential of the diverse and distinctive opportunities available across our partnership. We already have a great deal to be proud of in terms of sports and physical activities within the university and this strategy will provide an inclusive framework that responds to national policy drivers and promotes and develops them further. It will act as a catalyst for the unique blend of regional resources, our community links, our talented sportspeople, and all those people who simply would like to be more active, and I wholeheartedly welcome and support its development.

Vicki Nairn, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

5.0 Message from HISA President

In academia the dialogue typically revolves around classrooms, lectures, and the modern reality of staring at screens while sifting through materials and notes. Yet, amidst this academic hustle, it's crucial not to overlook the significance of incorporating physical activity into our daily lives to maintain both physical and mental well-being. Engaging in sports isn't just beneficial for personal health; it also serves as a conduit to a sense of belonging and community. Regardless of one's background, sports have a unique ability to unite individuals from diverse walks of life. It is a universal language that transcends differences, fostering connections and camaraderie.

The sports strategy exemplifies the powerful collaboration between students and staff at UHI. It goes beyond the confines of academia, highlighting a shared commitment to holistic development and a vibrant community spirit.

William Campbell, President

6.0 Strategic Aims and Objectives

6.1 Aim 1 - Increase Physical Activity

To offer a diverse, innovative and inclusive programme of sport and physical activity, including competitive sport, that is tailored to the unique characteristics of academic partners and encourages regular (habit forming) participation by all students, staff, graduates and our communities.

6.2 Aim 2 – Strengthening Communities and Skills Development

To provide meaningful opportunities for our students, staff, graduates and communities through sport and physical activity that positively impact on reducing loneliness, student employability prospects, lifelong learning and internal and external engagement.

6.3 Aim 3 – Supporting Health and Wellbeing

To foster a whole university community that is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of staff and students. Promoting health behaviour and positive mental health in co-curricular activities.

6.4 Aim 4 - Effective Organisation

To ensure our sport and physical activity infrastructure is managed and monitored through effective governance systems ensuring that sport and physical activity experiences at UHI are embedded,

communicated and maximised through marketing and communication channels to promote high levels of participation, profile and partnerships.

7.0 Sports Development Group

7.1 Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the implementation of the Strategy 2024 - 2026, and to periodically evaluate and report on progress to Partnership Council and other university committees.
2. To provide strategic advice, leadership, support and guidance, which will actively encourage joint strategic planning across the partnership.
3. To promote coordination of effort and 'joined up thinking' in order to maximize resources for sport and physical activity.
4. To identify major resource investment proposals (e.g. staff, equipment, capital funding) required to successfully implement the strategy.
5. To engage other colleagues and management groups in the delivery of the Strategy, as appropriate.
6. To work with colleagues in YSA, BUCS, SSS to promote the successes of the university in delivering the Strategy.
7. Advocate for and champion the role that sport and physical activity can make in improving the lives of students and staff across UHI partnership.

7.2 Membership

- Academic Partner Members
- Dean of Students
- YSA Sports Development Coordinator
- YSA representatives
- Mental Health and Counselling Manager
- Student Engagement Manager

- Additional members may be co-opted in accordance with the business of the group, and other university/academic partner/external partner officers may be invited to attend meetings of the group as appropriate.

7.3 Reporting

The **group** will report regularly to Student Engagement Group.

8.0 Influencing Factors

- Sport Scotland – Sport For Life
- UHI Strategy 2030
- UHI Student Partnership Agreement
- Scottish Student Sport Strategy 21+
- BUCS Strategy 2023-27
- Scottish Health Survey
- A More Active Scotland
- Active Scotland Delivery Plan
- Scotland’s Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport (SAMH)
- Healthy University Framework
- Cycling Friendly Campus
- Active Travel
- Healthy Body Healthy Mind
- Scottish Student Sport, College sport award

Cross Cutting Strategies

- UHI Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy

9.0 Glossary of Terms

- Students – Full time, Part time, FE, HE, International, Leisure
- UHI – All Academic Partners
- Regular – Scottish Government Physical Activity Guidelines
- Facilitate – Academically and within sport, access, resources
- Sport – Sport and physical activity includes: active living, active travel, active recreation, and active sports (competitive and casual) aimed maintaining or improving physical fitness, health, mental well-being, forming social relationships, improving sporting performance or obtaining results in competition at all levelsⁱ

ⁱ Amended from Council of Europe, available at: www.coe.int/t/dg4/epas/resources/charter_en.asp