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**UHI SHETLAND
BRANCH**



STOP JOB LOSSES AT UHI SHETLAND AND THE ATTACK ON RURAL COMMUNITIES

#CollegeCutsKillCommunities

UHI Shetland are undertaking an Academic Restructure with the intention of shedding 18.07 full time equivalent lecturer posts (to date) at the college, that's almost one third of all lecturers at UHI Shetland. Oppose the cuts.

Why is this important?

The loss of staff and educational provision on this scale will have a hugely detrimental impact on the community of Shetland - on the staff who will lose jobs and livelihoods; on rural and isolated communities; on the local economy and on the young people who have a right to access tertiary education locally.

In August 2021 Shetland College was privatised and became UHI Shetland- the first college which was privatised from the public sector in Scotland. Lecturers at the college were opposed to privatisation because they were worried about the negative impact on staff terms and conditions and security of employment, as well as students' quality and diverse range of education. Nonetheless, elected members were assured that the 'financial flexibility' non-incorporation would bring was a priority.

We're now two years on from the merger and have been informed that staffing costs need to be further reduced with lecturers now at risk of redundancy. Although every Academic section is facing a reduction of lecturers, the department most at risk is Community Learning & Business (CL&B). This section supports emotionally, psychologically, physically, and financially vulnerable students – providing important access level courses and provision as well as delivering courses to students with additional support needs, in core skills, employability, ESOL, hospitality, professional cookery, business and accounting.

Depopulation in Shetland is a real concern and the loss of staff at a major employer on the island coupled with a loss of accessible, inclusive, and diverse education will only make this problem worse. A wide range of courses should be available at UHI Shetland and secure and long-lasting employment which benefits the local community.

We should be investing in our communities, supporting the growth of skills, confidence, and the employment futures of everyone in Shetland.

We are seeking to engage with the Scottish Funding Council and the Minister for Further and Higher Education about additional funding for UHI Shetland via UHI.

Please support our campaign. If you share our concerns, please get in touch with UHI Shetland Principal Jane Lewis Jane.Lewis@uhi.ac.uk and the Board Chair Davie Sandison Davie.Sandison@uhi.ac.uk