

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) for Lews Castle College (Transfer & Closure) Order 2023

Disclaimer

This **draft** document is an **initial assessment** of the impact of **the Lews Castle College (Transfer & Closure) Order 2023** and Scottish Government will continue to review and update this document where required during the **parliamentary decision making process**. Any future iterations will reflect an increased understanding of these impacts as the amount of data and research available continues to grow.

This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment and the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

CRWIA Stage 1 – Screening

(Please note, the CRWIA should be started as soon as possible in the development process for the relevant proposal)

1. Brief Summary (Guidance Section 2.1)

Name the relevant proposal, and describe its overall aims.

The governing bodies of North Highland College (NHC), Lews Castle College (LCC) (also known as UHI Outer Hebrides) and West Highland College (WHC) have proposed to merge the three colleges to form one single, incorporated college. This is to be achieved by the closure of LCC and WHC, with all their property, rights, liabilities and obligations transferred to NHC.

LCC is an incorporated college under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 (“the 1992 Act”) and as such requires a statutory instrument, made by the Scottish Ministers, in order to give effect to its closure and the consequential transfer of property, rights, liabilities and obligations. This includes the transfer of the employees of LCC to NHC, along with the terms of their existing contracts of employment.

As WHC is not incorporated under the 1992 Act that college will be wound up through non-statutory means which does not require any Ministerial involvement.

The merging colleges’ aims from the merger are to become a financially sustainable organisation and to respond effectively to opportunities of scale. To grow the curriculum, research and knowledge exchange. To enhance the student experience and to create resource to address changing priorities, opportunities and economic difficulties.

Start date of relevant proposal: 1/8/23

Start date of CRWIA process: 28/4/23

2. The closure of Lews Castle College and its merger with North Highland College will not affect children under the age of 18. There were 610 (ay 2019-20) enrolments for children under 18 studying at Lews Castle College, but the merging parties have indicated that there are no current plans to close any physical centres nor to withdraw any courses, nor to make face to face courses virtual.
3. Children in a remote and rural setting will not be affected; because there are currently no plans to change the provision of courses offered nor the locations in which the courses are run.

Declaration

4. Is a Stage 2 Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment required? (Tick relevant requirement) (Guidance Section 2.1)

CRWIA required No explanation required, please complete questions 5 and 6

CRWIA not required Please explain why below and contact the children’s rights unit to discuss this decision crwia@gov.scot


Explanation why CRWIA is not required:

There is no requirement for a CRWIA because the closure and merger of Lews Castle College will result in no loss of choice or accessibility for children. The merging colleges have stated that they have no current plans to close any physical locations; nor withdraw or relocate any courses. The merger business case indicates that the merger has the potential to increase the reach of the curriculum and provide more opportunities for students in remote areas.

5. Sign & Date

Policy Lead Signature & Date of Sign Off:  12/5/23

CRWIA author, if different from policy lead, Signature & Date of Sign Off:

Deputy Director Signature & Date of Sign Off:  23/5/23

Date SGLD contacted 12/5/23