

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE
RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2022
9.30-11.30AM

Ref	Item		
Present	Professor Christopher Hughes	CH	Pro Vice Chancellor (Education), (Chair)
	Paul Blagburn	PB	Head of Widening Participation, (Secretary)
	Baljit Gill	BG	Widening Participation Manager, (Assistant Secretary)
	Professor Letizia Gramaglia	LGra	Head of Academic Development (until 10.30)
	Associate Professor Lee Griffin	LGri	Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education (until 10.30)
	Professor Ruth Hewston	RH	Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning
	Dr Elizabeth Hough	EH	Head of Admissions
	Kate Ireland	KI	Director of Centre for Teacher Education (from 9.45)
	Sue Jones	SJ	Head of Student Finance
	Nina Anne Lawrence	NL	Head of Academic Department, Foundation Studies (from 10.00)
	Chih-Hsiang Lo	CL	Students' Union Representative (Education)
	Professor Tim Lockley	TL	History, Faculty of Arts Representative
	Samuel McClenaghan	SM	Deputy Finance Director (10.30-11.30)
	Hamza Rehman	HR	Students' Union Representative (Postgraduate)
	Kulbir Shergill	KS	Director of Social Inclusion
	Professor Patrick Tissington	PT	Academic Director of Employability and Skills (until 11.00)
	Professor Gwen Van Der Velden	GV	Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) (from 9.45)
	Professor Derrick Watson	DW	Head of Psychology, Faculty of Science, Engineering & Medicine
Roberta Wooldridge Smith	RWS	Academic Registrar (interim) (until 11.00)	
Attending	Amanda Bishop	ABi	WP Faculty Co-ordinator, SEM
	Claire Edden		WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Social Sciences; WP Student Advisory Group Co-Chair
	Dr Damien Homer	DH	Head of Disability Services, representing Director of Wellbeing
	Cherryl Jones	CJ	WP Access and Lifecycle Manager; Student Success and Progression Working Group Co-Chair
	Catherine McNicholl	CMc	Widening Participation Manager (from 10.15)
	Dr Tammy Thiele	TT	WP Evidence and Evaluation Manager; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair
013	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Professor Celia Brown, (Professor, Warwick Medical School); Adele Browne, (Director of Student Experience); Dr Rebecca Freeman, (Dean of Students); Ruth Hewston, (Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning); Jenny Hughes, Director of Student Opportunity (interim); Paul Johnstone, (Head of Analytics); Natalie Lloyd, (Deputy Director of Development); Gavin Schwartz-Leeper, (Associate Professor, Liberal Arts); Professor Emma Smith, (Director of Education Studies; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair).</p>		
014	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>		

015	<p>Minutes of last meeting on 11 October 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022 (015-WPC011222{Protected}) were received and approved.</p>
016	<p>Matters arising from last meeting on 11 October 2022</p> <p>Following the discussion around cost of living measures (item 008), PB updated on additional support for those students in greatest need. UEB approved that undergraduate bursary holders would receive a ten percent inflationary increase on their annual bursary package. There has also been enhancement of the Hardship Fund support; while data is not available at the moment, uptake and impact will be brought to a future meeting.</p> <p>There were no other matters arising from the meeting on 11 October 2022 that were not covered in the agenda.</p>
Chair's Update	
017	<p>Chair's Business and Action</p> <p>There were no updates from the Chair.</p>
Strategic Item	
018	<p>Widening Participation and Social Mobility Division update</p> <p>The Committee received a paper from the Head of Widening Participation (011-WPC111022{Protected})</p> <p>a) The paper provides an overview of reforms and changes within the Widening Participation Team that will enhance our institutional approach. The developments are to build a stronger brand and identity for our institutional policy and practice, ensure stakeholders have clear idea of who to engage with and for what purpose, and finally ensure our university messaging and impact is celebrated. The paper gives details on structure position, principal areas of focus, and an outline of the benefits the changes will bring. The division is now formed of five pillars (areas) which have identified ownership and responsibility, aligned to our WP strategic priorities and access and participation approach.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Widening Participation and Social Mobility Evidence, Evaluation, and Impact - to enhance and evolve the evidence-base through effective evaluation and research ii. Academic Engagement and Internal Community (Inreach) - to promote a whole institutional approach to WP and SM iii. WP Educational and Collaborative Partnerships - to develop, enhance, and expand Warwick's key WP partnership provision iv. Widening Participation and Social Mobility Sustained Engagement - to enhance equality of opportunity for key target groups to progress to higher education v. Access and Student Success - to remove barriers to a Warwick education and enable upward social mobility for underrepresented groups. <p>Response to the OfS consultation on the future of access and participation</p> <p>The Committee received a paper from the Head of Widening Participation (018-WPC011222a{Protected})</p> <p>a) The Office for Students (OfS) launched a consultation on a new direction for access and participation plans as part of its approach to regulate equality of opportunity in higher education. A formal response to the consultation will arrive in Spring 2023 with formal guidance published for the development of new access and participation plans (APP) for 2024-25 onwards, with an expected submission deadline in Summer 2023. Access and participation plans set out how individual higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for students to access,</p>

succeed in and progress from higher education. This paper provides detail of the responses to each of the eight proposals, most of which are consistent with the Russell Group position.

A Warwick blueprint for access and participation

The Committee received a paper from the Head of Widening Participation (018-WPC011222b{Protected})

- a) This paper aims to stimulate discussion to how the University should further enhance its approach to WP and SM over the next five years, with a view to supporting the development of its new access and participation plan from 2024-28. It principally considers the strategic intentions we made, the external context made within, and the principles and ambitions our future approach should include.
- b) Vision and Strategy
 - i. Social Mobility at the centre of strategy: In 2018 the University set out a clear vision in its Widening Participation Strategy; *does our vision still reflect our institutional ambition toward 2030?*
 - ii. Education Strategy: Widening Participation is a core facilitator and firmly embedded in the University's Education Strategy where we made a range of commitments; *what scale of ambition and scope should be considered in a new Education Strategy?*
- c) External Context - in early 2022 a new set of priorities were developed for the sector to partner with schools and other local organisations to raise the attainment of young people; *what external factors pose a challenge to how the University sets its ambitions and approach for SM and A&P?*
- d) Risks to equality of opportunity - In the context of higher education, 'equality of opportunity' means that individuals are not hampered in accessing and succeeding in higher education as a result of their background or circumstances they cannot fairly influence. By conceptualising the barriers to equality of opportunity as 'risks' we are empowered to take an active role in mitigating those risks.
- e) Principles and focus - To inform and steer the next phase of our strategic approach, it is important to consider and agree a set of principles that build on existing plans but challenges us to go further in areas where we need to make further progress.
- f) Ambition - Our plan should respond to some of the longer-term challenges which may be caused or exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, notably the widening gap in attainment in schools, and any further issues that may arise because of increased costs of living. It should also continue to focus on eliminating persistent disparities between the access, success and outcomes of groups of students who do not currently experience equality of opportunity in higher education.
- g) Shaping our plan - The timescales to develop robust strategic plans are often tight and challenging to deliver. Consultation and engagement with internal communities (staff and students) should be paramount alongside dialogue with our external partners. It is important that we involve students as active partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation of our strategic plan, ensuring that we meaningfully engage students seeking a representative view from a diverse range of student groups. *What would the Committee agree as the priorities for active and meaningful consultation for our plan? How should we ensure that students play a role in shaping the future ambitions of our strategic approach?*

Thematic discussions:

- a) **Group 1 – Vision and direction: Does our vision still reflect our institutional ambition towards 2030? How should we embed and further enhance our whole University approach?**
 - The consensus was that it was still relevant and an important part of what we are trying to achieve, and we might want to elaborate on as we look at our new approach. Understanding the nuances within that statement itself particularly how we refer to economic disadvantage.

- The interpretation around that and there was also some discussion about how we really demonstrate and disseminate our vision in a way that is meaningful for different types of groups both internally and externally.
- To embed a whole institutional approach to this agenda, further progress is needed around clarity of understanding about what we are trying to achieve and ensuring that all stakeholders both internally and externally were fully converse with that and people have playing an active role in shaping some of that, so being a clearer about what the roles of each department were within that.
- There were some identification of opportunities, particularly how we talk about different groups and an opportunity within this space to think at a much more individual level about the quality of the risks to quantify equality of opportunity for different groups. This will help us better understand our students and the impacts of our work.
- There was also discussion about shaping this work beyond some of the principal groups that have perhaps been focused on previously and thinking differently about mature students and how they are embedded and play a role in the University community and to celebrate that.

b) Group 2 – Driving excellence in Evidence and Evaluation: How do we ensure that evaluation and evidence is embedded and enhanced in our institutional approach?

- Evaluation needed to be truly embedded, informing it by evidence and thinking about what structures needed to be in place, or whether that were already in place and how we can share that best practice and a more joined up approach. It was highlighted that they were different methodologies for evaluation across the university and how can we share that and how can we bring those to the forefront.
- What do we want to evaluate and what are we actually trying to achieve - can we share examples again from other areas across the university who do this good practice and bring those different evaluation methodologies together? What are we evaluating against and why are we gathering what we're gathering and what are we actually trying to measure, not in a way of a KPI but perhaps some form of criteria or goals or actions that we want to identify and thinking about the overlap across professional services - a joined up approach.
- Producing some clear guidance for departments about what we can do and bringing up the different areas: the WIHEA learning circles and WP, perhaps the inclusive education and the Warwick Institute of Engagement as well and having some monitoring points. We have a lot of good data so how do we collate it altogether and how do we embed it across the university?
- Departments already have monitoring points; maybe we can add extra guidance to inform that best practice and different groups like Student Opportunity, who would be interested in collaborating with WP so that we can share that best practice; finding the best way of speaking to different departments about what they would like from evaluation and also recognising that there is already a lot of expertise around; how to share best practice itself.

c) Group 3 – Student Engagement: How can we ensure that students play an active role as partners in the development, implementation and evaluation of the University's approach?

- The discussion started quite typically looking at focus groups, questionnaires, surveys, etc with students, but we soon realised that we needed to go a step back before that because we had a preconceived idea that we were then presenting to students for their opinion. So we were talking about how students could engage actively on an equal basis with us. The focus is on empowering students. Students produce lots of ideas and they can articulate what they want, but then they need to be empowered to talk to us about their ideas.
- When we say empower it means giving structures in order to be able to feed the student voice, so ideas have been generated and are able to feed into decision making.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commenting on pre-existing ideas because the students will know themselves what is most important and what would be most impactful. We know that students on an individual basis will talk to various members of staff in finance, WP, etc. and we need to collate that into one plan. <p>The Chair found the discussions useful in their contribution to the development of the APP and University strategy.</p>
Monitoring, Policy and Practice	
019	<p>Social Mobility Student Research Hub</p> <p>The Committee received a report from the Widening Participation Evaluation and Evidence Manager (019-WPC011222{Open})</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> This report provides insight into the outcomes and impacts of the University’s Social Mobility Student Research Hub (SMSRH), which was funded by Research England in February 2022 to improve access to and participation in, research, for students from underrepresented groups. Over a period of six months, the SMSRH offered funded opportunities that enabled fourteen undergraduate (UG) and two postgraduate taught (PGT) students from underrepresented groups to complete research projects which highlighted a range of issues related to Widening Participation and social mobility, utilising different approaches (e.g., podcasts, videos, primary research). The students developed these research projects with support from four mentors (postgraduate research students), and a project team comprising staff from the WP team and academics. Students attended various events as part of the SMSRH, including workshops and a conference, where they presented their final outputs. In addition, a few students have submitted abstracts from their research to external conferences. The feedback we received about the project has been highly positive. Findings from a post-activity survey, which all mentors and fourteen students completed, indicate that they would all get involved with the research hub again if they had the opportunity, and that they gained new knowledge, skills, and experience from taking part. In turn, findings from semi-structured interviews with six student researchers provide deeper insights into how the project was influential, including: i) as a gateway for enabling students from underrepresented groups to pursue research opportunities and contribute to areas of investigation that they felt deserve more attention; and ii) as a platform for bringing students from WP groups together, raising awareness of the challenges they face, fostering a sense of belonging, and ‘hopefully inspiring change’. Though the funding has gone some way in enabling students from underrepresented groups to conduct research and to highlight issues which they may not have previously been able to, further work is undoubtedly needed to improve access to and participation in research for these groups. We have recently received news that an application we submitted for a Research England grant to continue this work has been successful. It will therefore be possible for us to undertake a second stage of the SMSRH, consolidating and enhancing this project as a continuing pipeline for students from underrepresented groups to undertake research in areas related to WP and social mobility. Notably, this second stage will offer students added opportunities to work with other University students and staff but also with external partnerships (e.g. IntoUniversity, Sutton Trust, the Brilliant Club) who will be invited to participate in an advisory capacity and/or to support on collaborative projects. In addition, we will seek to generate new evaluative tools (including a pre/post research hub survey) and build on the evidence developed in the first stage of the project to help understand the impacts paid research opportunities like those offered by the research hub can have on the aspirations, skills, knowledge, and academic engagement of students from underrepresented groups. In doing so, the project would provide valuable information to help drive the future development of a Social Mobility Research Centre at Warwick

	<p>that would continue beyond the project to widen access to research for students from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>f) Social Inclusion and Student Opportunity areas were keen to work collaboratively with TT and mentioned the Undergraduate Research Support Scheme (URSS), suggesting engagement with students who have taken part, to provide a pipeline into the Research Hub. 'Educational gain' was identified for TEF, and other avenues such as the Student Advisory Group, hosting a WIHEA session, the forthcoming Student Voice Conference and Eutopia.</p> <p>g) The group considered who needed to access the insights from the research and how to ensure it is followed up on, suggesting developing an action plan to take it further and address the issues that students are raising. TT outlined plans to cascade this to different departments and give students opportunities to share their work, with follow-up interviews. DW and CL pointed to the importance of including the PGT community more, and suggested the possibility of PhD studentships in terms of the research being embedded within departments.</p> <p>h) PB informed the group that Damien Homer had played an integral part in this project; the project has delivered some excellent outcomes and really positive experiences for students to demonstrate their capabilities in terms of and interest in research. Due to a late call for funding, it had been challenging to bring this together. In terms of the legacy of this and how to embed this further, previous discussions around a research centre for social mobility would bring together the entirety of our research and evaluation expertise across the institution. TT is also working with Emma Smith in Education to bring together academic colleagues who have a vested interest in this space. PB reiterated the University's role as a thought leader and influencer in advancing social mobility and addressing inequalities nationally and internationally; involving students to really shape this, demonstrates that there is a lot to build on over and above the project itself.</p> <p>RECEIVED:</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <p>BG to circulate slides.</p>
020	<p>Access and Participation outcomes report</p> <p>The Committee received a paper from the Head of Widening Participation and the Widening Participation Evaluation and Evidence Manager (020-WPC011222{Protected})</p> <p>a) This report provides a brief overview of access and participation indicative outcomes related to the 2022-23 applicant cycle and the degree outcomes from the 2021-22 academic year. It provides an update on progress made towards achieving key Widening Participation (WP) targets that we have committed to in the University's 2020/21 Access and Participation Plan (APP).</p> <p>Access</p> <p>b) Overall, progress made towards our APP annual milestones appears positive across all the identified access targets. The number and proportion of entrants from POLAR4 quintile 1 areas, and from the most deprived areas (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation [IMD]) have increased since 2021, and are the highest recorded levels to date. While we have made progress in closing the gap between POLAR quintile 1 and 5 relative to our baseline year, we have missed our annual milestone to reduce this gap, which has slightly widened compared to the gap observed in 2021/22. At a national level, the proportion of entrants from POLAR4 quintile 1 areas has increased, and the gap between POLAR 4 quintile 1 and 5 has slightly narrowed from 2.31 in 2019 to 2.12 in 2022 (ucas.com).</p> <p>c) We have seen a positive increase in the number of local entrants, which is now over two times higher than the number of local entrants in the baseline year, however we are still short of the 2022-23 annual milestone set in our plan. The planned growth of Warwick Scholars should support this in the longer-term.</p>

	<p>d) When we consider progress towards our intersectional target of improving access for BAME students from POLAR4 Q1&2, we have seen another positive increase in the number and proportion of entrants from this background but narrowly missed our 2022/23 milestone. Student Success- degree outcomes</p> <p>e) The University made a commitment in its access and participation plan to eliminate the awarding gap between Black and White students by 2025. There has been recent progress towards this target with the reported gap at -6.4 % in 2020/21, exceeding the annual milestone of 10% for 2020/21. However, 2021/22 bucked this trend and saw this awarding gap widen by 2% to -8.4%. A similar pattern was observed with respect to awarding gaps between White students and other ethnic groups (e.g., Asian, Indian, and Chinese students), which tended to narrow during pandemic affected years and then widen in 2021/22, albeit to varying degrees. Though most awarding gaps by ethnicity appear to have widened at least slightly in 2021/22, they have not fully reversed to pre-pandemic levels and gaps are still noticeably narrower compared to baseline figures.</p> <p>f) Awarding gaps are also evident amongst other target groups, including, perhaps most notably: i) students from the least and most represented groups in higher education (based on POLAR 4 quintiles; ii) students from the least and most disadvantaged areas (based on IMD quintiles); and iii) mature students and non-mature students. The awarding gap between students from different age groups (mature vs under 21) has narrowed since baseline when the reported gap was 14.6%. Much like the attainment trends observed with respect to ethnicity, the awarding gap based on age categories reached its lowest level of approximately 7% during a Covid-19 affected year (2020/21) and then slightly widened to 9% in 2021/22. In contrast, awarding gaps between students based on POLAR 4 and IMD quintiles 1-5 were slightly wider during the pandemic years, but have been closing over the last few years.</p> <p>g) The data in this report has important equality and diversity implications pertaining to the outcomes of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups at the University which require consideration as part of our ongoing drive to advance equality of opportunity for specific groups. KS commented on the measures around free school meals, the widening gap during and post COVID and the differential between socioeconomic groups, ethnicity and disability and queried whether that gap is also affected by cultural factors; cultural inclusion needs to be recognised in the inclusive education model, so it is even more important that it is embedded. Furthermore the economic impact on huge swathes of young people who will not necessarily be getting free school meals, but actually faced the same social and economic conditions, so flex is needed to ensure that those young people are supported too. TT agreed that exploring the intersectionality of factors requires further analysis. GV further suggested mapping the awarding gap at a departmental level to gauge whether the return to traditional methods has had an impact. TT agreed and suggested delving into learner analytics and pedagogical approaches to explore further correlations between outcomes and how they might vary across groups and departments.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the report on the Access and Participation outcomes</p>
021	<p>Warwick Scholars Growth Report</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal report from the WP Access and Lifecycle Manager</p> <p>a) This report provided an update of the Warwick Scholars Programme following the October Committee meeting, with an overview of A level achievement and destination outcomes for</p>

	<p>Warwick Scholars. Of the 137 that were on the programme cohort 3, 122 (89%) Warwick Scholars achieved the grades needed to get a university place. While two secured places at Oxford, 47% were accepted at Warwick (including deferrals); 66% choosing universities in the Midlands region (including Warwick) with a mix of Russel group and post '92 universities.</p> <p>b) Patterns in recruitment to the programme and to Warwick indicated that 64% achieved either the standard or contextual offer for the course they applied to. 28% achieved or exceeded the standard offer for their course, 36% achieved the contextual offer while 23% gained their place by achieving the Warwick Scholars offer (WSO) for their course. The remaining 13% includes two deferrals from 2021 and students whose grades matched the WSO in tariff points (eg needed BBB achieved A*BC / AAC). About 50% of the Warwick Scholars access program students were in receipt of free school meals so it would be interesting to explore whether being on free school meals has made a significant difference.</p> <p>c) Of a recruitment target of 200 maximum, 186 are on the program this current year; from 2024-25 onwards, the target will be 500 places, with future progression to Warwick 49%. The next steps in the growth plan for the Warwick Scholars access programme will be to share this data with those in-demand departments - Computer Science, Economics, Law, Life Sciences and WBS - to identify the patterns that are starting to emerge and to discuss how to mitigate the growth in interest. Broader discussions are planned with departments with fewer Scholars' applications, such as in the Arts, in order to fill the proposed 500 places.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the update.</p> <p>ACTION: BG to circulate the slides.</p>
Items below this line are for receipt and/or approval, without discussion	
022	<p>IntoUniversity Coventry – Annual Report 2021/22</p> <p>The Committee received IntoUniversity Coventry Annual Report (022-WPC011222{Open}) for receipt without discussion.</p>
023	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<p>Close by 11.30 Next meeting: 30 March 2023</p>	