

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**  
**WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE**  
**RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 MARCH 2023**  
**9.30-11.30AM**

<b>Present</b>	Professor Christopher Hughes	CH	Pro Vice Chancellor (Education), (Chair)
	Paul Blagburn	PB	Head of Widening Participation, (Secretary)
	Adele Browne	ABr	Director of Student Experience
	Adam Child	AC	Academic Registrar
	Baljit Gill	BG	Widening Participation Manager, (Assistant Secretary)
	Professor Letizia Gramaglia	LGra	Head of Academic Development
	Associate Professor Lee Griffin	LGri	Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education
	Professor Ruth Hewston	RH	Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning
	Dr Elizabeth Hough	EH	Head of Admissions
	Paul Johnstone	PJ	Head of Analytics
	Sue Jones	SJ	Head of Student Finance
	Nina Anne Lawrence	NL	Head of Academic Department, Foundation Studies
	Chih-Hsiang Lo	CL	Students' Union Representative (Education)
	Professor Tim Lockley	TL	History, Faculty of Arts Representative
	Hamza Rehman	HR	Students' Union Representative (Postgraduate)
	Gavin Schwartz-Leeper	GS	Associate Professor, Liberal Arts
	Professor Gwen Van Der Velden	GV	Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education)
Professor Derrick Watson	DW	Head of Psychology, Faculty of SEM	
Roberta Wooldridge Smith	RWS	Director of Student Opportunity	
<b>Attending</b>	Rosalyn Forbes	RFo	Leadership and Regular Giving Manager, representing Deputy Director of Development
	Victoria Hill	VH	WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Arts
	Dr Damien Homer	DH	Head of Disability Services, representing Director of Wellbeing
	Andy Johnson	AJ	Social Inclusion Manager, representing Director of Social Inclusion
	Catherine McNicholl	CMc	Widening Participation Manager
	Dr Tammy Thiele	TT	WP Evidence and Evaluation Manager; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Item</b>		
024	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Kieran Barry, (SU WP Part-Time Officer); Amanda Bishop, (WP Faculty Co-ordinator, SEM); Professor Celia Brown, (Professor, Warwick Medical School); Claire Edden, (WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Social Sciences; WP Student Advisory Group Co-Chair); Dr Rebecca Freeman, (Dean of Students); Kate Ireland, (Director of Centre for Teacher Education); Cheryl Jones, (WP Access and Lifecycle Manager; Student Success and Progression Working Group Co-Chair); Natalie Lloyd, (Deputy Director of Development); Samuel McClenaghan, (Deputy Finance Director); Kulbir Shergill, (Director of Social Inclusion); Professor Emma Smith, (Director of Education Studies; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair); Professor Patrick Tissington, (Academic Director of Employability and Skills).</p>		
025	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>		

026	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting on 1 December 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 (026-WPC300323{Protected}) were received and approved.</p>
027	<p><b>Matters arising from last meeting on 1 December 2022</b></p> <p>There were no other matters arising from the meeting on 1 December 2022 that were not covered in the agenda.</p>
<b>Chair's Update</b>	
028	<p><b>Chair's Business and Action</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed new members to the Committee: Kieran Barry, WP Part-time Officer in the Students' Union and Adam Child, the new Academic Registrar.</p> <p>In February, RF and PB presented a paper to University Council on progress on Access and Participation and the Inclusive Education Model, which was strongly endorsed reflecting the long term work of the Committee. Institutional APP progress was positively received, and the Council felt the IE model was impressive and a sector leading point of distinction for the University. Further conversations will be arranged in May between PB, RF, Council members and students.</p> <p>There were no other updates from the Chair.</p>
<b>Strategic Item</b>	
029	<p><b>Student Experience Strategic Framework</b></p> <p>The Committee received a paper from the Director of Student Experience (029-WPC300323{Protected}) which has been presented for consultation at a number of Committees.</p> <p>a) In 2022 the University created a new, institutional Student Experience function to design and deliver a strategy focused on building student community and belonging. The 'student experience', taken broadly to comprise the quality and perceived value of a student's journey from end to end of their university course, is a priority consideration for UK higher education providers in respect of their reputation, market position and adherence to regulation. However, beyond the current market context, academic research has produced robust evidence since the 1970s of the interconnectedness of a student's wider lived experience and their academic achievement. A major purpose of the new function is to review, join up and enhance the utility and accessibility of the 'wider' student experience offer at Warwick, defined as the complete range of services and opportunities in place for students in addition to, and designed to support and complement, their academic course.</p> <p>b) The proposed strategic activity interconnects closely with the considerable work underway in academic Departments to drive forward course design, projects and interventions that support student community and belonging. The new Student Experience function plays a role predominantly as a horizontal connector and collaborator, and will deliver the Strategy working with, and through, Warwick's Inclusive Education Model and the University's strategies for Social Inclusion, Widening Participation, Wellbeing, Student Communications, Web Transformation, Regional impact, Culture and place-making and Internationalisation.</p> <p>c) The paper provides background and context for the proposed delivery of a Student Experience Strategy built around four key themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. That the range of wider services and opportunities supporting students' experience at Warwick should be made coherent from a student user perspective</li> <li>II. That the totality of the wider student experience offer should be reviewed for the ways it serves students at/on different levels and modes of study, and from different demographic groups, and made consistently relevant.</li> </ol>

	<p>III. That it is essential that the design, presentation and communication of Warwick's total 'offer' to its current students is consistently engaging, both in its substance and how students are made aware of it</p> <p>IV. That the student experience should be distinctive to Warwick and contribute to the University's reputation for excellence and innovation</p> <p>d) The main risks arising from this Strategy concern raising students' expectations that actual or perceived issues affecting the student experience will always be resolved quickly and easily. This particularly concerns questions of campus infrastructure. Student Roundtables are designed in part to mitigate these risks, fostering open dialogue around immediate challenges and the University's longer term plans.</p> <p>e) The wider student experience strongly connects to both the Inclusive Education Model and Widening Participation. AC queried whether off campus and virtual activity would enhance accessibility to all students and this was being gauged through the work with students. TT enquired about the level of granularity involved, and whether there are plans to share this. AB assured that all centrally held and department data was being analysed, with Student Officers recruited to map this out. GV acknowledged that while this is welcome progress, some of the necessary structures do not exist, for example around governance. PB agreed that this is the purpose of the WP Committee, ensuring inclusive voices and reaching those not engaged to better understand the student experience. It is anticipated that this will be implemented by 2028, reflecting internal and external environments.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b> The Committee <b>noted</b> and <b>supported</b> the Student Experience strategic framework.</p>
030	<p><b>PGT Strategy</b></p> <p>The Committee received a report from the Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education (030-WPC300323{Protected}) which has been presented for consultation at a number of Committees.</p> <p>a) This report provides an overview of the development of, and progress towards, a Postgraduate Taught (PGT) strategy for the University.</p> <p>I. PGT is an important part of the University, but often falls between undergraduate and postgraduate research provision leading to a lack of clarity and consistency. The student journey can be used to map out specific aims and goals across three areas: applications, enrolment and attendance</p> <p>Within each of these are strategic aims:</p> <p>I. A 'holistic signature' PGT pedagogy should be developed, being a concise description of the Warwick PGT journey.</p> <p>II. This can best be achieved with some central support structure that departments and students can utilise as necessary.</p> <p>b) An EDI impact assessment and a risk analysis will be conducted in advance of seeking full approval for a final PGT strategy in the future.</p> <p>c) The existing focus is on enrolment; this needs to continue throughout. Currently there is no definition of WP at PGT, data is only available on those UoW undergraduate students who progress to postgraduate study. Little structure or consistency around available scholarships exists; these are often awarded in the form of fee waivers. Support is necessary for students who struggle with the significant jump from UG to PGT and a greater focus on careers and skills. Further work with employers would aid their understanding of the differentiation between different levels of study.</p> <p>d) The challenges of identifying WP students presents risks to opportunity as defined by the OfS in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), reflecting the national complexities of PGT student engagement.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p>

	The Committee <b>noted</b> the report.
<b>Monitoring, Policy and Governance</b>	
031	<p><b>National approach to access and participation</b></p> <p>The Committee received a report from the Head of Widening Participation (031-WPC300323{Protected}) on updates from the Office for Students (OfS)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) In 2022 the Office for Students (OfS) consulted on a new approach to regulating equality of opportunity in higher education, including the provision for access and participation plans (APP) 2024-25 onwards. The consultation outlined a range of proposals including the introduction of a national equality of opportunity risk register (EORR) that all providers should take account of in the development of plans, a reduced duration of plan from five to four years, and a significant emphasis on the quality and quantity of evaluation outputs across access and participation activity. Moreover, plans would be expected to reflect new national priorities including raising attainment in schools and enhancing more flexible and diverse pathways to higher education.</li> <li>b) In February 2023, the OfS announced a shift in the approach to the development of new plans. This included a request that a small cohort of 30-50 providers submit new APPs this summer to take affect for the 2024-25 academic year onwards, with the remaining providers required to submit their new APPs in spring or summer 2024, to take affect for the 2025-26 academic year. Requests for the first wave of providers has been encouraged through an expression of interest, with around 40 expressions made to date. The wider implications of the different waves means that providers will have variable plan durations, potentially four years for wave 1 and three years for wave 2, to ensure providers eventually merge on to the same timeline. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. On 29th March 2023, the OfS published the following: independent analysis of responses to the consultation on a new approach to regulating equality of opportunity; OfS analysis of responses to the consultation and decisions; updated regulatory notice 1 (Access and participation plan guidance); the new sector level Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR); updated Access and Participation Data Dashboard.</li> </ol> </li> <li>c) The OfS have also published new and updated Key Performance Measures (KPMs) on equality of opportunity. These relate to access to higher education for different levels of disadvantaged, and measures of success and progression based on completion rate and progression to employment or further study by different levels of disadvantage. The final KPM considers degree attainment by ethnicity focused on the proportion of students from different ethnic groups who achieve a first-class degree compared to the proportion of all students receiving a first-class degree.</li> <li>d) Area-based measures including POLAR4 are being phased out, with a more explicit articulation of levels of disadvantage (significantly disadvantaged and economically precarious). The change in approach presents a range of opportunities, risks, and challenges for our institutional approach. The University is in a position of strength because of the significant commitment, effort, and reform in this area over the past five years, and priority should be on enhancement rather than radical reform. There will be areas to benchmark where our approach compares to the EORR and how we can further develop evaluation and strengthening the evidence base.</li> <li>e) The timescales for wave 1 are challenging with a likely submission required by the beginning of July, meaning a final version would need to be complete by the start of June to ensure governance routes are informed, consulted and can approve. Providers that choose wave 2 will have their current plan rolled over to cover the 2024-25 academic year. Opting for wave 2 potentially presents a risk to our current approach to access and participation, including the agility to make strategic level changes to parts of our plan, however providers can request to vary their APP at any time. Variations are concerned with strategic level changes that would have an impact on the delivery of a plan; they are subject to the same assessment, approval, and review process as a whole plan and can take up to 12 weeks to complete.</li> <li>f) The previous APP focused on national priorities and key performance measured directed by the OfS, resulting in very different plans, with a strong focus on improving access, especially in selective institutions, and on student success, in post 1992s. There is now opportunity for HEIs to</li> </ol>

	<p>take a more nuanced focussed approach, contextualising this relevant to institutional context. While the Plan will have a four-year outlook, universities are expected to have aspirations and intentions beyond that. Rather than raising attainment in schools, the guidance has moved to how HEIs can support in that area, as well as developing and promoting diverse pathways to HE including degree apprenticeships.</p> <p>g) Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) focusses on how institutions reflect in their own context and practice to mitigate twelve sector wide risks. Further risks may emerge, a number reflect the current context, and could be applied throughout the educational journey. In the updated APP dashboard POLAR4 is no longer included as an indicator, being replaced by TUNDRA (tracking underrepresentation by area), an area based measure linking participation rates with schooling factors, and a focus linking the language that schools use and understand. TT explained that TUNDRA is based on the medium super output areas that are quite large and has a low correlation with income deprivation, so challenges may emerge. EH is in conversation with IDG on how to get the data from UCAS to use in the decision-making process. The shift in emphasis away from area based measures to more individualized context will help looking at different demographics and diversity in a broader way.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b> The Committee <b>noted</b> the report. This item will be brought to the next meeting after presenting to other committees and reflecting on the University decision.</p>
<p>032</p>	<p><b>Working Group Updates</b> Due to presenters' apologies, this item will be deferred to the next meeting.</p>
<p>033</p>	<p><b>WP Student Voice Conference</b> The Committee received a report from the WP Faculty of Arts Co-ordinator (033-WPC300323{Open}) non the recent Student Voice conference.</p> <p>a) The conference on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 was the second joint annual event between the WP Staff and Student Networks, building on the inaugural conference in 2022 themed around sense of belonging. It was designed to allow members to come together as peers and discuss issues relating to WP at the University. The overarching theme of the event, Student Voice: A Widening Participation Perspective, was created in consultation with members of the WP Student Network, Student Network Representatives, and the WP Student Advisory Group. The theme was also supported by our Staff Network and provided an opportunity for staff and student collaboration.</p> <p>b) The conference provided an opportunity and platform for staff and students to share ideas and discuss student voice as a cross-cutting theme across the whole institution, bringing together academic and professional service colleagues and students. The event took the format of interactive workshops, insight presentations and panel presentations on the theme of student voice. A total of 19 different sessions were available for delegates to select from, including seven that were student-led and five co-led by staff and students providing a range of insights and perspectives into student voice. able to make new connections. There was so much active discussion in the room, lots of people said to us.</p> <p>c) Reflecting on opportunities for collaboration, the event was successful in terms of collaboration with students and from staff across the university. The next iteration of this is being considered, using forums to think collaboratively about the theme, and creative ways for WP students to share their voice across the student lifecycle are being identified.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b> The Committee <b>noted</b> the update.</p>

034	<p><b>Academic Governance Review</b></p> <p>The Head of Widening Participation gave a verbal overview of the Academic Governance Review.</p> <p>a) The Review will ensure that work within the academic governance agenda is effective. A focus on the diversity of membership of committees and structures will link into the broader inclusion agenda. The focus on delegation in terms of what committees are empowered to make decisions on is being explored, to implement agile ways of working within those structures. Furthermore as reflected in item 029, there are gaps in terms of governance.</p> <p>b) A working group has been set up, and all committee members will receive a survey looking at the effectiveness - more detail will come with that in due course. There will be a separate piece of work for the Secretariat looking at Committees' terms of reference.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b> The Committee <b>noted</b> the update.</p>
<b>Items below this line are for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</b>	
023	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>BG updated the Committee on developments in the University's Sanctuary, which are offered to asylum seekers to study at the University. A condition of the scholarship has been that if the students' status changes during their studies, the scholarship is immediately removed. However, UEB has now agreed that all asylum seekers who are awarded a scholarship will be awarded for the duration of their studies at Warwick, regardless of whether their status changes, demonstrating the University's commitment to these young people.</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<p><b>Close by 11.30</b> <b>Next meeting: 23 May 2023</b></p>	