

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE
RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 May 2022
9.30-11.30AM, MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present	Professor Christopher Hughes	CH	Pro Vice Chancellor (Education), (Chair)
	Paul Blagburn	PB	Head of Widening Participation, (Secretary)
	Adele Browne	ABr	Director of Student Experience
	Dr Rebecca Freeman	RF	Dean of Students
	Baljit Gill	BG	Widening Participation Manager, Assistant Secretary
	Dr Elizabeth Hough	EH	Head of Admissions
	Sue Jones	SJ	Head of Student Finance
	Natalie Lloyd	NL	Deputy Director of Development
	Professor Emma Smith	ES	Director of Education Studies; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair
	Professor Patrick Tissington	PT	Academic Director of Employability and Skills
	Dr Chris Twine	CT	Academic Registrar (until 10.30)
	Professor Gwen Van Der Velden	GV	Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education)
	Professor Derrick Watson	DW	Head of Psychology, Faculty of Science, Engineering & Medicine
Peter Wreford	PW	Head of Student Funding and Finance	
Attending	Amanda Bishop	ABi	WP Faculty Co-ordinator, SEM (item 057)
	Jo Bowers	JB	Widening Access Officer (item 053)
	Dan Cashmore	DC	Widening Participation Data Analyst (item 054)
	Kathryn Fisher	KF	Head of Disability Services, (representing Dr Hannah Friend)
	Dr Damien Homer	DH	WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Arts (item 057)
	Cherryl Jones	CJ	WP Access and Lifecycle Manager; Student Success and Progression Working Group Co-Chair
	Andy Johnson	AJ	Social Inclusion Manager (representing Kulbir Shergill)
	Paul Johnstone	PJ	Head of Analytics (representing Faye Murray)
	Kate McCarthy	KM	Research and Evaluation Officer (item 054)
	Catherine Munn	CM	Widening Participation Manager
	Alex Tansell	AT	Widening Participation Lifecycle Officer (item 053)
Ref	Item		
048	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Isabelle Atkins, (Education Officer, Students' Union); Professor Celia Brown, (Professor, Warwick Medical School); Jackie Clarke, (Director of Administration, Social Sciences); Claire Edden, (WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Social Sciences; WP Student Advisory Group Co-Chair); Dr Hannah Friend, (Director of Wellbeing and Safeguarding); Dr Letizia Gramaglia, (Head of Academic Development); Associate Professor Lee Griffin, (Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education); Professor Ruth Hewston, (Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning); Professor Kate Ireland, (Director of Centre for Teacher Education); Samuel McClenaghan, (Deputy Finance Director, Departmental Services); Professor Rachel Moseley, (Head of Department, TV and Film); Faye Murray, (Director of Strategic Planning and Analytics); Nathan Parsons, (Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union); Kulbir Shergill, (Director of Social Inclusion); Dr Tammy Thiele, (WP Evidence and Evaluation Manager; Research and Evaluation Working Group Co-chair); Roberta Wooldridge Smith, (Director of Student Opportunity).</p>		
049	Declarations of Interest		

	No new declarations were made.
050	<p>Minutes of last meeting on 6 April 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022 (050-WPC240522{Protected}) were received and approved.</p>
051	<p>Matters arising from last meeting on 6 April 2022</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the meeting on 6 April 2022.</p>
Chair's Update	
052	<p>Chair's Business and Action</p> <p>a) The Chair welcomed the recently appointed Director of Student Experience to the Committee.</p> <p>b) The Chair drew attention to the Realising Opportunities (RO) item (042-WPC010222) received at the last meeting; while this programme is important nationally, it has since faced media criticism, particularly around contextual admissions. PB added that the RO central team were disappointed as the initial engagement had been positive.</p> <p>There were no other updates from the Chair that were not covered in the agenda.</p>
Evidence, Policy and Practice	
053	<p>Warwick Scholars update</p> <p>The Committee received a presentation of a paper by the Widening Access and Lifecycle Manager, Widening Access Officer and Widening Participation Lifecycle Officer (053-WPC240522{Open})</p> <p>a) Warwick Scholars is a programme designed to support WP students with gaining access to Warwick and succeeding in their studies once at the University. It combines a pre-entry access element, introduced in 2019 for WP learners in the Midlands, with an undergraduate programme which covers the whole of the student lifecycle. Those selected to join receive A level tuition, access to mentoring and transition support during year 13, and once they enrol at Warwick they qualify for financial support in the form of a 50% tuition fee discount and a maintenance bursary. The paper provides an update on developments in Warwick Scholars since the last update in February 2021 (036-WPC020221).</p> <p>b) Recruitment to the Warwick Scholars Access programme increased from 99 in the first year to 147 in 2021/22, with the aim of recruiting up to 200 this year. In 2021/22 Scholars were successfully recruited from all 13 local authority areas covered by the scheme, the majority from Coventry and Birmingham. Attainment raising activities including A level tuition and revision bootcamps continue to be popular. The most popular subjects for tuition are Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and History. Revision bootcamps have focused solely on Mathematics and the physical sciences. 44% of Warwick Scholars joining the access programme in 2020-21 were interested in SEM courses. This translated into 51% of those who enrolled as an undergraduate in 2022/23. Warwick Scholars enrolling on courses in the Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities represented 39% and 10% of the cohort respectively. The third cohort of Warwick Scholars access students (current offer holders) follow a similar pattern with 46% interested in SEMM courses, 10% interested in Arts and Humanities and 37% in Social Sciences. 41 of the 68 Warwick Scholars access students holding a firm or insurance offer for entry in 2021 accepted a place at Warwick.</p> <p>c) The Warwick Scholars undergraduate programme is currently offered to all access programme participants plus care leavers and Sanctuary Scholars. From September 2022 it will also be offered to estranged applicants. In 2020/21 an additional 113 first years joined the programme, 56 Warwick Scholars access students and 57 from our other access programmes. In 2021/22 the first-year intake was slightly lower than the previous year at 92 students but this took the UG cohort numbers to over 240 in all year groups. In 2022/23 intake is predicted to be 120-140 students</p>

	<p>across all entry routes. Bespoke opportunities are offered to Scholars, and collaboration with the Warwick Award team to embed upReach engagement and skills development in the award criteria. Monash Warwick Alliance funded 20 additional bursaries for Warwick Scholars taking part in the TeaMWork virtual international experience in summer 2022. Mentoring and skills development programmes is offered through Student Opportunities and increasing numbers of Warwick Scholars 'giving back' and engaging with the wider Warwick Scholars community through social events and supporting widening participation initiatives.</p> <p>d) A revised bursary structure will be implemented from September 2022 and work with Academic Departments will plan for programme growth. Impact evaluation will be strengthened through use of STROBE data from UCAS, and degree outcomes will be available from 2022-23. Online provision to supplement on campus is being explored.</p> <p>e) RF queried the number of students not taking out the full student loan. CJ cited around 18 students are using their Scholars' bursary to supplement their fees, often for cultural reasons or debt aversion. NL wondered if there was a mechanism for Into University (IU) students to feed into Scholars; while the Scholars programme is advertised through a number of IU partnerships, they are not automatically engaged as IU assessment is not felt to be adequately robust. PB thanked the team and suggested a roadshow of this insightful data across Faculties. CH agreed on the need to promote it internally, potentially also to UEB.</p> <p>RECEIVED:</p> <p>The Committee noted and endorsed the developments and successes of the Warwick Scholars programme, and the continued growth and next steps for the programme.</p>
054	<p>Contextual Admissions evaluation</p> <p>The Committee received a report from the Widening Participation Evaluation Team (054-WPC240522{Protected})</p> <p>a) The University approved the adoption of the contextualised admissions policy in 2016/17 to support widening access for students from a range of underrepresented groups. This report provides insights into the impacts of this policy over its first five-year period, addressing the following three main research questions: has the contextual admissions policy enhanced access to the University for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds? To what extent does Warwick's contextual admissions policy mitigate academic barriers to HE participation for underrepresented groups? How do students who are admitted with a contextual offer perform in their studies?</p> <p>b) Admissions and Enrolments: Since 2017/18, a total of 13,799 applications have been flagged as eligible for a contextual offer; 9,229 applications have received a conditional contextual offer; and 2,230 students have ultimately enrolled at Warwick with a contextual offer (equating to 24.2% of all those that received a conditional contextual offer). The number of applications and enrolments from students that have met contextual indicators and thus been considered disadvantaged based on at least one measure have steadily increased since the inception of the policy. Notably, application and enrolment figures for this group were over three times greater in 2022 than in 2017/18. The entry grades of students that received contextual offer were on average lower than those of students who enrolled with standard offers by approximately 2 grades. These findings suggest that overall, the policy has helped to enhance access to the University for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds, and to mitigate academic barriers to HE participation for these groups. The policy has been heavily weighted in favour of educational measures of disadvantage, which have significant limitations and most students (approximately 70%) who have enrolled at Warwick with contextual offers have met the standard offer requirements. Changes have been made to address these issues and will be monitored going forward.</p>

	<p>a) Student Outcomes Analysis: Quantitative analyses were undertaken to examine the impacts of contextual offers on continuation rates to year 2 and degree attainment. Continuation was measured based on whether students progressed from year 1 to year 2 of their studies and degree outcomes were analysed for the first two cohorts of contextual offer students to have completed their studies at Warwick in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Between 2017 and 2020, 9.4% of students that received contextual offers did not continue to year 2, compared to 9.7% of non-contextual students. Analysis revealed that students that received contextual offers had 14% lower odds of continuing to year 2 compared to non-contextual students. However, this difference was not statistically significant. Moreover, the difference was entirely lost when background characteristics and prior attainment were considered. In contrast, the odds of achieving a 'good' degree result (2.1 or first) were found to be significantly lower for contextual offer recipients, compared to the odds of non-contextual students by nearly 40% when controlling for background characteristics and prior attainment. These differences varied when analyses were split by year and were only statistically significant for the first cohort of students that received contextual offers and completed their degrees in 2020. However, the proportion of contextual offer students that received first-class degrees was lower compared to that of non-contextual offer students by an average of 14% across both years.</p> <p>b) The findings highlight valuable ways in which Warwick's contextual admissions policy has helped to enhance access to the university for underrepresented groups and mitigates academic barriers to HE participation. However, various challenges are revealed related to the targeting of the policy and the outcomes of students that receive contextual offers once they are at the University, most notably in relation to degree attainment. These issues require consideration, further monitoring, and investigation to ensure that the contextual admissions policy is fair and effective and to help identify and address potential barriers that may affect the entry and success of students from underrepresented groups at Warwick</p> <p>c) CH inquired whether a breakdown of attainment and continuation by faculty/discipline was available. DC explained that it depends on the numbers involved in the cohorts. PJ proposed further exploration, tying in with the TEF co-ordination group for data for the OfS, differentiating between contextual/non-contextual students, and suggested using flags on the summary dashboard as an additional tool to explore the data. NL queried how the inclusion of both Access and Pathways students correlated, for example in Law. EH pointed to differences in the selection process; Life Sciences applicants are made an offer if they meet the entry requirements, whereas the Law department actively seeks to make quarter of offers contextual offers and therefore have different processes. PB suggested that this report may not reflect the complexities of how contextual admissions work in a highly selective institution. Discussions across the Russell Group propose linking together research powers to better articulate the benefits, outputs and impact of contextual admissions for government.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the findings in the report.</p>
055	<p>Access and Participation outcomes - Continuation</p> <p>The Committee received an update from the Head of Widening Participation (055-WPC240522{Open})</p> <p>a) A core part of the University's access and participation plan (APP) is to enhance continuation rates for some disadvantaged and underrepresented groups where there is evidence of a gap compared to other groups. Continuation refers to the percentage of first year students who continue their studies after 12 months (full-time students) or 24 months (part-time students). This paper provides an update on the most recently published OfS Continuation outcomes for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, including an overview on progress made towards APP targets. The University's APP targets take effect from 2020-21; however given the reportable lag in continuation data being published, the most recent data released is from 2019-20.</p>

	<p>Warwick's overall continuation rates have improved over the past 4 years, from 95.5% in 2016-17 to 97.6% in 2019-20. The University has made progress with all three continuation focused targets from the baseline year in 2016- 17.</p> <p>b) Continuation rates for POLAR4 quintile 1 students were at the highest ever in 2019-20 at 98%, the same level as POLAR4 quintile 5 students. In absolute numbers this represents less than 10 quintile 1 students not continuing their studies. This positive progress puts the University ahead of its 2020-21 milestone for the narrowing the gap between Q5 and Q1 students. Nationally, the non-continuation gap 2 between the most (Q5) and least (Q1) represented groups declined to 3.7% in 2019-20, however Warwick's pace of improvement is significantly higher. The gap in non-continuation rates between disabled students and non-disabled students has reduced significantly from 6.3% in 2016-17 to 1.9% in 2019-20. Continuation rates for disabled students are much higher when compared to national levels. There has been a marked improvement in continuation outcomes for mature students over the past four years, from 88% in 2016-17 to 93% in 2019-20, significantly higher than national outcomes. Continuation rates for students from the most deprived areas measured by IMD quintile 1 have also improved. The gap between Q5 appears significant nationally. These results will be reflected in the forthcoming TEF outcomes data and represent an opportunity to articulate a strong narrative in improvement over time.</p> <p>c) This information provides an addendum to a previous paper on APP outcomes (022-WPC021221). Due to the data lag, 2020-21 outcomes will be published next year. Significant gaps are evident across the sector for some groups; the increase in UoW continuation rates will be explored and the data reflected in TEF conversations. RF suggested the impact of pandemic may not be so positive.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the outcomes of the report.</p>
056	<p>Access and Participation Plan Variations 2023-24</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update {Protected} from the Head of Widening Participation</p> <p>a) The University has now received formal guidance from OfS; all institutions are expected to submit variations to their 2023-24 APPs by the end of July, a year before institutions are required to rewrite their APPs based on other national directives.</p> <p>b) OfS have provided a template to summarise APPs for students, parents/carers, and guidance on how to write succinctly. No major commitment changes will be in the UoW variations other than to draw on positive examples and outlining how we will build on commitments, particularly regarding school partnerships, degree apprenticeships and robust evaluation. There will be no change to investment commitments.</p> <p>c) The University has received formal confirmation from OfS that 2020-21 APP monitoring return has been accepted. The process has proved less burdensome than previously, and reflects progress made towards annual milestones highlighted in the APP dashboard.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the update.</p> <p>ACTION: The Head of Widening Participation to present a detailed item on APP variations at the next meeting.</p>
057	<p>Sense of Belonging Conference</p> <p>The Committee received an update from the WP Faculty Co-ordinators (057-WPC240522{Open})</p> <p>(a) The conference was the first joint event between the WP Staff and Student Networks and provided an opportunity for staff and student collaboration. It was designed to allow members to come together as peers and discuss issues relating to WP at the University of Warwick. The overarching theme of the event was created in consultation with members of the WP Student</p>

	<p>Network, the Network Representatives and the WP Student Advisory Group. The event was an opportunity to highlight the support, opportunities and challenges faced by staff and students who study and work at the University. The event took the format of interactive workshops and WP Insight presentations. The programme for the conference included sessions around the Mature Student Experience, Reshaping your Success, Belonging within an educational community, as well as Commuter Students and Young Carers. All the sessions were either student-led or co-created with staff and students.</p> <p>(b) A call to action at the end indicated students' desire for further student led activities, peer support, making connections outside faculty. Furthermore students specified that SSLC and course reps should be representative of whole community. They were keen for more collaborative events where they can speak to staff, with many surprised that staff can also come from a WP background. The paper will be presented at the upcoming University's Social Inclusion conference in June.</p> <p>(c) The UoW conference reflected the national picture, including a recent article (https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2022/05/23/student-belonging-and-inclusion/) and a WONKE conference where discussions covered making friends, building a sense of community and the impact of mental health and the pandemic, where a sense of belonging diminished. RF cited wider conversations around belonging and mattering, and suggested a broader discussion across the University on this. ABr queried how WP students were approached. DH suggested this had not proved a barrier as students are now more aware of their backgrounds. Furthermore a variety of events are offered from enrolment to engage with bursary holders, those entering the via contextual admissions process, those from low socio-economic backgrounds asking students to self-identify.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the update.</p>
058	<p>English Social Mobility Index</p> <p>The Committee received a paper by the Head of Widening Participation and the Senior Data Analyst (058-WPC240522{Protected})</p> <p>a) The English Social Mobility Index (ESMI) is a ranking of English Higher Education Institutions compiled by Professor David Phoenix, Vice-Chancellor of London South Bank University (LSBU) and published by HEPI. It is the latest in a series of exercises undertaken by HEPI with the aim of supplementing existing Higher Education rankings with new data and analyses that emphasise HEIs' performance in areas such as widening participation and social mobility. In order to assess social mobility, the index combines the social distance travelled by graduates from an institution (as represented by graduate salaries) and the number of graduates so transported. The paper has been well-received by UEB.</p> <p>b) The ESMI combines three factors: access, continuation and graduate salaries. Key data are drawn from the English Index of Multiple Deprivation; the OfS Access and Participation Plan datasets for access and continuation; and the Longitudinal Education Outcomes data. The Access and Participation Plan datasets are based solely on English students and the model takes account of both full-time and part-time students.</p> <p>c) Access data examine the percentage of students from IMD 1 and IMD 2 for each institution. Continuation data record institutions' percentage for continuation of IMD1 students. Longitudinal Educational Outcomes salary data are used to measure institutions' average graduate salary for IMD1, one year after graduation, adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).</p> <p>d) Following some changes to the methodology used in the 2022 Index, Warwick has achieved a ranking of 20 out of 101 institutions ranked. This is an improvement of 7 places from Warwick's 2021 ranking of 27. Individual metrics place UoW 6th for graduate outcomes, 8th for continuation and 80th for access, which has a 50% overall weighting in the Index. There have been recent updates to the access and continuation components of the Index which may provide a guide to</p>

	<p>how our ranking may change next year. It is notable that Warwick, alongside Cambridge, is one of only two Russell Group and highly-selective institutions in the top 20 outside London, where there tends to be a more ready recruitment area for socially and economically disadvantaged students. Overall, the ESMI, although an evolving methodology, demonstrates that Warwick, whilst continuing to make strong progress on access as well, is securing excellent outcomes for all students including those from a disadvantaged background.</p> <p>e) It is not clear that this ranking will achieve the reach or influence of the more established, commercially produced, league tables. It is possible that a concerted effort by the HE sector as a whole to promote the ESMI, or a shift in government HE policy to incorporate this (or a similar) measure of social mobility into HE performance metrics, could raise the profile of the ranking. HEPI advocate for OfS to use this, or another measure of social mobility in assessing the success of Access and Participation Plans.</p> <p>f) Given that the access measure accounts for 50% of the aggregate metric and it is Warwick's lowest-ranked metric, it seems likely that a focus on increasing the number of entrants from IMD1 and IMD2 would have a positive impact on Warwick's overall ranking in the ESMI. The University's APP has a clear focus towards POLAR4 as an indicator, given the gap between the most represented (Q5) and the least represented (Q1) was significantly wider than the equivalent gap using IMD. This is consistent with most Russell Group and more selective universities. In recognition of this, through WP policy and practice, a 'basket' of indicators are used to determine the most disadvantaged groups (including POLAR4, IMD, FSM etc), including through Warwick Scholars and Realising Opportunities. Moreover, the UoW Contextual Admissions approach recognises IMD Q1 as a key marker. HEPI's debate paper notes that, among institutions that rank highly in the ESMI, there are broadly two types: those that admit a moderate number of students from lower IMD quintiles and enable them to achieve significant social mobility; and those that accept many more students from lower socio-economic groups but move each of them a shorter distance. Warwick clearly resides in the former of these two categories, consistent with its position as a high tariff selective institution.</p> <p>RECEIVED: The Committee noted the report</p>
059	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The Chair thanked members for their support and work on the Committee and looked forward to the next meeting in the new academic year.</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<p>Close by 11.30 Next meeting: 30 June 2022</p>	