

WARWICK
EDUCATION
CONFERENCE

Learning for a Complex and Hopeful
Future: Pedagogies of
Empowerment, Equity, and Global
Readiness

Contents

Welcome to the Warwick Education Conference: Learning for a Complex and Hopeful Future: Pedagogies of Empowerment, Equity, and Global Readiness, 2026.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
Conference question	4
Programme Overview	5
Morning parallel session abstracts.....	6
Welcome Address	14
Morning keynote	15
Lunch.....	15
Afternoon parallel session abstracts	16
Afternoon keynote.....	21
Afternoon parallel session/ Conference close	21
Asynchronous nano-presentations	28
Education Fund 2025/26 Projects – Poster Display	31
Quiet Space – Room 0.03.....	32
Working Spaces.....	33
Conference Buddy Meeting Point.....	33

Welcome to the Warwick Education Conference: Learning for a Complex and Hopeful Future: Pedagogies of Empowerment, Equity, and Global Readiness, 2026

Welcome to the Warwick Education Conference. We are delighted to bring together colleagues from across our community to share practice, exchange ideas, and explore the future of education together.

Higher education has the power to cultivate hope, promote equity, and prepare graduates to thrive in an interconnected and uncertain world. Our conference theme invites us to explore teaching approaches that centre lived experience, challenge systemic barriers, and nurture students' capacity to imagine and enact meaningful change. It also calls for practices that build the critical, adaptive, and collaborative skills essential for navigating complexity—empowering learners not only to understand the world, but to shape it with purpose and compassion.

As we come together for this conference, the programme has been intentionally designed to foster meaningful dialogue, shared insight, and a strong sense of collective purpose. Through keynotes, workshops, and discussions, we hope to create space for reflection, inspiration, and practical exchange.

We encourage you to actively engage throughout the conference—share your perspectives, connect with colleagues, and contribute to our collective thinking, including through the conference question. Together, we continue to strengthen pedagogies that empower learners, advance equity, and respond thoughtfully to the complexities of an interconnected world.

Acknowledgements

This event would not be possible without the hard work and contribution of our education community (staff and students). We would particularly like to thank the following:

Conference Convening Team

Kerry Dobbins
Alexandra Fraser

Conference Steering Committee Members

Georgia Kremmyda
Marta Guerriero
Karen Simecek
Martyn Parker
Jessica Humphreys
Elena Riva
Leti Gramaglia
Ananya Sreekumar
David Lees

Conference Committee Members

Penelope Mosavian
Laura Gelhaus
Monica Sounderraj
Manoj Babu
Mojtaba Poorrezaei
Rachel Strisino
Cate Anthony
Jacob Sargeant
Khaled Al Khudir
Susie Cowley-Haselden
Jianhua Yang
Cecilia Paredes
Eleanor Reynolds
Natasha Mwila
Karen Kudar
Zhun Liu
Catherine Bennett
Tejal Fatania
Sherrihan Radi
Zhiqiong Chen
Emily Unwin
Tilly Harrison
Salimeh Pour Mohammad
Maryam Masood

Submission reviewers

Anandini Arumugam
Azadeh Moladoost
Bing Lu
Cath Fenn
Catherine Bennett
Cecilia Paredes
Daniela Dogaru
Georgios Kapogiannis
Fatemeh Azimi
Georgina Pilling
Hamish Sutcliffe
India Palmer
Karen Kudar
Lavanya Vimalan
Maryam Masood
Megan Caulfield
Mucahit Ozden
Muminah Hussain
Nicholas Hopcroft
Ninna Makrinov
Penelope Mosavian
Phyo Wai Tun
Pip Brown
Rachel Strisino
Richard Watson
Surangi Jayakody
Sutong Duan
Tejal Fatania
Zhiyan Guo

ADC administrative support

Judith Taylor
Amandeep Chhokar
Tina Finlay

We would also like to thank the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine for sponsoring the event.

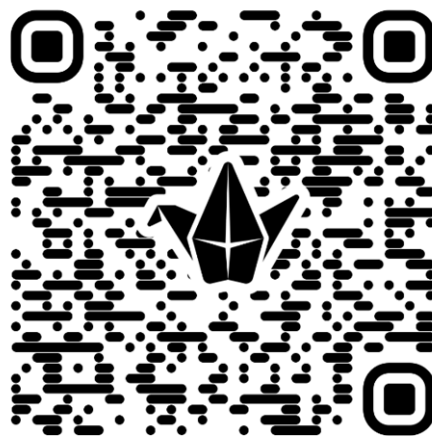
Conference question

As part of this year's Warwick Education Conference, we invite all participants to engage with a shared question that will run throughout the event:

Envisioning hopeful futures begins with the learning spaces we inhabit today — how can we cultivate environments where every student can thrive, contribute, and shape their world with purpose?

This question is intended to prompt reflection, dialogue, and the sharing of ideas across our community. We encourage you to contribute your thoughts, examples, and aspirations via the Padlet link below—whether inspired by a specific session, conversation, or your own practice.

By gathering these perspectives, we hope to create a collective resource that captures the richness of thinking across the conference and supports ongoing conversations beyond the event itself.



<https://padlet.com/universityofwarwick/EduConf2026>

Programme Overview

WARWICK EDUCATION CONFERENCE Programme 2026							Learning for a Complex and Hopeful Future: Pedagogies of Empowerment, Equity, and Global Readiness					
09:00 - 09:30	REGISTRATION											
Morning parallel session												
These sessions will start with a brief introductory segment, including a recorded message from Professor Lorenzo Frigerio, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)												
09:30 - 10:40 (to include welcome)	R1.15 Ideas Exchanges	R1.13 Ideas Exchanges	R0.21 Interactive panel	R1.03 Engagement workshop	R0.12 Engagement workshop	R0.14 Collaborative space						
	Elevating students' voices through lived experience.	Pedagogies of Empowerment: From 'talking at' to 'working with'.	Trauma-informed practice and pedagogy for empowerment and inclusion - a multi-perspective panel discussion.	What Counts as a Global Education Opportunity? Reimagining Global Learning for an Inclusive Future.	How we (un)do racism at the university: the language of racism, the racism of language.	Reimagining Assessment for Sustainable Futures: A Collaborative Exploration.						
	Inclusive Leadership Pathways: Findings and outcomes, and application in context.	Marking Criteria and Beyond: Sharing strategies for developing inclusive assessment and academic literacies.										
Developing skills to navigate uncertainty and complexity in an uncertain future: lessons from engineering education.	Rethinking Digital Assessment: Student Empowerment through Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Exams.											
10:45 - 11:00	Welcome Address (R0.21) Professor Georgia Kremmyda, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)											
11:00 - 12:00	KEYNOTE (R0.21) "From flailing to flourishing? Connection and criticality for uncertain times" Dr Karen Gravett (Associate Professor and Head of the Surrey Institute of Education at the University of Surrey, UK)											
12:00 - 12:50	LUNCH											
Afternoon parallel session												
12:50 - 13:50	R0.21 Interactive panel	R1.03 Collaborative space	R1.13 Collaborative space	R0.14 Collaborative space	R1.15 Engagement workshop	R0.12 Engagement workshop						
	Widening Participation is everyone's responsibility: Exploring a whole institutional approach to enhancing access and success.	Co-creating Collective Undergraduate Research through Project-Based Learning.	Faculty-wide approaches to interdisciplinary learning for skills development and employability.	"Scholarship" time: what should I do with it and why?	Practical Compassion: service learning as a powerful curriculum tool.	Beyond the classroom: Building an inclusive whole student experience.						
14:00 - 14:50	KEYNOTE (R0.21) "We Dream the Same Dream: Collective Empowerment in Pedagogy" Professor Jason Arday (Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education, and a Fellow at the Jesus College, Cambridge, UK)											
Afternoon parallel session												
15:00 - 16:15 (to include conference close)	R1.15 Ideas Exchanges	R1.13 Ideas Exchanges	R0.21 Interactive panel	R0.14 Collaborative space	R0.12 Collaborative space	R1.03 Engagement workshop						
	From Reflection to Readiness: Structured Conversations for Future-Ready Graduates.	Learning beyond the campus: supporting students through off-campus transitions.	Pedagogies of empowerment in practice: designing student voice and agency with AI.	Co-Creating Assessment Rubrics to Empower Learners and Promote Equity in Postgraduate Education	Adjustments ≠ Inclusion: from adapting for disability to accessibility as default.	The Power of Compassionate Communication						
	Developing Intercultural Competence through Experiential Learning: Insights from a large scale University Programme	Professional Identity with a sprinkle of Psychological Safety: A Recipe for Good Education.										
The Global Futures Challenge: How might we empower the next generation of global changemakers and innovators?	Compassion in Higher Education: Insights from the WIHEA Compassionate Pedagogy Learning Circle.											
CONFERENCE CLOSE												

Morning parallel session abstracts

Parallel session stream A – Ideas Exchanges

Location: R1.15

Elevating students' voices through lived experience

Mary Griffin (Warwick Law School)

When students draw on their own lived experience, they can forge connections between abstract theory and grounded reality. Inviting students to explore personal experience and share their stories not only fosters empathy and inclusivity, it provides an opportunity to reflect and learn from one another, often highlighting unconscious bias, values and areas of expertise students may not have previously acknowledged. This session will share the example of an interdisciplinary undergraduate module which empowers students to develop their own writing style to analyse and communicate the human rights issues that matter most to them. The module invites students to break away from imagining human rights as theoretical and distant, instead learning about human rights (and wrongs) in practice and in context. By centring human impact and the voices of those affected, we can challenge dominant narratives and ask how we might “live human rights”. Students consider “radical honesty”, a “pedagogical practice of truth-telling that seeks to challenge racist and patriarchal institutional cultures in the academy” (Williams, 2016) and respond to Audre Lorde’s rallying cry in *The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action*. While higher education is beginning to realise the importance of inviting students’ lived experiences into teaching and learning practices, anxieties around discomfort, unpredictability, and potential risks, may deter some teachers from introducing first-person perspectives to their classroom. But this misses the opportunity to draw on the cultural capital of our students, and to empower them as authors. The session will explore how similar strategies of students telling their own stories can be used across disciplines, with examples from teachers of nursing, business and science. This form of narrative pedagogy builds on Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology. It reminds us that while we educate and empower students to challenge norms and cultivate hope, we can also highlight the valuable educational resources that are already within them.

Inclusive Leadership Pathways: Findings and outcomes, and application in context

Marion Patel (Student Opportunity), Kelly Coles (Student Opportunity), and Erin Dilger (School of Life Sciences)

Leadership is often perceived by students as hierarchical, managerial, or reserved for formal positions of authority. This narrow interpretation limits students’ ability to recognise and articulate the breadth of leadership qualities they already demonstrate throughout their academic, personal, and professional experiences, and how these could link to inclusive and broad leadership roles in their future. In alignment with Warwick’s ESE 2030 Strategy, this project seeks to provide a framework for leadership as a broad, inclusive, and accessible skill for all disciplines.

This institution wide initiative brings together Student Opportunity, academic departments, Warwick Enterprise, and students to cocreate a new Warwick Leadership Framework. Drawing on research into inclusive leadership theory and qualitative

insights from student and alumni interviews and focus groups, the project will contextualise leadership through diverse lived experiences.

The project includes the creation of: – a university wide, student informed Leadership Framework – teaching resources and case studies for integration into curricula – a new Warwick Award Leadership Pathway accessible to all students – embedded leadership activities piloted in SLS (LF271) and WMS curricula

The session will share research findings, emerging framework components, and sample resources. Initial evaluation findings from student collaborators and early pilot engagement will be included, alongside discussion of how colleagues can adopt, adapt, or embed this work within their own modules or cocurricular initiatives.

By reframing leadership as inclusive, values driven, and rooted in everyday practice, this project aims to cultivate reflective, confident graduates equipped to lead positive change across varied professional and civic contexts.

Developing skills to navigate uncertainty and complexity in an uncertain future: lessons from engineering education.

Richard Watson (School of Engineering)

Engineering requires technical skills in ensuring that anything designed or made is safe and suitable for purpose. How this is achieved through conventional education includes the maths, physics and engineering principles as a theoretical basis. This basis was the main consideration for many years of engineering education, but design and other skills have become essential. Modern working engineers require a broad range of skills in addition to the theoretical basis to deal with uncertainty, complexity, and the modern work environment. The question is how do we develop these skills and is this of use in other disciplines?

In my teaching we aim to develop engineers who will have to cope with uncertainty and complexity as part of their career, this is being achieved by education through practical project-based learning. A range of challenging projects with uncertainty as an essential part of the project specifications are set for student groups to produce a prototype solving a specific challenge. With designed in uncertainty and complexity the students must develop skills for understanding and quantifying uncertainty and the skills needed to address this in a scientific manner. This development is guided through a range of seminars providing information on strategies and techniques for them to utilise. These seminars include skills for research, design processes, application of engineering science principles, practical manufacturing, and project management, to design the prototype solution and then manufacture this prototype over two terms. This is undertaken in groups of 6-8 mimicking the modern teamwork environment for engineers.

This session aims to stimulate discussion on development of skills for addressing an uncertain future not only for engineers but how that can be developed for interdisciplinary education. Discussions on assessment over 20+ weeks, project based learning and, practical components and their role in education and module design are envisioned.

Parallel session stream B – Ideas Exchanges

Location: R1.13

Pedagogies of Empowerment: From 'talking at' to 'working with.'

Rachel Strisino (Centre for Lifelong Learning) and Briony Martin (Centre for Lifelong Learning)

Since the 1990s, UK education policy has increasingly promoted lifelong learning to widen participation among non-traditional students (Cornford, 2002). In this context, higher education programmes must move beyond access alone to consider how pedagogical design can meaningfully empower students as active agents in their own learning. Our contribution to the Warwick Education Conference explores how critical and transformative pedagogies can be operationalised within professional programmes to amplify student voice, challenge dominant narratives, and foster reflective, confident learners.

Drawing on teaching practice across the Child and Family and Counselling and Psychotherapy programmes in the Centre for Lifelong Learning (SELCS), our discussion examines the intentional use of critical reflection, dialogic learning, and collaborative assessment as pedagogies of empowerment. Informed by Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (1991), reflective activities are designed to support students in constructing and revising frames of reference through structured dialogue with peers and educators. This is complemented by situated cognition theory (Ataizi, 2012), which emphasises learning as socially embedded and enhanced through group discussion, mentoring, and shared meaning-making – learning by doing.

In Counselling and Psychotherapy teaching, every lecture and seminar involves dialogic learning. We'll share the joys and pitfalls of this approach.

In Child and Family, we're engaging in critical reflection by embedding time in sessions where students recognise the significance of these sessions for future practice, fostering personal and professional growth.

In both our disciplines, we're using collaborative assessment, where students grade and comment on their own work before formal marking.

By embedding these approaches across teaching and assessment, we argue that students are afforded genuine opportunities to shape their learning journeys, develop critical self-awareness, and translate insight into behavioural and professional change. We encourage you to reflect on the role of the educator, recognising that institutional support, reflective teaching practice, and pedagogical confidence are essential to sustaining transformative approaches. Ultimately, we ask how you can be influential in fostering empowerment, agency, and equity in lifelong learning pedagogies.

Ataizi, M. (2012). Situated Cognition. In: Seel, N.M. (eds) *Encyclopaedia of the Sciences of Learning*. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_16

Cornford, I.R., (2002) Reflective teaching: empirical research findings and some implications for teacher education, *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 54:2, 219-236, DOI: 10.1080/13636820200200196

Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E.W., (1991) *Transformative Learning in Practice : Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education*, (ed.) John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2009. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/warw/detail.action?docID=469114>.

Marking Criteria and Beyond: Sharing strategies for developing inclusive assessment and academic literacies

Katie Stone (School of Modern Languages and Cultures)

Across the UK higher education sector, the National Student Survey repeatedly identifies assessment and feedback practices as areas for enhancement. A desire to understand the roots of student dissatisfaction with assessment, marking, and feedback has accordingly driven much pedagogical research for several decades. There is general agreement that traditional marking criteria based on evaluative language ('poor', 'good', 'excellent') are subjective, 'fuzzy' (Sadler, 1987), and make sense primarily to those who already possess the 'tacit knowledge' and 'academic literacies' to understand the standards expected (Chan & Ho, 2019; Panadero & Johnson, 2020). Informed by this literature, the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at Warwick has revised its marking criteria as part of a longer-term initiative to foster assessment for learning.

This session will begin with an introduction to the research and consultation process that informed our approach to creating more inclusive and transparent assessment practices. The main aim of the session, however, is to stimulate discussion about how marking criteria fit within and relate to broader strategies for enhancing assessment literacy (O'Donovan, Price, & Rust, 2004; Lorber, Rooney, van der Enden, 2019). It will be a space for sharing best practice and reflection on how teaching and assessment can be used to support students from a wide range of backgrounds and negotiate the emotional aspects of assessment and feedback.

References

- Chan, Z., & Ho, S. (2019). Good and bad practices in rubrics: the perspectives of students and educators. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44(4), 533-545.
- Lorber, P., Rooney, S., & Van Der Enden, M. (2019). Making assessment accessible: A student-staff partnership perspective. *Higher Education Pedagogies*, 4(1), 488-502.
- O'Donovan, B., Price, M., & Rust, C. (2004). Know what I mean? Enhancing student understanding of assessment standards and criteria. *Teaching in Higher education*, 9(3), 325-335.
- Panadero, E., & Jonsson, A. (2020). A critical review of the arguments against the use of rubrics. *Educational Research Review*, 30, 1-19.
- Sadler, D. R. (1987). Specifying and Promulgating Achievement Standards. *Oxford Review of Education*, 13(2), 191-209.

Rethinking Digital Assessment: Student Empowerment through Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Exams

Natasha Nakariakova (FOLD/Digital Learning) and Yihua Huang (FOLD/Digital Learning)

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) is often introduced as a technical solution to scaling digital assessment. However, sector practice suggests it has significant pedagogical implications. Institutions such as Cambridge, UCL, UEA and Kent & Medway Medical School have developed structured BYOD approaches for in-person digital exams, combining minimum device specifications, secure browsers, advance preparation, and contingency planning. Alongside this, Advance HE positions BYOD within broader blended, flexible and student-centred learning environments.

Our discussion reframes BYOD not as infrastructure replacement, but as a shift in the learning relationship. When students use their own devices in high-stakes assessment, familiarity, autonomy and continuity between formal and informal learning spaces may be strengthened. At the same time,

digital readiness, accessibility, confidence and equity become pedagogical considerations rather than purely technical issues. Drawing on cross-institutional examples and our own experiences within the School of Law and WMG apprenticeship programmes, this Idea Exchange session will explore how device ownership intersects with assessment design and learner experience. In Law exam, early BYOD implementation highlighted the importance of student confidence and clarity of responsibility. Within WMG apprenticeships, where learners are often workplace-based professionals with varied digital ecosystems, BYOD raises further questions about flexibility, inclusivity and authenticity of assessment practice. Does BYOD enable more authentic, open-book or applied assessment? Does it strengthen digital fluency as a graduate and professional capability? Or does it risk narrowing assessment to what secure platforms can technically support? After a short summary of sector practice, we will invite participants to discuss three questions:

- How does BYOD shape assessment design?
- What support structures make digital readiness part of learning, not a barrier?
- How can institutions balance student empowerment, fairness and academic integrity?

The session aims to stimulate collaborative reflection on BYOD as a deliberate pedagogical strategy.

Parallel session stream C – Interactive panel

Location: R0.21

Trauma-informed practice and pedagogy for empowerment and inclusion – a multi-perspective panel discussion

Helen Anne Nolan (Warwick Medical School (WMS)), Vicky Panossian, PhD Candidate (Department of Sociology), Rachel Craven, (Conduct and Resolution), Charlotte Jones (Centre for Lifelong Learning) Vasileios Marinos (Warwick Students' Union), Richard Clay (Warwick Medical School (WMS)), Yanyan Li (Institute of Advanced Study) and Shaoyu Yang, PhD Candidate (School of Modern Languages and Cultures)

Background

Recent studies indicate over 75% of UK university students have experienced at least one trauma exposure (1, 2). Traumatic events may have significant consequences, including on mental and physical health, relationships, academic performance, employment, and economic outcomes (1). Trauma often originates from established power structures and discrimination, leaving various minoritised groups disproportionately impacted.

Trauma-informed practice acknowledges the nature of traumatic impacts on individuals and communities and ensures that stakeholder needs are accommodated in individual practice and organisational policy to prevent retraumatisation and promote inclusion and empowerment for all stakeholders. Trauma-informed pedagogies encourage educators to recognise and respond to trauma and its impacts using strategies to improve engagement and wellbeing for those impacted by trauma. While trauma-informed practice and pedagogy (TIPP) are establishing in UK higher education (3), co-created guidance for UK contexts is lacking. Supported by the Monash-Warwick Alliance (MWA), we are undertaking a cross-institutional project to inform implementation of TIPP in higher education.

Panel overview

This panel, featuring stakeholders from university departments and services, will explore perspectives through audience engagement and interaction using audience response software and think-pair-share

activities. The session will explore audience familiarity with TIPP, and provide an overview of TIPP and our MWA project. Panellists from university departments and services will then discuss current practice and emerging needs at Warwick. Participants will be invited to identify examples of good practice and areas requiring further support. The session concludes with an overview of project outputs to advance TIPP, and a call-to-action to consider implementation within participants' own contexts.

Audience Take Homes

Participants will gain awareness of; contacts and resources at UoW to support the enhancement of TIPP in their own work; opportunities to pilot or apply project outputs; and pathways to advocate for and champion TIPP within their departments and everyday practice.

References

1. Allen SF, Thursby S, Elkwood L, Carthy NL. A latent profile analysis of psychosocial factors and trauma exposure in UK students and their association with mental health and academic persistence. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*. 2024.
 2. Davies E, Read J, Shevlin M. Childhood adversities among students at an English University: A latent class analysis. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*. 2022;23(1):79-96.
 3. Donkin S. Advance HE2025. [cited 2026]. Available from: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/everyone-can-benefit-more-trauma-informed-approach-higher-education>.
-

Parallel session stream D - Engagement workshop

Location: R1.03

What Counts as a Global Education Opportunity? Reimagining Global Learning for an Inclusive Future

Debbi Marais (Warwick Medical School (WMS)), Roberta Wooldrige Smith (Student Opportunity), Massimiliano Tamborrino (Department of Statistics), Daniel Jones (Warwick Global Academy), Thomas Greenaway (Student Opportunity) and Sujaya Shrestha, Student Researcher WIHEA Internationalisation Mapping project

As universities respond to increasingly interconnected futures, a central challenge emerges: what exactly constitutes a meaningful global education opportunity? Traditionally defined through longstanding models of physical mobility, "global experiences" have often been accessible only to a minority of students. Warwick's GEO100 vision aims to revolutionise this, with a very ambitious goal: 100% of students will have an international experience during their studies at Warwick (defined as physical, blended, or digital; embedded in curriculum or co-curriculum; and inclusive of intercultural, interdisciplinary, and internationally-oriented experiences). If every student is to engage globally, then our sector must broaden, challenge and even rewrite prevailing definitions, going beyond the idea of international mobility. This workshop invites participants to collaboratively explore and define the core elements of a global education opportunity appropriate for a diverse and future-focused

university. Taking inspiration from the GEO100 Programme, we will unpack the principles that might guide a shared institutional definition.

Together, we will examine questions such as:

What experiences genuinely develop a global mindset, intercultural sensitivity, and international orientation?

How can opportunities be designed to include students with limited financial means, diverse language profiles and cultural backgrounds, disabilities, caring responsibilities, or time constraints?

Which forms of global engagement should “count”, and why?

How do sustainability, digital innovation, and interdisciplinarity reshape what global learning can look like?

Participants will engage in structured discussion and design activities to map the attributes, thresholds, and values that might underpin a Warwick definition of a global education opportunity. By the end of the session, attendees will have co-created a set of draft principles that can inform practice, support equitable access, and guide related initiatives. This workshop is ideal for staff interested in internationalisation, inclusive education, curriculum design, and preparing students to thrive in a globally connected world.

Parallel session stream E – Engagement workshop

Location: R0.12

How we (un)do racism at the university: the language of racism, the racism of language

Sanchia Rodrigues (Warwick Global Academy)

What does racism have to do with ...

academic writing style?

speaking clearly and intelligibly?

language tests for those not from “English-speaking” countries?

teaching and research in English (only)?

the fetishisation of multilingualism?

This workshop focuses on an aspect of personal/professional practice that is pivotal to anti-racism and yet often goes overlooked: language. In some ways, the relationship between racism and language is clear: UK universities have clearly benefitted both from the global spread of English through empire, and the enduring ideologies that simultaneously attract and marginalise large numbers of so-called “international” students to our campuses (Gao, 2025; Hsu, 2017). From this point of departure, the workshop explores how racism operates not only through our use of language, but also through our understandings of what language is and does.

In the first half, attendees explore a menu of activities introducing concepts such as the ‘white listening subject’ (Rosa and Flores, 2015) and uncovering the hidden role of language in the university,

with the freedom to choose those they find most relevant. In the second half, the focus turns inwards: drawing on Kubota (2020) and the Sister Scholars (2023) and beginning from a place of collegiality, care and curiosity, the workshop invites us to collectively reflect on our own biases, how they relate to our personal journeys and relationships with language, and crucially, how we can work together to actively resist epistemic racism and coloniality through language.

Attendees will leave not just with inspiration, but with practical interventions to enact meaningful change in their personal/professional practice. More importantly, following Vandeyar (2020) and Arday et al. (2021), they will also start to build an emerging community of like-minded practitioners offering the cross-institutional support needed to sustain truly radical, anti-racist practice at Warwick.

Parallel session stream F – Collaborative space

Location: R0.14

Reimagining Assessment for Sustainable Futures: A Collaborative Exploration

India Palmer (WMG) and Maryam Masood (WMG)

Preparing graduates for sustainable futures requires assessment practices that can engage with complexity, uncertainty, and ethical judgement rather than reduce learning to predictable outputs. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) positions sustainability as a way of thinking and acting (UNESCO, 2017) therefore demanding systems awareness, collaboration, and reflexivity. This approach challenges conventional assessment models (Sterling, 2011). Given the powerful influence of assessment on student learning (Boud, 2010), rethinking how we assess sustainability is both necessary and timely, as traditional assessment formats often struggle to effectively consider the multi-dimensional and applied nature of sustainability challenges. Assessment of sustainability in higher education is something that has gotten less attention with more focus being on the content and pedagogical approaches to deliver the content (Redman and Wiek, 2021).

This collaborative session adopts an inquiry-led approach to assessment for sustainability. Rather than presenting fixed solutions, the session invites participants to collectively explore, test, and critique emerging assessment ideas grounded in theory and practice. Drawing on scholarship related to assessment for complex learning (Fischer, King and Redman, 2025), the session creates a space to share assumptions, tensions, and possibilities in current assessment practices.

Through structured prompts and facilitated small-group activities, participants will experiment with questions such as:

- What might assessment look like if complexity, uncertainty, and collaboration were treated as assets rather than problems?
- How can sustainability-oriented assessments remain credible within PSRB, apprenticeship, and institutional frameworks?
- How might assessment design better support equity, student agency, and shared responsibility for learning?

Participants will be given examples, or they can bring examples from their own contexts and work collaboratively to adapt, remix, or reimagine assessment approaches, including group- and project-based tasks. The session models the conference pedagogy by grounding discussion in scholarship, prioritising dialogue and co-creation, and designing for inclusive participation.

Participants will leave with new ways of thinking about assessment for sustainability, along with experimental, adaptable ideas they can refine and test within their own teaching contexts.

References:

Boud, D. (2010). *Assessment 2020: Seven propositions for assessment reform in higher education*. Sydney: Australian Learning and Teaching Council. Available at: https://www.uts.edu.au/globalassets/sites/default/files/Assessment-2020_propositions_final.pdf

Fischer, D., King, J. and Redman, A., 2025. Rethinking Learning Assessment in Education for Sustainable Development: A Call for Action. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 19(1), pp.58-75.

Jackel, B., Pearce, J., Radloff, A. & Edwards, D. (2017) *Assessment and feedback in higher education: A review of literature for the Higher Education Academy*. Available at: https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/hea/private/hub/download/acer_assessment_1568037358.pdf

Redman, A. and Wiek, A., (2021) *Competencies for advancing transformations towards sustainability*. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 785163). Frontiers Media SA.

Sterling, S. (2011). Transformative learning and sustainability: sketching the conceptual ground. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*, 5(1), 17-33. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504622.2010.505427?needAccess=true#d1e270>

Welcome Address

Professor Georgia Kremmyda Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) (including WATE award presentations)



Time: 10:45 – 11:00 | Location: R0.2

Morning keynote

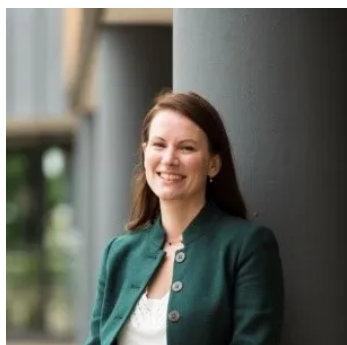
Dr Karen Gravett (Associate Professor and Head of the Surrey Institute of Education at the University of Surrey, UK)

"From flailing to flourishing? Connection and criticality for uncertain times"

Time: 11:00 – 12:00 | Location: R0.21

Abstract

This keynote will explore how we might respond to the current uncertainty of contemporary higher education. Teaching today is a complex, evolving and challenging practice, and yet meaningful teaching has the power to both inspire and change lives. Educators work in particularly difficult and fast-changing times: financial constraints and precarity have impacted across institutions, the transformative impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) are destabilising the ways in which we understand what it means to teach, learn and assess learning, and blurring the boundaries between human and machine. What it is to be a student at university, where the university is, the purpose of learning, and what constitutes knowledge are all fundamental questions that are reshaping our role as teachers. In this keynote I ask: how might we respond in order to create meaningful futures and connections – to flourish rather than to flail? To understand teaching in contemporary times, I draw upon my theory-practice to explore teaching as an affirmative and relational endeavour that can inspire others and lead to generative moments of connection. I consider how we might understand teaching as a critical practice, where educators embrace uncertainty, question assumptions, and continue to evolve their approaches.



Dr Karen Gravett is Associate Professor and Head of the Surrey Institute of Education at the University of Surrey, UK, where her research focuses on the theory-practice of higher education, and explores the areas of digital education, belonging, and relational pedagogies. She is Co-Director of the Language, Literacies and Learning research group, an Associate Editor for the journal *Sociology*, and Executive Editor for the journal *Teaching in Higher Education*. She is also a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA) and an Honorary Associate Professor for the Centre for Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University. Karen's latest books are *Reconceptualising*

Teaching in Higher Education: Connected Practice for Changing Times, *Critical Practice in Higher Education*, and *Relational Pedagogies: Connections and Mattering in Higher Education*. You can find some of Dr Gravett's e-books available from our Warwick digital library.

Lunch

Time: 12:00 – 12:50

Time and space to refresh, chat and connect. Lunch will be provided in the Ramphal atrium as buffet. As part of our commitment to sustainable practice, catering will be provided in a way that helps minimise waste.

Afternoon parallel session abstracts

Parallel session stream A – Interactive panel

Time: 12:50 – 13:50 | Location: R0.21

Widening Participation is everyone's responsibility: Exploring a whole institutional approach to enhancing access and success

Paul Blagburn (Head of Widening Participation and Social Mobility), David Bather Woods (Philosophy), Emma Cann (Social Inclusion), Liza Yousef (PGT Student), Oliver Daniels (UG Student) Victoria Hill (Widening Participation and Social Mobility)

Inclusion is a fundamental principle of Higher Education, particularly as universities seek to support increasingly diverse student populations to access, succeed, and thrive in the context of an evolving landscape.

As part of Warwick's commitment to inclusion and widening access, we strive to take a holistic and whole institutional approach to address the risks to equality of opportunity. The University's Access and Participation Plan outlines ambitious targets identified through an analysis of institutional performance on access, student success and progression. This commitment is embedded in our lifecycle approach, supporting underrepresented students from pre-entry to graduation and beyond.

Liz Thomas (2024) has defined a whole provider approach as focusing on 'widening access and student experience interventions across the student lifecycle and operating across the institution' to create an enabling environment across the entire university to actively drive equity forward. When universities are working with an increasingly complex and diverse student body, a whole institutional is imperative to create positive and sustained equity and inclusion for all.

This interactive panel will bring together a wide range of perspectives and insights into Widening Participation and Social Mobility work across the University of Warwick. The panel will be composed of current Warwick students from a Widening Participation background, academic staff supporting departmental practice and Widening Participation practitioners to share lived experience, current practice and sector insights. Together, we will explore how inclusive practice can be embedded across the student lifecycle, moving beyond isolated interventions towards shared academic and institutional responsibility. Attendees will participate in engaging and dynamic discussion, be encouraged to ask questions, and will leave with an enhanced understanding of whole institution approaches to widening participation and how they can contribute to Warwick's within their own context.

Parallel session stream B – Collaborative space

Location: R1.03

Co-creating Collective Undergraduate Research through Project-Based Learning

Bing Lu (Faculty of Arts), Elena Sokola, student, (Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG)), Chole Barker, student, (Global Sustainable Development (GSD)), Madison Bracher, student (Warwick Medical School (WMS)), Surangi Jayakody, (WMS), Naveera Abhayawickrama (Law), Jianhua Yang (WMG), Feng Mao (School for Cross-faculty Studies (SCFS)) and Modupe Jimoh (School of Engineering)

Across UK higher education, over 400,000 of undergraduate research projects are awarded each year. However, most dissertations are archived after assessment, representing a long-overlooked goldmine of ideas and insights within higher education. The piece 'rethinking the undergraduate dissertation' published by The Guardian (2011), suggests that while retaining the core learning outcomes of traditional dissertations, there's room to offer students alternative formats that align more closely with their interests and future career paths. Project-based learning is becoming increasingly important in the AI era, especially as educators place greater emphasis on authentic assessment.

This session responds to a growing pedagogic challenge: how can project-based learning move beyond isolated, short-term outputs to support collective, sustainable, and meaningful student research?

Long Term Collective Student Research (LoCoR) is a two-year, cross-faculty, student–staff co-created initiative that enables students to build projects on previous student research, fostering continuity, openness, and research community across cohorts and disciplines. Drawing on the learning developed from the project, this interactive session invites participants to explore how undergraduate students can be positioned not only as learners, but as knowledge producers whose work contributes to shared, interdisciplinary research legacies. Our focus group data shows that this process enhances students' personal resilience and optimism through recognising that their work has lasting value.

Grounded in scholarship on students-as-producer (Neary & Winn, 2009), project-based learning in Higher Education (Guo et al., 2020) and teaching-research nexus (Healey, 2005), the session will briefly introduce the LoCoR model before moving into collaborative activities. Participants will work in mixed groups (staff and students) to reflect on their own disciplinary contexts and co-design responses to shared challenges, including:

1. equity and fairness in project-based assessment,
2. ethics and openness in reusing student research,
3. interdisciplinarity and collaboration across programmes,
4. sustainability of staff workload and digital infrastructures.
5. working with advanced technologies in project-based learning contexts, for both learners and teachers

Facilitated by LoCoR staff co-leads and student co-creators, the session prioritises dialogue, mutual learning, and inclusive participation. Structured prompts and small-group activities will ensure all voices are heard, with multiple modes of engagement offered.

Participants will leave with:

1. practical design principles for collective undergraduate research,
2. strategies for embedding student agency and interdisciplinarity into project-based learning, and
3. a shared toolkit of ideas for making student research more visible, equitable, and impactful.
4. student participants leaving feeling their voice was heard and their ideas potentially incorporated into the assessment process

Parallel session stream C – Collaborative space

Location: R1.13

Faculty-wide Approaches to Interdisciplinary learning for skills development and employability

Karen Simecek (Social Sciences) and Ali Collins (Student Opportunity)

Connecting the Social Sciences Big Questions with the increasing need to support students' skills development and employability, the Faculty of Social Sciences and Student Opportunity are working together to develop a faculty-wide module which proposes an innovative approach to interdisciplinary learning. Whilst this initiative is currently focused on Social Sciences, this could serve as a model for all three faculties at Warwick.

The module is aimed at first year students, who will form cross-departmental teams to work on projects addressing one of the Big Questions and linked to regional, national or global practice through input from employers and alumni. The module would enable students to focus on a project aligned to their values, to see how their disciplinary expertise can help them to have an impact on issues they care about, and to understand the value of interdisciplinarity in tackling wicked problems and developing the skills they will need as they transition into their careers.

Based on successful existing models such as the LSE100 model and Taylors University Impact Labs, the proposed module will provide students with transferable employability skills and an understanding of how their area of specialism can be applied to a wide range of global challenges. It will also give them exposure to employers and alumni, enabling them to start building a professional network and levelling the playing field in terms of the connections and cultural capital which still play such an important role in career success.

The module is still in the early stages of development. This collaborative space session provides an opportunity to discuss and co-create the module with colleagues, as well as consider how this approach might translate to the Faculty of Arts and SEM. In particular we will explore:

- Integrating and reflecting existing departmental employability initiatives within a faculty-wide module.
- Addressing the challenges of scaling the module up for all first year students.
- Considering departmental perspectives on the potential benefits or challenges of this approach.
- Understanding the potential barriers to student engagement with a faculty approach to employability.

Parallel session stream D – Collaborative space

Location: R0.14

"Scholarship" time: what should I do with it and why?

Susie Cowley-Haselden (Warwick Global Academy), Mucahit Ozden (WMG), Hollie White (WMS), Kerry Dobbins (ADC), Kate Owen (WMS), Katie Stone (SMLC) and Leticia Villamediana Gonzalez (SMLC)

This year's conference invites proposals on designing teaching and learning that empowers students and prepares them for a global and complex world, as well as embedding sustainability, equity and

inclusion in higher education. Scholarly research and practice are at the heart of our endeavours as educators to work towards all these goals. However, time is tight and workload allocation for scholarship is limited. What is more, what we can/should/would do within this time can be unclear and elusive. Our collaborative space is designed for sharing ideas about how we “get started” and “find the time” to integrate scholarship into our daily practices. We will focus specifically on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and consider what we can do individually and as a community to embed the foundations, understanding and development of SoTL into our educational activities. SoTL has been seen as one of the most powerful forms of professional learning for educators (King, 2022). This applied session will harness the potential of SoTL for educators, recognising that engagement in this activity might look different for all of us depending on our context, experience and intention.

The session will be divided into three parts:

- Mini presentations from members of the new SoTL development network on what has worked well in their contexts.
- Small group discussion on what participants have done, could do, and have been inspired by.
- A “Wall Walk” to capture the outputs of the discussions and locate fellow travellers and potential collaborators and supports.

By attending our session, you will gain:

- Ideas about how to integrate SoTL into daily practice in an evidence-informed way;
- Ideas for encouraging SoTL community and collaboration;
- Opportunities to connect with others interested in SoTL.

References

King, H. (2022). Professional learning for higher education teaching: An expertise perspective. In H. King (Ed.) *Developing expertise for teaching in higher education: Practical ideas for professional learning and development* (pp.157-174). Routledge.

Parallel session stream E – Engagement workshop

Location: R1.15

[Practical Compassion: service learning as a powerful curriculum tool](#)

Kate Owen (WMS), Surangi Jayakody (WMS), Simron Kaur (WMS), Sean Barrett (WMS) and Mohamad Alobeid (Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre)

Compassionate practice can be protective against burnout and increase resilience and wellbeing amongst students. Many students achieve this through volunteering, however we have integrated this into our curriculum through "service learning" drawing on an extensive pedagogy largely from North America. We have conducted a systematic review to ensure our innovation is evidence based then developed and integrated into our core curriculum opportunities for students to serve the local community aligned with our academic discipline. We are now conducting a realist evaluation which has evidenced transformative learning and

This workshop is an opportunity to explore, design and critique potential service learning initiatives aligning with your discipline. Working on tables with students and members of the local community who have taken part you will consider step-by-step the development of a plan which will be supported by our experiences. This will include practicalities, identifying community opportunities, developing learning outcomes and identifying unexpected learning, evaluating students learning through reflection, supporting students and project evaluation.

We will finish with a "gallery walk" where participants will be able to view and critique other developmental plans.

At the end of the session you should have a discipline-aligned plan for service learning to take back to your department.

Parallel session stream F – Engagement workshop

Location: R0.12

[Beyond the classroom: Building an inclusive whole student experience](#)

Megan Caulfield (Dean of Students Office), Beccy Freeman, Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) and Adele Browne (Student Experience)

Students don't encounter university life in neatly separated compartments. Their sense of connection, motivation, and ability to succeed is shaped by a continuous network of everyday touchpoints that extend beyond the classroom. From communications, administrative processes and learning environments to peer connections, personal tutor interactions, and assessment expectations, this interactive workshop explores how universities can design for inclusion across the whole student experience.

Drawing on cross-institutional work with students and with academic and professional service teams, this session highlights practical examples where small, intentional shifts in practice have led to meaningful improvements in students' experiences.

By foregrounding these everyday touchpoints, the session reframes inclusion as a shared institutional responsibility that depends on collaboration across academic and professional boundaries. Attendees will be invited to reflect on the diverse routes students take through university and consider how minor adjustments can have a significant impact on equity, connection, and wellbeing.

The session will conclude with a practical, reflective activity in which attendees identify one or two achievable changes they can implement within their own roles and context.

Afternoon keynote

Jason Arday (Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education, and a Fellow at Jesus College, Cambridge)

"We Dream the Same Dream: Collective Empowerment in Pedagogy"

Time: 14:00 – 14:50 | Location: R0.21



Professor Arday has previously held the position of Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Glasgow, School of Education; Associate Professor in Sociology at Durham University in the Department of Sociology; and Deputy Executive Dean for People and Culture in the Faculty of Social Science and Health.

Jason is a Patron of the Adult Literacy Trust (ALT) and Get Further. He was formerly a Trustee of the Runnymede Trust, the UK's leading Race Equality Thinktank for 11 years. Presently, he is a Trustee of the British Sociological Association (BSA). Jason sits on the NHS Race and Health Observatory Academic Reference Group and the ITV Cultural Advisory Council.

Afternoon parallel session/ Conference close

Parallel session stream A – Ideas exchanges

Time: 15:00 – 16:15 | Location: R1.15

From Reflection to Readiness: Structured Conversations for Future-Ready Graduates

Samantha Wilson-Thain (School of Life Sciences), Bruno Martins (School of Life Sciences), George Haughie (Student Opportunity), and Chris Rodrigues (Life Sciences)

Higher education faces growing pressure to graduate students who can thrive in global workplaces—bringing disciplinary expertise alongside transferable skills and intercultural competencies for collaboration across cultures and disciplines. Yet graduates often report feeling underprepared, and employers continue to highlight gaps in communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving.

Building on Miller and Konstantinou's (2022) argument that reflective, authentic assessments bridge academic and professional practice, this case study explores an initiative within the School of Life Sciences. We introduced a formative, structured dialogic process that informs summative assessment, aligned to the Warwick 12 core skills, positioning students as active partners in their development. This approach fosters meaningful dialogue between students and supervisors and engages academic and professional services staff in co-creating an inclusive, transparent, and equitable assessment experience.

Drawing on literature around authentic assessment and employability (Knight & Yorke, 2004; Jackson, 2016), the framework scaffolds student growth, enhances assessment literacy, and cultivates shared

responsibility for employability. By embedding structured reflection and partnership, the initiative supports students in articulating skills for intercultural and interdisciplinary collaboration, preparing them to navigate complex, global contexts.

Participants will learn how to embed structured dialogue into assessment design to promote reflection, inclusivity, and skill articulation. They will take away adaptable templates for dialogic frameworks and practical strategies for aligning employability skills with disciplinary learning—approaches transferable across contexts to strengthen academic–professional connections and prepare graduates for collaborative, culturally diverse environments.

Developing skills to navigate uncertainty and complexity in an uncertain future: lessons from engineering education.

Yesim Kakalic (Student Opportunity) and Thomas Greenaway (Student Opportunity)

Engineering requires technical skills in ensuring that anything designed or made is safe and suitable for purpose. How this is achieved through conventional education includes the maths, physics and engineering principles as a theoretical basis. This basis was the main consideration for many years of engineering education, but design and other skills have become essential. Modern working engineers require a broad range of skills in addition to the theoretical basis to deal with uncertainty, complexity and the modern work environment. The question is how do we develop these skills and is this of use in other disciplines?

In my teaching we aim to develop engineers who will have to cope with uncertainty and complexity as part of their career, this is being achieved by education through practical project-based learning. A range of challenging projects with uncertainty as an essential part of the project specifications are set for student groups to produce a prototype solving a specific challenge. With designed in uncertainty and complexity the students must develop skills for understanding and quantifying uncertainty and the skills needed to address this in a scientific manner. This development is guided through a range of seminars providing information on strategies and techniques for them to utilise. These seminars include skills for research, design processes, application of engineering science principles, practical manufacturing, and project management, to design the prototype solution and then manufacture this prototype over two terms. This is undertaken in groups of 6-8 mimicking the modern teamwork environment for engineers.

This session aims to stimulate discussion on development of skills for addressing an uncertain future not only for engineers but how that can be developed for interdisciplinary education. Discussions on assessment over 20+ weeks, project based learning and, practical components and their role in education and module design are envisioned.

The Global Futures Challenge: How might we empower the next generation of global changemakers and innovators?

Chris Wilkinson (Warwick Enterprise, Innovation Group)

Today's social and ecological problems require students and graduates who can collaborate across diverse cultures and disciplines and apply local learnings to global contexts. Enterprise and entrepreneurship education (EEE) offers a pedagogical approach for developing empathy, resilience, and creative thinking (QAA, 2018). EEE has been shown to support global readiness and its associated

skills (Guzmán & Velazco, 2022). However, opportunities for students to employ these skills in a truly global context remain limited.

To address this, in 2025, the University of Warwick and Monash University launched the Global Futures Challenge (GFC), a unique initiative which blended EEE with cross-continental collaboration. Students formed interdisciplinary teams to develop social enterprises addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As part of the experience, students were required to navigate time zones, cultural differences, and disciplinary perspectives, mirroring real-world global challenges. Winners of the GFC participated in a Week of Action in Kuala Lumpur, learning from social entrepreneurs and community leaders, and receiving mentorship to sharpen their solutions and hone their skills, supporting them in confronting global challenges past the programme.

As we plan to expand the GFC, this session asks participants to co-design the future of global readiness initiatives. How might we scale global readiness initiatives across campus and beyond? How can we support students in creating change and achieving global impact? How can we ensure equitable access and experience across diverse student populations? How can we help students reflect on their Warwick experience to create global change?

Participants will leave with practical tools for integrating cross-cultural collaboration into their learning and activities, and the opportunity to shape future programs and activities to develop globally minded student leaders. (273 Words)

References:

Hernández Guzmán, D., & Hernández García de Velazco, J. (2024). Global Citizenship: Towards a Concept for Participatory Environmental Protection. *Global Society*, 38(2), 269–296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2023.2284150>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. (2018). Enterprise and entrepreneurship education: Guidance for UK higher education providers. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/enhancement-and-development/enterprise-and-entpreneurship-education-2018.pdf>

Parallel session stream B – Ideas exchanges

Location: R1.13

Learning beyond the campus: supporting students through off-campus transitions

Michelle Watson (Education Group) and Linda Sherwin (Education Group)

Transitions within higher education are often framed as administrative or pastoral moments, yet for many students (particularly those moving to live off-campus) they represent profound shifts in identity, belonging, and agency. This idea exchange shares learning from the University of Warwick's work on supporting students through internal transitions, with a specific focus on the move to living off-campus as a critical, equity-shaping moment in the student experience.

Grounded in lived experience, the project centred student voice to surface the often-invisible challenges of off-campus living, including isolation, navigating adult responsibilities, and uneven access to institutional support. Through co-creation with students, we explored how departments can move beyond deficit narratives to design responses that build students' confidence, autonomy, and capacity to navigate complexity.

The 10-minute presentation will briefly outline the inquiry approach, co-creative methods, and emerging outcomes, offering practical provocations about how teaching, learning, and support structures intersect at moments of transition. The session will then open into a facilitated discussion, inviting attendees to reflect on their own contexts and consider how pedagogical and support practices can foster hope, equity, and belonging beyond the classroom.

Designed as an interactive idea exchange, this session prioritises dialogue and shared inquiry. Participants will leave with adaptable insights into how student partnership and transition-aware pedagogies can empower learners to thrive in complex, interconnected futures- particularly where learning extends into lived, off-campus environments.

Professional Identity with a sprinkle of Psychological Safety: A Recipe for Good Education

Tajvinder Kaur Grewal (WMS), Rukshana Begum (WMS), Laura McNally (WMS), Anandini Arumugam (WMS), Jaskiran Johal (WMS) and Lavanya Vimalan (WMS)

Higher education can provide a platform for teaching students how to navigate challenging and sensitive topics. Throughout lived experience and professional journey, complex situations arise, including workplace challenges, subject-specific difficulties, and personal experiences that shape how individuals respond and cope. As educators our role extends beyond delivering course content, it also involves supporting the development of student's identities as they transition into their professional lives.

This semi-controlled environment enables students to engage in exploration, reflection, and self-understanding in relation to their chosen discipline. Within this space, learners can be introduced to challenging situations in a supported way, allowing them to develop insight, confidence, and resilience before encountering similar experiences in real-world professional contexts.

On the MBChB course, when teaching first-year medical students, we explore a range of challenging topics students will encounter during future clinical practice. These include breaking bad news, psychiatric examinations, and trauma-informed consultations alongside early patient exposure. Introducing these topics at an early stage allows students to engage with the emotional and relational aspects of medical practice alongside their academic learning.

Central to this approach is the creation of psychologically safe learning spaces. Psychological safety enables students to ask questions, express uncertainty, reflect on emotional responses without fear of judgement. This supports student wellbeing whilst also contributing to the development of professional identity, as students begin to see themselves as future practitioners who can engage compassionately and reflectively with complexity.

We invite educators to reflect on their courses and consider the learning needs of students both within and beyond the boundaries of current content. This includes identifying where challenging topics may need to be introduced to support professional identity formation, and where psychologically safe

spaces are essential for meaningful engagement. In this way, educators shape not only what students learn, but who they are becoming as professionals.

Compassion in Higher Education: Insights from the WIHEA Compassionate Pedagogy Learning Circle

Gemma Gray (Psychology), Luke Hodson (Psychology) and Claudie Fox (Psychology)

There is a growing recognition that compassion plays a central role in how we create supportive environments in higher education. Compassionate practices help cultivate a sense of shared humanity between staff and students, offering crucial support during periods of vulnerability (Parfitt et al., 2021). Kotera et al. (2023) further suggests that fostering self compassion can strengthen students' intrinsic motivation, encouraging greater engagement and academic persistence. The value of compassion extends to staff communities as well: studies indicate that compassionate institutional cultures are linked to enhanced staff motivation and wellbeing (West, 2021; WONKHE, 2023).

While the sector's increasing emphasis on student mental health and compassionate practice is vital, this shift has also placed growing emotional and administrative demands on staff. Emerging evidence suggests that this imbalance is contributing to staff burnout and reduced wellbeing (Cordaro et al., 2024; Constantin et al., 2024).

This ideas exchange session will focus on projects carried out by the WIHEA Compassionate Pedagogies learning circle, which explored compassion fatigue in UK academics. These studies used both quantitative and qualitative focus to explore the impact of compassion fatigue on staff wellbeing, burnout and intention to quit. We will also give an update on our earlier "Conversations about Compassion" piece, exploring staff and student views of compassion at Warwick. Here we hope to explore what makes compassion at Warwick work, and how can we ensure that compassionate policy and practice are aligned to support both students and staff.

Parallel session stream C – Interactive panel

Location: R0.21

Pedagogies of empowerment in practice: designing student voice and agency with AI

Adriana Ortega (School of Medicine and Health Sciences | Dep. Psychology Monash University Malaysia), Ninna Makrinov (WMG), Leonardo Dias Alves (WMG), Reham Ahmad (WMG and WMS) and Diana Shore (WMG).

This interactive panel explores how pedagogies of empowerment can be enacted in practice through international interdisciplinary collaboration, virtual student exchange, and ethically bounded uses of AI. Drawing on a co-created curriculum between the University of Warwick and Monash University Malaysia. The session is convened through the voices of students and tutors to explore the co-created curriculum, aiming to give students genuine voice and agency while navigating tensions within formal assessment. Discussion will be invited with the audience through exploring the key questions that came out of the study, considering how and whether student voice can be "designed" into our

curriculum. The curriculum links Warwick's Fundamentals of AI: Research, Development and Management module with Monash's Advanced Career Counselling unit. Students engage in cross-institutional consultancy projects, virtual teamwork, and AI-supported reflective activities that position them as co-constructors of knowledge. AI tools deliberately scaffold planning, reflection, and skills development, rather than generating academic outputs, enabling students to interrogate how technology shapes professional identities, decision-making, and power.

Early evidence will be shared, alongside the challenges of sustaining empowerment across institutional boundaries, time zones, and varying levels of digital confidence. The panel will highlight how student voice can be 'designed' into curricula without reducing it to tokenistic participation, and how ethically bounded AI can support agency while retaining the centrality of human judgment. Through short provocations, guided discussion, and audience participation, the panel invites participants to reflect on how pedagogies of empowerment can be embedded into curricula in ways that are inclusive, ethically grounded, and practically sustainable, enabling students to challenge dominant narratives while retaining the centrality of human judgment in AI-mediated learning environments. Attendees will leave with practical insights into designing student voice and agency, strategies for balancing empowerment with assessment requirements, and approaches to using AI as a scaffold for reflection and collaboration.

Parallel session stream D – Collaborative space

Location: R0.14

Co-Creating Assessment Rubrics to Empower Learners and Promote Equity in Postgraduate Education

Dr Gurpreet Chouhan (WMS), Prof Debbi Marais (WMS), Dr Gill Frigerio (SELCS-CLL), Dr Erin Dilger (School of Life Sciences), Dr Katrine Wallis (School of Life Sciences) and Fatima Adam (SELCS-CLL)

In complex and increasingly diverse higher education contexts, assessment practices play a powerful role in shaping students' sense of agency and belonging. Yet assessment criteria and feedback are frequently experienced as opaque and subjective, particularly by postgraduate taught (PGT) and international students navigating unfamiliar academic cultures. This interactive session explores co-created assessment rubrics as a pedagogy of empowerment that centres lived experience, promotes equity, and supports learners to engage meaningfully with feedback.

The session draws on mixed-methods research conducted across three departments within the University of Warwick, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative Friendship Method group interviews to capture PGT students' perspectives on assessment. Findings revealed inconsistent use of rubrics, limited access to criteria prior to submission, and a tendency for rubrics to be used diagnostically only after marking. Students highlighted vague descriptors, subjective language, unclear progression between grade bands, and absent weightings as key barriers to assessment literacy, disproportionately affecting students from non-traditional and international backgrounds.

Participants will engage with these findings through structured activities and guided discussion. Working in small groups, attendees will analyse anonymised rubric excerpts, identify sources of ambiguity and inequity, and co-generate clearer, more transparent alternatives. Facilitated dialogue will also focus on the practical implications of "giving more" to students: what meaningful

transparency and support look like in practice, where boundaries are needed, and how assessment design can reduce rather than intensify workload for both students and staff.

A key element of the session will be collective problem-solving around sustainability. Participants will discuss how co-created rubrics and guidance can pre-empt confusion, reduce individualised clarification requests, and support consistent marking, while acknowledging the emotional and cognitive labour already carried by educators. With focus on collaboration and shared responsibility, this session contributes to pedagogies of empowerment that promote equity, global readiness, and sustainable learning futures.

Parallel session stream E – Collaborative space

Location: R0.12

Adjustments ≠ Inclusion: from adapting for disability to accessibility as default

Mark Pulsford (SELCS) and Ruby Deakin and Harriet Paget (Students Union)

The session aims to engage attendees with issues of disability inclusion at Warwick and in the HE sector more widely. It will begin with provocations from recent national reports on disabled students' HE experiences, draw on insights from a Warwick-wide project on Reasonable Adjustments conducted in partnership with students in 23/24, and hear perspectives from the current SU Disabled Student Officers. In small groups, attendees will reflect on the differences between staff and student views and be encouraged to consider the productive tensions between these using Warwick's Belonging Framework as a guide for understanding.

These discussions will be placed in the context of rising numbers of disabled students enrolling at Warwick and projections of further increases in coming years. As we move towards a quarter of Warwick's students having a declared disability or long-term health condition, the session invites attendees to consider arguments from disability scholars that (just) adjusting for individuals' disability is neither a sustainable nor empowering approach to disability inclusion that dismantles barriers to student success.

The session will then introduce and work with three universities' 'baseline inclusion standards'. Attendees will collaborate in groups to discuss the ambition and the reality of these ideals, working to identify the barriers and enablers at Warwick. We will use a 'gallery walk' and a 'marketplace' activity to surface and gauge attendees' views on priority areas; by the end, the group will have a sense of the shared challenges and hopes for equity-minded change, and considered where practice in their own area could evolve.

Parallel session stream F – Engagement workshop

Location: R1.03

The Power of Compassionate Communication

Linda Sherwin (Student Experience Division) and Penny Cowie (Wellbeing and Safeguarding Team)

The way we communicate matters. It shapes our culture, our relationships, and the wellbeing of everyone in our community. Whether your role requires you to deliver feedback, share difficult news, navigate complex conversations or all three, having an understanding of how communicating with compassion can make a difference, will help.

This inspiring and practical session shares top tips and recommendations to help us engage with empathy, clarity, and care, even when the message is challenging. It is part of the Compassionate Communication Project at the University of Warwick; a university-wide movement to embed compassion at the heart of all student communications. From formal letters and university policy, to everyday conversations, it's rethinking how we connect with one another to build a more supportive, inclusive, and values-driven environment that considers the individual experiences of our students and removes barriers for engagement.

Delivered one year after the guidance was first approved, this session will also provide an update on the progress of the initiative so far – offering insight into what has been achieved, its work with students, what we've learned, and what we can do next to work towards a truly Compassionate Campus.

In this session, you will:

- Discover what Compassionate Communication is and how it enhances relationships across the university.
- Learn about Warwick's Compassionate Communication Project and its exciting progress.
- Reflect on what compassion means in a professional context – and how it can shape our culture for the better.
- Explore compassion in higher education – and imagine what a truly compassionate university could look like.
- Take away practical tips you can apply in your own communications.

Asynchronous nano-presentations

The Warwick Education Conference 2026 blends asynchronous resources and live events to offer a range of exciting ways for everyone to engage with this year's theme. These short (up to 10 mins) nano-presentations have been created asynchronously for you to watch and feel inspired at a time and place that suits you.

[Voices in Digital Health: Co Creating a cross-faculty Podcast with staff and students to Empower Learners Through Innovation and Dialogue](#)

Hamish Sutcliffe, Cath Fenn (Warwick Medical School), Mohannad Alajlani (Warwick Manufacturing Group)

[Dismantling Boundaries for Interconnected Futures: Transdisciplinary Working in the Children, Young People and Families Network](#)

Charlotte Jones (SELCS) and Jamie Ormes (Regional Strategy and Partnerships Team)

[Listening Differently: Using the Friendship Method to Advance Equity and Inclusion in Postgraduate Assessment Practices](#)

Debbi Marais (DPVC International Education), Gurpreet Chouhan (Warwick Medical School), Gill Frigerio (Centre for Lifelong Learning), Erin Dilger (School of Life Sciences) and Katherine Wallis (School of Life Sciences)

[Whose Responsibility is Ethical AI? Insights from Personal Tutoring](#)

Penelope Mosavian (Warwick Global Academy)

[Creativity by Design: Practical Assessment Patterns for AI-Mediated Learning](#)

Ejike Ezeh, Young Saeng Park, Dita Amry (Warwick Manufacturing Group) and Erin Connelly (School of Life Sciences)

[Evaluating Belonging: The Patchwork Quilt](#)

Inca Hide-Wright (Leadership and Management Development), Georgina Pilling (Education), Charlotte Stevens (Academic Development Centre)

[Why build a CoLab of Curiosity?](#)

Cath Fenn (Warwick Medical School)

[What's the good of guides? Developing university training materials to support you and your students in using educational technologies](#)

Christopher Vernon (Educational Technology)

[The Power of Compassionate Communication](#)

Linda Sherwin (Education Group), and Penny Cowie (Wellbeing and Safeguarding Team)

[Beyond `Feed`: Developing an Interdisciplinary Information Literacy Framework for Academic Authenticity in an Algorithmic Era](#)

Andrew Calvert, Lance Hayward, Rhiannon Taylor, Lucie Thomas and Sarah Akhtaruzzaman (Library)

[Virtual Reality for Teaching and Learning in Any Subject](#)

Diana Stefanescu, John McCaughley and Lisa Weaver (Warwick Business School)

[From Stuck to Skilled: Using Threshold Concepts to Navigate Complexity in Higher Education](#)

Samantha Wilson-Thain (School of Life Science)



View full details and the recordings from **[Warwick Education Conference 2026 - Nano-Presentations](#)**

Education Fund 2025/26 Projects – Poster Display

Posters from the 2025/26 Education Fund projects will be displayed on the ground floor of the Ramphal Building in the foyer.

The Long-Term Collective Research Project - Unlocking the untapped potential of student research

Feng Mao, Bing Lu, Gioia Panzarella, Jianhua Yang, Surangi Jayakody, Modupe Jimoh

The Long-term Collective Research (LoCoR) project is a two-year Warwick Education Fund initiative that addresses the continuation of student-led research in undergraduate project-based learning. Rather than viewing student projects as isolated outputs, LoCoR develops a collaborative and iterative model in which research is built cumulatively across student cohorts. Embedded within existing modules, the model enables students to extend previous work, contribute new insights, and collectively respond to complex societal challenges. Co-creation is central to the approach, with student panels and focus groups shaping the design and evaluation of the model. The LoCoR showcase, the central repository further enables students to pass on the legacy of their research to future cohorts. By fostering collaboration between students, academics and stakeholders, LoCoR aims to transform project-based learning into a more inclusive, sustainable research ecosystem within higher education.

Leveraging TeamWork to embed employability and authentic learning into the curriculum

Joelle Maurice, Zineb Nmili, Billy Smith, Tom Ritchie, Reece Goodall, Rashmi Varma, Jen Baker, Karen Simecek, Dave Ashworth, Aysu Dincer Hadjianastasis, Claire Woodrow, Jane Bryan, Jagjeet Jutley-Neilson, Marion Patel, Tom Greenaway, David Molyneux, Kimberley Harris, Ian Scrase, Stephanie Redding

This project develops a dynamic teaching resource that enables academic departments to embed recent, authentic employer-led projects into their curricula. Drawing on TeamWork's archive of over 300 global projects, the resource will provide a searchable, categorised database of anonymised project briefs enriched with contextual information and mapped to Warwick's Core Skills and strategic priorities. Co-created with Student Project Officers, it will include guidance for designing authentic assessments, embedding real-world challenges into modules, and supporting student reflection and skill development. The project will be piloted across multiple departments, with evaluation through student and staff feedback, engagement metrics, and learning outcomes. By offering an inclusive and scalable alternative to traditional work-based learning, the resource aims to enhance curriculum relevance, strengthen employability, and support departments in integrating authentic, globally oriented learning experiences across disciplines.

Inclusive Leadership Pathways: An Education Funded Project

Marion Patel, Kelly Coles, Erin Dilger, Tom Greenaway, George Haughie, Jo Pearson, Simon Finley, Nahid Ahmad, Simran Bhutada, Lewis Middleton, Kueene Renanton, S'thandwa Sibanda

This institution wide initiative brings together Student Opportunity, academic departments, Warwick Enterprise, and students to cocreate a new, broad and inclusive Warwick Leadership Framework.

The project includes the creation of:

- a university wide, student informed Leadership Framework
- teaching resources and case studies for integration into curricula
- a new Warwick Award Leadership Pathway accessible to all students
- embedded leadership activities piloted in SLS (LF271) and WMS curricula

The poster will set out the project aims, key findings to date and intending outcomes of this Education Funded Project

Exploring Engagement: Active Learning in Practice

Adriana Smith Ortiz, Amy Stickels, Anna Tranter, Abigail Ball, Sara Hattersley, Emily Davies, Sutong Duan, Caitlyn Lim, Grace Fisher, Upama Ghosh

Active learning is increasingly prioritised in higher education, yet its use differs across disciplines and teaching levels. This multidisciplinary study examines how active learning is currently used at the University of Warwick and investigates how often students encounter it, the types of activities they undertake, and their perceptions of its benefits for engagement, interaction, deeper understanding, and academic achievement. Using a mixed methods design, questionnaires will capture the frequency, forms, and perceived effectiveness of active learning practices, while focus groups with students and staff will provide deeper insight into their experiences, expectations, and the contextual factors shaping practice.

The project will identify key enablers and barriers influencing successful adoption and highlight areas where greater support, consistency, or innovation may be required. Findings will inform evidence based strategies to enhance inclusive, collaborative, and resilient teaching practices, in alignment with the University's 2030 strategic vision.

Study Work Place Skills Gap Project

David Molyneux, Gitit Kadar-Satat, Marion Patel, Amanda Lang, Jodie Lucas, Angela Lorenz

The WIHEA-funded Warwick Skills Gap Project explores the perceived gap between the skills students develop during their studies and those expected in the workplace. Bringing together student and employer perspectives, the project aims to co-create resources and recommendations that better prepare Warwick students for work-integrated learning and graduate employment. Three research streams examine the issue from complementary angles: student experiences of placements (Stream A), the development and curation of skills-building resources (Stream B), and employer insights into placement and graduate skills needs (Stream C). Through focus groups, surveys, interviews, and collaborative resource design, the project highlights challenges such as applying academic skills at work, digital skills gaps, and misalignment between university and workplace skill priorities. The outcomes will inform new mixed-media guidance, employer-informed reports, and enhanced support to help students articulate and develop the skills that matter most.

Quiet Space – Room 0.03

This year, we have introduced a quiet reflective space at the Conference.

We will have a number of optional low-key activities available: mindful colouring, bookmark making, and a jigsaw. However, if you just want to come in, sit for a while and take stock, feel free to stop by. You'll find us in Room 0.03.

Working Spaces

If you are looking for a quiet space to work or engage in a meeting briefly during the day, you can use rooms 1.04 and 2.41. There are also communal areas on the first floor.

Conference Buddy Meeting Point

The dedicated meeting point for Conference Buddies is outside room 0.03 in the Ramphal building atrium. It will be clearly labelled "Conference Buddy Meeting Point". Room 0.03 is our dedicated quiet and contemplative space for the event. You will be welcome to use this space to connect. The Working Space rooms listed above are also open spaces for colleagues to use throughout the day.
