

**The Warwick International
Higher Education Academy**



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Annual Report 2026

**UNIVERSITY
OF WARWICK**

International Higher
Education Academy

This is University of Warwick.
This is Beyond.
warwick.ac.uk

Table of Contents

Welcome	01
Year in Numbers	02
Student Voice	03
Learning Circles	07
Funded Projects	14
Community Pulse	20
WIHEA - Beyond Warwick	22
Celebrating the Community	25
Our Next Chapter: Building on Success	36





Welcome to our Annual Report

Last year we marked ten years of WIHEA and used that milestone as a chance to look back and reflect. As we move into an exciting new era for WIHEA within the newly created Education Academy, this year has been an opportunity to think about what is next for WIHEA.

This year has focused on our growing international work, not least our new collaboration with Curtin Academy. A huge thank you to Ben Milbourn and Sherry Bawa for so generously sharing their time and expertise with our Fellows, and to every WIHEA Fellow (staff and students) who gave up their own time to make that mentoring partnership work. It has also been a year of real structural change closer to home: under the leadership of Professor Georgia Kryemmyda Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) a series of new focused Action Groups have been established, with our Fellows leading at institutional level, and new governance structures are embedded, with Fellows, Alumni and Members alike represented in those spaces.

Due to the upcoming changes, we decided to pause the call for Fellowship over the summer; this was also an opportunity to consult with the community. The response has been overwhelming. Over 100 people from our community completed the survey, and we have had many conversations with Fellows and Alumni. We heard what is most valued within the community and what areas we need to develop further. This consultation lands at a real moment of transition: WIHEA is becoming part of a new Education Academy, bringing us together with the Academic Development Centre (ADC) and Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL). We continue as WIHEA, keeping hold of what we value, while also recognising this is the right moment to reflect on what we might do differently. Working alongside our colleagues from ADC and IATL, there will be more opportunities ahead for our community.

None of this year's momentum would exist without our Learning Circles, and a huge thank you is owed to every Learning Circle Lead and Member. Learning Circles have been working to develop frameworks, resources, reports and online modules, among other outputs. Some Learning Circles have completed exactly what they set out to do and are now moving into embedding that work within existing structures, a natural and welcome part of the Learning Circle model. I spent some time in the summer term meeting with Learning Circle leads to find out directly what is working, what support they still need and where the gaps are. Some Learning Circles have paused, others have evolved, and those conversations are ongoing.

Students remain at the heart of this too. I would like to say a particular thank you to Youn and Lewis, who co-edited this year's Student Voice section. Their piece, Student Voice: From Participation to Contributors and Co-creators, brings together reflections from student and ex-officio Fellows and shows just how much of WIHEA's work is shaped by students as genuine partners.

We are now well over 1,000 people strong as a community and still growing, though we know there is more to do to help people understand how to access WIHEA and what being involved means. We always want to hear that feedback.



We are keeping hold of what we value, while recognising this is the right moment to reflect on what we might do differently.

As we move into the new Education Academy, I am excited by what happens next: new collaborations, new connections, and a renewed commitment to keeping WIHEA accessible and inclusive for students and staff across Warwick. Thank you to everyone who has been part of this year; I am looking forward to building on it and to steering WIHEA into this next phase.



Jess Humphreys
SFHEA, SCHMALT
Director, Warwick
International Higher
Education Academy

The Year in Numbers

FUNDED PROJECTS



363 students also involved in the development stages

74 students also involved in the development stages

100 students also involved in the development stages

WIHEA COMMUNITY

114
FELLOWS
(includes 14 ex officio)

19
Students

81
Academic staff

14
Professional staff

13
Student

119
Academic staff

21
Professional staff

153
ALUMNI

MEMBERS

563
Internal members

223
External members

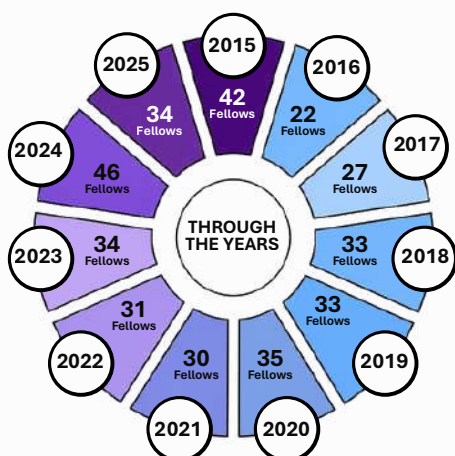
NATIONAL ACCREDITATION (ACHIEVED BY FELLOWS/ALUMNI DURING 2025/2026)

1 Advance HE Fellowship

1 Advance HE Principal Fellowship

7
Advance Senior HE Fellowship

FELLOW SELECTION HISTORY



COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS

107
Seats on Committees held by Fellows

180
Seats on Committees held by Alumni

25
Fellows Chairing

11
Alumni Chairing

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

12
In-person Masterclasses and Workshops
167 in attendance

4
Fellow Networking Sessions
156 in attendance

16
Online Masterclasses and Workshops
927 in attendance

This year WIHEA had a cohort of 19 student and ex-officio Fellows:

- **Naveera Abhayawickrama** - Undergraduate Student, Law
- **Dr Youn Affejee** - PhD Student, Warwick Manufacturing Group
- **Marie Bawden** - Undergraduate Student, History
- **Michael Cavaliere** - PhD Student, Mathematics
- **Lewis Middleton** - Undergraduate Student, Sociology
- **Ollie Chapman** - Vice President for Welfare and Campaigns, Students' Union (Incoming President)
- **Amir Cheshmehzangi** - PhD Student in Engineering, Warwick Manufacturing Group
- **Louis Gosling** - Vice President for Sports, Students' Union
- **Zineb Nmili** - Management Undergraduate Student, Warwick Business School
- **Maanya Raju** - Vice President for Postgraduate, Students' Union
- **Dr Alisha Rodgers** - PhD, Engineering
- **Stella Shi** - Language, Culture, and Communication Undergraduate Student, Applied Linguistics
- **Billy Smith** - Behavioural Economics, Undergraduate Student, Politics and International Studies
- **Ananya Sreekumar** - Vice President for Education, Students' Union
- **Alijah Taha** - President, Students' Union
- **Sarah Tasneem** - Undergraduate Student, History
- **Louisa Toxvaerd Munch** - PhD, English and Comparative Studies
- **Yuxin Wang** - PhD, Engineering
- **Dr Meifang Zhuo** - PhD, Applied Linguistics

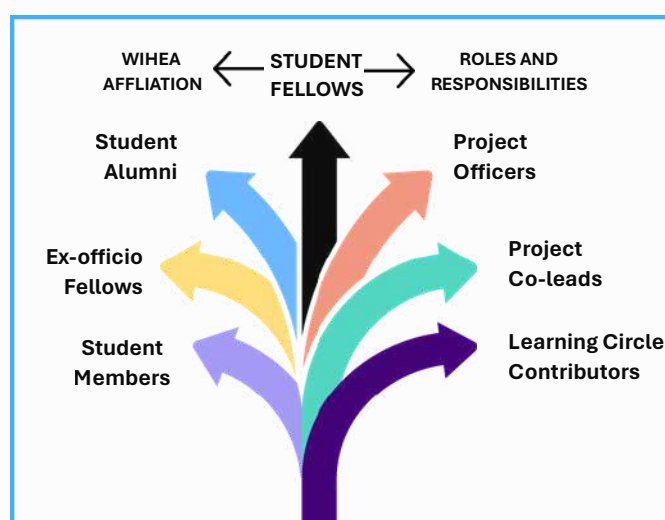
Student Fellows continue to play a vital role in shaping WIHEA's work through co-creation, reflection and student-led enquiry. They have played important parts, in a multitude of roles, from Project Leads to Learning Circles Contributors, across WIHEA initiatives and beyond. Furthermore, our Student Members also played key roles, showing that involvement and development with WIHEA extends beyond Fellowship.

This year's Student Voice section brings together reflections from Student Fellows, a Student Member and an Ex-Officio Fellow who have contributed to WIHEA as project leads and project officers, conducting research in a collaborative and collegiate ethos, and made outstanding contributions to Learning Circles.

Collectively, these reflections show the breadth of ways in which students shape educational enhancement at Warwick: not only by sharing their experiences, but by designing projects, analysing data, facilitating conversations, contributing to reports, and influencing institutional practice.

A strong theme running through these stories is belonging. For some, WIHEA created a communal space to build relationships across disciplines. For others, it provided the confidence, trust and practical support needed to turn an idea into a funded project, a student consultation, or a public-facing activity. Across the reflections, students describe being treated as partners whose insights matter, empowering them to be change makers at Warwick and beyond.

In this section, we have compiled five accounts below to spotlight different forms of student leadership and contribution, from employability and teamwork assessment to anti-racist pedagogy, photovoice, postgraduate transition and inclusive research culture. Together, they show how student voice becomes most powerful when it is embedded in collaboration, resourced through meaningful opportunities, and supported by communities where students not only feel visible but also trusted to shape change.





Lewis Middleton
Student Fellow, Project Lead
and Contributor

When I arrived at Warwick, I quickly realised that I wanted to build a career dedicated to enhancing the

student experience within Higher Education. Towards the end of my first year, I discovered WIHEA and saw the Fellowship as something to aspire to. From then on, I promised myself I would embrace every opportunity to make a meaningful impact and make the most of everything Warwick offered. After spending my second year working towards that goal, I was incredibly proud to secure a WIHEA Fellowship for 2025/26. Becoming a Fellow allowed me to continue that promise, and I've supported projects that are shaping the student experience across the university.

I've contributed to five projects throughout my Fellowship, each offering opportunities to generate institutional change. Within the Employability Learning Circle, I've led both the student consultation element of Student Opportunity's Core Skills Review and also the Supporting the Institutional Employability Agenda project, helping ensure that student perspectives inform employability policy and practice. Additionally, I've co-led data collection and analysis on the Designing and Assessing Group Work Learning Circle's Phase 2: Exploring Student and Staff Perspectives on Preparedness and Ongoing Support for Teamwork project alongside Callie, collaborated on Michael's Inclusive Transitions to PGR Study project alongside he, Youn and Zineb, and co-edited this section of the Annual Report with Youn.

One experience that particularly stands out occurred on the Core Skills Review. I was invited by Marion, the Warwick Award Manager and Employability Learning Circle Co-Lead, and Parmjit, the Head of Skills, to refine the focus group schedules, with my suggestions incorporated into the final design. I also led the thematic analysis and authored the report that will inform the Review's future direction. Before becoming a Fellow, I understood the importance of co-creation, but experiencing that level of trust from senior staff reinforced just how powerful it can be. Being empowered to shape both the consultation process and its outcomes showed me that meaningful change happens when students help shape decisions from the outset. Across all my projects, co-creation has given me a genuine sense of belonging, reaffirming that students strengthen both the university and their own connection to it when trusted as partners rather than consulted as participants.

Therefore, my advice to Staff Fellows is to embrace co-creation wherever possible and trust students as equal partners. To Student Fellows, your voice genuinely matters. Share your ideas, ask questions and embrace every opportunity, you may be surprised by how much of a difference your perspective can make!



Callie Wilson
Student Member and
Student Project Officer

This year, I was involved in the Designing and Assessing Group Work Learning Circle's

Phase 2: Exploring Student and Staff Perspectives on Preparedness and Ongoing Support for Teamwork project, working as a Student Project Officer alongside Lewis and members of the circle. My role has focused on analysing student survey data, exploring how teamwork is assessed across departments, and helping shape early insights for the project's wider recommendations.

Through this project, I've learned how complex and varied teamwork assessment can be across disciplines, and how important it is to design approaches that genuinely support students' learning rather than simply measuring performance. I've also refined my skills and confidence in data analysis, particularly in synthesising qualitative and quantitative data to tell a coherent story about student experience.

Working in partnership with staff has been one of the most valuable aspects. I've been treated as an equal contributor, and the team has consistently made room for student voices to shape decisions. One moment that stands out was during a discussion about the survey items, where I suggested implementing an item inviting students to explain how they would like to be better prepared for teamwork assessments. This addition has provided richer insight into students' perceptions of preparedness, and seeing that suggestion influence the project's direction was incredibly affirming.

For students who aren't WIHEA Fellows but are interested in getting involved, I'd encourage reaching out to project leads and expressing your interest. WIHEA projects genuinely value student insight, and there are many ways to contribute without holding a formal Fellowship! If you enjoy collaborative work, research, or improving the student experience, these projects are a brilliant way to develop skills, meet supportive staff, and make a meaningful impact.



Ananya Sreekumar
Ex-Officio Fellow and
Learning Circle Contributor

This year I joined WIHEA as an Ex-Officio Fellow and was primarily involved with the Anti-Racist

Pedagogies and Practices (ARPP) Learning Circle. I also participated in the Women Space: Holding Space as the Art of Leadership training programme. Engaging with both spaces, and the wonderful people I met through them, would not have been possible without my WIHEA Fellowship. During both the training programme and the ARPP Learning Circle, I felt my voice always was valued and uplifted. They also gave

me a welcome break from the never-ending demands of being a sabbatical SU Officer, while still challenging me to grow. Most importantly, I found myself in community with individuals I would not typically have met. At university, especially as an Undergraduate, it's easy to find yourself in echo chambers with people your own age experiencing the same things. That's why being involved in the ARPP Learning Circle and Women Space's training programme felt so refreshing and beneficial to my personal growth: I was able to build community with people from different ages, backgrounds, and roles within the HE sector.

With the Women Space Leadership programme, I was initially quite intimidated and apprehensive when I realised I would be the youngest on the programme, which also meant I was the earliest in my career journey, but that intimidation quickly transformed into inspiration, admiration and appreciation. It was incredible to learn from, and in tandem with, women who are so much further along in their careers. I absorbed so much knowledge from my interactions with them, and I left the programme feeling energised and excited about my career ahead of me!

The ARPP Learning Circle was special to me because it provided me with a community of like-minded individuals who were passionate about tackling anti-racism in academia, as I was. Sanchia and Karoline, the Anti-Racist Pedagogy Co-Leads, are such superstars, and they (along with all the members) made me feel so welcomed and valued within the learning circle. Seeing the care each member brought to the Learning Circle and the pockets of work they were involved in reminded me why anti-racist work matters so much, and I left each meeting with a sense of contentment knowing that, for as long as the ARPP Learning Circle exists, there will always be people at Warwick who care about improving the experiences of students and staff of colour.

To incoming Fellows, I would say, try your best not to get overwhelmed by the range and variety of opportunities this Fellowship will provide you. For me, sticking with what I knew I was most passionate about - anti-racism and women's empowerment - meant I finished my time at WIHEA feeling content and proud of the experiences I gained through this fellowship!



Dr Alisha Rodgers
Student Fellow, Project
Lead and Learning Circle
Contributor

It has been a privilege to be a WIHEA Student Fellow over the past two

years, which has opened many doors of opportunity to engage with the educational community here at Warwick. Being part of this has facilitated my professional development, expanding my skills, knowledge, and relationships with others both within the network and beyond it.

Before my Fellowship, I did not know such a community even existed - let alone comprehend how important it is in contributing to many ongoing developments at the university.

Throughout my time here, I have been involved in a number of Learning Circles. Particularly, I would like to give a special mention to the Building Belonging Learning Circle - and specifically to Inca, the Building Belonging Co-lead, - for being so welcoming and driven in her work, and whose voice always seems to bring everyone together and fill the room with positive energy.

Expanding on this - while not directly funded by WIHEA - this year I have co-led a project exploring student belonging at Warwick utilising the methodology of photovoice, which was funded by the Centre for Belonging in Education. I am grateful to Youn and Meifang, for being a brilliant and reliable team (whilst attempting to stay afloat amidst doctoral funding ending...). WIHEA has been instrumental in helping us build the connections that made opportunities like this possible. Seeing those initial, abstract ideas (that usually aimlessly float around my head) flourish into tangible, impactful projects has been deeply rewarding.

In hindsight, the highlight of my time here has undoubtedly been the connections that I have made and the communities that I have been a part of. I have learned that the generous act of WIHEA providing free food is, in fact, a particularly important ingredient in bringing people together, and fostering the relationships that sit at the heart of fuelling such impactful work.

I am profoundly grateful for this experience as I move on to the next chapter (whilst reconciling with the fact that I am unfortunately no longer a student). I wish all the best for the subsequent incoming Fellows joining WIHEA - it's going to be a good one.



Michael Cavaliere
Student Fellow and
Project Lead

As part of WIHEA this year I led the Inclusive Transitions to Postgraduate Research

Studyproject. We are investigating the experiences of PGR students, particularly those who are neurodivergent, with the transition from taught courses to independent research. There were two ways that WIHEA enabled me to do this: firstly, by giving students like me a unique opportunity to apply for funding to support these kinds of projects, and secondly, by connecting me with a fantastic team of student Fellows to make these ideas a reality. This was a project I have been wanting to investigate for a while, and it would not have been possible without all the support from the WIHEA team. In particular, it is a privilege to work with such enthusiastic student Fellows as Youn, Lewis and Zineb.

The most important takeaway for me is the importance of having a clear plan from the beginning, whilst also being adaptable. Everyone we collaborated with was really keen to support us, but we needed to be clear about everyone's role to ensure that we worked effectively as a team. Several factors outside of our control influenced the direction of the project, so it was crucial that our plan was flexible enough to not allow these to be roadblocks.

My advice for incoming student Fellows is to engage as much as possible with the WIHEA network. It is a great opportunity to meet staff and students from across the University that share your interest in education, and I have learned a lot from discussions at the networking lunches - not to mention, the food is pretty good! Student ideas and opinions are really valued, and everyone will treat you with the same respect that they would give any staff member. It's a unique opportunity to share your ideas and have an impact on teaching and learning policy and practice at the University.

Thank you

Across these spotlights, one message comes through clearly: student voice is most meaningful when it is connected to trust, partnership and action. Whether through contributing to Learning Circles or projects, students have helped move educational enhancement from discussion into practice.

The advice offered to incoming Fellows is equally clear. Be proactive, ask questions, follow the issues you care about, and do not underestimate the value of your perspective. At the same time, these reflections extend to staff; trust students early and involve them meaningfully by creating spaces that foster co-creation rather than consultation.

This year's Student Voice section reminds us that belonging is not only something WIHEA explores as a Learning Circle or supports; it is something WIHEA can actively create. When students are welcomed as researchers and leaders, they strengthen the Warwick community while also developing their own confidence, skills and sense of purpose. Their stories show that student voice is one of the ways educational enhancements happens, rather than an add-on.

Lewis Middleton and Youn Affejee,
Student Voice Section Co-editors



Scan this to see the far reaching impact of our Student Voices.





Learning Circles

Learning Circles are at the heart of WIHEA's collaborative community. They provide spaces where colleagues and students can come together to explore ideas and share expertise that informs and strengthen teaching and learning at Warwick and beyond. Led by Fellows or co-led with Alumni, Learning Circles harness collective insights to inform both strategic priorities and practical approaches and tackle challenges faced by Warwick and/or other HE Institutions.

At the start of the year, WIHEA had 13 active Learning Circles:

- [AI in Education](#)
- [Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Process](#)
- [Building Belonging](#)
- [Compassionate Pedagogies](#)
- [Designing and Assessing Group Work](#)
- [Developing Academic Literacies](#)
- [Digital Education and Technologies for Teaching and Assessment \(DETTA\)](#)
- [Employability](#)
- [Inclusive Assessment](#)
- [Internationalisation](#)
- [Mature Student Experience](#)
- [Public & Community Engagement Pedagogies](#)
- [Teaching, Recognition and Reward](#)

Learning Circle Membership

As the challenges and topics that Learning Circles focus on are diverse, the structure and size of each Learning Circle will vary, as will the attendance and engagement levels of its members. To support WIHEA Fellows to lead and develop expertise in specific areas during their Fellowship, the membership of some WIHEA Learning Circles are only accessible to WIHEA Fellows and Alumni. However, the majority of WIHEA's Learning Circles are 'Open' to staff and students across Warwick, this ensures there is greater accessibility, and enables a wider collective input and a strong student voice.

All staff and students at Warwick are welcome to become a WIHEA Member. Membership provides you with access to the Open Learning Circles. WIHEA Membership keeps you informed of WIHEA activities including Learning Circles and projects, so that your understanding of WIHEA's strategic aims and links to other similar work in your chosen area can be made more easily.

If you are interested in finding out more about WIHEA Membership, you can visit our '[Get Involved](#)' web page.



Developing Academic Literacies

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Laura Gelhaus (PAIS) and Romain Chenet (Cross-Faculty Studies)

This Learning Circle works towards identifying and removing systemic barriers to success in academia and offers a space for members to consider how a reimagining of academic literacies could also foster belonging across the University. This year, the Learning Circle made a deliberate shift towards strategic planning, mapping the academic literacies work happening across departments with members of the Learning Circle. It also hosted an [online Masterclass](#) with student voices playing a central role alongside staff perspectives to cultivate a shared and inclusive understanding of academic reading and writing across the university community. A [Masterclass](#) was also delivered by visiting academic Bettina Schwenger (University of Auckland) on "Expanding students' academic literacies: from the individual learner towards the more-than human".

Reflection on what has changed

The strategic planning this year has helped the Learning Circle to establish a clearer picture of the landscape at Warwick and lay the groundwork for future co-creation and policy influence. Specifically, going forward it will focus on academic reading, interrogating implicit assumptions and work towards projects, conference panels and publications that can help shape academic literacies practice at Warwick and beyond.



Internationalisation

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Massimiliano Tamborrino (Statistics) and Daniel Jones (Global Academy)

Fellows and Members in the Internationalisation Learning Circle exchange ideas and practices across disciplines on internationalisation, from student mobility, intercultural learning, internationalisation curriculum and much more.

This year, the Learning Circle continued progressing on the Mapping Internationalisation project by identifying and connecting internationalisation across the University to improve visibility and support collaboration the [Internationalisation at Warwick](#) resource web page has been launched. The far-reaching networks of the Internationalisation Learning Circle travelled beyond the WIHEA community by building strong cross-institutional links with Co-leads of other Learning Circles and senior leaders on internationalisation. This collaboration led to the delivery of the Warwick International Student Experience ([WISE](#)) [WIHEA Masterclass](#) with outputs that led to the creation of the [WISE Staff Toolkit](#) which is now available. The Learning Circle also delivered a workshop that discussed what is a global education opportunity, alongside Debbi Marais (DPVC for International Education) at the Warwick Education Conference.

Reflection on what has changed

The mapping of Warwick Internationalisation Activities project has progressed and there is now a web page containing the results of the mapping so far. As a result of carrying out the mapping, the Learning Circle has increased its knowledge of and made stronger connections with key stakeholders and leaders of internationalisation projects, networks and initiatives across Warwick. The work has improved visibility of the collective initiatives and will enable collaboration going forward. The Learning Circle can now progress from mapping activities to focus on university-wide engagement and impact.



Artificial Intelligence in Education

WIHEA Learning Circle (with Critical Friends)

Co-Leads: Karen Jackson (Library), Dr Jianhua Yang (Warwick Manufacturing Group) and Dr Neha Gupta (Warwick Business School)

The vision of the AI in Education Learning Circle is to improve the understanding and expertise in integrating generative AI in Higher Education. Its large membership spreads across four subgroups (a) AI and the Future of Assessment, (b) Overcoming barriers to the Use of AI (c) AI Literacy (Tools and Techniques) and (d) AI Integrity: Ethics Education and Society.

Reflection on what has changed

The exploration of AI-robust assessment formats has helped instructors, who have found these formats practical to mark and easy to refresh yearly with students building transferable scientific communication skills.

A combined AI-assisted literature analysis from a Warwick Staff survey found barriers include; ethical concerns, time constraints and lack of institutional guidance, and it identified key areas requiring improvement. Findings also showed that a one-size-fits-all policy is not sufficient to address all the barriers that both STEM and professional services staff may encounter.

A range of external resources including AI tools, prompt engineering and generative AI in HE, alongside an internal AI literacy Series have been curated.

Institutional guidance on academic integrity and AI including a certified Moodle course on good academic conduct aligned with Warwick policy has also been developed. Feedback from students and staff to expand the course and increase accessibility is currently ongoing. Links to all resources are on the [AI in Education Learning Circle](#) pages.



This year, eleven Learning Circles drew on the Learning Circle Project Fund, moving from collaborative discussion to tangible institutional impact through surveys, symposia, handbooks and guidance that departments across Warwick can now use. Their findings now sit with departments, faculties and University teams to take forward.



Designing and Assessing Group Work

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Mujthaba Ahtamad (WMG) and Dr Ian Saunders (Computer Science)

Members of this Learning Circle join to explore ways of addressing the challenges of assessed group work, with a focus on how group tasks are conceived in order to make assessments more representative of each individual's effort.

A number of activities this year have enabled the Learning Circle to examine how prepared and supported students feel in group work and identify recurring themes and effective practice. This has been achieved through desk-based thematic analysis of the last seven years of NSS comments mentioning group work, and also through carrying out a student survey on group work perceptions. Currently, the Learning Circle are carrying out a study to explore a novel approach to group allocation in which students are assigned to groups based on their self-reported skills and preferences. A follow-up survey will then be analysed to examine perceptions of the approach and gain a better understanding how group composition influences learning outcomes.

Reflection on what has changed

Over 200 responses to the Group work Perception Student survey has helped identify differences across departments and demographics. The analysis of over 500 NSS responses has also identified recurring themes and effective practice across departments – together these findings will strengthen the evidence base behind future recommendations and guidance that the Learning Circle will provide going forward.

Pedagogies of Public & Community

Engagement

WIHEA/WIE Learning Circle

Co-Leads: Dr Laura Gelhaus (PAIS) and Dr Rachel Turner-King (Education Studies)

As a WIHEA and WIE collaboration, this Learning Circle works towards strengthening the integration of public and community engagement pedagogies into teaching, learning and assessment across Warwick at both UG and PGT level, whilst also establishing broader networks and forums.

This year, the Learning Circle prioritised the production of a handbook to guide staff on the benefits of PCEP, how to get started and key considerations for curriculum developers. Entitled 'Embedding Public and Community Engagement in the Higher Education Curriculum: A practical guide', the handbook was published in July 2026 and will be launched at the start of the 2026/27 academic year, promotion activities will then continue to take place across Warwick and beyond.

Reflection on what has changed

As well as the production of the handbook which will support the integration of public and community engagement pedagogies into teaching and learning, the process of creating the handbook, surfaced colleagues working on public and community engagement who hadn't previously identified with the Learning Circle, broadening its reach and potential membership. We engaged with all three Faculty Engagement Leads who reviewed the handbook idea and presented at the Warwick Engagement Conference, further raising the profile of the Learning Circle across the institution.



For up-to-date information on our Learning Circles and their activities, follow our QR code.



dialogue between staff and student members to both share and enhance assessment practices and strategies.

Reflection on what has changed

The relaunch of the Learning Circle this year, helped create a sense of community amongst a smaller group and gave space for interesting discussions and insights. With assessment being such a broad topic, plans for this Learning Circle are still being explored to identify a more refined focus going forward.



Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Process in Higher Education

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Sanchia Rodrigues (Warwick Global Academy) & Karoline Schneider (PAIS)

Members of this Learning Circle engage in discussions with the core aim of improving the experiences and attainment of racially minoritised students and staff through anti-racist teaching, learning and institutional practice.

This year the Learning Circle saw a refresh accompanied by a commensurate growth in its engagement and far-reaching partnerships with other Learning Circles and University partners. The [Anti-Racism Staff Forum](#) was relaunched, open now to all staff, it creates a space for practice-sharing and collaboration, and the Foundations in Racial Equity Course has now trained over 1,000 students.

The Learning Circle continues to provide the [Tackling Racial Inequality Staff Development Programme](#), and in addition this year, have presented a workshop on Racism and Language at Warwick's Education Conference, as well as a poster at the Advance HE Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference, raising its profile beyond Warwick.

Reflection on what has changed

The past year has brought impactful opportunities to showcase and celebrate the work of the Learning Circle. It plays a pivotal role in providing staff and students at Warwick with meaningful educational and professional development opportunities to critically engage with the concepts of race and racism. Crucially, it encourages them to identify concrete actions they can take. In doing so, the Learning Circle continues to actively contribute to and underpin many of the University's commitments under its Racial Equality Charter Mark.

Teaching, Recognition and Reward

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Simon Peplow (History) and Amanda Kowalczyk (Warwick Global Academy). Former Co-lead: Dr Ali Ahmad (WMG)

The Teaching Recognition and Reward Learning Circle looks at parity between research and teaching, and how teaching activity is recognised and rewarded at Warwick, it informs institutional thinking and supports the promotion and adoption of excellent teaching practices more broadly. This year, the Learning Circle published and presented findings from the Perceptions of Support for Teaching-Focused Academic Promotions survey, which revealed important insights and identified key barriers. This has informed and generated discussions across faculties, surfacing wider issues beyond its original scope and shaping the direction of the Learning Circles work for 2026/27.

Reflection on what has changed

One of the biggest impacts this year has been the connections made to wider institutional initiatives, to ensure that supporting and rewarding teaching is on the agenda. The Learning Circle has also responded quickly to deliver on areas that staff have highlighted as requiring further support e.g. the first study leave session, which was organised in time for PDR discussions this year.

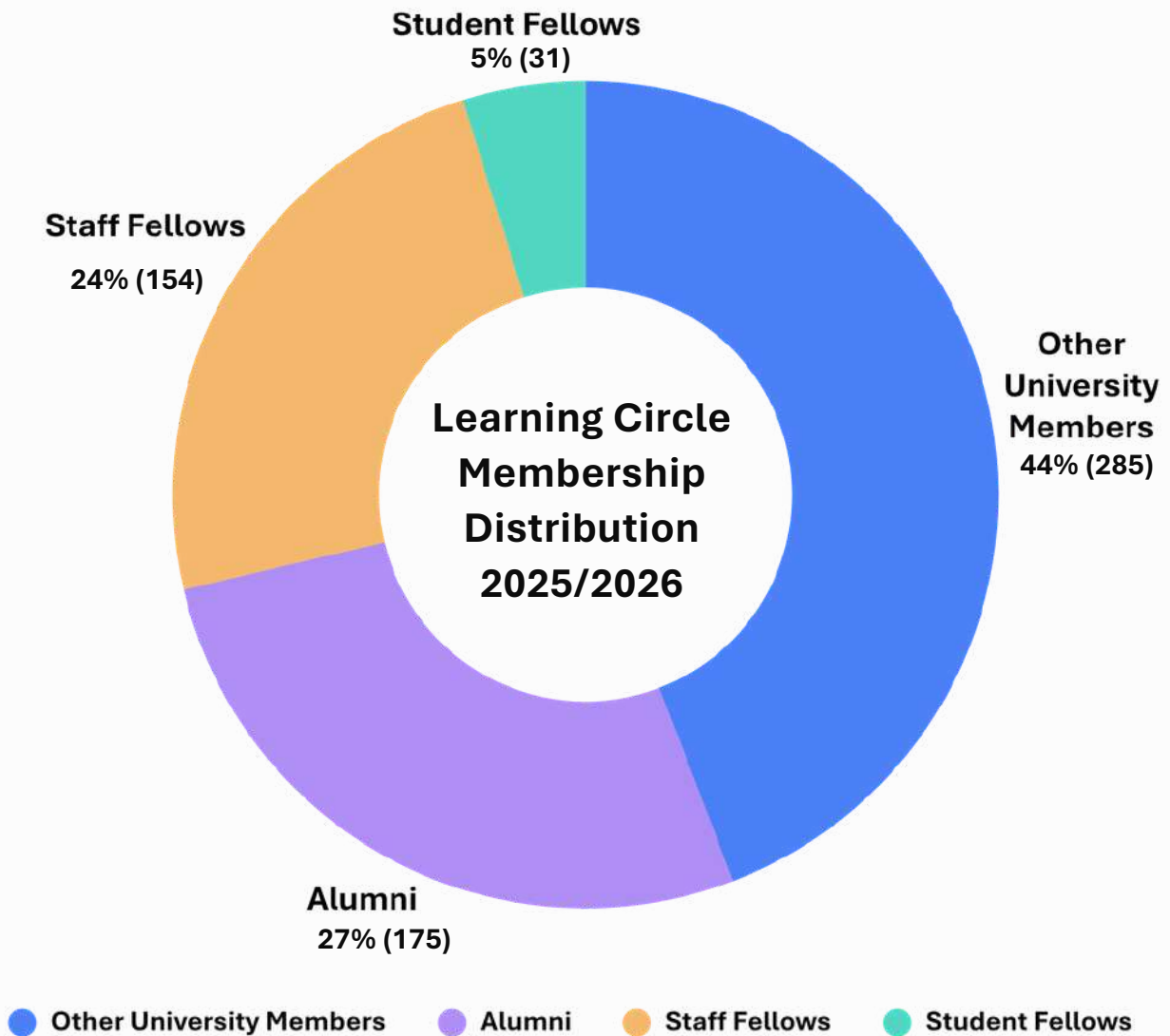


Inclusive Assessment

WIHEA Learning Circle

Co-Leads: Kerry Dobbins (Academic Development Centre) and Thomas Popham (Engineering)

This Learning Circle aimed to develop understanding of principles of inclusive, diverse, authentic and compassionate assessments by creating space for ongoing



Building Belonging

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Inca Hide-Wright (Leadership & Management) and Sarah Bennett (Student Opportunity)

The Building Belonging Learning Circle developed the [Building Belonging Framework](#) to further its goal of strengthening the sense of belonging amongst staff and students.

Following the development and embedding of the Framework across Warwick in 2024/25, this year, the

Learning Circle progressed to running focused community-led projects ranging from evaluation to dissemination activities. This included introducing an evaluation tool and redeveloping resources to reflect the learnings and support the embedding of the tool. The Learning Circle has broadened its reach this year through an online external session, presenting at the University of Leeds Student Success Conference, the Resonate Festival and the Warwick PGR Festival and its interest-based, community-led model was featured in an AMOSSHE publication. Thus, extending collaborations and its reach within and outside of Warwick.

Reflection on what has changed

The Learning Circle has achieved its objectives and more. As it now comes to a close, an integration roadmap which has been co-developed with the Inclusive Education, Student Experience and Social Inclusion teams will enable embedding to continue with purpose and meaning. This will be an exciting new chapter of the Building Belonging story.

“

The impact of Learning Circles extended beyond discussions. Teaching-focused promotion is now a question for Faculty Steering Groups and the DPVC (Teaching and Learning), and staff who asked for support on study leave had a session in time for the PDR round. The Anti-Racism Staff Forum, once limited to teaching staff, is now open across the University, and more than 1,000 students have completed training that asks them to identify actions. Students consulted about employability are now writing the recommendations their Learning Circle will act on. Work on belonging has gone beyond the Learning Circle and is being embedded by University teams.

”



Compassionate Pedagogy

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Gemma Gray and Dr Luke Hodson (Psychology)

This Learning Circle was created with the primary aim to develop compassion in how staff and student interact across Warwick. Their work is grounded in an ecological systems approach that considers everything from immediate relationships and pedagogical practice to institutional policy.

The Compassion Fatigue Project, conducted this and last year explored compassion fatigue among academic staff, debating the use of the term itself and contributed to a growing evidence base for compassionate practice in HE. The Learning Circle shared its findings at Warwick's Education Conference, and plans are underway to also publish the results. It also facilitated a series of meetings, reflection activities, focus groups, podcasts and workshops exploring compassionate approaches across policy and practice and reviewed resources targeted at supporting staff and students.

Reflection on what has changed

In addition to sharing the findings from the Compassion Fatigue Project, the Compassionate Podcast series launched this year has been a successful and accessible entry point to the Learning Circles work, widening the reach of the Learning Circle and providing a channel through which the exploration of emerging themes going forward can continue.



Mature Student Experience

WIHEA Learning Circle (with Critical Friends)

Co-Leads: Dr Anil Awesti and Dr Nalita James (Lifelong Learning)

This year, the Mature Student Experience Learning Circle continued in strides to inform institutional policy on mature students' access and experience at Warwick, by better understanding mature students' perspectives and lived experiences. The Learning Circle engaged their community members through regular online meetings, two surveys (institution wide and Arts Faculty), shared findings through a workshop and hosted Warwick's first-ever Mature Student Experience Symposium, which developed a shared understanding of what it means to be a mature student and identified common challenges to inform institutional work in this area.

Reflection on what has changed

Within 14 months this Learning Circle has generated real commitment from its community of members and made connections across Lifelong Learning, Apprenticeships and Partnerships, and Flexible Futures plus externally with the University of Leeds, University of Nottingham and Singapore University of Social Science. The findings from this year's activities and the collaborations formed, will enable the Learning Circle to focus more closely to the Warwick Skills Agenda, CPD, Short Courses, Stackable Modules and Apprenticeships, and to inform institutional policy and practice in line with national and international context around mature students.



Employability

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Marion Patel (Student Opportunity) and Laura Yetton (Flexible & Online Learning Division)

Members of the Employability Learning Circle engage in discussions to share and develop initiatives that further Warwick students' employability. This year, the Learning Circle has transitioned to an open and termly format which has increased activity and now positioned it as a central space for employability best practice at Warwick. Links have been developed with Student Mobility and Student Opportunity to embed employability in and beyond Warwick, and the Learning Circle shared practice through two Masterclasses, one shared how employability was embedded into assessed coursework in a first-year engineering module and the other shared information on how the Warwick Award helps students evidence the skills graduate recruiters value most.

Reflection on what has changed

The Learning Circle has made a meaningful step towards embedding the student voice at the heart of Employability through the launch of a pilot Student Employability Champion Scheme. The pilot employed four Students to co-create on four distinct short-term projects including: a Core Skills Review, Warwick Beyond & Placement Learning (WB&PL), and Study Abroad. Their input has already improved focus group question design and delivery, considering student views on employability language and successful peer recruitment. The Learning Circle has continued to work on Graduate Outcomes Data, which will support the TEF.



Digital Education and Technologies for Teaching and Assessment

WIHEA Learning Circle (Open)

Co-Leads: Dr Devon Allcoat (Warwick Manufacturing Group), Dr Charlotte Stevens (Academic Development Centre) and Dr Saran Shantikumar (Warwick Medical School)

DETTA is a forum for exploring good practice and innovation in digital education and technologies for teaching and assessment. The community is also space to experiment new ideas, try out new technologies and collaborate with domain experts to overcome community challenges. This year, DETTA reinvented itself by building a community around digital education with a culture of experimentation and space to fail. The Learning Circle is delivering an online symposium in September 26 'Epic Failures and Comebacks with Learning Technology' in collaboration with the Digital Learning community.

Reflection on what has changed

The Learning Circle will deliver a symposium that instead of only focusing on success stories, will instead create a space for candid reflection, an opportunity to recognise that setbacks, surprises, and even failures can be some of the most valuable sources of learning. It will provide real life stories of challenges, missteps and unexpected outcomes, as well as practical insights and lessons learned. It will also connect those working in learning design, educational technology, academic development, teaching or student support.





Funded Projects

Project funding remains a cornerstone of WIHEA's work in educational enhancement. By supporting partnerships between staff and students, it contributes directly to developing, recognising and embedding practices that enrich the learning experience. Seventeen projects were supported this year, many of them investigating the experience of groups whose needs are least well understood at Warwick.

Three funding streams supported WIHEA projects this year. The Small Fund enables Fellows to take forward initiatives, pursue projects of strategic importance, or extend the reach of existing WIHEA activity. The Student Fund allows Student Fellows to lead their own initiatives, while the Learning Circle Project Fund, gives Learning Circles the resources to move from discussion to delivery. A summary of some of the projects supported this year, and what will change as a result are detailed below.

STUDENT FUND PROJECT



Inclusive Transitions to Postgraduate Study Education

Lead: Michael Cavaliere (PGR, Mathematics)

Considerable research exists on the transition into undergraduate study, but very little on the shift from taught courses to independent postgraduate research. Through desk-based research, surveys and focus groups this student-led project aims to address that gap, with particular attention to neurodivergent PGR students, who are a growing but underrepresented part of the research community and face distinct difficulties at this point.

Project reflections so far

We hope that the project will have a significant impact on supporting PGR students with the challenges associated with the transition from taught courses to research courses – particularly neurodivergent PGR students, who are underrepresented but growing population and who often have unique needs relating to transitions. Already, the development of the project has led to the issue being raised at various University committees, and our work has had support from key stakeholders in the Doctoral College, Dean of Students' Office, and the Faculty Education and Student Experience Committees.

SMALL FUND



Belonging for Warwick Scholars and Priority Groups

Lead: Emily Watkins (Education)

Additional Lead: Inca Hide-Wright (Leadership and Development) and Jo Bowers (Education)

Warwick Scholars and Priority Group students, which includes estranged, care leavers and Sanctuary Scholars, are key groups identified in the Inclusive Education and Experience framework, but little is known about what drives their sense of belonging. This project aims to understand the lived experiences of students in these key groups across the student lifecycle, from applicant to alumni.

Project reflections so far

The project has strengthened understanding of the factors that influence belonging for widening participation students. Initial findings show that students feel the strongest sense of belonging through their relationships with staff and fellow students. For instance, students reported feeling more recognised, valued, and comfortable seeking help when staff knew them personally and maintained consistent, approachable relationships. The full findings and recommendations are being written up and will be shared soon.



A Sustainability Readiness Level (SRL) Framework for Education for Sustainable Development

Lead: Dr Maryam Masood (WMG)

Education for Sustainable Development is essential for graduates to address sustainability challenges. However, how far it is embedded varies considerably between disciplines and institutions. This project evaluates the Sustainability Readiness Level Framework, a diagnostic tool adapted from the concept of Technology Readiness Levels which assesses how ready course teams are to embed sustainability systematically.

Project reflections so far

Although analysis is ongoing, there are already several tangible outcomes:

- Increase of staff awareness and engagement, prompting initial consideration of curriculum changes and improvements and Course Leads taking ideas to be applied in their departments.
- Systematic collection of staff perspectives on ESD, providing an evidence base to inform both local curriculum development and wider institutional strategy
- Ongoing refinement of the SRL Framework, informed by real-world application and user feedback and an asynchronous workshop to enable wider adoption across departments for more consistent & scalable application of the framework in progress.
- Strengthened collaboration with King's College London and the development of a shared approach.
- Workshop outputs shared with ESD Action Group leading to institution-wide discussions on embedding sustainability in teaching.



For up-to-date information on our projects and outputs, follow our QR code.



Evaluation of Team Allocation for Skill Diversity

Lead: Dr Ian Saunders (Computer Science)

This project aims to explore the relationship between a team's skill composition and individual students' experiences within their teams, specifically within the context of the CS352 Module (Project Management for Computer Scientists) at Warwick. CS352 employs a novel approach to team allocation, which distributes self-reported skills equally across teams, while attempting to align members based on shared preferences. This method seeks to ensure that all students are placed in skill-diverse yet compatible teams. Natural variations in skill distribution between teams creates an opportunity to investigate how the composition impacts team dynamics, academic outcomes, and overall student experience.

Project reflections so far

Still in progress, the primary objective of this research is to examine how the balance and diversity of skills within teams affect students' academic performance, satisfaction, and teamwork skill development. By investigating the influence of team composition, the study will provide evidence-based recommendations for refining team formation strategies in group-based learning environments. A paper/poster will detail the findings and evidence-based recommendations and will be disseminated to the wider academic community once completed.



Warwick International Student Experience

Lead: Samantha Wilson-Thain (Life Sciences)

Co-leads: Emily Roisin-Reid (WMS), Echo Zhou (Education) and Dr Thomas Greenaway (Student Opportunity)

International students face barriers around academic

acculturation, language, visa stress and social integration, and institutional data shows a persistent awarding gap between home and international students. This project scaled a School of Life Sciences and Warwick Medical School pilot into an institution-wide Masterclass, delivered in Term 2, combining institutional data with a student panel and case-based learning. The WISE Staff Toolkit covered common challenges international students face around academic acculturation, language, visa stress and social integration. The toolkit and its practical strategies for inclusive teaching has been viewed over 1,000 times since launch.

Project reflections so far

In future iterations of this Masterclass the WISE team would simplify the miss-match task and open space for more in-depth discussion, related to a smaller number of scenarios.

The WISE team enjoyed working together and alongside the Internationalisation Learning Circle to develop this session and the WISE toolkit as an output from this work. It is important for groups to continue their collaborations with Learning Circles to ensure that projects benefit from the wealth of expertise showcased across the WIHEA network.



Student Focus Groups to Support Disability-Linked Inclusion

Lead: Romain Chenet (Cross-Faculty Studies)

Additional Lead: Kathryn Files (PGR, Global Sustainable Development)

Students with specific learning differences and neurodivergence are a growing and diverse group, supported inconsistently across the University, and almost no recent EDI projects at Warwick have focused on disability. By working with students with Specific Learning Differences and/or neurodivergence conditions (SpLDs-ND), this project addresses this gap by building a student-led view of the barriers to inclusion they face.



The Learning Circle Project Fund exists so that good ideas do not stop at the meeting, producing outputs meaningful to the Warwick community.

Project reflections so far

From the in-person focus groups, discussions have led to identifying 4 key themes: Time and Organisation, Language and communication, Expectations and Support, and Assessments. This has led to recommendations concerning staff training, clearer guidance, spread-out deadlines, alternative formats, simpler processes, tutor check-ins, lecture capture and cover sheets. A cross-University report and an internal School-level EDI policy report will detail the findings.

LEARNING CIRCLE



A Handbook for Public and Community Engagement Pedagogies

Co-leads: Laura Gelhaus (PAIS), Rachel Turner-King (Education) and Naomi Kay (WIE)

Several Warwick modules already encourage public and community engagement, but the pedagogies involved remain unclear to many educators and community members. Building on a 2025 project that mapped modules with engagement components, this project produced a 60-page practical guide featuring nineteen case studies of modules and extracurricular activities from across and beyond the Warwick faculties, including podcast assignments, hands-on activities and teddy bear hospitals.

Project reflections so far

The project produced a practical guide to support those who consider embedding public and community engagement in their teaching activities. It includes 19 case studies of modules and extracurricular activities that encourage students to engage with communities and the broader public, as well as practical how-to guides. The case studies are drawn from across and beyond all faculties at the University of Warwick, including a wide range of activities such as podcast assignments, hands-on activities, and teddy bear hospital. The handbook also contains contextual chapters on the benefits of public and community engagement in teaching, broader curriculum design concerns, and engagement with seldom-heard groups. The handbook will be launched in 2026-27 Term 1.



Mature Student Experience Symposium

Co-leads: Dr Nalita James and Dr Anil Awesti (Lifelong Learning)

Mature students are identified in Warwick's Access and Participation Plan as requiring targeted support, but no event had brought staff, students and sector expertise together on the issue. This project was a continuation of the Learning Circle's pilot survey. It held Warwick's first Mature Student Experience Symposium in May 2026, with external guests from Leeds, Nottingham and Singapore University of Social Sciences.

Project reflections so far

The primary research undertaken and symposium have provided a better understanding of what it means to be a mature student at Warwick and identified common challenges. This will be used to inform institutional work in the area.



Staff-Student Collaboration: Student Action for Refugees (STAR) Annual Charity Summit

Co-leads: Laura Yetton (Flexible & Online Learning Division) and Marion Patel (Student Opportunity)

In collaboration with other Student Societies and the Employer Engagement Team (Student Opportunity), students in the Warwick Student Action for Refugees (STAR) society, organised a first of its kind staff/student co-created employability offer that brought together representatives from the charity and NGO Sector. It included a panel event, a workshop on leveraging employability skills from volunteering, and an opportunities fair/networking lunch where charities/not for profit organisations with voluntary or paid roles can network with the student attendees. The

Employability Learning Circle were approached by the students to request support with funding the networking lunch. The event aligned with the aims of the Learning Circle, in particular, it helped to connect employers with staff and students to raise awareness of the employability and skills agenda, it also engaged student voices who can be represented in the Learning Circle going forward.

Project reflections so far

The event itself successfully increased political and legal literacy around asylum and migration, challenging misinformation and harmful stereotypes, whilst connecting attendees to concrete volunteering, advocacy and career pathways. It strengthened collaboration between students and civil society and has provided a model for student-staff co-created career insight events that could be repeated and used in future.



Student Employability Champions

Co-leads: Marion Patel (Student Opportunity) and Laura Yetton (Flexible & Online Learning Division)

This project piloted four paid Student Employability Champions, each assigned to a short-term project, to gather insight, co-develop practice with departments and make sure employer expectations and student needs are properly reflected. Projects included the Core Skills Review, Warwick Beyond & Placement Learning (WB&PL) and Study Abroad.

Project reflections so far

The Student Voice has improved the efficacy and approach to various existing projects through this pilot. Existing work usually completed by staff was reviewed and received direct input by students. An example of this in action, is that it led to improvements in focus group question wording design and delivery, taking into account student views on employability language, timetabling and successful recruitment of their peers. Students are writing recommendations on the employability strategy, approaches and activities of the Employability Learning Circle and Warwick as a whole, which the Learning Circle can then action.



Student and Staff Perspectives on Teamwork Preparedness

Co-leads: Dr Mujthaba Ahtamad (Warwick Manufacturing Group) and Dr Ian Saunders (Computer Science)

In support of the Education and Student Experience Strategy, existing surveys like the NSS touch on groupwork but don't dig into students' specific experiences and issues, a pilot survey project in 2025 started to explore teamwork preparedness and support at Warwick. This year the project re-distributed a revised survey to capture further data from both undergraduate and postgraduate students to identify the most effective ways to support students doing groupwork.

Project reflections so far

With data collection complete, initial analysis has established a baseline understanding of teamwork experiences across departments. Early patterns emerging are around teamwork enjoyment, comfort seeking staff help, and perceptions of support. Department data and qualitative themes are being organised to carry out deeper analysis, to explore the differences in experiences by department, gender and home vs. international students. The insights will be shared with departments in a final project report, which will include recommendations for each department, with a view to exploring ways to strengthen teamwork support university wide.



Embedding Belonging into the Curriculum

Co-leads: Jo Kukuczka (Academic Development Centre), Amanda Lang (Engineering) and Amira Elasra (Economics)

In further support of the aims of the Building Belonging Learning Circle, and its staff and student members working

on a number of activities to embed, share and develop the Framework, this project focused specifically on creating a new Curriculum Belonging Framework for academic staff to use when designing their curricula. The funding further enabled students to help design and deliver Faculty based workshops on embedding belonging into disciplinary and interdisciplinary curricular.

Project reflections so far

Two Faculty Workshops were delivered in March (Arts & SEM) and a further one in April (Social Sciences). The SEM workshop followed an Ignite-Shape-Shift structure, exploring what belonging means in a curriculum context, then discussing learning activities, assessment, and ILOs through the Framework's four elements (Inclusion, Mattering, Connection, and Empowerment), to then translating insights into curriculum design. Belonging in Curriculum Design resources for programme/module convenors and teaching staff are now available. Further dissemination and ongoing tests and refinement work will continue.



Mapping of Warwick Internationalisation Activities

Co-leads: Massimiliano Tamborrino (Statistics) and Daniel Jones (Warwick Global Academy)

Internationalisation is central to Warwick's International Strategy 2024–2030, almost 40% of students and staff are international, yet there is no central record of related activities. This year, Sujaya Shrestha (UG, Physics) took a more systematic approach, contacting leading experts and colleagues across departments and centres to gather resources.

Project reflections so far

[A resource page](#) showing the mapping so far was launched at the Warwick Education Conference, with several participants very much supportive of the initiative. The mapping has provided greater knowledge and connections. The Learning Circle will now work on promoting the page within the University at different levels and continue to gather and add resources.



Building Belonging: Developing Resources and Dissemination

Co-leads: Inca Hide-Wright (Leadership & Development), Leigh Mencarini (Estates), Charlotte Stevens (Academic Development Centre) and Georgina Pilling (Education)

In support of the aims of the Building Belonging Learning Circle, its staff and student members worked on a number of activities including a survey and series of presentations and workshops to embed, share and develop the Framework. Work also focused on the development of a method/tool for users of the Building Belonging Framework to capture impact, reach and value. Project funding enabled students to be involved in meetings and the design and delivery of workshops, keeping all activities grounded in real student experience.

Project reflections so far

In addition to raising awareness of the Framework through presentations and workshops, a two-step evaluation approach to measure the Framework's short- and long-term impact has been built, this includes evaluation surveys and a Power BI dashboard to record the data. It is a robust model, which in addition to evaluating belonging, could be an approach to evaluation which can be extended to other areas of work within the University.

Study on Compassion Fatigue in HE Academic Staff

Co-leads: Dr Luke Hodson, Dr Gemma Gray, Dr Claudie Fox and Dr Julie Eyden (Psychology)

Compassion fatigue is well documented in the helping professions but remains under-researched among academic staff, who often provide extensive pastoral care over long periods. This project recruited academics with student-facing roles across the sector for semi-structured interviews about that experience.

Project reflections so far

We have developed our understanding on the prevalence of, and experience of compassion fatigue in academic staff. By better understanding this phenomenon, we can start to look towards recommendations for tackling the impact this has on staff and ultimately, the student wellbeing.



Every project in this section had students involved in it — as leads, project officers, researchers and champions. This is what makes the findings practical.



Community Pulse

This summer, over 100 Staff and Student members of the WIHEA community which included Fellows, Alumni and Internal Members from right across the university, took the time to tell us what WIHEA means to them. Eleven years in, and with the new Education Academy taking shape, there was an opportunity to reflect with the community on both what is working well and how we can move WIHEA forward. What we heard was, above all, a story of connection.

A community that shows up

Two things stood out clearly above everything else: community/connection and Learning Circles. Around 70% respondents named each as one of the most valuable things WIHEA offered them this year. People told us, repeatedly, what that connection has meant to them:

"WIHEA has continued this year to be invaluable for offering opportunities to make connections with educators beyond my home academic department. WIHEA is where 'I found my tribe' at Warwick."

- Alumni

"WIHEA has been a space to learn, contribute, and grow within a wider community of education. It has helped me to feel more connected to Warwick's teaching and learning culture, while also giving me opportunities to exchange ideas with people from different backgrounds and disciplines"

- Student Fellow

"For me, this is a space to step outside the day-to-day pressures of my own department and connect with colleagues across Warwick who think and care deeply and creatively about teaching, learning, inclusion and educational leadership."

- Staff Fellow

That spirit of openness and generosity came through, and it is something respondents were clear they want us to protect, whatever else changes around us:

"The model works because it creates space for trust, curiosity, collaboration and professional generosity."

- Staff Fellow

Looking ahead, the community told us where they would like WIHEA's energy to go next: building a community that supports educators, and influencing institutional strategy and policy, were identified as priorities, followed closely by connecting Warwick to the wider Higher Education sector and generating and sharing pedagogic research.

Listening and acting

From the survey findings, people gave us, people also gave us thoughtful, constructive ideas for how WIHEA can grow, and we are genuinely grateful for that honesty, because it is exactly what helps a community stay healthy over eleven years and beyond. A recurring thread was about making sure WIHEA's doors are as open as they can be: some respondents suggested we look again at how the Fellowship nomination process works and how Learning Circles can keep growing their open model so more people can find their way in, however they first connect with us.

We also heard warmly from our Alumni community, many of whom told us how much WIHEA has shaped their careers, and how keen they are to stay involved in new ways as their journey with us continues.

Student fellows and members share insights in how WIHEA has helped them feel like they belong and matter, whilst providing new insights into teaching and learning at Warwick.

In direct response to what the community has told us, several things are already in motion including a review of how access to Learning Circles work, a look at how Learning Circles come to life and how we support LC leads, further conversations with the Alumni community about what happens once you finish your fellowship and a conversation with fellows around what next for WIHEA.

We asked the community this question “What does being part of WIHEA mean to you?”

sharing educators professional knowledge recognition
connection teaching space value
community opportunity ideas
learning practice department people access
network development students projects education
fellowship collaboration academic belonging staff
colleagues experience engagement support identity reflection

Of the 105 responses received, 28 respondents (27%) mentioned community, while 24 (23%) said connection and 20 (19%) responses included opportunity.



Thank you

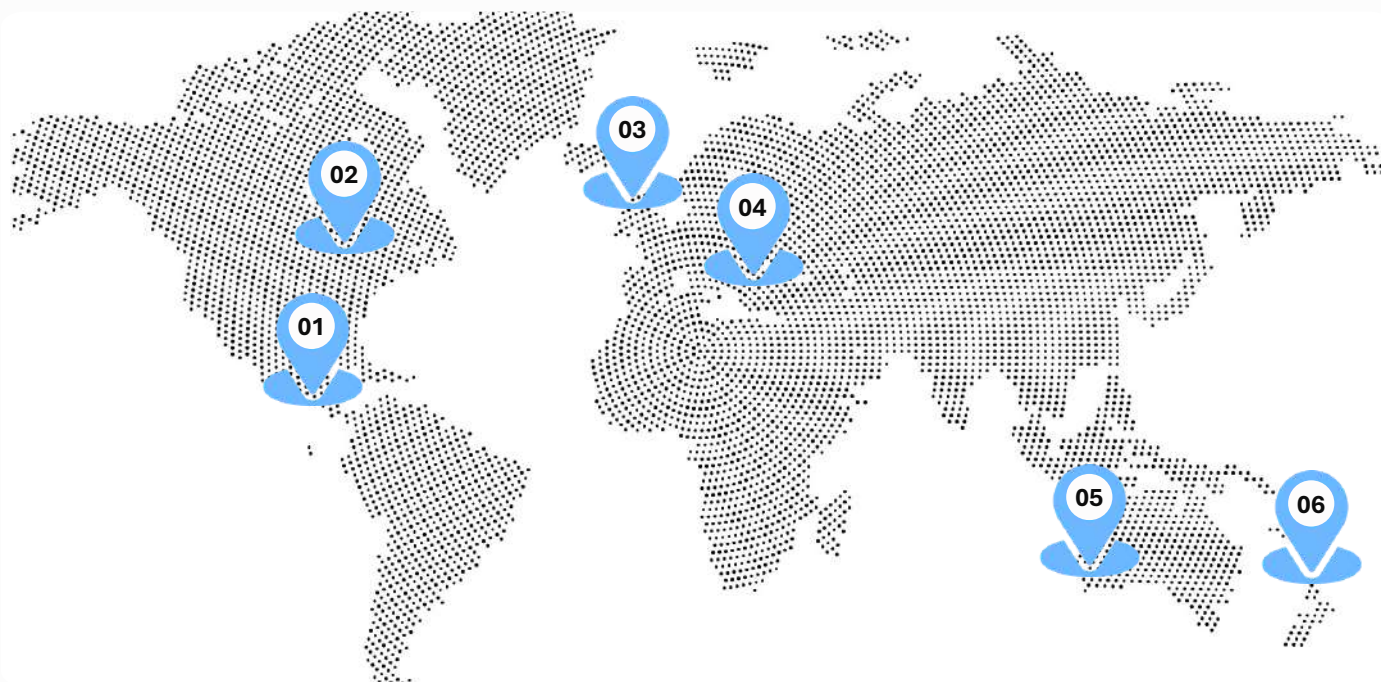
Eleven years in, WIHEA is what it is because of the people who show up for it, in Learning Circles, in project teams, in the corridor conversations that do not make it into any report.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their voice this year. We are listening, we are proud of what we have built together, and we cannot wait to see where the next chapter takes us.



WIHEA Beyond Warwick

WIHEA's reach continues to extend beyond Warwick this year, not only through flagship international partnerships but also in the everyday work of our Learning Circles. This year, several Learning Circles welcomed national and international colleagues into their meetings from expert panels to conversations with colleagues from as far afield as Singapore, a reminder that international exchange happens at the grass-roots level, not only through headline partnerships. Alongside this, WIHEA has continued to build and deepen three major partnerships over the past year: the UK SoTL Alliance, the Curtin Academy Mentor Circle, and the Transatlantic Teaching Exchange Series. Together, they show a community that is as committed to learning from elsewhere as it is to sharing its own practice with the world.



01

North Carolina, USA

Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, Elon University

02

Quebec, Canada

English Department, Bishop's University, Quebec

03

England, United Kingdom

University of Leeds and Queen Mary University of London

04

Kharkiv, Ukraine

National Aerospace University "Kharkiv Aviation Institute", Ukraine

05

Perth, Australia

Curtin Academy, Curtin University

06

Auckland, New Zealand

Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

Visiting Colleagues: WIHEA Masterclasses



Three WIHEA Masterclasses this year brought international expertise to Warwick, each engaging with how learning design responds to institutional change and the rise of AI in education.



Dr Dmytro Chumachenko (National Aerospace University, Kharkiv Aviation Institute, Ukraine; and a scholar at the Balsillie School of International Affairs) delivered "Ukraine's Playbook for Responsible AI in Higher Education: Soft Law in Action." Drawing on Ukraine's experience governing generative AI faster than legislation can keep pace, Chumachenko set out what effective "soft law" – institutional guidelines, disclosure norms, and academic integrity processes – should include, where institutions typically go wrong (notably over-reliance on AI detection tools), and a practical roadmap for responsible AI governance in teaching and assessment.



Dr Jessica Riddell (Bishop's University, Quebec), visiting through the IAS Visiting Professor Scheme, delivered "Designing for Belonging: The Classroom as a Microcosm of Systems Change." Jessica who holds the Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair of Undergraduate Teaching Excellence and founded the Hope Circuits Institute, argued that the classroom can function as a prototype for institutional and governance reform, with curriculum design and relational pedagogy modelling alternative futures for university culture more broadly. The session drew on her recent book, 'Hope Circuits: Rewiring Universities and Other Systems for Human Flourishing' (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2024).



In May 2026, WIHEA welcomed **Dr Bettina Schwenger** (University of Auckland), who spent time with us, meeting Fellows, engaging in conversations and inspiring us with her Masterclass focused on 'Learning Design Beyond Cognition: Emotion, Uncertainty, and Dialogue in an AI-Mediated World'. Bettina shared a post-digital perspective and proposed that wellbeing in an AI-saturated learning environment is fundamentally a learning-design issue rather than something addressed through regulation or individual coping strategies, drawing on Indigenous concepts from Aotearoa New Zealand to argue for designs that legitimise emotion and uncertainty rather than seeking to eliminate them.

Together, the three sessions from our international speakers form a coherent thread, belonging, wellbeing, and governance, all responding to how AI is reshaping the relationship between teaching and institutional structure, and all brought to Warwick from elsewhere.

Partnerships

UK SoTL Alliance

The UK SoTL Alliance was established in June 2025, out of the first Dales Dialogue, in collaboration with Jess Humphreys, Director of WIHEA, Professor Gabriel Cavelli, Director of Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) and Professor Emeritus Janet De Wilde, Former Director of the Queen Mary Academy. The Alliance has continued to grow significantly in its second year, expanding from 25 founding members to over 40 institutional members. The Alliance is a cross-institutional collaborative body that drives and celebrates the value of research-informed educational enhancement of students' experiences through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

WIHEA's leadership within the Alliance has also grown: Jess has been elected as co-chair of the UK SoTL Alliance steering committee and is also co-lead of the Action Group exploring Impact, Voice and Advocacy. A further two action groups have been established, exploring areas from scholarship careers and the Hidden REF, with other action groups being developed. The Alliance has also established a LinkedIn presence, now approaching 1,000 followers from the UK and beyond, a sign of its growing visibility across the sector.

Curtin Academy Mentor Circles

This year we launched a co-mentoring partnership with Curtin Academy at Curtin University, Perth. Structured as the Warwick-Curtin Academy Mentor Circle, it invited WIHEA Fellows and Alumni to co-mentor Curtin colleagues alongside an experienced Curtin Academy Fellow, pairing a Warwick perspective with a Curtin one on projects that had strong ideas but had not yet secured funding.

Running from February to December 2026 and co-chaired by Associate Professor Ben Milbourn and Associate Professor Sherry Bawa from Curtin Academy, the programme brought together a cohort of 20 mentors, 10 from Warwick and 10 from Curtin, supporting 5 mentee teams. Four weekly online sessions, each pairing a plenary on teaching and learning with breakout mentoring sessions are built towards a five-minute funding pitch, with mentors and mentees then continuing to work together through three further one-to-one sessions across the rest of the year. Successful projects received Curtin Academy grant funding.

Projects supported through the mentor circle included:

Improving retention of women students in geoscience and engineering

Project Lead: Lauren Petela

Mentors: Sherry Bawa (Curtin), Claire Rocks (Warwick), Maryam Masood (Warwick), Sam Grierson (Warwick).

Generative AI and pre-service teachers

Project Lead: Kim Balnaves

Mentors: Lisa Tee (Curtin), Sherry Bawa (Curtin), Tom Ritchie (Warwick), Youn Affejee (Warwick), Manoj Babu (Warwick).

Classroom readiness for education students

Project Lead: Bich Nguyen

Mentors: Rachel Sheffield (Curtin), Subra Ananthram (Curtin), Charlotte Stevens (Warwick), Luda Ruddock (Warwick)

Universal design for learning and inclusive practice for neurodiverse students in medicine and health

Project Lead: Annette Nyaradi

Mentors: Jun Chih (Curtin), Chen Zheng (Curtin), Emily Unwin (Warwick), Fatimah Shahbaz (Warwick)

A mindfulness hub for students

Project Lead: Trevor Mazzucchelli

Mentors: Shafiq Gobee (Curtin), Abhi Singh (Curtin), Samantha Wilson-Thain (Warwick), Sarah Bennett (Warwick).

Four projects went on to receive funding from Curtin University to develop their ideas further, and conversations between colleagues at Warwick and Curtin continue. A special thank you to Curtin Academy for this opportunity to collaborate and to colleagues from the WIHEA community who are contributing to this work.

Transatlantic Teaching Exchange Series

Created out of a US-UK Fulbright Exchange, Tom Ritchie, a WIHEA Alumnus, curated and led the Transatlantic Teaching Exchange Series. This series brought together students and staff from the US, UK and Canada to explore teaching practice as equal partners, with students and staff co-facilitating sessions and collaborating on research. The series connected WIHEA and IATL at Warwick with CATL at Elon University and LITE at the University of Leeds.

This year's programme explored what makes teaching "excellent" in context, teaching for a sustainable future, belonging and exclusion, teaching in the age of AI, and assessment as a driver of learning, closing with a session on building future transatlantic partnerships. The series remained live through a LinkedIn group, where participants continued discussions and explored future collaboration.

Closing

What connects a Learning Circle welcoming speakers from Singapore, a UK-wide Alliance now spanning 40 institutions, a mentoring partnership pairing Warwick and Curtin colleagues across two hemispheres, and a teaching exchange spanning three continents?

Each began as a single conversation and grew into something lasting. As these partnerships mature, they create new possibilities for the year ahead, from Action Group work within the UK SoTL Alliance to new opportunities within the mentoring circles to new voices joining international conversations. We are also working with the International Office to build new connections and support colleagues interested in applying for international funding. We look forward to what the coming year brings and to building on the connections we've made together.



Celebrating the Community

Recognising achievement and inspiring a community of learning/teaching-minded staff and students are at the heart of WIHEA, so we take great joy in celebrating and sharing the successes of our Fellows and Alumni. **CONGRATULATIONS** on these remarkable accomplishments!

Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence

Faculty Team Award - Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine



Dr Samantha Wilson-Thain
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed) and Director of Student Experience

Samantha led the MBio Skills, Expectation and Performance

project that won the WATE SEM Faculty Team Award. The award-winning project utilised a well-structured approach to student learning by integrating skills development, reflective practice and employability in line with institutional priorities.

Faculty Staff Award - Faculty of Social Science



Dr Neha Gupta
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed) and Director of AI Leadership Executive Education

Neha was recognized for her exceptional work in making

complex technologies accessible to diverse, non-technical business students. Through her innovative EPIC approach she integrates experiential and inclusive learning, building student confidence, AI literacy, and professional capabilities.

Outstanding Student Contribution Awards (OSCA)



Zineb Nmili
BSc Management

This award recognises Zineb's work through volunteering locally and internationally to widen access to inclusive education by supporting young people to overcome barriers.



Dr Meifang Zhuo
PhD Applied Linguistics

Meifang received this award in for her academic excellence and global impact, as well as her contribution to the wider community at Warwick.

Warwick Awards for Public and Community Engagement



Dr Meifang Zhuo
PhD Applied Linguistics

This was awarded to Meifang in recognition of her efforts to empower Chinese English teachers to become independent

researchers. The programme has generated classroom impact, scholarly outputs, and a lasting practitioner network that strengthens equitable knowledge exchange.

WBS CORE Teaching Award for Excellence



Dr Natasha Mwila
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WBS

Natasha received this award for her Outstanding Contribution to the Scholarship of Teaching and

Learning. It recognises her work in promoting the case method in the business school by mentoring emerging case writers, supporting case writing and leading scholarship in the field.

Warwick Manufacturing Group Rising Star Award



Dr Fatemeh Shahbazi
Associate Professor (Teaching
Focussed), WMG

British Association for American Studies



Dr Rebecca Stone
Associate Professor
(Teaching Focussed), History

Academic Achievements



Dr. Devon Allcoat
Associate Professor (Teaching
Focussed), WMG

Devon Completed a Postgraduate
Diploma in Leadership Practice

with distinction and submitted requirements for level 7
degree apprenticeship in senior leadership



Dr. Emma Baker
Associate Professor (Teaching
Focussed), History

Emma completed the level 7 Senior
Leader Apprenticeship program.

She was also awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership
Practice with distinction from the Open University



Marie Badwen
Completed her Bachelor of Arts
degree in History



Dr Youn Affejee
Youn completed his Doctoral
degree in Engineering Education



Dr Meifang Zhuo
Meifang completed her Doctoral
degree in Applied Linguistics



Dr Alisha Rodgers
Alisha completed her Doctoral
degree in Engineering



Lewis Middleton
Lewis completed his Bachelors
degree in Sociology



Naveera Abhayawickrama
Naveera completed her
Bachelors degree in Law



Zineb Nmili
Zineb completed her Bachelors
degree in International
Management



Billy Smith
Billy completed his Bachelors
degree in Economics, Psychology
and Philosophy

Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy Recognition



Dr Massimiliano Tamborrino
Associate Professor (Reader),
Statistics



Sanchia Rodrigues
Associate Professor (Teaching
Focussed), Warwick
Foundation Studies

Other Awards, Successes and Achievements



Sarah Bennett
PhD Applied Linguistics

Led the Thrive Programme which was shortlisted for the Inclusivity Opportunity category at the inaugural

GFI GRAFTA awards. It was also nominated by Warwick for THE Awards 2026 in the Outstanding Support for Students category.



Dr Jianhua Yang
Associate Professor (Teaching
Focussed), WMG

Jianhua recently secured a prestigious EU award as Main

Proposer and candidate Chair, bringing vital funding to Warwick. Building on the WIHEA AI in Education Learning Circle, this achievement positions the University to lead work on Generative AI across Europe.



Professor Modupe Jimoh
(Teaching Focussed), WMG

I was nominated by the Department of Education and invited to the May

May 2026 Royal Garden Party in recognition of my outstanding contribution to education.



National Teaching Fellowships

We extend huge congratulations to WIHEA Alumnae Dr Bo Kelestyn and Professor Rebecca Freeman for their National Teaching Fellowships in 2026. This award recognises and celebrates those making an outstanding impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession in UK higher education.



Professor Rebecca Freeman
Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Education)

Professor Rebecca (Becky) Freeman is Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) at the University of Warwick, leading student success and experience for a diverse student population of 29,000. She is a Principal Fellow (PFHEA) and is widely recognised for championing student voice, co-creation and inclusive education within Warwick and across the higher education sector.

Rebecca's work is grounded in the belief that students should be active partners in educational change. Across a career spanning universities, students' unions and sector-wide higher education roles, she has brought together leadership, scholarship and practice to challenge exclusion, strengthen belonging and create the conditions in which all students can thrive.

Rebecca has long argued that authentic student voice should be embedded into the fabric of institutional culture. Her research focuses on student voice and forms of power in higher education, and this scholarship informs the strategic initiatives she leads. Through keynotes and sector-facing work, she has invited universities to think carefully about how they communicate with students, how students' voices are valued in the classroom, curriculum and assessment, what meaningful and diverse structures look like, and how regulation can be used pragmatically to support student-centred change.

Through institutional leadership, research and national collaboration, including co-chairing the Russell Group Student Success Network, she has influenced thinking and practice across the sector. Her work has resonated within and beyond Warwick because it combines strategic reach with a clear purpose: a culture of educational excellence must be equitable.



Dr Bo Kelestyn
Associate Professor
Teaching Focussed, Warwick
Business School

Bo Kelestyn is an Associate Professor at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick.

Over the past decade, Bo has developed a distinctive design-led pedagogical approach that combines human-centred innovation, student partnership and participatory learning. Initially developed through her teaching of design thinking, this approach has evolved into a broader philosophy of educational transformation that enables learners to navigate complexity, challenge assumptions and develop the confidence and agency to create meaningful change.

At Warwick, she has influenced curriculum innovation, student experience, interdisciplinary learning and the implementation of the University's Education Strategy.

Nationally and internationally, she has advanced learner-centred design through collaborations with Advance HE, sector bodies, universities and professional networks, influencing how universities design learning experiences that promote student-led co-creation. Since 2022, Bo has applied this expertise to supporting educational reconstruction and leadership development in Ukraine. She co-founded the Leadership for Educational Transformation and Veteran Leadership programmes and nurtured partnerships with educational, governmental and civic organisations. Her work has influenced the establishment of the country's first Centre for Educational Leadership.

Across all contexts, Bo's work is characterised by engagement with design-led pedagogy and participatory approaches that enable individuals, institutions and communities to shape more hopeful futures.

Promotions and Appointments

We are very pleased to celebrate the promotion of some of our WIHEA Fellows and Alumni. We are aware that many more colleagues may have been promoted but have not had the chance to share their success with us. Congratulations to you all!



Dr Gill Frigerio
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), Centre for Lifelong Learning

I have taken on the fractional post of 'Director of Scholarship'

for the School of Education, Learning and Communication Science (SELCS). This role is designed to provide support to Teaching focused academics (TFAs), in order to leverage their workload allocation for research. This year has been about scoping and exploring what sorts of support TFAs need most, in the context of SELearning CircleS's emerging strategy for the future.



Emily Watkins
mA*ths Online Widening Participation

Since joining WIHEA, I have taken on a new role in the Widening

Participation Team as lead for the new mA*ths Online outreach programme. This initiative is designed to support students from underrepresented backgrounds in higher education to gain the skills needed to achieve an A* in A Level Mathematics, opening doors to pursue STEM degrees and careers



Dr Fatemeh Shahbazi
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WMG

I have been promoted to Associate Professor, and also appointed

Course Director for the Applied Professional Engineering Programme (APEP). These milestones recognize my teaching innovation and educational leadership, across apprenticeship programmes in the department.



Professor Modupe Jimoh
(Teaching Focussed), WMG

I am delighted to share my promotion to Professor of Civil Engineering alongside my

appointment as Course Manager for Civil Engineering Undergraduate Course. These achievements reflect my proven academic leadership and continuous contributions to Education and Student Experience.



Dr Damien Homer
Deputy Director of Wellbeing and Safeguarding

I am taking on a new role as the Deputy Director of Wellbeing and

Safeguarding, after over three years leading Disability Services. This new role will be focused on supporting student and staff wellbeing across the university.



Dr Maryam Masood
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WMG

I have been promoted to Associate Professor. This

highlights my work in education for sustainable development and my ongoing research into inequalities in AI through the AI Learning Circle.



Dr Freeha Azmat
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WMG

Promoted to Reader



Dr Natasha Mwila
Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WBS

Promoted to Reader

Fellow Impact Statements

Project funding continues to be a cornerstone of WIHEA's work in educational enhancement. By supporting partnerships between staff and students, this funding directly contributes to developing, recognising, and embedding practices that enrich the developing, recognising, and embedding practices that enrich the.



Dr Kerem Öge
Associate Professor
Politics and International
Studies

As a WIHEA Fellow, I joined and began to co-lead the 'Overcoming

Barriers to AI' Learning Circle subgroup, where I worked with colleagues to share best practice and help shape discussions around AI in higher education. This work contributed to an online repository of AI use cases and led to the Understanding Barriers to AI project, supported by the Warwick Education Fund.

The Fellowship has made me a better and more reflective educator. It encouraged me to be cautiously innovative, willing to try new ideas while remaining attentive to the ethical implications of AI in teaching and learning. The outcomes of this work have been shared through the Warwick Education Conference, a Masterclass session, two research publications, and written evidence submitted to the UK Parliament.

My advice to incoming fellows is to attend a few different learning circles before choosing one. I would also encourage them to put themselves forward for leadership opportunities, as co-leading made a huge difference to my WIHEA experience and became a central component of my promotion application.



Dr Andrea Klaus
Associate Professor
School of Modern Languages and
Cultures

At the beginning of my Fellowship, I was full of ideas

informed by my background in German Studies. Initially, I joined three different Learning Circles, with my areas of focus evolving over the course of the second and third years in response to changing interests and emerging opportunities.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the Fellowship for me has been the opportunity to meet and connect with colleagues from a wide range of departments across the University.

The WIHEA Fellowship has also provided valuable insights into the university as a whole, enabling me to develop a broader institutional perspective. As a result, it has reshaped my understanding of my role within the university and prompted me to reflect more deeply on my responsibilities as an academic.

My advice to incoming Fellows would be to pursue the areas that genuinely interest you and to explore several Learning Circles during your fellowship. WIHEA offers a unique environment in which to engage with a wide range of initiatives and to build meaningful connections with colleagues from across the institution. As interests and priorities often evolve over the course of the three-year Fellowship, remaining open to new opportunities can be particularly rewarding.



Marie Bawden
Student Fellow (UG)
History

I have been involved in various activities relating to mature and part-time students. This included

participation in the Mature Student Learning Circle and presenting 'The Mature Student Experience: emancipation or marginalisation?' at the Warwick Education Conference in 2025, which was an opportunity to share my experiences of university life which I would otherwise not have been able to do. I also helped to compile a survey of part-time students, identifying key changes that would help their experience. I believe that WIHEA has had a very positive impact in changing the student experience for mature and part-time students by encouraging greater inclusivity.

Fellowship of WIHEA most definitely broadened my horizons and allowed me to engage with a much wider and diverse population.

I would advise all incoming Fellows to become involved in one or two Learning Circles and attend as many WIHEA events as possible - it is a great way to meet new people from all departments, swap ideas and learn about academic life. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in such an innovative programme as WIHEA.



Dr Massimiliano Tamborrino
Associate Professor - Reader
School of Modern Languages
and Cultures

After three years as a WIHEA fellow, I can now say “what an amazing

journey this has been”! I navigated across a few Learning Circles in my first year, before I started co-leading the Internationalisation Learning Circle from Year 2, together with a few funded projects, the most intriguing, complex and challenging one being the mapping of Warwick internationalisation activities, culminated with the publication of a searchable database for all staff and students to use.

As a WIHEA Fellow, I had the privilege to get to know closely the WIHEA community, a community of colleagues driven by a passion for HE and for our students. This was a unique opportunity of personal and professional growth which led to my SFHEA award, in which my WIHEA Fellowship and activities played a crucial role.

To all new fellows: Enjoy this amazing experience in such an inclusive and supportive environment. You won't regret it.

Last but not least, I'd like to thank all WIHEA Fellows and Alumni I met through this journey, and Jess and Lisa for their continuous support throughout these years.



Prof Dr Laura Yetton
Associate Professor
Programmes Manager, FOLD
Swallow House

During my Fellowship, I re-established and led the

Employability Learning Circle, creating a collaborative space for colleagues to share practice, explore challenges and develop approaches to enhancing student employability. I recruited and worked alongside Student Employability Champions, ensuring that student perspectives shaped our activities and discussions.

Beyond leading the Learning Circle, I embraced opportunities to engage with the educational leadership offered through WIHEA, including becoming a peer reviewer and contributing to conversations about teaching, learning and student experience across the institution. As a member of Professional Services staff, these opportunities are particularly valuable, providing access to networks, perspectives and leadership experiences.

This fellowship has had a significant impact on my day-to-day work managing degree apprenticeships. It has strengthened my ability to take an evidence-informed, student-centred approach, foster cross-university and employer collaboration, and embed employability more meaningfully within programme design and delivery.

My advice to incoming Fellows is to say 'yes' to opportunities. Build connections, engage in leadership activities, and step outside your usual role. The relationships, confidence and insights you gain can have a lasting impact on both your professional practice and the wider university community.



Dr Youn Affejee
Student Fellow (PhD)
Engineering

It's been a privilege to be involved with WIHEA throughout my journey here at Warwick! The networking

opportunities is unmatched at Warwick, meeting individuals from all over campus that I wouldn't have otherwise, not to mention the vast network of Alumni.

This year I was involved in two projects which originated from discussion with WIHEA Fellows; exploring the step up to doctoral research from taught degrees, with a particular focus on neurodivergent students' experiences (WIHEA funded), and exploring belonging at Warwick using photovoice (Centre for Belonging funded).

The Fellowship has enabled me to work across departments, build meaningful collaborations and contribute to institution-wide conversations about belonging, widening participation and inclusive pedagogy. It has strengthened my confidence in using creative, student-centred methods to inform educational enhancement.

My advice to incoming Fellows is to be open, proactive and collaborative. The Fellowship is most rewarding when you use it to connect people and test ideas.



Dr Aysu Dincer
Associate Professor
Director of Graduate Studies,
Centre for the Study of the
Renaissance

During my WIHEA Fellowship, I applied for funding and led on two educational research projects: Investigating the Academic Experiences of Part-time History Students (2023/24) and exploring access and barriers to PGT study across the Faculty of Arts (2024/25). I also participated in the Teaching Recognition and Reward, and Employability Learning Circles.

The Fellowship has enabled me to develop evidence-based approaches to enhancing student experience, inclusivity and widening participation. It has also helped me build collaborations across departments and disciplines, with colleagues who are equally passionate about creating meaningful and transformative learning experiences for students.

My advice to incoming Fellows is to be collaborative. Use the



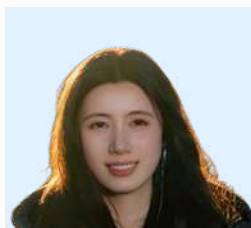
Stella Shi
Student Fellow (UG)
History

During my time as a WIHEA Fellow, I participated in several Learning Circles while serving as

the SSLC representative for Applied Linguistics. This allowed me to bring student feedback from departmental meetings into wider cross-disciplinary discussions, while also sharing ideas and practical solutions from the Learning Circles back with my department. In particular, the Belonging Learning Circle gave me valuable insights into fostering students' sense of belonging, which I was able to share through SSLC discussions.

I also had the opportunity to lead the development of a funding proposal for an AI-related research project. Although the application was unsuccessful, it was a valuable experience that strengthened my confidence in collaborative project design.

To future undergraduate Fellows: be bold enough to take up space. You may find yourself among people with many years of experience in high education or impressive academic achievements, and it is completely natural to feel daunted at first. But enjoy it and speak up! I found the WIHEA community to be incredibly welcoming, where ideas were valued regardless of career stage.



Yuxin Wang
Student Fellow (PGR)
Engineering

Being a WIHEA Student Fellow helped me step outside my usual PhD and engineering circles. I

attended talks, masterclasses, Learning Circles and networking lunches, each offering a different way to learn and connect. A highlight was the AI in Education Learning Circle, where people from different disciplines brought their own perspectives to discussions of generative AI, teaching, assessment and inclusion.

As an international PhD student who also teaches, I often move between being a learner and supporting others to learn. These conversations helped me recognise that this perspective was worth sharing. They also prompted me to reflect more deeply on my research and teaching.

My advice to incoming Fellows is to join conversations beyond your discipline, explore opportunities that interest you, and devote your time to what matters most so you can engage with them meaningfully.



Zineb Nmili
Student Fellow (UG)
WBS

During my time as a fellow, I joined three learning circles, where I met people from very different

backgrounds, degrees, tenure and job descriptions. Sitting in those rooms showed me what happens behind the scenes at Warwick, and where so much of the change we feel as students, in our modules, our lectures, our assessments and in how the University is run, actually begins. I also joined a project on the transition of postgraduate students from taught courses into postgraduate research, with a particular focus on neurodivergent students, and I'm looking forward to the team sharing its findings once everything is finalised.

To incoming fellows, I would say this: speak up in meetings. It can feel daunting to sit among people with so much knowledge and experience, but student voice is what WIHEA is built on, and it only works if you use yours. Join plenty of learning circles, including one you've never heard of, because that's often the one you end up loving. Start your own project, or join one you believe in, and trust that WIHEA's support system will carry you through it. And ask for help whenever you need it, because WIHEA people are generous with what they know and genuinely want to hear what you bring.



Michael Cavaliere
Student Fellow (PGR)
Mathematics

The most significant activity I got involved with in WIHEA this year proposing and leading the Inclusive

Transitions to Postgraduate Research Study project, which was funded via the WIHEA student-led project fund. This is a study investigating the experiences of postgraduate research students with the transition from their past taught courses to independent research, with a particular focus on the needs of neurodivergent students as a group underrepresented but growing in postgraduate study. I am working with a team of three other student fellows on this project, and we hope to continue the project into next academic year by creating resources based on our findings for the University to use in supporting incoming postgraduate research students.

My main advice for incoming fellows, particularly student fellows, is to take advantage of the WIHEA network, as it is a great opportunity to meet people from across the University who all share your interest in teaching and learning. I have particularly enjoyed working with the other student fellows on my project team, and I am glad WIHEA gives us the opportunity to share our thoughts and ideas through opportunities like this project.

Fellowship as an opportunity to develop projects that matter to you, share ideas widely, and build networks across the University that can support lasting impact for students, colleagues, and wider communities.



Dr Simon Peplow
Associate Professor
History

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Dr Matthew Voice
Associate Professor
Applied Linguistics

WIHEA has given me the opportunity to step outside my

department and learn more about how colleagues across the university are tackling shared issues across our work. My time as a Fellow has been particularly focused on the university's responses to the development of AI tools, from academic (mis)conduct through to research and pedagogic practice.

This year, I was delighted to support the QS Responsible AI Consortium as a supervisor to student-led research into the biases inherent in AI-generated careers guidance support.

The WIHEA Fellowship has been an invaluable resource for networking and developing my own ideas and practices - the impact of these opportunities on the last three years of my professional development was surely a significant contributing factor in my recent successful application for promotion to Associate Professor.



Prof. Julia Brettschneider,
Professor
Statistics

Joining a Learning Circle on group work and assessment to create resources for fellow educators,

attending masterclasses on a wide range of themes, and forming relationships through networking events may not sound like spectacular adventures, but WIHEA has transformed my relationship with higher education.

The Fellowship gave me fundamentally new perspectives on my teaching and accelerated reflection on my teaching leadership. It enabled me to articulate and abstract what had previously been largely intuitive practice in teaching, module design, team leadership, and mentoring junior colleagues. These insights have informed my work with colleagues and students and strengthened my contribution to teaching and educational leadership in a variety of contexts. As a by-product, this reflection also helped me to assemble my SFHEA application.

Crucially, WIHEA funding enabled me to lead a project involving several student researchers to create a study toolbox for Warwick students, both within my department and beyond. WIHEA also helps academics unite their roles as researchers and teachers, keeping the two communities connected. My current work on departmental AI policy builds directly on the guidance on individual and group productivity that we developed as part of the toolbox.

My advice to incoming Fellows is simple: hit the ground running. Three years pass much faster than you might expect.



Dr Mujthaba Ahtamad
Associate Professor
Engineering

My time as a WIHEA Fellow was incredibly productive and rewarding

I had the opportunity to contribute on a range of activities, initiatives and projects, including co-leading the Learning Circle on Designing and Assessing Groupwork – a circle that I will continue to support as an Alumni.

I led pedagogic research to enhance the quality of teaching within my teaching team and department. Its impact has been significant: it has helped raise awareness of key challenges and opportunities in Higher Education, while showing colleagues that these issues are shared across the wider sector. My advice to incoming Fellows is to immerse yourself in WIHEA events, build meaningful connections with other Fellows, and bring your new knowledge/understanding you gain back into practice.



Lewis Middleton
Student Fellow (UG)
Sociology

Being a WIHEA Fellow has undoubtedly been the highlight of my final year at university. It's

allowed me to engage in the discussions around institutional policy and practice that once felt inaccessible to me as a student, and to collaborate on several exciting and impactful projects within some fantastic teams.

Across the year, I've contributed to four projects spanning transition support, assessment design, and employability. Despite their distinct areas of focus, each is united by a shared aim to embed student voice within institutional policy and practice. The first, supported by WIHEA's Student-Led Project Fund, explores how PGR students experience the transition from PGT study to research. I'll be continuing my involvement after I graduate and analysing our survey data to inform the qualitative phase of the project, which will underpin the eventual development of evidence-informed resources to strengthen transition support for neurodivergent PGR students in particular. The second sits within the Designing and Assessing Group Work Learning Circle, where I'm analysing our survey data to produce department-specific recommendations for improving the design and facilitation of groupwork-based assessments. The third and fourth sit within the Employability Learning Circle, where I'm leading the student consultation component of Student Opportunity's Core Skills Review to inform the direction of the Review and future skills governance at Warwick, while also synthesising student perspectives, analysis of current employability practice in its broader sense, and targeted recommendations into a report that will shape the Employability Learning Circle's future agenda.

Through these projects, I've made contributions that will continue to influence practice across the university long after I've graduated, strengthening transition support for neurodivergent PGR students, enhancing the design and facilitation of groupwork-based assessments, and shaping employability strategy.

To incoming Fellows, I'd stress the value of networking at WIHEA events. Networking with the WIHEA community enables you to build meaningful relationships across the university and develop an organisational awareness of Warwick that you wouldn't develop anywhere else. Everyone coming from different departments and holding different roles might seem intimidating at first, but this difference is actually something that unites rather than divides you! I'd also stress joining as many Learning Circles as you can. It's through these that you'll make the impact that likely drew you to WIHEA in the first place



Dr Alisha Rodgers
Student Fellow (PhD)
Engineering

Over the past two years as a Student WIHEA Fellow, I have been engaged in various projects and

Learning Circles across the university. A highlight of this year was sharing my doctoral findings through the Inclusive Assessment Learning Circle, which helped to disseminate my work to the wider Warwick academic community.

The fellowship has been instrumental in expanding my interdisciplinary networks, connecting me with students and staff from across the university, and enabling me to feel part of the friendly WIHEA community. Beyond this, it also enabled me (and two other outgoing WIHEA fellows) to secure a funding opportunity from the Centre of Belonging in Education, exploring student belonging through the creative methodology of photovoice, culminating in a gallery exhibition here at Warwick.

For incoming fellows, my advice is to prioritise building genuine relationships to support you on your journey. These connections will likely be the most impactful outcome of your time here; reach out and engage with others - you will find the community is always incredibly welcoming and ready to help you along your way.



We would also like to mention the following Fellows who are reaching the end of their Fellowships

Ursula Clayton

Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed),
English and Comparative Literary Studies

Juliana Cunha Carneiro Pinto

Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Economics

Kerry Dobbins

Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Academic Development Centre

Fiona Farnsworth

Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning

Gemma Gray

Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Psychology

Neha Gupta

Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Warwick Business School

Nicholas Hopcroft

Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Warwick Medical School

Robert Horton

Director of Administration,
Law

Thomas Popham

Associate Professor - Reader (Teaching Focussed),
Engineering

Cleo Tilley

Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed),
Warwick Foundation Studies

Isleide Zissimos

Senior Teaching Fellow (Teaching Focussed),
Economics

Naveera Abhayawickrama

Undergraduate Student,
Law

Maanya Raju

Vice President for Postgraduate,
Students' Union

Billy Smith

Undergraduate Student,
PAIS

Alijah Taha

President,
Students' Union

Sarah Tasneem

Undergraduate Student,
History

Louisa Toxvaerd Munch

PhD,
English and Comparative Studies

Meifang Zhuo

PhD,
Applied Linguistics

Olle Chapman

Vice President for Welfare and Campaigns
Students' Union (Incoming President)

Amir Cheshmehzangi

PhD,
WMG

Louis Gosling

Vice President for Sports,
Students' Union



Our Next Chapter: Building on Success

A Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Eleven years on, WIHEA remains a valued space in our educational community, a place where staff and students come together as genuine partners to shape teaching and learning at Warwick. This year's community consultation made that clear: what people value most about WIHEA is connection and the chance to work alongside colleagues who care deeply about education across departmental and disciplinary lines. That is not something to take for granted, and it is exactly what we intend to protect as WIHEA enters its next chapter.

Students have been central to that story this year. From project leadership to Learning Circle contributions, and in this year's Student Voice section, co-edited by two of our Student Fellows, students have shown, in their own words, what it means to be treated as partners rather than participants in shaping education at Warwick. That spirit of co-creation is one of WIHEA's greatest strengths.

This year has also shown WIHEA's growing influence beyond Warwick, through the UK SoTL Alliance, now spanning over 40 institutions; through a new mentoring partnership with Curtin Academy in Perth, Australia; and through the Transatlantic Teaching Exchange Series connecting colleagues across three continents. Closer to home, our Learning Circles have continued to turn ideas into practice, developing frameworks, resources and reports that are shaping how we teach and support students.

We now move into an exciting new phase, as WIHEA becomes part of the newly created Warwick Education Academy, joining ADC and IATL to bring our collective expertise together under one roof. Within this new structure, WIHEA continues as the Connected Educator Community, the enabler that connects Fellows, Alumni and Members across every cluster of educational activity, from pedagogic research to AI and digital futures. This is a genuine opportunity to build on WIHEA's distinctive strengths in community and belonging, while working more closely than ever with colleagues across the Academy to have greater impact at the institutional level.

I want to thank everyone who has been part of WIHEA this year: Fellows, Alumni, Members, and everyone who took the time to share their views with us. WIHEA's success has always come from the people who show up for it, and I am looking forward to seeing this community continue to grow and evolve within the Education Academy.



**Prof. Lorenzo Frigerio,
Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Education)**

WIHEA Team



Jessica Humphreys
Director of WIHEA



Lisa Drummond
Academic Manager, WIHEA

With Special Thanks to:



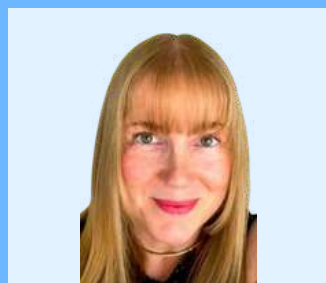
Olanrewaju Dada
Postgraduate Student,
Annual Report Project Designer/Assistant



Selina Shibata
Undergraduate Student, Poster
Designer/Project Assistant



Lara Coxon
Temporary Administrative Assistant



Michelle Kulpa
Former Administrative Assistantt



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