



Mature Student Experience Learning Circle Funded Project 2025/26:

Mature Student Experience Symposium

Project Aims

- Bring staff and students together to develop a better understanding of what it means to be a mature student at Warwick and identify common challenges to inform institutional work in the area.
- Actively shape institutional policy to be more inclusive and develop tangible, on-the-ground practices that foster a true sense of belonging and academic partnership.
- Bridge the gap between institutional ambition and students' lived reality, cultivating a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment in which mature learners can thrive.



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As a result of undertaking student surveys, workshops and holding Warwick's first ever Mature Student Experience Symposium, the Learning Circle has made great strides in better understanding what it means to be a mature student at Warwick and identified common challenges experienced by adult learners. This work will be used to inform institutional developments in the area.

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Project Rationale

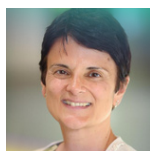
- Mature students are formally identified in Warwick's Access and Participation Plan as a group requiring targeted support, yet there was no dedicated event bringing staff, students, and sector expertise together on this issue.
- Building on the Learning Circle's pilot survey, the Symposium aimed to put student voice at the centre of Warwick's provision for mature students, positioning WIHEA at the forefront of the institution's lifelong learning ambitions.

Current Progress and Reflections

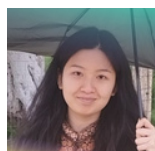
- Held Warwick's first-ever Mature Student Experience Symposium on 7 May 2026, bringing together Warwick staff and students with external guests from Leeds, Nottingham, and Singapore University of Social Sciences.
- Break-out group discussions surfaced recurring themes, including course design and flexibility, sense of belonging, access routes for adult learners, and the need for stronger institutional visibility and communication.
- Student voice sessions highlighted feelings of invisibility and being a "fish out of water," alongside the importance of peer and staff support, and embedding life experience into the curriculum.

Next Steps

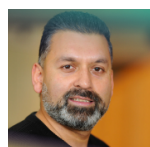
- Present symposium outcomes at the Warwick Education Conference, and a WIHEA Masterclass with Warwick Students' Union.
- Develop a University Action Plan on Enhancing the Mature Student Experience at Warwick.



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Project Team:



Staff Learning
Circle Members
involved



Student



Students involved
in the development
phase