WARWICK

Institutional Teaching and Learning Review 2023

Outcomes Report

Common Theme: Interdisciplinary Learning

November 2023

INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING REVIEW
ITLR 2023

Institutional Teaching and Learning Review 2023

Outcomes Report:

Common Theme: Interdisciplinary Learning

November 2023

Summary

Common Theme: Interdisciplinary Learning

The findings and recommendations presented here provide a roadmap for the University of Warwick to enhance its interdisciplinary initiatives, addressing the challenges and capitalising on the strengths identified. The emphasis on collaborative and integrated learning approaches aligns with the evolving demands of the global landscape, ensuring that students are not only academically equipped but also possess the critical thinking and adaptability skills necessary for future success. The journey towards effective interdisciplinary education at Warwick is an ongoing process, one that requires continuous assessment, innovation, and commitment to educational excellence.

Good practice

Successful integration of various academic disciplines into **comprehensive curricula**, preparing students for complex real-world challenges.

Initiatives include: **joint programmes**, **collaborative research** projects, and the development of **support systems**

Challenges

Despite progress, operational and institutional barriers such **as timetabling conflicts** and **structural challenges** are hindering progress.

These challenges underscore the need for **more effective integration** of interdisciplinary approaches within the university's academic framework.

Opportunities

Key opportunities include: strengthening interdisciplinary **engagement, collaboration**, and addressing **logistical challenges**.

Strategic action is necessary to foster an integrated learning environment conducive to interdisciplinary studies.

Actions

Simplifying **administrative processes** and establishing a **unified system** that supports interdisciplinary education.

Emphasising **collaborative strategies** for university-wide support and developing a **cohesive approach** to IL.

Introduction

This analysis serves as a crucial evaluation of good practices, areas of challenge, development needs, and actionable steps to advance the interdisciplinary agenda at the University. It does so from the perspective that interdisciplinary learning is not merely a pedagogical choice but a necessity in preparing students to navigate and address the intricacies of modern, interconnected problems.

Commendable efforts are identified in integrating diverse academic disciplines into comprehensive curricula. This approach is pivotal in fostering graduates equipped to tackle complex, real-world problems. Pioneering departments are breaking traditional academic boundaries, offering students an enriched learning experience that encompasses a broad knowledge spectrum. The drive towards collaborative learning and research is evident, with departments initiating joint programmes and interdisciplinary research projects. This not only enhances the educational experience but also cultivates a community of shared knowledge and purpose. Recognising that successful interdisciplinary learning requires more than curricular changes, departments are establishing robust support systems. This involves addressing operational challenges and ensuring resources for effective programme delivery.

Despite the strides made, there are, however, some operational and institutional barriers that may be hindering the smooth implementation of Interdisciplinary Learning. Issues range from logistical hurdles like timetabling conflicts to deeper structural challenges within the institution. A key area for development may lie in strengthening the foundations of interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration. This could involve strategic actions to overcome logistical challenges, foster integrated learning approaches, and cultivate an environment more conducive to interdisciplinary studies. A range of actions are suggested aimed at simplifying the administrative processes associated with Interdisciplinary Learning. These actions could be crucial for establishing a more unified and efficient system that supports and promotes interdisciplinary education.

Good Practice in Interdisciplinary Learning

By prioritising these themes, it is clear that various departments and professional clusters within the institution are making concerted efforts to prepare students for a future where the ability to think across disciplines is not just beneficial, but essential. These practices demonstrate a commitment to creating a learning environment that is dynamic, interconnected, and reflective of the complex world students will navigate in their professional and personal lives.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum Integration

Departments are weaving together various disciplines into a cohesive curriculum that prepares students for the complexities of modern challenges. The good practices here highlight the strategic collaboration between different academic fields to create programmes that offer students a holistic education, transcending traditional subject boundaries.

The integration of interdisciplinary studies into the curriculum is a response to the growing need for graduates who can navigate complex, real-world problems that do not confine themselves to single disciplines. Departments like the Academic Development Centre, Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, and the School for Cross-Faculty Studies are at the forefront, leveraging multidisciplinary teams and partnerships to enrich programmes and encourage students to draw from a broad knowledge base. This approach fosters a learning environment where students are not only educated in their primary discipline but are also exposed to complementary perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Examples include:

Academic Development Centre	ADC leverages its multidisciplinary team to enrich programmes with a variety of perspectives.
Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies	CIM embodies interdisciplinarity, aiming to overcome procedural barriers to such education.
Centre for Lifelong Learning	CLL offers interdisciplinary courses, integrating knowledge from various disciplines.
Centre for Teacher Education	CTE integrates multiple disciplines into its programmes, engaging in inter-departmental collaborations.
Centre for the Study of the Renaissance	CSR draws staff from various departments, providing a multidisciplinary teaching approach.
Department of Education Studies & CEDAR	Education Studies is interdisciplinary with diverse curricula and theme-based teaching.
Department of History	History integrates interdisciplinary training into its programmes.
School for Cross-Faculty Studies)	Built on the principle of Interdisciplinary Learning with diverse module offerings.
Cluster 2 - Learning Beyond Boundaries	The cluster is recognised for its embedded interdisciplinary work and partnerships with IATL.

Collaborative Academic Endeavours

This theme encompasses the efforts to break down silos between departments and promote a culture of cooperation and shared knowledge. It reflects a concerted effort to not only offer interdisciplinary programmes but to also actively engage with other departments to create joint degrees, research projects, and modules that benefit from multiple academic perspectives. This reflects a growing

trend in HE to promote collaborative learning and research that bridges multiple disciplines. Many departments and professional service clusters are increasingly recognising the value of combining the strengths and insights from various departments to address multifaceted issues. By creating joint programmes, such as dual degrees and interdisciplinary research projects at the University of Warwick, departments like Chemistry, Computer Science, and the School of Law offer students a more dynamic and enriched educational experience.

These collaborative efforts not only expand academic horizons but also foster a sense of community and shared purpose among students and faculty. Examples include:

Department of Chemistry	Chemistry has interdisciplinary research projects and joint programmes, like Innovation 101.
Department of Computer Science	Interdisciplinary research is common, with funded projects across various domains.
Department of Economics	Economics has increased interdisciplinary programmes and introduced new joint degrees.
Department of Psychology	Offers multiple joint degrees and integrates flexibility within degrees.
Department of Sociology	Engages with other departments and promotes Sociology as an interdisciplinary subject.
School of Modern Languages and Cultures	Collaboration across the School and with other departments.)
Mathematics Institute	Offers interdisciplinary joint degrees and modules.
School of Creative Arts, Performance and Visual Cultures	Proactive work on embedding interdisciplinarity; co-supervision of Ph.D. students across disciplines.
School of Engineering	Interdisciplinary first-year curriculum and design projects; collaborative postgraduate programmes.
School of Law	'Law in context' approach and joint degrees for interdisciplinary perspectives.
School of Life Sciences	Interdisciplinary approach in Biology; collaboration with various departments for PGT modules.
Warwick Business School	Large provider of Interdisciplinary Learning; integration of different disciplines into programmes.
Warwick Foundation Studies	Collaboration with other departments; interdisciplinary modules like SPAMM.
Warwick Medical School	Interdisciplinary curriculum design and assessment in undergraduate degrees.
Warwick Manufacturing Group)	Multidisciplinary nature of courses like Cyber Security.
Cluster 6 - Enabling Postgraduate Researchers to Thrive	The cluster provides strong support for interdisciplinary environments through CDTs and DTPs.

Enhancing Interdisciplinary Learning and Support

This theme captures the commitment to not only enhance Interdisciplinary Learning within existing structures but also to provide the necessary support to ensure its success. It is about the recognition that interdisciplinary education is not just about curricular offerings but also about the systems and policies that support these initiatives. The good practices identified involve establishing robust administrative practices, developing a national reputation for interdisciplinary module design, and ensuring strong supervisory arrangements to support cross-departmental research and learning. Enhancing Interdisciplinary Learning and support is crucial in modern education, where the interconnectedness of global issues calls for a collaborative and multifaceted approach to learning and research. Departments and professional service clusters are working to not only develop interdisciplinary curricula but also to ensure that there are supportive structures in place that enable the effective delivery of these programmes. This includes addressing operational challenges, harmonising deadlines, and implementing management committees to oversee interdisciplinary courses. Such support mechanisms are vital for the success of interdisciplinary education, ensuring that students and faculty have the resources they need to engage meaningfully with complex, cross-cutting themes. Examples include:

Department of Philosophy	Philosophy excels in delivering Interdisciplinary Learning through joint programmes.
Department of Politics and International Studies	Engages in embedding Interdisciplinary Learning through programmes like PPE and PPL.
Institute for Employment Research	Emphasises the interdisciplinary nature of their programme.
Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning	Internationally recognised for its interdisciplinary module design
Cluster 4 - A Culture of Education Leadership and Innovation	IATL and ADC contribute significantly to the enhancement of Interdisciplinary Learning.

Challenges in Interdisciplinary Learning

In terms of perceived challenges in aligning to the university's cross-cutting theme of Interdisciplinary Learning, the focus is on the operational and institutional barriers that departments and professional service clusters face in implementing and sustaining Interdisciplinary Learning. These challenges range from structural issues like timetabling and registration processes to more abstract concerns like departmental autonomy and recognition of interdisciplinary activities' value.

Implementing Interdisciplinary Learning across departments involves navigating a complex array of operational and institutional challenges. Departments like Chemistry and Computer Science, for example, face challenges like fee structures and space constraints that hinder the fluidity of interdisciplinary collaboration. Similarly, the autonomy of departments may create barriers to the smooth operation of interdisciplinary degrees, as noted in the Department of Philosophy.

These challenges highlight the need for a more integrated and flexible institutional framework that can adapt to the evolving nature of interdisciplinary education, ensuring that both students and faculty can engage in such learning experiences without unnecessary hindrance.

Navigating operational and systematic challenges

This theme encompasses the logistical and structural obstacles that hinder the seamless integration of interdisciplinary studies. These challenges manifest in various operational aspects, such as timetabling, registration processes, and institutional structures, which may create barriers to effective Interdisciplinary Learning implementation. Departments face difficulties in aligning student experiences, managing space and timetabling, and dealing with the complexities of fee structures and internal systems. These issues may not only disrupt the administrative ease of Interdisciplinary Learning but also affect the capacity of departments to fully embrace interdisciplinary approaches. Examples include:

Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies	Inconsistent registration and module selection deadlines
Centre for Lifelong Learning	Challenges in aligning student experiences across departments
Department of Chemistry, Department of Computer Science	Operational challenges like timetabling and fee structures
Department of Psychology	Space constraints and financial penalties
School for Cross-Faculty Studies, Mathematics Institute	Module selection process difficulties and recruitment gaps
Cluster 3 - Seamless Physical and Digital Learning Environments	Inadequate flexibility in the timetable and disparate online learning tools

Navigating institutional and departmental barriers

This theme reflects the internal barriers within the university's institutional framework that may limit the growth and development of Interdisciplinary Learning. The perception of the market for interdisciplinary courses and concerns about compromising specialisation may further contribute to the reluctance in fully adopting Interdisciplinary Learning. These barriers include the autonomy of departments, which can lead to a lack of coordination and collaboration, and the challenges in establishing a strategic and embedded approach to Interdisciplinary Learning. Examples include:

Department of Applied Linguistics, Warwick Medical School	Institutional structures impeding Interdisciplinary Learning development

Department of Philosophy, Cluster 6 - Enabling Postgraduate Researchers to Thrive	Autonomy of departments posing challenges
School of Modern Languages and Cultures, Warwick Manufacturing Group	Limited strategic embedding of Interdisciplinary Learning
Department of Sociology	Concerns about detriment to producing subject specialists
Department of Politics and International Studies	Challenges in interdisciplinary narrative and student awareness

Curriculum Design and Student Experience Challenges

This theme addresses the difficulties in designing and delivering a curriculum that effectively incorporates Interdisciplinary Learning principles. Challenges include combining subjects to create truly interdisciplinary courses and providing students with the necessary guidance and support. Additionally, there is a need to distinguish between collaborative and individual work within interdisciplinary settings, which can be complex in practice. Examples include:

Department of Economics	Challenges in combining subjects for interdisciplinarity
Department of Statistics	Students needing guidance in module selection
School of Life Sciences	Difficulty in differentiating collaborative and individual assessments
Warwick Business School	Less evidence of postgraduate student engagement in external modules
Warwick Foundation Studies	Often multidisciplinary rather than Interdisciplinary Learning

Communication and engagement issues

This theme highlights the challenges in communication and engagement concerning Interdisciplinary Learning. These issues range from lack of recognition of Interdisciplinary Learning's value by external departments to the need for better engagement and systematic communication between departments. Ensuring that the core messaging around Interdisciplinary Learning and sustainability is understood and acted upon across all university levels may be crucial to embedding it further. Examples include:

Centre for Teacher Education	External departments not recognising Interdisciplinary Learning value
Mathematics Institute	Communication issues in joint honour programmes
Cluster 4 - A Culture of Education Leadership and Innovation	Need for better engagement and communication between departments
Cluster 5 - A Strong Administrative Foundation for Student Success	Lack of engagement from non-lead departments

Opportunities for Development

The dominant theme encompassing all the suggested areas for development of Interdisciplinary Learning at Warwick concerns strengthening the foundations of interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration across various departments and clusters. This theme emphasises the need for more structured support, clearer communication, and strategic planning to foster a culture that embraces and facilitates Interdisciplinary Learning across the university. The focus is not only on overcoming logistical challenges but also on cultivating an environment where interdisciplinary approaches are actively encouraged and seamlessly integrated into curricula and research practices.

These themes collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced in implementing Interdisciplinary Learning at the University of Warwick. Addressing these challenges requires a more coordinated effort across various levels, from administrative processes to curriculum design and institutional policy. By addressing them, departments and professional service clusters could create a more conducive environment for Interdisciplinary Learning, one that facilitates seamless collaboration between various disciplines and maximises the potential of such integrative educational approaches.
The opportunities for development highlight the collective effort across different departments and professional service clusters to create an academic culture where interdisciplinary collaboration is not just encouraged but deeply ingrained. The actions and initiatives proposed seek to eliminate the traditional silos of academic disciplines, promoting a more integrated and comprehensive approach to learning and research. This would not only enhance the quality and scope of education but also prepare students to tackle complex, real-world problems that require a multidisciplinary understanding and approach.

The journey towards effective interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration involves several strategic actions aimed at enhancing Interdisciplinary Learning provision. Departments and professional service clusters are focusing on developing and restructuring programmes to foster a more integrated approach to learning. This involves creating collaborative platforms for resource sharing, similar to the WIHEA model, and broadening interdisciplinary collaborations. For instance, the Centre for Lifelong Learning is addressing the unique challenges faced by mature students integrating into other departments, while the Department of Applied Linguistics is influencing school structures to remove barriers to Interdisciplinary Learning.

Departments like Chemistry and Computer Science are proactively seeking opportunities for teaching and learning collaborations across disciplines. The aim is to create a more cohesive and inclusive educational environment where Interdisciplinary Learning is not just an option but a fundamental aspect of the curriculum. Efforts to streamline administrative processes, enhance communication and guidance, and provide necessary resources and support are pivotal in making Interdisciplinary Learning a tangible and valued aspect of academic life at Warwick. Opportunities for development in

interdisciplinary learning can be grouped as follows, and specific suggestions from departments/ professional service clusters can be found in Appendix E.

	*Enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration and curriculum integration*	The focus is on developing platforms for resource sharing, encouraging the design of multi-level modules, and ensuring that interdisciplinary courses are included in curriculum reviews. Efforts here could aim to make Interdisciplinary Learning a more prominent and structured aspect of the educational offerings, encouraging a culture of collaboration across different academic disciplines.	CIM, CSR, Classics, CLL, Chemistry, English, IATL, SCAPVC and Engineering
	*Streamlining administrative processes and improving the student experience*	Focus is placed on simplifying module selection systems, managing administrative burdens effectively, and ensuring that students can participate in interdisciplinary modules without facing academic or logistical hindrances.	Classics, History, Psychology, Physics, Statistics and CFS
	*Aligning department strategies with institution interdisciplinary goals*	It involves enhancing financial and structural incentives for interdisciplinary teaching, supporting staff in developing relevant pedagogic skills, and ensuring that departmental strategies are in sync with the university's interdisciplinary goals.	Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Law, Life Sciences, IER, WFS and WBS
	*Communication, guidance and systematic implementation*	The aim is to provide clearer pathways for Interdisciplinary Learning, improve collaborative course planning, and define clear objectives for sustainability and interdisciplinarity.	Maths, SMLC, Cluster 4, Cluster 2 and Cluster 3
	*Research development and interdisciplinary topics expansion*	It involves reviewing research project constraints, fostering growth in interdisciplinary teaching, and exploring	WMS and WMG

		new areas for interdisciplinary study.	

Interdisciplinary Learning Actions

The suggested actions are focused on the practical aspects of streamlining processes to enable interdisciplinary integration and facilitate a smoother interdisciplinary experience for students and staff. The aim is to create a more cohesive framework within which interdisciplinary initiatives can thrive, overcoming barriers related to timetabling, module registration, and departmental resource sharing.

Departments are working to harmonise deadlines, improve timetabling, and facilitate resource sharing to enable smoother interdisciplinary study experiences. For example, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies is addressing practical issues like inconsistent registration deadlines, while the Department of Chemistry and Department of Classics and Ancient History are working with the university to improve structural aspects like fee structures and internal systems for module choices. The objective is to create a more unified and efficient system that supports Interdisciplinary Learning and collaboration, removing logistical hurdles that have traditionally impeded such endeavours. Efforts are also being made to enhance communication and collaboration across different academic disciplines, aiming to foster a more integrated and holistic educational experience.

The actionable steps identified for advancing Interdisciplinary Learning at Warwick can be grouped together targeting specific aspects of interdisciplinary education as follows. These suggestions represent a holistic approach, encompassing administrative restructuring, curriculum development, faculty engagement, and resource allocation, all aimed at fostering a more integrated and collaborative educational environment. Specific actions as suggested by departments/ professional service clusters can be found in Appendix E.

	*Administrative and structural reforms for interdisciplinary integration*	This includes harmonising deadlines, improving timetabling, and enhancing resource sharing. These actions may remove logistical barriers, making interdisciplinary studies more seamless and accessible to both students and faculty.	CIM, Classics, CLL, Chemistry, English, History, and Maths
	*Enhancing Faculty engagement and curriculum development*	Steps are proposed to engage faculty more deeply in Interdisciplinary Learning and to develop curricula that reflect interdisciplinary	Politics, Physics, Law, Life Sciences, Psychology,

		principles. This includes creating new modules, fostering faculty collaboration, and embedding interdisciplinary skills into the curriculum.	Engineering and WMG
	Collaboration, communication and resource sharing	The importance of collaboration and communication between departments and professional service clusters is pivotal to enhancing Interdisciplinary Learning. It includes creating platforms for resource sharing, developing joint degrees, and fostering cross-departmental connections.	CSR, Applied Linguistics, WMS, WFS
	*Strategic Planning and institutional support*	This involves defining the university's commitment to Interdisciplinary Learning, ensuring adequate resources, and engaging in interdisciplinary workgroup discussions.	ADC, DES & CEDAR, SMLC and Cluster 2
	*Evaluation, research and student engagement*	This includes actions aimed at evaluating Interdisciplinary Learning practices, enhancing research opportunities, and engaging students in interdisciplinary activities. It involves conducting robust evaluations, reviewing research projects, and fostering student co-creation in module development.	IATL, WMS and Cluster 6

Conclusions

The findings and recommendations presented here provide a roadmap for the University of Warwick to enhance its interdisciplinary initiatives, addressing the challenges and capitalising on the strengths identified. The emphasis on collaborative and integrated learning approaches aligns with the evolving demands of the global landscape, ensuring that students are not only academically equipped but also possess the critical thinking and adaptability skills necessary for future success. The journey towards effective interdisciplinary education at Warwick is an ongoing process, one that requires continuous assessment, innovation, and commitment to educational excellence.

Appendix E

What follows for each Academic Department and Cluster is a summary of one or two of their most significant elements in relation to good practice, challenges in the current approach to aligning with the Interdisciplinary Learning cross-cutting theme, key opportunities to tackle these and potential actions that could be taken to move the agenda forward at Warwick.

Academic Development Centre (ADC)

- **Good Practice:** ADC leverages its multidisciplinary team to enrich programmes with a variety of perspectives. It supports participants in understanding interdisciplinary work and offers programmes that transcend disciplinary boundaries.
- **Challenges:** Participants, particularly from STEM, may need more support in the transition to IL.
- **Opportunities:** Strengthen the scaffolding for reflective writing and IL, especially for STEM participants.
- **Actions:** Align with IATL to define the University's commitment to IL, develop additional resources for reflective writing, and enhance the profile of ADC programmes within STEM departments.

Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies (CIM)

- **Good Practice:** CIM embodies interdisciplinarity, aiming to overcome procedural barriers to such education.
- **Challenges:** There are operational challenges, such as inconsistent registration and module selection deadlines.
- **Opportunities:** Develop collaborative platforms for resource sharing and community practice akin to the WIHEA model.
- **Actions:** Address practical issues like harmonising deadlines, timetabling, and departmental resource sharing for interdisciplinary study.

Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL)

- **Good Practice:** CLL offers interdisciplinary courses, integrating knowledge from various disciplines.
- **Challenges:** Difficulty in aligning student experiences across departments.
- **Opportunities:** Broaden interdisciplinary collaboration and address challenges faced by mature students integrating into other departments.
- **Actions:** Designate champions within departments to facilitate integration and consider the reconfiguration into a combined school for increased interdisciplinary opportunities.

Centre for Teacher Education (CTE)

- **Good Practice:** CTE integrates multiple disciplines into its programmes, engaging in interdepartmental collaborations.
- **Challenges:** Some external departments may not recognise the value of the interdisciplinary activities.
- **Opportunities:** Share and showcase interdisciplinary activities more explicitly.
- **Actions:** Build a network to share interdisciplinary activity and gain support to raise awareness of the department's activities.

Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (CSR)

- **Good Practice:** CSR draws staff from various departments, providing a multidisciplinary teaching approach.
- **Challenges:** Financial and structural barriers, such as funding models, impede further interdisciplinary study.
- **Opportunities:** Redesign programmes to encourage IL and develop multi-level modules.
- **Actions:** Advocate for funding models that support interdisciplinary study and propose strategies to the Interdisciplinarity Working Group.

Department of Applied Linguistics
- **Good Practice:** The department has developed clear links for interdisciplinary teaching with other departments.
- **Challenges:** Institutional structures may impede the development of IL.
- **Opportunities:** Influence the school structure to remove barriers to IL.
- **Actions:** Strengthen interdisciplinary links both within the new school and with external departments.

Department of Chemistry
- **Good Practice:** Chemistry has interdisciplinary research projects and joint programmes, like Innovation 101.
- **Challenges:** Operational challenges such as timetabling and fee structures hinder interdisciplinarity.
- **Opportunities:** Proactively seek opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching and learning collaborations.
- **Actions:** Work with the University to improve timetabling and fee structures to facilitate interdisciplinary opportunities.

Department of Classics and Ancient History
- **Good Practice:** The department offers a range of interdisciplinary opportunities through international studies and joint degrees.
- **Challenges:** Internal systems and differing deadlines pose challenges to interdisciplinary studies.
- **Opportunities:** Offer standalone online modules and streamline internal module choice systems.
- **Actions:** Review internal systems for module choices, seek funding for international study opportunities, and develop an institutional approach to module registration.

Department of Computer Science
- **Good Practice:** Interdisciplinary research is common, with funded projects across various domains.
- **Challenges:** Space and timetabling impact the ability for interdisciplinarity.
- **Opportunities:** Engage more meaningfully with STEM Grand Challenges and explore IL across faculties.
- **Actions:** Collaborate with STEM Grand Challenges for better departmental insights and explore interdisciplinary opportunities with Social Sciences.

Department of Economics
- **Good Practice:** Economics has increased interdisciplinary programmes and introduced new joint degrees.
- **Challenges:** Challenges in combining subjects to make them truly interdisciplinary.

- **Opportunities:** Encourage more opportunities for IL.
- **Actions:** Promote IATL options and work on structural challenges hindering interdisciplinary collaboration.

Department of Education Studies & Centre for Educational Development Appraisal and Research (CEDAR)

- **Good Practice:** Education Studies is interdisciplinary with diverse curricula and theme-based teaching.
- **Challenges:** Structural barriers affect collaboration in interdisciplinary module design.
- **Opportunities:** Enhance IL within and beyond the core curriculum.
- **Actions:** Work with the University to address barriers and develop collaborations with other departments.

Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies

- **Good Practice:** The department incorporates interdisciplinary research into teaching and has developed new interdisciplinary MA programmes.
- **Challenges:** Barriers for Humanities students to take STEM modules due to lack of prerequisites.
- **Opportunities:** Ensure interdisciplinary courses are included in curriculum reviews.
- **Actions:** Establish a management committee with oversight of interdisciplinary courses and curriculum development.

Department of History

- **Good Practice:** The department integrates interdisciplinary training into its programmes, evidenced by its public engagement activities and specialised skills development across various historical centres.
- **Challenges:** There are challenges with the credit framework and module selection, as History modules are 30 credits, complicating the process for students to take 15 credit modules from other departments.
- **Opportunities:** Improve the module selection system, currently managed by a large spreadsheet, to reduce risk and administrative challenges.
- **Actions:** Implement a university-wide system for module selection with a common timeline to enhance the student experience and reduce staff administrative burdens.

Department of Philosophy

- **Good Practice:** Philosophy excels in delivering IL through joint programmes and has developed robust administrative practices to manage them effectively.
- **Challenges:** The autonomy of departments at Warwick poses challenges to interdisciplinary degrees, particularly when joint management structures are not in place.
- **Opportunities:** Enhance the financial and structural incentives for departments to engage in interdisciplinary teaching.
- **Actions:** Standardise module information sharing and timetabling across the university to facilitate smoother interdisciplinary student experiences.

Department of Physics

- **Good Practice:** Offers a range of interdisciplinary modules and programmes, like Maths and Physics, with opportunities to draw on other disciplines in the final year project.

- **Challenges:** The market for interdisciplinary science courses is perceived as small, with some questioning the depth of knowledge gained in such courses.
- **Opportunities:** Address challenges in timetable coordination and provide a clearer, university-wide approach to cross-departmental module selection.
- **Actions:** Maintain and celebrate interdisciplinary teaching, especially modules delivered to students from other disciplines, and consider new joint degrees with other departments.

Department of Politics and International Studies

- **Good Practice:** Engages in embedding IL through programmes like PPE and PPL and encourages students to explore modules outside the department.
- **Challenges:** Challenges in the interdisciplinary narrative and student awareness of interdisciplinary content within their modules.
- **Opportunities:** Support academic staff in developing interdisciplinary pedagogic skills and provide clearer communication about interdisciplinary opportunities.
- **Actions:** Develop a capstone module for joint honours degrees and utilise skills badges to highlight the interdisciplinary skills gained.

Department of Psychology

- **Good Practice:** Offers multiple joint degrees and integrates flexibility within degrees, enhancing student satisfaction and IL.
- **Challenges:** Space constraints and financial penalties pose challenges to the exchange of students between departments.
- **Opportunities:** Further streamline the process for students to take modules from outside departments and manage the administrative load effectively.
- **Actions:** Share the department's experience and management strategies for IL with the wider university.

Department of Sociology

- **Good Practice:** Engages with other departments and promotes Sociology as an interdisciplinary subject.
- **Challenges:** Concerns about the potential detriment to producing subject specialists due to a strong push towards interdisciplinarity.
- **Opportunities:** Support students to take external modules without detriment and align departmental strategies with the university's vision for interdisciplinarity.
- **Actions:** Consider better support processes for students and policy-level engagement with IL.

Department of Statistics

- **Good Practice:** Strong joint degree programmes with other departments and opportunities for students to take a broad range of modules outside of the core curriculum.
- **Challenges:** Students need guidance in module selection to explore different ideas and ensure prerequisites are met.
- **Opportunities:** Address issues of overCATing and module registration and improve the student experience across partner departments.
- **Actions:** Review how interdisciplinary opportunities for PGT students are presented and reinitiate conversations about enhancing student experiences.

Institute for Employment Research

- **Good Practice:** Emphasises the interdisciplinary nature of their programme and engages in cross-departmental supervisory arrangements.

- **Challenges:** Challenges in student engagement with external departments and limited teaching opportunities compared to university averages.
- **Opportunities:** Foster greater cross-disciplinary collaboration and address issues with publishing lists and design of REF that inhibit interdisciplinarity.
- **Actions:** Address barriers to co-supervision and review regulations regarding qualifications for PhD supervision.

Mathematics Institute

- **Good Practice:** Offers interdisciplinary joint degrees and modules, including those requiring supervisors from different departments.
- **Challenges:** Communication issues in joint honour programmes and concerns about differential exam scaling.
- **Opportunities:** Improve communication and guidance for joint degree students and ensure clarity on interdisciplinary opportunities.
- **Actions:** Explore the establishment of a joint degree SSLC for better feedback and communication.

School for Cross-Faculty Studies

- **Good Practice:** Built on the principle of IL with diverse module offerings and a commitment to engaging with a variety of disciplines.
- **Challenges:** Challenges in module selection processes and a recruitment gap for WP students due to concerns about interdisciplinarity.
- **Opportunities:** Implement a centralised module registration system and ensure adequate staffing and finances to support interdisciplinary staff and student engagement.
- **Actions:** Continue to articulate the employability benefits of interdisciplinarity and work closely with WP Officers.

Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning

- **Good Practice:** Nationally recognised for its interdisciplinary module design and the integration of interdisciplinary pedagogy and learning.
- **Challenges:** Limited evaluation of the pedagogies used in IL.
- **Opportunities:** Expand representation in University Grand Challenges and support faculties in embedding interdisciplinary teaching.
- **Actions:** Conduct robust evaluations of IL to inform wider publishing and dissemination efforts.

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

- **Good Practice:** Collaboration across the School and with other departments like CTE; language modules integrating with other disciplines.
- **Challenges:** IL is not strategic or embedded, mostly needs-based.
- **Opportunities:** Greater planned interdisciplinarity and engagement with the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL).
- **Actions:** Develop a strategy for interdisciplinarity and consider shared core modules for first-year students.

School of Creative Arts, Performance and Visual Cultures

- **Good Practice:** Proactive work on embedding interdisciplinarity; co-supervision of Ph.D. students across disciplines.
- **Challenges:** Interdisciplinarity is limited and still in the initial stages.

- **Opportunities:** Cultural confidence for students to take modules outside their discipline.
- **Actions:** Streamline the module catalogue for greater optionality and address barriers to IL.

School of Engineering
- **Good Practice:** Interdisciplinary first-year curriculum and design projects; collaborative postgraduate programmes.
- **Challenges:** None explicitly stated.
- **Opportunities:** Expanding interdisciplinary course offerings.
- **Actions:** Introduction of new interdisciplinary courses and research centres.

chool of Law
- **Good Practice:** 'Law in context' approach and joint degrees for interdisciplinary perspectives.
- **Challenges:** Constraints due to increasing student numbers and stretched teaching provision.
- **Opportunities:** Overcoming structural barriers to interdisciplinarity.
- **Actions:** Work within existing constraints to maintain and enhance interdisciplinary offerings.

School of Life Sciences
- **Good Practice:** Interdisciplinary approach in Biology; collaboration with various departments for PGT modules.
- **Challenges:** Difficulty in drawing a distinction between collaborative work and individual assessment.
- **Opportunities:** Making the narrative of interdisciplinarity more explicit to students.
- **Actions:** Review of curriculum to incorporate interdisciplinarity more explicitly.

Warwick Business School
- **Good Practice:** Large provider of IL; integration of different disciplines into programmes.
- **Challenges:** Less evidence of postgraduate students taking modules outside WBS.
- **Opportunities:** Further development of interdisciplinary content.
- **Actions:** Encourage cross-departmental connections and innovative content development.

Warwick Foundation Studies
- **Good Practice:** Collaboration with other departments; interdisciplinary modules like SPAMM.
- **Challenges:** Often multidisciplinary rather than IL.
- **Opportunities:** Co-creation of interdisciplinary aspects of modules with students.
- **Actions:** Collaborate with other departments on IL and engage students in co-creation.

Warwick Manufacturing Group
- **Good Practice:** Multidisciplinary nature of courses like Cyber Security.
- **Challenges:** Interdisciplinary activity is emerging and not fully established.
- **Opportunities:** Growth in interdisciplinary teaching and learning in collaboration with other departments.
- **Actions:** Encourage modules taught with other departments and overseas partners.

Warwick Medical School

- **Good Practice:** Interdisciplinary curriculum design and assessment in undergraduate degrees.
- **Challenges:** Structural and organisational barriers to interdisciplinary study.
- **Opportunities:** Review of research project constraints and expansion of interdisciplinary topics.
- **Actions:** Review MBChB research projects and diversify areas for student exploration.

C1. Cluster 1 - Student Transitions, Community and Wellbeing

- No comments relevant to common themes included in the final report.

C2. Cluster 2 - Learning Beyond Boundaries

- **Good Practice:** The cluster is recognised for its embedded interdisciplinary work and partnerships with IATL, setting a model for the university.
- **Challenges:** Challenges include ensuring that core messaging around sustainability and interdisciplinarity is more widely understood and acted upon.
- **Opportunities:** The cluster could aim to define and communicate clear objectives for sustainability and interdisciplinarity.
- **Actions:** Secure funding for an Engagement Officer, promote interdisciplinary modules, and enhance collaboration with local organisations.

C3. Cluster 3 - Seamless Physical and Digital Learning Environments

- **Good Practice:** The library's initiatives in academic support and Estates' considerations of sustainability in building designs.
- **Challenges:** Inadequate flexibility in the timetable and disparate online learning tools may be barriers to interdisciplinarity.
- **Opportunities:** Improve collaborative course planning and provide clearer pathways for IL.
- **Actions:** Map existing work to recognise strengths, explore the use of MOBIUS Maths online programme models, and consider sustainability in service and space design.

C4. Cluster 4 - A Culture of Education Leadership and Innovation

- **Good Practice:** IATL and ADC contribute significantly to the enhancement of IL.
- **Challenges:** There is a need for better engagement and systematic communication between departments to further interdisciplinary education.
- **Opportunities:** A more systematic approach to promoting and implementing IL across departments is required.
- **Actions:** Develop resources linked to specific aspects of interdisciplinarity, engage in interdisciplinary workgroup discussions, and ensure that interdisciplinary initiatives are adequately resourced.

C5. Cluster 5 - A Strong Administrative Foundation for Student Success

- **Good Practice:** Limited information provided for evaluation.
- **Challenges:** Engagement from non-lead departments and supportive funding models for interdisciplinary apprenticeships are lacking.
- **Opportunities:** Systems and processes to monitor and mitigate compliance risks associated with degree apprenticeships.
- **Actions:** Revise self-evaluation in interdisciplinarity and explore collaborations with WMG for programme redesign.

C6. Cluster 6 - Enabling Postgraduate Researchers to Thrive

- **Good Practice:** The cluster provides strong support for interdisciplinary environments through CDTs and DTPs.
- **Challenges:** Institutional structures may limit PGRs' abilities to engage in interdisciplinary research.
- **Opportunities:** Encouraging PGRs to see themselves as part of a broader research community and appreciate the benefits of interdisciplinary research.
- **Actions:** Facilitate more opportunities for interdisciplinary activities and invite PGRs to join initiatives relevant to their research.