UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK PGR EDI Working Group MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD [13:00 – 15:00, Thu, 28 Nov 2024, MS Teams]		
Present	Daniel Branch	Academic Director of Graduate Studies (Chair)
	Aysa Ozcan	PGR Development Officer (EDI) (Secretary)
	Ross Forman	Associate Professor, M4C Site Director
	Sara Hattersley	Associate Professor, Academic Development Centre
	Rhiannon Martyn	Head of Doctoral College
	Ashleigh Skelhorn-French	MGS Consortium Manager, Doctoral College
	James Burford	Associate Professor, Education Studies
	Damien Homer	Head of Disability Services
	Gavin Schwartz-Leeper	Associate Professor, Liberal Arts
	Jagjeet Jutley-Neilson	Associate Professor, Psychology
Attending	Lucy Crompton	PGR Representative
	Liam Medlin	PGR Representative

Ref	Item
	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Cherryl Jones and Yousuf Antria.

	Items for Discussion
007	**Mitigating Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments (MADE) Project Update** The group received a verbal report from James Burford the MADE project outcomes and recommendations. The 97 page document with almost 50 recommendations is available on WRAP and will be shared with the working group. Discussion around next steps to include: - knowledge production - information dissemination - Institutional response to the report. It was discussed that there were 2 strands to the report. One being practical elements of upgrades and VIVAs. The second being the wider university response. **Damien** commented that staff in Disability support services would like more guidance on reasonable adjustments as relating to PGR students and how this differs from UG and PGT provision. Keen to take this forward with practical steps that can be implemented. Could a subgroup of the EDI Working Group speak to disability advisors? Standard operating procedures and what adjustment can be offered to PGRs. Could a list for departments be created? Intention to make policies and procedures student friendly and clear. **Jag** brought up placements and lab settings for PGRs. PGRs will sometimes be in an off-campus setting. There may be issues around Reasonable Assessments being held at Warwick and not transferring to other settings. Important to find out what good practice is already going on. Case studies and approaches. International student experience and helping them navigate reasonable adjustments in the UK context.

	Liam Commented that implementation of Reasonable Adjustment and Mitigating circumstances can be patchy across departments. Are there ways How can we make sure reasonable adjustments are carried out in departments and in supervisory teams? Are they enforceable? **Action 1:** Members of the Group to look through the final report and come back to next meeting with input and suggestions around assessment and progression. A draft at the next meeting to look at what a VIVA and Upgrade would look like.
008	**Student Disability, Mental Health and Inclusion Policy** Damien delivered Presentation on updated student disability, mental health and inclusion policy. 2018 policy which has been updated and currently going through various committees at the university. Discussion around change in case law – no need for students to prove diagnosis in order to access reasonable adjustments and support. Students demonstrating that they are on the pathway to diagnosis s sufficient to receive support. The Focus is on the student experience. Feedback Damien has received so far on the policy has been: - PGT and PGR needs and how they are covered to be made more explicit in the policy - More student facing guidance - Considerations for students over multiple disciplines & depts - Making sure policy applied consistently across university The policy will sit with the disability code of practice. **Jamie** mentioned that students and staff tend to prefer a less formal approach. Templates for PGRs on what adjustments might be considered. Parity across the institution important. **Jag** informed the group of signposting local students to [Coventry and Warwickshire Dimensions support](.). **Ross** noted the mental distress caused to students whilst waiting for appointments. **Jag** informed group that in person awareness building sessions have worked very well and were very popular. **Ashleigh** noted that training for staff on EDI matters would be very welcome. It was noted that training has to be done carefully. At the moment there is no formal training. Jag shared Moodle links to staff training. **Gavin** – supervisors often are point of pastoral and academic support. Wider cultural change around supporting students should be longer term aim. **Ross** – staff can be concerned about their legal responsibilities. Off-campus accommodation often substandard which negatively impacts PGRs and especially international PGRs. **Action 2** – Members of the group to provide feedback to Damien on the policy. **Action 3** – Members of the group to keep updated on developments in this space.

Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion	
Theme Heading	
	Term of reference for the group verbally agreed
Any other business	
	Inclusion & Online/Virtual Activity **Lucy** raised a topic around Research culture and there being assumption that in person is always better, especially as it related to community building. This is not inclusive of all students such as those with health conditions, caring responsibilities. This leads to a sense of isolation and being excluded. Issues span across many different departments. **Action 4:** Item for discussion at a future meeting. Creating opportunities for those who aren't on campus to build a community. Potentially to include other members of the Doctoral College team around community building. Lucy to be invited back to be involved with discussions around this item.
Next meeting: [Thu, 30 Jan 2025, 13:00 – 15:00, Online]	