

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
PGR EDI Working & Advisory COMMITTEE

11am, Thursday 25 JUNE 2026, Hybrid (FAB1.15 & MS Teams)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present	James Burford (JB)	(Chair) Associate Professor, Education Studies
	Megan Caulfield (MC)	Programme Manager, Dean of Students
	Ross Forman (RF)	Associate Professor, M4C Director
	Damien Homer (DH)	Head of Disability Services, Wellbeing Support Services
	Mara Silva Hope (MSH)	PGR, Sociology
	Cherryl Jones (CJ)	Widening Access and Lifecycle manager, Widening Participation
	Gillian Messaoud (GM)	(Secretary) PGR Development Officer (ED&I), Doctoral College
	Chris Thompson (CT)	MGS Placements Manager, Doctoral College
Attending	Rhiannon Martyn	Head of the Doctoral College, Doctoral College
Ref	Item	
020	Apologies for absence Aishah Ibrahim (PGR, WMS), Jagjeet Jutley-Neilson (Associate Professor, Psychology), Javearia Tariq (PGR, WMG) Jonathan Hickman-Heron Academic Director (Postgraduate Research), Sara Hattersley (Associate Professor, Academic Development Centre), Vicky Strudwick (Head of Research Culture Partnerships, IAS),	
021	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made.	
022	Minutes of last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 were approved without amendment.	
023	Matters arising from last meeting GM provided an update on the online sanctuary scholarship proposal discussed at the previous meeting. The proposal has now been considered by the Scholarships Working Advisory Group and useful advice has been received. A working model is being explored further, with discussions underway with Library and Admissions colleagues to clarify the practicalities of delivery. A further update is expected once the model has been tested for operational feasibility.	
Chair’s Update		
024	Chair’s Business - The Chair reported on the recent Inclusive Education and PGR catch-up meeting. The discussion had reinforced the importance of research culture as a core part of the PGR experience and also considered the need to build EDI more explicitly into international partnerships and international arrangements. - Members noted positively that EDI has now been embedded as a cross-cutting theme within the new PGR Strategy. The Chair confirmed that points raised by this committee at the previous meeting had been fed into the strategy development process. - An update was given on disability-related work in the PGR space. Disability Adviser PGR awareness training was due to be delivered the following week. In parallel, the Doctoral College and Disability Team have been mapping the PGR DSA pathway in order to identify barriers, improve process clarity, and strengthen departmental understanding of how support is implemented.	

	- It was also noted that a Disability Champions PGR awareness training offer is being developed collaboratively over the summer by the Disability Champions network, the Disability Team and the Doctoral College, with a view to delivery from Term 1 next academic year. - The committee received an update on work to improve the accessibility of PGR welcome and induction. The Doctoral College and Student Experience teams are developing enhanced pre-arrival communications, a checklist system, a recorded webinar, live chat, webpage videos, and greater integration of PGR Welcome into general Welcome Week arrangements. Members noted the importance of this work for international and other students who may need flexible ways to access information. - CJ advised that their team had developed information for sanctuary scholars, particularly for students whose circumstances do not fit neatly into either “home” or “international” categories. They offered to share this material to inform the PGR welcome work, especially for postgraduate sanctuary scholars and other students arriving through non-standard routes. GM agreed to follow this up after the meeting.
Discussion	
025	PATHWAY Evaluation Report - JB presented findings from an evaluation of Warwick’s PATHWAY programme for Black researchers, funded through Advanced Enhancing Research Culture Funding. The evaluation considered how the programme was conceived, established and implemented; whether it operates as an effective pathway for Black researchers; and what lessons it offers for future EDI and positive action initiatives. - The committee heard that the programme is valued and that participants had reported positive experiences of funding, mentoring, skills development, confidence-building and employability benefits. There was also evidence of strong institutional commitment to addressing the under-representation of Black researchers. - However, the evaluation identified several structural challenges. The programme had no dedicated budget line; it relied on combining existing schemes rather than being designed as a single coherent model; leadership and management arrangements were temporary; governance and ownership lacked clarity; and the programme’s longer-term progression aims were not yet fully articulated. - Members noted the challenge of defining whether PATHWAY is intended primarily as an access initiative, a progression initiative, or both. Questions were raised about what the programme is a pathway to, how success should be defined, and whether success should include movement into research-related roles beyond academia as well as retention within academic careers. - The discussion highlighted a number of strategic issues relevant both to PATHWAY and to wider future EDI work. These included the importance of: a clear theory of change; early consultation and co-design; sustainable funding and governance; clearer communication of aims and eligibility; support for mentors and supervisors; and robust measures of long-term impact. - CJ reflected on the usefulness of theory of change approaches in clarifying the problem being addressed and the intended outcomes of interventions. They noted that success may legitimately take multiple forms, including access to role models, community, information and informed career decision-making, rather than only academic retention. - MC agreed that the evaluation demonstrated the importance of clearer articulation of purpose and stronger visibility of programmes and opportunities grouped under a single initiative. - RM reflected on the risks of rapidly assembling programmes without adequate planning, resourcing or institutional buy-in from the outset.

	- Members discussed the broader institutional challenge of connecting work across education, research culture and PGR spaces, particularly where initiatives span multiple levels of study. - GM asked who currently has oversight of the programme's overall purpose and measures of success, given that PATHWAY is made up of several linked schemes. The Chair advised that this should be raised with Vicky Strudwick / the National Centre for Research Culture at a future meeting. - CT asked whether there may be value in supplementary downloadable or digital content to support students who may not engage directly with events but would benefit from accessible self-guided information. Members agreed that this was a useful point for further consideration in relation to communicating opportunities and signalling routes into research. - The committee noted the findings of the evaluation and agreed that a further update should be requested in the autumn term, including a response to the recommendations and clarification on governance, purpose and success measures. Decision The committee noted the findings of the PATHWAY evaluation and agreed that a further update should be brought to the committee in the autumn term.
027	Enhancing Research Culture Projects - The Chair introduced a discussion on whether this committee should act as a receiving forum for outputs from short-term Enhancing Research Culture projects relevant to PGR EDI. They noted that many project leads are unsure where their work, recommendations and artefacts should sit once short-term funding ends, particularly where projects relate to mental health, neurodiversity, international and part-time students, access to PGR, social mobility, or caring responsibilities. - RM strongly supported the proposal and argued that the committee should provide a place where such work can be received, discussed and, where possible, carried forward through collective institutional influence. They recommended using an inclusive lens rather than a narrow protected-characteristics-only lens, and suggested beginning with more recent or still-live projects rather than attempting to revisit every historical project at once. - Members discussed the importance of not over-promising where recommendations would require significant new funding or staffing. DH emphasised that any review should begin with a realistic appraisal of what can be taken forward. - MC suggested that stronger alignment between funded projects and the PGR Strategy could improve longevity and increase the chances of recommendations being embedded. They also noted that related PGR-relevant work may be arising through inclusive education funding and action plans. - There was support for clustering projects thematically rather than considering them only one by one. Themes identified in discussion included mental health, neurodiversity, international and part-time student experience, pipeline/access/social mobility, and caring responsibilities. - Members also discussed whether there may be value in developing clearer communication about what work has already been done in the PGR EDI space, what recommendations have emerged, and what action has or has not followed, both for transparency and to avoid duplication. - The committee agreed in principle to act as a forum to receive and consider relevant project findings and artefacts, beginning with live or recent projects where possible. - It was agreed that the Chair and the Secretary would review the catalogue of projects, identify relevant and realistically actionable work, cluster projects by theme where appropriate, and invite suitable project leads to a future meeting. Members also indicated that, where projects are presented, it would be helpful to ask leads to articulate clearly the change they believe their project should bring about.

	Decision The committee agreed in principle to act as a receiving forum for relevant Enhancing Research Culture project outputs relating to PGR EDI.
028	AOB - No additional business was raised. - Meeting dates for the next academic year had not yet been scheduled and would be circulated after the meeting. - The Chair thanked members for their contributions over the academic year and noted that this was the final meeting of the group for 2025/26.
Next meeting: TBC, Term 1 2026-27	

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	DECISION/ACTION	LEAD AND DUE DATE	STATUS
[2025-2026]			
003 - Minutes of last meeting on 26 JUN 2025	ACTION: Circulate minutes of 26 JUN 2025 meeting	Secretary, 17 MAR 2026	Complete
007 - Membership and Terms of Reference	ACTION: Discuss reporting structure to Supervisors with wider Postgraduate Research Subcommittee to confirm appropriate pathway for the community.	JHH, 17 MAR 2026	On-going
008 - MADE Report Implementation Update	ACTION 1) VS & GM to meet to discuss pathway programme collaboration (On hold pending legal advice - April 2026)	VS & GM,	Completed
	ACTION 2) JHH update Rhiannon (Doctoral College) to clarify and discuss legal issues concerning potential positive action work	JHH, 17 MAR 2026	Completed
	ACTION 3) YA & GM to meet re: visa communications to international students	YA & GM, 17 MAR 2026	Completed
	ACTION 4) GM to check if mitigating circumstances policy covers vivas and progression points explicitly	GM, 17 MAR 2026	Completed
009 - Disability Team PGR Ready Update	ACTION: Dissemination of new processes in response to the Abraha ruling needs to be reinforced, to emphasise it empowers departments make reasonable adjustments decisions closer to the time of an assessment.	GM & DH, 17 MAR 2026	Completed
010 - PGR EDI Intuitive Mapping	DECISION: Proposed mapping matrix was approved.		
	ACTION 1) Commence populating matrix for review at new PGR EDI WAG meeting.	JB & GM, 17 MAR 2026	Completed
	ACTION 2) All PGR EDI WAG members to share any initiative they are aware of with Secretary and Chair.	Members, 17 MAR 2026	On-going

	ACTION 3) MC to share Inclusive Education team's existing EDI mapping.	MC, 17 MAR 2026	On-going
17 MAR 2026			
016 - PGRs in conflict affected context	ACTION: Item to be revisited at a future meeting for further development	GM, 25 JUN 2026	Completed
019 - Next steps for PGR EDI WAG	DECISION: Five strategic strands will provide a framework for future activity and future activity will include collaboration with other WAGs.		
25 JUN 2026			
024 – Chairs Updates	ACTION: GM to follow up with CJ to review and consider use of sanctuary scholar welcome materials within PGR welcome resources.	GM & CJ, before next meeting	In progress
025 - PATHWAY Evaluation Report	DECISION: The committee noted the findings of the PATHWAY evaluation and agreed that a further update should be brought to the committee in the autumn term.		
	ACTION: Share the PATHWAY evaluation report and short summary/snapshot with members after the meeting.	JB/GM after meeting	Completed
027 - Enhancing Research Culture Projects	DECISION: The committee agreed in principle to act as a receiving forum for relevant Enhancing Research Culture project outputs relating to PGR EDI.		
	ACTION 1) Review the catalogue of Enhancing Research Culture projects, identify those relevant to PGR EDI, and assess which are realistic for committee consideration.	JB & Secretary before next meeting	To commence
	ACTION 2) Cluster relevant Research Culture projects thematically and invite suitable live/recent project leads to present findings and recommendations to the committee.	JB & Secretary before next meeting	To commence
028 - AOB	ACTION: Circulate proposed meeting dates for 2026/27.	Secretary before term 1	To commence