

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
ASSEMBLY
PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11:00, TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2022
VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Present	Professor Stuart Croft	Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
	Sharon Tuersley	Secretary to Council
	Professor Maureen Freely	(Proposer of Motion 1)
	Dr Naomi Waltham-Smith	(Seconder of Motion 1)
	Sophie Black	Assistant Registrar (Governance) (Technology Assistant)
	Emma Jeavons	Assistant Registrar (Governance) (Technology Assistant)
	Emma Tew	Assistant Registrar (Governance) (Minute-taker)
	Members of the Assembly (76 members present including the above-listed)	

Ref	Item
008	<p>Welcome and Introductory Remarks</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members of the Assembly, declared the meeting open and reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The membership of the Assembly included all staff employed on level 1-9 terms and conditions from the date of their employment. • As at 11:02, 51 members of the Assembly were present, and the meeting was quorate. • The meeting was first announced on Insite on 28 February 2022. The Motion and associated documents were published online on the same date. <p>The Secretary to Council outlined the voting procedure, noting that an electronic polling function within Microsoft Teams would be used to vote on the Motion, with contingency measures in place should individuals encounter any issues. Verification of the vote count would take place after the Assembly meeting and the final outcome would be recorded in the minutes.</p>
009	<p>Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared.</p>
010	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p>There were no items of Chair's business.</p>
011	<p>Minutes of the meeting of the Assembly held on 18 October 2021</p> <p>DECISION: The minutes of the meeting of the Assembly held on 18 October 2021 (011-A080322) were approved.</p>
012	<p>Matters arising from the meeting of the Assembly held on 18 October 2021</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
013	<p>Standing Orders of the Assembly</p> <p>The Secretary to Council reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assembly was not a decision-making body of the University. It could make recommendations to Council and Senate. • As the meeting was taking place on Microsoft Teams there were a number of the procedural elements under the current Standing Orders that did not apply. • That the Standing Orders were last approved by the Assembly on 15 December 2020.

014

Report from the Assembly Working Group and Motion to the Assembly (paper 014-A080322)

Professor Maureen Freely presented the interim report of the Assembly Working Party on Antisemitism and Racism (AWP), outlining several recommendations on how allegations of all forms of racism, including antisemitism, against staff and students should be handled at the University. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- The AWP had focussed on three key issues:
 - The inclusion of antisemitism in new and emerging antiracism pedagogy at all levels of the University.
 - National and international debates around the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (JDA) and International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) declarations of antisemitism.
 - The University's disciplinary processes.
- The recommendations of the AWP were as follows:
 - Funding should be provided by the University to deliver antiracist workshops with a focus on antisemitism, designed for students and staff to promote an ethos of mutual respect and inclusion through the work of the Race Equality Taskforce, the Tackling Racial Inequality at Warwick programme, the Social Inclusion team and the Social Inclusion Strategy.
 - Funding should be provided by the University for the conversation series on the IHRA and JDA in the British academic context, as well as workshops or other activities to develop shared understandings of antisemitism from a social justice perspective, in the context of other racisms.
 - The connection between the AWP and the Senate Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group should be maintained with reference to cross-University discussions around disciplinary processes.
 - The AWP should present its final report to the Senate.

Mark Hinton (a member of the Race Equality Taskforce) commented that it was critical for the University to host wider and more nuanced conversations on how to challenge racism, and antisemitism in particular. Focus needed to be placed beyond individual acts of discrimination, with consideration given to how discrimination was more subtly embedded in Warwick's systems and culture.

Dr Naomi Waltham-Smith (Chair of the Senate Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group) remarked that developing a deeper understanding of antisemitism would be the most effective means of challenging antisemitic discrimination on campus, as opposed to sole reliance on legal/regulatory mechanisms. Discussions around academic freedom and freedom of expression promoted open-mindedness and would facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of antisemitism.

The associated Motion 1 was as follows:

"We ask the Assembly to endorse our plan to continue our work in 2022 and to support us in our request for University support and funding."

Comments were invited from the floor, summarised as follows:

- The AWP was intending to engage with experts involved in the formulation of the JDA and IHRA definitions of antisemitism. Members commented that experts on the Palestinian conflict should be contacted as part of these discussions, to ensure a broad perspective.
- It was queried what research had been relied upon to qualify the AWP's assertion that antisemitism and racism was on the rise. A member expressed concern on the methodology of the Community Security Trust, noting that there were numerous other research reports exploring the increased incidence of racism.
- It was expressed that Warwick's disciplinary processes around these matters should have an element of independence from University authorities.

- The Director of Student Discipline and Resolution was exploring how antisemitism could impact on the University's student disciplinary processes and in particular on educational and preventative approaches, and they would welcome engagement with the AWP.

A vote was then taken on Motion 1, with the results outlined in the table below:

	Vote Count		
	Electronic Poll	Contingency Measure (vote submitted directly to Secretary to Council)	Total
Motion 1			
For	63 (94%)	1 (100%)	64 (94%)
Against	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Abstain	3 (4%)	0 (0%)	3 (4%)
Total vote count =			68
Members present at time of vote =			76

**Note – percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number*

015 **Draft Principles for a Code of Practice on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression**

Dr Naomi Waltham-Smith presented draft principles for a Code of Practice on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression, which was due to be discussed at the meeting of Senate on 16 March 2022. The Code would set out definitions, principles, and expectations in line with domestic and international law and standards to facilitate the University's duties to secure academic freedom and freedom of expression in a changing policy environment. Members were supportive of the draft principles and the development of the Code.

The Chair thanked members of the Assembly for attending and declared the meeting closed.

Meeting Closed 11:52