

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
OPEN/ RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2021
VIA MS TEAMS

Present	Professor David Davies	DD	Chair
	Alex Baker	ABak	Postgraduate Research Student
	Dr Nikola Chmel	NC	Chemistry
	Professor Gill Cooke	GC	Engineering
	Dr Nick d'Ambrumenil	NA	Physics
	Alex Fletcher	AF	Undergraduate Student
	Dr Lucy Hammond	LEH	Warwick Medical School
	Dr Paul Jenkins	PJ	Statistics
	Dr Matt Jones	MJ	WMG
	Dr Russ Kitson	RK	Chemistry
	Professor Georgia Kremmyda	GK	Engineering
	Dr James Lloyd-Hughes	JLH	Physics
	Dr Gioia Panzarella	GP	Faculty of Arts
	Dr Anastasia Papavasileiou	AP	Statistics
	Dr Michael Pounds	MP	Physics
	Dr Kevin Purdy	KP	Life Sciences
	Professor Lesley Roberts	LR	Warwick Medical School
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	JR	Mathematics
	Professor Dmitriy Rumynin	DR	Mathematics
	Professor Jane Sinclair	JS	Computer Science (Deputy Chair)
	Dr Helen Toner	HT	Faculty Senior Tutor
	Dr Adrian von Muhlenen	AVM	Psychology
	Professor Martin Wills	MW	Deputy Chair
Dr Dave Wood	DW	Mathematics	
Dr Philip Young	PY	Life Sciences	
Attending	Amanda Bishop	ABish	Faculty Widening Participation Coordinator
	Chris Bisping (item 026)	CB	PGT Academic Director
	Amy Collins	AHC	Assistant Secretary
	Louise Hasler	LH	Secretary
	Beccy Freeman (item 028-9)	BF	Dean of Students
	Linda Sherwin (item 025)	LS	Wellbeing Advisor, WSS
	Dr Elke Thonnes	ET	Faculty Student Engagement Coordinator
	Professor Ian Tuersley	IT	Faculty Student Engagement Coordinator
	Professor Gwen van der Velden (item 028-9)	GvdV	Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
	Leanne Williams (item 025)	LW	Associate Professorial Teaching Fellow and Director of Student Wellbeing for SLS
Ref	Item		
019	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Dr Adam Chester, Professor Mark Steel and Professor Jason Madan.		
020	Declarations of Interest No new declarations were made.		
021	Equality diversity and inclusion		

	Members were reminded to engage with agenda items in light of the University's policies that support equality, diversity and inclusion.
022	<p>Minutes of last meeting held on 27 October 2020</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2020 (022.SEMEC.20-21) were received and approved.</p>
023	<p>Matters arising from the meetings held on 16 January 2020 and 27 October 2020</p> <p>(a) Warwick Welcome (minute 038/19-20 refers, from the meeting held on 16 January 2020)</p> <p>The Head of Welcome had confirmed that consultation from Faculty Education Committees would be taken into consideration when disseminating information about planning for future welcome weeks. The report from Welcome 2020 was circulated on 14 December to the Welcome representatives in each department and within Student Opportunity (and was made available for information below the line at this meeting). The report would be received by the Education Executive, the Education Committee and the Senate. Members were asked to feed comments into their Welcome representatives, as it was not expected that SEMEC should formally consider this report.</p> <p>(b) Update on matters raised under the Adapting to Blended Learning item (minute 008/20-21 refers, from meeting held on 27 October 2020)</p> <p>It had been agreed that the Chair would raise the following requests and concerns with Chris Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)) and Ruth Cooper (Director of Administration, Faculty SEM). Updates were as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wish to defer any new initiatives where possible, in particular the need to create resit in tandem with first sit examination papers; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was no longer required that resit papers be prepared at the same time as first-sit papers for all modules; ○ The University had implemented a temporary streamlined approach to approvals to manage the changes to curriculum and delivery that programme teams would be making to mitigate the specific contexts of 2020/21; ○ As the University sought to establish a more timely approach to student feedback, incorporating the broader experience, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) would not run in 2020/21; ○ The University was not seeking such a full institutional or departmental NSS campaign, and was reducing the target response rate from 75% to 50%; ○ The University would run a light-touch TEG, focussing mainly on learning from departments on the blended learning experience and student engagement. • Logistical difficulties of students moving between face-to-face and online seminar groups; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) recognised this, but there were no obvious solutions at the time of discussion. • That the functionality of marking in Moodle could be improved, or other options investigated; and that departments be consulted on the specification and functionality of future online assessment systems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress was being made towards procuring a new system that would link with the existing student records system and that this should allow an improved marking work flow. <p>It had been agreed that the Chair would raise with Caroline Meyer (Chair of Faculty) the need for flexibility in departmental GTA budgets where there was an increased need for PGR students to teach small groups of students.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was further emphasised at the Board of the Faculty and was very clearly on the agenda of the Chair of the Faculty. <p>It had been agreed that the Secretary would find out to what extent the results of the internally coordinated term 3 student survey have been cascaded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These had been shared with Heads of Department and Directors of Education; members were encouraged to contact those colleagues if they had not had sight of results. • Useful data and insight from the term 1 survey should have been made available to Heads of Departments, Directors of Graduate Studies (PGT), NSS Contacts, and PTES Contacts, by the end of December, with the aim of supporting TEG meetings and future planning, alongside other evaluation such as SSLCs and module evaluation. <p>The Chair closed this item by reiterating that the University was being responsive to departmental pressures as raised and resolved above, and would continue to do so.</p>
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Chair's Update	
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024	<p>Chair's Business and Actions</p> <p>The Committee received and noted an update from the Chair, with key points as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Year Boards of Examiners for term 3 would be stepped down, but FYBoE would be expected to formally convene after resits (in autumn) and to work towards continued support for consistency in respect of mitigating circumstances. • There was a proposal for what should be included in the new annual (term 3) narrative approach to reporting on timeliness of feedback on assessment, which had been circulated to Directors of Education and Department administrators for a view; elements proposed for inclusion were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current context (e.g. a significant change to assessment process); ○ Trends over time; ○ What action was being taken to address any significant lack of compliance or to support good practice; ○ Whether departments required any support or advice with difficult issues. • Representatives from Chemistry, Engineering and Physics reported that the reduction in frequency to annual reporting was welcome, but that the change in approach from data to narrative was considered less preferable; their departments would prefer the previous spreadsheet return annually. • Graduate attainment data would be discussed at the meeting of the Board of the Faculty on 4 February 2021, to which Professor Robin Naylor from Economics and Tammy Thiele from SROAS had been invited to set out their approach to analysis of data. • Remaining TEG meetings were to be delayed (with all to be completed by the end of March) and further scaled back with minimal membership and agenda; the Mathematics TEG had been delayed and only Engineering had taken place from the faculty; hence item 030 was covered in this Chair's Business item instead of later in the meeting. • GC reported that the Engineering TEG atmosphere had been supportive (in particular with respect to understanding of the short timeframe to submit paperwork and other issues which had conflicted); the panel had been constructive but the current educational context was so in flux that some of the notes and actions had become redundant given the new national lockdown which took effect since the meeting.
025	<p>Wellbeing Support Provision</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal report from Leanne Williams (Director of Student Wellbeing for Life Sciences) with key details and discussions, as below:</p>

- LW was responsible for supporting the Senior Tutor Team in SLS and for providing advice and guidance for Personal Tutors on student wellbeing support;
- This provided a platform to showcase to academics and support staff that wellbeing was a fundamental anchor to implementation of any strategy;
- LW also Chaired termly mitigation panels which allowed for effective and timely provision of support to struggling students;
- LW was also responsible for ensuring students were aware of their rights and options within the University regulations.
- HT commented that the School of Law had a similar Director of Student Support and Wellbeing role at the head of the Senior Tutor team, and observed that having more time to be strategic as well as dealing with individual cases was a good approach in large departments.

The Committee received a presentation from Linda Sherwin (Wellbeing Advisor) about the provision available from Wellbeing Support Services (WSS):

- WSS included: the Wellbeing Support Team, the Disability Team, and the Counselling and Psychology Interventions Team (CAPIT).
- A Single Point of Access approach had been implemented from September 2020, whereby any student approaching WSS would receive an initial brief consultation with subsequent referral to further appropriate services; this was available 10am-3pm Mon-Fri.
- In addition to other more detailed training, WSS were providing four short weekly 30 minute masterclasses as whistle-stop tours of coping strategies; these included a general session, a PGR session, a PGT session, and a session relating to transitions.
- WSS also engage in outreach with the wider University by attending committees at various levels, providing direct support with identified issues, supporting personal tutor training, and providing various other kinds of training.
- The kind of extra support WSS referred students to included allocation of a Duty Worker for support to a student in crisis, or referral to one of two Mental Health nurses via the above-mentioned initial triage.
- Disability services were responsible for providing advice, guidance and support around disabilities across all the areas of the University a student might need it – for example not just in terms of academic departments but also with accommodation.
- CAPIT provided a variety of routes for therapy – video, email, group online – and various intervention methods as well.
- The team would also direct students to wider support options as appropriate; these included Personal Tutors, the Residential Life Team, Campus Security, the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser, Warwick Accommodation, Student Funding, the Health Centre, the Dean of Students, the Chaplaincy, Student Immigration and Compliance, the SU Advice Centre, and the local police.
- Togetherall was a free digital platform available to students and staff 24/7.

There was a general discussion around wellbeing issues following the presentation:

- The Chair asked about the uptake of services within the faculty; LS clarified that faculty-level statistics were not readily available but that there were about 30-40 consultations per day across the institution; in particular issues of anxiety and surrounding accommodation were high during 20/21 so far.
- AF felt (as a student representative) that there had been significant improvements in 20/21 in student support compared to previous years; although students had raised concerns about wait times, LS had acknowledged this during the presentation.
- LW noted that personal tutors should be actively reaching out to students during this lockdown in particular, especially to first years (who had not had the same methods available of building resilience as in normal years – e.g. society activity etc.); students often only contacted WSS at the point of crisis so the goal should be to catch issues earlier to prevent this.
- ABish thanked the WS representatives for all their work and asked whether there was any correlation between Widening Participation and Wellbeing Support needs; LS felt that issues were more across the

board, although noting that less male than female students tended to come forward with issues and this was a key goal to resolve.

There was a discussion about keeping departments in the loop about student issues within the bounds of confidentiality requirements:

- RK raised that the Chemistry Senior Tutors had historically felt out of the loop when students reached out to WSS, and asked whether it was possible for WSS to ask more proactively as standard whether students wished information to be shared with their department.
- LS and LW clarified that WSS did not normally actively seek permission to share unless it was asked for, but this was necessary to ensure a sense of security in providing a safe space to the student.
- If a student was in a significant crisis, the conversation might be held alongside encouragement to submit mitigation, but this was not standard due to the wide variance in issues and the fact many issues might have no academic impact.
- A number of colleagues expressed that their experience suggested students would presume information would be shared on; this had included for example academic appeals on the basis students had believed that their department knew about their problem because they had shared it with WSS, often expressed in such terms as “I told the University;” this was not without acknowledging the importance of confidentiality, but a plea to identify a middle ground that might improve perceptions and communications.
- LW and LS expressed the contrary experience that in most cases they found students expected and assumed confidentiality.
- ABak raised that perhaps there was merit in investigating the general concerns about toxic environments in academia, given this concern from students that revealing issues to their department might impact their academic progress; examples were known of students being told they were insufficiently resilient to do a PhD for example.

A question was raised regarding when and how to refer students who had ceased to engage:

- MP requested confirmation that it was permissible to refer students who had ceased to engage without their permission, and also requested clarity over any suitable timescale for this.
- LS affirmed this could be done (and was an example of where a Duty Worker would be employed); WSS would use the Wellbeing portal to initiate contact with the student, and would continue escalating efforts to find the student in the case of no response (leading up to referral to the police as a missing person if required).
- If WSS received a response from a student in the above circumstance, they would close the loop with the department to the extent of confirming that the student was safe and well, but without sharing any further confidential details.
- HT affirmed in relation to timeliness that it was important to raise concerns and that if WSS felt it was premature they would advise.

Closing comments:

- HT advised that all personal tutors should ensure their very first tutee conversation included assurance that it was safe to share issues and concerns, and that WSS were available to contact for any wellbeing issues.
- HT also acknowledged the challenges to personal tutors themselves, who should also be conscious of their own wellbeing and that of colleagues, and should speak to WSS about how best to handle a situation if unsure.

026

Newly Appointed Role of the PGT Academic Director

Chris Bisping was invited to describe his remit in the new Director role, priorities and challenges; key details and discussion were as below:

- This was a new role and was involving a lot of learning initially about its scope;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CB had spoken with all departments within an initial scoping exercise; • CB did not have a large team and wanted to dispel any such impression; • CB noted that the WSS item above had touched very little on PGT students and (although not stating this as a criticism), this was a good example of why the role had been put into place; • The role also sought to address and represent the variety of student situations in PGT – some part time pursuing a career, some direct entrants from a first degree, some returning to study as mature students, higher proportions overseas, and most only enrolled for one year; • Part of the role would be to investigate governance representation, noting FECs had some oversight shared with BGS when instituted which was unusual; • CB had a remit to ensure regulations were written not just with UG standard courses in mind; • CB would be taking stock from conversations with departments and central services to gain an understanding of the current landscape which might inform coming strategy; • DD noted that SEMEC had 3 UG reps and 1 PGR but no PGT as yet and no applicants had been forthcoming; • LR (WMS) raised in the Teams chat a need to distinguish between FT and PT PGT as well as broadly between PGT and UG/PGR.
027	<p>Postgraduate Business</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal report with key details and discussions, as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chancellor’s and MONASH scholarships had opened in November with a deadline 31 Jan 2021; • There was no update on WCPRS, but this was expected soon from the Doctoral College; • The current batch of extensions for funding were being processed, with another batch to open soon; • Regular communication was ongoing with PGR starters from the Doctoral College.
029	<p>Student Success and Academic Inclusion (taken before 028; items reordered for continuity of notes)</p> <p>The Committee received a presentation from the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Dean of Students with key details as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BF and GvdV had been working on the Inclusive Education Strategy, and were seeking input and feedback on a paper which was to be circulated w/c 18 Jan 2021. • Goals included: closing gaps, meeting commitments (Access and Participation Plan), inclusive curricula and communities, inclusive teaching and learning spaces (not just physical and virtual but also metaphorical spaces), and inclusive support. • Targets from the APP included reduction of three gaps to 0% by 24/25 – disabled/non-disabled continuation, white/black attainment of 1st and 2:1, POLAR Q5/Q1 continuation – some were further from this than others but there was movement in the desired direction on all fronts; also reduction of mature/non-mature first-degree continuation gap to 5% by 24/25 • It was noted that a strategic approach would require attitudinal and structural change, and this across the whole institution, not just some constituent parts. • A continuous improvement change model would be followed to effect change across the course of 2020-2025. • It was noted that some department SSLCs were beginning to add Inclusion as a standing agenda item and that this was a good way to facilitate and encourage the conversation. • Departments were encouraged to talk to students in order to understand their priorities; departments would also need to engage with data but there was recognition that this required data to be compiled centrally and analysis facilitated helpfully. • GvdV requested that any departmental input be fed in, including any student feedback in this area where available. <p>Discussion was as below:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEH queried whether the thinking was solely around aggregated data, as although this was important to analysing trends etc., there was also a place for far more granulated data due to the individualised nature of this issue; this was acknowledged but not covered in detail as it was relevant to item 028. • BF acknowledged that aggregate data would not tell departments what to do and that an important factor was to continue the conversation in order to understand possible actions. • DD asked ABak to report on ongoing discussions around inclusive teaching in Science with the Chair of Faculty; ABak affirmed that the work above was positive and the direction of change was there. • GvdV encouraged ABak to share a particular inclusive science paper with the committee (Secretary's Note: there was uncertainty over whether this may or may not have been the Embracing Black Lives Matter paper which was received by the Term 1 20/21 SEMEC meeting; ABak was to follow up with GvdV to clarify). • BK noted that Chemistry had also started a project on addressing Chinese student attainment gap, and invited other members to contact them if they wanted further information.
028	<p>Widening Participation (taken after 029; items reordered for continuity of notes)</p> <p>The Committee received a presentation with key details as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABish welcomed the Inclusion Strategy work. • There was now a WP Individualised Dataset being made available to departments, but due to sensitivity this was only available to the Head of Department and Widening Participation Representative for each department; this was granular to the level of individual students as per the comment from LEH under item 029. • The IT bursary had been suspended but this was not to be taken as a discouragement to requests for equivalent support; investigation was ongoing into what might replace the scheme. • ABish reminded members that the SEM WP forum, WP staff network, and WP student network continued to be available; also training was available for Departmental Ambassadors for WP, as well as general event planning and guidance. • Upcoming events included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 11th February: International Day of Women and Girls in Science: Women at Warwick ○ w/c 22nd March: Discover Warwick Week ○ Ongoing: Topic in a Box and STEM blogs <p>Discussion was as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DD raised a request that the IT bursary might be reopened as students were asked early in October whether they had suitable devices, but their perception of the suitability of their device may well have adjusted from the past term's experience; circumstances may also have changed if students had returned home as well; ABish agreed to forward the point. • BF affirmed that some replacement for the IT bursary was very high on the agenda, even if it might be with a different name; students could also be referred to Hardship for urgent needs and this would help improve awareness of IT needs. • RK queried why the fund had been home students only and ABish clarified this was because it had been from the WP budget and this only covered home students. • DD asked what fora might be available for further Inclusion discussion; GvdV clarified a number of fora existed already and would be covered in the paper, but also that there was the Directors of Student Experience Network and various WIHEA learning circles.
030	<p>Teaching Excellence Group Meeting</p> <p>See item 024; there were no further updates in addition to what the Chair had reported.</p>
031	<p>Any other business</p>

	No further items were raised.
<i>Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</i>	
032	Plagiarism and timeliness returns for 19-20 that were omitted from term 1 consideration The Committee received and noted the report (032.SEMEC.20-21)
033	Welcome Annual Report 2020 The Committee received and noted the report (033.SEMEC.20-21)
Next meeting: 14.00, Wednesday 5 May 2021	

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	DECISION/ACTION	LEAD AND DUE DATE	STATUS
n/a	No actions or decisions were required from this meeting.	n/a	n/a