

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**  
**FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**11.00, THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 2020**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBER, SENATE HOUSE**  
**AGENDA**

Ref	Item	Purpose	Lead	Report Type	Open/ Restricted/ Reserved
024	<b>Apologies for absence</b>				
025	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Should any members or attendees of the Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK, available from <a href="http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Code-Final.pdf">http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Code-Final.pdf</a>				
026	<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b>				
027	<b>Minutes of meeting held on 24 October 2019</b>	Approval	Louise Hasler	Paper 027.SEMEC.19-20	Open
028	<b>Matters arising from meeting held on 24 October 2019</b>				
	(a) Update on Course and Module Approval Systems	Information	David Davies	Verbal	Open
	(b) Update on Graduate Outcomes Data	Discussion	Nik Chmel	028.SEMEC.19-10	Open
<b>Chair's Update</b>					
029	<b>Chair's Business and Actions</b>	Information	David Davies	Verbal	Open
<b>Strategic Item</b>					
030	<b>Student Personalised Information (SPI) programme: Roland Ingram (Programme Lead) and Sophie Hannah (Stakeholder Engagement Officer)</b>	Discussion	Roland Ingram and Sophie Hannah	Verbal	Open
<b>Main Section</b>					
031	<b>Teaching Innovation- EUTOPIA: Jo Angori (Academic Director (Education and Internationalisation))</b>	Information and Discussion	Jo Angouri	Verbal	Open
032	<b>Teaching Excellence Group (TEG) 2019/20 Summary</b>	Discussion	Dan Derricott	032.SEMEC.19-20	Open
033	<b>Review of Assessment Update</b>	Information	Geraldine Connelly; Clare Watters	Verbal	Open
034	<b>Decolonisation of the Curriculum</b>	Discussion	David Davies (Chloe Batten, Education Sabbatical Officer)	034a.SEMEC.19-20 (full paper attached in pack) 034b.SEMEC.19-20 (short version online only)	Open
035	<b>Postgraduate Scholarships</b>	Information	Martin Wills	Verbal	Open

036	<b>Taught Postgraduate Working Group Update</b>	Information	Martin Wills	036.SEMEC.19-20	Open
037	<b>PhD and EngD Submission Rates</b>	Discussion	Martin Wills	037.SEMEC.19-20	Open
038	<b>Postgraduate Welcome Experience</b>	Discussion	Lisa Field	038.SEMEC.19-20	Restricted
039	<b>Widening Participation</b>	Information	Amanda Bishop	Verbal	Open
040	<b>Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee</b>	Information	Dave Wood	Verbal	Open
041	<b>Termly Timeliness of Feedback Report</b>				
	(a) Digest (faculty level)	Discussion	Louise Hasler	Paper 041a.SEMEC.19-20	Open
(b) Individual department returns			Paper 041b.SEMEC.19-20		
<b>Other</b>					
042	<b>Any other business</b>				
<b><i>Items below this line are for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</i></b>					
043	<b>Consultation on Exam Timetable Communication</b>	Information	n/a	Paper 043.SEMEC.19-20	Open
044	<b>Report on New Courses and Course Amendments Approved in term 1 2019/20</b>	Information	n/a	Paper 044.SEMEC.19-20	Open
<b>CLOSE BY 1.00PM</b> <b>Next meeting: 11.00, THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2020</b> <b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, SENATE HOUSE</b>					

**OF WARWICK**  
**FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11.00, THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER 2019**  
**IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SENATE HOUSE**

<b>Present</b>	Dr David Davies	DD	(Chair)
	Maya Alestwani	MA	Postgraduate Taught Student
	Alex Baker	AB	Postgraduate Research Student
	Professor Gavin Brown	GB	Mathematics
	Dr Nikola Chmel	NC	Chemistry
	Professor Gill Cooke	GC	Engineering
	Dr Miriam Gifford	MG	Life Sciences
	Dr Lucy Hammond	LH	Warwick Medical School
	Dr Paul Jenkins	PJ	Statistics
	Adam Jones	AJ	Undergraduate Student
	Dr Matt Jones	MJ	Warwick Manufacturing Group
	Dr Russ Kitson	RK	Chemistry
	Naveen Kumar	NK	Postgraduate Taught Student
	Professor Jason Madan	JM	Warwick Medical School
	Valentin Mancas	VM	Undergraduate Student
	Dr Anastasia Papavasileiou	AP	Statistics
	Professor Yorck Ramachers	YR	Physics (colleague sent in lieu of their formal members)
	Professor Lesley Roberts	LR	Warwick Medical School
	Dr Jane Sinclair	JS	Computer Science (Deputy Chair)
	Dr Helen Toner	HT	Faculty Senior Tutor
	Professor James Tresilian	JT	Psychology
	Dr Adrian von Muhlenen	AVM	Psychology
	Professor Martin Wills	MW	Deputy Chair
Dr Dave Wood	DW	Mathematics	
Dr Philip Young	PY	Life Sciences	
<b>Attending</b>	Amanda Bishop	AB	Faculty WP Coordinator
	Amy Collins	AC	Assistant Secretary
	Dr Beccy Freeman	BF	Dean of Students
	Louise Hasler	LH	Secretary
	Dr Elke Thonnes	ET	Faculty Student Engagement Coordinator
	Professor Pat Tissington	PT	Academic Director Employability and Skills
	Dr Ian Tuersley	IT	Faculty Student Engagement Coordinator
	Roberta Wooldridge Smith	RWS	Director of Student Opportunity
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Item</b>		
001	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from Professor Robin Clark (WMG), Professor Georgia Kremmyda (Engineering) and Dr Michael Pounds (Physics).		
002	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No declarations of interest were reported.		
003	<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> Members were reminded that they are asked to engage with agenda items in light of the University's policies that support equality, diversity and inclusion.		

004	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2019</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2019 in 004.SEMEC.19-20 were received and approved.</p>
005	<p><b>Membership and Terms of Reference 2019-20</b></p> <p>The key points reported and discussed were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Dr David Davies from WMS as Chair of SEMEC (<i>ex officio</i> as Deputy Chair of the Faculty), replacing Dr Dave Britnell.</li> <li>• Appointment of Dr Jane Sinclair from Computer Science as Deputy Chair, replacing Professor Lesley Roberts who continues as a member in light of the newly appointed Chair being also from WMS.</li> <li>• The Chair thanked Dave Britnell and Lesley Roberts for their previous contributions.</li> <li>• Faculty representation on AQSC had also been aligned with membership of SEMEC.</li> <li>• The membership implied that there was still a distinction drawn between the two areas represented by the two UG student members; it was clarified that the Students Union had removed this distinction and the two UG representatives both represented UG generally.</li> <li>• The TOR referred to module approval “pending the availability of Phase 2 of the SITS workflow” and this should be removed now that the system was in place.</li> <li>• The TOR referred to “best practice” but members felt the term “good practice” was more appropriate and accurate.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <p>LH to make the following amendments to membership and TOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of specified areas of representation from UG student members</li> <li>• Removal of reference to phase 2 of new SITS workflow pertaining to module approval</li> <li>• Amendment of “best practice” to “good practice”</li> </ul>
006	<p><b>Matters Arising from Meeting held on 16 May 2019</b></p> <p><b>(a) 45.a.vii/18-19: update on WRAP report investigating the availability and accessibility of undergraduate research opportunities at Warwick</b></p> <p>The committee received Paper 006a.SEMEC.19-20 and the key points of the discussion were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report recommends an inequality audit to allow less well-resourced students to be able to participate, and also embedding undergraduate research in the curriculum.</li> <li>• These recommendations are under consideration by the PVC for Education.</li> <li>• If the recommendation regarding the formalisation of undergraduate research within the curriculum is pursued, this will be submitted to Faculty Education Committees for consideration.</li> <li>• SEMEC members expressed a strong support of the scheme which they wished to be shared with the PVC for Education.</li> </ul> <p><b>(b) 46/18-19: Student Voice Committee</b></p> <p>It was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst supportive of a meeting, there was not capacity within Educational Policy and Quality to provide Secretarial Support; the Secretary for SEMEC had offered to provide clerical support with room booking ongoing, and papers would continue to be shared in good time.</li> <li>• The student representatives had not been able to convene a term 1 meeting due to the timing of SU elections; they were only elected to post the week before the committee.</li> <li>• Other faculties are now considering emulating this idea from SEMEC, noting that there should not be excessive overlap between faculties in terms of business.</li> </ul>

**(c) 47.i/18-19: Graduate Outcomes Data**

It was reported that:

- No high level coordination was known of (after investigation).
- It would be beneficial to convene a group at Faculty level.
- 4-5 volunteers were sought and names should be submitted to the Secretary.
- This group would develop a framework that departments could work to in term 2 19/20.
- It was felt strongly by committee members that Chemistry could contribute well to this work given the comprehensive nature of their response to the original data scrutinised in term 3 18/19.

**ACTIONS:**

- 1) LH to convey SEMEC's strong support for the WRAP report recommendations to the PVC for Education
- 2) All members to convey names of any volunteers for the Graduate Outcomes Data Framework Group to LH

**Chair's Business****007 a Education Strategy**

The committee received 007.SEMEC.19-20; related discussion was held under Strategic Item 008.

**007 b Course and Module Approval**

The committee received a verbal update with key points as follows:

- Systems went live in September.
- Work was ongoing to populate them: all module data held by departments had been input; course data input was nearing completion.
- Departments were being asked to validate what had been input and were now being asked to create missing MA1s.
- The data would be used to create a module catalogue which departments could then use to populate web pages rather than manually duplicating data.

The key points of the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The Chair noted there seemed to be 5 types of submission being put through the system: new modules for 20/21, revisions for 20/21, modules being populated where the department previously held no MA1, modules being validated by departments, and actual late changes for 19/20; due to dates of change being put into the system and its automation of the late review process, more of these than necessary were coming through to the Chair for late review.
- Members raised concerns about the number of notifications of submission for review, submission for departmental review, submission for late review, and coding, which were being received by system users as a result of the validation process.
- Members from several departments raised concerns about the deadlines given for validation to be completed, given the time of year and the workload in departments.
- The member from Chemistry raised the concern that a course proposal submission was currently being delayed because they had to wait for the modules involved to have been validated, approved and coded, before they could share them as part of the course proposal; Engineering reported a similar situation.
- The member from WMS raised a strong concern that actual review and submission of revisions to existing modules was being delayed by the validation process; it was not possible to work on revisions to a module until it had been validated.
- The Chair agreed to follow this up personally as issues were clearly widespread.

**ACTION:** DD to follow up on the concerns raised at SEMEC over the Course and Module Approval Systems roll-out

007 c	<p><b>Peer Dialogue</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal update to the effect that the Peer Observation consultation (renamed Peer Dialogue) would be rolled out University wide, although the minute from the last meeting indicated it was likely that the majority of departments of the Faculty were compliant already.</p>
007 d	<p><b>Dyson Degree Awarding Powers</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal update to the effect that Dyson had applied for degree awarding powers (noting the QAA had not yet agreed but there would be a reapplication); the member from WMG clarified that it was not yet clear what level of degree awarding powers Dyson would receive initially and that WMG would continue to support the course at least until Dyson had full level 6 powers.</p>
<b>Strategic Item</b>	
008	<p><b>Sharing Good Practice in Teaching</b></p> <p>The key points of the discussion and suggestions were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Faculty could reinstitute the termly showcases it used to hold.</li> <li>• Task-and-finish groups could be set up to feed into themes for showcases.</li> <li>• The Faculty should take care not to neglect use of existing mechanisms (e.g. WIHEA learning circles) and should promote the use of those mechanisms notwithstanding any new initiatives.</li> <li>• It would be important to consider what could be good practice in the future rather than solely focussing on what good practice was taking place in the present.</li> <li>• It could be beneficial to establish champions of good practice within departments who could influence their department and act as a key contact.</li> <li>• Formation of a more formal network for good practice sharing could be beneficial; members reported that they might talk with colleagues from other departments where a relationship was pre-existing, but a formal network would allow for more opportunities.</li> <li>• It might be beneficial to seek input from SSLCs as to what is felt by students to be good practice; this as an initial step should not be as burdensome to staff workload.</li> <li>• The Student Engagement Coordinator (also from WMG) offered to discuss this wider faculty-level interest at a forthcoming WMG visit from the PVC for Education and Academic Director of Employability and Skills, which was due to take place in November.</li> <li>• One student member queried whether University committee minutes were generally accessible to students.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) DD and LH to consider further ways to introduce good practice sharing into SEMEC both in and out of meetings</li> <li>2) LH to seek clarity over availability of committee minutes to students</li> </ol>
<b>Main Section</b>	
009	<p><b>Warwick Core Skills</b></p> <p>The committee received 009.SEMEC.19-20 and the key points of the discussion were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A query as to whether this was to result in a mapping exercise; PT confirmed it would but that students would make a first attempt at that mapping; there was further discussion around this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engineering raised a concern that academics should be involved in this mapping process since they already undertake similar exercises with PSRBs (students not having as much experience of such exercises).</li> <li>○ Engineering were also concerned that this could be duplication of work that has already been done for these PSRBs.</li> <li>○ It was generally agreed that this exercise would be critical for courses that do not have PSRB accreditation, but some members felt it should be exempt to courses which are accredited.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PT emphasized a belief that the skills would already be present in courses and therefore this should be a simple confirmation exercise; this was more about identifying whether students were conscious of the skills they were obtaining.</li> <li>● Noted there is a placeholder for this in the course/module approval system.</li> <li>● Clarified that PT had been working with SU Sabbatical Officers for student input into this; there had been a number of focus groups and ambassadors would be used to further the consultation.</li> <li>● AB offered to pass this through the Widening Participation student network as this would ensure consultation by a fuller representation of student body.</li> <li>● Point 4 on communications – use of word ‘seniority’ might better be replaced with ‘expertise’ as it was felt to be a problematic term (PGR student representative).</li> <li>● The Chair encouraged participation in this consultation, especially regarding the concerns raised around pre-existing comprehensive skill-mapping with respect to PSRB accreditation.</li> </ul>
010	<p><b>Examination Communication</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal update and the key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There have been two strands of the project, around exam communication, and around ensuring efficient timely exam timetable construction (owned by Kim Eccleston, the Head of Admissions).</li> <li>● There was an urgency to ensure these strands would be resolved for summer 2020.</li> <li>● The Dean of Students has been meeting with outgoing and incoming Sabbatical Officers over summer, as well as with SSLC chairs; academic departments had also been contacted to feed in (noted that although the response deadline was last week, responses would still be appreciated if this deadline had been missed).</li> <li>● Clarified that the SSLC chairs had submitted a report in summer 2019 and that a subset of these chairs were initially consulted in response to that report, as well as then being consulted on the wider issues.</li> <li>● The Dean of Students had also shared the questions sent to academic departments with these SSLC chairs.</li> </ul>
011	<p><b>Postgraduate Business</b></p> <p>The committee received 011.SEMEC.19-20 and the key points of the discussion were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● WMS had a number of scholarships ring-fenced (including Chancellor’s International Scholarships and WCPRS) in 18/19 with the faculty merger, but would be considered as part of a faculty total in 19/20 with no specific number of scholarships set aside.</li> <li>● For 19/20 the pencilled deadline for WCPRS applications for the faculty was 3 Feb 2020 but further details would be circulated when available.</li> </ul> <p>The committee received a further verbal report with the following key points and discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Graduate School had been renamed the Doctoral College, with a refined remit of PGR education; there was a PGT Strategy Working Group considering PGT arrangements, with Debbie Marais (WMS) and Stuart Allen (SLS) representing the Faculty of SEM; it was clarified by email correspondence after the meeting that this group also had student representation as the SU Postgraduate Sabbatical Officer was a member.</li> <li>● The Doctoral College would handle annual reviews of PGR education ongoing, and SEMEC would receive a report in term 2 for consideration.</li> <li>● The Doctoral College was to move towards involvement in the approval of PhD programmes.</li> <li>● The Chair noted the importance of ensuring that Faculty representatives have a key into the Faculty committees.</li> <li>● Chemistry reported that skills training within the faculty was going through an accreditation process; noted that a recent analysis had indicated that students who had gone through this training were 10% more likely to find work.</li> <li>● SLS raised a concern that SEMEC appears to consider PG business in one item (on account of how the regular agenda is constructed) whereas it should be represented and considered within all items.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <p>1) MW to finalise the WCPRS process for the faculty.</p>
012	<p><b>Widening Participation</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal report and presentation and the key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a WP Coordinator and forum for each faculty, working to facilitate good practice in this area across the faculty.</li> <li>• There is a WP Committee from which AB will be able to share updates.</li> <li>• There is a staff network for any staff who want to be involved in this area, and a student network for self-identifying WP students; there is a particular interest in encouraging WP students to get more involved in SSLCs.</li> <li>• The University of Warwick has submitted an Access and Participation Plan to the Office for Students.</li> <li>• Low Participation Neighbourhoods are a key factor in WP and one which the government wishes to promote; one of our targets is to move our ratio of quintile 5: quintile 1 from 7.5:1 to 3:1.</li> <li>• Warwick Scholars Programme is an ongoing programme whereby WP students get various support/discounts from fees if they accept a Warwick offer. 33 schools within 25 miles of the University are involved.</li> <li>• An individualised data set per department will be sent out soon to allow HODs and named departmental WP contacts to scrutinise departmental data.</li> <li>• AB is anticipating a faculty event within British Science Week in March 2020.</li> <li>• AB would be very happy to support departments before and after TEG meetings in the area of WP.</li> </ul> <p>The following key points came out of further discussion and questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted that although non-continuation data could suggest WP students were over-represented, a recent workshop gave indication this was not the case; it is always important to scrutinize individual data.</li> <li>• AB confirmed that the 5 year plan covers a desire to investigate PGT and PGR Widening Participation, as it was rightly noted by members that there had often been a focus solely on UG in this area.</li> <li>• WMG queried whether non-UCAS students would be factored into the data (such as part time or Degree Apprentices); AB answered that this can be scrutinized if details can be passed over.</li> <li>• AB confirmed that it would be possible to identify which schools students came from within the data analysis (in response to a query from WMG as to how much the WMG Academy was represented in the data).</li> <li>• AB confirmed a willingness to support SLS in their investigations into implementing an Inspire programme as it was thought this could be beneficial at Faculty level.</li> </ul>
013	<p><b>Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee (taken after 006)</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal update and the key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEEC would henceforth be sharing all minutes and papers with SEMEC.</li> <li>• SLEEC felt that the Student Engagement Coordinator (SEC) roles ought to be full members of Faculty Education Committees rather than 'in attendance'; a formal recommendation could be expected.</li> <li>• At the recent meeting of SLEEC they had reviewed NSS and PTES, set up a sub-group for ethics of analytics of student data, reviewed academic representation, and discussed the role of the SECs.</li> </ul>
014	<p><b>Academic Representation SU/University Partnership Agreement</b></p> <p>The committee received and noted 014.SEMEC.19-20.</p>
015	<p><b>National Student Survey Results 2019</b></p> <p>The committee received and noted 015.SEMEC.19-20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PGR student rep raised a concern about the opening of the paper seeming to trivialise the student body's experience through 18/19 of the group chat incident and the exams timetabling issues: the specific</li> </ul>

	quotation was “despite a challenging year for student sentiment on campus” in the first page of the main report (after the cover sheet).
016	<p><b>Peer Dialogue</b></p> <p>The committee received and noted 016.SEMEC.19-20</p>
017	<p><b>Appeals in Progress</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal report and the key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23 academic appeals have been submitted by students required to withdraw from their studies, ten of whom are intermediate year (year 2), several of whom are WMG students on the AEP.</li> <li>• This marks a shift from previous years where the largest number of appeals were from first year Engineering students, which could be due to the availability of a non-accredited BSc in Engineering which is a transfer option to students who fail year 1.</li> </ul>
018	<p><b>Audit of Departmental Quality Assurance Processes for Module Approval</b></p> <p>The committee received 018.SEMEC.19-20 and approved the departmental QA processes, noting that it was not yet known whether this regular item would still be required since the introduction of the new approval systems.</p>
019	<p><b>Termly Timeliness of Feedback Report</b></p> <p>The committee received 019a.SEMEC.19-20 and 019b.SEMEC.19-20 and the key points of the discussion were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 9/12 cases (WMG report UG and PG separately, and WMG report MBCHB and PGT separately) 100% compliance had been maintained or rates had improved; in the 3 cases where rates of compliance had decreased, in one case the reduction was by only 1%, and in another it was due to one out of three reported modules not being compliant so the impact on compliance was larger than where there was a wider range of modules to assess.</li> <li>• The number of modules running in departments was usually lower in term 3, hence the low numbers to be reported on (in response to a query from the UG student representative).</li> <li>• WMS queried how necessary it was to report on compliance where a specific student’s feedback was late because their submission was late (due to extension or otherwise).</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> LH to investigate and respond separately to WMS over the requirement for reporting on compliance with respect to late-submitting students.</p>
020	<p><b>Annual Plagiarism Report</b></p> <p>The committee received 020.SEMEC.19-20 and the key points of the discussion were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer Science figures needed to be checked as 50 did not seem plausible.</li> <li>• Chemistry figures needed to be checked as the members from Chemistry did not believe the 0 figure to be accurate, the return having been received from their administrative team.</li> <li>• It was suggested that the digest report should still split out the different outcomes rather than solely reporting on cases investigated; similarly clarity over the size of department would be required to contextualize the data.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) LH to liaise with Computer Science and Chemistry members to clarify the accuracy of their annual plagiarism reports.</li> <li>2) LH to adjust the next digest report for this annual summary to break down the different outcomes and to contextualise the departmental statistics by their number of live students (or a similar metric to be determined).</li> </ol>

021	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The member from Chemistry raised a concern over mock TEF data having included temporarily withdrawn students within non-continuation statistics; there was a need to understand if this was by design since it would need to feed into TEF submissions (Chemistry felt that such students should not be included). LH confirmed that SPA were looking into this as a known issue.</li> <li>WMS agreed to a request to share their MBChB FYBoE data for future First Year Board of Examiners (FYBoE) reports (item 022 below the line).</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> LH to ensure WMS are asked for FYBoE data for the MBChB to form part of future FYBoE reports</p>
<b>Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</b>	
022	<p><b>First Year Board of Examiners 2018-19</b></p> <p>The committee received and noted 022.SEMEC.19-20.</p>
023	<p><b>Warwick Education Conference 2020: SAVE THE DATE</b></p> <p>The committee noted that the conference would be held on 12 May, with pre-conference workshops held on 11 May. All details, including a call for contributions would be confirmed later in term 1.</p>
<b>Next meeting: 11.00 THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 2020, COUNCIL CHAMBER, SENATE HOUSE</b>	

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	DECISION/ACTION	LEAD AND DUE DATE	STATUS
005	<p>LH to make the following amendments to membership and TOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of specified areas of representation from UG student members</li> <li>Removal of reference to phase 2 of new SITS workflow pertaining to module approval</li> <li>Amendment of “best practice” to “good practice”</li> </ul>	LH, end of term 1	
006	LH to convey SEMEC’s strong support for the WRAP report recommendations to the PVC for Education	LH, end of term 1	
	All members to convey names of any volunteers for the Graduate Outcomes Data Framework Group to LH	LH, end of term 1	
007b	DD to follow up on the concerns raised at SEMEC over the Course and Module Approval Systems roll-out	DD, end of term 1	
008	DD and LH to consider further ways to introduce good practice sharing into SEMEC both in and out of meetings	DD, end of term 1	
	LH to seek clarity over availability of committee minutes to students	LH, end of term 1	Completed
011	MW to finalise the WCPRS process for the faculty.	MW, end of term 1	
019	LH to investigate and respond separately to WMS over the requirement for reporting on compliance with respect to late-submitting students.	LH, end of term 1	
020	LH to liaise with Computer Science and Chemistry members to clarify the accuracy of their annual plagiarism reports.	LH, end of term 1	Completed
	LH to adjust the next digest report for the annual plagiarism reports to break down the different outcomes and to contextualise the departmental statistics by their number of live students (or a similar metric to be determined).	LH, end of term 1	

021	LH to ensure WMS are asked for FYBoE data for the MBChB to form part of future FYBoE reports	LH, end of term 2	
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### Attainment data reporting framework

1. Each department should receive the raw data and a summary analysis (in tables, graphs format) for their own department and for the Faculty as a whole (for benchmarking).
2. Due to low numbers in most departments, and to allow for comparison across departments and the faculty, a rolling 5-year averages should be used for the analysis. Where sufficient data is available, departments might wish to perform analysis year-on-year using the raw data provided.
3. Where numbers are not sufficient (<10) pooled categories can be used for the analysis and the responses e.g. combining different ethnic backgrounds into one BAME category
4. Each department response should include:
  - a. Comments on each of the sets of data to whether a significant differences between graduate outcomes for one (or more) group or category can be identified.
  - b. Comments on differences (if any) to the overall faculty data
  - c. Action points need to address any identified anomalies, these can be e.g. a further investigation into whether there is an attainment gap and/or action to correct the issue.
  - d. Action points should address whether additional efforts are needed to increase diversity across the student body in each department (Faculty data can be used as a benchmark here).
  - e. In years 2 and onwards, Departments need to report back on progress of the actions from the previous report (note that the HESA data might not reflect any changes resulting from those action for several years). Where department internal data is available on each cohort's performance year-on-year, this can be used to demonstrate impact.
  - f. Good practice resulting from these reports and the actions undertaken should be shared between departments and faculties.

### Example format of summary plots and tables (provided to department by the centre):

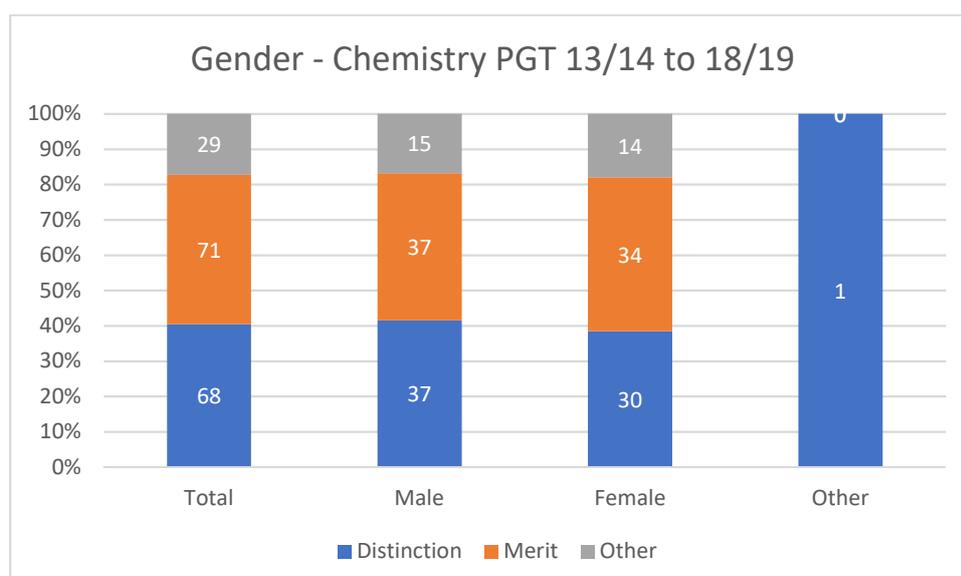


Figure 1. Example of Gender data for PGT.

Note. Each category is normalised to 100%, each column should show the actual number of students (not just the percentage).

Table 1. Example of tabulated data. Gender, Chemistry PGT

Gender\Degree outcome	Distinction	Merit	Other
Male	37	37	15
Female	30	34	14
Other	1	0	0
Total	68	71	29

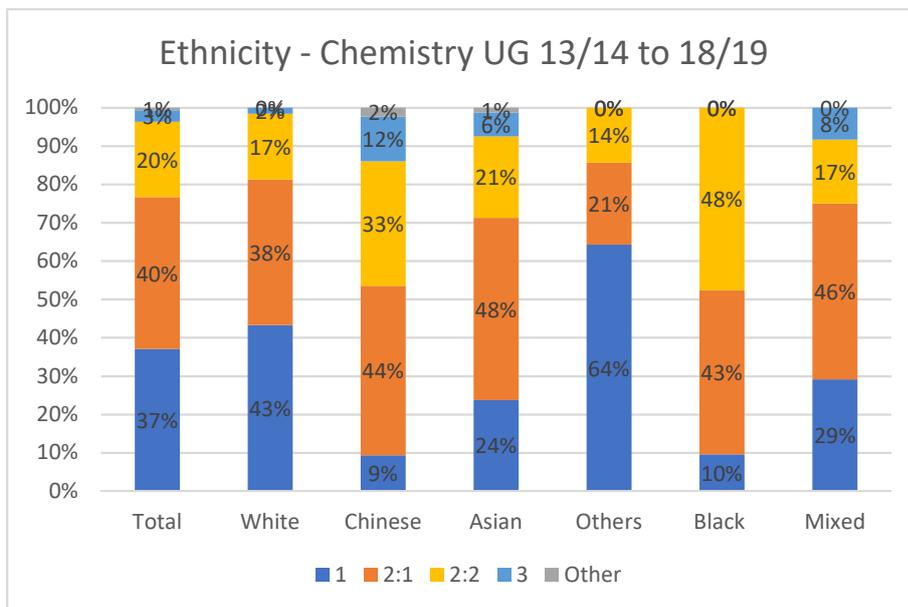


Figure 2. Example of Ethnic background data. Chemistry UG.

Note, actual number of students are missing in the plot above, not allowing to easily determine if the differences between categories are significant, or just caused by a low student numbers.

Where numbers are not sufficient for analysis, categories should be combined e.g.:

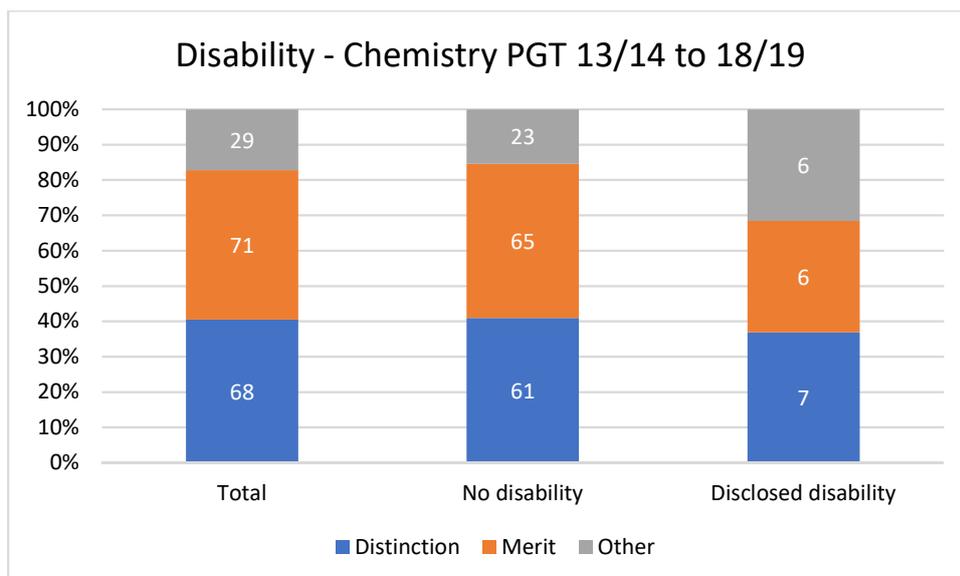


Figure 3. Example of disability data, Chemistry PGT. Different disclosed disabilities were combined into a single category.

Where additional trends in the data are identified (e.g. by cross correlation between different categories) this should be reported additionally e.g.

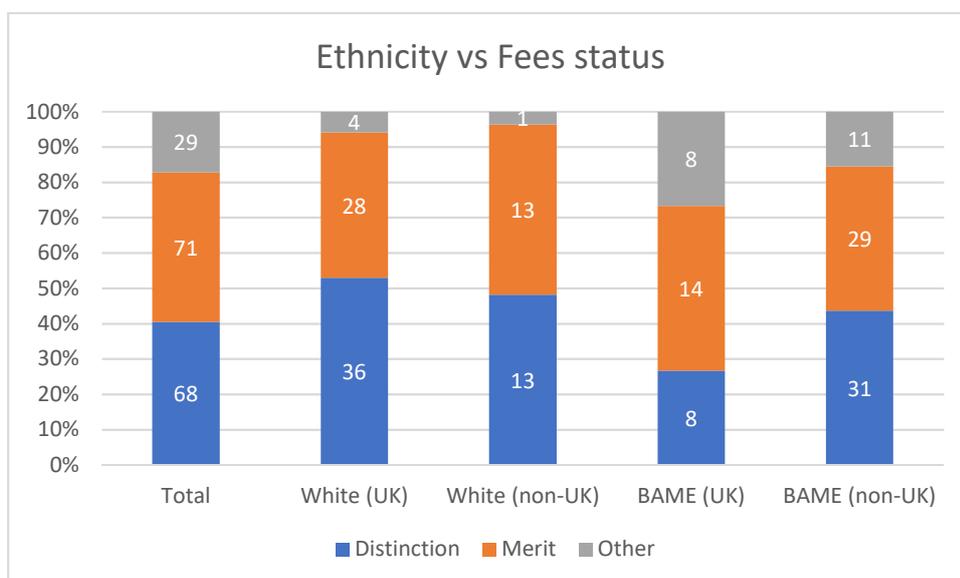


Figure 4. Example of cross correlation between ethnic background and fee status data.

Dr Nikola Chmel  
Department of Chemistry  
January 2020

## Report to Science, Engineering and Medicine Education Committee

Reference:	032.SEMEC.19-20	Report classification:	Open
<b>Meeting Date</b>	16 January 2020		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Outcomes from Teaching Excellence Group Engagements 2019-20</b>		
<b>Author / Presenter</b>	Dan Derricott, Assistant Registrar, Education Policy & Quality Katharine Stratford, Administrative Officer, Education Policy & Quality Anna Dunkley, Project Support Officer, Education Policy & Quality		
<b>Purpose of Report</b>		Tick all that apply ✓	
To provide assurance	✓	To obtain approval	
Regulatory requirement		To highlight an emerging risk or issue	
To canvas opinion		For information	✓
To provide advice		To highlight student or staff experience	✓
<b>University Strategy</b>			
Research		Education	✓
Innovation		Inclusion	
Regional Leadership		Internationalisation	
<p>The University recently completed the second round of autumn term Teaching Excellence Group (TEG) meetings with each academic department delivering undergraduate or postgraduate taught courses. This report summarises the findings from those meetings in order to provide insight into the cross-cutting themes emerging from work to enhance the student learning experience in different disciplinary contexts.</p> <p>Additionally, the report details initial findings from an evaluation of the TEG process from different perspectives – including 80+ staff and students who provided feedback – and seeks the Committee’s advice on how TEG should evolve going forward.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>The Committee is invited to <u>consider</u> the thematic findings arising from TEG meetings and how its own business could be aligned to support further progress in these areas.</p> <p>The Committee is invited to <u>consider</u> how the TEG process has evolved this year and advise Education Committee on priorities for its future development.</p>		

Route Map for this Report			
Committee	Date	Reference	Action Requested/Taken
AQSC	14 January 2020		
SLEEC	6 February 2020		
AEC	15 January 2020		
SEMEC	16 January 2020		
EFSS	16 January 2020		
Education Committee	24 February 2020		

## **Outcomes from Teaching Excellence Group (TEG) Engagements 2019-20**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching Excellence Group (TEG) meetings have been designed as a central part of the University's approach to assuring and enhancing the quality of its undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision (non-collaborative). TEG aims to balance its dual purpose of providing assurance that academic standards are being maintained and of encouraging continuous improvement in the quality of the student learning experience, and subsequently in student outcomes. While TEG will always dive into course-level, and sometimes module-level data, the focus is predominantly on management, leadership and strategy at the departmental level, and this is considered in the context of the University's Education Strategy.

The second year of TEG meetings with 34 academic departments ran through October, November and the first week of December 2019. All but two meetings ran within a seven week window in October and November as planned. In total, over 330+ staff and students were involved in the TEG meetings and student consultation events that preceded them. Each meeting concluded by agreeing a small number of priorities for enhancement, which indicate where the academic department will need to focus its energy over the coming year.

In concluding a round of TEG meetings, the University is well-placed to look laterally at the themes and lessons learnt arising across academic departments. This report draws that insight to reflect back to academic departments, in order to share practice, and to inform the work of committees and senior leaders at faculty- and university-level.

Given the considerable undertaking to deliver TEG, including the cost of colleagues' time in preparing for and attending the meetings, it is also timely to evaluate the extent to which TEG is fulfilling its purpose and operating effectively. This report collates the views of over 100 staff and student colleagues who completed questionnaires or took part in roundtable discussions about the TEG process. These are presented with limited commentary for consideration by committees in order to stimulate further feedback on TEG and inform its continued development. Plans for the next round of TEG will be presented to AQSC and Education Committee for approval later in the academic year.

### **THEMES ARISING FROM TEG MEETINGS**

The contents of the 33 reports that had been drafted by the end of the first term have been collated, tagged and analysed thematically, and the most common themes are detailed below. Nine of the reports were still drafts and with the department for comment, but they have been included on the assumption that while the nuance may change, the substance of most reports remains unchanged.

#### **Student engagement**

The first substantive item on the agenda in each meeting focused on the department's use of and response to feedback from students, including that received through NSS and PTES in 2019. The prevailing themes in these discussions related to the way in which students are engaged in enhancing the quality of their learning experience and the way in which the feedback loop is closed, with most departments recognising that both still need work.

Discussions about the nature of students' engagement in quality enhancement work have moved on since last year. In all but a small number of departments, there is an appreciation of the need to complement or evolve existing consultative approaches to student engagement with a model based on partnership and collaboration, not just in identifying problems but also in developing and

implementing solutions. Many departments could cite examples of how specific projects had achieved this over the last year and are now **looking to develop this further into a culture that underpinned day-to-day working in the department**. There is a widespread recognition that this work is neither easy or a quick win but rather it requires a planned and sustained effort, which was felt to be easier when starting afresh with a new cohort rather than when trying to change the way that students in later years viewed the department.

A number of the reports discussed this work in tandem with the role and focus of the Director of Student Experience where such a role exists. Where a DSEP has recently been recruited or is a desired addition to the department's senior team, the rationale typically includes increasing capacity for engaging with student feedback. However, the reports also cite DSEPs as leading the delivery of several other major enhancement areas (e.g. employability, academic skills, student outcomes, decolonising the curriculum and Welcome). Some panels explored the difference between **DSEPs as leaders who coordinated a department-wide approach** to, for example, student engagement and DSEPs as teaching-focused colleagues who were relied upon to 'do' all of the student experience work. Life Sciences and PAIS were noted as having a particularly strong approach to student engagement which was led by, rather than wholly delivered by, their DSEP. Similarly, in other departments without a dedicated DSEP role – such as CAL, Film and TV, Theatre and SMLC (Hispanic Studies) – work to engage students as partners has been led by senior staff but owned and delivered as a team-wide effort.

A small number of departments **conflated the challenge of engaging students in quality enhancement with the challenge of improving communications and information provision** to students (e.g. Moodle provision, information about placements, celebrating student and staff successes). There is a relationship between the two: having sound course organisation in place is important for building students' trust and confidence in the department, and both will have an impact on the sense of community that students feel in the department. However, they are distinct issues and the development of partnership working goes above and beyond communicating more effectively with students.

### **Successful Student Outcomes for All**

The first of two thematic items to feature on the agendas of all TEG meetings this year focused on gaps between the progression and attainment of students in different demographic groups where gaps are known to exist, as already identified in the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP). These demographic groups related to participation in HE (POLAR Q1 vs. Q5), ethnicity (Black students compared to White students), disability and age (Mature vs. Young).

For all but a few departments, the discussions highlighted a common understanding that such gaps did exist across the University and that these may be replicated within the department. The small sample sizes limited the usefulness of the data on these gaps when broken down by department, however, the discussion in most TEG meetings was productive in exploring the potential causes and consequences of such gaps.

The nature of the discussion was exploratory and the focus therefore varied considerably between departments, albeit there were still some common themes. Most notably, the majority of departments could talk more confidently about their investment (time and/or money) in improving access and diversifying their intakes than they could about their strategies for ensuring parity of outcomes for students once they were at Warwick and in the department. There was a tendency for the discussion to start on issues of access and intake, and a significant proportion of the related content in reports focused on this rather than issues of progression and attainment. There was also a much stronger focus in the reports on students in lower POLAR quintiles (WP students) than there was on students in other demographic groups. These conclusions do not reveal anything new but simply underline the current state of play at Warwick whereby there has been substantial progress on improving access for students from different socio-economic backgrounds and that **the focus is**

**only just starting to broaden to consider the whole student lifecycle** and different demographic groups.

The most advanced example of work on the broader lifecycle is itself still in the early stages. This is the work underway in several departments to **address the attainment/awarding gap for Black students**, including through work to decolonise the curriculum. In some departments (including Chemistry, Economics, WBS and WMS), this resulted from analysis of departmental data on the attainment of students by ethnicity at various levels of aggregation (such as module, year and courses). In others, the work has been triggered by cross-departmental work in this space (most notably the WIHEA Learning Circle on Anti-Racist Pedagogy and the Students' Union Decolonising Project), external influences (e.g. Professor Jacqueline Stevenson's keynote at the 2018 Education Conference) or a mixture of these. The outputs of this work thus far have focused on investigating and building understanding amongst staff and students of the contributing factors and possible solutions. In some departments, this has already informed work to systematically decolonise the curriculum and embed inclusive design as part of a wider curriculum review (e.g. History, Theatre and Law). However, most of the departments engaged with these issues continue to need to invest time in engaging broader groups of colleagues and unpicking the perceived tensions (e.g. between being inclusive and maintaining academic rigour). Furthermore, there are a number of departments still to fully commit and make tangible progress in this area.

TEG has confirmed that momentum with this work has increased considerably over the last year, largely with support and leadership from WIHEA and the Students' Union, and that the knowledge base within the University has grown too. It may be timely for further faculty- and university-level support to engage some of the remaining departments in order to broaden the range of disciplinary perspectives (especially in the physical and mathematical sciences) to ensure the impact of the work is felt by students across the University.

In a similar way to the discussions on student engagement, TEG meetings in a number of departments explored **how leadership was provided for work to ensure successful student outcomes** (as a distinct activity from leading recruitment, admissions and WP). As most departments are still exploring these issues, few departments have formal roles or structures with a clear focus on these matters. Instead, responsibility implicitly rests with a senior leader in the department (usually the Director of Education, Director of Undergraduate Studies or DSEP) by default as part of the broader role. It may be appropriate for Directors of Education to have accountability for this work as many will also be leading and can make the most of curriculum reviews over the coming years. However, the University is now subject to an unprecedented increase in accountability by the Office for Students for the way in which the gaps in progression and attainment are reduced or closed by 2025, as set out in the APP targets. This will require a step-change internally to ensure that we are moving at pace and delivering parity for our students, which in turn may warrant a more structured approach to leading this work across departments.

The purpose of including the Successful Student Outcomes for All theme this year was to begin a different kind of conversation about student outcomes and WP which systematically engaged all academic departments. The challenge now is to sustain this conversation, capture evidence of 'what works', and inform and inspire practice. As a first step, the Executive Office, Education Policy and Quality, and Widening Participation and Outreach are jointly organising a post-TEG workshop for staff across departments to share practice and lessons learnt from these thematic discussions, and to explore different options for leading and organising this work in departments going forward.

## **Employability**

The second thematic item focused on students' early engagement with the development of their employability. TEG meetings took place shortly after departments had developed Employability Plans with their Careers Consultant and during the time in which the proposed Warwick Core Skills were being consulted on. As such, many of the discussions focused on these aspects. Furthermore,

subject-level TEF submissions had been drafted by those departments with undergraduate provision, including an evaluative section on the employment outcomes for their graduates.

All departments were able to report on work underway over the last year to further enhance their work on employability and in most cases, this was based on a more robust understanding of recent employment outcomes as detailed in pilot TEF metrics, including the differences between demographic groups. Common themes included work to articulate pathways through courses that more explicitly align to certain careers, the introduction of placement modules as additional options, the engagement of alumni in supporting current students, the evolution of existing careers events and networks to cover a wider range of professions, and the diversification of assessment methods to test a wider range of skills.

Looking forward, the focus and ambition of Employability Plans varied considerably across departments. Actions featuring multiple departments' plans include highlighting or badging the skills students are already developing, working with a wider range of alumni to share their valuable experiences, and fully embedding a planned approach through curricula (e.g. Film & TV, Sociology).

Departments value the subject-specific support offered by Careers Consultants and some fund additional time allocations to enable them to progress employability further. The University's Employability Strategy and the recent support from Student Opportunity to produce Employability Plans for each department has increased the visibility and priority of work to develop student employability. Most departments have a named academic lead – typically the Director of Education or DSEP – and an increasing number now have additional professional services support in the form of Placements Officers. Nonetheless, there was strong support from departments for central placements support, including to the opportunity it brought to offer non-subject specific placements. This was recognised as an area where a joined-up, faculty- or university-wide approach would add significant value in a currently challenging area.

### **Curriculum Review**

Several departments reported that they had recently undertaken systematic reviews of their undergraduate curricula to either improve a specific aspect (e.g. diversity of assessment methods) or more fundamentally refresh their offer (including History and Law). Many others noted that they intended to pursue a similar approach, partly in response to the University's Review of Assessment and the revised Credit and Module Framework, including where they already operated a 15/30 credit model but delivered joint courses with departments not working within such a model. Several departments are taking the opportunity to go beyond aligning with new university policy by more holistically rethinking and refreshing their portfolios.

### **Other themes**

The momentum for a better approach to **personal tutoring** continues to build, with more systematic processes being established and additional coordination roles created. Large student loads for Personal Tutors have been unavoidable in some departments however (e.g. 1:28 in Economics), which restricts the breadth of support that can be offered, including employability skills. Allocating joint honours students to a tutor with course-specific knowledge has improved the student experience with tailored guidance in a number of departments. Good practice was identified in Psychology, which developed a tiered scheme to offer more intensive support to those students who need it, and in Sociology, which has established a pastoral support team to manage complex cases.

The range of joint honours courses and opportunities for interdisciplinary study is expanding and becoming more complex. This requires robust **inter-departmental collaboration**, to ensure consistency in the student experience where appropriate and expectation management where differences are valuable. With more students taking modules outside their home department, a number of TEG panels challenged departments to consider the experience of students from other home departments studying their optional modules. While some departments work very well

together, others find interdisciplinarity challenging and would benefit from the sharing of good practice, as well as the ability to interrogate disaggregated data for these groups of students.

Where **peer dialogue on teaching** already operated, these systems are being aligned to the new university-wide policy, and departments that did not have any prior scheme in place are now working to achieve buy-in from staff and develop their local schemes. All departments are aware of the expectations and timescale to implement and publish their schemes by January 2020.

**Space and timetabling** issues continue to impact departments in a number of ways, with several TEG panels concluding that further support was needed from the University to resolve specific challenges. Space Management and Timetabling are already aware of most cases, however they are not easily resolved without knock-on effects for other departments. Some departments (e.g. Chemistry, Economics) have insufficient or no social/study space for students, which limits the sense of student community and belonging in the department, which in turn exacerbates the issues of student engagement highlighted above. The supply of large teaching spaces is not keeping pace with growing student numbers driven by the University's size and shape ambitions (e.g. Computer Science, WMS and Mathematics). There is also a growing demand for more flexible learning spaces that enable a variety of delivery styles such as small-group teaching (Cross Faculty, Law) and innovative teaching, and a wider range of assessment types such as online exams (SMLC).

**Recommendation:** The Committee is invited to consider the thematic findings arising from TEG meetings and how its own business could be aligned to support further progress in these areas.

## EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS

Upon concluding the second round of TEG, an evaluation of the process has been undertaken to assess the extent to which it has fulfilled its purpose and improved its effectiveness. This has been informed by two surveys – one completed by 18 chairs and panel members, and one by 69 staff and students who attended their department's TEG meeting. Furthermore, the evaluation has been informed by separate roundtable discussions with seven panel chairs and ten EPQ staff who supported the meetings, and by the reflections of the core project team in EPQ responsible for planning and delivering TEG.

The evaluation addresses a number of areas that Education Committee had, in June 2019, asked that this most recent round of meetings include a focus on, based on the lessons learnt from the first round in 2018-19:

- **Delivering all meetings earlier in the first term to enable a more timely consideration of data and to inform the Autumn Review meeting of the Academic Resourcing Committee.**
- **Widening the pool of Chairs and EPQ staff delivering meetings while maintaining consistency.**

The second year of TEG meetings with 34 academic departments ran through October, November and the first week of December – all before the ARC Autumn Review meeting. All but two meetings ran within a seven week window in October and November as originally planned.

The 34 panels drew upon a total pool of 80 chairs and panel members, including 11 EPQ staff who both joined panels and serviced meetings, with panels typically comprising four to six members. 213 staff and student colleagues attended TEG meetings on behalf of their department. When taking into account that some staff were both on panels and in their department's meeting, a total of 276 staff and students were involved in the TEG meetings. A further 63 students attended consultation events or focus groups in advance of the TEG meeting meaning that in total, TEG involved 330+ people in its consideration of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.

- **Evolving the discussions to focus on the progress made in the intervening period, rather than repeating the same conversations from last year, including through the introduction of themes.**

All departments arrived at their TEG meeting ready to report on the progress made towards the priorities for enhancement agreed last year. In most cases, good progress had been made towards the highest priorities. Where the priority is longer-term and work continues through this year or where the TEG panel felt that further progress was needed, these priorities were carried forward.

Follow up meetings were held with nine departments last academic year. Just five of these have been asked to meet their TEG panel for a follow up meeting this year, with a further department requiring a follow up meeting for the first time and two departments asked to submit a brief written update on progress in lieu of a face-to-face meeting.

Two thematic agenda items were included in all TEG meetings this year: Successful Student Outcomes for All and Early Engagement with Employability. There was considerably less discussion about the Teaching Excellence Framework than last year and similarly, there was less general discussion about a department's approach to management, governance and quality assurance where this was clarified in last year's meeting and report.

The supporting papers and data were one of the less effective elements of TEG this year. A small number of papers – namely survey results and the corresponding action plan, and the department's employability plan – were well used to inform focused discussions on these areas. However, in contrast, feedback on data about student outcomes for different demographic groups clearly signals that further work is needed to make this useful for departments and panels. Similarly, the shortcuts taken to repurpose some External Examiner reports that had already been downloaded from the system meant that the department's response was missing. Overall, there was consensus in the feedback that the packs of papers were much larger than needed, however, there were mixed views on which papers provided useful context. Going forward, it is suggested that a smaller, core set of papers be provided for use in the meeting and that a bank of supplementary information be provided online for those attendees who find this useful and wish to 'dip in' as they prepare for the meeting.

- **Sharing draft meeting reports with attendees within one week of the meeting taking place.**

With just four EPQ colleagues servicing TEG meetings in 2018-19, there was a significant delay in the production of the reports, with some not being circulated until two to three months after the meeting. This was identified as the most important operational improvement needed for 2019-20 and as such, the team of EPQ staff supporting meetings was widened to 11 this year.

At the end of the first term in 2019-20, all but one of the 34 reports had been drafted and circulated to attendees of the meeting. 24 had been finalised following feedback from attendees with the remainder to follow shortly after the Christmas break. The target turnaround time for the production and circulation of a draft report was seven days, which was met for 15 (44%) of the reports. On average, draft reports were circulated 11 days after the meeting, which reflects a major improvement from last year.

This remains operationally challenging for EPQ staff, who service a demanding round of faculty and university committee meetings throughout the first term and, even with a larger team, are each servicing and preparing for several TEG meetings in a short space of time. In reality, several EPQ-led projects have slowed or paused through the first term (e.g. preparations for subject-level TEF and the Review of Assessment) in order to deliver TEG. On the assumption that this an accepted opportunity cost, this model can continue and will become more efficient as the team's experience and capability builds year-on-year. It is proposed that the seven-day turnaround target remains in place and that the focus next year be ensuring the majority of

reports meet this target, accepting that in a small number of cases, there will be a justifiable or unavoidable delay (e.g. staff illness).

- **Including the student Chair of the Student-Staff Liaison Committee as part of their departmental senior team that meets with the TEG Panel (at the HoD's discretion).**

Student Representatives were present at around one-third of the TEG meetings this year, which provides a useful sample to evaluate before deciding whether to make this engagement a standard feature of TEG going forward.

Of those survey respondents who had a student at their meeting, 91% of departmental representatives and 86% of panel members found it extremely or very useful. No-one said they found it not at all useful. Most of the comments relating to student reps were positive and mostly related to the importance of the student voice/perspective. The survey then asked what respondents thought about SSLC Chairs/Secretaries being invited as standard next year (TEG 2020), rather than being optional as this year. 76% of departmental representatives thought this wouldn't be problematic. Panel members were less optimistic, with 61% thinking that there would or could be reluctance from departments to do this.

- **Ensuring appropriate coverage of the PGT student learning experience in TEG meetings.**

Departments with significant PGT populations had an adapted agenda which enabled productive discussions to take place about the PGT student learning experience (namely CES, CTE, WMG, WBS and WMS). However, there was limited progress on this in the majority of departments with a more typical profile of students (large UG numbers, small PGT numbers). It is suggested that this remains a priority for improving the effectiveness of TEG going forward.

Further analysis of the feedback collected through the surveys and roundtable discussions will continue to be undertaken alongside the consideration of this paper by committees. The totality of the feedback will be used to inform proposals for the development and delivery of TEG next year.

**Recommendation:** The Committee is invited to consider how the TEG process has evolved this year and advise Education Committee on priorities for its future development.

Dan Derricott  
Assistant Registrar - Education Policy & Quality

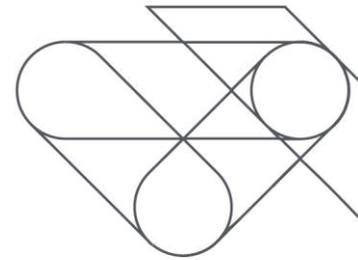
Katharine Stratford  
Administrative Officer - Education Policy & Quality

Anna Dunkley  
Project Support Officer - Education Policy & Quality

6 January 2020

Report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee				
Reference:	030-AQSC191119	Report classification:	Open	
Meeting Date	19 November 2019			
Title	Decolonisation of the Curriculum Project			
Author / Presenter	Chloe Batten, Students Union Education Officer			
Purpose of Report			Tick all that apply ✓	
To provide assurance		To obtain approval		
Regulatory requirement		To highlight an emerging risk or issue		
To canvas opinion		For information	✓	
To provide advice		To highlight student or staff experience	✓	
University Strategy				
Research		Education	✓	
Innovation		Inclusion	✓	
Regional Leadership		Internationalisation		
Equality and Diversity				
Are there any equality and diversity implications that would affect the University's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED; to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people) that should be discussed as part of this report?			Yes	✓
			No	
Summary of Report				
<p>This report presents the findings of the pilot phase (2018/2019) of The Decolonise Project at the University of Warwick. The Warwick Decolonise Project (WDP) is centred on student-led investigations around the concept of decolonising educational experience at Warwick through cross-examination of curricula, pedagogy and student experience across the institution.</p> <p>This area of work is being led through the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee (SLEEC) and is being provided to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for information.</p>				
Recommendation	The Academic Quality and Standards Committee is invited to: (a) <b>Note</b> the report			

Route Map for this Report			
Committee	Date	Reference	Action Requested/Taken
AQSC	19 Nov 2019	030-AQSC191119	To Note



**Warwick Students' Union / University of Warwick**

**Decolonise Project Pilot 2018/2019**

Project Timeline: February 2019 - July 2019

**CONTENTS:**

- i. **Executive Summary**
- ii. **Introduction and Key Recommendations**
- iii. **Background**
- iv. **Methodology**
- v. **Findings and main themes:**
  - **Employability**
  - **Collaboration (Four priority departments)**
  - **Student Engagement (Wider University Community)**
  - **The Decolonise Project – Research (Four priority departments)**
- vi. **Project overall lessons learned**
- vii. **Recommendations**
- viii. **Closing**

**APPENDICES:**

- Appendix 1:** Project Timeline & Main Tasks
- Appendix 2:** Keele University Decolonise Manifesto
- Appendix 3:** Key Stakeholders
- Appendix 4:** Appreciative Enquiry Model
- Appendix 5:** Facebook Insights
- Appendix 6:** Student Engagement Feedback
- Appendix 7:** Academic Engagement Feedback/DSEPs
- Appendix 8:** Philosophy/Collaboration
- Appendix 9:** Guardian Article (2019)
- Appendix 10:** Email/Collaboration
- Appendix 11:** National Student Survey 2019
- Appendix 12:** Wider University Engagement/Groups

**\*Note: Quotes and direct feedback from Advocates will be presented in bold typeface.**

## i. Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the pilot phase (2018/2019) of The Decolonise Project at the University of Warwick (Warwick University). The Warwick Decolonise Project (WDP) is centred on student-led investigations around the concept of decolonising educational experience at Warwick through cross-examination of curricula, pedagogy and student experience across the institution. Warwick University should be at the forefront of this work in the sector. However, findings have evidenced that despite the decolonisation of education being nationally recognised as integral to improving the experience of racially minoritized students at university, and to addressing related issues such as the Black attainment gap, this work has been viewed as a low-priority endeavour. This report makes recommendations for the University of Warwick to actively and committedly grapple with the fundamental problem-areas identified through the pilot phase, in engagement with best practice from the sector. It further recommends for the Warwick Decolonise Advocates to be supported as change agents to promote and embed a reflexive decolonial, anti-racist, and holistic approach to education at Warwick (curricula, pedagogy, student experience). While the WDP has a focus on decolonising *curricula*, it is vital to note that decolonisation work goes beyond this in its overall objective of decentring 'Western' epistemologies, in whichever forms they manifest. As a student-led project, the priorities and areas of work are in-part shaped by the needs highlighted by the Decolonise Advocates themselves.

### Key Recommendations:

- **Stronger leadership and senior buy-in:**
  - For there to be sustained conversations over a longer period of time between the Students' Union and departmental staff/champions, such as DSEs.
  - For departmental staff/champions and DSEs to encourage more input from senior management and Heads of Departments both to prevent the work stalling or becoming undone in the case of the staff champion's absence, and to provide further endorsement of the project.
  - For senior leaders in Education and Social Inclusion to endorse the work in such a way that is visible to departments, in order to provide assurance and increase confidence in the project.
- **Increased resourcing:**
  - In order to meet growing demand, and fundamental need for decolonial work to be cross-institutional, further resource is required to create resources, to employ more advocates on longer contracts
  - Collaboration with funders/SU teams to scope resources available to equip Advocates with the ability to organise and create material and events.
- **Further integration within the Students' Union:**
  - For better linking of the project with related change endeavours within the SU, for example working alongside other liberation caucuses to identify and address intersectional issues within decolonisation work.
- **For Advocates to deliver training/workshops**
  - To be delivered to departmental staff and Course Reps based on what they have learnt, inclusive of feedback gained through the project.
- **For the WDP to begin earlier in the academic year to prevent clashes with the exam season.**
- **To engage better with other HEIs and community organisations:**
  - To build relationships with organisations within the wider Warwick community

- To engage more with other HEIs who have done similar work to better understand best practice in the sector
- To hold a half or full-day event to engage these communities, share knowledge and perspectives, and to create more opportunities for dialogue about race and changing organisational culture.

## ii. Introduction

This evaluation and its recommendations are based on investigations conducted by the Decolonise Advocates during the short-term pilot phase of the Decolonise Project (**Appendix 1: Project Timeline & Main Tasks**), and centre on:

- The student experiences of the Advocates (8 out of 9 were from ethnic minority backgrounds)
- The Advocates' main aims to start a 'transparent' discourse across disciplines/departments to discuss what it means and what it takes to decolonise curricula at Warwick University
- The specialisms around everyday practices of decolonisation in higher education at Warwick University, in partnership with the four departments listed below:
  - School of Modern Languages and Cultures/Arts (SMLC)
  - Warwick Medical School
  - Philosophy
  - Psychology

The pilot phase of the Warwick Decolonise Project was funded by Warwick University's Innovation Fund subsequently being championed by the Students' Union Education Officer, with part funding support made available by the SU for the period 2018/2019.

### ***Warwick Decolonise Project Aims***

The project aimed to raise awareness about and address fundamental sector-wide issues related to the dominance of Western and Eurocentric epistemologies in HEIs, with a focus on curricula, pedagogy and student learning experience. The WDP set out to highlight and support the remedy of the erasure, appropriation and denigration of non-Western knowledge, identities and cultures that remains prevalent in British sites of education and knowledge-(re)production. Through the project, Advocates were tasked with opening up conversations with academics and facilitating discussion with students about how this is reflected in teaching and learning at Warwick. The main points of focus of these discussions were around the consistent lack of representation of black and minority ethnic groups in curricula, the decentring of non-Western knowledge when it does feature, and the ways in which racial discrimination manifests in pedagogical practice.

Key aims:

- Initiate conversations between University staff and students for the consideration of rethinking, reframing and restructuring current curriculum to be more expansive and inclusive.
- Open-up exploration to gain an understanding of how academic literacies are experienced by student groups.
- To create a space and resource for dialogue among all members of the University, in respect to what is being taught and how it frames the world for students.
- To improve communications so that staff and students are actively working together to give student voices a platform that supports a sustained collaboration, discussion and evidence-led investigations among groups here at Warwick, specifically to unify non-white students with academics and wider student bodies.

- To raise awareness of BAME student voices and how the student experience can become disempowered when not accurately represented in the scholarly arena (and its accompanying impacts on society such as hate-crime)
- To inspire and cultivate long-term approaches centred around engagement and acknowledgement of differences under conditions of respect, dignity and security at Warwick University.

### iii. Background

#### ***The Decolonise Movement: national and local***

Nationally, programmes around ‘decolonising the curriculum’ have been on the rise, providing literature that the Advocates were encouraged to engage with, such as Keele University’s manifesto, which aptly provides further understanding of the student-led drive (**Appendix 2: Keele University Decolonise Manifesto**). Further, this description from SOAS reflects the breadth and depth of this work:

*“Decolonising the curriculum’ can mean many things and is not something that happens overnight; it requires a sustained and serious commitment within the institution and across the sector. We might also remind ourselves that contestations over the politics of knowledge are as old as universities themselves, and in this sense the present student campaign is itself a manifestation of that fusty old academic tradition – to challenge received wisdom, to ask questions about society and to generate the insight needed to change the world.”* (SOAS, University of London, 2017).

Student-led initiatives such as ‘Why is my curriculum white?’ c. 2015 across several higher education institutions (UK) demonstrate an acknowledged agreement across the sector for the need to decolonise as part of higher education policy. Spearheaded by the NUS Black Students’ Campaign, initiatives towards a more inclusive education that addresses the lack of representation of the histories and perspectives (local and global) of racially minoritized communities, have culminated in the National Decolonise Network.

At Warwick, students and staff have invested time to explore positive ways on which to build on decolonisation and liberation movements. At the Student’s Union, this has largely been the result of students from ethnic minority backgrounds sharing their negative experiences of education at Warwick. The 2018/2019 Education Officer, Larissa Kennedy, in collaboration with Warwick Anti-Racism Society provided a forum for those students to articulate their frustrations through the Warwick Speak Out Campaign and resultant Student Engagement Report (2019). This report identified that ‘BAME students don’t always feel that their student experience is recognised or understood, and they also reported a lack of diversity in the University curricula’. Furthermore, Warwick SU’s Membership Services Strategic Framework (2019) also integrates the feedback from students of racially minoritized ethnicities that highlighted their negative experiences at the University of Warwick.

In this context, the pilot project was intentionally set-up to employ and empower students as Advocates of the need for decolonisation. The project’s most significant aim is to provide Warwick University’s student and staff bodies with space for theoretical reflections of decolonisation and the exchange of practical, creative and pedagogic strategies already (or not) pursued by departments and educational leaders in Warwick’s academic arena. The long-term aim of WDP beyond the scope of the pilot phase is to build collaboration and a dependable ‘transparent dialogue’ around decolonisation of curricula and pedagogy at Warwick University. This collaboration would be a student- and evidence-led approach that links research and practice, integrating theory and the practitioner, ultimately supporting educators to build a supportive learning and teaching culture which actively engages with and embeds decolonial praxis. In their roles, the Decolonise Advocates are encouraging more wider inclusive engagement across Warwick University.

### ***The University of Warwick's institutional strategies***

The purpose, aims and expected outcomes of the Warwick Decolonise Project's align with the University of Warwick's own strategies, targets and values as an institution, as well with as the Student Union's. The importance and necessity of the WDP is reflected in a range of University strategies and groups, such as, but not limited to:

- **Education Strategy**
  - Developing methods of inclusive engagement to ensure academic practices perform better for our diverse community of students; promoting success for all
  - Engaging in rigorous review of cross-sector data to establish which groups of students at Warwick achieve less well than others and learn from peers where similar students achieved better
  - Developing clear expectations for staff who teach or support learning, on ensuring a Warwick Education is inclusive and open to all
  - Engaging with student to explore how curriculum enhancement can be achieved
- **Social Inclusion Strategy**
  - Ensuring that, irrespective of background, disability, faith, gender, race and sexual orientation, all students have access to equal opportunities to thrive and progress at Warwick.
- **Widening Participation Strategy**
  - Promoting curriculum orientated, holistic and systematic approaches to address persistent attainment gaps for BAME students, students with disability and students from low socio-economic backgrounds
- **Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee (SLEEC)**
  - Overseeing strategic development of the student learning experience, learning environment and students' engagement with learning opportunities
- **WIHEA Learning Circle on Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Process in HE**
  - Informing institutional deliberations on issues of BAME student experience and attainment, as it relates to teaching and learning, and the creation of inclusive classrooms through the engagement and practice of anti-racism.

In summary, the student-led initiative of the Warwick Decolonise Project pilot provided students with a platform to work in partnership with academic departments to collaboratively improve student experience and progression. Simultaneously, it gave the students the ground to explore the emergent themes of what is involved in decolonising curriculum and pedagogy, and how such work has the potential to shape the future of educational development in HEIs across the board, positively improving student experience and closing BAME the awarding gap by redressing institutional barriers.

#### **iv. Methodology**

The research approach involved the co-evolutionary approach of Appreciative Enquiry which focuses on looking for the best in terms of its people and organisational strengths (**Appendix 4: Appreciative Enquiry Model**), it involves systematic discovery through an organisational change lens (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005).

Within groups, the Advocates used their own initiative in devising (Step One: Define Stage) the best approach to fit their methodology, utilising a combination of interviews, online surveys and observations.

It is essential to note here that focus groups were one of the main methods, alongside face-to-face interviews, that were identified and preferred by the Advocates during their induction mind-mapping session. Unfortunately given the short-term status of the pilot project and difficulty in initiating contact with all departments in the first few months of their employment, focus groups eventually proved to be difficult to take to task for all Advocates within all four departments.

Departments	Interviews	Online Surveys	Total Participants
School of Modern Languages and Cultures (SMLC)	4	24	28
Warwick Medical School	-	109	109
Philosophy	6	20	26
Psychology	4	20	24
<b>Overall Participant Engagement by Decolonise Advocates Team</b>			<b>187</b>

The best method suggested by all Advocates are focus groups and interviews as they provide space for participants to provide in-depth answers where greater clarity can be gained.

**‘interviewing participants has allowed us to clarify the terminology surrounding decolonise which many students (and staff alike) still find ambiguous and difficult to define’.**

This also provided the Advocates a platform for conversations that help participants to better understand the overarching aims of the project.

Online Surveys and observations were invariably incorporated by Advocates as a secondary preference due to the delays experienced during the ‘initiating contact with department’ phase:

**‘Given the difficulty of obtaining interviewees beyond circles already known to us, and the difficulty of establishing first contact with the department, we decided early on to incorporate a wider understanding of the university environment to our study. By having conversations with other academics, attending events relevant to the goals of decolonise, and speaking with other groups working towards decolonise, we have placed ourselves in a better position to make recommendations through this report.’**

**‘We also used the observational method as a tool within the department where possible, such as ‘sitting-in’ on the SSLC meeting in order to observe the issues which students and staff are concerned about, and to gain a better understanding of contextual factors which affect the department.’**

**‘Employing the online social survey was also a critical element of our research and gained the highest level of responses whilst also allowing for a more representative and random sample. Though the survey presented its own practical constraints, such as the potential for misinterpretation, it was a valuable tool which allowed us to take control of gaining student feedback as opposed to relying on assistance from the department. In doing this, the effective use of social media was crucial for expanding our response pool, and the attachment of a Facebook page which made our goals clear to participants helped users to engage more with the cause. Our survey was then circulated across the department to all students via email, which ensured that we maximised our chances of gaining a greater response rate from all students as opposed to those engaged with our presence on social media. Whilst all-student circulation via email is certainly the most empirically sound way of attracting un-biased responses, student response rates via email are notoriously low and the sheer volume of survey requests received by students can often be off-putting. As a result of this, the process of sharing the survey by social media can be considered very effective and is certainly a recommended strategy for future projects.’**

All Advocates shared the same reflections and responses when it came to creating and distributing their own group surveys independent to their departments (with the exception of Warwick Medical School explained under 'collaboration' later).

The Advocate Team also set-up social media platforms to gauge and raise the profile of their work amongst the Warwick student communities.

Peer engagement through social media outreach demonstrates an intellectual response from students on and off campus participating in the debate around 'Decolonising Universities', the Warwick Decolonise Project Facebook engagement averaged **304 per week** at the end of May 2019, with the highest engagement with a related post hitting **1,100 engagements** at one point (**Appendix 5: Facebook Insights**).

## v. Findings and main themes:

### 1) Employability

All the Advocates recruited on the Decolonise Project were students at Warwick University for the duration of the project, who were attracted and selected in part because of their own motivation to explore the themes and issues highlighted at the core of the project. However, as well as the main strategic aims of increasing decolonial practice within the University, a key strand of the project was on the personal development of the Advocates in line with the SU's prioritisation of the 'employability'. To this aim, the Students' Union supported the Advocates as they developed their practice and gained experience by increasing their awareness of, and engagement with, their own transferrable skills. The SU's Student Development Team offered workshops, training and guidance to the Decolonise Advocates to support their development.

Furthermore, to further teach and empower the Advocates with the required skills for the project, they participated in a 'Decolonising Education' workshop delivered by the National Union of Students' Black Students Officer, Fope Olaleye, to cover a broader area of what decolonising means and looks like from varying perspectives. These topics included:

- Engage/Challenge/Examine
- 5-phases of the Decolonisation Process by Poka Laenui
- Debates around Decolonisation versus Diversity
- Looking at the differences between Symptoms and Causes
- Institutionalism
- Intersectionality
- Cognitive Dissonance
- Social Transformation

The Advocates completed a 'Student Engagement Feedback Form' towards the end of the project and a full synopsis of the feedback is included (**Appendix 6: Student Engagement Feedback**).

Overall, feedback gained from the Advocates towards the student-driven project itself has been highly positive in terms of employability, engagement, student development and progression.

**'I enjoyed the freedom that came with the job- although challenging at times, it is the first experience I have had in employment where I had the opportunity to take control of the activities, direction and scope of the project'**

The Advocates demonstrated and positively acted upon making a difference in this project. It is fair to merit the Advocates for broadening their own capabilities in the learning and development process, most observably around; negotiation skills, public-speaking, event management & promotion, and leadership.

## 2) Collaboration (four pilot departments)

- School of Modern Languages and Cultures/Arts (SMLC)
- Warwick Medical School
- Philosophy
- Psychology

The Decolonise Project is endorsed by Warwick University as a space within a wider framework for change and inclusivity within disciplines and curriculum across the University. Collaboration of students with key departments is a vital component of the Warwick Decolonise Project's current and long-term ethos that supports the student-led drive.

Building on the previous successful employability aspects of this project, to enhance and deliver a well-rounded 'student experience' brings us to discuss the aims of the project towards working with academic and departmental staff to give structure to a platform of reciprocal engagement, specifically when it comes to addressing sector-wide issues such as 'Why is my curriculum white?' or what does it mean to decolonise curricula?

**'I am passionate about understanding how education is perceived by the youth. Therefore, personally, it was rather rewarding to work on a project that empowers those left behind in a way' (Advocate)**

**'Yes, I believe that there needs to be more momentum created in the University to generate more awareness about the project so we can get more engagement' (Advocate).**

The feedback from the Advocates regarding their collaboration with the departments identifies areas that need improvement if the project is to be a success at Warwick or to be considered as a university that blazed a trail as sector-leaders in this context.

The overall difficulties and issues observed and reported by the Advocates below have impacted their relationship with the DSEPs within each department and the overall expected results of a co-created collaboration:

- **Initiating contact' stage and focus-group research approach compromised early in the project**

Although support was championed and gained from DSEPs (Directors of Student Experience and Progression) by the leading Education Officer prior to commencement of the project, the initial project phase involved further dialogues between the departments and the SU about how the project fits in with the wider scope and strategies set by the university before we could secure agreement to proceed with the department's input and thus permission for the Advocates to get a 'go-ahead' to initiate direct contact, this added to the delays in direct student-led engagement on behalf of the departments.

- **Lack of clarity of the overarching initiatives and objectives behind 'Decolonise' projects**

Where contact was achieved, the Advocates reported having to refocus their research endeavours to allow more room for dialogues that increased awareness amongst departmental staff and participants before being able to launch into the research itself, having not anticipated the extent of dialogues that would be required of them to avoid further loss in translation

- **Project Timing – external pressure of exam period on both students, departments and DSEPs compromised collaboration later in the project**

The overall positive expectations and impacts of the project were compromised by its timeline **‘The timing of the project posed a major barrier in how the project was undertaken’** as it clashed with the Easter season and exam period **‘The clash with exam season- an earlier start date would enable us to engage with a greater number of students and dedicate more time to the job’**.

- **Departmental staff demonstrating ‘resistance’ (conscious or unconscious) that blocked dialogue around ‘decolonisation’**

During individual sessions Advocates revealed; they held an anticipated (inspirational) vision of co-creating together with their departments which became fragmented due to a lack in ‘meaningful’ collaboration, as the core reason behind any demotivation felt during the project (this was reflected individually and through group reflections). During the ‘initiating contact phase’ where Advocates were not getting responses back and/or the department required further persuasion to support the Advocates, the SU was prompted to act on behalf of the Advocates to establish further collaboration with the DSEPs, invariably with partnering departments.

***By department:***

School of Modern Languages and Cultures (SMLC)

The collaboration with the DSEP at the School of Modern Languages and Cultures was constrained by the time limits of the project and a slow start which was compounded by departmental pressures (not related to the project) that limited the number of opportunities/meetings the SMLC Advocates would have liked to have engaged/attended with their DSEP and with departmental staff beyond the DSEP’s role:

**‘Although I fully understand why the approach was taken to choose a specific contact/champion from the department, I’m not sure that this was helpful for our objectives as advocates/researchers. Instead it felt more like our ability to research/investigate was limited by a ‘gatekeeper’ figure. Personally, I do not feel that the level of communication with our partnering faculty was adequate in order to truly meet the aims of the project’**

However, the DSEP independently acknowledges this limitation with suggestion to improve (**Appendix 7: Academic Engagement Feedback/DSEPs**). The decolonisation research relating to the department’s practical steps taken towards engagement of the broader life of a diverse student body is very much received positively – **‘our initial research on module provision also hinted at positive elements to cultural teaching, such as modules covering slavery, colonial legacy, and migrant voices’** – although it does not come without any criticisms, it signifies a pocket of knowledge that could help support best practice across departments within the decolonise context. The student responses despite sounding critical in places seem to reflect **‘it is encouraging that students do feel the curriculum is representing colonial legacy’**. What appears to be an ‘experiential’ interaction being offered by way of the courses, the student voice is saying ‘we like what you gave us, when can we have some more?’. However, experiential learning aspects can be difficult to translate through a ‘strategic lens’ and appears as a challenge for the department to take up in terms of benefitting the ‘attract and appeal’ process in the recruitment of students. Overall, a positive relationship was built with the DSEP involved and the Advocates demonstrated a high regard for his supportive comprehension of the issues discussed and helpful nature:

**‘Our primary departmental contact has been David Lees, a Senior Fellow within French studies. His work as a cultural historian and position on numerous committees has given him an understanding of both the context of our work and how it can affect the**

**student experience.** DSEP was always responsive to communications with the SU and attended related meetings.

#### Warwick Medical School

The collaboration with the DSEP at Warwick Medical School was similarly constrained by the time limits of the project and a slow start which was compounded by departmental pressures (not related to the project). However, strong efforts were made to support the group once a firm schedule of engagement was put in place co-created by both the DSEP and the Advocates together, with a hands-on creation of the survey, its distribution amongst the medical school student cohort, with setting up a separate Decolonise Warwick Medical School Facebook page (under the umbrella of Warwick Decolonise Network page), and in compiling their final research report. With collaboration extended outwards culminating in an offer **'media team in the medical department have expressed that they could film these interviews with students'**. This touches on the envisioning 'Step 2: Discover' phase of Appreciative Enquiry that demonstrates collaborative elements of 'when members of the organisation inquire into high-point experiences and identify strengths and capabilities, all of which add up to the "positive core".' Overall a positive relationship was built with the DSEP involved and a high regard for her undivided attention to subject matter and the student collective was equally attributed to the Advocates: **'Emily was truly passionate about the project and her contributions, help and guidance were invaluable.'** The DSEP was responsive in communications with the SU and attended related meetings.

#### Psychology

The Psychology Department apologized for being unable to fully support the project due to unforeseen departmental pressures (not related to the project). When further engaged the Psychology Department agreed to fully commit to the project next year 2019/2020. The Advocate allocated to Psychology conducted her own research around the available modules, and took the initiative to find students to engage the topic on the ethos of it being a student-driven project, her report starts with a poignant acknowledgment: **'To the students who have yearned to be depicted but have represented themselves regardless.'** Despite no direct involvement from the Psychology Department, the Advocate involved did reach out to the DSEP for external support **'That said, when I was able to contact the respective member of staff, she was helpful in pointing me in the right direction.'**

#### Philosophy

The Philosophy Department were similarly constrained by the time limits of the project and a slow start, and this was compounded by further meetings required to discuss the ethos of the project and bring clarity to the national movement led by students across the globe. Without incriminating anyone in particular, it is extremely concerning that the Philosophy Advocates felt they had to capture their reflections as such:

**'The advocates - the students that have compiled this report - are all of BAME background and were aware of the issues BAME students faced. For the students it was a reflection of deep-set institutional racism, which affects BAME students well after their education and in their professional careers'**

Here, this group have reverted to reasserting their rights in this collaboration as 'students' on a base level, more explicitly from their point of view as BAME students, over being Advocates of Warwick University and have hit upon the major (national) issue of 'power-relations' that negatively affect projects such as this. To remain integral to the Advocates in the face of the resistance experienced, this section is expanded on in the appendices (**Appendix 8: Philosophy/Collaboration**). The DSEP was not always responsive in communications with the SU and did not attend any related meetings.

### 3) Student Engagement (wider University community)

The Decolonise Advocates at University of Warwick arranged and brought together various departmental staff and student bodies from various surrounding groups (**Appendix 9: Wider University Engagement/Groups**).

The Warwick Decolonise Network Launch Event (June 2019) was held on campus and brought together various supportive groups doing similar work in promoting diversity in its variant strains. Below follows an excerpt on the event as described by the Advocates (not in bold due to length of quotation):

“Engagement with the wider university community was a critical part of our research given the challenges that we faced working with our assigned department. During the course of the project we made efforts to engage in as many conversations surrounding the goals of decolonise as possible, which would also help us to illustrate a better picture of the dialogue already taking place on campus.

#### *The Decolonise Network Launch*

The purpose of holding an event through the decolonise project was twofold:

- 1) To demonstrate the importance of the decolonise project to university trustees and academic staff.
- 2) To establish a wider ‘decolonise network’ across the university, in order to ensure that decolonising the university environment remains a priority in future years, encouraging growth and engagement.

The Network Launch event provided clear evidence that the goals of decolonise are shared by the wider university, with promising numbers attending to show their support. Despite the timing of the event colliding with peak academic conference season, and the end of exams when the majority of students disengage with academic events and many leave early for home, our event still attracted around 45 attendees. This was incredibly encouraging when compared to other similar events which take place during prime term-time and have had a much lesser turnout.

The event comprised of a presentation which made our activity clear to guests and allowed them to see that action to decolonise the university has been backed by the SU through the format of our project. It also outlined the necessity of the project and introduced some of the key arguments for enabling a decolonised learning environment. This was followed by a panel discussion which shared personal experiences as well as more generalised experiences of decolonising the university institution, with questions opened up to audience members afterwards.

Through the experience of organising and successfully hosting the event, we have now collated a strong base of contacts who are engaged with a notion of a ‘decolonise network’ which allows a collaborative approach to the issue at hand. There is also a substantial number of academic staff who were unable to attend due to conferences, but keenly expressed their interest and have asked to be invited to any future events and activities.

The event was supported by the Colonial Hangover Project, the academic support librarians, and academics from the BREM network. Overall, the process has demonstrated that each cluster does its own valuable work to decolonise education, focusing on different key areas. Therefore, the network provides the perfect opportunity to bring these groups together, identifying opportunities to align that work so that it’s as inclusive as possible. By making the amount of work being done openly accessible to the student body, it is also more likely that students will feel better represented by the university.

Given the positive turnout for the event, it seems that there would certainly be a potential for Warwick to hold a full-scale conference for decolonising education in the next academic year. Universities such as Kent, Leeds and Birkbeck have held high-profile decolonise events to display their commitment to the cause and Warwick absolutely has the capacity and the demand to do the same. The next team of

advocates should be more than capable of planning the vision and the logistics for this, and there should be a greater emphasis or raising awareness and interest in the network among the student body in the run-up to the event.”

#### 4) The Decolonise Project – Research (four priority departments)

The decolonise research aspects for the priority departments in this report is set out below within their own boxes, providing a verbatim overview, findings, student responses and summary on behalf of the Advocates relevant to the departmental disciplines:

**Department:** School of Modern Languages & Cultures (SMLC)

**DSEP or Representative:**

**Advocates Allocated:** 3

**Methodology:** Interviews/Observations/Online Student Survey

**Overview:** Language has a dual character; it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture.

As a result, it plays a dominant role in the collective memory of historical experiences. When an individual speaks a language, they are carrying (although unknowingly) an entire history in their lexicon. When applied to the academic context, it is necessary to explore whose language we are speaking, as well as why and how this participates in pre-existing colonial narratives. The two are inextricable.

Specifically tied to the University of Warwick Modern Languages and Cultures department, Advocates have explored course content and student experiences to bridge the gap in what the university is able to supply, and how this is received and interacted with by students - for better or worse. As part of our work, we aimed to examine “how all students and staff engage with knowledge, culture and history” - so it is not reduced to a bottom-up process, but one that unites both students and the institution. More than being simply an activity that diversifies the face of the courses available, decolonising the university does not mean a loss of education but an expansion of it as we see and experience it.

Stuart Croft, Vice Chancellor and President of the University of Warwick, claims “the world’s leading universities have to be international universities because the best students and academic staff want to be global citizens addressing global issues. Warwick’s international reputation has brought students and staff from over 120 countries to our campus, but that reputation has also drawn a great many of our UK students to Warwick because they believe it will give them a truly international teaching and learning experience as part of a global community.” In order to truly achieve this, decolonisation must take place as part of higher education strategy. Colonial narratives should not have a monopoly on what we consider to be knowledge as scholars.

According to the Complete University Guide’s data from 2016-17, the University’s International Student body predominantly originates from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, France and India. With further opening of the curriculum to encompass these, surely the department would be boundlessly able to attract more students to an experience that truly includes them.

We were crucially concerned by the conflation between ‘modern foreign languages’ as essentially ‘European languages’ and sought to question whether the provision of European language degrees can be considered inclusive given Warwick’s global student body.

Our initial research on module provision also hinted at positive elements to cultural teaching, such as modules covering slavery, colonial legacy, and migrant voices. However, it was necessary to further investigate exactly how these modules are being taught and the perspectives offered through the module reading lists. Another issue for examination was the level of diversity across the department. Whilst many other departments at Warwick attract a global student body, the SMLC retains a largely Eurocentric student intake, as a result of its obvious focus on European languages.

### **Findings:**

- Nationally, the number of university students studying a language degree is very low in comparison to other degrees. Many have put the low uptake of language degrees down to the low uptake of languages at GCSE and A Level.
- The marketisation of higher education and lack of funding for state schools has made a language degree less accessible to those from a deprived community. With ethnic minority students disproportionately coming from a disadvantaged background, this has very significant consequences for student diversity. As such, the lack of diversity within the SMLC is very much a national problem, as well as a local problem.
- The four ‘major’ languages offered by the Department are French, German, Hispanic and Italian Studies. There were no ‘major’ Non-European languages offered by the department. Instead, languages such as Chinese and Arabic could be studied as a minor language, constituting 25% of the degree classification alongside a major language such as French which would constitute 75% of the degree.
- The survey revealed several interesting points for analysis: responses indicate that cultural modules which cover social issues, inequalities, and continued colonial impact are perceived as more interesting by students, and that there is a sustained demand for them. For instance, one participant suggests ‘creating a module on European Imperialism (covering French, German, Spanish and Italian colonial measures/ history/ literature/ philosophy)’ – stating interest in a whole module dedicated to understanding imperialism as opposed to occasionally referencing imperialism when focusing predominantly on other aspects of culture.
- At least seven responses also claimed that more could be done to address understandings of colonial legacy on existing modules. Suggestions included, ‘add more authors from diverse backgrounds’, and ‘less western-centric teaching of different cultures.’ Out of all the given responses, only one singular respondent commented that they would like to see ‘less talk about colonial legacy’.
- Survey responses highlight some potential for misinterpretation, as ‘diversity’ of the student body may have been rated favourably due to the number of European students in the department. Thus assuming ‘diverse’ to mean not living in Britain (therefore qualifying Europeans) as opposed to ‘diverse’ meaning an inclusive environment with a range of international students and the representation of BAME students from the UK.

- Survey respondents rated the level at which colonial legacy is reflected on their courses, positive responses demonstrate strengths in the decolonising work which has already been carried out in the department, of which students have clearly been able to observe. Therefore, despite there being many responses which cite suggestions for improvement, it is encouraging that students do feel the curriculum is representing colonial legacy.

- Most respondents to the survey had very similar ideas on what decolonise meant with the terms 'Eurocentric' and 'diversify' being used in multiple answers, eliciting that 'decolonise' meant "to break away from the norms put in place by colonialist systems enforced by the West. In terms of the curriculum, this means breaking away from Western canon and having a balance of perspectives from non-Western writers too on various topics" and "listening and opening our eyes to the narratives of students of colour who have traditionally been marginalised within academia and making sure to provide modules which reflect the diversity of their histories and heritage". It was interesting to see many students thinking of 'decolonising' in a specific academic context demonstrated how the term has become increasingly associated with calls for curriculum change.

### **Student responses:**

'Hispanic and French subject was predominantly studied by women and there were very few ethnic minority students studying the subject.'

'class could affect progress, with many middle-class students benefiting from gap years where they had already gone to countries of their target language which made it easier for them'

'accessibility and how income can affect a student's ability to travel and thus perfect their language skills in other countries or attend additional language schools'

'spoke of how the university could potentially provide greater financial support to students from low-income backgrounds in order to make languages degrees more accessible'

'highlighted why studying the colonial legacy in French speaking and Spanish speaking countries is important as it explains how and why that language was imposed on people...how the spread of languages through colonial conquest is not highlighted enough within the course'

'Language students and linguists should be unlearning biases in terms of regional accents'

'what annoyed her the most was how the languages were not put on an equal playing field. She questioned why Non-European languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Japanese had no culture modules. The student believed the absence of culture modules may have been down to the lack of resources and staff to teach additional modules'

'giving European languages greater importance it subconsciously reinforced the idea of Non-European cultures being inferior and less important. The student also highlighted how for students studying Non-European languages such as Arabic there were no opportunities to spend a year abroad in a country associated with the language, highlighting how Warwick could work to develop greater links and create partnerships with universities in the Global South'

'core modules were completely focused on the languages themselves whereas optional modules allowed students to focus on the culture that surrounds the languages and how culture and language influence one another'

'only two Black people studying the module on slavery. With discussions focused on Afro-Latinx people, the two Black students ended up being the only ones speaking in the seminar discussions with minimal participation from their peers which they found uncomfortable at times.

'there were very few people of colour studying Hispanic studies'

'student spoke of how language and culture were often taught separately and would appreciate greater focus on how language and culture are often interrelated. For instance, different languages and their accents in different regions are taught about but there is a lack of discussion on how languages were often forced upon indigenous people and how the acclimatization between their native language and the forced language led to a distinct regional accent.

'core modules should incorporate discussions on colonial legacy and examining how languages spread around the world'

'many Hispanic studies departments across the country did not have an international focus and commended the department (at Warwick) for exploring the Latin American context. The student said the department could go further by exploring Afro-Latinx cultures'

'would prefer to see existing languages from the Global South given greater weighting and an increase in Non-European languages on offer'

'highlighted how some languages such as Arabic could be learnt ab initio (from the beginning). Teaching some language ab initio could break down barriers and make the study of languages at degree level more accessible, especially for students from schools that don't necessarily have the resources and funding to teach languages'

'the additional costs for studying languages in addition to their degree subject through the language centre could also be a barrier to people from a low-income background'

'student who studied an Arabic module as an outside module, noted the popularity of the module amongst peers, most of whom were not studying a language degree and said the student body for the module was very diverse. The student enjoyed studying the module but would appreciate greater support from the department such as online resources, highlighting how students studying the module needed to buy textbooks and CDs and having online resources available to support learning could reduce costs for students. The student also wanted to learn more about the culture as he believed it was deeply connected to the language, often shaping it in various ways. The student said he would consider studying a full-time Arabic degree if it was available'

'History and French- In terms of student diversity the course was predominantly studied by women with very few students from an ethnic minority background studying the course'

'Reflections on studying the culture module: pointed out how a significant amount of time was spent looking at colonial legacy, with four lectures dedicated to exploring colonialism in Algeria.'

‘diversity amongst the teaching body could be better, stating it would be nice to have more BAME staff among the teaching body.’

**Summary of barriers to decolonising the SMLC:**

- Decreasing languages admissions = decreased funding for prospective students and decreased funding for expansion.
- Levels of bureaucracy in terms of altering module provision = numerous committees to persuade in this process.
- Difficulty to engage with the student community = difficulty to hear from a range of student voices.
- Optional modules on slavery, colonial legacy, and incorporating ethnic minority authors have been largely popular and very well received by students. However, the provision of these themes is largely via optional modules rather than core modules.
- The marketisation of higher education and lack of funding for state schools has made a language degree less accessible to those from a deprived community. With ethnic minority students disproportionately coming from a disadvantaged background, this has very significant consequences for student diversity. As such, the lack of diversity within the SMLC is very much a national problem, as well as a local problem.

**Summary:**

One of the fundamental problems highlighted by department academics was the general issue of decreasing admission rates for languages degrees across the country. This is a problem which starts (in the British context) far earlier than university, being impacted largely by the lack of effective language engagement within schools. Less students are studying languages at GCSE and A Level, which has an obvious knock-on effect to students being eligible, or even confident enough, to consider choosing a language at degree level. Additionally, there are issues in curriculum structure which fail to promote adequate language provision. To put this into context, a study found that only 16 per cent of language teachers think the GCSE curriculum & criteria for their subject reflects a good measure of language competence, (*Prospect Magazine*, 2016). As a result of this problematic legacy, universities are having to work far harder to convince potential applicants that languages degrees can offer a very different, more positive experience than their previous experiences in education have offered so far. As such there is a sense of caution among the department as the funding situation (as with many current UK universities) feels incredibly precarious.

Following on from this, it was noted that the due process for editing modules or re-structuring modules can be challenging at times. For academic staff who already have very busy schedules and high workloads, the process of changing or devising a new module is a time-consuming process. Not only this, but the bureaucratic process of education committees then reviewing these decisions may mean that the new propositions aren't followed through. Education committees often tend to be very traditional in nature, which means that they may not be receptive to the aims of decolonising despite the fact that it adds to the enrichment of the student experience. It is essential therefore to note that the work of decolonising must span beyond students and academic staff, to bring committee members and key stakeholders inside of the conversation.

Department staff also note the difficulty of engaging with the existing student body and the lack of 'community' ethos in the SMLC. This is likely a result of several factors and again

feeds into the issue of funding. Though the fees for undergraduate degrees are set at a fixed level, there is a gross disparity between the facilities accessible to students from the humanities departments such as the SMLC. The lack of a communal space such as a designated common room with facilities has been cited as a key reason for the lack of community ethos in the school. This combined with minimal contact hours for tuition contributes to a sense of detachment between the students and their course cohort and is also an observable trait among other 'less profitable' departments at Warwick. Essentially this leads to a lower level of dialogue between students and staff, and less opportunity for students to voice their opinions about modules and any issues they may be experiencing on the course. In talking to departmental staff, we documented that the optional cultural modules which cover colonial legacy, slavery, and minority voices have been received incredibly well by students. Several modules ensure to cover the racism suffered by indigenous peoples of colonised nations as well as issues faced by migrants living in European countries. The popularity of such culture modules, demonstrates that the interest among the student body is strong. However, it seems there is more progress to be made on incorporating these vital histories to the core modules using a critical lens. Again, this may be something which requires further dialogue with education committees to facilitate in the future.

**Department:** Warwick Medical School

**DSEP or Representative:**

**Advocates Allocated:** 2

**Methodology:** Online Student Survey/Observations

**Overview:** The collaboration with Warwick Medical School endeavours to analyse and deconstruct the current medical curriculum, in order to identify western pedagogies that alienate the diverse cohort of the medical school, and in turn explore new forms of teaching, research and assessment that will make the medical school more inclusive. In order to produce this report, representatives from the Student's Union collaborated with staff from the Medical School, as well as students enrolled on the Medicine course.

Decolonization is the process of 'ending the domination of Western epistemological traditions, histories and figures' (Molefe 2016:32), and beginning the process of incorporating global perspectives, theories and philosophies in the avenue of education and research.

The importance of including different cultural perspectives is more important than ever, and the prominence of this can be seen in changes made to workplaces and politics, but the speed of transformation within the educational field has been much slower.

Smith (1999) described the process of decolonisation, stating that it's about 'deconstruction and reconstruction; self-determination and social justice; ethics, language, internationalisation of indigenous experiences, history and critique.'

Dr Sharlene Swartz at University College London said that “Decolonising the curriculum centres on three key questions: what is taught? How it is taught? And who teaches it?” When first starting this investigation, these were the three things that were considered. However, it was later made clear by contacts at the medical school (Emily Reid Senior Careers Consultant and lead for widening participation) that changing the medical curriculum would be almost impossible since it would require the university to have to recertify the medical school with the GMC.

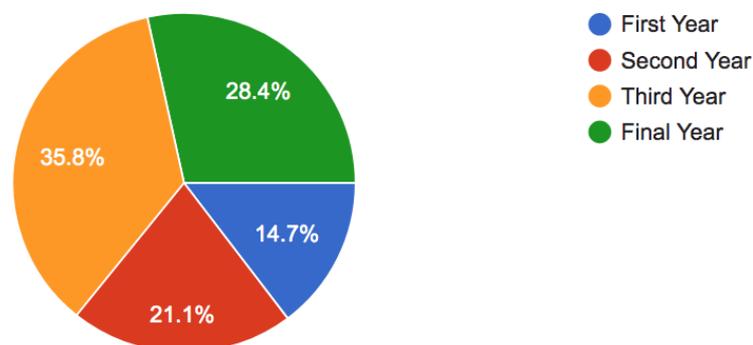
Our investigation therefore focused less on the content of the curriculum (what is taught) and more on the way that the curriculum is being taught, student experiences with the curriculum in lectures, case based learning seminars and practical work experiences in surgeries (how it is taught and how it is received).

Further, although we began creating a survey that would consider the ‘who teaches it’ element of decolonising the curriculum we did not receive the survey back from review by the deputy head of the medical school in time to send it out and wait for responses.

It’s also important to understand that decolonising the medical curriculum is quite different from decolonising other educational fields, since the subject matter entails discussion on the human anatomy, it is more objective and less subjective.

During meetings with Emily Reid we began to investigate the ethical makeup of classes knowing that BAME students can sometimes have a different but valuable perspective which would serve to diversify discussions especially in case-based learning seminars. We also became concerned with the experiences of these BAME students in lectures, case-based learning seminars and on placements and so looked into this to ascertain to what extent BAME student felt that they could give their own valuable perspectives without rebuke, judgement or condemnation. The medical curriculum may be somewhat objective, but the way students interact with it is not necessarily so objective - we therefore thought it important to find out how confident BAME students are in voicing those different opinions and to what extent they feel supported in doing so.

### Findings:



- Responses were quite evenly spread across all years of the course. However, the ethical makeup of our responses was not as evenly spread, since 57.8% of respondents were White- English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish or British. Approximately, 42.2% of students that answered belonged to other ethnic minorities despite the medical school student body

being only 23% BAME; this perhaps suggests that BAME students were more drawn to answer the questionnaire than their white British peers and are more engaged on this topic.

The first part of the survey discussed the issue of inclusion with the medical curriculum:

***‘So far in the curriculum, I have had the chance to discuss different perspectives within and outside the UK related to ethnic diversity’.***

- The responses for the question indicated that a large number of people (37) disagreed with the statement, whilst 33 people agreed with the statement, 22 people were neutral, and 13 people strongly disagreed with the statement.

***‘The curriculum uses material that explores different data, models and theories related to ethnic diversity – even within an historical context’.***

- The entire survey had 109 responses, and almost half of the respondents (51) disagreed with this statement.

***‘The curriculum has reading lists and resources that contain a diverse range of authors including those from different ethnicities, from outside the UK and from non-academic sources where relevant’.***

- 54 people were neutral about this yet 20 people disagreed. The total number of people in agreement was 22, which is just slightly more than the amount of people in disagreement. What also must be noted is that the number of people that felt neutrally about this statement could also be interpreted as unawareness as opposed to having a neutral stance towards the statement.

***‘The curriculum develops my critical thinking and awareness of different perspectives on issues relating to diversity in ethnicity, culture and nationality’***

- Whilst 38 people agreed with the statement, 29 disagreed.

***‘The curriculum allows me to gain an understanding of how different factors e.g. Social, economic, ethnicity influence patient care’*** the counterpart to this question being ***‘The curriculum allows me to gain an understanding of how different factors e.g. Social, economic and ethnicity influence medical outcomes’***

- These questions both collected the most amount of responses in agreement. This implies that there is a basic understanding of how ethnicity and socio-economic factors affect society, and education but it is essential here to pause and wonder whether understanding necessarily means that individuals are equipped to facilitate people from varied backgrounds.

The focus was then shifted to gaining more information on case-based learning which makes up a huge part of the curriculum. Two questions were asked to identify the general consensus towards diversity in case-based learning:

***‘Case based learning uses a diverse makeup of patients ethnically, socially and economically’***

and ***'When case-based learning uses diverse patients it does not do so in a generic stereotypical way to indicate a specific condition'*** i.e. The black patient does not always have Sickle Cell disease.

- The responses for these were almost 50/50 agreement or disagreement. For the first question, 35 people disagreed and 49 agreed, for the follow-up question 49 agreed and 43 disagreed. The remaining responses for both questions were neutral. The discord when it comes to case-based learning is fairly evident, and therefore the team had hoped to analyse the case-based learning material personally, unfortunately the team were not permitted to do so further this would have taken a lot of time the team did not have.

The final few questions focused on group work and in-class discussions:

***'The allocation of students to small group work enables the creation of ethnically diverse groups from different educational, ethnic or social backgrounds'*** and ***'Teaching encourages discussion from students with diverse backgrounds and includes topics where personal experience and views are expressed'***.

- A majority of students that answered the question agreed with the statement (41 people agreed for the former, and 33 agreed with the latter), however one can argue that this doesn't paint a complete picture, especially if we take a closer look at some of the responses that people had provided when they were asked to expand on their answers.

#### **Student responses:**

"The current final year has a very low number of ethnic students. This was surprising to me in comparison to other university courses. Therefore, opportunities to integrate learning from other ethnicities is minimal."

"I personally found quite a lot of the teaching in First Year on ethnicity and race to be extremely stereotypical and not at all sensitive. It was skin deep and did not reflect a true understanding of most of the cultures we were discussing."

"I strongly disagree that our teaching groups are meaningfully separated to create diverse groups."

"In first year, we were taught white men as the default, and black men and all women as exceptions. I can find the slides that do this if evidence is required! When questions of inclusion and diversity arise, they are handled in a stereotypical and slightly thoughtless way"

"I believe Soc pop tries hard to be inclusive and raise awareness of different impact of e.g. poverty, lower economic group and racism on treatment. However, beyond this I feel the course could improve. For example, for lectures covering dermatology or dermatological conditions (e.g. AC1 sdl autoimmune conditions and most other lectures) we are invariably shown pictures with white patients, even when, like for SLE the disease is more frequent in Asian/Black background."

"I have felt alienated at WMS - the vast majority of students are from very wealthy, seemingly undiverse backgrounds and show little to no understanding or awareness of cultural and

social differences. Sadly, the curriculum has done nothing to challenge unhealthy perceptions or to educate in diversity awareness and anti-racism.”

When students were asked about what challenges the universities faces when it comes to moving towards being fully inclusive, these were some of the answers:

“The only time I ever actively thought about race on the course was when a fellow student who is black pointed out that not a single image in our dermatology teaching had black skin and how some of these would look different on her. Which made me not only feel ignorant for not considering this in first place, but it highlighted to me how white appears to be the 'norm' in our teaching.”

“Ensure there is a more diverse cohort. Naturally this will allow for conversations about differences and similarities. More lectures and module on national and international health.”

“I think the sessions on ethnicity and race in First Year need to be moved away from the lecture theatre and into group work sessions, where patients from different backgrounds can explain to us how their culture influences their decisions, health behaviours and decisions about care.”

“The current financing of university is the biggest barrier. When the maximum loan + grant barely covers rent, if you're from a disadvantaged background (which disproportionately affects ethnic minorities) there's a HUGE barrier to accessing higher education.”

“Fear that it may cause offence. Use diversity more widely”

“I feel having senior staff who are more representative of our cultural diversity would benefit creating an inclusive culture amongst students”

“Integrate ethnic diversity into each block CBLs, consider working with the BME society in the medical school, a more diverse staff base would be nice to see”

### **Summary:**

Whilst this questionnaire posed some very important questions, it was the first of its kind and therefore preliminary. The stark contrast in the amount of people who agreed that CBLs were inclusive, and the personal accounts that people shared in the second half of the questionnaire prove that this questionnaire has merely scratched the surface when it comes to discussing inclusivity.

Furthermore, almost 50% of the respondents disagreed when asked ‘The curriculum uses material that explores different data, models and theories related to ethnic diversity – even within an historical context’. This is not a small number of people, and one cannot wait for this number to get bigger before we take any action.

Through this work however, specific areas within the medical school that could be diversified or improved have been identified. These include using diverse examples when discussing dermatology, to identifying that CBLs often present stereotypical narratives of diseases when discussing other ethnicities. Whilst the entire CBL material can't be changed overnight, it is imperative to train the staff delivering this material. As seen earlier in the accounts, conversations about race and racial differences are feared and thus avoided.

These conversations should instead be embraced, encouraged and facilitated by a faculty trained to deal with such subject sensitively so that stereotypical racial understandings from the past can be confronted, countered. Staff should be able to identify these regressive examples and help students deal with them in lectures, case-based seminars and on placements.

Training staff to tackle uncomfortable situations is recommended. Whilst creating this report, it was found that many textbooks and cases used in the curriculum consisted of regressive and stereotypical representations of race and ethnicity. Whilst these can't be removed overnight, staff should be trained adequately deal with these situations head on and explain why they are problematic.

Perpetual collaboration with the medical school is recommended. This report identified various points within the curriculum that could be altered for decolonisation. Examples included modules like dermatology and case-based learning seminars. These points were identified within the span of a few months and the possibly more potential points or areas for decolonisation. This report recommends constant collaboration with the medical school to identify all these areas together.

Recommendations on what to do next: As part of the investigative survey sent out, students were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed more on the matter. 37 students indicated that they would be willing to do so and the media team in the medical department have expressed that they could film these interviews with students. We would therefore recommend that these interviews should be held in conjunction with the media team in the medical school. We would however recommend the interviews should be shot in such a way that obscures the identity of the student should a student request as such. The filming of such interviews will add a new dimension to the project, make it easier to share and understand the perspectives of students in regards to decolonising and, if the interviews are publicly shared, highlight to the wider community the necessity of such a decolonisation project.

Further, we would also recommend that any further research project on decolonising the medical curriculum focuses on the case-based learning seminars. There are about 150 cases in total but they are sensitive in nature so further collaboration with the medical school would be needed in order for those cases to be released to a future team for review. In this case, a team with at least one member who is a student of the medical department would be invaluable in helping to understand and unpack the cases. Although such work would undoubtedly be very time consuming and require several more weeks, we believe it would be very important in any future discussions about decolonising the medical curriculum. From discussions with a student in the medical department we already know that the diversity of patients in case-based learning is low and often only an indicator for a certain diagnosis i.e. the ethnicity of an African patient denoting sickle cell disease. It would however be informative and valuable to understand to what extent this stereotyping occurs with diverse patients in case-based learning seminars.

**Department: Philosophy**

**DSEP or Representative:**

**Advocates Allocated: 3****Methodology:** Interviews/On-line Survey/Observations/Meetings**Overview:**

On a broad level, the Decolonise Project works for the Education team and Democracy and Academic Representation at Warwick Student Union and aims to collate research found regarding the lack of engagement of BAME students, as previously discussed. The advocates - the students that have compiled this report - are all of BAME background and were aware of the issues BAME students faced. For the students it was a reflection of deep-set institutional racism, which affects BAME students well after their education and in their professional careers. Whilst the issue of the attainment gap between BAME students and their white counterparts (one study found that 24% more of the white student cohort received a first or 2:1 at the end of their degree than BAME students), it must be noted that 'there are no examples of systematic or institution wide interventions that aim to achieve cultural change in addressing inequalities of attainment'. This project therefore provided us with the resources to help further investigate and challenge these issues that affect us as individuals.

The importance of decolonising the curriculum on a global scale must also be understood in order to be able to critically evaluate the work has been undertaken in the project. In particular, the importance of the decolonisation movement, in particular within humanities subjects such as philosophy was reinforced in 2015, following the '#RhodesMustFall' movement in South Africa. In his article, *'the Role of Humanities in Decolonising the Academy'*, Prinsloo argues that humanities subjects must aid in decolonising the curriculum as they "play both in the academy's evaluation of itself as a colonial project and in its remaking." He further goes on to explain methods that should be used in order to effectively achieve an equal academic environment; particularly a refusal of methods that "move to innocence" but rather should be about "re-centring ourselves, intellectually and culturally by redefining what the centre is: Africa."

In other words, this refers to people actively working to break down the existing institution, and then rebuild it in a way that centralises and emphasises the importance of learning non-western academia alongside western studies, making it a centre point of learning as opposed to a secondary option. Approaches such as that of 'decolonising the mind' are therefore rejected as it can be viewed as undermining the key goal of remoulding the curriculum. Another noteworthy point that must also be considered is the levels of awareness of the problem as "we cannot decolonise universities or the country, for that matter, if we do not adequately grapple, in greater numbers than we are currently, with the idea of colonisation". This indicates that another aspect needed in order to tackle the problem effectively is for a widespread knowledge and understanding of the problem needs to be established, as change can only be achieved through many levels of the institution to work together, and this cannot be done without consistent and large scale awareness being raised.

Overall, this report aims to critically discuss both the Philosophy department in regards to the inclusivity of their curriculum, as well as whether or not the steps used to analyse them are effective; as the report develops, the key issue of the restraint of the philosophy department will be highlighted and is undeniably the greatest finding from our research. So,

with this in mind our group initially decided to take note of all formal interactions with the key stakeholders of the department as students and other related figures.

### **Findings:**

This section will discuss mainly what the advocates discovered in their findings, noting the trends between both the positive and negative aspects of the data. However, it is firstly important to note that the main questionnaire that the data is derived from does not entirely correspond with the main objective of the project to explore the curriculum of the university or the philosophy department itself, but of students across a range of different departments:

- In general, the data shows that whilst a majority of people knew what 'decolonising the curriculum' meant, 21.7% (5 people) did not understand the meaning. Of these 5, 2 were white and 3 were of a BAME background. This demonstrates that awareness of the issue is not exclusive to certain ethnicities. This in itself does impose a problem as this would suggest that around 20% of the student population are unaware of the issue, which would hinder change as all persons in a position of power and are capable of making change should be aware of the issue in order to help tackle it regardless of their ethnicity.

- However, in terms of improvement, there seems to be a general trend of negativity in terms of inclusivity of topics relevant to ethnic minorities, including the study of non-western academia and representation amongst academic staff.

- Many core modules in philosophy, especially in the first year, make reference to 'key' readings or the main topics to be studied in the term, and also discuss typical western philosophers such as Aristotle. Whilst this would be a major part of studying philosophy, it would be beneficial to change the wording to make it seem as though any study of non-western philosophy is not an alternative, but an expansion of the ideas perhaps should also be incorporated into core modules.

- Furthermore, 73.9% (17) respondents stated that they would like to see an increased number of modules that focus on non-western studies.

- Academics have supported this idea too, with Smith in his article, '*Philosophy's Western Bias*', highlighting that 'non-western philosophy is not approached on its own terms, and thus philosophy remains, implicitly and by default, Western.' Smith also goes on to highlight the importance of increasing the amount of 'non-western' philosophy 'as it enhances the diversity of the philosophy curriculum and makes the curriculum representative of a wider portion of the student body' as it encourages minority groups to become engaged with the topic.

- The most notable trend that can be taken from the interviews is the dissatisfaction of participants regarding the lack of diversity amongst university staff and that the curriculum is not reflective of colonial legacy.

### **Student responses:**

- Two philosophy students referred to how Eurocentric they feel the core modules to be, with one student stating that they 'would completely change the political philosophers that we studied for the Hobbes module. The schools of thought were so entrenched in eurocentrism'

- Another philosophy student described the optional module choices as, 'somewhat varied, many modules offering extended study of the work of specific male philosophers in the Western canon, not much beyond that,' and to improve 'more historiography of philosophy, discussing the creation of the canon of white male philosophers in Europe and the establishment of their supposed lineage with the Ancient Greeks', should be included.

- The importance of increasing non-western module choices can also be highlighted amongst STEM subjects with one student stating, 'I hope that all STEM degrees have a core humanities module that covers modern history and a general base of politics. There should be modules per STEM subject that goes in depth about the ethical issues that the STEM discipline raises. We need students to become interdisciplinary and understand the implications their studies and careers have in the world, especially the global south'. This statement in particular highlights the need to decolonise humanities subjects primarily.

- The general trend appears to be that students would like to see more modules focussed on Asian, African and generally more eastern academia. Certain candidates go on to expand stating that they should be 'integrated into all modules so it's more holistic' as opposed to being portrayed as an alternative to western academics, with one candidate even stating that 'philosophy at Warwick is exclusively occidental philosophy, it's ridiculous. Professors are even dismissive of non-western ideas.' From the data, these two points are the most commonly referred to in terms of changing the curriculum. This can therefore be seen as one of the underlying problems of the curriculum at Warwick as the majority of people provided an extended response - 16 - and is something that should be taken into consideration. It is understandable that departments face difficulties in changing module content, however this does not prevent lecturers from discussing non-western ideas in the same respect as western ideas.

- In order to expand and sufficiently educate students on other courses, it is firstly important to ensure that humanities modules provide a wide range of choice, that are not entirely focussed on western studies and theories as this can provide for a wider and less prejudiced views on topics. For example, a STEM student may study a humanities core module that focuses entirely on western theories and cultures, but this does not help them understand the possible implications of their work on other eastern countries. This in itself would defeat the point of even introducing a humanities module.

- The seriousness of this issue can be exemplified when comparing both the interview and questionnaire results. Between the two, strong levels of dissatisfaction with module choices can be noted. When asking for how departments can be improved, this aspect is something that students tended to refer to.

### **Summary:**

One of the main aspects to be noted that we discovered whilst collecting data for the report was the restraint of the Philosophy department in working collaboratively alongside the advocates. Initially, the head of the philosophy department organised a meeting with the advocates, as well as the representative for equality and welfare to discuss what they could do to aid with the collection of data and compiling of the report. From the outset, it was clear that the philosophy department wished to retain the power in regard to the direction and scope of the project. The meeting lasted for an hour and consisted mainly of the two

academics leading the conversation, despite the efforts of the advocates to join in and add to the conversation. In fact, one of the academics talked over an advocate three times within just the first meeting. This led little room for the advocates to discuss their own views. Another aspect of the philosophy department that could be improved is the diversity of the panel that sits on the Equality and Welfare Committee. Whilst this may not be something that can be changed straight away or easily, it is important that a move towards increased diversity is seen. At the meeting, advocates noted that roughly 9/10 of the members were white. Although it is not suggested by the advocates that there should not be white members of the panel, it can often be difficult to properly understand and empathise with BAME students experience of university. In particular, this led to much of the meeting referring to increasing inclusivity as a 'box-ticking' exercise as opposed to a passion to truly see change. As a result, incorporating more BAME members of staff onto the panel would help to avoid this problem as they can directly connect with the issues and be at the forefront of the problem.

- As a result, the philosophy department almost imposed the direction of the project they wished to lead, focussing on inclusivity of students within the department, as opposed to their views on the curriculum, as was meant to be the aim of the project.

- Although they asked whether or not the advocates agreed, they felt no other choice but to agree due to the way the meeting had been conducted. This vehemently opposes the main objective of the project as a whole which was to allow students to lead the discussion in increasing inclusivity in the university, and fundamentally weakens the accountability of the department.

- This was further complicated as the department stated that they would need to authorise any questionnaires before they would help us distribute them. Whilst this is understandable so as to ensure the questions are not misleading, it also undermines allowing the students to take the lead in the decolonisation project.

- It is also important to note that we sent out our recommendations on the 7th June and did not receive the amended version until the 20th June. We also were not able to distribute and gain data from the information as we would not have had a significant response due to the fact that most students had returned home following exam season.

- This further demonstrates the way in which the department sought to tailor the questions focussed around how they could improve as opposed to focussing on obtaining as much information as possible about the experience of the students.

The Philosophy department and the faculty members involved in the collaboration showed restraint towards the term "decolonisation" as they insisted this term be changed to "inclusivity" in the theme as well as the understanding of the project. It thus becomes important to educate departments and stakeholders about the specific scope of the project, so it is not perceived as a personal attack towards any particular individual(s) or department.

Another aspect of the philosophy department that could be improved is the diversity of the panel that sits on the Equality and Welfare Committee. Whilst this may not be something that can be changed straight away or easily, it is important that a move towards increased diversity is seen. At the meeting, advocates noted that roughly 9/10 of the members were white. Although it is not suggested by the advocates that there should not be white

members of the panel, it can often be difficult to properly understand and empathise with BAME students experience of university. In particular, this led to much of the meeting referring to increasing inclusivity as a 'box-ticking' exercise as opposed to a passion to truly see change. As a result, incorporating more BAME members of staff onto the panel would help to avoid this problem as they can directly connect with the issues and be at the forefront of the problem.

Furthermore, participants have highlighted the need for an improved curriculum which does not suggest that non-western philosophy is inferior to the classic western philosophy that is typically studied. Whilst a change in the curriculum can often be challenging and hiring staff specialised in specific niche areas of academia may be expensive, this should be set as a long-term goal with shorter steps imposed to help reach this goal. The main recommendation that has arisen from the data that departments could take forward immediately is through the portrayal of non-western theories as academically equal to western ideas. This not only encourages the further study of these ideas, but also incorporates the element of inclusivity of ethnic minorities, whose culture it may be that lecturers are referring to. Another step that the philosophy department in particular could take would be to further market and uplift their group 'MAP' (Minorities and Philosophy) which strongly encourages and facilitates the learning of non-western theories. This should not be seen as something extra-curricular, but as something to expand, strengthen and broaden philosophical knowledge.

The advocates believe that inclusivity is an important subject under the umbrella of decolonising curriculum. Limiting the entire project to one of the many factors of decolonisation prohibited a wholesome understanding of the extent to which changes are to be made to achieve a decolonised university curriculum. Whilst it has been previously criticised that the curriculum should remain the main focus, it is clear that in order to achieve change on a whole scale, a focus on other decolonisation aspects is necessary. This is due to the fact that it can lead to awareness on a different level, perhaps one that individuals affected by the issue had not considered. The ability to explore different areas of decolonisation can be exemplified through the work of other universities, such as University College London. In terms of areas the university wishes to decolonise, they focus on three main areas; decolonising the mind, decolonising education and decolonising the institution.

**Department:** Psychology

**DSEP or Representative:**

**Advocates Allocated:** 1

**Methodology:**

**Overview:**

This report makes a blatant distinction between colonialism and coloniality; and thus, decolonisation and decoloniality. Coloniality - as opposed to colonialism – refers to the understanding of the coloniality of power, knowledge and mind within the colonial metrics of power. It involves *but is not exclusive to* issues of race, class, gender, sexuality and disability. Engaging with all the areas where hierarchies of power exist, coloniality develops the frameworks of colonisation by presenting it as more than a document of history. Coloniality measures the impacts and manifestations of colonialism

in everyday life; recognising the dominance of Eurocentricity and noticing the oppression of marginalised voices.

The challenge of decoloniality, contrary to belief, is not recognising the coloniality itself or making the further corresponding to approach its decoloniality, but the reconstruction of a stable and representative agenda. In order to do this, we must encourage all facets of the curriculum to work in unison. This report does not just identify how the education system must approach decoloniality but questions how faculty will respond to this and promote its perpetuation.

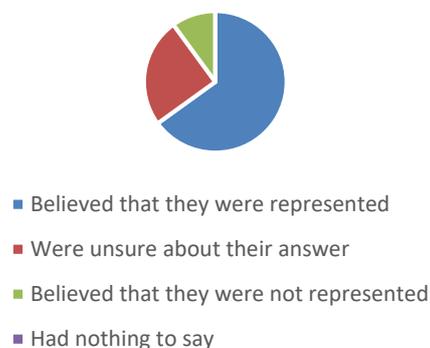
This report may be referred to as a mandate to influence how the Psychology department of the University of Warwick may reconstruct its curriculum in order to implement tools that recognise coloniality.

### Findings:

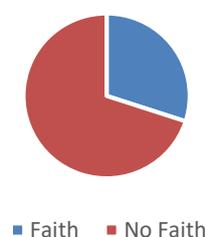
The research process for the Department of Psychology was incredibly difficult. The department was almost entirely unresponsive for the first few months' despite assuring the Student's Union of their support. Even once the research team was able to reach the faculty, there was little data that could be accessed with many of the statistics asked for not existing within the Department's documents.

\*The data collected from these charts refer to a survey taken by 20 psychology students. Many students involved in the interview are also reflected in the data; however not all are.

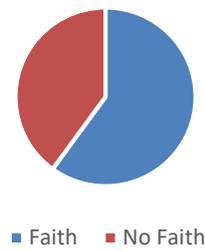
% of students who felt that the Psychology Department represented them in the curriculum



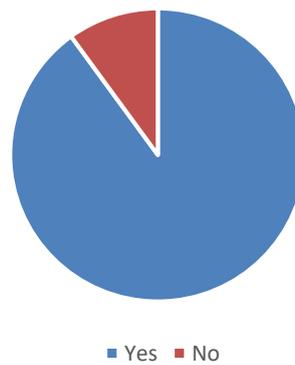
% of students who had faith that the University would respond to their requests



% of students who had faith that the Psychology Department would repond to their requets



% of students who felt that the Psychology Department could be more inclusive



**Student responses:**

\*Many of the participants opted to conceal their identity. For confidentiality reasons such as this, this report will not reveal the identity of *any* individual student. The participants involved were not selected based on race, gender or sexuality. None of these were taken into consideration when selecting interviewees. 10 interviews were documented. The most potent points the collection of interviews will be included within this report.

**What can the Psychology Department of the University of Warwick do to help its students of oppressed groups?**

"I can't start with suggesting what the Psychology department can do to help the University without addressing what the University can do to help itself. I am referring to the unfortunate case that was placed at Warwick's hands this year. Whilst I understand that dialogues such as this will happen amongst men inevitably; it is a shame that Warwick had not yet fostered an environment that made such behaviour unacceptable. The individuals in question, however, *were* in first year so this could be the reason for this.

What made matters worse was how dismissive the institution was when confronted with the case and question how to best approach it. As a subsidiary establishment to the entire institution – I'm sorry – I can't discuss what the Psychology department can do for me, without acknowledging what the university could have done for her and all the women that were misrepresented by the university in their nonchalant response."

**Do you feel the Psychology Department of the University of Warwick helps its BAME students?**

I can only speak for the Psychology department, but it's done everything it can to support me. I came with lower grades and from a disadvantaged background and they did everything to accommodate for that. I come from a really good department."

**How do you feel about the modules offered by the Psychology Department?**

"If I were pushed to say it, they could be a little broader. I understand that theory needs to be understood for the foundation of the course and built on after that; but it would be nice to learn something more niche that would offer us more breadth when it came to our Dissertation options."

**What could the Psychology Department do to make their modules more liberalised?**

"I'm not too sure institutionally because I don't know if they can add and remove modules like that, but I'd love to see some more ethnic guest speakers come to the university – speaking about specific findings within Psychology – topics that can apply more to my life."

**Topics such as what?**

"Like for instance, are there any statistical or psychological findings when looking at stop and searches by the police in inner-city areas."

**What theorists can you think of that could be added to the curriculum?**

"I wish I could tell you - I can't because the department doesn't do much to expose me to them."

**What do you think about the diversity of the faculty in the Psychology department?**

“I don’t think I need to tell you that the faculty is not very diverse. There are a fair few women; however, we don’t have too many ethnic professors or from underprivileged backgrounds like myself. I do know some here and there; but that’s it.”

**Which modules, if any, do you think could be replaced?**

“I’m not in the best position to answer that because I enjoyed almost all of the modules I took. First year is very theoretical however, I think that it’s a necessary foundation. I think if another module were to fit anywhere, it would fit in Year 2. This is when we start to develop our research areas and could really benefit from being introduced to a wider variety of studies.”

**Summary**

This report makes the proposal that the Psychology Department work in unison with the University to further strategies of decoloniality. There is need to further this liberalise the curriculum; but more importantly, there is an urgent need to make statistics available for evaluation.

It is recommended that certain data be collected by each University Department; all of which must be available for public consumption. The data should offer information such as:

- % of BAME, LGBTQ+ and female students in the department
- % of BAME, LGBTQ+ and female students who maintain their academic standard each year (compared to the previous year)
- % of BAME, LGBTQ+ and female faculty in the department
- % of students from underprivileged backgrounds
- Number of support sessions offered per term

Fulfilment of these statistics will not only assist each corresponding department; but further instil faith in the university that it is willing to be proactive in their methods of decoloniality.

The main objective for the Psychology department is to increase the number of guest speakers who specialise in less traditional topics and for the curriculum to reflect some of these academic areas.

The diversity of the faculty is something that must be focused on by not just the Psychology department but the entire University.

*Bibliography:*

Du Bois, W. E. B (1903) *The Souls of Black Folk*

Fanon, F (1952) *Black Skin, White Masks*

Frye, M (1987) *Lesbian ‘Sex’*

Gurminder et. al (2018) *Decolonising the University*

Young, I (2005) *Five Faces of Oppression*



### **i Project overall lessons learned**

- If the University really wants to take on the task of decolonising education they need to embrace the project, by endorsing it throughout the university. There needs to be top down leadership to ensure the engagement and participation of departments with the project.
- It is also worth mentioning that most of the research was conducted in the latter half of the third term of the academic year. This was quite difficult to manage personal timetables (particularly in terms of deadlines) but did mean that students who finished exams early were able to offer more assistance in this enquiry.
- In terms of the methods chosen; increase the scope of the investigation to include both undergraduate and postgraduate students, but also to interview members of staff in the department to evaluate their role in the overall decolonisation of the department. This is in order to better understand different perspectives on the issue. Focus group sessions would enable this, but these take time to plan and require resources such as rooms, refreshments, and printed material which the Advocates struggled to access in the time we had for this project.
- To explore and secure resources from departments where possible to facilitate focus groups with department specific student bodies.
- The difficulties encountered in accessing the department (and at times the lack of transparency) indicate problems at the institutional level. It is integral that advocates employed by the SU must be valued and trusted by academic staff as representatives of the student voice.
- There are clear barriers presented with the collaboration aspects of the project, and better relationships need to be sustained with academic staff in order to communicate these issues and achieve substantial change.
- Of those who have successfully engaged with the project, the Advocates encountered a significant demand for a more decolonised curriculum. The interest in decolonising Warwick is present across the university community especially demonstrated by the turn-out of attendees for the Decolonise Network Launch Event, and future initiatives to achieve this would be greatly welcomed.
- Perhaps it would be just as valuable to engage all key stakeholders in the department in the Decolonisation Workshop the Advocates received so that both the advocates and the department stakeholders are at the same starting point, this may be difficult to achieve in real-time to varying availabilities but can be tapped into by smaller Advocate groups.
- Departmental presence and support for decolonise events held on campus will benefit overall engagement, the Decolonise Network Launch organised by the Advocates Team was not attended by the DSEPs this year, more support will help for Warwick University to present a unified front.
- The low-priority status attributed to the project by some departments involved is disheartening on all levels, it may ultimately require the highest level of university to state a commitment to decolonising – and for it to be affirmed for departments that they are called on to be a part of the process.

## vii Recommendations

From the experiences of the advocates, this section will explore further action that can be taken, both on behalf of future advocates of the project, and also more widely the university, specifically departments and how they work alongside and collaborate with the wider student body to explore how university curricular.

### The Student Experience:

- A continuation of the research project planned throughout a period which is more accessible for participation by the wider student body, this recommendation has been put forward by each Advocate group. Since the submission of the group reports and the writing of this evaluation, it has been shared with the Advocates and DSEPs that Warwick University has endorsed the Decolonise Project to continue for another year as part of our strategic plan to Widening Participation, in a bid to positively increase overall access and participation at Warwick University.

### Collaboration:

- For Departments to be fully aware of the role of Decolonise Advocates and should be invited to discuss how making changes to decolonise the curriculum may benefit the experience of their students.
- For departments, and DSEPs to meet the project and its Advocates 'half-way' in terms of arriving to the collaboration armed with their own research around the 'decolonise' movement across UK universities and specifically in relation to how it impacts their departments directly from a sector-wide perspective.

#### *Student feedback:*

- **'Department representatives and advocates groups should sign a mutual contract regarding their commitments to the research and be encouraged to negotiate this together from the beginning of the project.'**
- **'Greater collaboration between advocate teams working in different departments in order to share resources and learn from one another.'**
- **'Furthermore, the main aims of the project should not be negotiable, the extent of the change cannot be defined as it evolves and as such, however focus should remain on the students working with departmental staff to achieve progress in this arena together.'**

### Decolonisation Research:

- Continued analysis of the curriculum, pedagogy and the student learning experience with students by way of the Advocates for more depth.
- For research from other working groups and sources of expertise to feed into the WDP and vice versa

## viii Closing:

UUK and NUS (2019) recommends universities work at gathering evidence and scrutinising data in a far more comprehensive way than is currently being done, this pilot was a success in initiating those conversations however because it was only short-term project more work could be done to build on its momentum to further develop and engage universities and students, more significantly allow a clearer

institutional message that issues of race are being looked at and broader thinking is embedded within wider strategic goals.

The Decolonise Project at the University of Warwick is an 'open invitation' to all students, departmental staff, and faculty leaders to engage in a 'transparent discourse' as it is anticipated that the research evidence will look towards having an impact on:

- Re-envisioning how/what knowledge is legitimised or de-legitimised through curriculum exclusion or inclusion.
- To gain an understanding of how a colonised education system is perceived in order to drive a sector-leading step change towards co-creation of an inclusive curriculum.
- Liberating teaching and learning, through content, pedagogy and process, and student experience.
- Enabling provisions and a basis of what could potentially be achieved in relation to best practice when it comes to equality, diversity and inclusion in the academic arena in years to come, benefitting the long-term processes of organisational development and change.
- Remaining a student-driven endeavour to engage academics 'experientially' in challenging subject areas require a catalyst at every turn, it is an intrinsic duty of the institution- to remember that young people are a sum of their learning up to a point on entry to a prestigious level of education. **The students are a direct reflect of the current status quo in the outside world beyond academic walls, the students are here to teach us where we need to be drivers of innovation, and to remain as ongoing sites of critique and debate.**

This project has encouraged a co-created dialogue between students and university members to develop approaches that could deliver a greater impact; the pilot phase of this project has generated and discovered strong interest in the topic, in the raised awareness of the nature of colonial impacts on the current day spectrum of education, specifically in its short time it has raised awareness of how BAME members feel excluded in teaching and learning environments.

In association to pedagogies and histories that serve to discount two centuries of struggle for democracy in the academic arena for BAME inclusion, such as for black communities where in-depth psychodynamic studies reveal how exclusion and lack of representation is prevalent across the board for black people all over the world, is rooted in an unaccountable colonial past and notably being explored as a 'global phenomenon' that plays out daily **"we cannot decolonise universities or the country, for that matter, if we do not adequately grapple, in greater numbers than we are currently, with the idea of colonisation"**.

The sector-wide initiative to 'decolonise the curriculum' across the UK comprises of systematic exploration of knowledge structures which traditionally exclude the representation of BAME experiences on various levels, including to look at how socially oppressed communities are marginalised and colonised by socially constructed categories, and the conscious or unconscious impacts this continues to have in shaping perceptions.

**Appendix 1: Project Timeline & Main Tasks**

Theme	Project	Tasks	Timeline:	
Developing Effective Plans	Mapping Priority Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Contact stage/Key department contacts: Contact department assigned to.</li> </ul>	March 2019	
	Plan Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Plans/Outline group plans for undertaking focus group research/interviews/</li> </ul>	March 2019	
	Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange Appreciative Inquiry interviews and focus groups with departmental staff/key stakeholders/Arrange logistics to conduct interviews and focus groups.</li> </ul>	April/May 2019	
	Execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct interviews/execute focus group interviews. Arrange themes/categories for defining data collated.</li> </ul>	April/May 2019	
	Evaluation & Impact	Review/Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collate, review and analyse data.</li> </ul>	April/May 2019
		Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write final report and present findings: SUHQ</li> </ul>	<b>May 2019*</b>
Deliver		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation Report</li> </ul>	<b>June 2019**</b>	

\*Note the Advocates requested an extension on their report deadline before the end of May 2019 due to earlier delays with departmental interactions and an untimely clash with the Exam season and Easter Holiday period later in the project.

\*\*The Advocates were approved a run-over of four weeks with due consideration of maintaining the Advocates' progress, their project deadline was extended from end of May 2019 to the new submission

date end of June 2019, this in turn instigated the extension of the Project Coordinator's role by four weeks, changing the final evaluation from the original end of June 2019 **to the new end of July 2019**.

## **APPENDIX 2: Keel University Decolonise Manifesto**

Decolonization involves identifying colonial systems, structures and relationships, and working to challenge those systems. It is not "integration" or simply the token inclusion of the intellectual achievements of non-white cultures. Rather, it involves a paradigm shift from a culture of exclusion and denial to the making of space for other political philosophies and knowledge systems. It's a culture shift to think more widely about why common knowledge is what it is, and in so doing adjusting cultural perceptions and power relations in real and significant ways.

One of the most significant problems relating to gaps in the curriculum in higher education is the lack of representation of black and minority ethnic groups. This is commonly referred to as the colonisation of the curriculum. The content of the curriculum in our universities continues to reflect and maintain a colonial legacy through the presentation of a white, western intellectual tradition as not only superior to other forms of knowledge but as universal. Since the end of the colonial period, epistemologies and knowledge systems at our universities have not changed considerably; they remain rooted in colonial and Western-centric worldviews. The curriculum remains largely Eurocentric and continues to reinforce white and Western dominance and privilege, while at the same time being full of stereotypes, prejudices and patronising views about non-white people and cultures. The academic space has been one of the key platforms that remind us of the legacy of the colonial past. Practically all academic disciplines have been influenced by a history of colonial thinking where western attitudes have dominated academic narratives and practices. For too long, teaching in universities has encouraged a 'traditional' and 'canonical' approach that privileges the work of selected authors. If we mainly cite white men in our work, we recreate a world where only knowledge produced by them is considered important, having the effect of marginalising the knowledge produced by others. Even where the curriculum includes the intellectual work of people racialized as other-than-white, it can still operate as a white curriculum. Those non-white writers are often presented as offering a response to 'mainstream' (i.e. white) thought, rather than as thinkers who themselves demand response. The white curricula not only compromise the quality of education, it also asserts irrational and unjust practices and has detrimental effects on both staff and students. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students are the first to feel the effects of a white curriculum. They find themselves under-represented and under-stimulated by the content of their curricula, with their histories, narratives and experiences omitted from mainstream discourse. The white curriculum feeds into the feeling of isolation, marginalisation, alienation, and exclusion which is internalised as these students live under the burden of the negative stereotypes regarding their communities and do not wish to reinforce them. As a consequence, BME students may not feel confident to speak up or to call this out, as much like their white counterparts, they have been socialised to see the institution as the gatekeeper of worthwhile knowledge. Our curriculum, like other university curricula in the UK, is centred on the 'pale, male and stale', and does not benefit nor capture the interest of a diverse staff and student body. Decolonisation has become particularly important since the recent managerial turn in university systems (auditing, benchmarking, ranking through REF and TEF, and non-stop complete strategic planning) has narrowed, not enriched, the domain of knowledge increasing pressure to teach and research for short-term profit.

The university curricula will not decolonise itself. It will not happen through the bureaucratised curriculum design reviews. Major curriculum reform cannot be achieved without greater democratisation of the university as an institution, and its relation to wider society. It is not something that happens overnight, it requires a sustained and serious commitment as well as ownership by all members of the university - staff and students, white and non-white.

### **WHAT WOULD IT MEAN TO DECOLONISE THE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM?**

1. Decolonising the curriculum means, first of all, acknowledging that knowledge is not owned by anyone. It is a cumulative and shared resource that is available to all. Knowledge (and culture) is collectively produced and human beings of all races, ethnicities, classes, genders, sexual orientations, and disabilities have as much right as elite white men to understand what our roles and contributions have been in shaping intellectual achievements and shifting culture and progress.
2. Decolonising the curriculum is to recognise that knowledge is inevitably marked by power relations. Our universities exist in a global economy of knowledge, with a definite hegemonic centre, reflecting hierarchies of race, class and gender. At the top of this hierarchy sit the knowledge institutions of the global North, databanks and research centres supported by the wealth of European and North American powers. This hegemonic position is not just a matter of the wealth of the global North. Our world is still shaped by a long colonial history in which white upper-class men are at the top of social hierarchy, most disciplines give disproportionate significance to the experiences, histories and achievements of this one group.
3. Decolonising is about rethinking, reframing and reconstructing the current curriculum in order to make it better, and more inclusive. It is about expanding our notions of good literature, so it doesn't always elevate one voice, one experience, and one way of being in the world. It is about considering how different frameworks, traditions and knowledge projects can inform each other, how multiple voices can be heard, and how new perspectives emerge from mutual learning.
4. Decolonising is not just about bringing in minority ethnic writers and texts, but also how we read 'traditional mainstream' texts. Decolonising is far more nuanced than just replacing authors, and it is more than just the topics covered in a course. It concerns not only what is taught and how it is critiqued, but how it is taught, which gives rise to an understanding of decolonisation that addresses how academic literacies are experienced.
5. Decolonising means identifying ways in which the university structurally reproduces colonial hierarchies; confronting, challenging and rejecting the status quo; and reimagining them and putting alternatives into practice for the benefit of our academic integrity and our social viability.
6. Decolonising the curriculum means creating spaces and resources for a dialogue among all members of the university on how to imagine and envision all cultures and knowledge systems in the curriculum, and with respect to what is being taught and how it frames the world.
7. Decolonisation is not a project over which one group can claim sole custodianship. Non-white and white academics and students are in this together. This will involve conscious, deliberate, non-hypocritical and diligent interest by both non-white and white members of the university in all knowledge systems, cultures, peoples and languages.
8. Decolonising requires sustained collaboration, discussion and experimentation among groups of teachers and students, who themselves have power to make things happen on the ground and think about what might be done differently. The change will take different forms in different universities and disciplines. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.
9. Decolonising is thinking about how students experience the university differently. Race, gender, disability and class all demonstrably impact student attainment and experiences of exclusion from the university environment. These are linked to the university's historic identity and mission, as well as wider structural inequalities within society.
10. Decolonising requires the courage to admit that any knowledge could and should be open to challenge and question; regardless of its original power relations. This is the only way to avoid the mere 'displacement' of one curriculum coloniser by another.

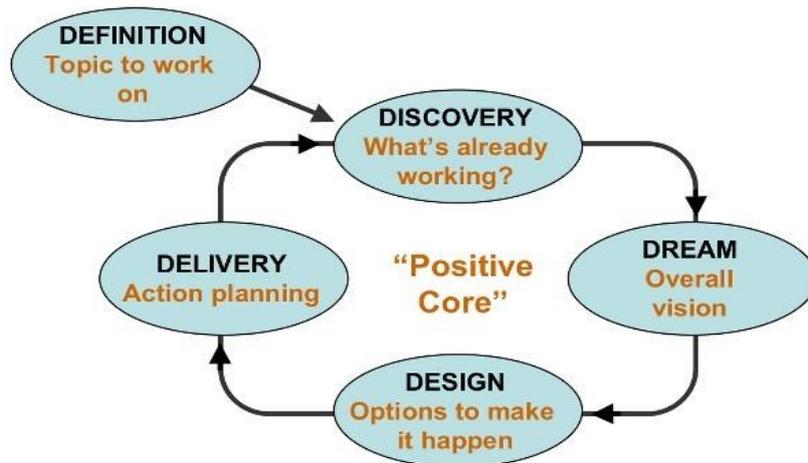
11. Decolonising is about how we can ensure a system where all those who engage with the university to make their living, or to study, can do so under conditions of dignity, respect and security.

### **APPENDIX 3: Key Stakeholders**

Some of the key stakeholders in this project include:

- SU and University Education Executives
- SU Academic Representation Transformation Steering Group
- Warwick Medical School BME Network
- MAP (Minorities and Philosophy) Warwick chapter
- Politics and International Studies: Liberated Curriculum Working Group
- Global Warwickshire Collective
- English and Literary Studies: Liberated Curriculum Working Group
- Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee
- Race Equality Taskforce
- Equality & Diversity Committee
- Fellows of the Warwick International Higher Education Academy
- Student Experience Network
- Heads of Departments' Forum
- National Decolonise Network
- SU Liberation Officers:
  - Women's Officer,
  - Ethnic Minorities Officer,
  - LGBTUA+ Officer,
  - Trans Students' Officer,
  - Disabled Students' Officer;
- NUS Liberation Campaigns:
  - Black Students' Campaign,
  - Disabled Students' Campaign,
  - Women's Campaign,
  - LGBT+ Campaign,
  - Trans Campaign.

### **APPENDIX 4: Appreciative Enquiry Method**



Benefits of using Appreciative Inquiry in evaluation:

- Lessen the fear and scepticism many have about evaluation by focusing on successes and best experiences
- Help organisations become learning systems with a focus on building onto the best of what is
- Engage the whole system in the evaluation process, thereby ensuring more comprehensive evaluation results
- Create buy-in to the changes recommended through the evaluation process which may lead to increased decision making and action
- Build organisation members' capacity for thinking about evaluation and engaging in more in the future
- Garner important programme and service information that can be used to develop more meaningful evaluation plans or designs

Benefits to the SU

- Deeper Engagement – helps the SU create a consistent way of identifying what is working within Club & Society and Academic Representation. It allows us to address challenges from a different perspective. For example, shift mind-set from what Execs are doing wrong (process), to what is working well. This helps build better relationships and trust.
- Improves morale and encourages optimism – helps show that progress is being made and that there are always things that are working well even if it may not seem so initially
- Demonstrating Impact – uncover the stories of the positive difference Clubs & Societies and Academic Representation has made to students' lives and relationships with departments and other stakeholders, which can be used for case studies and to replicate best practice
- Builds stronger relationship with University – the Academic Representation project is a partnership between the Warwick SU and the University. Using AI will enable all stakeholders to identify a joint vision based on what all parties are already doing well which enables deeper ownership of the action plan to achieve it.
- Recognition – demonstrates appreciation of the good work Clubs & Societies and Course Reps deliver and helps build on their strengths

- Employability – assist in Execs and Course Reps to reflect on their skills and experiences and identify specific examples of when they have used their strengths
- Legacy – identifying and building on what works strengthens the organisation. For example, it can assist the Exec & Course Rep handover process and developing more user-centred systems and designing future services. For the Academic Representation project best practice can be used to inform future training and rolled out to other University departments. It could also help inform the role of the new Directors of Student Experience.

The Student Development Manager already has expertise in using Appreciative Inquiry. This will facilitate the session planning and ongoing support of the evaluators, enabling the project to get started quickly.

The 5-D steps in the iterative cycle:

**Step 1: Define**

- Define – the stage during which the organization gathers data to decide the Affirmative Topic that will be the focus of the inquiry for the change the system seeks to make.

**Step 2: Discover**

- Discover – the stage when members of the organization inquire into high-point experiences and identify strengths and capabilities related to the Affirmative Topic—all of which add up to the “positive core.” \*

**Step 3: Dream**

- Dream—the stage during which the members share images and co-create possibilities of what the desired future might look, sound, and feel like when the “positive core” comes to life. (That could be immediately, or at some time in the future.)

**Step 4: Design**

- Design—the stage during which members collaboratively begin to design what projects and investments can (practically) and should (morally) be made to build organizational capacity to bring the Dream to life.

**Step 5: Destiny**

- Destiny—is the agreed commitments to the continued exploration of learning, innovation, and delivery of the outcomes all stakeholders care about.

**APPENDIX 5: Facebook Insights for Warwick Decolonise Project**

04/05/2019 17:29	If you study languages at Warwick or know anyone who is, please consider			139		10 9	
04/05/2019 17:26	Studying languages at Warwick? Take our quick survey to help us			1.1K		60 24	
22/04/2019 17:35	Warwick Decolonise Project			111		6 4	
22/04/2019 17:34	Any interested students are invited to attend the following workshop,			299		65 28	
21/04/2019 09:45	If anyone is free on the 1st of May, this lecture in memorial of			148		18 2	
15/04/2019 14:00	Decolonization involves identifying colonial systems, structures and			213		11 8	
14/04/2019 14:00	Decolonisation sensitises us to the existence of dominant discourses and the influence of			502		25 7	
13/04/2019 14:00	'Decolonising the curriculum' can mean many things and is not			702		31 15	
12/04/2019 14:00	<a href="https://www.varsity.co.uk/violet/13967">https://www.varsity.co.uk/violet/13967</a>			303		10 15	

**Appendix 6: Decolonise Advocates/Student Engagement Feedback**

Did your Line Manager:	Always	Often	Seldom	Never
Explain tasks properly?	8 out of 9		1 out of 9	
Give adequate instructions?	7 out of 9	1 out of 9	1 out of 9	
Give adequate support where required?	9 out of 9			
Listen to suggestions?	9 out of 9			
Show fair/unbiased treatment?	9 out of 9			
Provide constructive feedback on your performance?	7 out of 9	1 out of 9	1 out of 9	
Give praise where due?	8 out of 9	1 out of 9		
Make you aware of relevant SU/HR procedures and training?	8 out of 9		1 out of 9	

<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>						
<b>11. How would you rate the following:</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I Don't Know
I feel that I was given an effective induction into the Project	4 out of 9	4 out of 9		1 out of 9		
I feel that I received adequate training/coaching to perform my role	3 out of 9	3 out of 9	2 out of 9	1 out of 9		
The project encouraged me to learn and develop my potential	5 out of 9	4 out of 9				
Being an employee in this project has allowed me to develop and utilise my skills	6 out of 9	2 out of 9	1 out of 9			
The project helped me acquire skills and knowledge that will benefit my future career	6 out of 9	1 out of 9	2 out of 9			
The project allowed me to build my leadership skills in an independent/autonomous manner	6 out of 9	3 out of 9				
The research elements of the project helped me understand what it takes to question/explore/analyse and share knowledge	5 out of 9	3 out of 9	1 out of 9			
The project enabled me to understand the impact and value of knowledge research	6 out of 9	2 out of 9	1 out of 9			
The project's learning initiatives will increase my employability prospects when I finish studying	5 out of 9	2 out of 9	1 out of 9	1 out of 9		
The project facilitated my knowledge development in relation to the research process and theme of 'Decolonisation'	6 out of 9	2 out of 9	1 out of 9			
The work gave me a feeling of personal achievement	7 out of 9	2 out of 9				
Being engaged in the project has increased my personal confidence	5 out of 9	3 out of 9	1 out of 9			
I understand the SU's priorities and how it supports students	4 out of 9	3 out of 9	2 out of 9			

What did you like most about your job?

**'The fact it was challenging- so there were lots of opportunities to problem-solve and gain new skills'**

**'Working with others who are equally passionate about decolonising the curriculum- I've been able to understand decolonising from other perspectives and develop my understanding of the issue'**

**'Learning something new in my research, feel like I'm actually making a difference and building something'**

'I get to work in departments that I wouldn't have got insights on, for example I am currently enrolled at the WBS yet I get the chance to learn more about the medical school at Warwick which is great for my personal growth'

'I enjoyed the freedom and independence to explore how to best approach this project'

'I am passionate about understanding how education is perceived by the youth. Therefore, personally, it was rather rewarding to work on a project that empowers those left behind in a way'

'I liked the handprint I felt we were leaving on the University. There was a lot of autonomy and independence with the role which acted as both a blessing and a curse - blessing it allowed each team to morph into the role of both student and employee but curse as it compromised some vocational structure'

'I enjoyed the freedom that came with the job- although challenging at times, it is the first experience I have had in employment where I had the opportunity to take control of the activities, direction and scope of the project'

What did you like least about your job?

'The timing of the project posed a major barrier in how the project was undertaken. Given that decolonisation is becoming more relevant than ever, so much so that it is becoming a national movement across UK, it was a bit disheartening to not be able to reach the full potential that we could have. The departments who had agreed to become a part of the project seemed rather unwilling to support the actual cause and mould it to suit their personal needs as they viewed it more as an attack on the department'

'The difficulty to get work done during exam season (time management)'

'I started work in the second term of university, but I wish we had started earlier so that we would have had the chance to raise awareness about the project before we actually started'

'The clash with exam season- an earlier start date would enable us to engage with a greater number of students and dedicate more time to the job'

'Being limited by our departmental contact and sometimes the lack of collaboration with our wider group'

'In my particular role, I was the singular participant in my team. Whilst this allowed me to be wholly independent with how I approached the topic – as a final year student – it often interfered with my academia. I also found that the Psychology department were not that cooperative despite their prior advocacy of the project'

Did you have any suggestions as to how the job could be improved? If so, have you raised them in the past with your line manager?

'If we had been able to start sooner, Term 1 or budget for refreshments for focus groups. I have raised both with Suki.'

**'Yes, I think we could use more support from academics.'**

**'Yes, I believe that there needs to be more momentum created in the University to generate more awareness about the project so we can get more engagement. Additionally, as stated before, it is very important to shift the timeline of the project for both the advocates to better work and deliver and to be able to get more participation and better results.'**

**'Although I understand the fact that this was the first year of the project and the aim was to allow the students to take control of the direction, I felt as though a little more direction could have been provided at certain stages within the project, for example when activity was stilted.'**

**'I have not raised any issues. I think having at least an hour meetup every week would benefit employees both individually and collectively. It will also allow the line manager to keep up to date without having to request updates from students.'**

**'I think the aims of the project could be expanded. I also think creating more opportunities for whole-group collaboration would improve motivation + momentum.'**

**'More collaboration between our groups- suggestion has been raised recently in 1-2-1 meeting.'**

**'yes and yes' x 2**

Did you feel valued in your role?

**'Yes – I found the one to one meetings and larger group meetings encouraging and felt as though my views and ideas were valued at every stage, by both my manager and my peers.'**

**'Given I was the only member in my team, I felt absolutely valued in my role'.**

**'Yes, working in the role and telling people what the project is about every time gave me a renewed sense of confidence in why I decided to work for the project in the first place and why it is important to keep working in it.'**

**'Definitely we are viewed as important'**

**'Yes, I feel valued but also understood and encouraged through 1-2-1 meetings and various training programmes'**

**'Yes'. (x 4).**

How would you describe your working relationship with your line manager? How would you describe your working relationships with colleagues/team?

**'Wonderful and very comfortable...My colleagues have been constant pillars of support which was much needed on a project like this so I am extremely satisfied.'**

**'Very positive overall...Also very positive with regards to my team.'**

**'A very good working relationship- kept us motivated and open-minded about the project and encouraged us think outside the box...Worked very well with my team and enjoyed working with them. We were able to delegate responsibilities effectively based on our availability.'**

**'Great, Suki is very encouraging 1-2-1 meetings are really great...With my team in the medical school it is good- not that much interaction with other teams though a get-together has now been suggested which would be great.'**

**'Very good. We have 1-2-1 meetings where we can personally liaise and discuss the potential for moving forward. Our line manager was constantly in contact with us...Very good also! We utilised social media to stay connected like Facebook messenger groups. We all developed a unified sense of community and this has only strengthened.'**

**'My line manager was rather helpful and understanding and her friendly nature definitely helped build a rapport because of which we were comfortable as a team, to share our problems regarding the project with her. She was very understanding when we weren't able to deliver as much due to exams but always made sure she gave credit when due...I had the chance to meet some exceptionally passionate and talented people on the team. Despite not having many chances to meet, we were able to work collectively, supporting each other and working towards our common goal.'**

**'Truly inspiring employee. I was grateful she was selected for the role. Her relationship with the team was impersonal yet personal and she struck a great balance between professionalism and comfort. Her lack of formality fostered an environment perfect for students whilst demanding a lot of respect...I had very little interaction with the team due to my circumstances however the group chat we did allow for updates and reminders.'**

**'Our line manager was very open and ready to help if we had any problems. The relationship between my line manager and myself was different to any manager I've had in the past, and her approach to the project was incredibly encouraging in terms of self-development and growth...The social Media forums have allowed for effective means of communication with team members.'**

**Collaboration: How do you feel about the level of communication with your partnering faculty?**

**'Very poor. It took several weeks to hear from my partnering faculty despite being assured of their support. That said, when I was able to contact the respective member of staff she was helpful in pointing me in the right direction' (Psychology Advocate)**

**'Communication was limited because the faculty had certain days specific for their work which is understandable. Other than that, they made sure we were provided with details we needed when we asked for them, and went out of their way to arrange for 1-2-1 sessions in their packed schedule to benefit us individually too' (Philosophy Advocate)**

**'The faculty has recently been more responsive, but we still feel that there could have been a significant improvement in the level of communication with the partnering faculty. Delays in**

response times has put a time constraint on the work we can actually do and achieve. The department was originally resistant toward the project and agreed to proceed effectively on their terms' (Philosophy Advocate)

'Great- we are working directly with Emily Reid in the Medical Department and we briefly had a Medical Student on our team. The two of them have given invaluable insight to the medical department. Although it was hard to get initially in contact with med school- weren't replying emails' (Warwick Medical School)

'This was the most challenging aspect of the job – level of communication was not great and it took a while for our key contact in the department to have an initial meeting with us. We managed to overcome this lack of communication by reaching out to others in the department who were willing to meet and discuss the project' (SMLC)

'Although I fully understand why the approach was taken to choose a specific contact/champion from the department, I'm not sure that this was helpful for our objectives as advocates/researchers. Instead it felt more like our ability to research/investigate was limited by a 'gatekeeper' figure. Personally I do not feel that the level of communication with our partnering faculty was adequate in order to truly meet the aims of the project' (SMLC)

'My experience has been great. I think the only area of improvement would be that there should be more people involved in the faculty in case one person is busy or sick' (Warwick Medical School)

'This was perhaps the aspect that hindered us the most regarding the development and progression of the scope of our project in terms of how we had envisioned and planned it to be. We reached out to the head of the Philosophy department, who seemed eager to set up a meeting with our team. She informed us that she had invited the Philosophy Department's representative for the Equality and Welfare Committee. We went as a team, and initially were invited to describe the background of the project, and what plans we had for the future in terms of working alongside the department. From this point on, both professors started to take control of the meeting, and ultimately the direction of our research. The discussion became purely between the two, with them sometimes talking over each other and leaving no room for anyone else to talk. I tried to join in the conversation three times but was talked over each time by the Equality representative. This was patronising, unprofessional and made me feel quite embarrassed - and in the end making me feel as though my contribution was not valued and honestly, quite stupid. They talked between themselves for the majority of the hour meeting we had (literally 35-45 minutes of the entire time), and very much led it into the direction they wanted, i.e. a project that focused on the teaching style of the department, and whether this led to the exclusion of BAME students. For example, they wanted to focus on first years as they had a better overview of the initial way in which the department welcomed people (however, I did not completely understand this as later years would have a better overview of teaching methods as a whole), as well as restricted the questions we could ask within the questionnaire (this is more understandable, to avoid leading questions etc. but ultimately is more restrictive regarding the developing the scope of the project as we wanted it to be). On top of this, both were white, middle-aged academics. Whilst I am not stating that they do not have the capacity to enhance the experience of BAME students, I felt as though I couldn't share some of my personal experiences as a BAME student in response to some of the problems they have experienced with engaging students and how this links to some experiences I have found (them talking over me was

discouraging and didn't create an environment I felt comfortable sharing these experiences in.) This was in contrast to the entire Decolonise project of decolonising the curriculum, which we had explicitly described at the beginning. In the end, when they asked whether or not we agreed with what they had discussed, the interaction all in all made me feel incredibly disempowered and belittled; I felt as though I really didn't have a choice but to agree. Whilst they seemed keen on the idea they had proposed, I felt restricted in terms of analysing critically the department, as it ended up becoming more a project for them and internal department improvement (through the experiences of students), as opposed to fully engaging with students and understanding and being a voice for them' (Philosophy Department)

'Engaging with stakeholders and contacts in the medical department was at first extremely difficult and for the first several weeks we had no response from the medical department. Although emails were sent and meetings requested these were not returned due to key people being out of the office, off sick or on leave. Engagement was therefore extremely hard and did hinder the pace of the project in the beginning - a lot of the basic background information we needed to know about the medical school (i.e. the structure of curriculum, chain of command, the importance of the GMC or methods of teaching) we had to research and learn ourselves or find out much later on, once contact was established. Meetings would have been a more preferred, easier and less time consuming way to learn such information. This could be made easier next time if there were medical students on the team who already know a lot of this information or understand the structure of the medical school to know who to approach and talk to.' (Warwick Medical School Advocate)

'This research project is a very important starting point in a long overdue conversation about the decolonisation of the University of Warwick, from the curriculum and beyond. The process of conducting this research was a very enriching yet challenging experience for all advocates involved. The main challenges faced were in the form of resistance from the Philosophy department, but even more-so the time-frame of the project. Although the latter is easily resolvable by starting the project in term 1 of the next academic year (2019/20) instead of term 2, the resistance from the Philosophy department posed a bigger challenge in the course of the project and will largely involve structural changes. It is worth noting that throughout the project, many adjustments to our initial aim of investigating the extent that the department needs to be decolonised particularly for the needs for BAME were made to accommodate the interests of the department, which often felt entirely different to our own. The advocates believe that the resistance was largely due to the department viewing the term "decolonisation" as an attack towards their inclusivity. It became difficult to gauge their understanding of the project and mould the project according to this understanding so as to be able to receive support from the department, whilst ensuring the actual aims of the project were met. This required us to spend a lot of time finding ways to satisfy both the department and our own aims, which could have been spent conducting research.' (Philosophy Advocates)

#### Student Experience: How have you benefitted as a result of this project?

'I have talked to a wide range of people and through this I have discovered different experiences of BAME students on a wider university level, not just through the curriculum. One significant example I found was to do with the way in which BAME students are treated in the counselling service – for example, solutions do not often align with BAME cultures (i.e. 'just talk to your parents about

**deferring a term’ – the student I talked with described how culturally, this was not a realistic possibility, and this was not comprehensible for the counsellor). This has allowed for greater levels of self-awareness within myself in terms of personal experiences with personal tutors/counselling services.’ (Philosophy Advocate)**

**‘I got insights into research I would not have known about. As the project progressed I also realised how important this project is and I am glad I am a part of something important.’ (Warwick Medical School Advocate)**

**‘I have really valued this project as it allowed me to make use of the skills I’ve gained through my degree (sociology). It has been a great opportunity to finally get some more ‘professional’ work experience as of my previous roles have been customer service based. I also feel that the project has helped me develop my confidence due to the independent nature of it.’ (SMLC)**

**‘I have learnt a lot more about decolonising the curriculum. I’ve developed confidence through attending and organising various meetings with students and staff. A lot of the research is relevant to my history and politics degree and I hope to build on the knowledge acquired in the future.’ (SMLC)**

**‘The project has been really eye-opening in terms of what we are researching. But also in terms of personal development, the opportunity to do a strengths profile and customer service training has allowed me to understand and see aspects of myself, my personality, my views and biases and how these affect the people and the world around me’ (Warwick Medical School)**

**‘This has been incredibly enriching. I feel as though I have gained several valuable skills – particularly in areas I struggled with (like public speaking). This project has also been a great example of how students working together can create a strong community.’ (Philosophy Advocate)**

**‘Due to the project, I have understood the hurdles that come in the way when one tries to work against the norm. There were quite a few times when we were in a dilemma about how to proceed with the project because anything we would do would impact either the project or the relationship with the department we were studying.’ (Philosophy Advocate)**

**‘The project kept me focused on an agenda wider than just the academic curriculum. It offered some humanity to an otherwise theoretical university experience- I appreciate it for that.’ (Psychology Advocate)**

**‘A major method in our qualitative studies was to distribute a survey to the entire Philosophy department cohort toward the beginning of term 3. However due to several delays in waiting for the key stakeholders of the department to get back to us, we were unable to distribute the survey in time to obtain enough data for this report. Appendix (-) provides an example of the correspondence held between ourselves and the philosophy department. Whilst the email suggests that the department authorised questions would be provided to us by the end of the week, they in fact were not shared until the end of the following week. In addition to this, the scope of the project was reduced to only first year philosophy students, and per the request of the department, we were asked to change the theme and scope of the project and spend time**

looking into the ‘inclusivity in the Philosophy community’ (whether or not students feel engaged or welcome in the department / do students view themselves as philosophers) as opposed to the decolonisation of the philosophy department. This became more evident by the pacification (or ‘neutralisation’ as the department deemed it) of our proposed questions by the department. Instead of creating a unified front for the decolonise project with our department, we found that we were working on two separate projects. One to satisfy the department, and one to achieve our goals as decolonise project advocates. On several occasions it seemed as though the department lumped our project in with their own diversity schemes, particularly regarding their attempt to maintain their Athena Swan award (a definition of this award can be found in Appendix G). Attending an Equality and Welfare committee meeting made it clear that the expectation of us was synonymous to that of SSLC i.e. general feedback of the department. Furthermore, another meeting with two of the main contacts with the department proved difficult to gain an insight into the decolonial work the department was already doing as according to the contacts - this information could not be given to us, for various reasons. Overall it is very clear that this project must be emphasised as being a student lead research initiative by Warwick SU, that is separate to the department’s own initiatives. This is to prevent any bias in research and to enable the advocates to conduct research independently. However, even if this is achieved, lack of support from the department will pose a problem for the advocates to be able to access important resources to conduct this research (for example, student emails). A feasible solution to this is a commitment by the department to provide access to resources for advocates, as this project is for the benefit of the department and the university. It is worth noting that the MAP coordinators and Welfare and Equality committee meetings attendees are valuable contacts for this research.’ (Philosophy Advocates)

Impacts: Describe the impacts of your research and how the community benefitted:

‘I hope that my research will be accepted warmly by the Student’s Union and suggestions are considered appropriately. If they are to be followed, I believe they will foster an environment of much comfort for many students who have, otherwise, felt neglected by the institution.’

‘Through the establishment of the network and the research we have undertaken; we have been able to understand the realities of the problem by those who are first hand affected by it- BAME students. I believe that through continuous participation in the project, it will become a bigger movement which will help the wider community realise what they ignored, not because they were ignorant, but because they had no idea these problems existed. Education should be studied in the essence of creating a better life and not to empower the already powerful. With the project and this realisation, I believe that the goals established will be met and we would be able to work towards achieving equality in education.’

‘The project is giving students voices, particularly those already underrepresented. This project is in its infancy and this first year is the start of a long journey to continue giving students voices a spotlight and highlighting the current issues the university is facing with decolonising.’

**‘Hopefully it will serve to highlight those perspectives that have been silenced and create doctors more aware of their ethnically diverse patients. The impact that could have on the standard of care these doctors will be able to provide cannot be understated.’**

**‘The research will be used to lobby the university for a more inclusive curriculum which the wider student community can relate to. Closely linked to the Decolonise Project is the attainment gap and diversity within degree courses. Hopefully, a curriculum that incorporates what our research has uncovered will radically transform student perceptions of various degrees and create a curriculum that all students can relate to.’**

**‘I do feel that our research has raised important questions about receptivity to change among departments. We have uncovered a great deal of interest in the values of decolonise across the university in various forms. Which has been hugely positive. However, the realities of implementing substantial change at the department level seems a lot more challenging. I think our research has made a great initial impact in realising this but needs to be built upon in the future.’**

**‘At the medical school, we discovered various touch points within the course that needed some serious work. BME students have shared various experiences that have potentially hampered their confidence with regards to starting their career. With this project we are glad that these students are coming forward and helping us improve the quality of education we provide.’**

**‘Firstly, this has definitely raised awareness of the issue. Through socialising with friends when discussing the work I do for the SU, often they do not understand the meaning of the word ‘decolonise’ which leads to a wider discussion about the issue, and at times a realisation that this issue has impacted them too. The research will hopefully lead to the project continuing into the next year which will also allow for further discoveries and improvements to be made.’**

Acknowledgements contained within Reports:

**‘we would like to make a special thanks to our supervisor, Suki Kaur, who was always on hand if we needed any resources and coaching. Suki was beyond helpful, encouraging and inspiring at all times because she was so ardent about the potential of the project. Another huge thanks must go to Emily Reid from the medical department; Emily was truly passionate about the project and her contributions, help and guidance were invaluable. Finally, we must thank Larissa for beginning this project and giving us the opportunity to be a part of it - without her vision of a decolonised Warwick, none of this would have been possible.’ (Warwick Medical School Advocates)**

**‘To the students who have yearned to be depicted but have represented themselves regardless. To the University of Warwick Student’s Union for supporting the efforts of the Decolonise Team. To the Decolonise Team for submitting their time and efforts to represent the student body.’ (Psychology Advocate)**

**APPENDIX 7: Academic Engagement Feedback/DSEPs**

**Warwick SUHQ/Warwick University****The Decolonise Project- Research Pilot 2018/19****Academic Engagement Feedback Form**

Director of Student Engagement and Progression (DSEP):

Department: **School of Modern Languages and Cultures**

<b>1. To what extent has your engagement with the Decolonise Advocates involved the pursuit of the following intellectual activities?</b>					
<b>1 Never; 2 Occasionally; 3 Often; 4 Very Often</b>		<b>1.</b>	<b>2.</b>	<b>3.</b>	<b>4.</b>
A	Memorising facts, ideas or methods from your subjects and readings		x		
B	Analysing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a case or situation in depth and considering its components			x	
C	Making judgements about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how other gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions			x	
D	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations			x	
E	Conferring ethical guidelines and demonstrating knowledge of their application in relation to your department/faculty?	x			
F	Discourse/understanding of how annual and periodic development reviews that monitor and assess the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum are conducted within your academic department?			x	
<b><u>Additional Comments:</u></b>					

<b>2. During the project, how many times did you meet with your Decolonise Group (e.g. number of meetings/interactive engagements/co-creative work sessions)?</b>					
A	Number of meetings	2			
B	Number of engagements involving other people in your department	1 (SSLC)			
C	Who were the other e.g. if sign-posted to another specialist/support/champion/lecturer/senior staff/Head of Department?	SSLC Coordinator			
<b><u>Additional Comments:</u></b>					
We have quite a devolved model of responsibility in the department, so I was able to brief the advocates on most aspects of SMLC policy and planning. Next year it would be good to have them come to an Education Committee (which I'll be chairing).					
<b>3. To what extent has your experience and engagement in this project, and directly with the Decolonise Advocates contributed to your knowledge, skills and professional role development in the following areas?</b>					
<b>1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much</b>		<b>1.</b>	<b>2.</b>	<b>3.</b>	<b>4.</b>
A	Acquiring a broader understanding of how the content of curricular education can impact BAME communities negatively			x	
B	Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills	x			

C	Thinking critically and analytically of how current education can be advanced to reflect more inclusivity of other races and cultures (global viewpoints)			x	
D	Understanding students/people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds			x	
E	Analysing quantitative and qualitative problems	x			
F	Contributing to the welfare of the student community			x	
G	Contributing to the integration of BAME student experiences within teaching and learning environments			x	
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
Taking part in this project was a very simple decision. If we're serious about tackling some of the barriers faced by BAME students then this is a project every department should be involved with.					

#### 4. What are the BEST ASPECTS of how your department engaged with the student-advocates?

I think this was definitely the discussions I had with the advocates. They learnt a lot about language education in the UK and the context we work in, and I learnt a lot from them and their experiences from other departments.

#### 5. What could be done to IMPROVE how your department engages student-advocates?

I think next time I would invite them to an Education Committee and possibly the School Management Group and introduce them to more colleagues.

#### 6. To what extent does your department emphasise each of the following?

1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much		1.	2.	3.	4.
A	Spending significant amounts of time engaging students outside of studying and academic work times				x
B	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds				x
C	Attending campus events and activities (e.g. special speakers, cultural performances, other events, etc.)				x
D	Providing additional support to help students hold campus/project related events			x	
E	Encourage feedback from students through proactive Q&A panels/suggestion processes/other			x	
F	Promotes engagement of projects such as this (please describe how below)			x	
G	Preserves the work achieved in projects such as this e.g. archived/documentated/reports			x	
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					

**Please share any additional comments you would like to make centred around the student experience of the Advocates, the collaboration amongst yourselves, and the explorative theme of 'Decolonisation' and its relation to higher education.**

#### **Additional Comments**

This is an excellent, much-needed project at Warwick. The advocates were consistently well-prepared, well-organised and very amenable to discussion. I really enjoyed engaging with them and I think their professionalism was exemplary. They were not helped by factors

beyond our control—the exams timetable issue and the ‘group chat’—but they were able nonetheless to conduct some research and to engage with our students.

Thank you.

**Warwick SUHQ/Warwick University**

**The Decolonise Project- Research Pilot 2018/19**

**Academic Engagement Feedback Form**

Director of Student Engagement and Progression (DSEP):

Department: **Philosophy**

<b>1. To what extent has your engagement with the Decolonise Advocates involved the pursuit of the following intellectual activities?</b>					
<b>1 Never; 2 Occasionally; 3 Often; 4 Very Often</b>		<b>1.</b>	<b>2.</b>	<b>3.</b>	<b>4.</b>
a	Memorising facts, ideas or methods from your subjects and readings				
b	Analysing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a case or situation in depth and considering its components				
c	Making judgements about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how other gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions				
d	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations				
e	Conferring ethical guidelines and demonstrating knowledge of their application in relation to your department/faculty?				
f	Discourse/understanding of how annual and periodic development reviews that monitor and assess the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum are conducted within your academic department?				
<b><u>Additional Comments:</u></b>					
I don't really get where this question is coming from – more guidance of the context for this would have helped me answer your questions					

<b>2. During the project, how many times did you meet with your Decolonise Group (e.g. number of meetings/interactive engagements/co-creative work sessions)?</b>		
a	Number of meetings	2 (but I also made regular contact by email and invited them to a Minorities and Philosophy session but they did not attend)
b	Number of engagements involving other people in your department	2
c	Who were the other e.g. if sign-posted to another specialist/support/champion/lecturer/senior staff/Head of Department?	I met with them with the chair of the equality and welfare committee, and they attended the equality and welfare committee as a whole
<b><u>Additional Comments:</u></b>		
The timing of the project made it difficult to meet with the students. We did agree that they would deliver a survey but they didn't do it (and didn't write to me to say they had finished the project). They also didn't discuss their report at all, which left me confused as to what they were reviewing (and seemed to go against what we had all agreed as the remit for the project).		
<b>3. To what extent has your experience and engagement in this project, and directly with the Decolonise Advocates contributed to your knowledge, skills and professional role development in the following areas?</b>		

1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much		1.	2.	3.	4.
a	Acquiring a broader understanding of how the content of curricular education can impact BAME communities negatively	✓			
b	Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills	✓			
c	Thinking critically and analytically of how current education can be advanced to reflect more inclusivity of other races and cultures (global viewpoints)	✓			
d	Understanding students/people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	✓			
e	Analysing quantitative and qualitative problems	✓			
F	Contributing to the welfare of the student community	✓			
g	Contributing to the integration of BAME student experiences within teaching and learning environments	✓			
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
Unfortunately, the students did very little that they shared with the department. This was very disappointing.					

4. What are the BEST ASPECTS of how your department engaged with the student-advocates?
We had a really constructive initial conversation where discussed the broader context (both their work as advocates and what philosophy is like as a discipline), we agreed a clear remit with clear goals. The students started work on a survey but didn't complete it.
It was great that they were able to attend our equality and welfare committee but a shame that they didn't have anything to feedback and discuss.

5. What could be done to IMPROVE how your department engages student-advocates?
The main thing is that more time is needed to build relationships to enable the work to happen. The failures with this project are not really the students' fault but the timing of the project. They were good, committed students that simply ran out of time. Departments are very busy all year and so it would work better if advocates were in post for a longer period (so the work is more spread out).

6. To what extent does your department emphasise each of the following?					
1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much		1.	2.	3.	4.
a	Spending significant amounts of time engaging students outside of studying and academic work times				✓
b	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds		✓		
c	Attending campus events and activities (e.g. special speakers, cultural performances, other events, etc.)			✓	
d	Providing additional support to help students hold campus/project related events				✓
e	Encourage feedback from students through proactive Q&A panels/suggestion processes/other			✓	

f	Promotes engagement of projects such as this (please describe how below)			✓	
g	Preserves the work achieved in projects such as this e.g. archived/documentated/reports			✓	
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
We have tended to try to reach all students rather than identifying students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds (we don't have a way of accurately identifying individuals, so try to put on events and opportunities to appeal to such students who self-identify).					

**Please share any additional comments you would like to make centred around the student experience of the Advocates, the collaboration amongst yourselves, and the explorative theme of 'Decolonisation' and its relation to higher education.**

**Additional Comments:**

This is a great scheme but more buy in is needed from HoDs. We also need such partnerships to be in place earlier in the year for more meaningful work to take place. I'm a bit concerned that due to the lack of findings from this pilot, my HoD will be reluctant to support continuation of the scheme. More support from the SU is needed to help the advocates achieve goals in partnership with the department.

**Thank you.**

**Warwick SUHQ/Warwick University**

**The Decolonise Project- Research Pilot 2018/19**

**Academic Engagement Feedback Form**

Director of Student Engagement and Progression (DSEP):

Department: **Psychology**

<b>1. To what extent has your engagement with the Decolonise Advocates involved the pursuit of the following intellectual activities?</b>					
<b>1 Never; 2 Occasionally; 3 Often; 4 Very Often</b>		1.	2.	3	4
a	Memorising facts, ideas or methods from your subjects and readings	X			
b	Analysing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a case or situation in depth and considering its components			X	
c	Making judgements about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how other gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions				X
d	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	X			
e	Conferring ethical guidelines and demonstrating knowledge of their application in relation to your department/faculty?				X
f	Discourse/understanding of how annual and periodic development reviews that monitor and assess the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum are conducted within your academic department?		x		
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
It has shown me that actually there is so much that needs to be covered by departments but there is little central support on this or guidance. There needs to be wider research on the BME experience of students but also staff at Warwick.					

<b>2. During the project, how many times did you meet with your Decolonise Group (e.g. number of meetings/interactive engagements/co-creative work sessions)?</b>					
A	Number of meetings	2			
B	Number of engagements involving other people in your department	0			
C	Who were the other e.g. if sign-posted to another specialist/support/champion/lecturer/senior staff/Head of Department?	0			
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
I would have liked to have met more, but the documents need to be written aligning to the discourse of the department. Maybe a collaborative approach with the SU and department. This will capture the department experience well.					
<b>3. To what extent has your experience and engagement in this project, and directly with the Decolonise Advocates contributed to your knowledge, skills and professional role development in the following areas?</b>					
<b>1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much</b>		1.	2.	3.	4.
A	Acquiring a broader understanding of how the content of curricular education can impact BAME communities negatively			x	
B	Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills	X			
C	Thinking critically and analytically of how current education can be advanced to reflect more inclusivity of other races and cultures (global viewpoints)		X		
D	Understanding students/people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	X			
E	Analysing quantitative and qualitative problems	X			
F	Contributing to the welfare of the student community			X	

G	Contributing to the integration of BAME student experiences within teaching and learning environments				X
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
I came with knowledge of this area before coming to Warwick. I am a BME member of staff who is working class and female, so I relate to a lot of aspects of this project. Saying this, It should not just be people like me who do this work.					

<b>4. What are the BEST ASPECTS of how your department engaged with the student-advocates?</b>
Working with the SU and Department. Especially, as a DSEP this is really important.

<b>5. What could be done to IMPROVE how your department engages student-advocates?</b>
More people on board, and maybe thinking more broadly about student experience outside of the curriculum.

<b>6. To what extent does your department emphasise each of the following?</b>					
<b>1 Not at all; 2 Somewhat; 3 Quite a lot; 4 Very much</b>					
		1.	2.	3	4
A	Spending significant amounts of time engaging students outside of studying and academic work times			X	
B	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds		X		
C	Attending campus events and activities (e.g. special speakers, cultural performances, other events, etc.)	x			
D	Providing additional support to help students hold campus/project related events			X	
E	Encourage feedback from students through proactive Q&A panels/suggestion processes/other			X	
F	Promotes engagement of projects such as this (please describe how below)		X		
G	Preserves the work achieved in projects such as this e.g. archived/documented/reports	X			
<b>Additional Comments:</b>					
To my knowledge, I am the first DSEP so a lot of this work has not been carried out before. I hope the department does engage a lot more in such activities.					

Thank you.

## Appendix 8: Philosophy/Collaboration

**The Philosophy Department** were generally constrained by the time limits of the project and a slow start, and this was compounded by further meetings required to discuss the ethos of the project and bring clarity to the national movement led by students across the globe. Without incriminating anyone in particular, it is extremely concerning that the Philosophy Advocates felt they had to capture their reflections as such: **‘The advocates - the students that have compiled this report - are all of BAME background and were aware of the issues BAME students faced. For the students it was a reflection of deep-set institutional racism, which affects BAME students well after their education and in their professional careers’**, here the group reasserts its rights in this collaboration as ‘students’ on a base level, more specifically inclusive of their point of view as BAME students, over being Advocates of Warwick University. To remain integral to the Advocates in the face of the resistance experienced, this section is expanded on in the appendices (Appendix: Philosophy/Collaboration). DSEP was not always responsive in communications with the SU and did not attend any related meetings.

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The first meeting was between the Project Coordinator and the DSEP. Followed-up by another meeting where the Head of Department, the department’s Equality & Welfare Officer, and the DSEP were present, in attendance with the SU’s Decolonise Project Coordinator and Education Officer to prompt the student-led drive behind the collaboration, and consequently any meetings had thereafter were with the Advocates themselves.

The Philosophy Advocates centred their report in two parts **‘Overall, this report aims to critically discuss both the Philosophy department in regards to the inclusivity of their curriculum, as well as whether or not the steps used to analyse them are effective; as the report develops, the key issue of the restraint of the philosophy department will be highlighted and is undeniably the greatest finding from our research.’**

An online survey was conducted without the support of the department and distributed to the wider campus to gain some generalised feedback about the decolonise initiative, feeling pressured and helpless they sought to use the little time they had left to achieve more for themselves. This group adapted their research methods to also apply the qualitative approach of ‘ethnographic research’ to present their real-life experience, which led them to the scrutiny of their own student experience whilst engaging with the Philosophy Department.

The Advocate group express their initial enthusiasm on entering the project **‘As all three students studied at the university of Warwick for the duration of the project and are of BAME background, the topic and issues tackled by the report were what motivated the advocates to partake in the study. A lack of prior research and scrutiny within this area meant that the project allowed advocates to be at the forefront to reforming and highlighting the issues of discrimination against BAME students at university’**, the Advocates in this group shared their frustrations with the Project Coordinator during individual 1-2-1 meetings and amongst themselves, they felt discouraged and demonstrated the typical signs of ‘defeatism’, it is important to note that they still believe this is something that they are likely to experience in the workplace as professionals despite consistent encouragement from the SU support team. Notably motivation for the project was affected within this group, however the students were encouraged to be integral in their interactions and authentically appeal to their departments about how they felt their group objectives were being stymied, its concerning they could not reiterate to the department directly that they felt misunderstood. Significantly, this group expressed and confirmed their level of dissatisfaction about how unmotivated they felt during engagements and conversations that transpired between themselves and the department.

The Advocates reported **'The Philosophy department and the faculty members involved in the collaboration showed restraint towards the term "decolonisation" as they insisted this term be changed to "inclusivity" in the theme as well as the understanding of the project. It thus becomes important to educate departments and stakeholders about the specific scope of the project, so it is not perceived as a personal attack towards any particular individual(s) or department.'**

The Philosophy Advocates also reflected some of their criticism towards the project itself where they state **'Overall it is very clear that this project must be emphasised as being a student led research initiative by Warwick SU, that is separate to the department's own initiatives'** Attempts were in fact made by the SU on behalf of the Advocates, albeit they seemed to be misunderstood by the department.

This may have eroded the group's trust in the SU to be able to make any head way in the plight of oppressed voices expressed through their own student body (the students involved were all BAME, one of which was a Black Male who self-identified as LGBTQ) although not explicitly expressed, it is fair to say this had a knock on effect on the individual learning and development of this group of Advocates as well as leaving the project feeling defeated, in retrospect it appears not a single positive conversation around 'decolonisation' was had in pursuit of intellectual engagement, educational reform or within the remit of the national debate surrounding the 'decolonise' context or more specifically how it may be impacting other Philosophy Departments across the sector, rather it appears it was intentionally sidelined **'the interaction all in all made me feel incredibly disempowered and belittled; I felt as though I really didn't have a choice but to agree.'**

The Project Coordinator's earlier meeting with the DSEP hinted towards concerns over students overthrowing western greats (such as Socrates and Hegel) in replacement of new innovators, the DSEP was assured it was a peaceful, collaborative project that was working towards 'expanding the curriculum' not replacing it and in relaying that the tenure towards innovative approaches in directly in the hands of the department itself, and more certainly it was to be the start of creating a space to open 'dialogues' amongst its own student cohort, more so than demanding an upgrade of the education system overnight.

The second meeting with the department was attended by the Education Officer who had pioneered the project at Warwick University to reaffirm the status of participation- which to her mind was already confirmed as she had made the bid for funding after rallying the support of all the departments involved and before the project had commenced. The Education Officer involved assured the Project Coordinator that we were working with the right champions within each department, particularly as the philosophy department's DSEP sat on and supported wider BAME related issues such as the **'(WIHEA)/Learning Circle on Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Process'**, this was identified and initiated with the department contact before a Project Coordinator was recruited to support the students in their progression.

Here, attention is drawn to **'The department was originally resistant toward the project and agreed to proceed effectively on their terms'** the statement is a reflection of two aspects, firstly echoed by institutions of what has been established as a typified resistance response 'campaign for decolonising the curriculum still faces scepticism and resistance' (**Appendix 10: Guardian Article, 2019**), following that the Advocates were overstretched to change the term of 'decolonisation', whilst ominously experiencing being 'stereotyped' and 'not seen'- simultaneously.

Secondly, the students' time was utilised by the departments for their own purposes, the challenge of the Decolonise Project was not welcomed and the collaboration -on all levels- mostly strained towards maintaining the status quo rather than clarifying the scope of those 'power relations' in terms of who can take the steps needed towards an innovative educational stance with the appeal made by this project?

In review of the independent group report it became evident that the approach taken by the department was coercive in nature **'we were asked to change the theme and scope of the project and spend time looking into the 'inclusivity in the Philosophy community'**, the Decolonise Project Coordinator received the same conditional dictates in response to an introductory email which demonstrated the project ethos had not been understood, this was an opportunity to address the work being done at Warwick in line with the national movement at all UK universities, and following a 1-2-1 meeting with the DSEP it was believed that an understanding had been achieved regarding the terms and the scope of the project. This depicts a major barrier in collaborations where genuine efforts made by a collective to build a common language -discourse- becomes undone as it deviates away from the greater consensus and is not reflective of the changing landscape as a whole.

The lack of collaboration becomes transparent as despite initial meetings, national monthly press releases directly related to 'Decolonising the curriculum', and a team of BAME students to empower and engage into representational Advocates, the Philosophy Department have treated the project and their engagement with the Advocates as a tokenistic gesture to inclusion **'It is not simply about the token inclusion of a few BAME writers, but an underlying transformation from a culture of denial and exclusion to a consideration of different traditions of knowledge. To diversify our curriculum is to challenge power relations and call for deeper thinking about the content of our courses and how we teach them'** (Guardian Article, 2019) which fails to support what is more of a public consensus behind the wider initiatives rather than an SU attempt to gratify itself.

Advocates reported that they were being put to use to gather data for the sake of the department's own tick-boxing agenda **'we were asked to change the theme and scope of the project and spend time looking into the 'inclusivity in the Philosophy community' (whether or not students feel engaged or welcome in the department / do students view themselves as philosophers) as opposed to the decolonisation of the philosophy department. This became more evident by the pacification (or 'neutralisation' as the department deemed it) of our proposed questions by the department. Instead of creating a unified front for the decolonise project with our department, we found that we were working on two separate projects. One to satisfy the department, and one to achieve our goals as decolonise project advocates. On several occasions it seemed as though the department lumped our project in with their own diversity schemes, particularly regarding their attempt to maintain their Athena Swan award...Attending an Equality and Welfare committee meeting made it clear that the expectation of us was synonymous to that of SSLC i.e. general feedback of the department. Furthermore, another meeting with two of the main contacts with the department proved difficult to gain an insight into the decolonial work the department was already doing as according to the contacts - this information could not be given to us, for various reasons.'** The department seem to be actively avoiding engagement with the project, on the whole the department collectively perceives the value of the project or the 'mission' behind it to be of low priority.

**'This was perhaps the aspect that hindered us the most regarding the development and progression of the scope of our project in terms of how we had envisioned and planned it to be. We reached out to the head of the Philosophy department, who seemed eager to set up a meeting with our team. She informed us that she had invited the Philosophy Department's representative for the Equality and Welfare Committee. We went as a team, and initially were invited to describe the background of the project, and what plans we had for the future in terms of working alongside the department. From this point on, both professors started to take control of the meeting, and ultimately the direction of our research. The discussion became purely between the two, with them sometimes talking over each other and leaving no room for anyone else to talk. I tried to join in the conversation three times but was talked over each time by the Equality representative. This was patronising, unprofessional and made me feel quite embarrassed - and in the end making me feel as though my contribution was not valued and honestly, quite stupid. They talked between themselves for the majority of the hour meeting we had (literally 35-45 minutes of the entire time), and very much led it into the direction they**

wanted, i.e. a project that focused on the teaching style of the department, and whether this led to the exclusion of BAME students. For example, they wanted to focus on first years as they had a better overview of the initial way in which the department welcomed people (however, I did not completely understand this as later years would have a better overview of teaching methods as a whole), as well as restricted the questions we could ask within the questionnaire (this is more understandable, to avoid leading questions etc. but ultimately is more restrictive regarding the developing the scope of the project as we wanted it to be). On top of this, both were white, middle-aged academics. Whilst I am not stating that they do not have the capacity to enhance the experience of BAME students, I felt as though I couldn't share some of my personal experiences as a BAME student in response to some of the problems they have experienced with engaging students and how this links to some experiences I have found (them talking over me was discouraging and didn't create an environment I felt comfortable sharing these experiences in.) This was in contrast to the entire Decolonise project of decolonising the curriculum, which we had explicitly described at the beginning. In the end, when they asked whether or not we agreed with what they had discussed, the interaction all in all made me feel incredibly disempowered and belittled; I felt as though I really didn't have a choice but to agree. Whilst they seemed keen on the idea they had proposed, I felt restricted in terms of analysing critically the department, as it ended up becoming more a project for them and internal department improvement (through the experiences of students), as opposed to fully engaging with students and understanding and being a voice for them'. The 'student experience' appears to be a statistic that the department can 'spin' rather than a real-life aspect to be improved. Further input from the National Student Survey, based on 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduates reinforces that the philosophy department overall has lower engagement and satisfaction from BME students compared to their white counterparts (**Appendix 11: National Student Survey 2019**).

Ultimately the Philosophy Advocates were put in an awkward situation, they were challenged the most of all the groups and have taken an integral stance in articulating their feedback and input into a project they feel passionately about, in contrast the philosophy Department's perception has tended towards the negative, the Academic Feedback form received back from the Philosophy DSEP outlines 'the failures of the project' as related to the SU for not supporting the students when the demoralising turn of events for the Advocates began following their interactions with the department, to the extent the Advocates did not feel they could share their report with the department.

It is relevant to mention that despite the limited time made available to the project; feedback from the Education Officer relays that the timing of the project was affected by the slow release of the funds by the University last year (2018) end of November, December contended with the Christmas period, with compilation of job descriptions and advertising in January, this meant the project kick-started in February, in hindsight this first cohort of Advocates have displayed exemplary mannerisms throughout the course of this project, expressly by way of offering meaningful engagement to fellow students at the University of Warwick.

As referred to in group report appendices: Appendix G/Athena Swan Award:

Definition of the Athena Swan Award according to the 'Advance HE Equality Charter' website <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/charter-marks-explained/>

'ECU's equality charters enable organisations to apply for an award recognising their commitment to, and progress on, equality and diversity.

The charters aim to drive forward the cultural and systemic changes needed if institutions are to remain competitive and attractive to talented staff and potential students in a global market.

These outcome-focused programmes are catalysts for change – encouraging higher education institutions, research institutes and others to transform their cultures and make a real impact on the lives of staff and students’

## **APPENIDX 9: Wider University Engagement**

**SSLC Observations:** Our observations at the SSLC meeting largely corroborated the above concerns, participants also stated concerns about the difficulty in engaging students for further feedback, especially during the exam period. Some participants at the meeting also expressed concerns that the core modules lacked perspectives from non-dominant voices of knowledge. It was expressed that the majority of readings still remain to originate from white, male authors. Although it was mentioned that efforts have been made to some extent to liberate the curriculum and incorporate feminist perspectives, this cannot be placed under the umbrella of decolonising to shift the focus. It is rather the over-arching assumption that core knowledge comes from white male Europeans that needs further challenging throughout the curriculum. In order to do this, other voices need to be given a platform.

The SSLC department meetings are also regularly attended by library academic support staff, who are incredibly supportive of the aims of decolonise, and pro-actively engage with academic conversations surrounding decolonise. The library academic support are vital allies in assisting with decolonising work, and are able to encourage students to read more widely and request books that reflect their own specific cultural backgrounds.

**English Department Townhall Meeting:** In March, the English Department organised a town hall meeting which was open to students and staff and was addressed by Professor Gurminder Bhabra who recently wrote the book ‘Decolonising the University’. The meeting was very useful as it made us aware of some of the many barriers academics face in decolonising the curriculum. Whilst many academics have huge amounts of autonomy in constructing a curriculum, the long and tedious process of module re-evaluation requires significant amounts of academic labour. With many academics already working stressful hours, academic labour needs to be taken into account. Whilst certain topics may need to be covered in core modules, the extent to which certain topics need to be taught is often not specified and this is often left to individual departments. However, some topics may be taught at the expense of others and this may be a barrier to decolonising the curriculum.

**BREM Seminar:** Attending the BREM seminar allowed us to see how decolonising work was taking place in other departments. Notably, presence from the ‘liberating the curriculum’ group in PAIS seems to be a very positive initiative, which encourages students to be pro-actively critical of their reading lists. Discussion at the seminar also raised important issues

such as our assumptions of what constitutes knowledge and where ‘empirical knowledge’ comes from. One academic staff member recounted how placing a ‘non-traditional’ text on the reading list of a memoir from a black author instigated debate, as students were stimulated to ask what qualities make a text reliable and what qualities attribute authority to a text.

**Colonial Hangover Project:** The Colonial Hangover Project in PAIS also places a focus on widening participation initiatives, enabling BAME students to participate in decolonised educational activities. The Colonial Hangover Project group were integral to the planning and support of our launch event, giving us the encouragement to open up our work to the wider university community.

### **Appendix 10: Guardian Article (2019)**

March 20 2019/The Guardian

Students at British universities are increasingly calling for their reading lists to include more black and minority ethnic (BAME) writers. But four years after the first [Rhodes Must Fall](#) protest in South Africa, the campaign for decolonising the curriculum still faces scepticism and resistance.

#### **Students want their curriculums decolonised. Are universities listening?**

While Meghan Markle recently [came out in support](#) of the campaign, not all academics are on board. Doug Stokes, a lecturer at the University of Exeter, has [claimed](#) that calls to decolonise the curriculum are “a big mistake” since “the last thing our universities need are to have ‘male, pale and stale’ voices side-lined.”

This narrow view has become a common complaint of those who feel threatened by recent challenges, yet what these critics miss is that decolonising universities is not about completely eliminating white men from the curriculum. It’s about challenging longstanding biases and omissions that limit how we understand politics and society.

Many advocates of decolonisation don’t want to abolish the canon; they want to interrogate its assumptions and broaden our intellectual vision to include a wider range of perspectives. While decolonising the curriculum can mean different things, it includes a fundamental reconsideration of who is teaching, what the subject matter is and how it’s being taught.

Far from being a meritocratic system, academia is still struggling to overcome ingrained structural inequalities. Only two weeks before Stokes’s article, [a report from the University and College Union](#) found that black female professors in the UK faced systemic racism, bullying and discrimination.

To put things in perspective, the report states that in the 2016-17 academic year just 25 black women were recorded as working as professors compared to 14,000 white men. Despite outnumbering black women as professors at a rate of 560 to 1, some white men believe they are the ones under threat.

There has been little change over the past decade, despite the well-documented nature of the problem. Decolonising universities involves reviewing hiring and promotion practices to correct the current biases that discriminate against BAME academics. As a white man, it would be easy for me to assume that my successes were solely a result of my hard work, and ignore the structural biases that advantage me at every step of my career.

[Students](#) are also concerned about the narrowness of their curriculums. Here it is also important to consider the facts. Most reading lists in my discipline of political science and international relations consist of an overwhelming majority of white male authors. This introduces a systematic distortion to the material and ignores excellent scholarship produced by BAME scholars.

When we offer white male-dominated reading lists we also teach students the wrong lessons about who is an intellectual authority and deserves our attention. BAME students need to see themselves reflected in the curriculum as legitimate creators of knowledge.

The demand for greater representation from non-European writers need not involve burning copies of Plato and Shakespeare's texts. We can still teach authors like John Locke, but we should note that he was a liberal political philosopher deeply enmeshed in American slavery – including investing in the slave-trading Royal African Company and [co-authoring the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina](#), which enshrined chattel slavery.

The issue is complex, but to overlook this ignores the fundamental role that slavery and colonialism played in the development of modernity.

### **'Universities shouldn't be comfortable': vice-chancellors on campus protests**

It is not simply about the token inclusion of a few BAME writers, but an underlying transformation from a culture of denial and exclusion to a consideration of different traditions of knowledge. To diversify our curriculum is to challenge power relations and call for deeper thinking about the content of our courses and how we teach them.

Critics claim that the perspectives of race and gender are not relevant to certain subject matter. Why decolonise a module on American foreign policy, for example? The answer is that you can't properly teach such a module without incorporating these perspectives into the curriculum.

Decolonisation asks us to consider how the location and identity of an author shape their perspective. Designing modules entails narrating stories and we need to reflect more critically on how these stories are told. Which actors are privileged and placed at the centre? Whose voices are authoritative and considered as part of the canon while others are left at the margins?

Sceptics should realise that the campaign is not a witch hunt, but a legitimate concern about addressing how the forces of racism and colonialism have shaped our past and present. This is a campaign that all academics should be actively promoting in their departments – as many already do.

- James Muldoon is a lecturer at the University of Exeter

## **Appendix 11: National Student Survey 2019**

The following statements are from the Education Team's analysis of the 2019 NSS Scores.

BME Students in the Philosophy Department (3<sup>rd</sup> Years) scored 24 out of 25 questions lower than their White counterparts with 18 of the questions with a minimum of 5 points less than their White counterparts.

The following questions are the Top 5 differences from their White counterparts:

Question 2. Staff have made the subject interesting (-11.55)

Question 16. The timetable works effectively for me (-11.01)

Question 25. It is clear have students' feedback on the course has been acted on. (-10.9)

Question 3. The course is intellectually stimulating (-9.85)

Question 22. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course (-9.5)

## PGT strategy working group update for FECs December 2019

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### Overview

The PGT strategy group was created in response to the repositioning of the Graduate School as the Doctoral College, which exposed an absence of strategic and operational oversight of PGT at the institutional level.

### Aims

The group is tasked with generating recommendations to Senate in summer term 2020. We have identified the following as priority areas:

1. The place of PGT in relation to University governance:
  - a. To generate strategic solutions to ensure that the distinctive nature of PGT study and students are recognised in University strategy (especially in education, internationalisation, employability, student experience), governance and management structures.
  - b. Where should leadership on PGT sit? Need buy-in at the highest level of management, input into strategic development, a clear reporting line, and a point of reference for PGT-focused work around the University.
  - c. Systems need adapting to PGT structures/calendar – e.g. TEG, admissions, module approvals, personal tutoring.
2. Student Experience:
  - a. How do we articulate a PGT-focused narrative about what it means to be part of the Warwick community?
  - b. How do we tailor support in areas where the UG model does not fit PGT calendar, scale or requirements? (e.g. personal tutoring, accommodation, pre-arrival support, acculturation, study skills, distance learning, etc?)
  - c. How can we use space to make students feel more integrated, supported and visible?

### Interim Reflections and Recommendations

1. The scope includes all modes and levels of PGT study, including full-time, part-time, distance learning and CPD. We recognise that there is no 'typical' PGT student and that the 'PGT' label covers a diversity of experiences.
2. The focus is on central university strategy, provision and support for departments, rather than on departmental activity itself. **A consultation to capture the current position and concerns will go out to departments in January, for report to the February meeting.**
3. Feedback from students (e.g. via PTES, PG SSLCs, the SU) indicates ongoing frustration at lack of visibility, the failure of systems to account for their needs, a lack of tailored pedagogy, and being 'lumped in' with UGs.
4. Feedback from strategy group members indicates longstanding frustration with the lack of support for PGT students throughout their lifecycle. There is a strong expectation that this project and its recommendations will lead to real change.
5. This work needs to be visible; with more frequent reporting from the strategy group, Ed Exec will be in a position to help us communicate developments along institutional reporting lines.

Latest developments

1. Kirsty Hooper has resigned from her role as Deputy Chair of BGS and Chair of the working group. A replacement is being sought but Colin Sparrow will chair the group as an interim solution.
2. Chris Hughes will join the next meeting of the group.
3. The group is likely to expand its membership to include a FEC Chair and representation from Education, Policy and Quality.
4. The group will consider how to engage extensively with students during the next six months.

Rhiannon Martyn, Head of the Doctoral College

11 December 2019

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**Terms of reference****1. Membership**

Chair: Kirsty Hooper (Modern Languages) *Colin Sparrow from January*

Secretary: Rhiannon Martyn (Doctoral College)

Alice Churm (SU PG Sabb Officer)

Debbi Marais (WMS)

Robin Clark (WMG)

Ross Ritchie (WBS)

Stuart Allen (Life Sciences)

Florian Reiche (PAIS)

Jennifer Smith (Economics)

Pietari Kaapa (Culture & Media Policy)

Andy Clark (Academic Director UG)

Ant Brewerton (Library)

Erika Hawkes (Student Opportunities)

Andrea Humber (Law)

**2. Terms of Reference**

- a) Undertake a detailed exploration of current PGT provision at Warwick across the entire lifecycle in consultation with all stakeholders to identify issues, gaps and best practice;
- b) Identify best practice in the sector;
- c) Propose and consult on strategic solutions to ensure that the distinctive nature of PGT study and students are recognised in University strategy, its governance and its management structures;
- d) Propose and consult on a strategic identity for the Warwick PGT offer and experience in dialogue with wider University strategy, as a means of focusing and enhancing recruitment, retention and reputation within the sector.
- e) Make prioritised recommendations to Senate in the summer term 2020, to include an implementation plan).

**3. Scope**

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • All modes of study | • Life on campus        |
| • Recruitment        | • Progression           |
| • Induction          | • Governance/management |
| • Curriculum         |                         |

Not in scope: assessment

**4. Reporting structure**

Reporting to the: Board of Graduate Studies; AQSC; SLEEC, FECs; Faculty Boards; Education Committee

**5. Meetings**

Monthly

## UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

For the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies to be held on 7 November 2019

**PhD and EngD Submission Rates 2019**

The University follows the methodology employed by UKRI to generate submission rates for students completing within 4 years (full-time) and 7 years (part-time). For the purpose of this exercise a student is classed as either a 'submitter' or a 'non-submitter'. Students who submit within four years (or part-time equivalent) are classed as submitters, regardless of the outcome of their viva. Allowance is made for periods of temporary withdrawal. Otherwise, whatever the reasons for submitting late or the duration of time after the 4-year point (or part-time equivalent) that a student submits their thesis for examination, the student is classed as a non-submitter.

**Methodology**

The figures below are based on data extracted from the Data Warehouse on 25 October 2019. The years relate to the academic cohort – the 2015 cohort includes full-time students who started in 2015-16, and part-time students who started in 2012-13.

Any students who have not completed a full four (or seven for part-time) year registration period, for example due to starting later in the academic year or taking period(s) of temporary withdrawal, have not been included in the 2015 figures. Data for previous years has been updated to include students who had been ineligible at the time of previous reporting due to not having completing their full registration period.

Any students who permanently withdrew during the first year of registration (two years for part-time students) are not included in the figures.

**Submission rates**

Faculty	No. of Students					No. Submitted Within 4 Years					% Submitted within 4 years				
	11	12	13	14	15	11	12	13	14	15	11	12	13	14	15
Arts	55	54	71	43	42	42	45	55	27	34	76%	83%	77%	63%	81%
Science	255	277	298	262	-	207	228	252	213	-	81%	82%	85%	81%	-
Medicine	18	27	40	27	-	16	24	39	20	-	89%	89%	98%	74%	-
Social Sciences	165	152	155	148	107	105	106	113	101	78	64%	70%	73%	68%	73%
Science, Engineering & Medicine	-	-	-	-	241	-	-	-	-	210	-	-	-	-	87%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>83%</b>

The overall submission rate has increased from 75% to 83% for the 2015 cohort. The submission rate has increased across all faculties. This is the first year that the submission rate for Science, Engineering and Medicine has been combined – previously this was reported separately for the Faculties of Science and Medicine.

Departmental submission rates are provided in appendix 1.

The 2015 cohort contains 553 students. Of these, 39 (7%) are excluded for withdrawing in their first year, leaving 514. 322 have already submitted within 4 years, and 68 have allowed the four years to expire without submitting. These are the figures used to calculate the overall 83% submission rate. However, there were another 124 students whose submission status was not resolved by the date of the data download and who are not therefore included in the 2015 figures.

**Recommendation**

The Board is invited to receive the contents of this report

Laura Larard

Administrative Officer (Doctoral College)

29 October 2019

## Appendix 1 – Departmental submission rates

	No. of Students			No. Submitted Within 4 Years			% Submitted Within 4 Years		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
<b>Arts</b>									
Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies	6	1	3	6	1	2	100%	100%	67%
Classics and Ancient History	3	4	4	1	1	3	33%	25%	75%
English and Comparative Literary Studies	19	12	8	15	10	6	79%	83%	75%
Film and Television	3	4	1	1	4	1	33%	100%	100%
History	15	6	11	12	2	9	80%	33%	82%
History of Art	2	1	3	2	1	3	100%	100%	100%
Modern Languages and Cultures	16	6	5	13	5	5	81%	83%	100%
Renaissance Studies	2	1	1	2	0	1	100%	0%	100%
Theatre and Performance Studies	5	4	6	3	1	4	60%	25%	67%
<b>Science, Engineering and Medicine</b>									
Chemistry	52	40	41	48	32	37	92%	80%	90%
Computer Science	17	18	17	12	15	12	71%	83%	71%
Engineering	37	28	18	32	22	14	86%	79%	78%
Life Sciences	35	33	41	29	27	40	83%	82%	98%
Mathematics	43	34	31	40	28	28	93%	82%	90%
Physics	37	34	24	33	28	23	89%	82%	96%
Psychology	11	8	7	11	7	7	100%	88%	100%
Statistics	11	12	11	10	9	11	91%	75%	100%
Warwick Medical School	40	27	27	39	20	24	98%	74%	89%
WMG	45	41	24	29	32	14	64%	78%	58%
<b>Social Science</b>									
CEDAR	-	2	1	-	2	0	-	100%	0%
Centre for Applied Linguistics	10	13	8	7	10	8	70%	77%	100%
Centre for Education Studies	22	18	12	11	8	8	50%	44%	67%

Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies	5	3	-	5	1	-	100%	33%	-
Centre for Lifelong Learning	2	2	2	1	0	1	50%	0%	50%
Economics	-	-	9	-	-	9	-	-	100%
IER	1	6	-	1	4	-	100%	67%	-
Law	13	10	6	6	5	5	46%	50%	83%
Philosophy	9	8	9	8	6	5	89%	75%	56%
Politics and International Studies	25	28	14	20	25	13	80%	89%	93%
Sociology	17	20	11	11	11	7	65%	55%	64%
WBS	50	38	35	42	29	22	84%	76%	63%

Report to the Faculty Education Committee (Science, Engineering and Medicine)			
Reference:	038.SEMEC.19-20	Report classification:	Restricted
Meeting Date	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2020		
Title	Postgraduate Taught Student Welcome: Consultation on Course Start Dates		
Author / Presenter	Lisa Field, Induction Manager, Student Opportunity		
Purpose of Report			Tick all that apply ✓
To provide assurance		To obtain approval	
Regulatory requirement		To highlight an emerging risk or issue	
To canvas opinion	✓	For information	
To provide advice		To highlight student or staff experience	
University Strategy			
Research		Education	✓
Innovation		Inclusion	
Regional Leadership		Internationalisation	
Equality and Diversity			
Are there any equality and diversity implications that would affect the University's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED; to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people) that should be discussed as part of this report? (if yes, details to be provided within the report) [please contact <a href="mailto:Equality@warwick.ac.uk">Equality@warwick.ac.uk</a> if you have queries relating to E&D]			Yes
			No ✓
<b>Summary of Report</b>			
<p>The Welcome Team is undertaking a project to provide a high quality and distinctive Welcome to all new full-time Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students.</p> <p>As part of this project the Welcome Team is exploring whether PGT courses should start in Welcome Week to encourage students to participate in Welcome Week and attend their course inductions.</p> <p>At present full-time PGT course start dates are varied, with the majority of students starting on the Monday of Week 1.</p> <p>The Welcome Team is in dialogue with departments about the practical implications of a move of start dates in relation to departments differing views and circumstances.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>The Committee is invited to provide feedback on two options in relation to PGT course start dates based on the information provided in this paper:</p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> A recommendation to move the start dates for PGT courses that do not currently start in Welcome Week to the Monday of Welcome Week (Week 52 in the academic week timetable). For immigration reasons, course duration would remain at 52 weeks, with an understanding that Week 52 is not normally used as teaching time by courses in-scope</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> A recommendation not to make changes to course start dates</p>		

Route Map for this Report			
Committee	Date	Reference	Action Requested/Taken
SEMEC	16 January 2020	038.SEMEC.19-20	To provide feedback

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

For the meeting of the Faculty Education Committee (Science, Engineering and Medicine) to be held on 16<sup>th</sup>  
January 2020

**Postgraduate Taught Student Welcome: Consultation on Course Start Dates**

**Executive Summary**

The Welcome Team is undertaking a project to provide a high quality and distinctive Welcome to all new full-time Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students.

As part of this project the Welcome Team is exploring whether PGT courses should start in Welcome Week to encourage students to participate in Welcome Week and attend their course inductions.

At present full-time PGT course start dates are varied, with the majority of students starting on the Monday of Week 1 (See Fig 1).

The Welcome Team is in dialogue with departments about the practical implications of a move of start dates in relation to departments differing views and circumstances.

The Committee is invited to provide feedback on two options in relation to PGT course start dates based on the information provided in this paper:

**Option 1:** A recommendation to move the start dates for PGT courses that do not currently start in Welcome Week to the Monday of Welcome Week (Week 52 in the academic week timetable). For immigration reasons, course duration would remain at 52 weeks, with an understanding that Week 52 is not normally used as teaching time by courses in-scope

**Option 2:** A recommendation not to make changes to course start dates

**1. Background Information**

The Welcome Team is undertaking a project to provide a high quality and distinctive Welcome to all new full-time Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students. The full scope of this project, and any exclusions, are outlined in a paper that was distributed to this group in the autumn term and is included as an appendix here.

a) Project Update

The research phase of this project is complete.

The Welcome Team is now analysing the findings and recommendations will be made to the Welcome Week Steering Group on Tuesday 28 January.

b) Changing PGT Course Start Dates

When Welcome Week was introduced in 2018, all Undergraduate course start dates were extended by one week, to include Welcome Week, and therefore maximise participation. However, course start dates for PGT students were not changed. As part of this project the Welcome Team is exploring whether PGT courses should start in Welcome Week to encourage students to participate in Welcome Week and attend their course inductions.

Student feedback from the Welcome Week Surveys in 2018 and 2019 found that PG students who attended Welcome Week found it very helpful. For example, in 2019 83% of PGTs agreed that Welcome Week helped them to make friends and 82% agreed that Welcome Week helped them to feel part of the Warwick Community.

Following the success of Welcome Week, the Students' Union Postgraduate Student Executive Committee lobbied for a change to course start dates so that all students can benefit from attending Welcome Week and receiving some level of basic academic induction during this time.

At present, where a PGT course does not include Welcome Week, there is a barrier to students attending because they do not need to be on campus as a requirement of their course.

## 2. Course Start Dates – Present Picture

The present picture for full time PGT course start dates is mixed, with the majority of students (1978, from 115 courses) starting on the Monday of Week 1. This compares to 1670 students from 25 courses starting in Welcome Week. See Fig 1 below.

Fig 1. Number of Courses by Course Start Date

Course Start date	No. of courses	No. F/T Students	Number of courses by cohort size				
			<9 students	10-49 students	50-9 students	100-199 students	200+ Students
30 Sept	115	1978	46	63	3 (CAL x2, WMG x1)	2 (WMG )	1 (WMG)
23 Sept <b>(Monday of Welcome Week)</b>	25	1670	7	4	7 (WBS)	6 (WMG)	0
22 Sept	1	72			1 (WBS)		
16 Sept	3	217		1	1 (Economics)	1 (Economics)	

### 3. Staff Feedback

The Welcome Team has undertaken a thorough consultation with departments via a series of Staff and Student Development Workshops at which every in-scope academic department<sup>1</sup> has been represented by at least one member of staff. Staff attending workshops were from a variety of roles including DSEPs, DPGs and Department Administrators. There is therefore some potential diversity of perspective on this issue. To mitigate against inconsistency it was emphasised by email, and at each workshop, that staff were expected to represent their department's position rather than their own. In order to do this, staff were asked consult all relevant colleagues and decision makers after the workshop and to contact the Welcome Team with any differing points of view by 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

Relevant staff feedback is summarised below.

When asked at Development Workshops whether course start dates for PGT courses could be moved to the Monday of Welcome Week, department representatives responded as follows:

#### Departments in favour

Computer Science	Education Studies
Statistics	Philosophy
WMG	WBS
Life Sciences	
Global Sustainable Development and Liberal Arts	
English	
English and Comparative Lit. Studies	

#### Departments not currently supportive

Departments not currently supportive	Reason
Engineering	Dissertations being processed
Classics	Lack of staff time and a preference for personalised induction
History of Art	Start dates cannot be changed for visa reasons due to the Venice term
Economics	There are two full weeks of 9-5 teaching in Weeks 51 and 52 and regular lectures/seminars begin in Week 1.
PAIS	Course is designed for 52 weeks
Law	Academic staff are reluctant to teach before Week 2 and moving start dates would put additional pressure on resources e.g. rooms
History	Concerns that students may feel isolated and unsure of what to do if they have too much undirected time

<sup>1</sup> Warwick Medical School courses and PGCEs have been taken out of scope

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Departments with mixed feedback	Reasons for concerns or not currently being supportive
Maths	No reason provided
WMG	Logistical concerns about student numbers and room/space
CLL	Cohort does not attend during daytime hours
WBS	WBS Finance suite starts on Sunday of Arrivals Weekend
Sociology	Concerns around visa timeframes: not insurmountable, but re-assurances are required from the Immigration Team
Psychology	Joint courses with Economics could result in courses with different start dates within the same department

Chemistry, School of Modern Languages and Cultures and most WBS courses already start in Welcome Week. We are waiting to receive feedback from Film and Television Studies.

We are currently contacting all colleagues who were not currently supportive, to gain further insight into the reasons given because some feedback implies they may have misinterpreted the question, whilst other reasons are more complex and require further discussion e.g. around joint degree provision. Updates may be available to share at Faculty Education Committee meetings.

At the Development Workshops we also asked colleagues and students to list advantages and disadvantages of moving course start dates. The responses were as follows:

	Advantages of Moving Courses Start Dates	Challenges if Moving Courses Start Dates
<b>For Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time to settle/integrate (18)</li> <li>• Opportunities to meet other students (10)</li> <li>• Access to opportunities outside of the department (6)</li> <li>• More staged approach to transition/ information provision (3)</li> <li>• Consistency of Welcome to Warwick (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less time for visa processing (9)</li> <li>• Less time for finding accommodation (4)</li> <li>• Welcome Week is too busy – too many UGs, PGTs “drowned out” (5)</li> <li>• Issues around Joint Masters Degrees</li> </ul>
<b>For Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time to sort issues before teaching starts (8)</li> <li>• Streamlining communications and student journey (11)</li> <li>• More events and activities for students to attend (5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff availability e.g. to cover UG Welcome, dissertation, Open Days, research, exam boards (18)</li> <li>• Department resources e.g. busy with UGs, availability of social spaces, (17)</li> <li>• Dissertation issues – submission dates, marking (6)</li> </ul>

#### 4. Next Steps

We are attending Faculty Education Committees and will finalise our recommendations based on feedback from the Committees, the workshops and follow up conversations with relevant colleagues.

At the end of January, we will present recommendations to the Welcome Week Steering Group to improve the PGT welcome experience. Course start dates will form one part, as this project is broader than this particular issue, as set out in Appendix 1.

We will circulate recommendations to this Committee when they have been approved. You can contact the Welcome Team with any queries at [welcometeam@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:welcometeam@warwick.ac.uk).

#### Recommendations

In the interests of consulting as comprehensively as possible, we would like to share these findings with you and invite your feedback on the proposal to change course start dates.

The Committee is invited to provide feedback on two options in relation to PGT course start dates:

**Option 1:** A recommendation to move the start dates for PGT courses that do not currently start in Welcome Week to the Monday of Welcome Week (Week 52 in the academic week timetable). For immigration reasons, course duration would remain at 52 weeks, with an understanding that Week 52 is not normally used by courses in-scope as teaching time

**Option 2:** A recommendation not to make changes to course start dates

Lisa Field  
Induction Manager, Student Opportunity  
6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

## APPENDIX 1

### Faculty Education Committees Paper, November 2019

#### Postgraduate Taught Welcome Project

This paper is for information and dissemination.

#### Background Information

The Welcome Team is starting a project to provide a high quality and distinctive Welcome, to all new full-time postgraduate taught (PGT) students.

#### Approach

<b>Scope:</b> The initial phase of this project aims to:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Gain a deeper understanding of PGT students' experiences, expectations and needs via analysis of existing survey data and qualitative engagement with students</li><li>2. Gain insight into sector practice through benchmarking</li><li>3. Consult with academic departments</li><li>4. Formulate recommendations for improving the Welcome for new PGT students</li><li>5. Explore the impact of recommendations on supporting infrastructure and resources (e.g. space, accommodation, central and department administrative systems)</li></ol>	<b>Out of scope:</b>  Postgraduate Research courses  Part time and distance learning PGT courses  PGT courses starting mid cycle
<b>Outputs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recommendations to the Welcome Week Steering Group on how to enhance the Welcome for new PGT students.</li></ul>	
<b>Project Milestones:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Sept - December 2019</b> - gain a deeper understanding of PGT students' experiences and needs through analysis of existing survey data, literature, benchmarking and qualitative engagement with students and staff</li><li>➤ <b>January 2020</b> - present recommendations to the Welcome Week Steering Group on how to enhance the Welcome for new PGT students</li><li>➤ <b>Welcome Week 2020</b> – implement practical recommendations for improving the PGT Student Welcome</li><li>➤ <b>Welcome 2021</b> – deliver a high quality and distinctive Welcome to new PGT Students</li></ul>	

#### Getting involved

Students and colleagues from all academic and professional service departments are invited to shape this project. Please book onto a Development Workshops at

[warwick.ac.uk/students/welcome/staff/pgwelcome](http://warwick.ac.uk/students/welcome/staff/pgwelcome).

You can also contact the Welcome Team with any queries at [welcome2019@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:welcome2019@warwick.ac.uk)

**Lisa Field**

**Induction Manager. Student Opportunity  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

## Feedback Turnaround Term 1 19/20: Faculty Summary

<b>A Department</b>	<b>B Total Number of Modules Reported</b>	<b>C Modules Meeting 20 University Working Days Turnaround</b>	<b>D % Compliant Modules in T1 2019-20</b>	<b>E % Compliant Modules in in T 1 2018-19</b>	<b>F Difference from Previous Year</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Chemistry	17	15	88	85	3	
Computer Science	18	18	100	87	13	
Engineering	19	19	100	92	8	
Life Sciences	18	18	100	95	5	
Mathematics	26	26	100	96	4	
Physics	33	32	97	100	-3	
Psychology	24	24	100	96	4	
Statistics	15	14	93	77	16	
WMG UG	51	49	96	96	0	
WMG PG	43	28	65	84	-19	
WMS MBChB	7	7	100	89	11	
WMS PGT	15	14	93	88	5	