

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK  
SENATE**

**MINUTES OF THE SENATE MEETING HELD 14:00, WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2025,  
ON MS TEAMS**

<b>Present</b>	Professor Stuart Croft	Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
	Dr Navdeep Bains	Director of Research and Impact Services
	Dr Elisabeth Blagrove	Assembly representative
	Adam Child	Academic Registrar (from item 019)
	Professor Nikola Chmel	Head of Chemistry Department (SEM)
	Professor Matthew Clayton	Head of PAIS (Social Sciences)
	Ali Collins	Assembly representative
	Professor Fiona Copland	Head of SELCS
	Professor Paulo De Sousa Aguiar de Medeiros	Head of English and Comparative Literary Studies (from item 018)
	Professor Rosie Dias	Co-Head of School of Creative Arts, Performance and Visual Cultures
	Professor David Fearn	Classics and Ancient History (Arts)
	Professor Teresa Grant	Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (to item 022)
	Professor James Hayton	Vice-Provost and Chair of Faculty of Social Sciences
	Professor Elisabeth Herrman	Co-Head of School of Modern Languages and Cultures
	Professor Jonathan Hickman-Heron	Chair of the Senate Committee responsible for postgraduate research
	Dr Nicholas Hopcroft	Community Member
	Dr Bo Kelestyn	Assembly representative (to item 020)
	Professor Kerry Kirwan	Dean of Warwick Manufacturing Group (SEM)
	Professor Nina-Anne Lawrence	Head of Warwick Foundation Studies (Social Sciences)
	Professor David Leadley	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)
	Dr David Lees	Dean of Students
	Professor Ulf Liebe	Head of Sociology (Social Sciences)
	Professor Tim Lockley	Head of History (Arts)
	Professor Guy Longworth	Head of Philosophy (Social Sciences)
	Professor Fiona MacCallum	Head of Psychology (SEM)
	Professor Caroline Meyer	Provost
	Professor Rachel Moseley	Vice-Provost and Chair of Faculty of Arts
	Professor Mark Newton	Head of Physics (SEM)
	Debbie Nickerson	Community Member
	Anna O'Neill	Librarian
	Professor Gavin Perkins	Dean of Warwick Medical School
	Professor Martyn Plummer	Head of Statistics (SEM)
	Maanya Raju	SU Vice-President Postgraduate
	Professor James Robinson	Head of Mathematics Department (SEM)
	Professor Clare Rowan	Assembly representative
	Rachel Sandby-Thomas	Registrar
	Hannah Sargeant	Community Member
	Dr Gavin Schwartz-Leeper	Chair of Academic Freedom Review Committee (AFRC)
	Professor Michael Scott	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)
	Professor Jeremy Smith	Head of Economics (Social Sciences)
Professor Olanrewaju Sorinola	Assembly representative	
Ananya Sreekumar	SU Vice-President Education	
Alijah Taha	President of the Students' Union	
Professor Yulia Timofeeva	Head of Computer Science Department (SEM)	
Professor David Towers	Head of Engineering (SEM)	

	Fiona Wallace	Community Member
	Professor Mike Ward	Vice-Provost and Chair of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Nuo Xu	Assembly representative
<b>Attending</b>	Sophie Black	Governance Manager (Assistant Secretary to item 020)
	Lyudmyla Demchuk	Operations Administrator, EPQ (meeting support)
	Dan Derricott	Director of Education Policy & Quality (Secretary to Senate)
	Rosie Drinkwater	Group Finance Director
	Nia Fortune	Chief People Officer
	Katharine Gray	Head of Governance
	Ikrah Iqbal	Graduate Management Trainee (observer)
	Emma Jeavons	Governance Manager (Assistant Secretary to Senate – present from item 020)
	Jamie King	Senior Policy and Engagement Adviser (item 019 only)
	Professor Stéphanie Panichelli-Batalla	Academic Director for Sustainability (item 021 only)
	Mihir Rathi	Graduate Management Trainee (observer)
	Dr Tom Ritchie	Education for Sustainable Development lead (item 021 only)
	Sam Roseveare	Director of National and Regional Policy (item 019 only)
	George Saxon	Head of Transport Systems & Operations (observer)
Dr Chris Twine	University Secretary (to item 021)	
Gemma Wilkins	Head of Sustainable Campus Operations (item 021 only)	
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Item</b>	
013	<p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all, including those filling four of the Senate’s community posts, appointed by the Senate Nominations Panel (SNomP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiona Wallace (Deputy Head, Warwick Global Academy)</li> <li>• Hannah Sargeant (Strategic Campaigns Manager PG and Non-Standard Recruitment, MCI)</li> <li>• Dr Nick Hopcroft (Assoc Prof &amp; Director of Undergraduate Studies, WMS)</li> <li>• Debbie Nickerson (Disability Adviser - Mental Health, WSS)</li> </ul> <p>Professor Jonathan Hickman-Heron joined the Senate following their appointment as Academic Director (Postgraduate Research) and Chair of the Senate’s Postgraduate Research Subcommittee.</p> <p>Warwick’s new Chief People Officer joined for their first Senate meeting as a regular attendee.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed back Professor David Towers, rejoining Senate having reassumed the role of Head of Department in Engineering.</p> <p>Observers were also welcomed, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ikrah Akhtar Iqbal and Mihir Rathi, Graduate Management Trainees, and</li> <li>• The Head of Transport Systems &amp; Operations.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair encouraged everyone to actively engage in the conversation, noting that hearing a wide range of voices was essential to the Senate effectively fulfilling its function. Senators were reminded that, if they wished to discuss any changing needs that would support their access and participation in meetings, to speak with the either themselves or the Senate Secretariat.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Professor Lorenzo Frigerio, Professor Miriam Gifford, Professor Andy Lockett, Professor Cagatay Turkay, Professor Chris Warhurst, Dr Jane Webb, and Professor Andrew Williams.</p>	
014	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>	

015	<b>Minutes of meeting held on 24 September 2025</b>
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2025 (015-S051125, Confidential) were approved.</p>
016	<b>Matters arising from meeting held on 24 September 2025</b>
	<p>There were no matters arising.</p>
<b>Chair's Update</b>	
017	<b>Chair's Business</b>
	<p>The Chair presented their report (017-S051125, General) which was received and noted, without further discussion.</p> <p>The Chair also reminded the Senate that there would be a joint workshop of Council and Senate members on 10 February 2026, where the two would explore some topical issues of common interest. The session would also provide a good opportunity for Council and Senate members to become more familiar with each other and ensure Warwick's governance structures worked well as a coherent whole. The Secretariat would share more information in due course. The Chair encouraged all to attend if they were able to.</p>
<b>Governance I</b>	
018	<b>Ways of Working in Senate: Actions from our Annual Effectiveness Review</b>
	<p>The Director of EPQ/ Senate Secretary presented the report (018-S051125, General) and provided a brief presentation. They highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further to the Academic Governance Review (AGR) undertaken, one recommendation was that the Senate and its committees carry out Annual Effectiveness Reviews (AERs); the first of these had taken place over summer 2025, and their report summarised the outcomes from the Senate's AER.</li> <li>• They thanked the 19 Senators who had responded to the Senate AER survey and highlighted that responses received had been generally positive.</li> <li>• In addition to the aforementioned survey, some desk-based analysis and reflection on the agreed principles of what good academic governance looked like were also carried out.</li> <li>• Positive feedback related especially to Senate's remit being clear, having the right membership, and the frequency of meetings.</li> <li>• Areas for development included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spending more time on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the wider student experience and student wellbeing,</li> <li>▪ following up on approved academic strategies to assess implementation, and</li> <li>▪ matters of free speech and academic freedom</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Ensuring there was a strong flow of information into and out of the Senate,</li> <li>○ Continuing to build a sense of collective responsibility among members of the Senate and taking decisions in the interest of the University as a whole, even where that might be difficult for some parts of our institution or community, and</li> <li>○ Ensuring the student voice was coming through the Senate clearly, as well as understanding the range of student perspectives on its business.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The necessary adjustments would be made in terms of agenda-planning and other processes, to develop the listed areas, while there was also some work around the culture and environment of the Senate that all in attendance were responsible for.</p> <p>The Senate was encouraged by the reflections and assured that Senate continued to function well. There was some reflection on the resource required to carry out tasks such as the AER and it was agreed that assurance could be taken from the summer 2025 review, while acknowledging that there was work to do,</p>

	especially around ensuring the student voice was heard clearly at the Senate. Any further feedback from the Senate was welcomed.
<b>Strategic Items</b>	
019	<p><b>Update on the Government’s Post-16 White Paper and implications for the University of Warwick</b></p> <p>The Director of National and Regional Policy presented a report (019-S051125, General) and provided a brief presentation. The Senior Policy and Engagement Adviser was also in attendance. The presentation highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The White Paper reflected early stage thinking wherein the Government reflected on its aim for a more sustainable Higher Education sector, through being more specialised and more efficient.</li> <li>• A recap of the evolution of funding in English Higher Education in recent decades, including the realities and limitations of the current model that relied on student fee income, rather than state investment, and the cross-subsidisation between activities.</li> <li>• Other key government announcements, including: inflation-linked increases in fee caps; the reintroduction of maintenance grants and inflation-linked increases in loans; the reformation of research funding; encouragement of specialisation, and strengthening risk-based resolution by the Office for Students (OfS) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).</li> <li>• That the White Paper reconfirmed the introduction of a levy on international student fee income, though without any detail.</li> </ul> <p>The Senate discussed the presentation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential broadening of Access and Participation Plans to include Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students, for which OfS confirmation was awaited,</li> <li>• Questions around Research and Development funding,</li> <li>• The possibility of “less funding, more regulation”, and</li> <li>• The related need to consistently and meaningfully engage with sector regulators.</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that more on the government’s International Education Strategy was still awaited, as well as questions around their view of the purpose of universities.</p> <p>The Senate was assured that the Regional and National Policy team was coordinating the University’s analysis of the implications for Warwick, as well keeping under review the different possible political realities and governments, and inputting to policymakers. The Senate was concerned about the government’s confirmation of a levy on international student fee income. The levy presented a financial threat to the University and would have an adverse effect on the attractiveness of the UK as a destination for study, compounding our already difficult operating context.</p>
020	<p><b>Financial Plan 2025</b></p> <p>The Group Finance Director presented the report (020-S051125, Highly Confidential) and provided a brief presentation, highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2025 Financial Plan remained in draft as several variables continued to adjust. How the final Plan would be shared with the Senate was to be confirmed.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair acknowledged the difficulties in the timings of processes and ensuring that the Senate was in receipt of the Plan at an appropriate time; they advised that this would be worked on by the relevant teams for future years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking back at 2024/25, the outturn for the year had been positive at [Exempt information not included]. The underlying results had been close to the top-down Q3 flash forecast [Exempt information not included].</li> <li>• There had been [Exempt information not included] of one-off items, including [Exempt information not included], that contributed to the final 2024/25 outturn.</li> <li>• Headlines for the 2025 Financial Plan were laid out, including:</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [Exempt information not included],</li> <li>○ The financial outlook remaining cautious, particularly in relation to student recruitment and government policy,</li> <li>○ Updates since the last draft of the Plan, including: home Undergraduate fee inflation; adjustments to the Connect Programme; interest; “incomes provision”, and staff costs,</li> <li>○ Cash headroom at the end of the Plan remained above the 50-day target,</li> <li>○ [Exempt information not included].</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Exempt information not included].</li> </ul> <p>The Senate discussed the update, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An acknowledgment of the increased spend required for resources to accommodate increased student numbers.</li> </ul> <p>The Senate was assured that work was underway to look at [Exempt information not included].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A query, particularly in the context of industrial action ballots, of the level of the pay rise assumed within the Plan.</li> </ul> <p>The Senate was assured that pay rise provision had been included in the Plan [Exempt information not included].</p> <p>All acknowledged the continued financial pressure in the sector, however the Senate and was assured that the overall Plan remained positive, with [Exempt information not included] over the Plan period, the international student fee levy included as a [Exempt information not included], and, as always, a safety factor [Exempt information not included].</p>
021	<p><b>Environmental Sustainability Strategy</b></p> <p>The Academic Director for Sustainability presented the report (021-S051125, Confidential). The Head of Sustainable Campus Operations and the Education for Sustainable Development lead were also in attendance. They highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many Senators had been involved in the collaborative development of the Strategy.</li> <li>• The Strategy was presented to the Senate for endorsement before final approval by the Council.</li> </ul> <p>The Senate discussed the Strategy, including how academic departments could support its implementation, the guidance available to them, and a request from the presenters to share with them any best practice that departments had organically developed.</p> <p>There was an acknowledgment that environmental sustainability policy and process must also enable sustainable practices among individual students and staff in the Warwick community. It was recognised that there was a tension between the desire to expand research internationally and simultaneously reducing emissions as an organisation, and it was agreed that these discussions were ongoing with careful planning involved.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>recommended approval by the Council</b> of the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy.</p>
<b>Governance II</b>	
022	<p><b>Initial Proposals Regarding Academic Freedom at Warwick</b></p> <p>The Chair of Academic Freedom Review Committee (AFRC) presented the report (022-S051125, General) and highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were ongoing and widely publicised issues related to Academic Freedom, both nationally and internationally.</li> <li>• The central recommendations within the report related to the expansion of AFRCs remit across a wider range of employment-related processes, for which several of Warwick’s policies and some of its governing instruments would first require amendment.</li> </ul>

Senators queried the impact of the expansion into new processes and the possibility that this could hinder or slow these. They were advised that it was not intended that any of the developments would complicate processes; rather, it was hoped that specialist advice from AFRC members would assist the People Team.

- A role description for the Academic Freedom Champions was included. Issues related to Freedom of Speech, which a previous iteration of the Champions role had included, were noted as more difficult to consider in the context of UK law.

Senators sought clarification as to whether the Champions were to be appointed as new Committee members or existing, and it was confirmed that the intention was for the Champion role to be filled by existing members.

- A proposed Joint Senate-Council Working Group would focus on wider developments that could further strengthen academic freedom at Warwick.

Should the Council prefer not to be directly involved in the proposed Working Group, the Senate agreed that it would be keen to progress the proposals that were within its own remit.

Senators queried the outcomes of a not unrelated piece of work led by an Assembly Working Party on Antisemitism and Racism, for which the Registrar assured the Senate, recommendations had been agreed and largely implemented.

The Senate discussed the report and was content to approve the progression of the developments mentioned within it, subject to the listed collaboration and approval by the Council and University Executive Board (UEB).

**DECISIONS:** The Senate:

**1) Approved** the Academic Freedom Champion role description and commence the appointment to those roles from amongst the membership of Senate's tier 2 and 3 committees.

**2) Recommended to the Council:**

- a) the establishment of a time-limited Joint Senate-Council Working Group to review and strengthen academic freedom at Warwick, and
- b) the addition of 'academic freedom' to institutional risk registers.

**3) Recommended to UEB:**

- a) the appointment of Academic Freedom Champions from amongst the membership of UEB and its senior committees, and
- b) the extension of current AFRC review process from gross misconduct and redundancy to probation and promotion processes, grievances, investigations, suspensions, performance management processes, and restructures, upon receipt of a feasibility assessment and the necessary drafting of revisions to policy by the Employee Relations Team in collaboration with the Chair of AFRC and the Registrar.

**ACTION 1:** Ensure the necessary policy and/or process changes are discussed with the Chief People Officer, People team, and are presented to People Committee.

**ACTION 2:** Further develop some of the detail in the paper before presentation to the Council.

**ACTION 3:** Add a central member of Professional Services staff to the Working Group, possibly the Director of Research and Impact Services.

<b>Substantive Items</b>	
023	<p><b>International Update: One World Warwick and Transnational Education Task and Finish Group</b></p> <p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) presented the report (023-S051125, General) and highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OWW events and projects within the international space, ongoing throughout November 2025, were being connected and highlighted through an institution-level, internal and external communications campaign, highlighting the strength and diversity of Warwick’s global community, connections, impacts and opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>The Senate was encouraged to take part in events, as well as share information with colleagues and students and encourage their participation too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Transnational Education Task and Finish Group had been set up [Exempt information not included]</li> </ul>
024	<p><b>Update from Senate Representatives on the Council</b></p> <p>Senate Representatives on the Council provided a verbal update highlighting that the Council agenda had continued to share many of the same items as the Senate’s. The Senate was also advised that, at a recent meeting, the Council had received presentations from senior sector leaders.</p>
<i>Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval without discussion.</i>	
<b>Governance III</b>	
025	<p><b>Chair’s Action Report</b></p> <p>The report (025-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
026	<p><b>Outcomes of the 2025 Admissions Cycle</b></p> <p>The report (026-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
027	<p><b>Constitution and Membership of Senate Committees 2025-26</b></p> <p>The report (027-S051125, Public) was received and noted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the committee memberships in the report.</p>
028	<p><b>Precautionary Actions Update</b></p> <p>The report (028-S051125, <b>Highly Confidential</b>) was received and noted, without discussion.</p> <p><i>Sabbatical Officers and observers were unable to view this report.</i></p>
029	<p><b>Recommendations for Postgraduate Research Awards</b></p> <p>The report (029-S051125, <b>Highly Confidential</b>) was received and noted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the award of the University qualifications, as set out in the report.</p> <p><i>Sabbatical Officers and observers were unable to view this report.</i></p>
<b>Committee Reports</b>	
030	<p><b>Academic Freedom Review Committee – Chair’s Report for 2024-25</b></p> <p>The report (030-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
031	<p><b>Report from the Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC)</b></p> <p>The report (031-S051125, General) was received and noted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed minor amendments to ESECs Terms of Reference.</p> <p><b>a) Annual Report for Report and Support 2024-25</b></p> <p>The report (031a-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted.</p>

**PUBLIC**

	<p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>recommended to the Council</b> for approval, the Annual Report for Report and Support 2024-25.</p> <p><b>b) Revisions to Regulation 10</b></p> <p>The revisions (031b-S051125, Public) were received and noted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed minor amendments to Regulation 10.</p>
032	<p><b>Report from Research Committee</b></p> <p>The report (032-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
033	<p><b>Report from the International Committee</b></p> <p>The report (033-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
034	<p><b>Report from the Research Governance and Ethics Committee (RGAEC)</b></p> <p>The report (034-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p> <p><b>a) Research Integrity Training Policy</b></p> <p>The Policy (034a-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed Policy changes.</p>
035	<p><b>Report from the University Executive Board</b></p> <p>The report (035-S051125, Confidential) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
036	<p><b>Annual Report from Academic Staff Committee</b></p> <p>The report (036-S051125, <b>Highly Confidential</b>) was received and noted, without discussion.</p> <p><i>Sabbatical Officers and observers were unable to view this report.</i></p>
<b>Other</b>	
037	<p><b>Student Deaths</b></p> <p>The report (037-S051125, Public) was received and noted, without discussion.</p>
038	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<b>Next meeting: 14:00, Wednesday, 28 January 2026, in Panorama 1, Rootes Building</b>	

<b>DECISIONS AND ACTIONS</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DECISION/ACTION</b>	<b>LEAD AND DUE DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
<b>2025-26</b>			
<b>05-11-25</b>			
<b>021 – Environmental Sustainability Strategy</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>recommended approval by the Council</b> of the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy.		
<b>022 – Initial Proposals Regarding Academic Freedom at Warwick</b>	<p><b>DECISIONS:</b> The Senate:</p> <p><b>1) Approved</b> the Academic Freedom Champion role description and commence the appointment to those roles from amongst the membership of Senate’s tier 2 and 3 committees.</p> <p><b>2) Recommended to the Council:</b></p> <p>a) the establishment of a time-limited Joint Senate-Council Working Group to review and strengthen academic freedom at Warwick, and</p> <p>b) the addition of ‘academic freedom’ to institutional risk registers.</p> <p><b>3) Recommended to UEB:</b></p> <p>a) the appointment of Academic Freedom Champions from amongst the membership of UEB and its senior committees, and</p>		

	b) the extension of current AFRC review process from gross misconduct and redundancy to probation and promotion processes, grievances, investigations, suspensions, performance management processes, and restructures, upon receipt of a feasibility assessment and the necessary drafting of revisions to policy by the Employee Relations Team in collaboration with the Chair of AFRC and the Registrar.		
	<b>ACTION 1:</b> Ensure the necessary policy and/or process changes are discussed with the Chief People Officer, People team, and are presented to People Committee.	Chair of AFRC, CPO, ASAP	Ongoing.
	<b>ACTION 2:</b> Further develop some of the detail in the paper if to be presented to the Council.	Chair of AFRC, ASAP	Presented to Nov Council through Senate report.
	<b>ACTION 3:</b> Add a central member of Professional Services staff to the Working Group, possibly the Director of Research and Impact Services.	Chair of AFRC, ASAP	Noted.
<b>027 – Constitution and Membership of Senate Committees 2025-26</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the committee memberships in the report.		
<b>029 – PGR Awards</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the award of the University qualifications, as set out in the report.		
<b>031 – ESEC</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed minor amendments to ESECs Terms of Reference.		
<b>031a – ESEC: Annual Report for Report and Support 2024-25</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>recommended to the Council</b> for approval, the Annual Report for Report and Support 2024-25.		
<b>031b – ESEC: Revisions to Regulation 10</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed minor amendments to Regulation 10.		
<b>034 – RGAEC: Research Integrity Training Policy</b>	<b>DECISION:</b> The Senate <b>approved</b> the proposed Policy changes.		