UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK **STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SLEEC)** **OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 12:30, THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2022, online via Teams**			
Present	Isabelle Atkins	IA	Co-Chair / Education Office, Students' Union
	Dr Rebecca Freeman	RF	Acting Co-Chair / Dean of Students
	Professor Jo Angouri	JA	Academic Director (Education and Internationalisation)
	Ant Brewerton	AB	Representative of the Library
	Dr Sarah Dahl	SD	Academic Representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Lucy Davis	LD	Student Engagement Officer, EPQ
	Lee Griffin	LGri	Academic Director (Postgraduate Taught)
	Dr Cathy Hampton	CHa	Academic Representative of the Faculty of Arts
	Sam Hardy	SH	Director of Flexible and Online Learning
	Dr Modupe Jimoh	MJ	Academic Fellow of WIHEA
	Dr Russ Kitson	RK	Academic Representative of the Faculty of SEM
	Dr David Lees	DL	Student Engagement Co-ordinator (Faculty of Arts, role share)
	Kate Mawson	KM	Student Engagement Coordinator (Faculty of Social Sciences)
	Naomi de la Tour	NdlT	Academic Representative of IATL
	Professor Azrini Wahidin	AW	Academic Fellows of the WIHEA
	Roberta Wooldridge Smith	RWS	Director of Student Opportunity
	Dr Jianhua Yang	JY	Student Engagement Coordinator (Faculty SEM, role share)
Attending	Lauren Botham	LB	Secretary
	Dan Derricott	DD	Director of Education Policy and Quality (item 039)
	Joanne Lee	JL	Associate Professor, SMLC (item 037)
	Chih-Hsiang Lo	C-HL	SU Societies Officer
	Grace Nolan	GN	Student Communications Manager
	Jo Richards	JR	Associate Director Market Research and Insight, Engagement Grp
	Charlton Sayer	CS	SU Welfare Officer
	Dominic Sheehy	DS	Academic Partnerships Officer, EPQ

	Katharine Stratford	KSt	Assistant Secretary
	Tammy Thiele	TT	Widening Participation Evaluation & Evidence Manager (item 040)
	Despina Weber	DW	Joint Head of Service, Disability Team, Wellbeing Support Services (item 040)

Ref	Item
031	**Welcome and Apologies for Absence** Apologies were received from Professor Andy Clark, Dr Leti Gramaglia, Professor Christopher Hughes, Dr Rebecca Limb, Emma Mundy, Nathan Parsons, Sidney Pycroft, Jack Sperry, and Professor Gwen van der Velden. The 2021/22 Student Representative for SEM has not yet been nominated by the Students' Union. Kerry Pinny (Head of Digital Learning Environment Services, Academic Technology) had left the University, and was thanked for her contributions to SLEEC. It was agreed that with the Director of Flexible and Online Learning on SLEEC's membership, the Head of Digital Learning Environment Services would be removed from the membership. **ACTION**: Remove the Head of Digital Learning Environment Services, Academic Technology from the membership. Ant Brewerton (Academic Representative of the Library) would also leaving the University, and was thanked for the significant contributions to the student learning experience and engagement, both through the creativity and input to SLEEC as well as the range of initiatives in the library. Karen Jackson would be temporarily covering the role of Representative of the Library from the April meeting of SLEEC. **ACTION**: Replace Ant Brewerton with Karen Jackson as the Representative of the Library (temporarily). **ACTION**: Notify SLEEC of the permanent Representative of the Library once in post.
032	**Declarations of Interest** No new declarations were made.
033	**Minutes of last meeting on 25 November 2021** The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 were received and approved.
034	**Matters arising from last meeting on 25 November 2021** Actions were in progress but not yet due.
	Co-Chairs' Update
035	**Co-Chairs' Business and Actions** The Committee received and noted verbal updates from the Co-Chair: **(a) Students' Union – Pulse Survey Outcomes** Headlines were shared, with lowest satisfaction being in representation, covid response and student welfare, the latter having workload, stress, work-life balance and study skills being key concerns from students. Academic Feedback and Support scores have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, which the SU intend to explore. A significant reduction in the number students feeling their experience has been impaired by Covid was noted as particularly positive, bolstered by increased in-person teaching. **(b) Students' Union Academic Voice Team**

A number of simultaneous vacancies has provided an opportunity to restructure the team and review links to other roles such as the Decolonise Manager. A further update will provided once posts are filled.

(c) Students' Union CEO
Martyn Williams (previously Northumbria SU) will take over from Rob Parkinson on a temporary basis.

(d) Lecture Capture

The SU Education Officer noted that sensitivities remained around lecture capture and UCU's concerns would be taken into consideration.

(e) Assessment modes
The SU maintains an ongoing interest in assessment modes, particularly during the shift from traditional exams, steered by to the Shape of the Academic Year proposals.

(f) Shape of the Academic Year Proposal
The proposal to move from three terms to two semesters had been discussed by the Senate with strong support for reviewing the structure but consensus not yet reached on a preferred model.

(g) National Student Survey (NSS)

Members were thanked for their efforts so far and asked to continue to promote to students.

(h) Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence and Warwick Awards for Personal Tutoring Excellence

Members were reminded to submit their nominations.

Items for Consideration

| 036 | **SU Priorities Update** |

The Committee received a verbal update and key points and discussions were as follows:

- Four projects are planned arising from are-prioritisation of the Education Officer manifesto
  1. Creating a catalogue of hidden course costs and ensuring students are informed at application stage. Data will be collected via student-led surveys.
  2. Mental health training for all staff to enable better support for students
  3. Making mitigating circumstances guidance student-friendly
  4. Markers Guide to Disability to help markers to understand the impacts declared disabilities may have on students' work to enable adjustments to be made while upholding academic standards.

DECISION:

The Committee **noted** the verbal update on SU priorities.

| 037 | **PGT Strategy Update** |

The Committee received a verbal update and key points and discussions were as follows:

- Work is underway to implement HEAR transcripts for PGT students, and the description bank is currently being updated.
- The PTES survey will resume, launching on 14 March with an ambitious aim of 50% response rate. Members are asked to promote amongst PGT students.
- The Academic Director (PGT) is joining SSLCs, with some excellent practice and engaged students.
- Further work is needed to ensure that PGT students understand the role of the SU, and the PG Office intends to create a guidance document to share with students before they join.
- Challenges are faced with building PGT communities, amongst students on one-year courses and with overseas students particularly. Suggestions from the committee included closer consideration of the variation in PGT timetables and shape of the year across departments; ensuring information

is signposted early as courses can be intense once begun; greater publicising of the PGT Hub and its function as a community space; relaunching "Sabbs on the Sofa" sessions for students to meet the Sabbs in the hub. An example from Education Studies was given whereby new students complete a 3-week MOOC via FutureLearn prior to commencing study (since Moodle isn't available until enrolled) which allows students to get to know staff and receive initial feedback on work, resulting in noticeable positive impacts on engagement on arrival. The Associate Director Market Research and Insight noted that they facilitate PGT focus groups and offered to test suggestions there. The SU Education Officer also expressed keenness to support the Academic Director (PGT) and to strengthen links with the SU.

DECISION:

The Committee **noted** the verbal update from the Academic Director (PGT).

038	**University Guidance on Advance Content Statements in Teaching**

University Guidance on Advance Content Statements in Teaching

The Committee received the paper (038-SLEEC-100222{public}) and key points and discussions were as follows:

- Departments had asked for institutional guidance on what can be a polarising topic, with examples of good practice. Comments and steer were invited on the draft guidance as per the paper, with members supportive of the approach and content.
- It was emphasised that a common-sense approach had been taken, asking academics to use their judgement, and that it was not possible to mandate as an exhaustive list of content is not possible and there is currently insufficient evidence that mandating statements was effective. It was acknowledged that for some modules, the advance statements may not be applicable, e.g. mathematical applications.
- The committee raised a concern that some students may not anticipate finding a topic challenging until encountering it, for instance when learning about childhood safeguarding and drawing parallels to their own experiences. Students would therefore need support but would not be able to ask in advance. Members agreed an exhaustive list being impossible, and further noted that tangential conversations could lead to difficult topics being covered which were not planned.
- Members discussed the importance of ensuring students are aware of the academic need to covering challenging or unpalatable material at times, for instance for academic critique or the acknowledgement of unpalatable alternative views in society, but that this should sensitivity be placed in context.
- Student engagement had not been as strong as anticipated, but renewed efforts would be made to gain student input to the draft guidance.
- It was suggested that as well as providing advance content statements to students in module materials, guidance should also be provided in handbooks, and the institutional guidance shared perhaps through EPQ webpages. Ideally student views should help guide all stages.
- The Committee gave thanks for very well-received draft guidance and efforts in producing it.

DECISION:

The Committee **noted** the draft Advance Content Statements guidance and supported the approach.

039	**ITLR - Introducing the 2023 Review**

ITLR - Introducing the 2023 Review

The Committee received the paper (038-SLEEC-100222{public}) and key points and discussions were as follows:

- An overview of the rationale and planned approach were given, and the Committee was supportive.
- Each meeting's focus would be tailored with a stronger quality assurance or enhancement emphasis depending on the needs of each individual department and supported by a self-evaluation exercise. The developing evaluative culture means that greater appreciation of strengths

and weaknesses of each department was possible compared to the previous ITLRs, supported by more helpful data, enabling a forward-thinking focus.

- The University were keen to increase efficiency and value added from the meetings, both for departments and the University, utilising a combination of online and face-to-face engagement. Reviews will cover central professional services departments as well as academic departments and those involved would receive further details nearer the time.
- The intensity of the process would unavoidable add pressure to all involved but this would be minimised through timings where possible, being mindful of the additional workload pressures of the NSS.
- It was hoped that ITLR would help steer the future direction of the University, just as the 2017 ITLR informed the Education Strategy. Suggestions of themes included: the future use of technology as an enabler for students and providing choice in ways of learning; ensuring students have sound academic skills particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds; sustainability and climate-friendly curriculum; engagement with Warwick Institute for Engagement; future-proofing the curriculum and skills students gain; and preparing students for lifelong learning and to cope with change at graduation and beyond. Revisiting interdisciplinarity was suggested, to identify meaningful developments since 2017 and future institutional direction. Similarly, it was felt important that student voice, particularly co-creation, should remain a key theme. It was noted that study pathways were becoming increasingly flexible, with student loans to move to a model allowing for "jumping on and off" further and higher education, and an increase in degree apprenticeships and lifelong learning and so it would be prudent to consider the development of alternative pathways.
- The author was keen to receive additional comments and will return to a future SLEEC meeting.

DECISION:

The Committee **noted** that ITLR would take place in 2022/23 and discussed the themes and timings.

040	**Learning Experience of Disabled Students**

The Committee received the paper (040-SLEEC-251121{public}) and key points and discussions were as follows:

- <u>Relevant highlights were given from NSS (finalists) and Term 1 (all students) surveys</u>, both of which showed clear gaps in the satisfaction of students who declared disabilities compared to their peers. On the whole NSS scores for disabled students were noted to be higher than sector averages, but nevertheless the University is very keen to grasp opportunities for further improvement. NSS data split by Specific Learning Disabilities compared to other disabilities also showed differences – the latter showing greater dissatisfaction with learning communities. Both data splits showed gaps with the student voice including the SU. Differences were also noted in the Term 1 Survey between year groups, and overall, students who declared a disability felt a weaker connection to their department and the University and were less satisfied with face-to-face teaching and academic support. Numerous intersecting factors give rise to a range of experiences and caution should be taken against considering "disabled students" as a homogenous group, however there are clear areas of the student experience which the University must take steps to address.
- <u>The Transcription Pilot</u> had been introduced to support students for whom automatic transcripts were inadequate (particularly around scientific language), instead producing manual transcripts. Student feedback had suggested a need for the service, to avoid significant impacts on students, however uptake has been surprisingly low this year. Five requests had been received but four of those were in response to lack of automatic transcription and so were not part of the pilot, and the fifth required changes to formatting rather than accuracy issues. It would continue to be emphasised to departments that transcripts should be produced as a matter of course, even once teaching returns to a "new normal" and regardless of whether specifically requested by students, to increase accessibility of course materials. It was noted that manual transcripts were incredibly time intensive to produce, and so it was recommended that academic terminology be corrected

but trivial errors be allowed to stand. The service is provided at individual student level and so the students' needs can also be taken into account. It was noted that some students are significantly benefiting from hybrid learning e.g., deaf students, and in many cases the benefits of live transcripts vastly outweigh inaccuracies, however mathematical and scientific language as well as foreign languages can pose significant challenges and require departmental input to correct. With the very low uptake throughout the pilot, it is not clear whether the service should continue to be formally supported given the time and cost implications. The Disability Team requests that minimum expectations for adjustments by departments be formalised, including always providing automatic transcripts.

- Members noted that when <u>students declare disabilities</u> and the details are shared on a need-to-know basis, the information was not always cascaded through the students' department nor to partner departments, and this should be streamlined to ensure adjustments can be made. Furthermore, "need-to-know" may be determined based on the home department's teaching style but a partner department may for example include more group work or moving around a room.

- The Education Officer is producing <u>guidance for markers</u> explaining the lived experience of a range of disabilities so that markers have a clearer idea of how a named disability may impact a student in practice. It cannot cover every eventuality but is instead designed to provide a practical guide to reasonable adjustments while maintaining academic standards, and broadening markers' appreciation of challenges students face. Examples were given of students with mobility difficulties who primarily use online resources and may otherwise lose marks in assessments due to a reduced breadth of references, or sign language users who may use different grammar structures.

- <u>The Committee agreed that a standard set of minimum expectations for departments</u> should be created with accompanying good practice examples to ensure that there is consistency across and between departments, that students know what to expect and do not need to ask for common adjustments, and that equity of the learning experience between non-disabled and disabled students is improved. It was noted that initiatives such as this to close the gaps in attainment and satisfaction were crucial to the success of the Inclusive Education strategy. It was proposed that the expectations and guidance be in place ready for Term 1 of 2022/23.

- The Committee supported the Co-Chair (RF)'s proposal to set up a Working Group to advance the minimum expectations project, including defining what the guidance should include, links to other areas of work such as the IDG project regarding web accessibility of online learning, and in consultation with students and departments. Membership would include the SU Education Officer, a representative of the Disabilities Team (Wellbeing Support Services), a representative of the Flexible and Online Learning team, as well as representative(s) of the Education Executives plus additional student representation. Initial meetings would take place in Term 2.

DECISION:

The Committee

1) Noted the updates relating to the learning experience of disabled students.

2) Approved the creation of a subgroup to progress the Minimum Expectations for Adjustments for Disabled Students guidance.

041	**Term 1 Survey Outcomes**
	The Committee received the paper (041-SLEEC-100222{Protected})
	DECISION:
	The Committee **noted** the Term 1 Survey Outcomes, including aspects of particular relevance to the Learning Experience of Disabled Students (as discussed in 040-SLEEC-100222).
042	**Consultation on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)**

	The Committee received the paper (042-SLEEC-100222{public}) and were invited to share feedback directly with the authors.
	DECISION:
	The Committee **noted** the TEF Consultation.
043	**Online Assessment**
	The update was not available and would be shared at a future meeting.
044	**Plans for Welcome Week**
	The Committee received the paper (044-SLEEC-100222{public}) evaluating Welcome Week 2021/22 and future plans.
	DECISION:
	The Committee **noted** the Welcome Week update.
Other	
030	**Any Other Business**
	No business was raised by members.
Next meeting: Thursday 07 April 2021, 10:30, online via Teams	

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	**DECISION/ACTION**	**LEAD AND DUE DATE**	**STATUS**
2020/21			
049-SLEEC-270521 Role of Student Engagement Coordinators	**ACTIONS** 1) Receive review of the Faculty Student Engagement Coordinator roles in academic year 2023/24 2) Recommend to Education Committee that workload recognition for SECs be considered as part of their wider discission on workload recognition.	SECs 2023/24 GvdV Summer 2021	Ongoing Ongoing
053-SLEEC-270521 Decolonise Programme	**ACTION:** The Committee requested a further update on the Decolonise Project	KS / Decolonise Programme Manager Term 1 2021	Ongoing – awaiting appointment to role.
055-SLEEC-270521 Learning Experience of Disabled Students	**ACTION:** The Committee requested an update in 2021/22 of the transcription pilot review.	KS / Despina Weber Term 1 2021	Completed
2021/22			
004-SLEEC-141021	**ACTION**: Ethics in Using Student Data in Learning Analytics Sub-Group (new name tbc) to provide update	RF	Ongoing

Matters Arising	on broadened Terms of Reference and membership, and to give an update on developments and plans.	Term 2 2021/22	
004-SLEEC-141021 Matters Arising	**ACTION:** Provide an update on the engagement and support of PGT students in the student rep system	NP, LG, AS-S Term 2/3 2021/22	Ongoing
007-SLEEC-141021 NSS 2021 Results	**ACTION**: Include SLEEC members in communications publicising the new library social and co-creation spaces and ideas for use	AB Term 1	Ongoing
031-SLEEC-100222 Welcome and Apologies for Absence	**ACTIONS** 1) Remove the Head of Digital Learning Environment Services, Academic Technology from the membership 2) Replace Ant Brewerton with Karen Jackson as the Representative of the Library (temporarily) 3) Notify SLEEC of the permanent Representative of the Library once in post	KS Term 3 KS Term 3 KJ Term 3	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing