## UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE **RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 November 2023** 9.30-11.30AM Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) (Chair) Professor Lorenzo Frigerio LF Present Paul Blagburn PΒ Head of Widening Participation (Secretary) **Director of Student Experience** Adele Browne ABr **Professor Matthew Clayton** Head of PAIS, Faculty of Social Sciences representative MC Baljit Gill BG Widening Participation Manager (Assistant Secretary) Associate Professor Lee Griffin Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education LGri **Professor Ruth Hewston** RH Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning Dr Andy Hind Head of Academic Department, CTE AH **Elizabeth Hough** EΗ Head of Admissions Sue Jones SJ Head of Student Finance Students' Union WP Part-Time Officer Mya Kaur MK Professor Nina Anne Lawrence NAL Head of Academic Department, Warwick Foundation Studies Sam McClenaghan SM **Deputy Finance Director Emily Reid** ER Director of Student Experience, WMS Students' Union Representative (Education) Holly Roffe HR **Kulbir Shergill Director of Social Inclusion** KS Director of Wellbeing and Safeguarding Andy Smith AS Simon Stearn SS Chief Data Officer/IDG **Professor Patrick Tissington** ΡT Academic Director of Employability and Skills (until 11am) Professor Derrick Watson Head of Psychology, Faculty of SEM representative DW Roberta Wooldridge Smith RWS **Director of Student Opportunity** Claire Edden WP Faculty Co-ordinator, Social Sciences; WP Student Attending CE Advisory Group Co-Chair **Rosalyn Forbes** RF Head of Philanthropy, Development and Alumni Engagement (representing Natalie Lloyd) Victoria Hill VH WP Faculty Coordinator, Arts **Cherryl Jones** Widening Access and Lifecycle Manager CJ Vicki Marsh VM **Quality Review and Enhancement Manager Dr Tammy Thiele** TT WP Evaluation and Evidence Manager; Research and **Evaluation Working Group Co-Chair** Ref Item 013 **Apologies for absence** Apologies were received from: Amanda Bishop, (WP Faculty Coordinator, SEM); Adam Child, (Academic Registrar); Dr Rebecca Freeman, (Dean of Students); Professor Letizia Gramaglia, (Head of Academic Development); Natalie Lloyd, (Deputy Director of Development); Professor Tim Lockley, (Head of History, Faculty of Arts); Catherine McNicholl, (Widening Participation Manager); Vaishnavi Ravi, (Students' Union Representative (Postgraduate)). 014 **Declarations of Interest** No new declarations were made.

015	Minutes of last meeting on 5 October 2023
	The minutes of the meeting held on 05 October 2023 (015-WPC301123{Protected}) were received and approved.
016	Matters arising from last meeting on 05 October 2023
	The Head of Widening Participation informed the Committee that John Blake from the Office for Students may visit the University in June 2024.
	There were no matters arising from the meeting on 5 October 2023 that were not covered in the agenda.
	Chair's Update and Governance
017	Chair's Business and Action
	<ul> <li>a) The Chair welcomed Emily Reid to her first meeting as representative for the Warwick Medical School.</li> <li>b) The University recently has been awarded Silver at the UK Social Mobility Awards; the Chair commended all involved.</li> </ul>
	There were no other updates from the Chair.
018	Terms of Reference for Priority Groups Working Group
	The Committee received a proposal from the Widening Access and Lifecyle Manager, Widening Participation Manager and Social Inclusion Manager (018-WPC301123 {Public})
	<ul> <li>a) This report outlines Terms of Reference for the development of a new 'priority groups' working group to include a focus on students whose circumstances are likely to complicate their journey to and through higher education including those with caring responsibilities, those who are care experienced and/or are estranged from their parents, refugees and asylum seekers and other groups which the university and HE sector acknowledge as requiring additional consideration and support.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>b) The University currently has a University of Sanctuary (UoS) Advisory Group to support the implementation of UoS commitments. This currently sits outside any governance framework and therefore the proposal is to amalgamate this group into a wider Priority Groups working group (name to be determined) which will report into the WP Committee and the Social Inclusion Committee. This change will ensure there is accountability and recognition for this important work, but also support a more agile decision making process. KS supported the concept of a wider group to meet the needs of students, but suggested that the group should focus on the groups identified to avoid diluting its endeavours.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>c) The proposed group would provide direction to the University's policy and practice to enhance equality of opportunity for students with individual needs across the whole student lifecycle, including:</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>i. Ensuring the student voice and agency is key to the development and evaluation of support; advising on how to ensure that the needs of students from these groups are appropriately embedded in broader institutional agendas; making recommendations to secure investment to support students from these groups, including delivery of institutional pledge; advising on policy matters relating to students from these groups; making recommendations for action to be taken by those responsible for delivering a service/function in relation to supporting students with individual needs.</li> <li>ii. Supporting the work of the Widening Participation, Student Learning Experience and Engagement and Social Inclusion Committees, including the development and</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>implementation of the Widening Participation Strategy, Access and Participation Plan, Social Inclusion Strategy, and Inclusive Education in relation to students with individual needs and to provide regular reports to the Widening Participation and Social Inclusion Committees on the progress of the group.</li> <li>Monitoring, evaluating and providing governance to the University's commitments – University of Sanctuary, <u>https://universities.cityofsanctuary.org</u>/Stand Alone Pledge, <u>http://www.thestandalonepledge.org.uk</u>/Care Leaver Covenant <u>https://mycovenant.org.uk/</u> and raising awareness and providing advocacy for the commitments the University has made to these agendas internally and externally. In addition, making recommendations on external policy relating to these groups and considering the widest possible spectrum of issues impacting these groups of learners at all stages of their educational journey where the university, directly or through working in partnership, can be a force for positive change.</li> <li>Monitoring the progress and experience of these learners across the whole student lifecycle, including outcomes on access, student success and progression and considering evidence- based approaches to access and student success of these groups of learners and share good practice.</li> <li>Membership and the name of the group would be determined shortly; it is anticipated that the group would comprise a core membership with additional members of the University invited as appropriate. The proposed group would provide the opportunity for the University</li> </ul>
	to be transformational in supporting, and understanding the needs of, these students.
	RECEIVED:
	The Committee <b>noted</b> and <b>approved</b> the Terms of Reference in principle, to be refined at the first meeting of the group.
	Strategy and Priorities
019	Access and Participation Plan Development
	The Head of Widening Participation provided a briefing on the development of the Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2025-26 onwards.
	<ul> <li>a) The APP supports the University's strategic priorities and is therefore everyone's responsibility, providing an understanding of our student communities and the barriers impacting access to higher education, and the risks that impact on equality of opportunity. It supports the embedding of inclusive policies and practices across the University and strengthens the evidence base, contributing to sector improvement through rigorous evaluation.</li> <li>b) Expectations to consider in the development of a new plan encompass addressing the risks posed to fair access and successful participation by knowledge, skill and attainment gaps emerging across childhood by making meaningful and effective contributions to supporting schools to raise pre-16 attainment. Providers will demonstrate how they will expand and promote diverse and flexible pathways and provision; furthermore how providers can improve the mental health of their students. Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of activity is crucial and strategies will put in place to achieve the appropriate changes, including relevant and realistic outcomes, and the investment it will make to deliver the plan.</li> <li>c) The Office for Students (OfS) will make an announcement on submitting plans in Wave 2 on 7<sup>th</sup> December, including publishing an externally commissioned report on the learnings from wave 1.</li> </ul>

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	institutional <b>e</b> ngagement/sign-off: May- June. The initial draft to go to Senate 17 <sup>th</sup> April, Social Inclusion Committee 1 <sup>st</sup> May, UEB 7 <sup>th</sup> May, ARC 13 <sup>TH</sup> May, Widening Participation Committee 14 <sup>th</sup> May, Council 22 <sup>nd</sup> May.
e) f)	The APP Advisory Group will oversee the development of the new APP including making recommendations to the Widening Participation Committee and other governance groups where necessary. The group will be made up of PB, LF, ABr, HR, KS, DW and Brian Karanja (IDG) and will ensure planning aligns to and adds value to existing work, i.e. Education Strategy, Cost of Living, Wellbeing. Other thematic reviews will be commissioned to aid the development of the plan, subject to identified priorities and capacity. The inclusion of a Student Submission highlights a positive change. The Advisory Group will act as Access and Participation advocates and engage in thought leadership to support institutional awareness of the key priorities and approach, promoting a whole institution approach. A number of workshops will be arranged for February. Strategic points to consider include the implications of national demographic shifts on WP groups applying and gaining a place at an institution like Warwick; what should a diverse student community look like and how do we achieve this? How do we create a wholly inclusive organisation where students from all backgrounds feel like they belong, and can achieve and thrive? Exploring the evidence on the Black Awarding gap, which narrowed during Covid-19, but has since widened. The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) identifies 12 sector-wide risks that may affect a student's opportunity to access and succeed in higher education, and student characteristics of which groups are most at risk nationally have been identified. Universities need to take account of the risks and identify areas of focus. Providers should consider which, if any, of their prospective or current students are likely to be affected by the risks, and how these might be mitigated.
DE	CEIVED:
The	e Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the report.
Co	st of Living Update
The	e Committee received an update from the Director of Student Experience.
a)	Five Cost of Living Workstreams have been developed, involving University staff, Students' Union Sabbatical Officers and Students' Union staff, led by Beccy Freeman (Chair) Adele Browne, Phil Smith CEO SU, to review and improve our support for students in financial need.
b) c)	Approachability, flexible and adaptable access to Hardship Funding with a holistic assessment of circumstantial needs would aim to prevent long-term crisis. A new Food & Drink Strategy (presentation 7/12/23) will offer access to food equity. Issues around transport costs may be supported by the University fronting costs for monthly/weekly payments for UniRider passes. The workstream is also exploring an aggregated taxi service and charge reduction policies for Medical students. Additional groups may be considered for parking, student parents, carers, commuting students. Cohesive promotion of free social events, including the removal of federation fees, and a new Warwick active lifestyles strategy would support students in sports and socializing. Data collection on students' part-time work will continue to ensure parity of payment by reaching an institutional position on living wage and banding of pay. A single place for the communication
	of job opportunities with categorised roles would offer students better search capacity. With a consistent link to skills and the Warwick Award. Student benefits such as outlet discounts, and a new HR process step of considering students first for internal part-time or temporary roles will be explored.
d)	Further issues around the costs of on-campus accommodation, parking costs, prices in on-campus food outlets were discussed. It was recognised that the financial assessment for the Warwick UG bursary remained unchanged at £35k, with a lack of understanding around its complexities. Furthermore pockets of funding available to students are located in various places, making them difficult to find. Cost of living, particularly transport costs, has negatively impacted student

RECEIVED:         The Committee noted the report.         ACTION:         A dissemination plan to be brought to a future Committee meeting.         Monitoring and Practice
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Wolltoning and Practice
Student Insight Feedback 22/23
The Quality Review and Enhancement Manager and Market Research Manager (Staff and Student Experience) provided an update on Student Insight from 2022-23.
<ul> <li>a) Detail from the NSS highlighted the following insight from subgroups: <ol> <li>Apprenticeships: Positivity about Academic Support (90.6%) &amp; Freedom of Speech (90.5%) scored well when compared to the Warwick total. Apprentices scored all other scales poorly in comparison to the Warwick total. Organisation &amp; management scored particularly poorly (-15%).</li> <li>Part- time students are much less positive about their Academic Support (71%), Student Voice (69.9%) and Freedom of Speech (74.2%). Part-time students are very positive about their Learning Opportunities (90.3%) and Assessment &amp; Feedback (91.0%).</li> <li>Students who reported a disability were less positive about their Student Voice (71.4%), Organisation &amp; Management (73.1%) &amp; the SU (58.2%). Students who reported a disability had similar positivity ratings for all other scales when compared to the Warwick average.</li> <li>Non-white students (67.1%-70.3%) were more positive about thes SU than white students (57.7%). Black &amp; Asian students (72.4%) were particularly negative about Seessment &amp; Feedback. Black students (85%) are most likely to recommed Warwick to future students (57.3%) and Assessment &amp; Feedback (90.5%) Students aged over 21 (74.2-77%) are less likely to recommend Warwick to future students then those under 21 (83.2%)</li> <li>Female students (69%) are more likely to report the SU represents their interests. Female students (89%) are more likely to report the SU represents their interests. Female students (89%) are more likely to report the SU represents their interests. Female students (99.5%) such rasks Warwick 1<sup>st</sup> in the Russell Group. Part-time, apprentices and disabled students are least positive about their student voice, while international students negating an overall sense of belonging, which received relatively unfavourable responses. 73% of students agreed they felt part of a PGT community, 16.7% of students agree they feel like they belong at the University (T1: 73%), however, there was an 11 point drop in those wh</li></ol></li></ul>
students considering leaving, which is corroborated by several free-text comments that indicated dissatisfaction with the University's wellbeing services. Student's self-reported sense of mental health/wellbeing dropped between Term 1 (6.7/10) and Term 3 (6.4/10), but 40% of students believe that their mental health/wellbeing has improved since September and 38% feel it has worsened. 86% of students agree it is good to know there are mental health and wellbeing services available if they need them, and 59% agree that in the University people can have open conversations about Mental Health & Wellbeing. However, one in three still agree that they

would worry that others (friends or tutors) might find out. This is particularly true of UG Y1. When asked how easy it is to access the University's Wellbeing services there is a clear difference between those who have accessed the service and those who haven't. Further exploration and articulation of resource and targets is needed in terms of internal response rates; satisfaction with assessment and feedback; student connections to departments; better understanding of mental health & wellbeing; post-graduate student voice; apprenticeship feedback strategy. <b>CEIVED:</b> e Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the update.
cess and Participation Plan Indicative Outcomes 2023-24
e Head of Widening Participation and Widening Participation Evaluation and Evidence Manager
ovided a paper on APP Indicative Outcomes (022-WPC301123{Protected})
The sector position indicates application rates to higher education have decreased from 44.9% in 2022, to 43% in 2023, with a small decrease in the number of entrants from POLAR 4 Q1, and the gap with Q5 widening slightly compared to 2022, figures. The number and proportion of entrants eligible for 5M increased by 14% compared to 2022, while patterns based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) have seen little change. This report provides an update on access and participation outcomes related to the 2023/24 applicant cycle and degree attainment outcomes from the 2022/23 academic year. Access: Progress has been made towards all access targets identified in our APP over the past five years, including improvement from 2022/23. The number and proportion of entrants from POLAR4 quintile 1 (Q1) areas in 2023/24 are the highest achieved, with over 100 more entrants from the least represented areas in higher education (HE) coming to Warwick in 2023/24 compared to 2017/18, our baseline year for this target. The entry gap at Warwick, between those from the most and least represented areas in HE (Q1 vs Q5) now stands at 6.3:1 compared to 6.9:1 in 2022 and 7.1:1 in 2017/18. In comparison, the proportion of students from POLAR 4 Q1 areas applying and getting admitted to HE nationally decreased in 2023 compared to 2022, contributing to in a slight widening of the overall gap from 2.12:1 in 2021 to 2.3:1 in 2023. The proportion of entrants from POLAR 4 Q1-2 from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups has also increased year-on- year and is now nearly twice as high (8.1%) compared to figures for this group increased to 4.6% in 2023/24 (co3) is nearly three times higher compared to 2022/4 from 3.7% in 2022/23. While the number of entrants from these areas in 2023/24 compared to 2022 (from 11% to 10.5%). Student success: The University made a commitment in its APP to eliminate the awarding gap between Black and White students by 2025. Progress was made in previous years towards achieving this target, such that we exce

	<ul> <li>Covid-19 affected year (2020/21). The awarding gaps observed between students based on POLAR 4 and IMD measures have both changed substantially over time. Notably, the awarding gap that existed between students from IMD Q1 and Q5 groups in 2017/18 has widened from - 1.7% to -13% in 2022/23 (double than the gap observed in 2021/22, -6.5%). In turn, the awarding gap between POLAR 4 Q1 and Q5 students has stayed relatively similar since 2019/20, averaging at just over -5% but contrasts starkly from figures observed in 2017/18 when 7.1% more students from POLAR 4 Q1 achieved a 'good degree' than students from POLAR 4 Q5 backgrounds.</li> <li>d) Further analysis is currently being undertaken to examine differences in the outcomes of students from outlined groups in greater depth. This analysis will inform the development of our next APP and seek to better understand variations in outcomes, not just related to access and degree award, but also continuation, completion and progression to postgraduate studies or graduate employment. Alongside this, work is being undertaken to develop a new APP dashboard which will be crucial in ensuring that academic departments can gain a more holistic understanding of the outcomes of WP groups at Warwick. This new APP dashboard is in early stages of development, but this will include functionalities which enable comparison with sector-level trends and assessment of how particular student characteristics combine to provide an intersectional view of outcomes.</li> </ul>
	RECEIVED:
	The Committee <b>noted</b> the access and participation monitoring outcomes in the report.
023	Warwick Taught Masters Scholarship and PGT Sanctuary Scholarship Schemes Update
	The Committee received an update on the operation of two PGT scholarship schemes from the Widening Access and Lifecycle Manager (023-WPC301123{Public})
	<ul> <li>a) The Warwick Taught Masters Scholarship Scheme (WTMSS) was launched in 2014/2015 and has been offered each academic year since. Originally, the scheme was supported by Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and Warwick funding combined but is now fully funded by Warwick to the value of £500,000 pa. Tuition fee awards of up to £10,000 (pro rata for part time study) are available to students who meet the award criteria. Applicants must be eligible for home fees and have applied to study an eligible Taught Masters course either on a full-time basis or part-time over a maximum of two year.</li> <li>b) In the pilot year, with co-funding from HEFCE, all awards were £10,000 and where tuition fees were below £10,000 the balance was awarded as a stipend. Subsequently, with the introduction of Postgraduate loans by Student Finance England in 2015/16, the WTMSS awards were halved to £5,000. The combination of these funding sources proved insufficient for many applicants to cover both their maintenance costs and tuition fees, resulting in fewer enrolments than hoped. In 2019/2020, the maximum award was increased to £10,000 (pro rata for part-time students) as a tuition fee contribution only. This meant that fewer awards were offered but for many students the award covered their tuition fee in full and in consequence the proportion of students enrolling increased. For Warwick alumni, who benefit from the 10% alumni fee discount scheme, and applicants who are awarded a departmental scholarship in addition to the WTMSS, the award can be sufficient to cover the remainder of their fee. Two sets of criteria are used to assess applications; essential eligibility criteria include an assessment of financial need and course eligibility, with a set of additional widening participation criteria used to prioritise applications. In 2022/23 98% of awardees met one or more of the additional criteria. In 2023/24 this figure was 100%.</li> <li>c) The University of Sanctuary Postgraduate Taught Scholarship (PGTSS) we</li></ul>

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d e f)	Sanctuary Scholarships, highlighting that for PGT scholars the maintenance stipend enables those who are asylum seekers to come off government Asylum support completely during their studies but this would also prevent them receiving legal aid to help with their asylum claim, as well as preventing them remaining in supported accommodation or returning to live with family in the UK outside of term time, if their family is in living in accommodation provided to them as asylum seekers. These students typically will not have the right to work in the UK, those who do may be restricted in the types of work they are permitted to undertake. A review of the operation of these scholarships, including the interplay within the postgraduate scholarships schemes, is due to be published in December 2023. Each of the schemes is open to full-time or part-time study but there are course exclusions, and distance learning and modular courses are excluded in both, whilst for WTMSS there is a further exclusion of courses taken part time over more than two years. Changes to the University approach to online and distance learning may impact these schemes in future. Furthermore, the exclusion of modular and some part-time courses has meant that highly eligible applicants from widening participation backgrounds have been unable to access their chosen course, and mode, of study with support from the WTMSS. A review of these course exclusions is necessary to consider whether they remain necessary. It should be noted that to date we have not had any PGT sanctuary scholars choosing to study part-time.
R	ECEIVED:
	he Committee <b>noted</b> the update.
	eedback from House of Lords Social Mobility Event
Т	he Head of Philanthropy, Development and Alumni Engagement provided a verbal update on the ecent Power of Potential event, held at the House of Lords.
a b cj	<ul> <li>HE, engaging members of UoW alumni and donor community.</li> <li>Speakers at the event included Professor Stuart Croft, John Blake, Director for Fair Access and Participation at the Office for Students , and Hanna Amanual, a WBS alum pursuing a career in the financial sector. Whilst at Warwick, Hanna worked helping to inspire girls from underrepresented backgrounds. Also speaking was Prem Gill, a Scholar via the Engineering Pathway, who has since taken part in Warwick in Africa and Warwick Racing; Attal Shams, Head of Adult and Access to Higher. who came to the UK as a refugee in the early 2000s and completed both an BA and MA as a Scholar at Warwick.</li> </ul>

	RECEIVED:
	The Committee <b>noted</b> the update.
Other	
025	AOB
	There was no other business.
Close by 11.30	
Next meeting: 30 January 2024	