

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Widening Participation Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Widening Participation Committee
Tuesday 20 February 2018

Present: Professor Chris Hughes (Chair, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education), Paul Blagburn (Secretary, Head of Widening Participation and Outreach), Delyth Chambers (Director of Student Recruitment Outreach and Admissions Service), Shirley Crookes (Director of Wellbeing Support Services), Emily Dunford (Postgraduate Officer, Warwick SU), Jaine Fleetwood (Associate Director of Development, Engagement Group), Dr Miriam Gifford (Associate Professor, Life Sciences), Professor Louise Gracia (Dean of Students), Professor Geraldine Hartshorne (Head of Clinical Faculty, WMS), Andrew Higgins (Director, Academic Office), Kate Hughes (Regional Partnerships Director, External Affairs), Kate Ireland (Director of Centre Teacher Education), Liam Jackson (Education Officer, Warwick SU), Samuel McClenaghan (Deputy Finance Director), Professor Fergus McKay (Director of Centre for Lifelong Learning), Dr Ines Molinaro (Academic Director, Warwick Foundation Studies), Dr Rachel Moseley (Head of Department, TV and Film), Professor Jeremy Smith (Head of Department, Economics), Professor Patrick Tissington (Academic Director of Employability and Skills)

Apologies: Sue Bennett (Director of Student Careers and Skills), Matt Ferguson (Director of Development), Professor Lorenzo Frigerio (Head of Department, Life Sciences), Dr Richard Hutchins (Director of Strategy and Policy), Rory McIntyre (Senior Assistant Registrar, Strategic Planning and Analytics), Dr Ines Molinaro (Academic Director, Foundation Studies), Dr Nick Monk (Director of Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning), Professor Robin Naylor (Director of Studies, Economics, Chair of WP Evaluation and Research Working Group), Professor Colin Sparrow (Academic Director, Graduate Studies), Roberta Wooldridge-Smith (Academic Registrar), Teng Zhang (Head of Student Finance and Funding)

In attendance: Baljit Gill (Assistant Secretary, Widening Participation and Outreach Manager), Catherine McCarthy (Research and Evaluation Officer, Student Recruitment Outreach and Admissions Service)

16/17-18 **Conflicts of interest**

REPORTED:

That, should any members or attendees of the Senate have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (2014), available online from <http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/publications/>.

NOTE: No declarations were made.

17/17-18

Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the WP Committee held on 30 November 2017.

Matters arising

- (a) 11/17-18 WP Evaluation and Research Working Group
The WP Evaluation and Research Group to be co-chaired by Professor Robin Naylor and the incoming WP Evaluation Manager and to meet in March.
- (b) 11/17-18 (a) Professor Naylor to present his research on evaluation practice across the sector at the next WP Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the WP Committee held on 30 November 2017 be approved

18/17-18

Chair's Business

- (a) Committee sub-groups
That progress is being made to identify potential members of the other sub-groups.
- (b) University infrastructure
That a whole-University approach is to be taken with WP recognised in all planning and allocation of resources. A recent meeting with the Academic Resourcing Committee approved an endorsement of WP and linking up the two Committees. Appropriate staffing and resource infrastructure is required across the University to ensure a joined up approach at Faculty level.
- (c) The Education Strategy
That the draft Education Strategy is available for consultation both on the University website and Insite, and has generated a good level of engagement. The Strategy has a strong WP component and the consultation period is open until 26 February.

19/17-18

The Warwick Bursary Scheme

CONSIDERED:

A paper on the outcomes of evaluation of the University's Bursary scheme (WP.7/17-18 {Restricted})

REPORTED:

- (a) Threshold levels
 - (i) That there has been a reduction in the percentage of students with family incomes of less than the £35k upper income threshold for bursary support.
 - (ii) That student feedback on the impact of the bursary in supporting their studies is overwhelmingly positive.
 - (iii) That the offer of a bursary furthermore enhances students' employability, in that it allows students to engage in extra-curricular activity, thus developing their transferable skills.
 - (iv) That any future development of bursary support may be offered in alternative means, such as discounts on accommodation.

- (v) That three immediate options for 2019-20 are suggested:
 - (A) Increasing the upper income threshold to £42k
 - (B) Increasing the level of bursary award
 - (C) No action
- (vi) That an overview of all WP focused bursaries and scholarships be presented to reflect the broader picture of student financial support
- (vii) That further details be provided on the numbers of students that fit into the three income threshold bands for the Warwick Bursary scheme over a period of time

RESOLVED:

That further information and context is necessary to support any approach. The Head of Widening Participation to discuss further with the Director of the Academic Office, presenting options at the next meeting.

- (b) Welcome Week
 - (i) That the introduction of the new Welcome Week for incoming students would disrupt the arranged payments to those students receiving maintenance loan payments, entitling these students to an additional week's payment.
 - (ii) That this would incur an additional cost of £100k, which would be absorbed within the current budget.

RESOLVED:

That the additional week's payment be made to students receiving a maintenance loan.

20/17-18

Revised IntoUniversity Partnership

CONSIDERED:

The revised IntoUniversity paper on a proposed partnership with IntoUniversity, (minute 4/17-18 refers), (WP.4/17-18 (Revised) **{Restricted}**).

REPORTED:

- (a) That a meeting on 8 February between members of the Committee and representatives from IntoUniversity explored the impact of existing partnerships in other localities and provided a broader overview of the approach
- (b) That approval is sought from the Committee to progress to implementation phase.
- (c) That a risk-based approach to be utilised due to ambitious timescales and the identification of appropriate funding streams.
- (d) That the Head of Widening Participation discuss the issue of due diligence with the Director of Development.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed partnership with IntoUniversity be approved subject to due diligence and legal oversight.

21/17-18

Access Agreement Monitoring Return 2016/17

CONSIDERED:

The University's Access Agreement Monitoring Return 2016/17 paper circulated via email in January 2018 (WP.5/17-18 {Restricted})

REPORTED:

- (a) That the return allows a review of performance and future aspirations
- (b) That continuous progress is being made in the core categories of the University's Access Agreement targets with the setting of ambitious future targets to further progress
- (c) That a considered strategic approach be taken regarding future underspend to enhance outcomes and priorities across the student lifecycle
- (d) That the University met its Low Participation Neighbourhood target for the first time in 2016/17

RESOLVED:

That the Access Agreement Monitoring Return is approved and a response from OFFA to the submission will be reported at a future meeting.

22/17-18

Widening Participation Annual Report 2016/17

RECEIVED:

The University's Widening Participation Annual Report 2016/17 was received by the Committee. This provides an overview of widening participation provision and engagement across the student lifecycle.

REPORTED:

- (a) It was noted that this visual aid puts the Access Agreement into context and it is anticipated that the proposed Research and Evaluation Group will explore the impact of this activity further in future
- (b) A dissemination strategy was discussed and will be implemented shortly.
- (c) A poster version of the centre pages to be circulated both internally and externally.
- (d) It was noted that the Report is a powerful way of promoting the University's WP endeavours and of supporting colleagues across the University to engage.

23/17-18

Access Agreement Targets and Priorities

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Widening Participation on Access Agreement targets, priorities and performance challenges across the student lifecycle, (WP.6/17-18 {Restricted}).

REPORTED:

- (a) A review of the data sets encompassing WP target groups focussing current priorities.

- (b) That 2017/18 access agreement performance targets were positive with significant progress made with BME entrants
- (c) That focus be determined on institutional work across the student lifecycle, including postgraduate study, student performance and areas where gaps are identified.
- (d) That a number of the data set descriptors were rather broad; furthermore that the intersectionality of characteristics would provide a more comprehensive representation.
- (e) That OfS guidance for Access and Participation Plan development would require an assessment of performance across the student lifecycle with a view to ensure targets remained ambitious and stretching
- (f) That employability (graduate) outcomes identified through TEF data demonstrated positive indicators for many of the split metrics
- (g) That the collection of data is key and investment in both SPA and SITS is vital to achieve this.
- (h) That exploration should include the analysis of qualitative data collected from students.
- (i) That through the Widening Participation Strategy refresh, greater clarity should be provided to articulate how the University defines and perceives widening participation.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Widening Participation to explore targets and priorities further with Robin Naylor and the WP Evaluation and Research Group.

24/17-18

Contextual Data Overview

RECEIVED:

A paper on the University Contextual Data Policy outcomes from 2017/18 entrant cycle (WP.8/17-18 {Restricted}).

REPORTED:

- (a) The paper provided preliminary analysis of the first year of the Contextual Data policy, adopted in Autumn 2016.
- (b) The paper reviewed Departmental Contextual Data outcomes across the application cycle.
- (c) It was noted that the policy had positively impacted the number of students offered places and subsequently enrolled at the University.
- (d) That any impact of the policy on supporting Access Agreement targets to be explored in further detail.

25/17-18

Any other business

Paper to be circulated on the impact of Universal Credit by the Director of Centre for Lifelong Learning for the next meeting on 10 April 2018.