

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**  
**WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE**  
**RESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2024**  
**9:30 – 11:30**

Ref	Item		
<b>Present</b>	Paul Blagburn	PB	Head of Widening Participation (Chair for this meeting)
	Adam Child	AC	Academic Registrar
	Associate Professor Lee Griffin	LGri	Academic Director, Postgraduate Taught Education
	Vaishnavi Ravi	VR	Students' Union Representative (VP Postgraduate) (joined online)
	Emily Roisin- Reid	ER	Director of Student Experience, WMS (left at 10:45am)
	Holly Roffe	HR	Students' Union Representative (Education) (joined online)
	Andy Hind	AH	Head of Academic Department, CTE
	Adele Browne	AB	Director of Student Experience (joined online)
<b>Attending</b>	Amanda Bishop	ABis	WP Faculty Engagement Manager (SEM)
	Claire Edden	CE	WP Faculty Engagement Manager (Social Sciences); WP Student Advisory Group Co-Chair
	Victoria Hill	VH	WP Faculty Engagement Manager (Arts)
	Rosalyn Forbes	RF	Head of Philanthropy, Development and Alumni Engagement (representing Natalie Lloyd)
	Micaela Hodges	MH	SI Manager (representing Kulbir Shergill)(Left at 11:00am)
	Catherine McNicholl	CM	Widening Participation Manager
	Thamela Desborough	TD	Admissions Service Manager (UG)
056	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Professor Matthew Clayton (Head of PAIS, Faculty of Social Sciences representative), Professor Rebecca Freeman (Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)), Professor Lorenzo Frigerio (Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education)), Baljit Gill (Widening Participation Manager (Assistant Secretary)), Professor Ruth Hewston (Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning), Elizabeth Hough (Head of Admissions), Cherryl Jones (Widening Access and Lifecycle Manager), Sue Jones (Head of Student Finance), Professor Nina-Anne Lawrence (Head of Academic Department, Warwick Foundation Studies), Natalie Lloyd (Deputy Director of Development), Professor Tim Lockley (Head of History, Faculty of Arts), Kulbir Shergill (Director of Social Inclusion), Simon Stearn (Chief Data Officer/IDG), Professor Patrick Tissington (Academic Director of Employability and Skills), Roberta Wooldridge Smith (Director of Student Opportunity), Professor Derrick Watson (Head of Psychology, Faculty of SEM representative)</p>		
057	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>		
058	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting on 14 May 2024</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 (058-WPC270624) were received and approved.</p>		
059	<p><b>Matters arising from last meeting on 14 May 2024</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the meeting on 14 May 2024 that were not covered in this agenda.</p>		

Chair's Update and Governance	
060	<p><b>Chair's Business and Action (PB)</b></p> <p><u>University of Warwick WP and Social Mobility Division shortlisted award</u></p> <p>a) The University of Warwick has been shortlisted at the Student Social Mobility Awards – for University of the Year category. This award will recognise the work a university has done to facilitate social mobility. This could include initiatives focused on widening access and participation, student success, and/or career progression, as well as any collaborative partnerships. There are also a four students from Warwick who have been nominated for various awards. The ceremony will take place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024.</p> <p><u>The Education &amp; Student Experience (ESE) Strategy Update</u></p> <p>b) ESE Strategy on a Page was approved at Senate on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 without any changes. The next stage is for it to go to Council for approval. Several themes are reflected in both the ESE and the Access and Participation Plan, as well as good links being made between multiple university level strategies.</p> <p>There were no other updates from the Chair</p>
Strategy and Priorities	
061	<p><b>Access and Participation (APP) Update Student Submission</b></p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Widening Participation and Students' Union Representative (Education).</p> <p><u>APP Update (Head of WP)</u></p> <p>a) PB confirmed that the relevant documentation had been sent to the Office for Students and so far, they have asked for clarification on minor points only. b) Next stage is for final approval from Director for Fair Access and Participation, which should come at the end of August. Allowing time for an implementation plan roll out to be created for next academic year.</p> <p><u>APP Student Submission (Student's Union Representative (Education))</u></p> <p>c) HR confirmed that the student submission for the Access and Participation Plan was complete and ready to be sent. Several societies were consulted in order to gain feedback, including Warwick Pride and the 93% Club. They were not able to consult with many students individually, but the societies felt that they were able to represent the student voice well.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p> <p>The Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the update.</p>
Monitoring and Practice	
062	<p><b>Warwick Scholars (WS) Update</b></p> <p>The Committee received a written update in advance from Jo Bowers, Lifecycle Officer and Ellie Hinds, Widening Access Officer (062-WPC270624) and a verbal update within the committee.</p>

- a) The Warwick Scholars programme was launched in 2013 initially as a bursary programme and in 2018 this was revised with an introduction of the Access stage of the programme, supporting students from year 12.  
The programme is Midlands based and is a flagship programme for Social Mobility. The programme is broken down into two areas, Access (supporting students wanting to come to Warwick from the end of Year 12) to the Undergraduate Programme (supporting Warwick Scholars who are studying at Warwick for the duration of their degrees).
- b) Access  
In 2022/23 there were 275 places available but were only able to offer 247 places on the programme largely due to departmental number caps.  
In 2023/24 there were up to 350 places available and to date 670 applications have been received.  
In 2022/23 scholars were successfully recruited from all 13 local authority areas covered by the scheme, majority from Birmingham and Coventry.  
89% of the 122 Warwick Scholars access students who applied to Warwick for entry in 2022-23 achieved the required A level grades to secure a place at university.  
47% accepted a place at Warwick, 8% at other Russell group universities or Oxbridge.  
64% of those who came to Warwick achieved grades higher than the Warwick Scholars offer with 28% achieving the standard offer grades.  
Only 24% relied on the Warwick Scholars offer to gain their place.
- c) WS UG Programme  
The Warwick Scholars undergraduate programme is currently offered to all access programme participants plus care leavers, estranged entrants and sanctuary scholars. Over 330 undergraduates are in the Warwick Scholars community.  
Those who come through the Warwick Scholars Access route are eligible for a 50% fee reduction.  
In 2022/23 108 first years joined the programme, 61 Warwick Scholars access students and 47 from our other access programmes.  
In 2023/24 our first-year intake was 119, 81 Warwick Scholars access students and 42 from our other access programmes.  
Due to improved processes for early identification of care leavers and estranged students we welcomed 13 in 2022/23 and 14 in 2023/24  
65-75% of first year Warwick Scholar undergraduates in 2022/23 and 2023-24 had a household income which qualified them for the higher-level Warwick Scholars bursary on entry to the university. 65% were in the lowest income bracket for eligibility and the median household income was £17,047.  
A significant proportion of scholars (48 out of 335) who do not have a household income assessment go on to qualify for the higher-level bursary once an assessment is made by SFE. These include students who are unable or unwilling to take out an interest-bearing loan.  
Degree outcomes for our first cohort of Warwick Scholars access students to graduate were positive with 78% achieving a 2:1 or above which is better than the sector average for disadvantaged students from 2018-2022.
- d) Challenges and Risks  
*Cohort growth and diversification* (risk is due to subject preference and department caps)  
Without this the programme cannot grow.  
Guaranteed offers set at point of application doesn't then mean this number enter at point of enrolment.  
UniTracks (a sustained engagement programme for pre 16 students, interested in the Creative Arts) and Year 12 Academic Taster Days have helped to challenge some of this.  
126 more applications than last year  
*Monitoring engagement and success for undergraduate Warwick Scholars.*  
A recommendation from the internal audit of Warwick Scholars in 2023 was to work with the Information and Digital Group (IDG) to establish improved processes for monitoring

	<p>engagement and success of Warwick Scholars. This has not been possible because of disruption within IDG during Warwick Transformations.</p> <p><i>GCSE contextualisation</i> Applicants need to have achieved 5 GCSE's 6- 9 when applying for WS but this can be missed due to mitigating circumstances. This can be taken into account for WS programme but not for entrance to some courses.</p> <p><i>Regional focus and priority groups</i> Warwick Scholars has extended the undergraduate programme to enrolling care leavers, estranged students and sanctuary scholars from outside the geographic area. However, this means these groups to not benefit from the access element of the programme nor the tuition fee discount. To mitigate this, the proposal is to trial an extension of the Warwick Scholars access provision in 2024/25 to all offer holders (nationally) in year 13 who are known to be care leavers or estranged from their families.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p> <p>The Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the update and report.</p> <p>Action: Slides to be shared</p>
063	<p><b>Support for Priority Groups</b></p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update from Emily Cannon, Lifecycle Officer.</p> <p>a) <u>Who do we mean by priority groups:</u> Independent students who are care leavers Independent students who are estranged from their parents (this sometimes includes bereaved students) Sanctuary Scholars (usually students seeking asylum)</p> <p>b) <u>Common themes:</u> Often students who have no stable homes, especially to return to during vacation times. Experience trauma and disruption to childhood and education. Strong resilience and incredible potential within these students</p> <p>c) <u>Data</u> 70 Warwick UG students fell into these groups in 2023/24 (compared to 45 in 2022/23). Around 20-25 UG offer holders for 2024 entry are care leavers or are estranged (that are currently known). No UG Sanctuary Scholars for 2024 entry currently.</p> <p>d) <u>What support do they have?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contextual offers</b> (for some groups)</li> <li>• <b>Pre-arrival support for applicants/offer holders:</b> e.g. signposting to internal/external services, support with Student Finance (where applicable)</li> <li>• <b>Financial support while on course:</b> up to £4,000pa for care leavers/estranged students; full tuition fee waiver plus c.£12,000 bursary for UG Sanctuary Scholars. This is seen as good at Warwick with an easy automated system.</li> <li>• <b>Accommodation support:</b> access to 52 week on-campus accommodation for duration of studies for main 'priority groups' who are UG – but this does involve moving rooms twice over summer</li> <li>• <b>Access to Warwick Scholars Undergraduate Programme:</b> for students who join the university from a care leaver/estranged background or are a UG Sanctuary Scholar (these students also get the WSUG bursary)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Other bespoke support while on-course:</b> e.g. single point/team of contact (WP Lifecycle Team), advocacy and signposting support</li> <li>• <b>Additional consideration for Warwick Taught Masters Scholarship:</b> up to £10,000 scholarship towards PGT study (care leavers and estranged students); we also have a PGT Sanctuary Scholarship scheme</li> </ul> <p>e) <u>Current challenges and opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions and contextual considerations</li> <li>• Information sharing</li> <li>• Accommodation support</li> <li>• Cost of living support</li> <li>• ‘Exit plans’ and transitioning out of university (RSWOR, TWD, PWD and graduation)</li> <li>• Staffing/resourcing in support services/WP Lifecycle team</li> <li>• Gaps at PGT &amp; PGR level, along with gaps in provision for other ‘priority groups’/non-Home students</li> <li>• Decision making/governance</li> <li>• Support for international students (no resources presently from this)</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions: Slides to be shared with Committee</b></p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p> <p>The Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the update.</p>
064	<p><b>WP Committee Working Group Updates</b></p> <p><b>a. WP Research and Evaluation Working Group</b></p> <p>The Committee received a written update from Tammy Thiele, WP Evidence and Evaluation Manager and Ellis Ryan, Evidence and Evaluation Officer (064a-WPC270624) was also present for a verbal update.</p> <p><b>A verbal update was given by Ellis</b></p> <p>a) Established in 2017/18, the Working Group was created to facilitate collaboration between academic and practitioner colleagues to enhance, steer, and support research and evaluation related to WP across the student lifecycle. Since its inception, the Working Group has been co-led by Dr Tammy Thiele from the WP Evaluation and Evidence Team and an academic co-chair, currently Professor Emma Smith (Education Studies), who succeeded Professor Robin Naylor (Economics) in 2021.</p> <p>The Working Group has focused on scoping WP-related research across the University and identifying staff and students interested in or already conducting such research. We have conducted staff and student surveys to gather this information. Additionally, two events were held last year where staff and students presented their research on WP issues at Warwick, followed by discussions on interests, research and evaluation questions, and support needs to build research capacity.</p> <p>The research related to WP that is being undertaken across the University can be fragmented, disparate, and potentially duplicative. To address this, and consolidate these research efforts, the Working Group have been setting out plans to develop and implement a new iteration of the ‘Warwick Observatory for Social Mobility’.</p> <p>b) Next Steps - Applying for funding from Enhancing Research Culture to develop and implement our plans for the Social Mobility Observatory. This funding is crucial for moving these plans forward, as there is limited resources available at present. The Group would welcome guidance from the WP Committee on other funding options or whether this initiative could be supported by the University if our grant application is unsuccessful, as well as guidance from</p>

the WP Committee on the key aims and priorities for the Working Group in the new academic year would also be beneficial.

#### **b. WP Student Advisory Group**

The Committee received a written update from Claire Edden, WP Faculty Engagement Manager (Social Sciences) (064b-WPC270624).

- a) The WP Committee recognised the importance of including the student voice within its work, as such they commissioned the setting up a Widening Participation Student Advisory Group (WP SAG) as one of their three working groups and this was established in 2020/21. The group acts as a forum where current students (both UG and PG) from a diverse range of WP backgrounds can support the University to enhance its WP practice and policy. This extends across the whole student lifecycle, from pre-entry through to graduation and beyond, incorporating access, transition, student success and progression. The group is cochaired by the Student Union Widening Participation Officer(s) (SU WPO's) and Claire Edden, Widening Participation Faculty Engagement Manager (FSS), with support from Jo Bowers, Widening Participation Lifecycle Officer.
- b) All students are recruited for and have to apply through a competitive process and most fulfil at least 3 WP criteria.  
Full training given about what their roles are and how they contribute within the group and wider.  
The students (up to 14) look at discussion topics from a more proactive strategic lens but importantly avoid having the group becoming a focus group, members need to feel they are making a difference and can see their input.  
This year topics have been around the APP, Personal Tutoring and the Student Experience strategy.
- c) Next Steps are to continue with links to the APP and the implementation of this.  
An emerging offshoot is around the support for WP PGT students with a possible further group being created around this.

#### **c. Diverse Student Journeys Group**

The Committee received a written update from Michaela Hodges, Social Inclusion Manager (064c-WPC270624)

- a) In September 2023, it was agreed that the University of Sanctuary Advisory Group be reformed as a sub-group of the Widening Participation Committee with a broadened focus, to cover the needs of sanctuary seeking students and those of other 'priority groups'/'students with individual needs' (namely, care leavers, estranged students, and students with caring responsibilities). The group will report regularly to both the Widening Participation and Social Inclusion Committees, as well as sharing updates with Student Learning Experience & Engagement Committee (SLEEC) as needed.
- b) Key points - A request for a small budget at the discretion of the Lifecycle team, to support students with urgent, one-off financial difficulties which negatively impact their ability to study.  
The outcomes and learning from an externally provided review of our Sanctuary scholarships, which provides a series of recommendations for where we could improve as well as reflections on where the University is doing well.  
Identification of barriers to entry and success for students, and any gaps in provision of support. Based on this, the group will create a plan of priority areas for the group to focus on, beginning with an action plan for the next 12 months.

	<p>Progressing plans for the University to charge asylum seekers at the home fees level (as opposed to international fees)</p> <p>c) Next Steps - Looking at the creation of a 3 – 5-year plan. University of Sanctuary accreditation is due in September 2024</p> <p><b>Action – Guidance needed from WP Committee to support with the funding and direction of the WP Research and Evaluation Working Group</b></p> <p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p> <p>The Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the updates.</p>
065	<p><b>Admissions Update</b></p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update from Thamala Desborough, Undergraduate Admissions Manager.</p> <p>a) <u>Update for 2024 cycle</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume of offers in total is high, we have made more offers than ever before around 2000 more</li> <li>• Increases in applications is due to recruiting departments and also strategically deciding to make more offers.</li> <li>• WP remains at the heart of what we are offering home student.</li> <li>• 3600 (check) of contextual offers – represents 18% of total offers, slightly fewer than last year</li> <li>• Conversation picture is po 1288 CF (36% - 31% home none CO), CI (20% - 14% home none CO)</li> <li>• WS 204 offers of which 135 CF (66%) 26% CI – maybe a few more but they have chosen to apply to a different course that doesn't have the guaranteed offer attached.</li> <li>• Care leavers – 20-25 acceptances with evidence (45 who have ticked the UCAS flag but may not have had evidence checked)</li> </ul> <p>b) <u>Offer making and how admissions work with WP cohorts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextual offer scheme forms a big part of working with WP cohorts (this is currently based on applicant home postcode or school postcode at KS4 and KS5)</li> <li>• Stronger relationships have been developed with the WP Lifecycle Officer (Priority Groups) to support with the care leaver verification process.</li> <li>• We are able to track WP Programme students through the WP Evidence and Evaluation team.</li> <li>• For selective courses, a data report that brings in individual UCAS data is being used in conjunction with other factors. This data can be used to look at other factors such as Free School Meals and these applicants are looked at in context. Personal statements are not looked at anymore so no potential advantage, now rely more heavily on GCSE's.</li> <li>• Extenuating circumstances review underway – currently links to UCAS teacher statement changes. These are now reviewed individually by a panel of admissions officers and ahead of Confirmation and Clearing, the opportunity to submit further extenuating circumstances is offered too.</li> </ul> <p>c) 2025/26 will see the introduction of new admissions tests for some courses (Economics and Computer Science) but WP applicants are mostly exempt through contextual offers.</p>

	<p><b>RECEIVED:</b></p> <p>The Widening Participation Committee <b>noted</b> the update.</p>
<p><b>Other</b></p>	
<p>046</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked wanted to thank Vaishnavi Ravi, Mya Kaur and Hollie Roffe for their commitment and contributions to the committee for this academic year.</p> <p>The Chair drew attention to the Access and Participation Plan thank you event being hosted in University House Atrium on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024. Invites have been circulated but colleagues are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>Widening Participation Manager (CMN) shared a document of summer activity being run by the WP and Social Mobility Division. Committee colleagues may wish to pop along to visit – please drop CMN an email if you wish to attend.</p>
<p><b>Close by 11.30</b></p> <p><b>Next meeting:</b></p>	