Social Inclusion Strategy

1. Vision

The University of Warwick's purpose, to achieve excellence with purpose in education and research is supported by four strategic priorities: Innovation, Inclusion, Regional Leadership and Internationalisation. The Social Inclusion Strategy will help Warwick to re-imagine the original purpose of setting up the University in 1965, to 'increase access to higher education'. Through this Strategy, the University aspires to remove economic, social and cultural barriers that have prevented people from working, studying and succeeding at Warwick, and to be recognised as best in class in its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, for staff and students by 2030.

2. Objectives

1) Increase the diversity of Warwick's staff and students to maximise the creativity and innovation of its talent;

2) Develop a culture that supports students and staff in achieving their potential; and

3) Become an internationally recognised leader in inclusion.

The social inclusion agenda at Warwick aims to make a real difference by nurturing the most diverse and inclusive citizens and leaders for today and tomorrow, and that through inclusive practice, Warwick can leverage the benefits of difference to help the University achieve its vision. Work will continue into identifying talent that has found itself excluded and under-represented in Higher Education. By removing barriers and changing the way things are done, Warwick can provide an inclusive experience of outstanding academic and professional growth at the University for both its students and staff.

At Warwick, diversity is about all members of its community. Warwick's approach will go much further than the bounds of legislative practice, protected characteristics[1] and the requirements of regulators. It is leadership at all levels of the University's community that will be central to driving the structural changes required to see everyone living Warwick's values and nurturing a culture that truly recognises, respects and fosters diversity.

Research and experience indicates that certain diversity characteristics result in greater challenges for some people in higher education. In particular, there are more challenges for people of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) origin; people who have a disability; and people who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This is manifested in numerous ways, but most obviously in access to higher education and academic attainment. Warwick's approach will focus on ensuring it tackles these barriers and practices to specifically address these issues. The effects of intersectionality when considering diversity will be central to the analysis and actions subsequently undertaken.

3. Objective One: Increase the diversity of Warwick's staff and students to maximise creativity and innovation of its talent

---

[1] Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation as defined under the 2010 Equality Act

Diversity of thought leads to innovation and creativity. Inherited and acquired diversity characteristics are indicators of diversity of thought. Representing different experiences and approaches, it brings fresh challenge to ways of thinking and doing things.

For Warwick, having diversity represented in its students and staff means that the University can achieve its vision of excellence in education and research. This can be measured through the protected characteristics and economic background of its staff and students and these indicators will continue to be a key focus of the University's progress on increasing inclusion. Headway on closing the attainment gap for Warwick's students, and in particular for those of specific BAME backgrounds, those with disabilities and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, will be key indicators of success. For staff, measures of career progression and pay equity will be primary indicators of real change across the academy and in professional services.

Diversity in Warwick's Students

As a Russell Group University, Warwick recognises that traditional methods of recruiting students, coupled with reputation, have inadvertently resulted in a lack of diversity for certain groups of people. It is understood that this has created barriers and significant work is being undertaken to redress them. Warwick is proud of the progress that it has made in the increases in BAME student recruitment compared to its Russell Group peers. However, the University will continue to examine how best it can reach out to, engage with potential students, and work with them to ensure they are informed and supported through the application process. The regional ethnic diversity of communities makes this a priority for Warwick. On the University's part, systems and processes are needed that ensure that it is identifying talent and making offers to entry based on criteria that truly recognises potential in all its diversity.

As a university, Warwick is constantly striving to improve how it does things to make its student experience among the best in the world. It is recognised that the University needs to understand how its teaching, learning and assessment approaches impacts on its students. As the student life cycle is reviewed, measures will be introduced that help to provide better indicators of which students are likely to face challenges in reaching their potential and make available options for timely and appropriate interventions.

Warwick has made great strides in improving the female experience, by working towards and achieving an institutional Silver Athena Swan award. However, to truly achieve gender equality for its students, Warwick will continue to identify and work on challenges as it works towards all academic departments achieving an Athena Swan award. Work will also be undertaken towards the Race Equality Charter to help improve the experience of BAME students and staff at the University.

The attainment gap is one of the most pressing challenges affecting particular groups of BAME students, those with disabilities and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Through co-creation with students and academics, Warwick is working towards inclusive teaching practices, curriculum and teaching spaces that provide reasonable adjustments. This will be done by:

- Co-creation with affected groups;
- Underpinning by research and learning from peers;
- Systemic and structural change that goes beyond supporting affected groups separately;
- Enhancement-driven monitoring (to make immediate and then structural change);

Diversity in our staff

Increasing diversity in all staff, including academic, professional and other support staff, particularly at senior levels, is essential to bring inclusion to the student experience, and to enhance Warwick's reputation and brand as an inclusive employer. Reviewing recruitment and promotion processes to ensure unbiased decision-making and nurturing talent to establish a diverse talent pipeline are some of the actions that will support the University in its drive for a diverse workforce: a workforce whose diversity and inclusive leadership will be inspirational for Warwick's students and the communities that it works with.

Equity in pay for all staff is one of the ways that high performance can be rewarded and diverse talent valued. Reduction, and ultimately elimination, of the gender and ethnic minority pay gap is a priority, which must be achieved. Through better understanding, the barriers to career progression and decision-making about reward and recognition, Warwick can work towards achieving this outcome. Improving diversity data will support the improvement of the pay gap for women and ethnic minorities and it will promote better understanding of how it affects other groups of staff, in particular those with specific protected characteristics.

4. **Objective Two: a culture that supports Warwick's students and staff to achieve their potential**

Warwick's culture will determine how individuals treat one another through understanding of what they owe one another as members of a community and as citizens of a diverse world - or in other words, a culture of inclusion. A culture of inclusion is one where:

- Diversity is recognised, understood and valued;
- Leaders are role models for inclusive behaviours;
- There is an environment which is flexible and adaptable and facilitates meaningful interactions;
- There is transparency of and accountability for our actions.

Diversity is recognised, understood and valued

By embedding diversity and inclusion into the University's learning and communication programmes, it can engage with students and staff on realising the benefits that diversity and inclusion brings. Systems and processes will be reviewed to ensure that Warwick does not inadvertently discriminate against students or staff, and have tools in place that promote decision-making that is free from bias. Warwick will support a culture which encourages constructive dialogue to tackle discrimination and injustice.

Leaders are role models for inclusive behaviours

Leadership in any organisation includes the articulation of its values, and inclusion is fundamental to the values of Warwick. Inclusive behaviours can include different things to different people, here at Warwick they include:

- Being respectful of and understanding individuality;
- Nurturing diverse talent;
- Being an ally and never a bystander through safe intervention; and
- Understanding the benefits of diversity and embedding it into all that Warwick does.

An environment, which is flexible, adaptable and facilitates meaningful interactions

Physical environment has a key role to play in facilitating access for Warwick's students, staff and the communities within which it works. The University wants to support everyone to enjoy the campus and find the environment to be one, which helps them to perform at their very best. This will be reflected in as many ways as possible, from the welcome provided, to ensuring that the campus is physically accessible and adaptable to different needs.

To go beyond understanding bias and to achieve unbiased actions, there must be meaningful interactions with people who are different and unfamiliar to oneself. Physical and social environments can encourage such interactions between different members of the community by facilitating learning and respectful curiosity about difference.

Through proactive communications and learning, individuals can also support their community; to not be bystanders; and to encourage people to report and call out behaviours that are not congruent with Warwick's values. Warwick will create an environment of respect, where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. It is recognised that that not all forms of discrimination and harassment are overt and take the form of micro-aggressions, but these are no less damaging.

Transparency and accountability for actions

As a University, Warwick is subject to external scrutiny on actions and outcomes in achieving social inclusion for its students and staff. Warwick will go further than this and hold our itself accountable to all stakeholders through its shared values and governance processes, and by being transparent in the actions that the University are taking, outcomes that it is achieving and barriers that it has yet to overcome.

The University will work with its staff, (academic, professional and support services), with its students and with external stakeholders to identify best practice, implement actions in a timely fashion and innovate new approaches to achieve Warwick's vision of inclusion.

5. **Objective Three: Internationally recognised leaders in social inclusion**

Warwick wants to be recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a place that is leading on learning, developing and achieving inclusion.

At a national level, the University wants to be at the forefront of the debate and a force for change on social inclusion, not only in the role of a higher education provider, but also using its expertise and knowledge on social, political and economic factors that are inhibitors or facilitators of progression towards greater equality.

Warwick values the richness that international relationships bring to knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, and will continue to strive to achieve geographical diversity in its students and partnerships.

The University will continue to increase the depth, mutuality and diversity of its relationships in the surrounding communities and the region. This will be achieved by continuing to contribute skills, knowledge, volunteering, and other support, to facilitate and shape sustainable change in the region by helping to build capacity in local communities and promoting the development of leadership skills and practices to achieve inclusive economies.

In many ways, the discourse on social inclusion is still in its infancy. By harnessing the experience of Warwick's practice and the knowledge and innovation of its academics, professional staff and students, it will use its voice to develop and establish thought leadership in this critical area.

6. Delivering the Strategy

The Social Inclusion Strategy will work inter-dependently with the following strategies: Research, Education, Widening Participation, Student Admissions, International, Regional, Research, Innovation, People, Government Affairs and Communications.

Strategy progress and developments will be monitored and actioned by the Social Inclusion Committee and report to Council.

<div align="right">

Kulbir Shergill
Director of Social Inclusion

30 April 2019

</div>