Special Section: Preparing for the Future with Liberal Arts

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Not long after I joined Warwick's Liberal Arts department in 2021 I was supporting a finalist writing their dissertation. Being new, I didn't know them and I was still getting my head around what it meant to teach, research, and talk in the transdisciplinary way we do in Liberal Arts. My student, however, was an expert. They had not only done very well in their first two years on the programme, but they had also taken advantage of our study abroad programme and spent a year at a fantastic Liberal Arts programme in Germany. During the course of one of our supervision meetings, the student outlined all the things they were doing — multiple classes in several different disciplines, their own active engagement with the Students' Union, and their life outside of university, to say nothing of their dissertation. I asked them how they were coping and balancing all these different demands. They looked me straight in the eye and replied calmly: 'Will, I'm just going to Liberal Arts the sh!t out of all of this.'

And they did.

To me, this episode encapsulates what a liberal education is. Rather than preparing students for a specific present, we work to give them skills, perspectives, confidence, and courage to deal for whatever future they enter into.

We are very proud that Warwick Liberal Arts is celebrating its 10^{th} anniversary this year. During this time, we have seen students from all backgrounds join our community and explore a wide range of subjects and disciplines, bringing together all their experiences in ways that matter to them. Our graduates have gone on into so many different careers and are each changing their complex worlds in interdisciplinary ways. Getting to hear their stories and tales is all the evidence I need to know that what started as a pretty radical experiment a decade ago has become a true Warwick success.

Beyond this university, though, there is a thriving liberal education community across the UK. As this special edition of *Reinvention* shows, interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research are transformative everywhere. In a world that hyperfixates on the specific, being able to deal with complexity, to be able to think critically, and to have the confidence of one's own convictions is clearly valuable.

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