

WARWICK ISLAMIC EDUCATION PROJECT

INSPIRED BY A SHARED TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL VISION

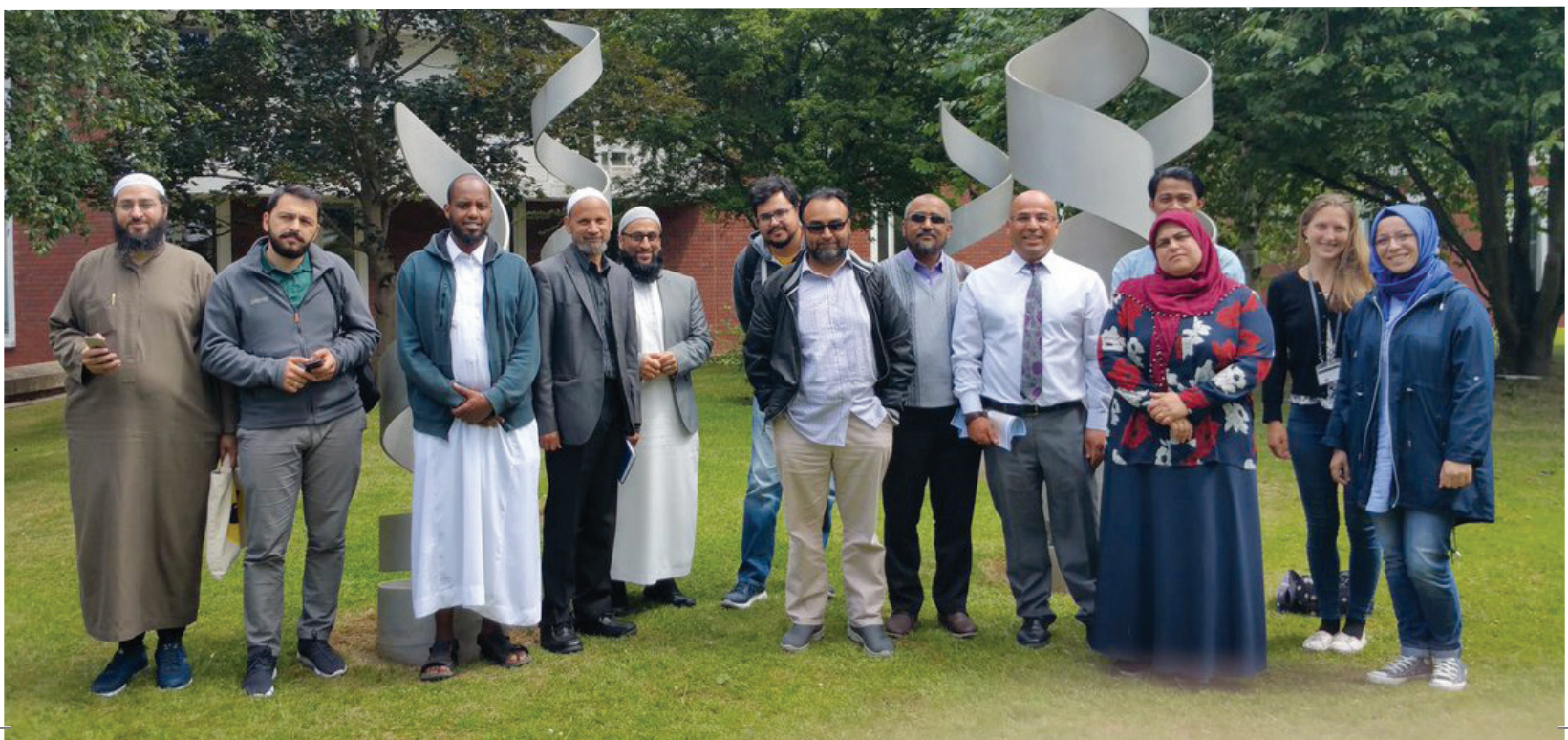
- ▶ Establishing Islamic Education as a rigorous **interdisciplinary field of research and teaching**, opening up professional development pathways for practitioners
- ▶ **Empowering Muslim communities** and contributing to the public understanding of Islam
- ▶ Encouraging **research-based reflective practice** among practitioners including faith leaders, teachers, and community and youth workers

During the 2nd year of the project, we have continued raising awareness and relationships with our stakeholders have thrived. The first intake to the MA in Islamic Education have been welcomed, a new Postgraduate Award launched and PhD students have begun their research in the field of Islamic Education.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

- ▶ A flourishing postgraduate learning community: the project has established distinctive academic programmes and they are attracting a significant number of local and international students
- ▶ A successful Warwick Islamic Education Summer School, which attracts researchers and practitioners from around the world. Our network has more than 100 members, including delegates from Canada, India, Japan, Singapore and Indonesia
- ▶ The emergence of a hub of academic excellence in Islamic Education: developing collaborations with organisations and universities, publishing research and making a real community impact

Much of this is thanks to the support of the Randeree Charitable Trust, whose generous donation helped to initiate the project by establishing a Readership in Islamic Education at Warwick.



STUDENT EXPERIENCE ON OUR GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

MA ISLAMIC EDUCATION

In 2017 seven students successfully joined the MA course.

This cohort has now completed their coursework and are currently finishing their dissertations. It is pleasing to note that four of these students will remain at Warwick to study for a PhD.

Expectations are high for 2018-19 with space for ten new students to join the MA course and we plan to significantly increase the female intake. Applications for part time study also shows the course is attracting practitioners who want to take up the course as a professional development opportunity.

PhD STUDENTS

Currently there are six PhD students studying at Warwick.

By using empirical research designs the students are investigating different aspects of contemporary Islamic Educational practice as well as conducting historical, textual, philosophical and theological inquiries in the field. It is hoped this number will double by next year.

We are receiving applications from highly qualified scholars who want to engage with classical Muslim intellectual heritage by using an interdisciplinary research methodology, and applying the results to improve current practice in the field. These research projects aim to contribute to the formation of a transformative educational culture within diverse communities of practice.

Topics of research include:

- ▶ 'Assessing current curriculum and teaching materials used within Muslim supplementary schooling sector'
- ▶ 'Developing Islamic education intervention programmes to engage with and challenge youth delinquency within Somali Muslim communities in London'
- ▶ 'Exploring the spiritual character of education in Islam and considering its pedagogic implications for contemporary practice of Islamic education'
- ▶ 'Contextual teacher and faith leadership training within European Muslim communities'

POSTGRADUATE AWARD IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION (PGA)

As the UK's first access course in Islamic Education, the PGA is supporting applicants, especially those who wish to continue their professional and academic development, to meet the admission criteria for the MA.

The PGA is especially relevant to Muslim educators, faith leaders and graduates of traditional Islamic seminaries.

This has proved incredibly popular with a high number of enquiries and 20 applications so far. The next step will be to consider ways of embedding the course into seminary training on-site for Muslim seminaries (dar al-ulum) in the UK.



"The MA programme is a must for anyone interested in transformative Islamic education and wanting to bring about positive change in their communities. The flexible nature of the programme, the constant encouragement, support and guidance contributes towards a rich and worthwhile experience."

Imtiyaz Damiel

"Warwick Islamic Education research programme is unique in creatively integrating critical education studies into exploring the intellectual heritage of Islam. I feel privileged to be part of this growing new research community."

M. Ziad Tekleh, PhD student

WARWICK ISLAMIC EDUCATION SUMMER SCHOOL

Based on the Muslim educational tradition of *taaruf* (or openness to learning from one another), the Summer School offers an academic space which encourages critical inquiry and reflective practice in Islamic Education.

Held annually, the Summer School welcomes 25 national and international researchers and practitioners to Warwick who come together to inspire, support and motivate one another in key research areas.

The dialogue and proceedings have informed wider scholarly discussion on Islam and Education and has led to the formation of a distinctive international Islamic Education Research Network. Last year the teaching and learning of the Qur'an within Muslim communities settled in Europe was the focus. This year the topic will be around the formation of Muslim female faith and educational leadership.

Positive participant feedback demonstrates that the Summer School has helped create an increasingly well-recognised distinctive Islamic Education research and professional networking platform.

"I would like to express my gratitude for organising such a great summer school focusing on challenges of organising modern Qur'an didactics. And I want to thank you all for contributing so many inspiring thoughts. It really was a pleasure to meet all the delegates and I am looking forward to next year's meeting!"

*Dorothea Ermert, Teaching Fellow,
Department of Islamic Theology
and teacher training, University of
Giessen, Germany*

"Thanks for having the vision and energy to bring such a group of people together. The whole group was delightful, people of great intellect, integrity and insight. I felt participants were really looking for guidance and a framework with which to move on and the summer school has provided this much needed inspiration and collegial support and guidance."

*Dr Bill Gent, Associate member WREUR,
University of Warwick*



"Three days of discussions and reflections have helped me to better organise my own research interest and focus. I felt motivated and supported to pursue my research project."

*Arwa Al-Azzaz, Teaching
Assistant and PhD candidate,
Saudi Arabia*

SCHOLARLY IMPACT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We are pleased to report that the Warwick Islamic Education project is increasingly recognised nationally and internationally amongst a wide range of stakeholders.

These include practitioners, community leaders, educationalists, Muslim parents, researchers and interfaith activists.

Going forward the project will continue to talk to these groups to find effective ways of realising our shared educational capacity-building goal within the diverse UK Muslim communities.

This year connecting with other academics groups has also resulted in new research projects. For example, Dr Sahin was recently appointed as a Visiting Professor at the UIN State Islamic University in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Academic highlights 2018

- ▶ Six papers written
- ▶ Eight conferences attended
- ▶ Three books in development
- ▶ Five journal articles due for publication in the coming year

WARWICK ISLAM DAY EVENT 2018

In June the project ran an outreach event with the Warwick District University of Third Age, a large local organisation catering for the needs of people in retirement and semi-retirement.

The day included a lecture on the basics of Muslim faith, its history and contemporary issues. This was enriched by contributions from the Khayaal theatre group, illustrating wisdom traditions, and an exhibition and short talk by Sairah Yassir-Deane on the Muslim contribution to science.

"We are indebted to you for putting together such a distinguished team of presenters. I hope we have helped break down some of the misconceptions surrounding the place of Islam in our world."

Chris Forse, Chairman



OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Based in the Centre for Education Studies (CES), the Warwick Islamic Education Project benefits from the scholarly expertise in the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU) and the wider CES and is going from strength to strength. There is a growing synergy, collaboration and support from multiple stakeholders, and the project is increasingly engaging Muslim and non-Muslim groups alike.

Future plans include:

- ▶ Develop a strategic plan to ensure future development, involving the University of Warwick and stakeholders
- ▶ Appoint a research fellow who can support the activities of the project, and lead on marketing and community engagement
- ▶ Work closely with colleagues to identify more collaboration opportunities (e.g. a BA in Education Studies and Islam, or a joint BA Honours in Arabic and Islamic Studies).
- ▶ Seek funding for more collaborative research and publication opportunities
- ▶ Continue to attract high-calibre and passionate scholars to our courses
- ▶ Secure funding to offer scholarships and remove barriers to study

OUR APPEAL TO YOU: COULD YOU HELP TO GROW THE IMPACT OF THIS PROJECT?

Much of our success is thanks to a generous donation from the Randeree Charitable Trust, which vastly accelerated the growth of our project. Could you join them in supporting our work?

We believe that Islamic Education at Warwick has the power to improve the standards and quality of education in our communities, shape society's perceptions of Islam and Muslims, and to make a difference. We want to be able to welcome worthy scholars no matter what their financial background is. Could you support that vision?

With your help, more students could share their energy and insight, and touch lives across the world. Please donate to our scholarship programme and help us welcome more scholars.

Every gift makes a difference, and the University can claim Gift Aid on eligible donations too. Please contact the fundraising team at benefactors@warwick.ac.uk to find out more.

For further course information please contact **Dr Abdullah Sahin** at a.sahin@warwick.ac.uk and visit warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ces