



University of the West of Scotland & UWS Student Union

Student Mental Health Agreement 2022-2023

Introduction

The University of the West of Scotland and the UWS Student Union have collaborated in creating the Student Mental Health Agreement. This is part of the NUS Think Positive Student Mental Health Agreement Project.

The agreement was developed in academic year 2021/22 by the student mental health advisory panel – a group of UWS students with lived experience and awareness of mental health. The University & the UWS Student Union completed a mapping exercise to identify current preventative provision, current supportive provision, and any gaps in provision. Through the mapping exercise and the work of the advisory panel, the focus is on five key priority areas for the academic year 2022/2023. These priority areas are mental health promotion, campaigns and events, reducing barriers to seeking help and co-created communication on mental health and wellbeing.

The University of the West of Scotland and the UWS Student Union view mental health through a 'whole systems lens' and believe all students and staff have a role to play in improving mental health in the university community.

1. Mental Health Promotion

Reason for priority area: To raise awareness on student mental health through multiple platforms and to encourage use of services.

Actions to be taken:

- **Weekly wellbeing webinars:** The counselling team will continue the development and delivery of webinars on common mental health problems.
- **Silvercloud:** Continued promotion of the online cognitive behavioural therapy programme which is freely available for the whole university community.
- **Reading for wellbeing:** Expansion of reading for wellbeing self-help books in the library.
- **Link between mental and physical health:** Promoting the free gym access for all students at UWS managed facilities and co-creating social media content with Team UWS.
- **Wellbeing Walks:** Continuing walks delivered by UWS student union to give students the opportunity to get to know the campuses and socialise with fellow students.
- **Newsletters:** Promotion of wellbeing resources through wellbeing, residences and sports newsletters.
- **Clubs, societies and recreational sports opportunities:** Promote and encourage student participation.
- **On campus promotion of wellbeing resources & the hub:** Creation of physical posters for each campus, residences and the union and utilise on-campus plasma screens. Wellbeing services to be promoted and information on the hub and its functions.
- **WhatsApp:** WhatsApp hub service will be promoted as a alternative way to engage with the service.
- **UWS Student App:** Promotion of wellbeing resources through the new UWS Student App.

Success measures: Engagement can be measured through social media analytics.

2. Involve students in campaigns and events

Reason for priority area: Promote social events for students and encourage conversation on mental health.

Actions to be taken:

- On campus event for university mental health day.
- Hold a film screening for students.
- On campus event for paws against stress.

Success measures: Recorded attendance of events.

3. Reduce barriers to help seeking

Reason for priority area: Increase the number of students seeking support and provide students with options to seek help.

Actions to be taken:

- **Health Assured 24/7 support line:** Continued promotion of the out of hours line available for all students. Additional free resources will be shared.
- **Counselling Service:** We will continue to offer an accessible counselling service with no wait list.
- **Report + Support:** Raise awareness of the report + support tool online platform available to all students to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, harassment, discrimination, hate crime or racism.
- **Male mental health:** Development of a male mental health working group facilitated by one of our male counsellors.
- **Inclusivity:** Improve messaging to ethnic minority students and international students on what is involved in counselling. Share the real feedback and experiences of ethnic minority students and international students who have used the wellbeing services.

Success measures: Social media analytics and recorded service usage.

4. Suicide Prevention

Reason for priority area: Challenge stigma on suicide by providing resources, sharing experiences on mental health. Sharing this message by linking with external organisations.

Actions to be taken

- **Elearning:** Promote suicide e-learning programmes.
- **Health Assured:** Promotion of 24/7 out of hours line.
- **Community links:** Development of links with our local suicide partners/chose life co-ordinators.
- **Male mental health:** Share work of counselling department on male mental health.

Success measures: Monitor uptake on training and measure analytics of support services.

5. Co-created communication

Reason for priority area: To make sure the wider student voice is heard, and content is relevant to current student issues. Student-led content will aim to be more engaging to the student population.

Actions to be taken:

- **Social media:** Continued involvement of the student mental health advisory panel in co-creating social media content on wellbeing.
- **New platforms:** Implementing new creative ways of sharing information - students to create bitesize TikTok wellbeing content.

Success measures: Analytics of content can be measured to show which types of content engage students. This will inform our strategy moving forward into next academic year.

Signed by VP Welfare & Wellbeing at UWS Union: Omoleye Awolaja

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