

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

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SCOPE

As UCEN Manchester is committed to adopting a whole institutional approach, all our community are in scope to include students, staff, and stakeholders.

The Mission of UCEN Manchester is "To deliver first-class technical and professional higher-level skills to meet the priorities of the Greater Manchester region and beyond." This applies equally to our extensive degree-level provision in creative, culture and sport – which as highlighted in the Greater Manchester LSIP form “a large part of the GM economy” – as it does to our higher technical education programmes.

We are committed to widening access to students who would not normally progress into higher education and, to this end, have well established widening participation strategies that aim to make higher education more accessible to students locally, regionally, nationally and from a diverse range of backgrounds. The general profile of our students is one of diversity which we actively seek to promote and celebrate.

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy will inform strands of delivery to be detailed in later sections.

Drawing together this mission and vision is a set of shared values that will be critical to our success. These values help to define who we are and how we behave:

- Integrity - We will be honest, trustworthy and open.
- One Team - We will collaborate, respect each other, and contribute to team goals.
- Always improving - We will be forward-thinking; we will innovate and take ownership.
- Can do - We will be positive, inclusive, flexible and proactive.
- Sustainable - We will take a long-term view, environmentally, financially and socially

PURPOSE

UCEN Manchester is committed to enabling all students to attain and exceed their goals, throughout their studies and beyond. An integral part of this commitment is to create an ethos of quality enhancement that impacts in a positive and progressive manner, on all aspects of the academic student experience to include mental health and wellbeing.

UCEN Manchester acknowledges that to achieve this, there must be a clear and equal partnership between stakeholders, the organisation, the staff, and the students. Therefore, this strategy links closely with other aligning plans and procedures to further ensure a whole institutional approach to include:

- A strategic focus on mental health that is embedded across all aspects, activities and areas of work, complementing our core missions of teaching, learning and research.
- A healthy learning, working and living culture and environment where individuals can manage and maintain good wellbeing.

- An inclusive focus on the whole population, with emphasis on mental health inequalities, student and staff mental health, and partnerships with local NHS services, third-sector organisations and colleges.

(Dooris, Powell & Farrier, 2019; Dooris, 2016; Dooris, Wills, & Newton, 2014; Dooris et al., 2010):

To achieve this our Strategy will follow the “Principles of good practice” outlined in the Student Minds Mental Health Charter Framework and will provide us with key objectives in relation to the four domains: Learn, Support, Work and Live. [University Mental Health Charter - Student Minds Hub](#)

Objective 1: Learn - We will prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of students studying at UCEN Manchester from application to graduation

Objective 2: Support - We will ensure our students can access wellbeing support when and where they need it and provide direct support for the wider determinants of good health and wellbeing.

Objective 3: Work - We will enhance staff development and well-being by providing comprehensive training, resources, and support that enables staff to thrive personally and professionally.

Objective 4: Live - We will implement proactive intervention strategies and cultivate a compassionate campus that promotes resilience, reduces stress, and supports the overall well-being of the UCEN Manchester community.

We will also encompass the Frameworks “Enabling Themes”:

- Leadership, Strategy and Policy
- Student Voice and Participation
- Cohesiveness of support across UCEN Manchester
- Inclusivity and intersectional mental health
- Research, innovation and dissemination

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

STRATEGIC STRAND ONE - LEARN DOMAIN

We will prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of students studying at UCEN Manchester from application to graduation.

Theme 1: Transition into UCEN Manchester

1.1 take a whole institutional approach to transition, embedding measures to support the positive transition of all students across their provision and into the curriculum.

1.2 put in place measures to support transition begin from pre-application and continue through application, pre-entry, arrival, induction and through the first year.

1.3 put in place measures to support transition aim to promote wellbeing, efficacy, academic integration and social connectedness.

1.4 provide additional or specific interventions for students who face additional barriers

Theme 2: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

UCEN Manchester will:

2.1 ensure that curriculum takes a holistic and inclusive view of learners, using evidence informed practice and secure scaffolding to enable all students to develop skills, confidence, academic self-efficacy and improve performance.

2.2 ensure that curriculum is designed to facilitate students to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate pace.

2.3 ensure that curriculum and pedagogic practice encourages deep learning, meaning, mastery and development.

2.4 ensure that curriculum design, pedagogic practice and academic processes consider and seek to impact positively on the mental health and wellbeing of all students.

2.5 clarify the role of curriculum in supporting student mental health and guide staff to maintain supportive, appropriate boundaries.

2.6 ensure that staff in teaching and learning support roles understand how they can support student mental health and wellbeing through good pedagogic practice.

Theme 3: Progression

UCEN Manchester will:

3.1 support students to prepare for the multiple, ongoing transitions they encounter during their studies e.g. between years/ levels of study.

3.2 provide targeted support for students on placement and on professional programmes, who may require more in-depth preparation and specific interventions.

3.3 provide adequate support for students taking breaks in study and proactively support their transition back into education.

3.4 support students to prepare for life, career and further study beyond graduation.

3.5 ensure that support for these transitions is structurally embedded into curriculum and UCEN Manchester practice.

Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Continue to develop Confident Futures pre-entry support package	Improve student outcomes by ensuring they develop skills, confidence, and academic self-efficacy across all transition points	Ensure as part of UCEN Manchester Strategy Objectives 1 and 4 – curriculum design explicitly considers and positively promotes the mental health and wellbeing of all students.
Continue to proactively contact all students who have made an MH declaration	Refine package of support for students taking breaks in study to facilitate successful re-engagement	

before enrolment and no later than first half term		
Academic staff to pilot the 'prearrival' questionnaire as an early intervention tool to support students who may have emotional support needs.	Establish a comprehensive package of CPD which provides teaching staff with the confidence to embed and support mental health and wellbeing in the classroom.	

STRATEGIC STRAND TWO - SUPPORT DOMAIN

We will ensure our students can access wellbeing support when and where they need it and provide direct support for the wider determinants of good health and wellbeing.

Theme 4: Support Services

UCEN Manchester will:

- 4.1 ensure that support services are appropriately resourced.
- 4.2 ensure that support services are safe.
- 4.3 ensure that support services are effective.
- 4.4 ensure that support services are responsive to current and future need and to local context.
- 4.5 ensure that support services are equally accessible to all students.
- 4.6 ensure that support services are well governed.

Theme 5: Risk

UCEN Manchester will:

- 5.1 have in place effective practice, processes and training for alerting and assessing risk to staff and students, and appropriately referring those at risk to internal or external services.
- 5.2 ensure staff have access to timely, expert advice and guidance.
- 5.3 provide interventions for all affected by risk and suicide and provide support for those at risk, when waiting for external interventions.
- 5.4 plan for prevention, intervention and post-vention activities, including planning for suicide clusters and reporting to the media.
- 5.5 reduce risk by ensuring they provide a safe physical environment and compassionate campus culture.

5.6 support students to be able to report concerns.

Theme 6: External Partnerships and Pathways

UCEN Manchester will:

6.1 take proactive steps to build relationships with local NHS, Social Care and third sector agencies, creating a shared understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities and demonstrating a commitment to principles of effective collaboration.

6.2 work collaboratively with NHS/Social Care to support individual students

6.3 support NHS/Social Care and other relevant agencies to understand the context of student life and the implications of treatment options and other decisions.

6.4 have arrangements in place to assess risk and effectively communicate this to NHS/Social Care.

6.5 work with NHS/Social Care to support students to return to study when appropriate.

6.6 work collaboratively with DSA funded private providers, ensuring they are aware of providers provide support to their students that those providers understand the mechanisms for reporting concerns.

Theme 7: Information Sharing

UCEN Manchester will:

7.1 work with students to mobilise all of their available resources to support their mental health—especially in instances of crisis.

7.2 acknowledges and demonstrates understanding that working with families, statutory services and others can provide effective support for students with poor mental health.

7.3 respect that student autonomy is central to decision making in relation to sharing information and is enabled as far as possible, unless the individual is appropriately assessed to lack mental capacity.

7.4 ensure that any decision to override student wishes or to pass on information without consent is done as a result of an appropriate, well governed, clinical assessment, is consistent with relevant national guidance, is clearly justifiable and is in the best interests of the student.

7.5 ensure that information is passed to the most appropriate people, who can reduce risk.

7.6 ensure confidentiality arrangements are clear, accessible and highly visible and relevant Data Sharing Agreements are in place.

Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Promote PAM Assist Student Assistance Programme to increase engagement.	Build on partnerships with local NHS and social care to establish clearer pathways for students to access support.	In line with UCEN Manchester's ambition to grow, ensure access to Future U Support Service is resourced

		and responsive to current and future need.
Increase the number of students sharing Wellbeing Contact information at point of enrolment	Respecting the diversity of our students, develop partnerships with third sector agencies to ensure we better meet their needs e.g. male mental health; LGBTQ+; neurodiversity	
Disseminate widely the suicide protocols that have been agreed to support prevention, intervention and post-vention activities.		

STRATEGIC STRAND 3 – WORK

UCEN Manchester has a commitment to habitually seeking staff consultation to ensure UCEN Manchester is continually improving. We will enhance staff development and well-being by providing comprehensive training, resources, and support that enables staff to thrive personally and professionally.

Theme 8: Staff Wellbeing

UCEN Manchester will:

8.1 develop a culture and environment that supports good staff wellbeing and good workplace conditions.

8.2 ensure staff feel able to discuss their own mental health and wellbeing and have access to effective, accessible support and proactive interventions to help them improve their own mental health and wellbeing.

8.3 ensure staff feel psychologically safe to enable them to innovate, identify improvements and raise concerns about culture and practice that may impact on mental health.

8.4 equip managers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to support good wellbeing within their teams and respond appropriately when staff experience poor mental health.

8.5 enable staff to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle and workplace behaviours.

8.6 support staff to spend a significant proportion of their time on work that is meaningful to them and appropriate to their role.

Theme 9: Staff Development

UCEN Manchester will:

9.1 support staff to develop, individually and collectively, the confidence and ability to promote positive mental health and respond appropriately to poor mental health.

9.2 support staff to recognise and respond appropriately to poor mental health and signs of risk, signpost effectively and maintain the safe boundaries of their role.

9.3 ensure staff receive mental health training that is context and role specific.

9.4 promote a workplace environment and management practices that support formal and informal reflection, consultation and development for staff who may encounter student mental illness.

9.5 provide formal development for managers that enables them to promote good wellbeing within teams, understand the challenges staff may face, provide appropriate support for their teams and have knowledge of resources that can help.

9.6 ensure staff in mental health roles engage in regular, ongoing clinical development.

Short Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Continue to promote dedicated Wellbeing Days	Working alongside LTE Group, encourage engagement with IThrive as a staff development tool that can support mental health and wellbeing.	On completion of our estates strategy and in line with Objective 2 of the UCEN Manchester strategy, commit to a comprehensive overview of working environment to include the impact of hot desking on staff wellbeing.
Improve staff responses to annual Wellbeing Survey by ensuring concerns previously raised have been addressed.	Implement training programme for managers to ensure they are better able to respond to and support staff members who are experiencing declining mental health.	
Continue to promote UCEN Manchester's staff participation in the LTE Quality Team's annual fitness challenge to encourage staff to proactively look after their physical and mental health.	Enhance reciprocal partnership with Rugby League Cares (RLC) to promote staff wellbeing through CPD opportunities.	

STRATEGIC STRAND 4: LIVE

We will implement proactive intervention strategies and cultivate a compassionate campus that promotes resilience, reduces stress, and supports the overall well-being of the UCEN Manchester community.

Theme 10: Proactive interventions and a mentally healthy environment

UCEN Manchester will:

10.1 promote the mental health of all members of the community through education, actively encouraging healthy behaviours and community– building and providing proactive interventions to improve wellbeing.

10.2 take steps to create an environment and culture that supports positive mental health and wellbeing.

10.3 take steps to create an environment that facilitates and makes it easy for individuals and groups to adopt healthy behaviours, offering multiple and varied options and interventions.

10.4 take steps to create a culture that prioritises mental health as important and are open and highly visible in doing so.

10.5 take steps to create a culture in which individuals feel safe and supported to disclose when they are experiencing poor mental health.

Theme 11: Residential Accommodation

UCEN Manchester does not have its own residential accommodation and instead we have Service Level Agreement in place with Manchester Student Homes (MSH). Manchester Student Homes is a free, university-run housing service for students. This service is jointly funded by The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University.

MSH is a student-focused service providing housing and community related information and guidance to students. Based in The University of Manchester's Students' Union, MSH runs a landlord accreditation scheme and offers support to students in relation to property searches, housing inspections and provides housing advice and contract checking service. As part of this relationship with MSH:

UCEN Manchester will:

11.1 ensure student accommodation provides safe environments that are positive for mental health and wellbeing.

11.2 ensure student accommodation supports every student to meet their physical and psychological needs and manage their wellbeing.

11.3 ensure student accommodation is inclusive and supports all students to find their friendship group and build a sense of belonging.

11.4 ensure arrangements are in place to recognise poor mental health and to refer students to appropriate support. This includes supporting accommodation providers and support services to collaborate and develop a shared understanding of provision, data sharing and signposting arrangements.

11.5 ensure accommodation staff are trained and supported in responding to student mental illness.

11.6 provide support for students living with a peer who is experiencing significant mental illness and staff in accommodation who may be responding to student mental illness.

Theme 12: Social Integration and Belonging

UCEN Manchester will:

- 12.1 take considered action to ensure a diverse, safe community.
- 12.2 actively and systematically support the social integration of all students.
- 12.3 take action to tackle the causes and effects of social isolation.
- 12.4 provide support for those experiencing loneliness.
- 12.5 work to prevent and address marginalisation, discrimination or harassment of individual students and groups.
- 12.6 ensure social cohesion and individual differences exist alongside each other, taking account of power dynamics and imbalances.

Theme 13: Physical environment

UCEN Manchester will:

- 13.1 engage with evidence and their communities to embed wellbeing and accessibility within the design of new buildings and developments.
- 13.2 engage with evidence and their communities to embed wellbeing and accessibility into the redevelopment and maintenance of current estate.
- 13.3 ensure that the design and allocation of working and learning spaces effectively supports the learning/work undertaken within that space.
- 13.4 facilitate and actively encourage staff and students to engage with nature.
- 13.5 ensure staff and students have access to appropriate social space.
- 13.6 ensure that wayfinding is clear and makes navigating campus easy for all.

Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Deliver preventative and targeted interventions which contribute to improvements in health and wellbeing and reduce reliance on crisis support from Future U student services.	Collaborate further with Manchester Student Homes to ensure mental health and wellbeing support is available to students living in residential accommodation.	In line with Objective 2 of the UCEN Manchester Strategy, we will ensure UCEN Manchester provision is delivered in the highest quality facilities for Technical and Professional Education that is conducive to positive mental health and wellbeing.
As part of Freshers 24', launch regular Wellbeing Walks to be led by student Wellbeing Advocates to engage with outdoor spaces across GM.	Support the full implementation of the Student Engagement Strategy to prevent and address marginalisation, discrimination	

	or harassment of individual students and groups.	
In response to student feedback, identify quiet break out spaces on campus.		

HOW WE WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN

Enabling Strategic Themes

Theme 14: Leadership, Strategy and Policy

UCEN Manchester will:

14.1 take a strategic whole institutional approach to mental health that is embedded in day-to-day practice and culture.

14.2 have an approach to mental health and wellbeing that is robustly evidence informed.

14.3 have an approach to mental health and wellbeing that is co-produced with staff and students, seeks to mobilise the whole community and considers mental health across the whole-institution.

14.4 ensure our approach to mental health and wellbeing is evident in other strategies, policies, procedures and practice.

14.5 ensure there is visible leadership and commitment to mental health across the entire organisation.

14.6 ensure our approach to mental health is clearly linked to and part of core institutional missions

Theme 15: Student Voice and Participation

UCEN Manchester will:

15.1 work in partnership with students to develop mental health related strategy and policy.

15.2 work in partnership with students to shape the ongoing development and oversight of support services.

15.3 work in partnership with students and staff to create a culture that supports good wellbeing.

15.4 provide clear structure for participation and co-creation, support staff and students to develop the necessary skills to collaborate and ensure approaches to co-creation are safe and inclusive.

15.5 take proactive steps to ensure that a diverse range of student and staff voices are considered in developing responses to mental health.

15.6 ensure that student-led or peer support interventions are safe, appropriately resourced and well-managed.

Theme 16: Cohesiveness of support across UCEN Manchester

UCEN Manchester will:

- 16.1 ensure cohesion and appropriate collaboration between different support services.
- 16.2 ensure cohesion and appropriate collaboration between support services and academic teams.
- 16.3 facilitate appropriate sharing of information across the institution to support individual students.
- 16.4 ensure effective signposting and triage across the institution.
- 16.5 work to develop a shared vision and understanding between different parts of the university community, towards mental health.

Theme 17: Inclusivity and intersectional mental health

UCEN Manchester will:

- 17.1 take action to understand their populations and staff and students' differing needs and experiences.
- 17.2 ensure that the culture and environment is inclusive, welcoming and safe for all members of the university community.
- 17.3 develop specific interventions that address the barriers to mental health and wellbeing faced by particular groups due to structural, personal or cultural inequalities.
- 17.4 develop specific interventions that address the barriers to mental health and wellbeing faced by particular groups due to higher education specific inequalities, such as mode of study or access.
- 17.5 ensure support services work to improve their cultural competence and can respond to different student backgrounds, characteristics and experiences.

Theme 18: Research, Innovation and Dissemination

UCEN Manchester will:

- 18.1. support research into mental health and wellbeing in higher education and the development of innovative good practice.
- 18.2. encourage collaboration and dissemination of learning between research and practice, between disciplines and between HEIs and relevant organisations.
- 18.3. undertake rigorous and systematic evaluation of services and interventions that informs decision making and continuous improvement.
- 18.4. enable support services staff to participate in, lead and disseminate research.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

The main ways in which we will measure the impact of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- 1) triangulating clinical data, student outcome data and student feedback
- 2) establish mechanisms for the student and staff voice to influence mental health and wellbeing development across UCEN Manchester

- 3) continual monitoring and review of the utilisation of Future U Student Support Service to include waiting times
- 4) peer review from other institutions participating in the University Mental Health Charter Programme