

Health and Wellbeing Strategy



**‘supporting our staff and enhancing their experience
through effective leadership, prevention and
intervention’**

Contents

Introduction	3
Context, Vision and Aims	4
Principles of the Strategy - Health and Safety	5
Strategic Framework - Wellbeing	
• Leadership	6
• BU Community and Engagement	7
• Prevention	8
• Intervention and Support	9
• Monitoring and Review	10
Background Information and Key Contacts	11

Introduction

BU is committed to providing an environment where everyone can thrive.

The health and wellbeing of our staff is vitally important and we recognise that there is a direct relationship between health and wellbeing and staff feeling supported, valued, engaged and encouraged. This includes creating and sustaining an inclusive and supportive environment, where staff feel they have a voice, are valued, treated fairly and feel able to bring their whole selves to work.

This strategy builds on our existing health and wellbeing arrangements for staff, but provides an opportunity to review and refresh, build on what we have and align it to a changing environment and sector.

We have reflected on the need to be agile and respond to change, recognising the challenges that staff face and will focus on proactive interventions to ensure staff can access accessible, appropriate and timely support and resources.

This strategy outlines BU's aims and aspirations for the continued enhancement of staff health, safety and wellbeing, promoting staff engagement and staff 'voice'.

'Health and wellbeing should be integral to an organisation's business goals and day to day operations - any efforts that treat it as an 'add-on' or 'nice to have' won't be effective.' (CIPD 2022)

BU fully acknowledges its responsibility as an employer and is committed to a range of initiatives, events and resources to support all our staff achieve good health and wellbeing.



Health and wellbeing needs of staff

Research shows that being in work is generally good for people's health and wellbeing, and case studies indicate that helping employees to improve or manage their health can result in increased attendance, performance and engagement.

Context

Vision

The World Health Organisation states that 'positive health and wellbeing is a state in which an individual realises their own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to contribute to their community'.

At BU, we want to equip our staff with the understanding, skills and experiences to lead satisfying, worthwhile and happy lives.

We are committed to positive health and wellbeing as part of the BU culture and overall staff experience.

Aims

BU expects:

- Everyone in the wider BU community to support positive health and wellbeing
- Health and wellbeing is a priority for leaders across BU
- Effective support is in place for staff and managers that is easy to access and covers a wide range of staff needs
- BU working culture and environment promotes staff health and wellbeing
- Data and research is used to support health and wellbeing, helping us to monitor trends and plan improvements where required.

Governance

The University Joint Health and Safety Committee is responsible for the strategic monitoring and management of health, safety and wellbeing at work.

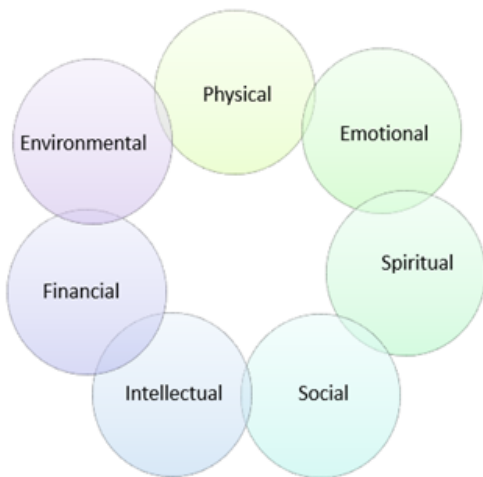
The corporate governance of health, safety and wellbeing is overseen by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee via regular update reports, approval of the Health and Safety Policy and the Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report.

Further information and guidance

There are a range of [resources](#) available to support BU staff in relation to staff health, safety and wellbeing including access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Key contacts for this strategy and the associated implementation plan can be found on page 11.

Principles of the Strategy- Health and Wellbeing



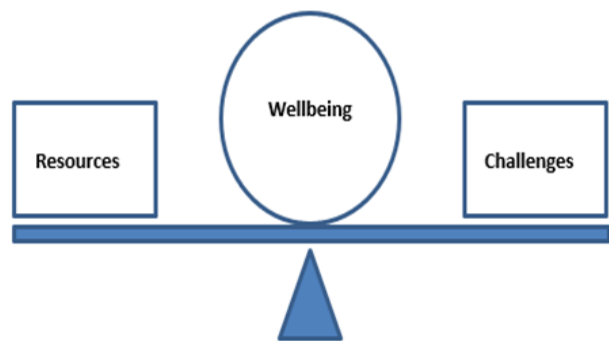
1. Health and wellbeing is multidimensional

Our approach centres on the whole person, recognising that health and wellbeing is multidimensional and interconnected, and includes our personal experiences of satisfaction, fulfilment and purpose.

2. Health and wellbeing is dynamic

We understand that our health and wellbeing fluctuates and relates to the interplay between our individual resources and any challenges we may be experiencing.

We recognise the potential for individual and collective transformative opportunities afforded by our health and wellbeing experiences.



"The balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced"
Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235.



3. Health and wellbeing is unique

We are all informed by human perspectives and experiences and understand that genuine respect and support for individual uniqueness and difference provides an opportunity for staff to flourish.

This is the platform for active participation in our person-centred approach to health and wellbeing.

4. Health and wellbeing is interconnected

We recognise that our individual and collective experience is inextricably linked and involves personal and shared responsibility for health and wellbeing.

Our whole university approach is founded on culture of inclusivity, promoting richness in our health and wellbeing experience and a sense of belonging for all.

Strategic Framework - Leadership, Prevention, Intervention

1. Leadership

Our leaders and managers recognise the importance of ensuring and embedding a positive working environment to enable our staff to thrive through supportive and enabling relationships. We provide strategic leadership and advice to ensure health and wellbeing is fully immersed within our organisational structure, influencing commitment at all levels.

We will continue to:



Ensure that our leaders and line managers are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to support and promote a culture of good health and wellbeing.

Provide regular reports and assurance to the BU Board on all matters of health and wellbeing and escalate any issues of concern that may increase corporate or local risk.

Ensure all leaders take ownership for addressing concerns about workload for BU staff, in a structure within which individual performance, appraisal and development considers the wider health and wellbeing aspects of the role and any impact on the individual.

Develop line manager tool kits and development pathways to support and promote the health, safety and wellbeing strategy to ensure all line managers have the necessary skills and experience to support individual staff across a range of circumstances and situations, including during periods of sickness absence.

Provide development opportunities for managers to more effectively and consistently support staff health and wellbeing at work.

Contribute to the UN Sustainability Development Goals through ongoing commitment to BU targets, recognising the interrelated link between wellbeing, resilience and sustainability.

Ensure our health and wellbeing support aligns with the requirements of external accreditations such as, Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter, Mindful Employer, Disability Confident etc.

Keep BU Ways of Working under continual review to ensure we have an operating model that provides opportunity for staff to improve their work-life balance without impact on the operational requirements of their role and wider BU performance.

Fully embed the BU strategic narratives as part of a suite of relevant information, positive messaging and “BU Proud” resources to support the health and wellbeing strategy.

Demonstrate best practice in the development of health and wellbeing support that considers individual learning needs, styles and intended outcomes (e.g. recorded sessions/podcasts as well as small group sessions).

Support transformative development through experiential (and unintentional) learning (e.g. Q&A/reflective practice type sessions).

Strategic Framework - Leadership, Prevention, Intervention

2. BU Community and Engagement

We work across our BU community and engage in strong partnerships externally, facilitating a collaborative approach to continuous development, innovation and co-production in health and wellbeing promotion.

We will continue to:



Build on our existing resources and support mechanisms to ensure that all staff, irrespective of their health and wellbeing needs or requirements can access appropriate and timely support.
Support staff who share their neurodivergence and ensure we use the most appropriate and effective mechanisms to gather advice and recommendations about any workplace adjustments that would help them to thrive.
Extend the current list of Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs), but convert those that wish to volunteer into MHFAs on behalf of BU who will act in the same way as First Aiders and respond to staff/students who may be in crisis or struggling with their emotional wellbeing.
Partner with Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust in relation to the University Retreat, exploring potential for growth and transformation into a resource that offers safe spaces for staff in crisis or for staff development and support sessions.
Work in partnership with recognised trade unions and student representatives to promote a positive health and wellbeing culture and share our successes and best practice across the BU community. Consider some form of 'reward' system for examples of positive action in relation to health and wellbeing matters.
Build on existing staff engagement mechanisms to ensure we have effective networks, groups and committees that are representative of our whole BU community and that the staff and student 'voice' is appropriately heard.
Promote the BU Volunteering Scheme for existing volunteers, but working also in partnership with Community Action Network (CAN) to provide staff with an opportunity to sign up to volunteering activities for which BU will support with appropriate levels of time off.
Build on existing relationships with student wellbeing to ensure both operational and strategic issues are aligned and addressed as required. Promote the health and wellbeing strategy as part of joint work with the student union and seek regular and meaningful involvement.
Consider the effectiveness of a framework of Wellbeing Champions that would be positioned within faculties and services.
Engage with key external agencies/bodies (including third sector) to consider the impact of wider health service priorities and/or provision looking at local, national and global perspectives/evidence.
Ensure the recommendations from the recently produced Women's Health Strategy for England are carried forward as business as usual – specific focus on the 'life course' of women – health conditions linked to having periods and babies, getting pregnant, fertility, pregnancy, pregnancy loss and post birth support, menopause, mental health and wellbeing, cancers, health issues to do with violence against women and girls, health ageing and long-term conditions.

Strategic Framework - Leadership, Prevention, Intervention

3. Prevention

We empower staff as active participants in managing their own health and wellbeing and to take a proactive approach that encompasses individual and collective responsibility for improved outcomes.

We will continue to:

Play an active role in 'supporting change' and facilitating staff through change processes and the organisational change programme as required.
Work with partners and regulatory bodies to anticipate statutory and other changes that may impact on staff health and wellbeing and react in a timely and effective way to minimise risk of harm or reputational damage.
Ensure our resources and information for health and wellbeing is regularly reviewed, accessible, fit for purpose and meets with current organisational and legislative requirements.
Make best use of training events, promotional events, workshops, drop ins and conferences to promote health and wellbeing and engage the workforce further in a proactive and accessible way.
Seek continuous improvement in relation to health and wellbeing by working with key stakeholders across BU, such as SportBU and ALS, to provide a number of opportunities for staff to engage with in order to assess and/or improve their physical or emotional health and wellbeing.
Ensure our resource of information in relation to health and wellbeing not only helps to prevent ill health but also promotes positive emotional wellbeing, resilience and performance.
Ensure calendar of health promotion events aligns to the national picture including EDI events as agreed. Use this events calendar as part of the structure of a health and wellbeing work plan going forward.
Build on previous trial of reasonable adjustments passport, we will develop a BU personal wellness plan (PWP). The PWP will be developed in line with HR, TU and UET to provide a mechanism for regular conversations that consider health and wellbeing of individual staff including those with a disability or long term condition.
Promote employment opportunities such as flexible working, ways of working, staff benefits and any other family friendly support available.
Improve on existing risk assessment framework to provide access to electronic processes for stress and pregnancy. Update policy and resource on stress management, to include both individual assessments and department/team analysis. Consider use of HSE new platform and analysis tool to produce action plans/reports.
Make best use of campus space, environment and work areas to not only promote health and wellbeing but to align individual staff members to our existing commitment to sustainability.



Strategic Framework - Leadership, Prevention, Intervention

4. Intervention and Support

We provide appropriate and timely support, ensuring targeted interventions are evidence based and focused on individual need and circumstance.



We will continue to:

Engage with staff on a regular basis to ensure they are aware of the health and wellbeing support available to them, making use of the intranet resource, campus promotional events (see Prevention) and other media as required.
Develop policy and procedural documentation, advice sheets and guidance in accessible language and formats that meets the need of the reader.
Ensure staff who may be experiencing difficulties or harm in their personal lives (such as financial hardship, domestic violence, coercion or control) know where to seek help in confidence and can be supported as required. Signpost to dedicated intranet information and access to specialist help as required.
Position health and wellbeing input appropriately to ensure it continues to provide person-centred support and makes the best use of onward referral opportunities where indicated.
Work with Procurement to ensure BU has access to the most effective and appropriate external support available (EAP, OH etc).
Assess individual support needs when raised, utilising principles of triage to determine the urgency of need and nature of support required and informing provision drawing from a suite of internal and external services, expertise and resources.
Improve awareness and access to the range of Assistive Technology available in collaboration with key colleagues across BU.
Provide support as required to the staff representative networks to facilitate discussion and interaction, contributing to a wider understanding of the views and/or needs of staff with shared or common experiences.
Ensure support is in place for any member of staff or student who may have sustained an injury or harm in the course of their work or studies.
Strive for regular review, critical appraisal and continuous improvement of all BU health and wellbeing support mechanisms.

Strategic Framework - Leadership, Prevention, Intervention

5. Monitor and Review

We seek to monitor, listen and understand the impact on health and wellbeing and the effectiveness of this strategy using a range of data and user experience. Review methods will be inclusive, focused on the employment life cycle, reflective and committed to continuous improvement.

We will continue to:

Ensure the health and wellbeing strategy is regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure emerging theories, concepts and areas of excellence are included. This continuous improvement cycle will be driven and overseen by a recognised forum within the BU governance structure and reported to the BU Board on a regular basis.

Use all available data in relation to the employee life cycle to ensure health and wellbeing resourcing and activity are aligned in the most appropriate way. Information such as equality analysis, absence, turnover, exit interviews, staff surveys, casework outcomes, and anecdotal feedback will be used as required.

Use health and wellbeing data on a regular basis as a backdrop to the decision making processes about future direction and resource. Data from a range of safety sources, plus health and wellbeing referrals, Employee Assistance Programme, Pre Employment Health Questionnaire, Personal Wellness Plan numbers and a newly developed health and wellbeing service evaluation form.

Ensure that every departmental stress risk assessment outcome is reviewed to ensure any elements of concern that might be mirrored elsewhere are pulled together and reported as central BU themes.

Encourage staff with lived experience to use their voice in a range of ways to ensure decision making, policy and resources are best positioned. Scope out the possibility of a network of colleagues with lived experience who would be willing to produce media (video, podcast, blog etc) to further support the work of the health and wellbeing strategy.

Seek staff feedback on work of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing team through a dedicated evaluation process.



Background information and key contacts

Background information

BU Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy is informed by multiple sources including guidance, examples of best practice and recommendations spanning Human Resources, Health and the Higher Education sector, notably:

- [Education Support Partnership \(2021\) Supporting Staff Wellbeing in HE](#)
- [Universities UK Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities Framework](#)
- [UCEA HE Sector Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategic Framework 2022-25](#)
- [NHS Health and Wellbeing framework](#)
- [New Economics Foundation \(2008\) Five Ways to Wellbeing](#)
- [Society of Occupational Medicine](#)
- [Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive](#)
- [Thriving at Work - Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers 2017](#)
- [BU2025 Vision and Strategy](#)

Key Contacts for BU Staff Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy:



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