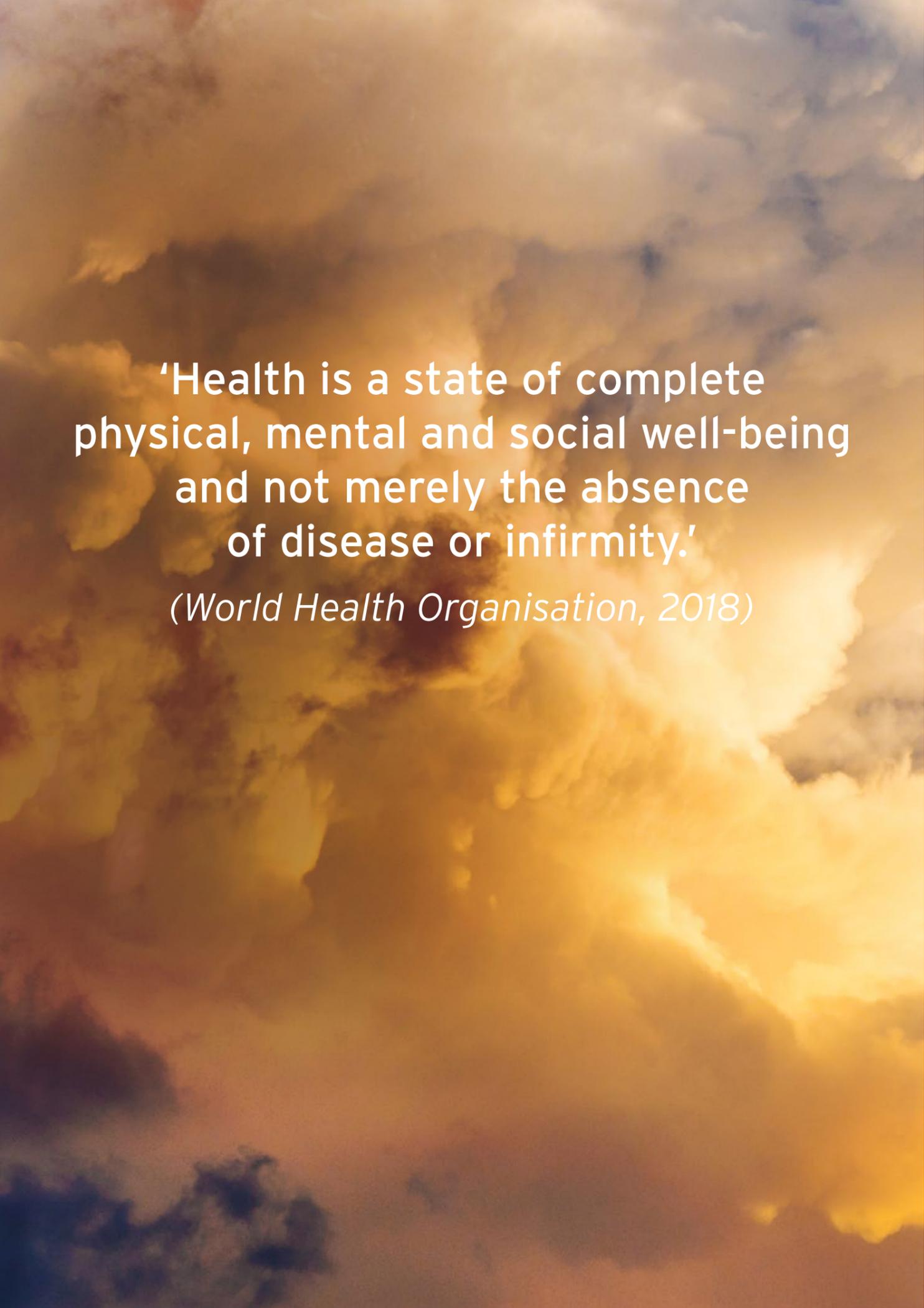




Brunel
University
London

BRUNEL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY FOR STUDENTS



'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'

(World Health Organisation, 2018)

Brunel Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Students

Brunel University London is committed to delivering a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing. Good mental health and wellbeing is essential to students' academic success, their engagement with a positive student experience and for the career of their choice upon graduation.

The Brunel 2030 Vision states 'we will celebrate diversity and further strengthen our culture of mutual respect and equality of opportunity, placing the health and welfare of individuals at the heart of our ethos'.

Aims

The University aims to provide an environment that promotes healthy lifestyle choices in tandem with services to support individuals and groups experiencing periods of ill health. Brunel will provide a community which is:

- Committed
- Knowledgeable
- Caring
- Supportive
- Healthy
- Resourceful

Brunel will continue to improve all provisions in relation to providing a whole university approach to mental health and wellbeing by prioritising the aims listed below and by regularly reviewing the progress of this work. An action plan to guide this work will be continuously monitored with regular reporting to the Student Experience and Welfare Committee which is co-chaired by the Vice-Provost (Students, Staff & Civic Engagement) and the President of the Union of Brunel Students.

Committed Community

Brunel University London is committed to respond to the Universities UK Step Change Framework (2017) and will provide sufficient opportunity, resource and strategic guidance to embed positive mental health and wellbeing awareness, messages and interventions into all areas of University life.

We are committed to create an inclusive and supportive learning community for students, promoting wellbeing and enabling all students to achieve their full potential. Recognising the diverse needs of our students and developing an inclusive approach that builds positive wellbeing in individuals. Brunel aims to build a community that sees positive mental health embedded in University life and promotes diversity and equality of opportunity for all.

We aim to promote a community with all members committing to others, where everyone sees mental health and wellbeing as a joint responsibility.

Knowledgeable Community

Providing appropriate information and education to our staff and students, will enable a knowledgeable community to function and respond appropriately to all aspects of mental health and wellbeing. We will endeavour to provide accurate information to staff and students throughout their entire journey at Brunel.

We already:

- Promote wellbeing messages at Open and Applicant days
- Ease the transition into university with Brunel Buddies, which is a peer programme to support new students when they start at Brunel
- Embed positive mental health messages in Welcome Week
- Have staff training available through Staff Development
- Promote campaigns in line with World Mental Health Day (10 October), University Mental Health Day (1 March) and Mental Health Awareness Week (May) in conjunction with the Union of Brunel Students
- Run alcohol and drug awareness campaigns at least twice annually
- Hold wellbeing activities in advance of university exams (January, May and August)
- Provide information to staff about how to respond in cases of concern for a student
- Provide training to staff on how to respond to disclosures of sexual violence

We aim to:

- Include positive mental health and wellbeing messages in our marketing literature and online space
- Train all outreach and recruitment staff in mental health and wellbeing awareness to enable positive messages to be included in outreach work
- Create publications and information on 'look after your mental health at University'
- Add information on good mental health and wellbeing into parents' talks at open and applicant days
- Embed a specific wellbeing role into Brunel Buddies to encourage new students to engage with sporting and additional activities at the beginning of their student journey. Additional wellbeing training to be provided specifically to students who are training to be a Brunel Buddy
- Provide online mental health awareness training for all staff
- Define which roles should receive compulsory mental health training
- Create a network of key staff to enable sharing of best practice and regularly refresh training in mental health support
- Ensure personal academic tutors and professional staff are aware of the available resources within the University that promote and support student mental health and wellbeing

Caring Community

Providing a community that cares about its members means including mental health and wellbeing awareness into all aspects of the university. By considering the impact of all strategic decisions and policy changes, we will create a community that considers potential harm that may be caused and moves toward removing negative barriers before they cause any significant problems.

We already:

- Promote initiatives and activities that reduce stigma about mental health and disability
- Run Tutoring@Brunel to embed pastoral support into the academic provision
- Have a Dignity at Study Policy to help anyone who is subjected to bullying or harassment while at Brunel
- Employ highly skilled Security staff who can respond to all incidents all year round
- Have a holistic approach to individual cases of wellbeing

We aim to:

- Develop a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Staff
- Apply for accreditation of ProtectED - a code of practice scheme for Security and Student Wellbeing in Universities
- Improve our IT systems to enable efficient and comprehensive support to all students
- Review relevant university policies and regulations in the university to ensure consideration for mental and physical health is included
- Introduce wellbeing impact assessments into the university committee structure to ensure that all proposals have had due consideration to any wellbeing impact
- Add wellbeing and mental health as a standard item on meetings at all levels throughout the university

Supportive Community

Brunel University London has a long and successful history of providing responsive and appropriate student support services through a variety of teams and services. Building on this foundation will develop a community where all of its members provide support to each other.

We already:

- Provide a variety of support services to our students to respond to their individual needs
- Promote support services to students throughout the academic year
- Provide self-help resources and group sessions to students
- Provide information on external and additional services available in the local community, including specialist organisations
- Have links with local services to promote streamlined referral routes for our students.
- Facilitate peer support groups and schemes
- Provide flexible support to address specific needs of different groups of students
- Deliver a range of programmes to assist students with their transition to Brunel and to the UK; i.e. International Orientation, Headstart

We aim to:

- Strengthen referral pathways with third parties to provide a wider variety of services to our students
- Develop links with the local NHS services to enable better referral mechanisms
- Improve relationships with external stakeholders by developing a partnership network between agencies to promote awareness, provide information and reduce stigma
- Run a Suicide-Safer project
- Develop more comprehensive out of hours guidance for staff
- Improve the support available for PostGraduate students (taught and research)
- Develop a Sensory Room to provide a safe space for students that may need it
- Remove barriers to disability disclosure to encourage more students to access support which they may need

Healthy Community

Building a healthy community which empowers healthy choices will enable our community to work towards a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.

We already:

- Embed healthy lifestyle messages into all welcome week information
- Encourage healthy study habits

- Provide free access to physical activities on campus
- Provide healthy food on campus
- Ensure free drinking water is available at all times
- Provide extra-curricular activities through Brunel Arts
- Facilitate sexual health provision through free access to contraception and sexual health testing on campus
- Active referral links to alcohol and drug support in Hillingdon
- Work with the Student Union to run campaigns and to improve services

We aim to:

- Deliver sessions to promote self-care and life skills
- Provide mental health and wellbeing messages within each classroom
- Use technology to better promote healthy studying and lifestyle choices
- Embed wellbeing into Careers provision to prepare for life at work
- Develop a mental health in sport project
- Improve the outdoor spaces on campus
- Develop our response to students using smart drugs

Resourceful Community

Brunel University London will provide suitable frameworks and guidance to respond in times of crisis. Strengthening our internal and external referral pathways will provide for a more consistent and supportive response to any individual. Providing a resourceful response to situations where ill health is interrupting healthy academic progression and student experience.

We already:

- Provide guidance for cases of Fitness to Study through Senate Regulation 11
- Provide guidance for crisis situations through the University Incident Management Plan
- Work with Public Health England in cases of transmittable diseases

We aim to:

- Address suicide prevention both through processes and awareness
- Implement post-trauma support for members of our community

Impact and evaluation

Implementation of this University wide strategy will be overseen by the Student Experience and Welfare Committee which will receive an annual report on the outputs and outcomes of the work committed here. A summary will be provided to Senate.

Development outputs from this strategy will be monitored by the Committee to ensure that they are completed in time and to budget. Any stipulated targets will be monitored here.

Impact of the strategy will be monitored by collecting data and feedback from students and staff to demonstrate improvements in the awareness and recognition of the impact of this work against attainment and retention.

The strategy will be reviewed annually to expand and further improve the strategic priorities in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

Communication

This full version of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Students will be available online externally to demonstrate Brunel's commitment to this work.

A shorter (one page) version will be created to highlight the priority areas which

are being developed to inform all members of the Brunel Community about any upcoming interventions and improvements.

A comprehensive communications plan will be developed to ensure continuous, meaningful and appropriate messages are communicated about this work to all members of our community.

Continuous development

All members of Brunel are encouraged to engage with this strategy and to suggest areas for expansion and development. All comments and suggestions should be made to the Deputy Director Academic and Student Services.



**Brunel Mental Health and Wellbeing
Strategy for Students**

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v1. Approved at Senate 9 July 2018.