



Faculty of Social Sciences Wellbeing Statement

Composed by Sphere Challenge 1: Supporting Women* during Covid and its Aftermath

The University's strategy includes a commitment to *foster an inclusive environment which supports mental and physical wellbeing, the health, safety and security of our staff and students, and empowers people to achieve their potential.*

We recognise that Covid-19 has caused changes and additional challenges that will have affected groups of staff and individuals differently; we also recognise that some colleagues, such as women, Black, Asian and Minority ethnic staff members, those in clinically vulnerable groups and who hold other protected characteristics as well as those individuals belonging to more than one of these groups, may have faced additional challenges and may continue to be disproportionately impacted.

We recognise that wellbeing is holistic - a combination of the physical, psychological and the social features of a person – and will mean different things to different people. This will be reflected in the way that we each individually manage our own wellbeing. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) define wellbeing as: *creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation.*

Therefore, we aim to promote and enhance wellbeing for all staff through the development of a proactive and enabling culture. This requires effective leadership, to encourage staff to feel supported in focusing upon their personal wellbeing, and management practices that integrate wellbeing considerations when planning work activities.

Ultimately, our key aim is to help and support staff to feel happy and healthy.

In order to do this, as part of the wellbeing strategy, the University has identified five core themes – healthy lifestyle, healthy mental wellbeing, healthy environment, healthy social wellbeing, and healthy work experience – and there are a wide range of existing activities, interventions and initiatives including:

- The [Staff Wellbeing Hub](#) providing staff with access to a huge range of resource, activities and support
- A [Staff Wellbeing guide](#)
- An [online Staff Wellbeing Programme](#) and a range of centrally provided courses e.g. resilience and mindfulness
- An [Employee Assistance Programme](#), providing practical information and emotional support for any issue that staff may be facing
- [Counselling services](#), [Mental Health First Aid](#), and a range of supporting activities
- [Staff networks](#), People and culture events programme
- The [Leadership and Management Academy \(LMA\)](#) and [Professional development opportunities](#)
- Flexible working opportunities
- The UoN Sport [Health and Wellbeing Hub](#), sports membership [offers](#), cycle to work scheme, and a range of other activities throughout the year.

In addition to these, we are committing to a series of additional actions to support staff wellbeing.

As a Faculty we will:

- Endorse the [principles and guidance for prioritisation of work](#).
- Promote open and honest conversations about workloads and wellbeing, objectives and expectations as part of regular one-to-one and ADC conversations.
- Consider developing a Wellbeing Champions Network within the Faculty to help identify additional measures, to ensure that wellbeing remains on the agenda, and to provide colleagues with an informal route to report wellbeing related issues.
- Diffuse best practice on wellbeing across the different Schools, such as for instance the creation of a Carers' Champion.
- Sponsor a series of practical steps to support staff wellbeing, such as Teams free-Fridays and adopting fair and inclusive practices to scheduling meetings such as using meeting polls to agree timings, rotate meeting dates and times to allow wider participation.
- Adopt a continuous learning approach informed from regular consultations with staff across the Faculty on their experiences.
- Commit to addressing issues raised through the staff consultations within reasonable timeframes.
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We will also be asking our Managers to:

- Support local culture change to take wellbeing into account and to integrate the five core themes – healthy lifestyle, healthy mental wellbeing, healthy environment, healthy social wellbeing, and healthy work experience.
- Embed the [principles and guidance for prioritisation of work](#).
- Engage with staff to promote and enhance employee health and wellbeing including finding appropriate mechanisms for raising issues with workload pressures and wellbeing
- Consider actions to adjust workload allocation and/or working arrangements to support staff wellbeing.
- Support and promote flexible working arrangements.

We will promote the following individual actions:

- Engagement with the [online wellbeing programme](#) whenever possible in order to raise awareness and identify practical steps we can all take.
- Participation where convenient in wellbeing initiatives, activities and events provided during the academic year and where appropriate suggest how existing wellbeing provisions could be developed and expanded.
- Routes and mechanisms to escalate and report circumstances that negatively impact wellbeing. Wherever possible, in the first instance these should be discussed with the line manager, and then the Head of School, or via the Wellbeing Champions.
- Participation in relevant peer-to-peer support groups and networks, such as the [staff networks](#) and [Women's Career Support groups](#) that have recently launched specifically for staff identifying as women.