

## Student Mental Health Agreement 2022 - 2024

Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA) and the University of Aberdeen (UoA) are committed to caring for the wellbeing, health and safety of our diverse community. We have defined wellbeing as *"the state of being comfortable, happy or healthy"*, encompassing all areas of life including personal, study, work, physical exercise, nutrition, and mental health.

We recognise that each of us has a mental health which can be measured on a continuum. Depending on the circumstances of any individual at any time, they may find themselves at one point of the continuum and shift position as their situation improves or deteriorates.

The Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA) outlines our shared priorities for academic period 2022 -2024. These agreed priorities have been informed by student consultation and support both AUSA and UOA strategies. By working together, we will enhance the inclusive environment and positive culture at UOA, supporting students to maintain positive mental health; manage problems and support the prevention of mental ill health. The agreement will be delivered by an annual action plan and will be reviewed and developed regularly.

### Our commitment to you

#### **Raise awareness of support available**

Through student orientation we will increase visibility of services, providing our community with information, and thereafter, regular updates and advice on maintaining positive mental wellbeing and how to access support and services.

We will deliver a comprehensive programme of wellbeing communication and engagement activity focused around key 'pressure point' times of the year offering students with academic advice and support and mental health advice and support.

#### **Encourage, promote and facilitate student self-care**

Through supporting the ongoing efforts to challenge and change attitudes around mental health we will enhance our positive culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

We will work with schools and academic staff to develop communication and empower students to maintain a healthy study-life balance and prioritise self-care.

#### **Ensure that support services are available and accessible to all**

We will continually strive to create an open and inclusive environment where staff and students have access to the information, mechanisms and support they need to maintain positive mental wellbeing and support them through difficult periods.

With particular focus on those that may be harder to reach or have specific needs. We will review and monitor the effectiveness of our services and support, listening to student feedback and continually implement improvements.

We work to improve the accessibility of internal support services, and how we assist students in accessing external specialist support.

#### **Continued development of staff support, training, and resources**

We will equip staff with the tools, knowledge and confidence to identify and support a student experiencing ill mental health through enhanced training, access to information and improved signposting to support.

#### **Support Schools to develop a more consistent approach to study related support**

We will place particular focus on extension request procedures for reasons related to mental health and the evidence requested in these circumstances.



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