

Policy on Learner Mental Health and Wellbeing

Policy Procedure Protocol Guideline

Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD): Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)

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1.0 Purpose

This policy offers guidance and support for learners and staff to promote a learning experience that adopts a culture of support and inclusiveness. The CCNME aims to promote positive mental health wellbeing for all learners and implements a consistent approach for staff to support learners who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to:

| Academic Council | Programme Board & Committees | CCNME Programme Teams | Learner |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

3.0 Policy Statement

The CCNME aims to create an environment which promotes and respects mental health and wellbeing for all learners. The learner will be assisted to reach their full academic potential through adopting a supportive environment. Learners are encouraged to voice any concerns about their mental health and wellbeing. The CCNME respects learners' right to privacy and will treat information concerning a learner's mental health with appropriate confidentiality in line with Data Protection Act (Data Protection Act 2018) and CCNME policy and procedures on Data Protection (HSE 2019).

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

| | Academic Council | Programme Board and Committees | CCNME Programme Teams | Learner |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Responsible for Implementation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Responsible for Monitoring & Review | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

4.1 Academic Council

- 4.1.1 Promote and embed a culture of education that encourages the promotion and protection of mental health and wellbeing amongst all learners
- 4.1.2 Ensure all policies and procedures comply with the relevant legislation

4.2 Programme Board and Committees

- 4.2.1 Monitor academic supports and resources to meet the overall wellbeing needs of learners.
- 4.2.2 Review evaluation reports following each QQI programme of education, identifying issues and areas of concern in relation to Learner mental health and wellbeing.

4.3 CCNME Programme Team

- 4.3.1 Comply with this policy and associated procedures.
- 4.3.2 Promote an inclusive teaching and learning environment that fosters collaboration and engagement, to reduce learner isolation and promote a sense of belonging in the classroom.
- 4.3.3 Engage with learners to support them in making informed decisions about protecting, strengthening, and improving their own mental health.
- 4.3.4 Promote awareness and understanding of mental health issues to encourage positive mental health and wellbeing.
- 4.3.5 Support awareness and promotion of healthy lifestyle choices that have been shown to improve mental health wellbeing. Respect learner's decision to disclose or not, any mental health difficulties.
- 4.3.6 Respond to any disclosure of mental health difficulties by a learner in a non-judgmental and supportive manner.
- 4.3.7 Ensure learners with mental health difficulties are treated with sensitivity, fairness and confidentiality.
- 4.3.8 Treat all concerns relating to learners and their mental health difficulties with strict confidence, and only disclose information 'on a need to know' basis, with consent from the individual learner.
- 4.3.9 Promote a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing and support learners who may experience mental health difficulties during their programme.
- 4.3.10 Facilitate learners with mental health difficulties in finding and maintaining a path to wellbeing by signposting available resources/supports, however recognize that it is the responsibility of the learner to engage and work towards that goal.
- 4.3.11 Offer support to learners within the professional limitation of their role.
- 4.3.12 The Director of each Centre will provide leadership in the development of inclusive, supportive and learner centered teaching and learning environments in the Centre.
- 4.3.13 The Director of each Centre will oversee continuous quality improvement to review existing supports and measures to promote learner mental health and wellbeing.

4.4 Learners

- 4.4.1 Actively take measures to care for their own mental health and wellbeing, for instance ensuring that they get adequate rest and exercise, take medication if prescribed, and access appropriate supports.
- 4.4.2 Communicate their needs and seek support from the Programme Co-ordinator to provide appropriate and reasonable supports where feasible.
- 4.4.3 Encourage learners concerned about fellow learners' mental health and wellbeing to seek support from available resources at the earliest opportunity.

- 4.4.4 Be aware of their personal limitations, if someone is in immediate danger or is a danger to others, learners should call emergency services (telephone 999 or 112).

5.0 Document Control

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| Supporting Documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD). (2013). <i>A Guide to Disclosure</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/A%20guide%20to%20Disclosure%202013.pdf [accessed 20 June 2022]. • Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD). (2020). <i>Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/Charter4InclusiveTeachingAndLearning.pdf [accessed 20 June 2022]. • Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD). (2008). <i>Good practice guidelines for the providers of supports and services for students with disabilities in higher education</i> [online]. Dublin: AHEAD. Available from: https://www.ncad.ie/files/download/AHEAD_Good_Practice_Guidelines.pdf [accessed 20 June 2022]. • Central Statistics Office. (2018). <i>The Wellbeing of the Nation: Societal Wellbeing in Ireland 2017</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/health/Wellbeing_of_the_Nation_FINAL_OFT_-_web.pdf [accessed 23 January 2022]. • <i>Data Protection Act 2018</i>. No. 7/2018 [online]. Available from: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/7/enacted/en/html [accessed 31 January 2022]. • Deasy, C., Coughlan, B., Pironom, J., Jourdan, D. and Mannix-McNamara, P. (2014). Psychological Distress and Coping amongst Higher Education Students: A Mixed Method Enquiry. <i>PLOS ONE</i>, 9(12), p.e115193. • European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). (2015). <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf [accessed 23 January 2022]. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Authority. (2020). <i>National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework</i> [online]. Available from: https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2020/10/HEA-NSMHS-Framework.pdf [accessed 23 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2015). <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Code%20of%20Practice.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2016). <i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022]. • University College Dublin. (2015). <i>UCD Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/UCD-Student-Mental-Health-Policy1.pdf [accessed 23 January 2022]. • University of West London. (2018). <i>Student Mental Health Policy</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/uwl/files/Mental%20Health%20Policy%20Final%207%20May%202021.pdf?_ga=2.43845029.1068517416.1633334143-1930149641.1631196488 [accessed 23 January 2022]. • World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). <i>Mental health: strengthening our response</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response [accessed 23 January 2022]. |
| <p>Related Policies & Procedures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Programme Development [PDF, 6 Pages] • Policy and Procedure on Learner Admission[PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Learner Withdrawal from Studies/Early Exit [PDF, 5 Pages] • Procedure on Learner Withdrawal from Studies/Early Exit [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Learner Attendance and Absenteeism [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure for Managing Learner Attendance and Absenteeism [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Teaching and Learning Strategies [PDF, 5 Pages] • Procedure on Teaching and Learning Strategies [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Learning Environment: Classroom [PDF, 5 Pages] • Policy and Procedure on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion of Learners [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Workplace Learning Environment [PDF, 5 Pages] • Policy on Learner Complaints [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure on Management of Learner Complaints [PDF, 5 Pages] |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Assessment of Learners [PDF, 8 Pages] • Procedure on Assessment of Learners [PDF, 7 Pages] • Policy on Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment [PDF, 5 Pages] • Procedure on Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment [PDF, 5 Pages] • Policy on Submission of Assessments [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure on Submission of Assessments [PDF, 4 Pages] • Policy on Assessment Appeals [PDF, 8 Pages] • Procedure on Review, Recheck and Appeals of Learner Assessment Decisions [PDF, 6 Pages] • Policy on Support for Learners [PDF, 4 Pages] • Procedure on Support for Learners [PDF, 6 Pages] • Policy on Data Protection, Usage & Management [PDF, 7 Pages] |
| Related Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Ireland: Resources Mental Health Ireland [online] Available at https://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/resources/ [Accessed 10 January 2022] • World Health Organisation: Mental Health (2019) [online] Available at https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/ [Accessed 10 January 2022] |