



# Student Mental Health Agreement

2024-2026

**Edinburgh Napier University & Edinburgh Napier Students' Association**

# STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AGREEMENT 2024-26

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## Introduction

Edinburgh Napier University and Edinburgh Napier Students' Association are committed to working in partnership to improve the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff. The University and ENSA have worked together to create this Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA), which was inspired by the [NUS Think Positive](#) initiative.

At Edinburgh Napier, the SMHA is an integral part of the University's Wellbeing Service and ENSA's strategic priorities. The Agreement ensures that the Service and the Students' Association are actively achieving their goals, both individually and collectively, to promote the importance of student mental health by challenging stigma, raising awareness and promoting an open and inclusive University community.

We have ensured that the SMHA content is informed by students' opinions through a series of focus groups held by Counselling & Mental Wellbeing on topics including Men's Health, International and Nursing students. A draft SMHA was also shared with Student Council for comments and discussion, and a survey shared for further thoughts. ENSA Sabbatical Officer Ryan Cairns sits on the working group, helping to provide a student voice and perspective also.

This SMHA builds on the 2019 – 2020 Agreement and covers the period 2024 – 2026. It has been developed in a post-Covid-19 context.

The SMHA is intended to be an active document which will be used and promoted over the two academic years. Learning from this SMHA will be used in the development of the following SMHA. Self-evaluations will be updated at quarterly working group meetings and will be submitted to *Think Positive* in May 2025 and 2026.

**Our shared objectives are as follows:**

- ▼ Fostering a sense of belonging through creating an inclusive community
- ▼ Increasing suicide prevention awareness
- ▼ Enhancing self-care and wellbeing through a range of physical activities, including sport and nature connection
- ▼ Increasing awareness of the availability of support for mental health
- ▼ Improving psychological wellbeing through psycho-educational workshop

**Key groups with responsibility for improving mental health and wellbeing in the University:**

- ▼ Harm Reduction Short Life Working Group
- ▼ Suicide Safer Steering Group
- ▼ Chaplaincy Steering Group

**The SMHA links into other documents including:**

- ▼ The Student Partnership Agreement (currently in development)
- ▼ [Edinburgh Napier University Strategy](#)
- ▼ [Equality Impact Assessments](#)

## Our current offer to support Student Mental Health

The Student Counselling & Mental Wellbeing (C&MW) team offers a range of support and advice for students who are experiencing stress, anxiety or other mental health issues due to personal circumstances or academic pressures. All of our practitioners are trained to work in a trauma-informed way.

Edinburgh Napier University students going through a tough time can now access free, anonymous, online support and self help with Togetherall and SilverCloud. Whether you're struggling to sleep, feeling low, stressed or unable to cope, these online platforms can help you get support, take control and feel better.

### What support is available?

- ▼ [Single Session Therapy \(SST\)](#)
- ▼ [Wellbeing Assessment](#)
- ▼ [Counselling](#)
- ▼ [Cognitive Behavioural Therapy \(CBT\)](#)
- ▼ [Mental Health Advice](#)
- ▼ [Mindfulness](#)
- ▼ [Togetherall](#)
- ▼ [Wellbeing Collection Self-Help Resources](#)
- ▼ [SilverCloud](#)
- ▼ [Student Listening Service](#)
- ▼ [Report and Support](#)

### Additionally, students can access the following services:

- ▼ [Safeguarding](#)
- ▼ [Disability Inclusion team](#)
- ▼ [Chaplaincy Service](#)



## Our current offer to support Student Mental Health

C&MW and ENSA run an annual programme of training and events to support student mental health and to signpost to methods of support.

Events include:

- ▼ Social and active events run by ENSA, including a focused Feel Fab Feb campaign
- ▼ Mental Health Training and Psychoeducational workshops run by C&MW
- ▼ A cross-departmental Wellbeing Day

Training include:

- ▼ Look After Your Mate training delivered by Wellbeing & Inclusion
- ▼ Introductory student sessions delivered by C&MW at the start of the academic year
- ▼ ENSA staff are encouraged to undertake Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST) Training

Each ENSA Sports Club or Society has a named Wellbeing Officer.

In addition to the above services, Postgraduate students can also access support available to University staff through the EAP provider MCL Medics





# SMHA GOALS & ACTIVITIES FOR 2024-26

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## Community & Belonging

*Goal: Foster and sustain an environment which is welcoming and supportive of all students and staff in which everyone feels a sense of community and belonging.*

*Why: Creating community and belonging are inline with ENU's Strategy. We want to contribute to a sense of support, belonging and respect that includes everyone associated with the University equally, without restriction or discrimination.*

### Activities

- ▼ Increase the number of students participating in clubs and societies to pre-pandemic figures.
- ▼ Offer a range of events and activities that are inclusive of all students (e.g. some events with no alcohol; target both UG & PG; reach out to widening participation students through the WP team.
- ▼ Offer on-campus events and activities that are open to both staff and students (e.g. the Winter Warmer).
- ▼ Work with external partners who offer opportunities to students through signposting and partnerships.
- ▼ Provide support and space to enable the creation of communities within student demographics including LGBTQ+ students, disabled students, mature students, commuter students and others.

### Success Measures:

- ▼ Numbers of students taking part in clubs and societies
- ▼ Number of campus events open to staff and students
- ▼ Students report an increased sense of belonging through participation in the activities on offer



# SMHA GOALS & ACTIVITIES FOR 2024-26

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## Suicide Prevention

*Goal: To meet the aims of the Suicide Safer Plan which includes the following:*

- ▼ *People at risk of suicide feel able to ask for help and have access to skilled staff and well-coordinated support*
- ▼ *People affected by suicide are not alone*
- ▼ *Suicide is no longer stigmatised*
- ▼ *Provide better support to those bereaved by suicide*
- ▼ *Minimise the risk of suicide by delivering better services and building stronger, more connected communities*



*The Suicide Safer Plan incorporates the prevention, intervention and postvention framework (based on the 2018 UUK guidance 'Suicide Safer Universities'). The Suicide Safer Implementation Group includes Counselling & Mental Wellbeing Services, and ENSA representation and activities below are related to work undertaken between the ENSA and Counselling & Mental Wellbeing services.*

*Why: Suicide deaths in Scotland are some of the highest in the UK and Europe.*

*The incidence of suicide in Scotland is three times higher among males than females and is highest amongst men aged 35-54 years and women aged 45-54 years. In England and Wales, the most recent statistics show that suicide rates were twice as high among male compared to female students, somewhat higher in undergraduates than postgraduates, but there was no evidence of an increased risk in people from ethnic minority populations.\**

*\*UUK & Papyrus, "Suicide-Safer Universities," Sept 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2018/guidance-for-sector-practitioners-on-preventing-student-suicides.PDF>*

*To reduce these figures whilst tackling inequalities, ENU and ENSA work in partnership to create safer, inclusive and compassionate spaces.*

*We recognise there are several stages to Suicide Prevention.*

▼ *Prevention - being understood as the support given to keep people safe and well.*

*Developing a Student Mental Health Agreement with a focus on suicide prevention means:*

▼ *Suicide Awareness Training for both staff and students*

▼ *Taking part in a local multi-agency suicide prevention group*

▼ *Early intervention - being understood as the support given when a problem first emerges.*

*Promoting the early intervention procedures to students such as onsite Counselling and Staff peer support.*

## Activities

▼ As recommended by the University-wide Harm Reduction Framework Short-Life Working Group, ENU and ENSA will adopt a framework with a number of awareness-raising activities to reduce stigma and implement culture change.

▼ The ENU Comms Team will deliver suicide awareness-raising messages alongside the Feel Fab Feb campaign. In addition, suicide prevention community partners such as *Samaritans* and *Penumbra Crisis Service* will be invited onto campus, increasing awareness of where and how to seek help (in addition to C&MW services).

▼ There will be ongoing dialogue between ENSA and the C&MW team around suicide and suicide prevention.

▼ The ENU Wellbeing Team and ENSA will develop a suite of indicators to measure impact.

## Success Measures:

▼ Number of social media impressions related to suicide awareness campaigns

▼ Students engage with community partners on campus

▼ Student feedback demonstrates that they know where and how to access support for themselves or their peers

▼ Success measure around anti-stigma suicide prevention



# SMHA GOALS & ACTIVITIES FOR 2024-26

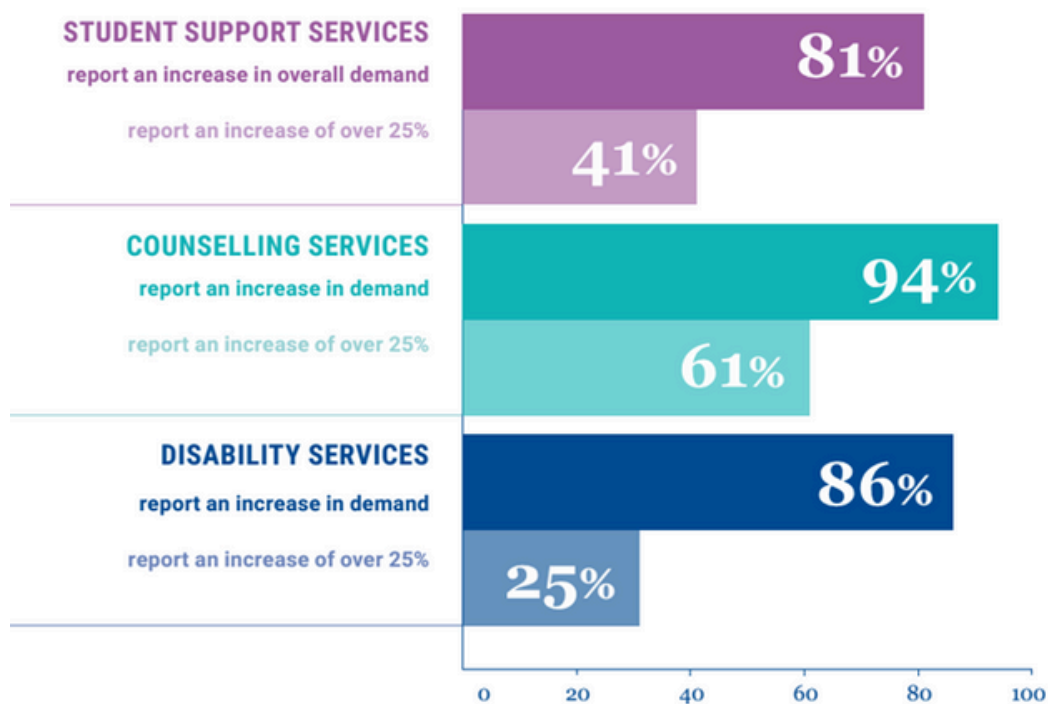
## Mental Health Promotion & Support

*Goal: To promote wellbeing, reduce stigma around mental health issues, and increase awareness of the support available.*

*Why: Across the UK, there has been sharp increases in demand on support services at Edinburgh Napier University and at most other HEI's.\**

*\*S. McManus, P. Bebbington, R. Jenks and T. Brugha, "Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey," NHS Digital, Leeds, 2014.*

Higher education institutions have experienced significant increases in demand for (overall) student services, counselling services and disability services over the past five years:



Source: IPPR. Not by degrees: Improving student mental health in the UK's universities. 2017.

## Activities

- ▼ Produce communications promoting health and wellbeing (both ENU & ENSA)
- ▼ Offer psycho-educational workshops for students and staff (e.g. LAYM for students by ENSA, and Mental Health in the Workplace for staff by ENU)
- ▼ Train Wellbeing Office Holders within ENSA's clubs and societies
- ▼ Run the campaign 'Feel Fab Feb' to engage both students and staff in healthy living activities across the month of February
- ▼ Promote the BRIT Challenge to engage both students and staff in health and wellbeing activities and raise funds in support of good mental health
- ▼ Students report a reduction in stigma and an improved understanding of where to access support

## Success Measures:

- ▼ Number of workshops offered to staff and students
- ▼ Number of Wellbeing Officer Holders trained
- ▼ Number of activities and events offered during Feel Fab Feb
- ▼ Funds raised for the BRIT Challenge





Signed on behalf of Edinburgh Napier Students'  
Association:

**Catherine Jones**

Team Lead Student Engagement

Date: 5/6/24



Signed on behalf of Edinburgh Napier University:

**Nike Oruh**

Clinical Counselling Lead

Date: 14/05/24