

Student Mental Health Policy

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Purpose

1. The purpose of the Northeastern University London ('the University') Student Mental Health Policy is to provide a coherent institutional framework for managing stigmatisation around mental health and for supporting students with mental health difficulties.
2. It sets out the provisions that are central to the University's objective of supporting students that are experiencing mental health difficulties to minimise barriers that could hinder their academic progression or personal development.

Rationale

3. The University takes a whole institution approach to supporting students with their mental health and to underpin this the University has adopted the [University Mental Health Charter](#).
4. The University values diversity, equity and inclusion, coming from a non-judgemental place to ensure support for each student. The University works across all departments to promote wellbeing, including valuing collaboration with the Students Union to keep engaging with the voice of the students.
5. The University seeks feedback from students and staff so that it keeps relevant and up to date with the needs of the University, therefore providing the best possible service to all students.
6. The whole-University approach involves co-production with diverse students and staff to ensure strategies are inclusive and targeted to the needs of different groups.

Definition of Mental Health

7. In line with the Student Minds definition, mental health refers to the range of experiences that impact a person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing, from positive wellbeing to mental health challenges, including mental illness. It involves the ability to live a fulfilling life, maintain resilience, and manage life's stresses. The University aligns with the Student Minds Mental Health Charter and recognises that mental health exists on a spectrum, and students may experience anything from short-term difficulties due to challenging circumstances to more persistent conditions.
8. The University is committed to student wellbeing, and provides a supportive environment where students can access resources, care and

support to help them manage their mental health and continue their studies successfully. The University aims to ensure that all students, regardless of their mental health status, have the opportunity to thrive and meet their academic potential.

Principals

9. The University is committed to offering excellent support for all its students. In relation to mental health, it will endeavour to:
 - 9.1. Promote mental wellbeing
 - 9.2. Offer students a range of support that is individually tailored and includes reasonable adjustments if required;
 - 9.3. Endeavour to create a safe environment for students to work and study
 - 9.4. Raise awareness among students and staff of mental health issues, services & procedures
 - 9.5. Create a non-stigmatising, inclusive and respectful culture;
 - 9.6. Safeguarding students
 - 9.7. Develop policy, informed by liaison with students, staff and relevant external agencies
 - 9.8. Ensure monitoring and review of policy and practice.

Roles and responsibilities

10. What you can expect from the Student Mental Health Advisors:
 - 10.1. Personalised Support: individualised and tailored support to meet the needs of each student
 - 10.2. Safe and Confidential Environment: provide a secure, non-judgmental space where students can discuss any mental health concerns that may create barriers to their life and studies
 - 10.3. Referral to external resources: Mental health advisors can refer students to appropriate specialist services such as GPs, Spectrum life, UWill and Togetherall
 - 10.4. Awareness and Wellbeing Activities: Throughout the academic year, the University will provide awareness-raising activities that promote the maintenance of good mental health and wellbeing for all students.

11. The University also has trained Mental Health First Aiders who can support students who are experiencing a mental health episode.

Mandatory Reporters

12. All University employees are Mandatory University Reporters. A mandatory reporter is obliged to report any disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University via [Report and Support](#) .
13. There are some members of staff that are designated [confidential](#) advisors that are able to offer support and guidance for those impacted by sexual misconduct.

Students

14. All students should help towards creating a non-stigmatising and inclusive community. Students are expected to live independently and in harmony with others, to engage with their programme of study, and not to conduct themselves in a way which has an adverse impact on themselves and those around them.
15. There is a range of internal, external and digital support services that the University encourages all students to access if they are experiencing any mental health difficulties. If students are unable to carry out their academic commitments they should contact Student Support and Development (SSD) at the earliest opportunity, so the University can provide them with the appropriate support.

Pre-admission and Admission

16. Prospective students can request an assessment to be completed by a member of Student Support at any point during the admissions process or the academic year. This confidential discussion with a member of Student Support will help determine what support the University is able to provide to create a tailored support plan.
17. All student data is held in accordance with the University's [Data Protection Policy](#).
18. Prospective students can receive advice from SSD for any additional support for which they may be eligible (e.g. the Disabled Students Allowance), in order to pursue their chosen course of study.
19. The University Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Registration and Induction

20. All students with a diagnosed disability, which can include mental health conditions, are advised to share this information with the University at the earliest opportunity by contacting SSD who can provide tailored support to students and applicants, should they require it.

Accommodation

21. The University offers accommodation to all students. Global experience and London undergraduate degree students that live in the University's partnered accommodation are assigned a Residence Life Coordinator who is available to answer questions and signpost students to support.
22. Residence Life also has a 24/7 on-call service which supports students out of hours.
23. To help alleviate stress associated with finding private accommodation, the University (via the Housing Team) will provide information about available accommodation and financial options, including guidance to students on inspecting local housing.

Support and Services Available

24. Mental health issues can impinge on both academic and personal aspects of study, and the University is committed to providing support in both areas. Students have access to individual advice and support from a range of staff and specialised services, including:
 - 24.1. Academic Advisors
 - 24.2. Admission
 - 24.3. Careers and employability service
 - 24.4. Faculty
 - 24.5. IT services
 - 24.6. Residence Services
 - 24.7. Student Support & Development
 - 24.8. Success Managers
 - 24.9. NU Student Union
 - 24.10. Visa Team.

Reasonable Adjustments

25. Reasonable adjustments/accommodations can be provided to students living with a disability, Specific Learning Difference or mental health condition. Student Wellbeing Coordinators (SWCs) support students to access reasonable adjustments by assisting them to develop a [Learning Support Plan](#) (LSP).
26. As defined in the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Disability in this context and includes students with mental health conditions. SWCs can provide further advice on the use of [Extenuating Circumstances](#) and reasonable adjustments.

What is a Crisis?

27. 'Crisis' covers a wide range of situations and what one person might consider a crisis may be manageable to another. It can come about quickly or develop over a long period of time.
28. People experience mental health crises in different ways, but the focus needs to be on staying safe and getting help.
29. Crisis can look like (but is not limited to):
 - 29.1. Being at risk of harm to self or others
 - 29.2. Severe anxiety or panic attacks
 - 29.3. Flashbacks or nightmares of past experiences
 - 29.4. Feeling suicidal
 - 29.5. Making plans to end your life or acting on these plans
 - 29.6. Feelings of wanting to self-harm
 - 29.7. Acting on these feelings
 - 29.8. Not feeling able to care for yourself (self-neglect)
 - 29.9. Feeling extremely high
 - 29.10. Fearing others want to harm you (paranoia)
 - 29.11. Hearing voices
 - 29.12. Withdrawing from friends and family
 - 29.13. Difficulties with communication; not being able to think about other things.

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30. A mental health crisis can occur because of triggers - study or work related stress can both be triggers. Someone might have an existing mental health condition and experience a crisis, or it can be something they have never experienced before. It is usually very frightening for the person experiencing the crisis and those around them.
31. While rare, there will be instances where a student's behaviour gives cause for immediate concern; there is reason to believe that the students themselves, or others, may be harmed and in immediate danger. If a student is reasonably considered to pose an immediate risk of harm to themselves and/or others, they are likely to require emergency assistance and steps will be taken in line with the [Safeguarding Policy](#).
32. The primary aim in responding to crisis incidents is to keep individual(s) safe and prevent further harm from occurring to themselves or others (either direct harm or by vicarious exposure to concerning behaviour). The University will endeavour for any action to be proportionate and the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
33. If someone's life is at risk or causing harm to themselves or others, emergency services should be contacted by calling 999 or their GP. Where possible, people should be advised to go to A&E or an emergency mental health service. In the event of a crisis, the student's next of kin or emergency contact may be contacted.
34. Details of the procedure that will be followed, in the unlikely event of imminent harm to self or others, can be found [here](#).

Confidentiality

35. Where it is appropriate SSD will discuss the need to break confidentiality with the student(s) at risk, and encourage them to seek help and support, however this is not always possible.
36. SSD will break confidentiality if there is immediate danger to the student or others.
37. The University will need to call 999 on the student's behalf if the student:
 - 37.1. Has clearly told the University that they plan to take their life within the next 24 hours
 - 37.2. Has already taken action which puts their life in danger
 - 37.3. Does not want to seek support themselves
 - 37.4. Does not give their consent for the University to do so.

Student Views, Feedback and Concerns

38. The University encourages any student to contact the University to discuss their views and experiences as they arise, including matters relating to this Policy. Students are encouraged to consider all options as alternative mechanisms could be more suitable, depending on the nature of their concern(s). These can include: Informal feedback, [Student Voice mechanisms](#) and via your [Student Union](#).
39. Feedback is often informal and directed to the relevant area of the University. Please contact the Head of SSD.
40. If a student wishes to submit a formal complaint please see the [Complaints Procedure for Students](#).

Monitoring and review

41. This Policy is the responsibility of the Head of Student Support and Development and is reviewed annually to maintain compliance with UK legislation.
42. A service review is provided to Northeastern London Board via the Quarterly Standards Report for monitoring.

Version History

Title: Student Mental Health Policy				
Approved by: Academic Board				
Version	Approved	Published	Owner	Proposed Next Review
24.1.0	December 2024	December 2024	Head of Student Support	September 2026
Referenced documents	Complaints Procedure for Students ; Data Protection Policy ; Extenuating Circumstances Policy ; Safeguarding Policy ; Student Union .			
External Reference Point(s)	Admission Policy and Entrance Requirements ; University Mental Health Charter - Student Minds Hub .			