

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

This policy is available on-line at: www.tynecoast.ac.uk

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please note that the College may charge for this. Please contact: Director of Student Services, Inclusion and Safeguarding
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person:
SMT, EG, JCC QC&S Committee, Board	1	October 2025	October 2028	Director of Student Services, Inclusion and Safeguarding

Equality Opportunities: **Impact**

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POLICY NUMBER 116

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1.0 Introduction: In line with its strategic intent and aims, the College recognises it must support its students to overcome barriers in relation to their mental health and well-being to ensure they are successful in achieving their learning goals and obtain their career of choice. Tyne Coast College, along with regional and national trends and statistics identify that the mental health and well-being of people is a priority.

Tyne Coast College is completely committed to fostering a whole college approach in supporting students and staff with mental health conditions to ensure they realise their full potential and progress.

Tyne Coast College values its employees and accepts that their well-being and the environment in which they work are essential requirements for the efficient and effective performance of its functions.

To meet its legislative obligations the College undertakes, through its Health and Safety policy, to provide systems of employee management and a working environment which seeks to avoid harming individuals and actively promotes a sound and sustainable approach to work.

The College has been awarded Maintaining Excellence status for the Better Health at Work Award, which demonstrates the College's commitment to the health and wellbeing of our employees.

2.0 Scope: Tyne Coast College strives to foster a whole College approach that is committed to supporting student and staff mental health and wellbeing, through the following key aims;

- Ensuring that the early identification of students at risk is facilitated by a co-ordinated range of services and practices including Tutorial Coaches, lecturers coaches, Wellbeing advisors and the Safeguarding team.
- Ensuring that the availability of support is accurately and widely publicised to both prospective, current students and staff.
- Promoting healthy behaviour and positive mental health within the Colleges curriculum and wider curriculum activities, encouraging students with mental health difficulties to seek help.
- Promoting Healthy behaviour amongst staff and positive mental health, encouraging staff to seek help and inform their line managers if they need support.
- Delivering effective student support services which are easy to access, meet the needs of a diverse student body, and are resourced sufficiently to meet demand.
- Providing training and support for staff relating to mental health and wellbeing, connecting support for staff and students to mutual benefit and foster mutually supportive initiatives among staff and students.
- Fostering collaborative working and strong partnerships with external organisations in the region and nationally to support the delivery of comprehensive mental health and wellbeing services.
- Using data and research to support mental health and wellbeing, conducting regular surveys, monitoring trends, devising improvement plans, and measuring success for staff and students.

3.0 Policy Aim

The College will;

- Ensure our students & staff feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- Support students to form and maintain relationships.
- Encourage students to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Help students to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

The College will promote a healthy environment by:

- Actively promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students and staff.
- Celebrate both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promote opportunities for students and staff to seek support and guidance when it is needed
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our students' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole College approach to mental health and providing support to any student or staff member that needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students and with colleagues.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.
- Provide regular training opportunities for all staff.

4.0 College Support and Services

The College approach seeks to minimise the triggers for poor mental health, promote wellbeing and equip our students to build resilience, develop skills to manage their own well-being and prepare them for working life.

The College will continue to be ambitious in its approach to supporting students with their Mental Health and Well-Being, new initiatives, and ways of providing support will be a key objective of the working group.

The College recognises the support required for staff and has implemented initiatives and systems that all staff can access to manage and support their wellbeing and mental health.

4.1 Dedicated Pastoral Support Team

All students will have access to an Wellbeing Mentor who they can discuss and share concerns with. Students can self-refer to the mentor service or be referred by a tutor. The Wellbeing Mentor will provide guidance and support on a wide range of areas, signpost the student to appropriate services or work 1-1 for a time limited period.

The tutorial curriculum for FE and targeted hot topics for HE are developed to give students the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training. The support APP Togetherall will be promoted through tutorials as a helpful resource for students to engage with.

4.2 Personal Development:

Personal Development Tutorials for FE students, have specific time set with in the academic calendar to focus on mental health and wellbeing, advising of resilience techniques and demonstrating the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing. Personal Development also allows time, for anything trending with regards to mental wellbeing, so any topics in the media or something happening locally, that we feel may impact the Mental Health and Wellbeing, we will discuss the topics and offer advice and guidance.

4.2 Mental Health First Aid:

The wellbeing, safeguarding and SEND teams have undertaken mental health first aid training, with a view that they champion mental health and well-being. We have implemented a dedicated Mental health first aid internal help line, where one of the dedicated Mental Health First Aiders can respond as and when required.

4.3 Development and Skills Coach:

The College has dedicated Development & Skills Coaches, who have the capabilities and capacities to review individual students progress and identify a need for additional specialist support services in a timely manner.

4.4 Counsellor:

We have a dedicated counselling service, available for students to self-refer, with a maximum of 6 sessions available if required for learners.

4.5 Local Authority Training for Staff:

The local authority offers a wide range of free training for staff around growing trends or ongoing issues around safeguarding and mental health, wellbeing and safeguarding staff in particular access this training to support their vigilance and capabilities when dealing with cases or concerns.

4.6 External Links:

The College has strong relationships with external service providers, so students are referred to appropriate and specialist services in a timely manner.

4.7 Local authority Partnerships:

The safeguarding Lead and Manager sit on the board of numerous local authority safeguarding children and adults' boards.

4.8 Signposting within the Local Community

Given the breadth of external services available within the Local Community and through the NHS the College will always ensure students are signposted externally wherever possible. The College will pro-actively work with these services to advertise and engage the student community with them.

4.9 Student Hub:

Each campus has a dedicated Student hub, which students can access throughout the working day. Safeguarding and wellbeing are available as a drop in service and without appointment.

4.10 Health Minds EAP Guide for Managers (Staff)

An independent specialist will provide all staff with a Healthy Minds Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), they'll have access to a range of confidential, around-the-clock support, designed to help them manage any worries before they turn into more serious issues. Our experts can help them build resilience and feel on top of their day-to-day life. Anytime, anywhere.

4.11 Flexible Working (staff)

Where possible, managers are encouraged to support flexible working (this is not a whole college approach)

4.12 Quiet Hour (staff)

Managers and staff are encouraged to free up an hour a day, avoiding meetings for this period to have some quiet time to catch up on things.

4.13 Wellbeing Day (staff)

All Staff will receive an additional leave day for wellbeing. **This must be taken in line with usual college approval for annual leave and this needs to be approved with your line manager.**

4.14 Celebration event (Staff)

This will be a social event and will be, held annually at Easter time, celebrating work related achievements.

Responsibilities & Leadership

5.1 The Responsibilities of Director of Student Services (student)

- Implementation and review of the policy
- Lead the College strategy, action plan and working group for student Mental Health and Well-Being
- Work with Learning and Development to offer regular training opportunities for all staff
- Work with the Student Union to promote positive Mental Health and Well-Being through engaging initiatives

5.2 The Responsibilities of Additional Learning Support Team (including Pastoral Support) – (Student)

- Promote the college Mental Health and Well-Being Support services through interactions with students
- Keep abreast of current initiatives both local and nationally to inform the working group
- Manage the use of the College Well-Being room (STC Only)
- Ensure appropriate communication with curriculum staff regarding individual students' cases via Pro-Monitor

5.3 The Responsibility of Curriculum Staff: (Student)

- Promote the college Mental Health and Well-Being Support services through interactions with students
- Refer students to college student services as required
- Ensure relevant information is recorded on Pro-monitor

5.4 The Responsibilities of Students:

- To engage in Services offered where there is a benefit to their mental health and well-being
- To provide feedback through Student Voice forums on the College approach

5.5 The Responsibility of Governor: (Student)

- There is a dedicated Safeguarding link Governor responsible for student wellbeing, who regular liaises with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.6 Managers (staff)

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their teams.
- Ensure good communication between management and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure employees are fully trained to fulfil their duties.
- Ensure employees are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not put under unnecessary pressure.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that employees are not put under unnecessary pressure.
- Monitor holidays to ensure that employees are taking their full entitlement and taking regular rest breaks throughout the year (in line with the Working Time Directive).
- Attend training in good management practice and health, safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their teams.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to employees who are experiencing stress outside work e.g. financial pressures, bereavement or separation.
- Refer employees to occupational health/counsellors where appropriate.
- Promote a positive working environment that supports good physical and mental health and wellbeing.

5.7 Director of Human Resources (Staff)

- Give guidance to managers on the health and wellbeing at work policy.
- Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures put in place to address stress and promote wellbeing at work, by collating sickness absence statistics and arranging follow up meetings with individuals to gather information.
- Advise managers and individuals on relevant training requirements.
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment.
- Promote referrals to occupational workplace counsellors or specialist agencies where appropriate.
- Promote the College's Stress Counselling Helpline on a regular basis
- Arrange for the provision of specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Support all individuals who are and have been off sick with stress and advise on a planned/phased return to work and any relevant adjustments on their return.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures put in place to reduce stress.
- Assist managers in creating a positive working environment that supports good physical and mental health and wellbeing.

5.8 Health & Safety Manager:

- Inform the Executive Director of HR and the Health and Safety Council of any changes and developments in the field of stress and health and wellbeing at work.
- Advise managers and individuals on relevant training requirements.

5.9 Employees:

- Raise issues of concern with your Manager, Executive Director of HR or Safety Representative as soon as issues arise.
- Accept opportunities to attend counselling when recommended.
- Accept training opportunities.
- Attend appropriate training with time allocated to complete.

6.0 Prevention: Prevention through education is also a fundamental obligation of the College, this is done through a robust tutorial programme covering topics such as.

- Wellbeing and mental health
- Resilience
- Healthy relationships
- Safeguarding
- Prevent
- Substance misuse.

It is also done through consistently raising awareness and sign posting intervention services through curriculum, tutorials, social media, display screens and poster campaigns. Ensuring awareness weeks/days such as – mental health day, suicide prevention week are actively promoted.

6.1 Prevention (Staff) – Wellbeing Risk Assessment related to staff. Identifying the possible causes of a negative impact on someone's wellbeing where it had has been identified that preventative or management strategies can be effectively put in place. In carrying out risk assessments, managers should be aware that:

- Negative impact on wellbeing at work can result from a single incident or an accumulation of incidents over time, and should seek to minimise both types of risks
- stress related ill health might be caused by personal circumstances, which in turn may have a detrimental effect on an individual's ability to cope with work demands
- An independent specialist provides all staff with a Healthy Minds Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), they'll have access to a range of confidential, around-the-clock support, designed to help them manage any worries before they turn into more serious issues. Our experts can help them build resilience and feel on top of their day-to-day life. Anytime, anywhere.

7.0 Related Policies and Procedures:

Procedure Title	Link
Wellbeing Referral Procedure	Wellbeing Hub Referral Process
Safeguarding	0191-427-3545
Counselling Referral Process	Counselling Referral

8.0 Key performance Indicators.

- 99.6% of learners stayed on roll that had been reported to Safeguarding/wellbeing.
- Wellbeing forums feedback.
- Student Surveys
- Counselling statistics
- Wellbeing statistics
- Safeguarding termly report and weekly statistics
- Hive Survey (Staff)