



UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Student Health & Wellbeing

Suicide Prevention Plan

2022-2025

london.ac.uk

Contents

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	3
OBJECTIVES	4
IMPLEMENTATION	4
MONITORING AND REPORTING	4
SUICIDE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN.....	5

This version approved by VCEG on 1 June 2022

Version: 1.3
Revised: June 2022
Next review: June 2024
Contact: Adrian Clark, Student Health & Wellbeing Manager
Email: adrian.clark@london.ac.uk

Statement of Purpose

Suicide is the leading cause of death young people in the UK. Student suicides are devastating for friends and family, and often have profound impacts on the wider community of students and staff. Universities play a key role in helping to prevent suicides. This requires a whole-university approach and working in close partnership with students, parents, local government and the NHS.

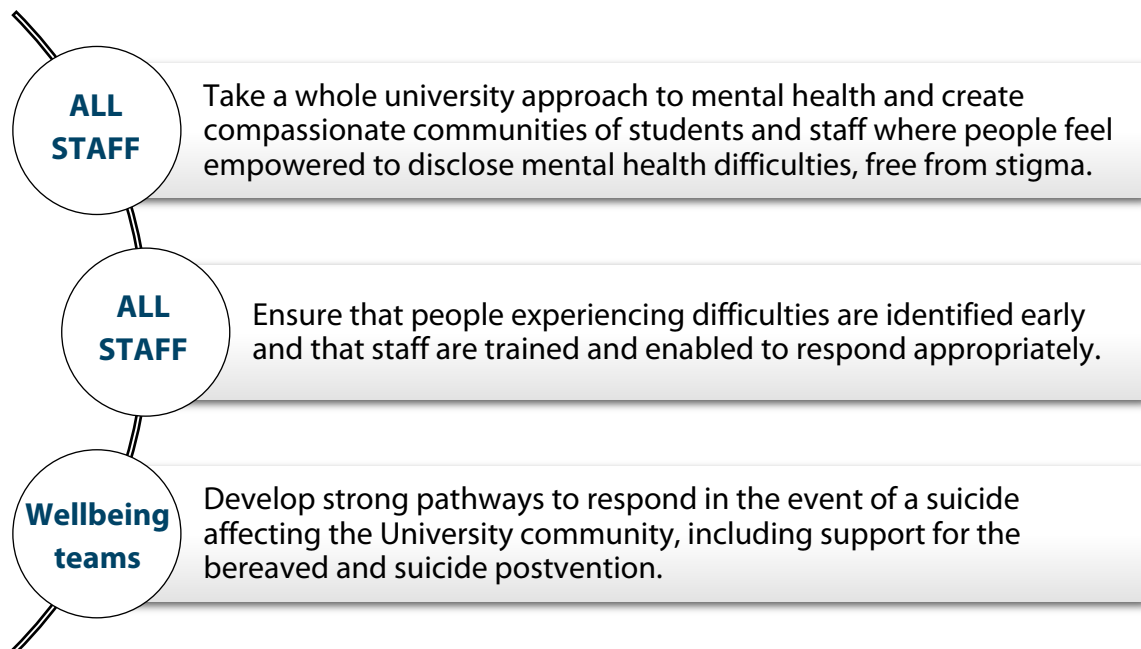
The University of London recognises that:

- Suicide thoughts are common and should always be taken seriously.
- The majority of suicides are preceded by warning signs, whether verbal or behavioural. Young people often tell their peers of their thoughts and plans.
- Suicide is a difficult thing to talk about and we are therefore committed to training staff in identifying and responding to suicide risk.
- The majority of people with suicide thoughts and behaviours do not actually want to die. They do not want to live the life they have; they do change their minds and may want to be saved. Often, feeling actively suicidal is temporary, even if someone has been feeling low, anxious or struggling to cope for a long period of time. This is why getting the right kind of support at the right time is so important.
- Lack of understanding and stigma around suicide and mental illness can be a barrier to seeking and offering help and we are therefore committed to tackling this through training and educating our students and staff.
- The effect of a student suicide can be far reaching with a significant impact on family and friends; students both on and off campus; and teaching and support staff across the university.
- Suicide prevention is everybody's business and we are committed to a whole-university approach that facilitates wide engagement and involvement of students, parents and staff.

We are committed to ensuring that students and staff at the University of London are as suicide-safe as possible; to promoting positive mental health in every aspect of the University culture and experience; and to making wellbeing part of the language of higher education.

This Plan blends three key objectives informed by the 2018 Universities UK (UUK) guidance, "Suicide-Safer Universities" and the UUK *Stepchange* model with a risk-based approach to define targeted actions to reduce the risk of suicide in our student communities – starting with a strategic, whole-university approach to wellbeing and mental health, which means that all students and staff understand its importance and the role it plays as the foundation for learning and academic achievement.

Objectives



Implementation

Dr Adrian Clark (Student Health & Wellbeing Manager) will lead on implementing this plan. Each action listed in the risk assessment and action plan below indicates which staff groups will be involved.

Monitoring and reporting

VCEG will receive a monthly report on numbers of “student of concern” cases and safeguarding cases identified across all student-facing departments. Progress toward the actions outlined in this plan will be displayed in a dashboard and action tracker, and included in the monthly report.

Suicide safety risk assessment and action plan

	Hazard	Risk categories	Severity	Likelihood	Action by April 2022	Action by April 2023	Action by April 2024
1	Students and staff feeling unable to disclose mental health difficulties and/or access support, or not knowing how to do so	Individual wellbeing	Moderate	Moderate	Join Zero Suicide Alliance (SHWB) Create an online hub for students experiencing difficulties, with information and resources about suicide awareness and prevention, and directing them to the appropriate staff and services for their part of the University (SHWB & Communications)	Actively promote Zero Suicide Alliance campaign activities (Communications, Libraries, SAS, ULIP, Worldwide & Residential Services)	Extend Look After Your Mate training to students across the University (SAS, ULIP & Residential Services)
2	Students, staff, and third parties being unaware of how to raise a concern about a student or colleague	Individual wellbeing	Moderate	Moderate	Online hub (see line 1)	Develop a report and support policy and procedure (SHWB)	Look after Your Mate (see line 1)
3	Incorrect, inappropriate, or no response to a disclosure of mental health difficulty	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Moderate	Moderate	Create and maintain a suicide prevention and awareness staff training register (OSD)	Provide Zero Suicide Alliance Training via the staff development portal with a target of 50% of staff to be trained by 2025 (OSD, all staff) Report and support (see line 2) (SHWB) Implement a University-wide safeguarding policy (Designated	Look After Your Mate (see line 1) Offer Mental Health First Aid training for more student-facing staff, including facilities teams, with a target of 15% by 2026 (OSD, all student-facing staff) Offer Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for

	Hazard	Risk categories	Severity	Likelihood	Action by April 2022	Action by April 2023	Action by April 2024
						Safeguarding Lead & Safeguarding Officers)	student-facing staff, with a target of 5% by 2026 (OSD, all student-facing staff)
4	Failure to identify a behaviour pattern that suggests deterioration in a student's mental health, especially where information is not shared between departments, between the University and member institutions, or between the University and third parties	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Moderate	High	Deploy the full StarRez community management platform in halls, including reporting and escalation pathways for students of concern (Residential Services)	Report and support (see line 2)	Look After Your Mate (see line 1) Review and develop the University's information sharing agreements and practices with: parents, guardians, carers, and supporters; our member institutions and statutory mental health services in London, Paris, and key locations for distance-learning students overseas (SHWB & Information Governance)
5	Bullying or harassment within the University contributing to a person's suicide behaviour	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Moderate	Moderate		Report and support (see line 2) Safeguarding policy (see line 3)	
6	Delay in accessing care from NHS mental health services preventing timely intervention	Individual wellbeing	Moderate	Moderate			Work with the London Higher Mental Health and Wellbeing Network to develop closer links with local mental health services and NHS providers (SHWB)

	Hazard	Risk categories	Severity	Likelihood	Action by April 2022	Action by April 2023	Action by April 2024
7	Family or other supporters being unaware that a student needed help with mental health difficulties	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Severe	Moderate	Review welcome and induction communications for all departments to ensure students are encouraged to involve those who care for them (SAS, ULIP, Worldwide & Residential Services)	Review information sharing (see line 4)	
8	Inadequate mental health support being available at locations outside of London for distance and flexible learning students	Individual wellbeing	Moderate	Moderate	Online hub (see line 1)		
9	Failure to respond to a suicide in the University community with appropriate postvention actions to support the safety and wellbeing of affected people	Individual wellbeing Reputational	Moderate	Moderate	Publish a student death procedure, to include communications with the bereaved, legacy considerations, appropriate support for signposting, and post-incident review; and ensure that relevant sections of this procedure may be applied in the event of a student being critically injured or unwell as a result of suicide behaviour (SHWB)		Publish a suicide postvention procedure to supplement to student death procedure. (SHWB)
10	Failure to ensure a timely and compassionate response to the death of a student	Individual wellbeing Reputational	Moderate	Moderate	Student death procedure (see line 9)		Offer psychological first aid training to student-facing members of staff

	Hazard	Risk categories	Severity	Likelihood	Action by April 2022	Action by April 2023	Action by April 2024
							<u>(OSD, all student-facing staff)</u>
11	Failure to keep pace with evolving legal and regulatory requirements and expectations around student mental health and wellbeing	Regulatory Legal Reputational	Moderate	Moderate	Implement monthly anonymised reporting of students of concern to VCEG, to include developments relating to safeguarding, Prevent, and managing students of concern (SHWB)		Audit the University's mental health and wellbeing arrangements against the UUK <i>Stepchange: mentally healthy universities</i> framework (SHWB)
12	Failure to prevent a student or staff member from accessing materials or locations that can be used for suicide on University property (e.g. high roof)	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Severe	Low	Explicitly include restriction of access to locations and materials that can be used for suicide in building safety audits (Health & Safety, all Estates & Facilities, Residential Services)		
13	Failure to provide adequate suicide postvention or to identify and respond to a suicide cluster	Individual wellbeing Legal / duty of care Reputational	Severe	Moderate	Student death procedure (see line 9)		



