**Sheffield Hallam: a Healthy University**

#healthyhallam

Key messages for all staff (frontline, support, academic)

What is a Healthy University?

Sheffield Hallam is part of the [UK National Healthy University's Network](http://www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/index.php?s=1). The definition of a healthy university used by the network is "a Healthy University aspires to create a learning environment and organisational culture that enhances the health, wellbeing and sustainability of its community and enables people to achieve their full potential".

The University has developed a strategy to develop a whole university approach to health and wellbeing which covers everyone in the university community. This work is being led by the Healthy University Steering Group, a cross University Group with representatives drawn from the University and the Students' Union. The Group is chaired by Mark Swales, Director of Estates and Facilities and reports directly to the University Leadership Team.

Students need to be healthy to learn, and the Healthy Universities agenda is therefore business critical not just for the university but also for regional and public health. Everyone has a part to play in this work.

Why is this a priority now?

There is growing concern about student health which can be seen in research findings, media reports and in government led task forces. Within Hallam that concern has been particularly focused on student mental health as there has been a notable rise in the number of applicants disclosing mental health as a disability; students presenting to support services with anxiety or depression and students citing stress as a factor in the difficulties they are facing trying to study effectively. This needs addressing as students are less likely to be able to learn effectively if they are struggling with mental health issues. There are also business benefits of pro-actively addressing this issue as it will release staff resource and support improvements in our performance with respect to retention and progression.

What are the priorities in 2016/17?

The Steering Group has approved a number of [Student Priorities](https://portal.shu.ac.uk/departments/lsss/projectsandworkinggroups/healthandwellbeing/Shared%20Documents/The%20priorities/Final%20student%20priorities%20-%202016-2019.docx) which have been developed around a public health framework.

Our current focus is on 4 things:

* promoting good health behaviours in all students through a new 'Healthy Hallam Challenge'
* establishing a calendar of engagement activities
* establishing a Sheffield Student Health and Wellbeing Board
* managing risky behaviour and building healthier adults

The Healthy Hallam Challenge

We want to encourage students to develop healthy habits whilst at University and have developed the 'Healthy Hallam Challenge' to support new and returning students to do this. The Challenge is a joint initiative which is being led by Claire Gandy, Head of Student Support Services and Davey Silver, Welfare and Community Officer.

The notion of 'Healthy Hallam' was introduced by the SU Welfare and Community Officer in 2015/16 to promote a week of SU led activities focused on health and wellbeing. Such was the success of that week that it was agreed that we adopt the healthyhallam hashtag and the healthy hallam identity more broadly across the University community.

This new Challenge has been designed specifically around the **5 Ways to Wellbeing - Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Take Notice and Give**. This is an approach that is known to have benefits for individual's psychological and physical health and is widely promoted by mental health organisations such as MIND. Members of the University and Students' Union Officers are each championing one of the 5 Ways with the aim of engaging as many students as we can in the Challenge. More detailed information is available here <https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/healthyhallam/>

Calendar of Engagement Activities

Students have access to a wide range of events and activities which are focused on health and wellbeing which are fun, informative and engaging. Our aim in 2016/17 is to consider how to maximise the impact of these with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of our students. We will be looking at ways of reinforcing key messages with an increased focus on the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

Sheffield Student Health and Wellbeing Board

The University has recognised that it is not alone in trying to address these issues and has recently established a Sheffield Student Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board draws together representatives from both Universities, the City Council, NHS, Clinical Commissions Group, the Police and other relevant local organisations. We hope to be able to take forward joint initiatives and improve our policy and practices as a result of pooling our expertise.

**What do I need to do?**

***Your responsibility as a member of SHU***

* know about the ['5 ways to wellbeing'](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/healthyhallam/5ways/) (on the Healthy Hallam blog)
* everyone has a part to play
* everyone has a responsibility to understand, talk about and encourage students to engage with the 5 ways to wellbeing
* are you engaging with the 5 ways? what examples could you talk to students about? think about opportunities within your role for encouraging students. eg Does your course have a student society that you encourage students to join - does that provide an opportunity to talk about the value of 'connecting with others'. Does your role involve promoting opportunities to students; can you link these opportunities to one or more of the 5 ways? Look for inspiration on the [Healthy Hallam blog](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/healthyhallam/).

***Your messages to students***

* Healthy Hallam is a 'way of life' - not just for the start of term!
* Healthy Hallam embraces the '5 ways to wellbeing' (Connect, Be active, Keep Learning, Give, Take Notice)
* Small changes in behaviour can improve your wellbeing and can help you flourish in everyday life. You can set small goals to start with. Being active can be using the stairs instead of the lift or walking to Uni instead of coming on the bus; it doesn't have to mean joining a gym.
* Try to integrate the 5 ways to wellbeing into your daily life - think of them as your '5 a day' for your wellbeing!

***Resources***

* Healthy Hallam blog - [blogs.shu.ac.uk/healthyhallam/](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/healthyhallam/) 
  + a Healthy Hallam 'news channel' - for competition details, 5 ways to wellbeing, events, resources, activities, ideas, campaigns
* Healthy Hallam webpages
  + hosted on the SU website - which focuses on a range of Healthy Hallam initiatives and includes a link to the Healthy Hallam blog

Healthy Hallam is being delivered in partnership by University staff and the Student Union. Each of the 5 ways are supported by a Student Union officer and academic staff and service providers. To find out more, contact a member of the working group.