UK Healthy Universities Network
Introduction and Overview

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Introduction: Why Healthy Universities?

Background: The Journey

Healthy Universities: The Approach

Healthy Universities: Achievements, Outputs and Lessons Learned
“Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love.”

WHO Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1986

In the UK, there are 162 HEIs with 2.5 million students and 378,000 staff (Universities UK, 2013; HESA, 2013).

Investing in health and wellbeing is win-win:

- Healthy learners & healthy staff will increase levels of achievement, performance & productivity
- Universities can make significant contribution to long-term health improvement of the population
- Healthy Universities builds on experience of Healthy Schools (and FE) and adds consistency across the education spectrum.
However, universities are large and complex systems that do not have health as their main aim or ‘raison d’être’

It is, therefore, challenging to introduce and integrate health and wellbeing – and in ‘making the case’, it is essential to argue in terms of impact on ‘core business’

Whilst there is little research evidence on Healthy Universities, possible to draw on learning/evidence from healthy schools and other settings, suggesting that effective programmes adopt a sustained ‘whole system’ approach addressing range of factors and involving activity across domains (Stewart-Brown, 2006).
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1993  Settings conference held at UCLan

1994/5  Healthy University initiatives established at UCLan and Lancaster

1998  WHO book *Health Promoting Universities*


2006  UCLan established informal *English National Network of Healthy Universities* in response to interest and demand (approx. 8 HEIs)

2008  UCLan secured funding for *National Research & Development Project*

2009  UCLan (with MMU) secured HEFCE funding for *Developing Leadership and Governance for Healthy Universities Project* – including Network and Website/Toolkit Development

2009.  UCLan (with MMU) secured funding for *National Healthy Universities Model and Framework Project*

2010-  England: PH Strategy support; Wales: Healthy FE/HE Framework
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Achievements, Outputs and Lessons Learned
‘Healthy Universities’ is one application of the healthy settings approach, which is well-established in other settings e.g. Healthy Schools; Health Promoting Hospitals.

The approach reflects an ecological whole-system perspective and an appreciation that:

“Many risk factors are interrelated and can be best tackled through comprehensive, integrated programmes in appropriate settings where people live, work and interact.”

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland), 2002
“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.”

www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk
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Healthy Universities: Achievements, Outputs and Lessons Learned
The UK Healthy Universities Network has grown from just 8 universities in 2006.

It now has representation [multiple stakeholder groups] from:
- 66 UK universities
- 8 non-UK universities
- 19 other stakeholder organisations

Network meeting/thematic workshop held twice each year.

E-Newsletters, email lists and telephone networking.

Steering Group – 6 HEIs / Welsh Government / NHS Health Scotland / Public Health Agency for N Ireland / Public Health England / HEFCE / HEFCW / NUS
Website and Toolkit

Between April 2010 and April 2014:

- 11,898 unique visitors made 20,213 visits to site and viewed 85,129 pages
- these visitors came from 134 different countries – including 65% (7,796) from the UK, 5% (642) from Canada, 5% (589) from the USA and 5% (585) from Australia.
Welcome to the National Healthy Universities Toolkit

This toolkit comprises a collection of resources created by the Developing Leadership and Governance for Healthy Universities Project and is designed to support Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that wish to adopt and/or embed a whole system Healthy University approach.

The toolkit includes a set of Guidance Packages designed to provide guidance to HEIs at all stages in developing and implementing Healthy University initiatives. Each explores a different theme — for example ‘Leading and Implementing a Whole University Approach’ — using key headings to frame the discussion: overview; key concepts and terms; wider context and evidence base; university context; planning and implementation; consultation and partnerships; evaluation and impact. They also include references, links and a resource page — incorporating features such as ‘talking head’ video clips and template powerpoint presentations that can be tailored to your individual requirements (see also Getting Started).

The toolkit includes institutional Case Studies which offer ‘real life’ examples of Healthy University related initiatives which have been implemented in institutions across the country. These can be accessed using a searchable database, categorised according to topic, method and population group. The case studies follow a consistent format and, whilst all are ‘freestanding’, some also provide a supportive/illustrative role for particular guidance packages, with automatic links. If you have a case study that you would like to contribute to the toolkit please complete this short template and we will be in touch.

The Toolkit also includes the Healthy Universities Self Review Tool, which provides a mechanism for HEIs to review and reflect on their progress in embedding a whole system approach to health and wellbeing into their core business and culture. The Self Review Tool is an online questionnaire structured under five headings: Leadership and Governance; Service Provision; Facilities and Environment; Communication, Information and Marketing; and Academic, Personal, Social and Professional Development. Once a university has completed questionnaire, a graphic ‘traffic light’ representation (red, amber, green) of progress will be generated, highlighting areas where the university is achieving and those areas where additional input is needed.

Guidance Packages  Case Studies  Self Review Tool
1) Leadership and Governance

This section of the tool focuses on the corporate commitment of the university in working towards becoming a Healthy University (you may find it helpful to read the Guidance Packages – particularly Leading and Developing the Whole System Healthy Universities Approach and Integrating a Commitment to Health and Wellbeing within a University’s Policy and Planning Process).

Corporate Engagement and Responsibility

1) The university’s core plans and strategies address the health and wellbeing of students, staff and the wider community.
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

2) The university ensures that health and wellbeing related strategic planning and delivery are inclusive and address the needs of the diverse range of individuals throughout the organization.
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

3) The university embeds its health and wellbeing work into wider policy and practice relating to sustainable development.
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

4) The university has performance criteria and data collection systems in place to measure the satisfaction levels of staff and students with regards to the delivery of health and wellbeing services and support.
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

5) The university has a system for assessing the impact of health and wellbeing initiatives on its core business (e.g., by mapping to key performance indicators relating to student retention and staff sickness absence).
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

6) The university works in partnership with the local public health/health improvement organizations to ensure that it contributes to local health priorities.
   - No, not at all
   - Thinking about it
   - Working on this currently
   - Yes we are there

Next
Case Studies

15 Case Studies Found

Active Travel

Sustainable transport policies are increasingly being developed and championed across the higher education sector. These contribute to action on climate change by reducing carbon emissions and helping tackle obesity and other chronic diseases by promoting physical activity. This case study highlights a range of achievements to date which demonstrate a holistic approach to travel planning but also indicates the work that still needs to be done and the challenges to progressing such an important agenda for health and wellbeing.

Date added: 26th October 2010  Author: Steve Ward  Organisation: University of the West of England

Adventure Therapy

This project is a joint project between the Sport and Well-being department, Student Counselling Service and the mental well-being coordinator, all within Student Services. Students who are receiving counselling are referred onto the scheme. It is a one to two day adventurous activity experience in the Lake District, an environment which evidence has shown is beneficial to health (Barton, H. & Pretty, J. (2010) What is the best dose of nature and green exercise for improving mental health? A multi-study analysis. Environmental Science and Technology 44 3647-3655). The project has run for three years now, the first two years were a one day experience, whereas the last year was a two day experience with an overnight ‘wild camp’. Before the students go on the ‘experience’ they also attend an orientation/team building session on the University campus, in order to meet the other students and staff attending. To evaluate the scheme, students complete the CORE 10 item Questionnaire and Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ), prior to and after the experience. They also fill in a health questionnaire prior to attending. Whilst away they are given reflective journals to write about their experience, which they keep for approximately two weeks after the experience to write any further reflections.

Date added: 15th September 2010  Author: Hazel Wright  Organisation: Teesside University

Fruit and Vegetable Stalls on Campus

This initiative encourages local healthy food market traders to come onto the university campus to provide a service.

www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/toolkit
Guidance Packages

These online guidance packages form part of the National Healthy Universities Toolkit and have been designed to provide guidance to HEIs at all stages in developing and implementing Healthy University Initiatives.

Each Guidance Package explores a different theme, using six key headings to frame the discussion, together with downloadable resources such as powerpoint presentations (sometimes with accompanying notes) where appropriate. Each package is also downloadable as a PDF.

- Leading and Developing the Whole System Healthy Universities Approach
- Connecting and Developing Synergy between Health and Sustainable Development Agendas
- Integrating a Commitment to Health and Wellbeing within a University’s Policy and Planning Process
- Developing an Holistic and Joined-Up Approach to Mental Wellbeing
- Communicating Health as Part of a Whole System Healthy Universities Approach
- Leading and Implementing a Healthy Universities Approach to Enhance Student Experience and Performance