

LAINE

THEATRE ARTS

Policies

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

PURPOSE

Laine Theatre Arts is committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and to fostering an inclusive, respectful and compassionate environment in which all students can thrive academically, professionally and personally.

The College recognises that mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to student success and is committed to a culture in which students feel able to seek support without stigma and access appropriate interventions at an early stage when required. The College will work collaboratively with students to remove barriers to participation and progression where mental health difficulties arise and to support positive outcomes throughout the student journey.

The following policy applies to the BA (Hons) Musical Theatre (3-year course), Level 6 Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre, BA (Hons) Musical Theatre (One-Year Top-Up) and the Cert HE Musical Theatre Foundation Course in Musical Theatre.

This policy should be read alongside the Student Support and Intervention Framework, Disability and Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Fitness to Study Policy, Extenuating Circumstances Policy, Attendance and Absence Policy, Intermission Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Non-Academic Misconduct Policy, Safeguarding Policy and the Student Complaints Policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all applicants, prospective students and enrolled students of the College.

The policy covers mental health conditions, emotional wellbeing concerns, anxiety disorders, depression and mood disorders, eating disorders, trauma-related conditions, self-harm concerns, stress, emotional distress, mental health crises and any mental health condition that may constitute a disability under the Equality Act 2010, where such conditions may have an impact on a student's access to, participation in, or progression through their studies.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Office for Students Regulatory Framework
- Office of the Independent Adjudicator Good Practice Framework
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Sector good practice guidance relating to student mental health and wellbeing

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, supporting continuation and positive student outcomes, and ensuring that students experiencing mental health difficulties are supported effectively and proportionately.

DEFINITIONS

MENTAL HEALTH: A spectrum of emotional, psychological and social wellbeing, which may fluctuate over time and influence how individuals think, feel and behave.

WELLBEING: A student's ability to engage with, participate in and benefit from their learning, training and wider student experience.

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION: A diagnosed condition or presentation of symptoms or indicators affecting emotional, psychological or mental functioning.

WELLBEING PLAN: A structured support plan developed collaboratively with a student through the Student Support and Intervention Framework.

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS: A situation presenting, or reasonably believed to present, a significant and immediate risk to the safety or wellbeing of the student or others.

PRINCIPLES

The College's approach to mental health and wellbeing is guided by the following principles:

- Early intervention through the Student Support and Intervention Framework.
- Student-centred decision-making and student partnership
- Collaborative support planning.
- Promotion of a positive culture of wellbeing, inclusion and belonging.
- Proportionate support and intervention.
- Support before sanction.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Transparency and fairness.
- Safety and wellbeing.
- Inclusive practice and accessibility.
- Commitment to supporting student access, continuation, achievement and progression.
- Commitment to evidence-informed practice and continuous improvement in student support.

LIMITATIONS OF COLLEGE SUPPORT

The College is an educational institution and is not a healthcare provider.

The College does not provide:

- Clinical diagnosis.
- Psychiatric treatment.
- Ongoing therapeutic interventions.
- Emergency mental health services.
- Twenty-four-hour support.

The College's role is to provide educational support, reasonable adjustments, proportionate wellbeing interventions, risk management where appropriate, alongside signposting or referral to suitable external services, including healthcare and specialist support providers.

Where students require medical, psychiatric or emergency mental health support, they will be directed to appropriate healthcare providers and specialist services. In circumstances where there are serious concerns regarding safety or wellbeing, the College may also liaise with relevant external services in line with safeguarding and information-sharing responsibilities.

IDENTIFICATION AND DISCLOSURE

Students are encouraged to disclose mental health conditions or wellbeing concerns during application, enrolment or at any stage of study.

The College recognises that mental health and wellbeing needs may present differently across individuals and that students may experience varying barriers to disclosure and support. The College is committed to ensuring equitable access to support and will seek to minimise disadvantage arising from mental health-related difficulties.

Evidence may include:

- Medical evidence.
- GP letters.
- Mental health care plans or equivalent documentation from relevant healthcare professionals.
- Reports from psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors or other relevant professionals.

The absence of a formal diagnosis will not automatically prevent consideration of support needs where sufficient evidence indicates a student may otherwise experience disadvantage.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Students are encouraged to provide an emergency contact and indicate whether they consent to that person being contacted in circumstances involving significant welfare concerns.

The College will normally respect student preferences regarding emergency contact arrangements; however, the College has a duty of care to act in the student's best interests and may contact an emergency contact without prior consent where it considers this necessary and proportionate. This may include situations where there are serious concerns regarding a student's safety or wellbeing, including but not limited to:

- Risk of harm to self or others.
- Significant and immediate deterioration in mental or physical health.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Situations where a student is missing or uncontactable and there is concern for their welfare.
- Medical or mental health emergencies requiring urgent support.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information relating to a student's mental health will normally be treated confidentially and shared only on a need-to-know basis with relevant staff involved in supporting the student. Information shared will be limited to the minimum necessary for the purpose of providing appropriate support, safeguarding, or meeting legal obligations.

Information may be shared without a student's consent where there are:

- Serious concerns regarding risk to the student or others.
- Safeguarding concerns involving children or adults at risk.
- Legal or regulatory obligations requiring disclosure.
- Medical emergencies or situations requiring urgent intervention.
- Other exceptional circumstances where disclosure is considered necessary, lawful and proportionate to protect safety or meet statutory duties.

Where possible and appropriate, the College will seek to involve the student in decisions about information sharing, unless doing so would increase risk or compromise safety. Information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the College's data protection procedures.

SUPPORT AT ENTRY

The Student Support Lead will review disclosed information, assess support requirements and, where appropriate, develop a Wellbeing Plan in collaboration with the student. The purpose of the Wellbeing Plan is to identify appropriate support arrangements and facilitate effective engagement with study.

The Student Support Lead may:

- Coordinate support arrangements.
- Liaise with relevant staff and external professionals where appropriate.
- Arrange review meetings.
- Facilitate reasonable adjustments.

- Signpost students to specialist support services.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

The Student Support and Intervention Framework provides the College's primary structure for identifying, coordinating and reviewing support for students.

The Framework promotes early intervention, collaborative planning and proportionate responses to emerging concerns, with the aim of supporting students to engage successfully and safely with their studies.

Support is delivered through four pathways:

PATHWAY A – SHORT-TERM SUPPORT

For students experiencing temporary or short-term difficulties that may be resolved through limited interventions and monitoring.

PATHWAY B – ONGOING SUPPORT

For students requiring structured and continuing support through a Wellbeing Plan and regular review arrangements.

PATHWAY C – ENGAGEMENT CONCERNS

For situations where attendance, engagement or participation concerns indicate that additional intervention may be required.

PATHWAY D – SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

For situations involving substantial concerns regarding wellbeing, safety, risk or a student's ability to engage effectively with study.

The Student Support and Intervention Framework is available on the College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

WELLBEING PLANS

Wellbeing Plans are the primary mechanism through which mental health and wellbeing support is delivered.

Plans are developed, implemented and reviewed collaboratively with the student and seek to balance support needs with programme requirements.

Plans may include:

- Agreed support arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Staff responsibilities.
- Review dates.
- Monitoring arrangements.
- Crisis contacts.
- Recommendations from external professionals.
- Strategies to support participation and engagement.

Wellbeing Plans normally operate within Pathway B (Ongoing Support) of the Student Support and Intervention Framework.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Where a student's circumstances present a potential risk to health, safety, wellbeing or participation in training, the College may undertake an individual risk assessment.

Risk assessments will be carried out by appropriately designated staff and will be proportionate to the level of risk identified. Where appropriate, students will be involved in the risk assessment process.

Risk assessments may inform:

- Wellbeing Plans.
- Safeguarding Plans.
- Support arrangements.
- Return-to-study planning.
- Fitness to Study decisions.
- Crisis management planning.

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS AND EMERGENCY SUPPORT

The College takes concerns regarding student safety and wellbeing seriously and will respond promptly where a mental health crisis is identified.

Where there are concerns that a student may be at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others, the College may take appropriate action to protect safety. Decisions will be based on necessity, risk and professional judgement, and will be made by appropriately designated staff in line with safeguarding procedures.

This may include:

- Safeguarding intervention.
- Contacting emergency services.
- Contacting NHS crisis services.
- Contacting nominated emergency contacts where appropriate.
- Referral to specialist support services.
- Temporary safety measures.
- Enhanced support planning.

Students experiencing a mental health crisis should seek urgent support from appropriate emergency or healthcare services.

The College does not operate a twenty-four-hour mental health service.

Students requiring urgent support outside normal College operating hours should contact:

- NHS 111.
- Local NHS Mental Health Crisis Services.
- Accident and Emergency services.
- Emergency services (999) where there is immediate danger or risk to life.
- Other appropriate crisis support providers.

Following a crisis, the College will seek to work collaboratively with the student to identify appropriate support arrangements and facilitate a safe return to study where possible.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

STUDENT SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

The College's primary framework for identifying concerns, coordinating support, monitoring engagement and wellbeing, and managing escalation where required. This framework underpins the implementation of this policy.

DISABILITY AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

Sets out how the College identifies, assesses and implements reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, long-term health conditions and mental health conditions to support equitable access and participation.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

Provides a mechanism for students to seek consideration where unexpected circumstances temporarily affect assessment performance or submission.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Sets out expectations regarding attendance, engagement and reporting of absence, together with support processes where attendance concerns arise.

FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY

Provides a structured framework for considering whether a student is able to continue their studies safely, effectively and with appropriate support. The policy may be used where concerns arise relating to a student's health, wellbeing, behaviour, attendance or engagement that indicate potential impact on their own safety, the safety of others, or their ability to meet the academic, practical or professional requirements of their programme.

The College will normally seek to implement supportive interventions, wellbeing measures and reasonable adjustments before consideration of Fitness to Study processes wherever reasonably practicable.

INTERMISSION POLICY

Provides a structured process for students to take an approved break from studies where circumstances significantly affect their ability to continue.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Explains how the College responds to safeguarding concerns involving children, young people and adults at risk.

NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Applies where concerns primarily relate to behaviour, conduct or breaches of College expectations.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Provides a formal process for students to raise concerns about College services, decisions or support arrangements, including the resolution and review of complaints.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENTS

- Engage with support processes.
- Provide relevant information where appropriate.
- Participate in support planning and review meetings.
- Inform the College of significant changes in circumstances.

STUDENT SUPPORT LEAD

- Coordinate mental health and wellbeing support.
- Assess support requirements.
- Develop and review Wellbeing Plans.
- Liaise with relevant professionals.
- Monitor support effectiveness.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- Promote positive wellbeing.
- Implement agreed support arrangements.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Raise concerns where support appears ineffective.
- Refer students for additional support where appropriate.

HEAD OF STUDENTS

- Oversee implementation of this policy.
- Ensure alignment with the Student Support and Intervention Framework.
- Oversee escalation where concerns become significant or complex.
- Monitor effectiveness and continuous improvement.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Support arrangements will be reviewed:

- At least annually.
- Following significant changes in circumstances.
- At student request.
- Where concerns arise regarding effectiveness.

The College will monitor the effectiveness of this policy in supporting student wellbeing, continuation, participation and positive student outcomes.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Students may raise concerns regarding mental health support or wellbeing provision through the Student Complaints Policy.

Students who remain dissatisfied following completion of the College's internal complaints procedures may be eligible to seek an independent review of their complaint by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), subject to the OIA's eligibility criteria.

ACCESSIBILITY OF PROCEDURES

The College will ensure that procedures associated with this policy are accessible.

Reasonable adjustments may be made to:

- Meetings.
- Timescales.
- Documentation.
- Communication methods.
- Administrative processes.
- Review procedures.

This is intended to ensure equitable participation in support processes and decision-making.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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