

## Minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 meeting

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**Present:** Jo Jones (Chair)

Katie Davies, Lee Jones, Andrew Manley, Sarah Moore, Susan Smith, Sarah Swales, Sharon Swales, Sarah Tomlinson, Lindsay Trelford.

**In attendance:** Nicola Beaumont, Evelyn Mufushwa.

**Apologies:** Oliver Bray, Deveral Capps, James Chester, Sareen Galbraith, Dee Grismond, Jackie Hargreaves, Katie Hughes, Victoria Johnson, Gary Lawson, Steve Mardy, Gareth Robertshaw, Daniel Stanley, Sarah Stone, Bryony Walker.

### Preliminary Items

#### Terms of reference and membership

001.2526.WSC

It was **agreed** that:

- a) The committee were waiting on confirmation of PGR representation on the membership, to be confirmed by John Goodwin (Director of Organising & Influencing – LBSU).
- b) The committee were waiting on confirmation as to who would be the second Student Union representative alongside Katie Davies, to be confirmed by John Goodwin (Director of Organising & Influencing – LBSU.)

#### Minutes

002.2526.WSC

The Committee **agreed** that the minutes of its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 were an accurate record.

#### Matters arising

003.2526.WSC

The Committee reviewed the previous Matters Arising with the following updates noted.

- a) Minute 072a.2425.WSC had been actioned completed.
- b) Minute 074c.2425.WSC had been actioned completed.
- c) 080b.2425.WSC would be actioned week commencing 22/09/2025.
- d) All remaining actions were complete.

### Main Items of Business

#### The University Mental Health Charter Update

004.2526.WSC The Director of Student Services reported the following:

- a) The first meeting of this academic year had taken place week commencing 15 September 2025.
- b) The review of the year three improvement plan was being completed, and the year four improvement was being finalised.
- c) Membership was being reviewed as gaps in expertise had been identified.
- d) The focus was on the six areas with poorer outcomes, which were transition, progression, residential accommodation, social integration and belonging, student voice and participation.
- e) The reassessment was due in April 2028; commencement of self-assessment and evidence gathering would begin in January 2027.

### **Wellbeing and Occupational Health Update**

005.2526.WSC The Wellbeing Managers/Members of the committee reported the following:

- a) 2024/2025 had been a transition year for the Occupational Health service, who had merged into one team.
- b) There had been 233 referrals in 2024/2025 (slightly lower than the previous year), with the majority being medical & mental health related.
- c) A large proportion of musculoskeletal referrals were DSE; work was due to commence as a priority with the Head of Health & Safety this autumn to update the process & communications to Schools & Services.
- d) Utilisation of the EAP for 2024/2025 was at 10.73%, with good knowledge across the university (there had been a slight downward trend in the use of services compared with the last academic year, at 13.32%).
- e) Over time a higher female population used the EAP, with a split of 56% female, 23% male, and 20% not disclosed.
- f) A greater number of colleagues had accessed the service when absent (30% compared to 11% last year).
- g) Engagement had followed a different pattern; in 2023/2024 there had been a clear increase from September to January. In 2024/2025 September and October had showed an increase, but the spike had occurred in January/February 2025.
- h) Wellbeing and Mental Health communications had been circulated in November 2024, March 2025 and June 2025 and colleagues had followed articles through to the online platform & self-help.
- i) More had been done in terms of offering financial wellbeing support, which had been identified as a lacking part of the offer (largely related to the pay date change).
- j) Approximately 130 employees had utilised the educational learning hub.
- k) School based Wellbeing Practitioners and Student Engagement Officers were recognised as being a useful resource. Feedback was that academics were learning from these practitioners.

### **Organisational Change and Wellbeing (including workload/engagement)**

006.2526.WSC Members of the committee reported that:

- a) This standing item had been retained on the agenda, as a way of checking in, and getting a sense of the mood across the university.
- b) From the wellbeing assessments carried out in the last academic year, observations were that people had needed to absorb work, despite there

being a loss of institutional knowledge, making things more difficult for existing colleagues.

- c) Unison members were amongst those who reported a large increase in workload.
- d) The Carnegie School of Sport had introduced for the past few years a re-connect day in September.
- e) The University is a good organisation to work for, and one which pays well within the sector.
- f) Estates and Facilities reported that managers are working hard with their teams in terms of supporting mental health, whilst ensuring the foundations of the university do not fall.
- g) The customer interface within Estates and Facilities remained positive, customer interactions and deliver remained extremely good.

### **Student data reporting**

007.2526.WSC The Head of Student Wellbeing reported that:

- a) This was the first time Student wellbeing data had been presented at this meeting, so asked the committee for their views on what was useful, and what was missing.
  - b) The trend in student referrals was consistent and was returning to pre-pandemic levels.
  - c) Tableau was being used a lot more to better evaluate the demographic data, e.g. Students in IMD groups 1-3 quintiles were over-represented.
  - d) Male students were under-represented, but it was highlighted how this should be considered alongside national help-seeking trends in males.
  - e) Service demographic data from self-referral numbers showed that international students were under-represented.
  - f) Regarding service waiting times, the service continued to offer same-day support for urgent concerns.
  - g) For non-urgent support, students had consistently been able to access an assessment appointment within ten working days of referral, meeting the Service's KPI.
  - h) Colleagues from the Carnegie School of Education accounted for 66% of attendees at the Academic Adviser sessions.
  - i) A recommendation is that all student facing colleagues undertake some training; and this was to remain an area of focus.
  - j) The take up of Psychoeducation within the curriculum was constantly building. The aim was to gather data by School, to determine who to target in terms to increase take up.
  - k) During 2024/25, Student Life Advisers delivered ten Support Report Respect training sessions to a total number of 187 colleagues. This training addressed appropriate responses to student disclosures of bullying, harassment, abuse, or sexual misconduct / violence and the support available. The low uptake was to be addressed in 2025/26 by E6 mandatory colleague training.
  - l) Senior leaders within the schools need to support engagement with training.
  - m) Student Wellbeing offer bespoke training for Schools and Services.
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008.2526.WSC

It was **agreed** that the:

- a) The Wellbeing Managers would pull together the completion numbers for the mental health wellbeing module.
- b) The committee members were asked to feedback to the Head of Student Wellbeing in terms of the data needed within the student data report.
- c) Student data reporting would become a standing item at the wellbeing subcommittee, to be presented at the September annual meetings.

### **Reasonable Adjustments – manager guidance – for approval**

009.2526.WSC

The Wellbeing Managers/Members of the committee reported the following:

- a) Conversations had identified a lack of knowledge about reasonable adjustments.
- b) Much work had been carried out with IT/Estates/Timetabling to ease the adoption of reasonable adjustments.
- a) The guidance had already been to the Joint Consultative Committee and would go to the Health & Safety Consultative committee on the 7 October for approval before the launch across the university for the academic year 2025/2026.
- b) The guidance formed part of the wider piece around disclosure and was also being presented to the EDI Committee on the 9 October 2025 for awareness.
- c) Unison representation passed on thanks from Unison members that the guidance had taken onboard their feedback; this had made employees feel empowered.
- d) The guidance received positive feedback and was seen to give useful principles.
- e) Academic and UCU's feedback had highlighted the difficulties faced for a manager in getting the reasonable adjustments embedded within the timetable.
- f) The guidance prompted helpful conversations but there was a process underpinning it that required some flexibility.
- g) Further guidance was needed around what to do when a colleague needs conflict with a student's needs.
- h) Manager guidance was needed in scenarios where an adjustment was not reasonable if it meant a colleague was unable to fulfil their role.

010.2526.WSC

It was **agreed** that the Wellbeing Managers would:

- a) Meet with the Head of Campus Experience to pick up separately on examples of where an adjustment means a colleague is unable to fulfil their role.
- b) Update the guidance with the feedback received from the Sub-Committee ahead of Health & Safety Consultative Committee.

### **National review of higher educational student suicide deaths**

011.2526.WSC

The Director of Student Services/ Members of the committee reported the following:

- a) The National review over two years reported on 169 incidents across 73 Higher Education providers, 107 suspected suicide deaths, and 62 incidents of non-fatal self-harm.

- b) Key findings showed that 21.24% were international students, 70% were known to some sort of support service and 30% were neurodivergent.
- c) Other key findings showed that there was less evidence (18%) of postvention for colleagues affected by death by suicide.
- d) Overall, there was a need for better signposting of wellbeing for students in terms of accessing this type of support.
- e) More needed to be done to create different offers of social opportunity for those who were neurodivergent.
- f) Having a system that monitored attendance would be helpful, with a linkage to compassionate communication.
- g) The need for compassionate communication from progress boards was identified.
- h) The committee discussed how to equip academic staff with the confidence, knowledge, and capacity to appropriately ask students about their wellbeing and signpost effectively.
- i) The support services were overall seen to be very proactive at the university, which included having meetings such as the wellbeing sub-committee, for discussions with colleagues.

012.2526.WSC

It was **agreed** that:

- a) The Director of Academic Quality Enhancement and Director of Student Services would look at communication following progression boards, to determine whether communication could be improved.
- b) The committee would feedback directly to the Director of Student Services with any other thoughts on possible areas for improvement.

#### Other Business

#### Schedule of meetings and business 2025/26

013.2526.WSC

It was **agreed** that:

- a) Financial wellbeing of students would be a standing item on the agenda for the annual May wellbeing sub-committee meetings only.

#### Date of next meeting

014.2526.WSC The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026 and would be chaired by Sarah Swales.

Confirmed by the Committee/Board as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

Signed: Sarah Swales Date: 13/05/2026