



## Minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 meeting

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**Present:** Sarah Swales (Chair)

Oliver Bray, James Chester, Katie Davies, Sareen Galbraith, Jackie Hargreaves, Katie Hughes, Harish Jayaseelan, Jo Jones, Andrew Manley, Steve Mardy, Sarah Moore, Susan Smith, Daniel Stanley, Sarah Stone, Sharon Swales, Sarah Tomlinson, Bryony Walker.

**In attendance:** Nicola Beaumont, Evelyn Mustafwa, Dominic Ramsden, Ben Turner-Chastney

**Apologies:** Mobina Begum, Deveral Capps, Dee Grismond, Victoria Johnson, Lee Jones, Gareth Robertshaw.

### Preliminary Items

#### Terms of reference and membership

072.2425.WSC

It was **agreed** that:

- a) The Chair would follow up with the UNISON representative to see who the representative at this committee would be going forward.
- b) Jo Jones job title would be updated to Director of Student Services.

#### Minutes

073.2425.WSC

The Committee **agreed** that the minutes of its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 were an accurate record.

#### Matters arising

074.2425.WSC

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

- a) There were no updates on the matters that had been paused, but the work would continue.
- b) Minute 061a.2425.WSC had been completed by Jo Jones.
- c) Regarding minute 066a.2425.WSC, the Deputy Director of Human Resources would circulate the final Annual Absence Report with the committee.
- d) All remaining actions were complete.

### Main Items of Business

#### The University Mental Health Charter Update

075.2425.WSC The Director of Student Services reported the following:

- a) Since the last Wellbeing Subcommittee, the working group had met once, as per the quarterly meetings in place.
- b) The focus was on submitting the annual report in June 2025; following this date a smaller group would form to look at the evaluation of interventions at Leeds Beckett.
- c) Only fifteen institutions had the award; the reassessment is every five years and Leeds Beckett would be reassessed in three years' time.
- d) The pilot university are coming up to their fifth year of being assessed.
- e) To be reassessed earlier would potentially result in receiving the award with merit but the decision was to hold off on an early reassessment as the consensus was not to overload people with work.
- f) A greater clarity of the priorities would be available in September for the next Wellbeing Subcommittee.
- g) There are eighteen themes; six had good outcomes, six were average and six were lower, the latter being the area of focus.

## Wellbeing and Occupational Health Update

076.2425.WSC The Wellbeing Manager reported the following:

- a) It had been a transition year for the Occupational Health service, who had merged into one team. Evelyn Mufushwa, an experienced Occupational Health Adviser had been recruited; thus, retaining experienced in-house support. Evelyn would be working alongside Dr Suleman to provide pre-employment and management referral consultations.
  - b) Leeds Beckett University undertook health surveillance for colleagues who may be exposed to specific risks in their working environment. This was done for three main reasons:
    - 1) contribute to the health and wellbeing of colleagues.
    - 2) ensure compliance with health and safety legislation (such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations).
    - 3) improve the overall safety culture at Leeds Beckett University.
  - c) Historically this had mainly involved Estates and Facilities staff, but it now covered colleagues in LSA (who were exposed to noise).
  - d) Heales (a specialist provider) are being used for Health Surveillance. 90% of the tests had been completed, the remainder of them would be completed this academic year.
  - e) A call for action was for the support of leaders to ensure that colleagues in their areas engaged in the process and were encouraging conversations in their teams.
  - f) The Mental Health Online module had launched in November 2024; there had been 170 completions, and 80 were in progress.
  - g) The Mental Health Module had been communicated through:
    - 1) LBU Voices / Staff News.
    - 2) Wellbeing and Mental Health Network mailing list.
    - 3) School and Service Wellbeing Briefings.
    - 4) Senior Leaders and HR Business Partner meetings.
    - 5) An all-Manager email.
  - h) The following impact highlights were noted:
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- 1) There had been a 28% increase in awareness of the support available, sustained over 3 months post-course.
  - 2) There had been a 30% increase in confidence to have a conversation about mental health at work, sustained over 3 months post-course.
  - 3) There had been a 20% increase in conversations about mental health at work.
  - 4) 87% had signposted a colleague to support in the 3 months since completing the learning.
  - 5) There had been an increased frequency of colleagues taking daily or weekly action to support their own positive mental health.
- i) Engagement with Spectrum (our EAP) was at 6.07%; this is judged as good, as it was above sector average of 3-4% so indicated a good level of knowledge & colleagues accessing support. The top reasons for contacting EAP were mental health, legal issues and financial information/assistance.
- j) Support has been provided for the University's Payroll Consolidation project through provision of financial wellbeing support for colleagues and included:
- Webinars with eighty-two attendees.
  - In person and online budgeting and financial planning sessions with money coaches.
  - Resources and information to support the change, which seventy-three colleagues had accessed.
  - Work had been carried out with colleagues in Estates and Facilities to offer in person sessions.
- k) Work on the reasonable adjustments project had been paused but would be picked up over the summer.

077.2425.WSC

It was **agreed** that the Wellbeing and Occupational Health Manager would:

- a) Share the clinical outcome data from Spectrum at the next wellbeing subcommittee meeting in September 2025.
- b) In collaboration with the Head of Health and Safety offer one-off support sessions to managers completing the risk assessment forms at the start of the semester, so people could feel confident in completing them (i.e. for pregnant staff.)
- c) Share the Health Surveillance form with Sareen Galbraith (in advance of the next round)
- d) Share the guide for reasonable adjustments for feedback and to look at setting up a joint meeting with UCU to discuss this at the right stage.

## Organisational Change and Wellbeing

078.2425.WSC

Members of the committee reported that:

- a) There was still a lot of change happening within the university, including process changes; resulting in a hiatus as new processes materialised. Changes implemented in one area could have an unforeseen impact and create work in another.

- b) In a turbulent world, Leeds Beckett University were in a position of relative stability. More and more stories about other universities and financial challenges across the sector were contributing to uncertainty and anxiety.
- c) Generative AI (a fast-moving external factor) was impacting the world of higher education; the need for new curriculum design was on the horizon, which was impacting wellbeing.

### Student Wellbeing/Financial wellbeing of students

079.2425.WSC *Minutes 079.2425.WSC and 080.2425.WSC are exempt from publication under section 43 (Commercial interests) of the Freedom of information Act 2000.*

080.2425.WSC

### Student data reporting

081.2425.WSC It was noted that:

- a) It would be helpful for this committee to have access to data and solid metrics, to be able to look at:
  - 1) What is happening to our student's health, particularly in relation to stress and wellbeing, and clinical distress over time.
  - 2) The broad demographic data around students and schools, and the target groups identified in the APP.

082.2425.WSC It was **agreed** that the Head of Student Wellbeing would:

- a) Bring existing data (already generated for other committees) to the next wellbeing sub- committee meeting, for the committee to look at the pre-existing data through a different lens.

### Wellbeing Assessment Annual Report

083.2425.WSC *Minutes 083.2425.WSC and 084.2425.WSC are exempt from publication under section 43 (Commercial interests) of the Freedom of information Act 2000.*

084.2425.WSC

### Other Business

### Schedule of meetings and business 2024/25

#### Date of next meeting

085.2425.WSC The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

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

Chair: Signed: Jo Jones Date: 17/09/25