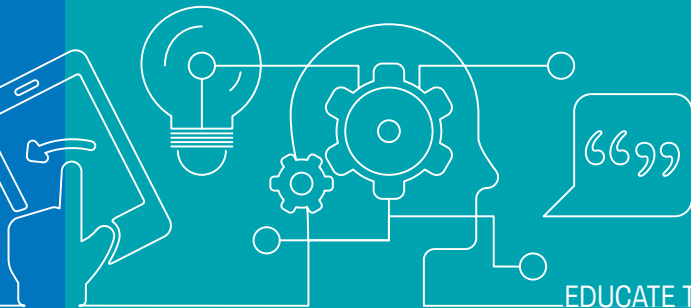


Student mental health and wellbeing

Report and strategic plan

2018–20



EDUCATE TO INSPIRE AND IMPROVE



**KING'S
STRATEGIC
VISION**
2029

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Foreword

We are proud to sponsor this initiative, which is vital to ensure that every King's student feels part of a supportive and inclusive community and is equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive at every stage of life.

As parents of current university students ourselves, we appreciate the highs and lows of university life – the life-changing positive opportunities as well as the academic, social, financial and other practical challenges which students encounter. We understand the importance of talking openly about mental health, equipping our students to build self-awareness and become empowered to know how to ask for help for themselves and for others in our community.

On behalf of the King's senior leadership team, we are absolutely committed to looking at how the ways in which we structure and assess our courses impact on the wellbeing of our students. We need to strive to reduce and remove elements of our students' experience which cause unnecessary stress, while retaining the challenge and academic rigour that our students demand of a world class institution like King's.

We are committed to making further improvements to all levels of the support that we offer to students. We care about every student as an individual and want to ensure they have a positive experience at King's. A key part of this is understanding, and responding to, the needs of our diverse student population.

The university has a civic duty to support our students and we are well placed to do so given King's expertise in the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, the world leading centre for psychiatry and mental health research and education; our cultural partnerships; our What Works behavioural insights capability; and our Student Support & Wellbeing Services within the Students & Education Directorate.

We are grateful to our dedicated staff who strive to support our students every day and we see our staff experience and student experience as being fundamentally interdependent.

We will ensure that staff have access to the appropriate training, skills and knowledge to support students and be confident that their wellbeing is taken care of. We will also continue to work closely with colleagues leading a parallel staff mental health and wellbeing strand of work to provide the same level of commitment for our staff. Some staff-related issues are, however, picked up in this report and action plan. For example, in recognition of the key supportive role played by our academic and professional services staff, especially those in a student-facing capacity, in supporting our students, our agreed action to enhance the guidance and training we provide to staff on responding to students in distress is designed to ensure we are safeguarding the wellbeing of both parties.

A key part of our strategic plan is to create new opportunities for all members of our community to get involved in the discussion about how we support student mental health and wellbeing, particularly given the fact that we all have a part to play in making positive wellbeing a fundamental ethos of the university. We are therefore looking forward to working with our colleagues across King's to deliver the actions contained in this report.

We are very grateful to those who led the work to bring together this report and strategic plan on behalf of King's, especially Sian Norris, Levi Pay, Kathryn Richards, Wilna Gracias and Dr June Brown. We also thank everyone, students and staff members, who participated in the steering group and working groups which together shaped this report and our strategic actions for the next two years.



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Director of Students & Education



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Provost & Senior Vice-President (Health)

Joint sponsors of the Student Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan 2018–20, September 2018



Executive summary

Supporting our students' mental health and wellbeing has been a priority for King's since we signed the 'Time To Change' pledge in 2014. We have since embedded this commitment in Vision 2029 and the Education Strategy 2017–22.

We continue to dedicate a great deal of effort to supporting our students, and examples of the range of support structures in place are outlined in the different sections of this report. We will build on these solid foundations by consolidating and strengthening what we do, evaluating effectiveness and impact of our services and activities and working in partnership with our students.

We have agreed how we will measure success for each of our main strategic actions, as set out in this report. As an overview of what we are seeking to achieve, we will:

See student mental health and wellbeing issues as core to our decision-making about the way we structure and design our curriculum, deliver support to students and create an environment which helps our students to feel that they belong.

Ensure that our communications to students are helping them to draw on their inner resources and informal networks, as well as making it easier for students to access specialist services, when appropriate.

Deliver support interventions which meet the needs of all students, reflecting our diverse student body and different modes of study – including part-time and distance learning, and ensure these interventions are appropriately balanced across the five levels of our support model.

Further enhance the ways in which we seek out feedback and views of students, and make use of service impact data, to help us shape support provision in the future.

Put in place new and specific forms of support for university staff and faculties to help us respond to students who require support in a consistent and effective way across King's.

By signing the King's College London and King's College London Students' Union (KCLSU) Relationship Agreement in 2017, we committed to co-creating a strategy for student mental health. We will continue to work in partnership with KCLSU, student representatives and the wider student body, as we oversee the delivery of the strategic plan in support of this commitment.

The national context



There can be no doubt that the whole of the higher education sector is more focused on student mental health and wellbeing than ever before¹.

It was not long ago that student mental health and wellbeing considerations were the preserve of people in specialist roles, such as university counselling teams or personal tutors with a specific interest in supporting the wellbeing of their tutees.

Since then, what it means to be a student has shifted radically. Students today experience increased pressures related to their long-term financial contributions to the costs of their education, their need to juggle more paid work with their studies, and the pressure to succeed in a more challenging economic context and graduate job market. Specific groups of students experience additional pressures, such as international students' need to comply with more complex UK visa regulations.

As the context in which we operate has become more pressured, our understanding has grown of the factors within a university's control which influence the mental health and wellbeing of our student populations. Informed by feedback from students, we also have a better understanding as a sector of the onus on universities to take an intersectional approach to supporting our student body, responding to students' diverse backgrounds, identities and lived experiences.

We appreciate that the way a university operates is never neutral. It is not a case of saying that student mental health and wellbeing considerations *should* permeate every aspect of what we do at King's; rather it is the case that these considerations already *do* permeate every aspect of what we do. The choices made, day in and day out, by a university – for example, how to assess the learning outcomes of a course, how to design buildings and accommodation, how to induct and support students, and so on – are all choices that influence the mental health and wellbeing of students, whether or not universities are cognisant of this impact. Universities, therefore, need to work hard to minimise mental health and wellbeing-related barriers to their educational opportunities; students who have good mental health and feel supported will be well placed to perform to the best of their abilities.

At the same time, a university education must, by its very nature and purpose, be challenging. A university that fails to challenge its students, its staff, and society to think, develop and change is unlikely to be fulfilling its core purpose.

Active listening, learning, confronting our own assumptions, engaging with ideas, producing academic work and being assessed on the quality of that work – these are all activities designed to take us some considerable distance away from our comfort zones. In today's world, students might understandably have higher expectations of their universities than ever before, but these expectations can never mean the university compromises on challenge and rigour.

Our position at King's

For King's, as for all universities, student mental health and wellbeing support is about striking a balance.

We need to balance our fundamental duty of care towards our students with a recognition of the fact that King's is an adult learning environment which values the autonomy and independence of our students. And, while continuing to provide high-quality and effective student support services, which we know make a real difference to the ability of students to succeed with their studies, we also need to encourage our students to develop the skills needed to manage some of the stressors of everyday student life.

We often talk about students being co-producers of their higher education experience, rather than consumers or customers. When it comes to student mental health and wellbeing, this concept of co-creation is an incredibly relevant one. Both King's, as a university, and our students, as individuals and a community, have a shared responsibility for co-creating the mental health and wellbeing of our student population.

Student mental health and wellbeing is an area where some unhelpful 'myths' have emerged and taken root at King's over recent years. It is sometimes said that there is a lot of unnecessary duplication in our support provision, with students thought, for example, to be accessing both counselling and wellbeing coaching simultaneously. Our waiting times for students to receive support from our Counselling and Mental Health Support Team are also the subject of much discussion, with some people suggesting that these waiting times mean that the team is not able to respond effectively to students with urgent support needs. A key part of this project was testing the evidential basis for these ideas. We found, for example, that only 1.8 per cent of students who access counselling also access a wellbeing coach. Moreover, while we do have significant waiting times for one-to-one support at peak periods in the academic year, students are triaged from the outset and prioritised for urgent support if they require it. The opportunity to bring staff and students together to discuss these findings, and also highlight them within this report, has been a significant benefit of this project.

King's is in a unique position to review and enhance the support we provide to our own students and add to our global understanding of student mental health and wellbeing. Our student support services are demonstrating sector-leading approaches in service delivery.

We are able to draw upon the significant academic expertise our institution has in relation to the mental health and wellbeing of students and young people in faculties such as our Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience. We have developed an innovative approach to understanding how we engage with our students, embodied in the behavioural insights work of our What Works team. And, in light of the well-established evidence of the therapeutic benefits of cultural engagement to wellbeing, King's is taking an imaginative approach to connecting the arts and health, leveraging its extensive cultural partnerships to provide students with extra and co-curricular activities that contribute to wellbeing.

In our 'King's Strategic Vision 2029' and our 'Education Strategy 2017–22' we set out clear objectives to ensure positive wellbeing is a fundamental ethos of the university and to be a world leader in the area of student mental health and wellbeing support.

Across King's, to deliver our strategic objectives, we operate on the principle of 'functional integration'. This means that, while we have professional service teams located at the centre of the university in our Students & Education Directorate with the responsibility for driving forward improvements in areas such as student mental health and wellbeing, we can only deliver on our ambitions if every part of the university is fully engaged and accountable to these teams for the way they support this work. This is consistent with the approach recommended by national initiatives, such as the 'whole university approach' advocated by Universities UK's Step Change initiative².

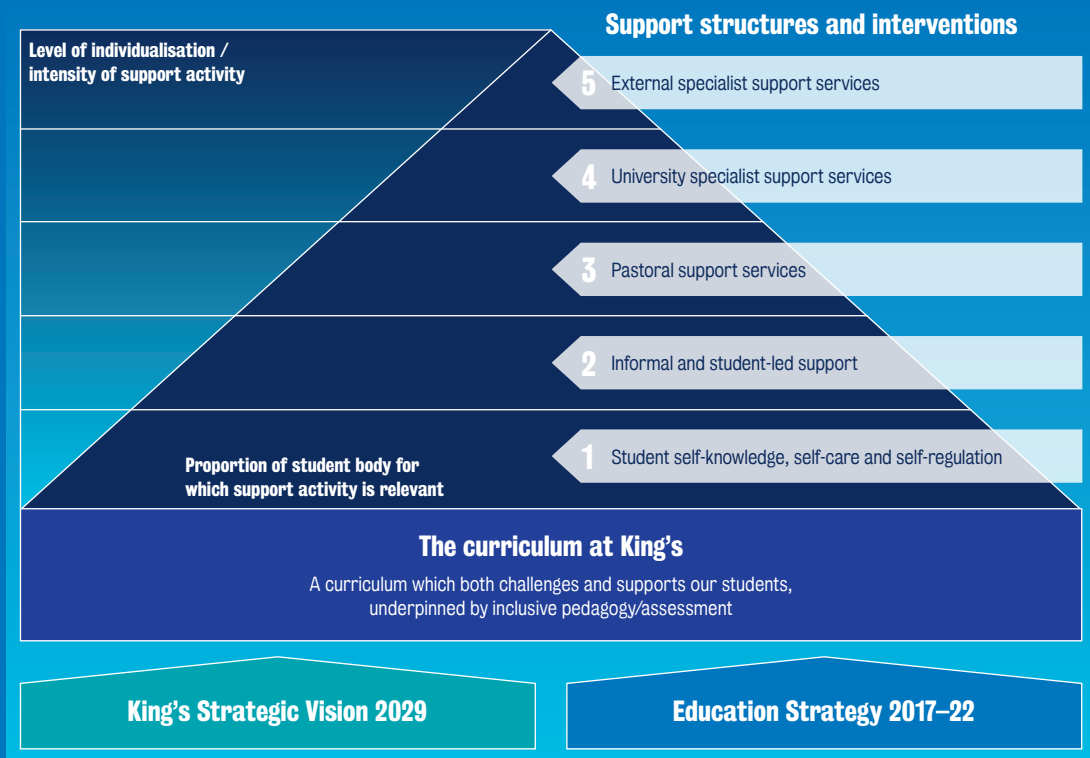
To explore areas in which we could drive the biggest improvements in student mental health and wellbeing support, we established a university-wide project in January 2018. Through a steering group and its associated working groups, which included student representatives, we explored the many types of support we already have in place for our students, summarised in this report. We also examined how we can, and will, enhance this provision.

This report sets out strategic actions for the next two years which will enable us to realise our strategic objective to deliver world-class support for our students.

1. www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/stepchange, www.ippr.org/publications/not-by-degrees
2. www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/stepchange

Our model of student mental health and wellbeing support

The King's community is made up of around 30,000 students, 8,000 staff, five campuses across London, nine faculties, and 13 residential halls. In this complex context, we have developed a King's model to help us understand the levels of activity we already deliver to support the mental health and wellbeing of our student population.



Internal enablers

- Staff training and CPD
- Stakeholder engagement
- Resources and facilities
- World-class research
- Service evaluation
- Benchmarking

External drivers

- Legislation/regulation
 - Duty of care
 - Equality act
 - Safeguarding
- Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework
- NHS support provision
- Student funding
- Pressures of student life
- Geographical context
- National Student Survey

At the heart of the model is the curriculum. At King's we believe that framing the curriculum in the right way, with a pedagogy and assessment framework that are inclusive and supportive, is key to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students.

This is emphatically not about removing the challenge and rigour of our courses, but rather about understanding that effective academic support, course induction, group work and group discussion, feedback, inclusive teaching, and inclusive assessment methods are all essential in underpinning our work to be a world leader in the area of student mental health and wellbeing support.

The section of the model that sits on top of the curriculum is our five-level model of pastoral support. We have based this section of our model on a piece of work from the World Health Organisation – a framework for understanding how mental health and wellbeing can be managed in communities, beginning with self-management and leading up to specialised services. It identifies five levels of support at King's which support the mental health and wellbeing of our student population:

Level 1: Self-knowledge, self-care and self-regulatory skills

Level 2: Informal and student-led support

Level 3: Pastoral support structures

Level 4: University specialist support services

Level 5: External specialist support services

This model is designed to categorise the range of university activities which are aimed at supporting student mental health and wellbeing, to help us understand how we are currently focusing, and should focus in the future, our resources and efforts as an institution.

The steering group also carried out a mapping exercise to gather information on the full range of activities currently being delivered at the five different levels of the support model. The section of this report headed 'Examples of student mental health and wellbeing-related pastoral support at King's' highlights examples of the support services and interventions already in place at King's at each of these five levels.

It is important to emphasise that this model does not categorise individual students or their individual support requirements. All students will have access to, and many will regularly be accessing and benefitting from, support at different levels of the model simultaneously.

For example, with a student who is returning to study after a period in hospital with a mental illness, they:

- may be assessed as requiring support from external support services, such as a local NHS Home Treatment Team (Level 5)
- will require proactive case management and student-centred support from the King's Counselling & Mental Health Support Team to ensure that the university meets its duty of care towards the student, appropriately manages risk – either to the student or to other members of the university community – and coordinates our support for the student across all parts of the university (for example, the student's faculty, Kings' Residences, etc.) and beyond (by liaising with the external services to ensure therapeutic interventions are coordinated) (Level 4)
- will, like all students, continue to require support from their personal tutor (Level 3)
- may take part in events run by student societies or KCLSU (Level 2)
- may access some of our online materials or workshops about specific wellbeing issues, attend a wellbeing workshop or engage in some physical activity at King's to enhance their wellbeing. (Level 1).

All students, regardless of their level of mental health and wellbeing, are likely to find it very helpful to access support at several of these levels simultaneously.

Furthermore, the higher levels of the model do not necessarily relate to emergency or crisis support; university and external specialist support services are helpful for a wide range of students, not just those experiencing a crisis.

We also should not fall into the trap of thinking that, if we get one of these levels of support right, it might do away with the need for another level of support. The five levels of support activity all target different aspects of student mental health and wellbeing, and they are all necessary. At King's, we are committed to ensuring that we are supporting our students effectively at all five of these levels.



The curriculum and student mental health and wellbeing at King's

Students come to King's to experience our excellent teaching and transformative educational opportunities. As described earlier in this report, a university education will, by its nature, be a challenging environment. A university that fails to challenge its students, its staff, and society to think, develop and change is unlikely to be fulfilling its core purpose. From a wellbeing perspective, we need to balance this need to deliver courses which challenge our students with our recognition that the way in which we manage our curriculum should not create unnecessary barriers or stressors for our students. A high-stress environment is not a prerequisite for high achievement.

Our Education Strategy places student mental health and wellbeing considerations at the heart of the way in which we plan, deliver and assess our modules and courses. The King's Education Strategy 2017–22 states that we will:

- Introduce greater diversity in assessment methods aligned to improving learning and the development of skills and attributes required by graduates and employers.
- Shift our assessment focus to assessment *for* learning, away from assessment *of* learning.
- Ensure all King's students are equipped for success.

Our Education Strategy also states our commitment to:

- Support and enhance the mental and physical wellbeing of students and staff through all aspects of the university experience.
- Care about our learners on an individual basis and design mainstream interventions that remove all forms of inequality in learner engagement, retention and success.





EMBEDDING STUDENT WELLBEING IN OUR TEACHING AND IN THE CURRICULUM

Wellbeing considerations need to inform every aspect of the way we deliver teaching, the way we structure our courses, and the choices we make about how our courses should be assessed.

King's Academy, our centre for educational development dedicated to supporting all staff at King's to enhance the teaching and learning environment, delivers training around pedagogy designed to enable us to deliver our Education Strategy 2017–22 and shape and transform academic practices to improve the student learning experience. We have a real opportunity at King's to become renowned for our expertise at the intersection between pedagogy and programme design and mental wellbeing.

We also strongly encourage and support our faculties and academic departments to deliver wellbeing-related content and learning in, or alongside, the curriculum. This is one of the most effective ways for us to engage large numbers of students to think about their wellbeing.

Wellbeing activities can have a strong study skills or employability component; for example, a lecture on preparing for exams might cover both the study skills aspects of exam preparation and guidance on why and how students should look after their own wellbeing at exam time.

Student engagement can be enhanced further by tailoring the content of these sessions for particular courses or student cohorts. Consider, for example, the difference that it makes for a group of medical students to be invited to participate in an activity about 'stress management in the medical professions', rather than a session about stress management more generally.

Embedded wellbeing content can also be delivered digitally – for example, by including online modules and content to sit alongside other online course materials on KEATS, the university's virtual learning environment.

From January 2019, a new Academic Support service based within the Students & Education Directorate at King's will work with faculties and academic departments to co-create enhanced support to embed wellbeing content in the curriculum. The team will enable those academic departments that have already been delivering such content for the past few years to share their practice and experience with other academic departments, with wellbeing specialists assigned to help with the planning and delivery of this content.

A PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT THE WELLBEING OF NURSING STUDENTS

Our Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care embedded, in 2017–18, a wellbeing course in the BSc options module on Mental Health Promotion.

The aims of this project were not only to support student wellbeing, but also to support employability – responding to the fact that, at a national level, it is becoming ever more important that nursing attracts and retains resilient nursing graduates who understand the importance of looking after their own wellbeing and that of the peers and patients they are working with.

This significant project was made possible through external NHS funding and represented a successful collaboration between faculty staff, the central university Wellbeing Team and the Recovery College at South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust.

A wellbeing coach from the university's Wellbeing Team was seconded to the department to work closely on the project. Student-led support was also a key element of the project. A group of 'wellbeing ambassadors' was trained as peer trainers and these students facilitated wellbeing workshops for all year 1 and 2 BSc Nursing students as part of the curriculum.

There was also a focus on staff development, with events held for staff on responding effectively to distressed students, the co-production of health promotion activities, and staff wellbeing.



SUPPORT IN OUR DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Our Department of English has delivered, for the past three years, a 'Skills and Support for your Degree' (SSD) programme – a series of workshops, seminars and events through which academics and student services professionals come together to provide student support. The programme encourages students to see their well-being as intrinsically linked to their academic success.

The programme has been enhanced each year in response to feedback; for example, the department has learned that, even though much of the content of these events is wellbeing-related, students are much more likely to attend if the events are marketed in terms of their academic rationale, rather than their wellbeing benefits. Planning events into students' timetables also has a positive impact on engagement.

The SSD programme has brought about improvements in teaching and learning, student wellbeing and student satisfaction. The programme's innovation is in the way in which it dissolves boundaries between academic staff, student support services and students to provide support in a way that is geared towards preventing students from reaching crisis point, in terms of their academic work or their wellbeing.

ASSESSMENT

To some extent, feeling nervous in anticipation of an exam, working to tight deadlines, preparing to give an assessed group presentation, or participating in other assessed activities will always cause some anxiety for students. It is important we see these feelings as a normal part of the experience of studying at university, particularly when they do not interfere with a student's day-to-day functioning.

However, it is also important that those who design, validate and review our courses consider the wellbeing impact of the choices that they make and seek to prevent any unnecessary stress caused by the way in which our assessments are designed.

To deliver our Education Strategy 2017–22, we have initiated a review of our approach to assessment across King's. Following our recent work on student mental health and wellbeing support, we will now ensure that this assessment review specifically considers how we can:

- Reduce our over-reliance on traditional forms of assessment, such as the unseen examination, and afford students greater choice, flexibility and agency in choosing their assessment methods, where possible
- Make changes to our assessment methods that are specifically aimed at reducing the need for Personalised Assessment Arrangements (PAAs) for students
- Ensure a sustainable assessment-related workload for both students and educators.

Such changes have the potential to enhance student wellbeing, make for a more inclusive learning environment for all and reduce the administrative burden associated with over-assessment.



DISABILITY-RELATED ADJUSTMENTS

At King's, we have a great deal of experience of making our courses accessible to students with disabilities, including students with a long-term mental health condition, through disability-related adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment. Around 350 students with a long-term mental health condition, across all years and levels of study, access academic adjustments and disability support by engaging with our Disability Support Team.

The team creates a King's Inclusion Plan for each student; this is a personalised document summarising how the student's disability impacts on their engagement with their studies. It also recommends support strategies for the student's academic department or university professional services to ensure the student can access their programme. Based on the student's individual requirements, these may include access to one-to-one and group study skills support, Personalised Assessment Arrangements such as extra time, extended loans on library books, permission to audio record lectures, or other adjustments. We also advise students on how to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance, which is funding for specialist equipment, non-medical helper support, and general consumables.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

King's enables students to submit mitigating circumstances forms when evidence can be provided that they were not able to complete an assessment to the best of their ability, as a result of disruptive or unexpected events beyond their control which had a significant and adverse impact on their academic performance.

There are many ways in which mitigating circumstances submissions relate to student mental health and wellbeing issues; for example, a student's mental ill health might be the basis of their submission. Mitigating circumstances procedures themselves can also add to the stress experienced by a student at what is already for them a difficult time. Alternatively, the content in a student's submission might indicate a possible need for a referral to a specialist support team or contain a disclosure of a high level of risk. In these scenarios, we need to ensure that all staff handling the submissions know how to signpost students to the right support.

A clear and consistent understanding of the ways in which mitigating circumstances claims fit with other procedures, such as Kings' Inclusion Plans (KIPs) and Personalised Assessment Arrangements (PAAs), is also required.

Given the significant link between student mental health and wellbeing issues and mitigating circumstances, we will reflect mental health and wellbeing issues in a forthcoming university-wide review of our mitigating circumstances policy, procedures and systems.

1

Level 1: Student self-knowledge, self-care and self-regulatory skills

AT THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS TO:

Provide students with information and opportunities to enhance their own wellbeing and therefore their academic performance and life-skills more generally.

Activities led by universities aimed at encouraging students to think about, and enhance, their wellbeing are often described as being about fostering greater resilience in our students.

The term 'resilience', while commonly used, might, in some ways, be an unhelpfully normative term; resilience might come across as something we should all aspire to demonstrate all of the time.

In fact, we all have moments or periods in our lives when we do not feel resilient. Helping our students to understand that this is okay, and that having these experiences is a normal part of everyday life – at university and beyond – is an important aspect of our work to support student wellbeing. The more we give ourselves permission to make mistakes or experience things that are sometimes hard, the easier we will find it to maintain perspective during difficult times. This will also make it easier for us to seek out support when we need it.

From the beginning of a student's time here at King's, our Welcome to King's induction and KCLSU's Welcome Week activities include a wide range of wellbeing-related activities, aimed at helping students build connections and foster a sense of belonging. Over 1,000 students engaged with in-person events and online via the King's Move Challenge Group as part of KCLSU's Welcome Week in October 2017.

A Welcome to King's app helps students to customise their induction experience and choose from different activities including wellbeing workshops, social events and specific meet-ups.

At key points in the academic calendar, King's also runs large-scale, university-wide wellbeing campaigns. This includes Take Time Out – an annual campaign, delivered by our Wellbeing Team, which encourages students to look after their wellbeing at exam time. Similarly, Make Do Play, delivered by the university's specialist Culture Team, is a campaign which introduces students to a range of creative activities for wellbeing through a programme of artist-led workshops across the four campuses and online. Building on a growing body of research that indicates the positive impact of creativity on wellbeing, practical workshops are delivered across King's campuses inviting students to sing, dance, make and draw. These are delivered by leading artists and cultural organisations which have in the past included Choir Master Gareth Malone and the Rambert Dance Company.

In 2017–18, we also delivered a lecture series called 'Thriving, not Surviving' – a new initiative which highlights to students the importance and positive benefits of looking after their own well-being.

Our King's Residences team deliver activities aimed at promoting life skills. The team brings in people with specialist skills to deliver sessions for students living in university accommodation on a range of topics including budgeting, motivation, managing stress, and communication.

Departments including the Wellbeing Team, the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team, and King's Sport also provide online resources, such as leaflets, infographics and videos, for students to access at their convenience.

SUPPORTING PHYSICAL WELLBEING AT KING'S

Our physical wellbeing is an important aspect of our overall wellbeing, and our King's Sport team delivers a wide range of activities which are aimed at all students, regardless of their level of experience of sport and physical activity or how sporty participants consider themselves to be.

The team manages the BeActive Programme, which allows all students to enjoy free weekly social sport and fitness activities during term-time. Over 2,500 students have attended sessions in the academic year 2017/18. The King's Move web app enables students to sync their fitness trackers or wearable technology to earn 'Move points' every time they exercise – points which can be exchanged for rewards on campus and further afield, such as a hot drink on campus or discounts. Over 10,000 students and staff are signed up. Over 4,500 members take advantage of fitness facilities and a new gym opened on 12 October, Bush House North West Wing.

TAKE TIME OUT CAMPAIGN

During the main exam period each year, our Wellbeing Team, with support and involvement from KCLSU and other teams across the university, delivers an annual Take Time Out campaign. The campaign runs wellbeing-promoting activities and promotes tips for positive wellbeing at exam time and beyond.

We set up a marquee or stand on four of our main campuses, and use this space to run daily yoga activities, offer students a chance to take time out to be creative, enjoy a game or make a healthy smoothie.

In 2018, the campaign used the strapline 'Be Well, Do Well' to place the focus on the positive impact that student wellbeing has on academic and exam performance. Over 3,000 wellbeing packs and 4,500 Take Time Out leaflets were handed out, encouraging students to take meaningful breaks, eat well, and prioritise getting a good night's sleep. The campaign highlighted the findings from research demonstrating the relationship between positive wellbeing and exam performance.

Level 2: Informal and student-led support

AT THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS TO:

Recognise the importance of, and support, student's informal support networks.

Once students have gained a sense of their mental health and wellbeing needs, they can access the various networks and create the support system they need to thrive and which the university recognises as a vital part of the student experience. While activity at this level is generally led by students themselves, the university's role is to create the right conditions and facilities for this activity to flourish.

KCLSU, King's independent students' union, plays a crucial role at this level of the support model. KCLSU is run by elected student officers and spends over £1.25m each year on student activities, supporting over 330 student groups and societies and 70 sports clubs. KCLSU also trains over 600 student leaders from sports teams and activity groups so that they can lead financially sustainable and inclusive communities, and, through KCLSU, students also log over 8,300 hours of volunteering time. This student-led activity plays a vital role in supporting students to meet other students at any point in their course, which is key to fostering a sense of belonging and positive wellbeing.

In 2017–18, elected student officers and leaders from societies were invited to participate in a training, including Mental Health First Aid Lite, a half-day course aimed at helping students recognise the signs of ill mental health and know how to respond and signpost effectively.

The university's specialist Culture Team offers a range of opportunities for students to develop informal support networks beyond their disciplinary and social boundaries. King's Cultural Champions is a cross-campus student-led group which informs and co-delivers the university's cultural strategy. King's Cultural Challenge, the Cultural Experience Award and Make Do Play offer further opportunities for students to enhance their wellbeing through arts, culture and creativity.

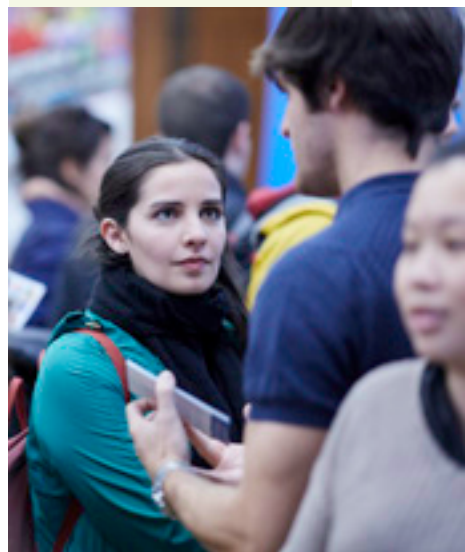
Although individual students' support networks are not created by King's, we encourage students to foster healthy relationships with their support system at home. Workshops on how to nurture healthy relationships and deal with conflict are provided by the Wellbeing Team throughout the year. We also deliver 'Look After Your Mate' campaign workshops, devised by the national charity, Student Minds; incorporating student stories and practical tips, as well as information about self-care and boundaries. These workshops equip students with the confidence to support and signpost a friend who is experiencing mental health difficulties.

External student-led support activities are also key at this level of the support model. Run almost entirely by students, London Nightline is an independently registered charity offering listening, support and information to higher education students by way of a confidential helpline. Nightline provides out-of-hours peer support, between 18.00 and 08.00 during term time, via phone, Skype, email and instant messaging services.

KCLSU AND KING'S PARTNERSHIP ON STUDENT-LED WELLBEING ACTIVITY

From 2016, King's has provided specific funding to KCLSU to support student-led wellbeing activity. KCLSU used this funding to create a Wellbeing Coordinator role – someone dedicated to working with student societies and students living in university accommodation to support them in reflecting student wellbeing considerations into their work. The post-holder works closely with the King's Wellbeing Team on cross-university campaigns and events.

In 2017–18, the Wellbeing Coordinator role supported the delivery of 103 student-led wellbeing initiatives, which, in total, engaged a total of over 5,000 students. The post-holder also disbursed a small grants fund to enable 36 student-led societies and activity groups to run wellbeing-related events.



Level 3: Pastoral support structures

AT THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS TO:

Continue to enhance structures which provide effective pastoral support to students – structures which are not dedicated exclusively to supporting student mental health and wellbeing, but which play a key role in fostering a sense of belonging and identifying individuals' need for more specialist support.

King's has in place pastoral support structures which, while not aimed exclusively at supporting mental health and wellbeing, play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging and enabling staff to identify when students might require signposting to specialist support.

One of the key sources of pastoral support is a student's personal tutor. All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students are allocated a named personal tutor from within their academic department or faculty. Last year, there were 1,828 personal tutors at King's.

A personal tutor is an academic member of staff who will take an active interest in a student's academic progress and university experience and is concerned for a student's general welfare. Personal tutors receive advice and support, as appropriate, from colleagues in professional services roles, both within their faculty and centrally, and some faculties have specific professional services roles involved in the delivery of pastoral support. Postgraduate research students will have a research supervisor fulfilling a similar role to that of the personal tutor.

We also encourage our academic departments and faculties to implement peer-to-peer and peer mentoring schemes, often supported and overseen by our central support services. These schemes are principally about enabling students to seek support from fellow students. In many cases, first year students are paired up with a student in the second or third year, which provides the first-year student with an opportunity to contact another student and learn from their practical insight. Peer mentors can provide invaluable information and signposting, based on their experience at King's so far.

Some of our peer-to-peer support schemes are also themed around particular aspects of student life. For example, we have a team of Student Money Mentors, current students at King's with a passion for helping their peers make the most of their money. Student Money Mentors offer advice about how to prepare a budget and where to get the best discounts and deals in London. Our Student Money Mentors are trained by our own specialist money advice team and external partners, Blackbullion and Developing Youth Practice.

For students living in university accommodation, our King's Residences team provides access to pastoral support. Wardens are King's staff or postgraduate students who live in the residences and are trained to look out for the welfare of our students and signpost them to specialist services, as required. We also have teams of Resident Associates, who are community builders in the residences – organising kitchen talks, games nights and other social activities throughout the academic year.

PERSONAL TUTORING AT KING'S

Students should meet with their personal tutor within the first few weeks of starting at King's. At this initial meeting, the personal tutor outlines their role and provides information about how they can be contacted.

The student's personal tutor is available to talk to the student about any matter which may be getting in the way of successful engagement with their course, however the student defines what 'success' looks like for them personally.

For example, a student might want to talk about some difficulties with the course, explore how they can settle into university life, or seek some support with issues in their life that are impacting on their studies. Students may also want to have a conversation about how their course fits with their future career plans.

Depending on what a student brings to these conversations, a personal tutor may be able to help the student themselves or might instead signpost the student to our other specialist teams.



PEER-TO-PEER SCHEMES

Two of our peer-to-peer support models are assisted by the university's centrally-based support services through the provision of specialist training and ongoing advice to the academic departments and faculties operating these schemes:

- Peer Supporters are groups of undergraduate and postgraduate students trained by our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team to provide a one-to-one listening service for students, in addition to running events, workshops and supporting welfare representatives in student societies. Groups of peer supporters have been trained, for example, in our Dental Institute, Law School, and our Humanities, Medicine and Nursing departments. The peer supporters have been recognised as making a valuable contribution to the voluntary scene at King's, with a Peer Supporter Coordinator nominated by KCLSU Volunteering for the 'volunteer of the month' award in July 2018.
- Positive Peers is a peer support scheme for health students by health students and is jointly coordinated by the university's Wellbeing Team and KCLSU. Peers are trained to facilitate the Student Minds Positive Minds course for low mood and depression. They also host outreach stalls and workshops at King's residences.

From January 2019, our new Academic Support service will be reviewing peer-to-peer support across the university with a view to enhancing the support given to faculties to implement these schemes.

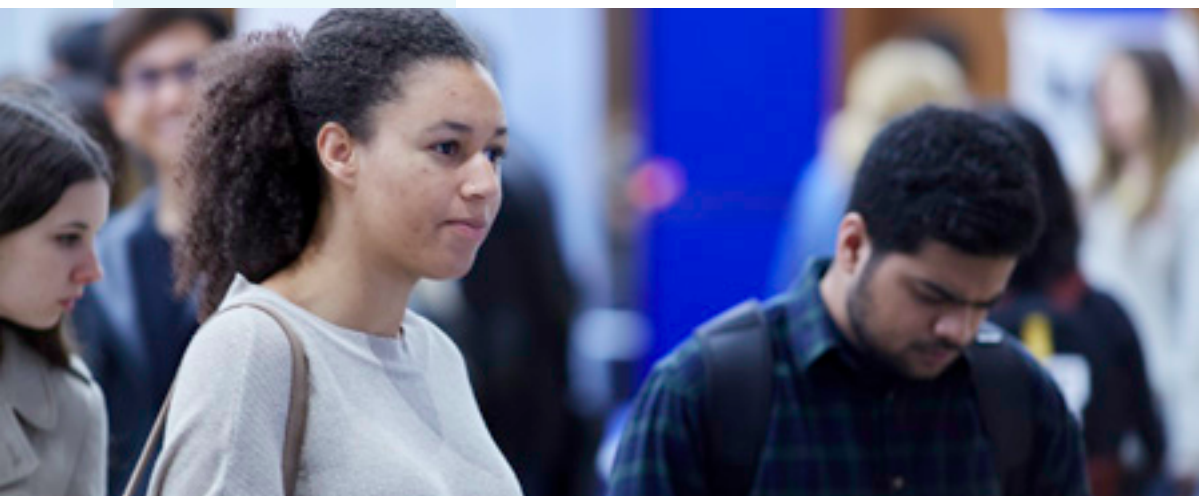
EXAMPLES OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING-RELATED PASTORAL SUPPORT AT KING'S LEVEL 3: PASTORAL SUPPORT STRUCTURES

We run a Community Ambassadors scheme. King's Community Ambassadors play a key role in helping first year students settle in to life at King's. They make telephone calls to first year undergraduate students at key times of the year in coordinated 'phone banks' to ask questions about how our students have found their time so far, to get feedback on their experience and direct them to support services, if they require them. 50 trained ambassadors called every first-year undergraduate student three times over the academic year 2017–18. This resulted in over 3,700 conversations and over 2,700 referrals to services including Wellbeing, Money Advice, Personal Tutors, Careers and Study Skills.

A pilot programme, Campus Conversations, has also been launched to foster social belonging on campus for first year undergraduate students and build a stronger sense of community at King's. Student representatives are trained by Citizens UK to use community organising techniques, primarily focussing on a model called the 'intentional one-to-one', providing an opportunity for students to have a meaningful face-to-face conversation during their first year at university. In the pilot phase of February-May 2018, 16 trained ambassadors held 105 one-to-one conversations, with early qualitative feedback suggesting that the interactions helped students to feel connected to the King's community and improved confidence in building relationships.

Our Chaplaincy team is also a key part of our commitment to the pastoral and spiritual support of students and staff at King's. Made up of men and women from different faiths and denominations, and working across our campuses, the team is a resource for the whole King's community.

We have also established a frontline student enquiry service for the university, called Student Services. Student Services has a service desk on all of our main campuses, as well as responding to student enquiries by email and telephone. If a student is not sure how to access support at King's, an excellent place to start is with our Student Services team, who can explain the different types of pastoral support on offer and help students access the services most relevant for them.





Level 4: University specialist support services

AT THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS TO:

Deliver a range of effective specialist mental health and wellbeing support services, managed centrally within the university.



At King's we believe passionately in the positive impact of specialist mental health support services for those students who require them. Such services are not only key to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students, but also to underpinning academic attainment and retention.

Students can self-select which of our specialist mental health and wellbeing services to engage with or they may be signposted by personal tutors, or other university staff, to engage with a particular service for additional support.

Within Student Support & Wellbeing Services, King's has a multi-disciplinary Counselling & Mental Health Support Team, responsible for providing a range of support to students with an emotional or mental health difficulty.

Our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team at King's supports over 2,700 students each year. The team continues to see significant annual increases in demand from students for its services, along with increased complexity and levels of risk in its casework.

Each student, after registering with the team, is assessed so that the right kind of support is offered to each individual. The support provided can include self-help materials, online/digital support through our access to Big White Wall (for more information, see page 22), group therapeutic sessions, skills-based workshops, one-to-one counselling, support from one of our mental health practitioners or support from our resident psychiatrist. The Counselling & Mental Health Support Team also liaises with external specialist services, as appropriate, to coordinate support.

THE IMPACT OF OUR COUNSELLING & MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

In December 2017, King's started a twelve-month piece of work, jointly managed by our Students & Education Directorate and our Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (IoPPN), to explore the impact of our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team and other wellbeing-related support services. A research worker, Claire Dunne, was recruited to deliver the project, supervised by a researcher in the IoPPN, Dr June Brown.

Initial findings provide us with a new insight into the impact of the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team. For example, we know that 90 per cent of the students who register with the team present initially with a clinical level of distress; this has helped us confirm that those students who are accessing the service are seeking support from the right place.

Almost three-fifths of these students, following their engagement with the service, showed an improvement in their level of mental health and wellbeing. And one-third showed such a significant level of improvement that they were now no longer presenting with a clinical level of distress after receiving support.

This service evaluation work will continue, moving on to explore with students how they find out about our support services and ask about their perceptions of these services. The work is also testing whether some demographic groups within our student population are more likely than others to seek support in order that student engagement work can be targeted appropriately. Future work to enhance our collection of feedback from students about the quality of their experience of accessing support will help inform other aspects of service delivery.

BIG WHITE WALL

King's now offers an online support service called Big White Wall that students and staff can use at any time of the day or night. Big White Wall is a safe and anonymous online space for anyone who is feeling down, struggling to cope or just wanting to talk to people who understand what they are going through.

Big White Wall has already helped more than 45,000 people in the UK, and, now that King's has added it to the range of specialist support services we provide, our students and staff can access Big White Wall for free by visiting www.bigwhitewall.com

As well as providing a space for sharing with people who have experienced similar issues, Big White Wall also contains useful digital resources for learning practical skills, taking self-assessments and monitoring progress. It also provides opportunities to join online group courses on topics such as stress, problem-solving and negative thinking.

Big White Wall is an important complement to our other specialist mental health and wellbeing services and is particularly helpful to a student seeking support outside of our services opening hours or on a waiting list for one-to-one support from our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team. It is also very helpful for a student who wants to explore how they are feeling but does not feel ready to talk to someone face-to-face.

Over 200 people at King's signed up to use Big White Wall in the first month after the service went live. Initially the focus has been on directing individual students to Big White Wall when we know they may find it helpful – for example, while on a waiting list to see someone from our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team. In future, we will enhance our marketing of the service so that all students across King's have access to information on how to access Big White Wall.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING-RELATED PASTORAL SUPPORT AT KING'S LEVEL 4: UNIVERSITY SPECIALIST SUPPORT SERVICES

At busy times of year, the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team does have a waiting list and waiting times for certain types of one-to-one appointment can take a number of weeks. However, our process of initial assessment means those students who are waiting for an appointment have been assessed as being able to wait. The team has protocols in place to ensure that any student who is assessed as requiring more urgent forms of support is offered support more quickly.

King's was also one of the first universities in the country to introduce wellbeing life coaching to the range of specialist support services on offer to students. Coaching support, from our Wellbeing Team, allows students to tap into their own inner resources to better understand their current situation and options for moving forward. Coaching approaches wellbeing from a strength-based perspective, providing an empowering experience which promotes self-awareness and positive change to build resilience and personal fulfillment. Students can meet with a campus-based coach for up to six sessions per academic year.

King's Sport launched our Active Wellness Scheme to support anyone within the King's Community, with a mental or physical health difficulty, through the use of exercise therapy. Students can be referred by the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team, Wellbeing Team, Disability Support Team and the King's College London NHS Health Centre.

Our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team and Wellbeing Team also deliver workshops throughout the year, enabling students to explore mental health and wellbeing topics in confidential group settings. These workshops cover a wide range of different topics including anxiety management, overcoming procrastination, mindfulness, body image, healthy relationships, and conflict resolution. We are also planning to extend this groupwork provision in 2018/19 through the introduction of new therapeutic groupwork, led by our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team.





Level 5: External specialist support services

AT THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS TO:

*Work well alongside, and with, external services
that complement university provision.*

At King's we know the importance of working closely with external specialist mental health and wellbeing services, particularly statutory NHS services, to help meet the support needs of our student population.

We encourage all our students to register with a local medical practice as soon as they can after they arrive at university, to ensure they are able to access healthcare when they need it.

We are fortunate to have our own King's College London NHS Health Centre, an independent health centre practice located at Strand Campus, dedicated to providing healthcare for students and staff of the university. Whether students choose to register at our health centre or any other, we recommend that everyone registers with a GP practice as early as possible during their course.

We also understand the importance of liaising with specialist external mental health services, including NHS Crisis Teams, Home Treatment Teams and IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) services, which complement the support we provide within the university.

Some students, when they arrive at King's, are already engaging with external mental health support services. In other cases, to ensure that our students receive the support they need, we might signpost a student to external services, or work alongside an external service to coordinate the support we are providing to an individual student. Our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team acts as a point of contact with external services, particularly to help coordinate the support provided to a student – for example, following a period in hospital.

Our university Counselling & Mental Health Support Team is not an emergency service and is not a 24/7 service. We ensure therefore that students have access, via the team's website at kcl.ac.uk/needhelpnow, to information about external emergency and crisis support services – including emergency services, hospital Accident and Emergency departments, and Samaritans, as well as details of the university's on-campus 24/7 security team.

OUR LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In July 2018, we created the post of Head of Mental Health Practitioner Support, to sit within our Counselling & Mental Health Support Team.

The post-holder will manage our team of mental health practitioners. Among its other responsibilities, this team will liaise with external mental health services to coordinate the support we provide to individual students, where external services are well placed to support a student.

Our team of mental health practitioners are already very experienced in working with external services, and we will continue to develop these external networks to the benefit of our students.

In our experience, students benefit greatly from this coordination of support, as it ensures that the types of support that a student is receiving are complementing, rather than duplicating or working against, one another.



Link between our research at King's and our student support services

Our strategic plan will inform activities from the end of this project, which will include leveraging research expertise at King's to develop, pilot and implement interventions and establishing a multi-disciplinary network of academics with research interests in student mental health.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY, PSYCHOLOGY & NEUROSCIENCE (IOPPN)

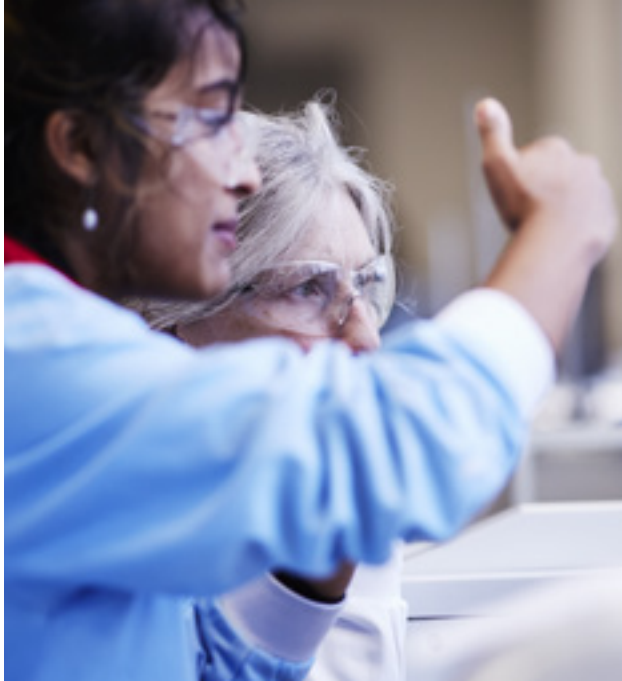
The IoPPN at King's is a world leader in the research, study and practice of psychiatry, psychology, neuroscience and related disciplines. It has three world-class divisions: Psychology & System Sciences, Psychiatry and Neuroscience, which share a vision to understand how the mind and the brain work and to use this understanding to improve quality of life and clinical outcomes of individuals with mental health problems or neurological disorders. The IoPPN is in the unique position of being a global research centre that can truly integrate neuroscience into mental health research.

Data from 2015 shows that IoPPN has the highest number of research publications in the top 10 per cent of the world in Psychiatry and Mental Health, and in the 2014 REF assessment the impact of IoPPN's work was judged as 100 per cent world leading or internationally excellent, and the IoPPN's research environment was judged as 100 per cent world leading. It hosts 14 of the world's most highly cited researchers (Highly Cited Researchers by Thomson Reuters), 27 Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences, and six Fellows of the British Academy. In 2013 King's received the first Regius Professorship of Psychiatry, which Professor Sir Simon Wessely took up in February 2017.

The IoPPN is part of the Academic Health Sciences Centre King's Health Partners, a pioneering collaboration between King's and three NHS foundation trusts: South London and Maudsley, Guy's and St Thomas' and King's College Hospital. It has 26 taught postgraduate programmes and 16 research programmes (PhD, MDRes, DClinPsy), totalling more than 1400 students from over 70 countries, giving the IoPPN a truly diverse student population.

The IoPPN has more than 100 years of research excellence. The Institute's founding researcher, Sir Frederick Mott, helped identify syphilis as the cause of General Paresis of the Insane – laying the foundation for the first scientific treatment of a mental illness. During the First World War, it pioneered the understanding and treatment of 'shell shock.' Since its foundation, the IoPPN has been responsible for the objective measurement of intelligence (Raven's Progressive Matrices); identifying the neuropathological basis of epilepsy (Alfred Meyer); developing the modern concept of 'personality' (Hans Eysenck); applying the new field of epidemiology to psychiatry (Aubrey Lewis); and hosting the first MRC Centre for Psychiatric Genetics (Eliot Slater). In recent years its clinical-academics led the development of Child Psychiatry (Sir Michael Rutter) and Neuropsychiatry (Alwyn Lishman) as new sub-specialities of psychiatry.

A defining feature of the IoPPN is its partnership with the South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust. This collaboration has helped to translate research findings into novel treatments: cognitive-behaviour therapy for schizophrenia; computer-delivered self-help for bulimia; take-home naloxone strategies to prevent drug overdose; community-based 'early intervention' services to treat schizophrenia; and 'memory clinics' to detect and treat dementia – most of these advances are now part of NICE guidelines and national policy.



To continue its prominent position as a world leader in mental health research and care, the IoPPN has invested in future areas of excellence and opportunity, such as a major new centre for Translational Neuroscience; the UK Dementia Research Institute at King's, mapping out some of the earliest changes in the brain associated with dementia; the world's first academic Centre for Global Mental Health; hosted the first MRC Centre for Psychiatric Genetics, looking at the impact and interplay between genetic, environmental and developmental factors in mental disorders; and launched a new world-class centre to reveal biological clues behind brain disorders.

Sir Simon Wessely, the world's first Regius Professor for Psychiatry, whose acceptance speech for the Regius Professorship had a clear focus on student mental health, has provided input as a member of the steering group that produced this report.

Another piece of work delivered in the first six months of this project was a research mapping exercise, led by Dr June Brown, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the IoPPN, whose work was funded by Student Support & Wellbeing Services. This exercise captured information about researchers at King's whose research interests are relevant to student mental health and wellbeing support. Student support service leads will link up with these researchers as part of progressing the strategic plan.

Dr Nicola Byrom, Lecturer in Psychology at the IoPPN and founder of the student mental health charity, Student Minds, is also bringing together an interdisciplinary network of researchers with diverse expertise, from within King's and beyond, to build knowledge and understanding around student mental health, and support the implementation of the strategic plan. This project is funded by UK Research and Innovation.

As we take forward our work to further enhance the mental health and wellbeing support provided to students at King's, we will continue to draw upon the research and expertise of these and many other colleagues leading relevant research.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH

In June 2018, a special issue of the *Journal of Mental Health* (Volume 27, Issue 3) which focussed exclusively on the issue of student mental health was published.

This issue, edited by Dr June Brown, a senior lecturer within the IoPPN at King's, features articles from world-leading researchers in the field of student mental health. It highlights important new evidence on student mental health, both by understanding the underlying issues and their implications for poor mental health, in addition to interventions that may be effective to alleviate distress. Articles included cover very diverse aspects of student mental health, including:

- Academic and non-academic predictors of student psychological distress: the role of social identity and loneliness.
- Experiences of flourishing and languishing during the first year at university.
- Undergraduate mental health issues: the challenge of the second year of study.
- Social media, cyber-aggression and student mental health.
- The feasibility of brief dog-assisted therapy on university students stress levels.

From summer 2018 onwards, Dr June Brown is organising a series of seminars at King's to bring together those with an interest in student mental health, to share expertise and learn from the latest research. These seminars are also key to building even greater dialogue between researchers at King's and those who are delivering and managing the university's student support services.

Building upon these foundations: our recent achievements

Actions taken in our first six months

In the first six months since we started our university-wide project in January 2018, we have delivered a number of key pieces of work and developments. At the start of the project, the following actions were agreed with the university's senior management team – with updates provided below on each action, as of July 2018, and references to other relevant sections of this report:

Launching Big White Wall online support service in response to student feedback about digital provision and to support students waiting for Counselling & Mental Health Support Team services.

This service has now been launched.

See page 22

Appointing to a remodelled Head of Mental Health Practitioner Support post. This role and the team they manage will review our 'students at risk' protocol and provide advice on complex cases.

This post has now been created.

See page 25

Delivering projects to evaluate our specialist support services, which will analyse existing data and involve students, through the IoPPN and Students & Education Directorate partnership.

This project is half-way through its twelve-month lifespan and has already generated very useful data about the usage and impact of our support services. The findings will help shape future service provision.

See page 21

Involving the What Works team within the Social Mobility & Success Division of the Students & Education Directorate to support the evaluation of interventions and services.

The What Works team was represented on our student mental health and wellbeing support working group. The work of this team has already started to focus on student wellbeing with the development of new questions at enrolment for students to answer to assist with data collection. These questions will enable us to collect baseline data about, and better understand, the confidence and connectedness of our student body. The Social Mobility & Student Success Division has also been selected as the home for our new Academic Support service, to enable our wellbeing practitioners to work closely alongside the What Works team.

See action 5 in our strategic plan (page 33)

Building greater confidence, particularly among staff who refer students to our specialist services, in the fact that all cases are triaged and prioritised, where necessary, based on the level of clinical and retention risk presented.

This report is one way in which we are sharing this information with colleagues across King's. We will also reflect this issue in staff training and guidance.

See actions 10 and 13 in our strategic plan (pages 35 and 36)

Reviewing and updating the staff training offer and online referral guidance that relate to student mental health and wellbeing, to ensure staff feel confident in their role supporting students.

Following a review of this provision, we will develop a new half-day course on managing distressed students.

See action 13 in our strategic plan (page 36).

Appointing a new academic advisory post in IoPPN, responsible for co-ordinating the translation of research into practice.

The IoPPN have appointed to the new role of Deputy Dean for Education, starting in September 2018. The role holder will work with the Institute's Senior Tutor (Student Experience) and colleagues across King's to develop and implement new evidence-led initiatives promoting positive student mental health and demonstrate commitment to the long-term development of pedagogical research at King's. They are a social psychologist with an interest in mental health and are experienced in supporting students' wellbeing and mental health.

Recommending options for faculty and departmental peer-to-peer support models.

We carried out an initial review of the peer-to-peer support models in operation across the university. Feedback from faculties is that they would appreciate more support with setting up peer-to-peer support schemes. We intend to expand the number of these schemes, while also driving greater consistency and university-level oversight of them. We will create a post in our Academic Support service (by January 2019) to lead this peer-to-peer work across the university.

See action 5 in our strategic plan (page 33)

Scoping options for offering online mindfulness support.

An initial piece of work has confirmed that online mindfulness materials would be a helpful addition to the support we provide to students.

See action 15 in our strategic plan (page 36)

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

We have also considered the future resource requirements to implement the strategic plan set out in this report. As part of the budget planning round for 2018–19, we have agreed to increase the resources available to our Mental Health Practitioner Team by two full-time posts. The creation of our new Academic Support service also represents a significant additional investment in the pastoral support that the university provides to faculties. We are currently reviewing the level of resource available to support communications in relation to student mental health and wellbeing. If, in order to implement the actions set out in this report, those teams responsible for leading these actions require resource to implement them fully, they are responsible for meeting this need from their teams and budgets, or securing necessary additional resources through the annual planning cycle.

It is important to emphasise, however, that our strategy, as set out in this document, is about working towards all the university's teams and resources taking account of student mental health and wellbeing when planning and making decisions. Therefore, while additional resource is important in specific areas to reflect increase in demand, our strategy is also about the effective deployment of all our resources as a university.

MAPPING AND DATA EXERCISES

As another key part of the first phase of this project, Wilna Gracias, Senior Wellbeing Coach, and Sian Norris, Strategic Projects Manager (Health), led exercises to:

- ♦ map the mental health and wellbeing support interventions and services which currently exist across the university to support students, and
- ♦ understand what data we have available about these interventions and services – particularly in relation to the volume of interactions they have with students, their impact, and student feedback about the quality of these interventions and services.

The activity mapping exercise helpfully captured our current range of support activities and has informed many of the examples described in this report. It has also helped us understand where there is a need for more central support and greater consistency – for example, with faculty-led peer-to-peer schemes. From the data exercise, it is clear not all of these support activities are currently able to provide data on volume/usage. Student feedback data is also not currently collected in a standardised or consistent way across these activities. Even where similar support models are in operation, we are not collecting data in a comparable or consistent manner. Our strategic plan has been informed by these two important pieces of work.

COMMUNICATIONS

We agreed with the university's senior management team to develop more effective ways to communicate with both students and staff about student mental health and wellbeing support.

As a result, we have produced a communications plan for this work, to demonstrate the university's leadership in this area and promote greater awareness of existing interventions and services. A key part of this will be the review of our online information and resources. We will embed student mental health and wellbeing issues in the emerging university-wide student communications strategy, currently being devised by the Social Mobility & Student Success Division of the Students & Education Directorate. Also, as we plan the development of a new student portal, we will ensure this is used to provide clear information to students about when and how to access support at all levels of our support model.



Strategic plan

2018–20

ACTION	IMPACT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE DELIVERED THIS ACTION AND TIMESCALES
<p>01 Review our governance and committee structure to determine how they can best support the effective cross-university coordination of student mental health and wellbeing-related activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve communication at a strategic and cross-university level. To ensure a clear understanding of the role of the Steering Group (or any successor body) in oversight of this strategic plan, including interface with the central governance structures of the university. 	College Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New steering group, with revised terms of reference, established from October 2018. Outcome of review and recommendations for governance of student mental health and wellbeing-related support finalised by December 2018.
<p>02 Complete the service evaluation work, commenced in December 2017 and supported by the IoPPN, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> research how students access our counselling and mental health, wellbeing and disability support services assess the impact of these services. 	<p>To enhance our evidence base for understanding how students are accessing our support services (particularly those at level 4 of our support model, and potentially some support at level 3) and the impact of these services.</p>	Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, IoPPN, with the Interim Director of Student Support & Wellbeing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service evaluation reports completed, and summary of findings published, by December 2018. Steering Group to consider any relevant amendments or additions to this strategic plan arising from the recommendations in these reports by February 2019.
<p>03 Complete the remodelling of our multi-disciplinary Counselling & Mental Health Support Team (formerly the 'Counselling Service') in SSWS, through enhancing the support at both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the higher end of the risk spectrum (eg through enhanced risk assessment and the creation of a dedicated sub-team to manage these cases), and the lower end of the risk spectrum (eg by embedding Big White Wall as a digital support offer, increasing our group work, etc). 	<p>To further enhance our capability for responding to the sustained increases in demand and risk in casework, help us to offer more support to students who are waiting to be seen, and enable us to shorten waiting times for first appointments. In so doing, students who fall into the category of neither high nor low risk and form the majority of students seeking counselling and mental health support, will benefit from decreased waiting times and improved triage. This relates to level 4 of the support model.</p>	Director of Students & Education, working in conjunction with the Associate Director (Counselling & Mental Health Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New sub-team within the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team established by August 2018. Regular reporting in place for this team to update the Steering Group on caseload, risk and waiting times (including agreeing a new target for improving waiting times with the Steering Group) by December 2018. Review of 'Students at Risk' procedure and creation of new approach to holding case conferences by October 2018. Meetings taking place with local NHS and voluntary sector mental health services to enhance joint working from November 2018.

ACTION	IMPACT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE DELIVERED THIS ACTION AND TIMESCALES
<p>04 Develop new ways for researchers and student services to share access to data and research findings about student mental health – for example, through internal seminars and discussion groups to share ideas and findings.</p>	<p>To ensure our support for students is always based on the latest research about what works.</p>	<p>Executive Dean of Faculty, IoPPN, working in conjunction with UK Research & Innovation -funded student mental health network lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal seminar series, organised by Dr June Brown, initially from May to December 2018, established to share research findings from June 2018. • New UKRI-funded student mental health research network established, and network considering how its work will inform and influence the support we provide to students at King's from September 2018.
<p>05 Embed support for student wellbeing at the heart of academic support structures that are now being designed as a key workstream under our Education Strategy.</p>	<p>To strengthen delivery under level 3 of pyramid and make the student experience more consistent. This will include bringing together a central Academic Support service dedicated to supporting faculties and academic departments in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal tutoring and related structures • local peer-to-peer support schemes, and • embedding, in more departments across the university, wellbeing content and sessions for students to sit alongside the curriculum. 	<p>Director of Social Mobility & Student Success, working with the Associate Director (Academic Support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Academic Support service established from January 2019, supporting faculties in the areas of personal tutoring, peer-to-peer support and embedding wellbeing content in the curriculum, as well as delivering wellbeing activities and campaigns at a university level. • Targets developed for the activities of the Academic Support service by April 2019. • Peer-to-peer support activities scoped and reviewed across the university by July 2019, with actions planned to enhance this support from 2019/20 onwards. • Review of personal tutoring code of practice for academic year 2019–20.
<p>06 Reflect mental health and wellbeing considerations in the work planned to simplify the curriculum and streamline assessment across King's.</p>	<p>To reduce unnecessary distress among students. More varied and inclusive assessment methods will enhance the experience of students.</p>	<p>Director of Curriculum, Quality & Employability Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Strategy groups leading work on Curriculum 2029 and Assessment & Feedback tasked with involving representatives of teams with relevant expertise, including the IoPPN (particularly the emerging Student Mental Health Research Network), King's Academy, Student Support & Wellbeing Services and Social Mobility & Student Success, by August 2018. • Education Strategy groups to define targets for simplifying the curriculum and streamlining assessment by the start of the academic year 2019–20.

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<p>07 Ensure the forthcoming university-wide review of mitigating circumstances takes account of all related student mental health and wellbeing issues.</p>	<p>To enhance the experience of both students at King's and our staff managing the policy, systems and processes relating to mitigating circumstances.</p>	<p>Director of Admissions & Registry Services, with Associate Director (Academic Services)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-level project, supported by the Students & Education Directorate Business Support Team, established to review the regulations, systems and processes related to mitigating circumstances, ensuring that mental health and wellbeing considerations inform this work, by Spring 2019. • Representatives of teams with relevant expertise, including Student Support & Wellbeing Services and Social Mobility & Student Success, to be involved in this review by October 2018. • Recommended changes to policy, systems and processes implemented from 2019–20.
<p>08 Review aspects of our Academic Regulations to reflect our duty of care towards students whose mental health presents a high level of risk to self or others.</p>	<p>To enhance our support at levels 4 and 5 of our model for this very small number of students and ensure the effective management of these cases and associated risks. This work will support the university's compliance with its duty of care, as well as other relevant statutory requirements (eg Equality Act).</p>	<p>Associate Director (Academic Regulation, Policy & Compliance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of new and amended regulations, to reflect our duty of care towards students whose mental health presents a high level of risk to self or others, in our Academic Regulations from July 2019.
<p>09 Enhance the way we communicate with students about our support services and student wellbeing more generally, and embed student mental health and wellbeing issues in our university-level student communications strategy.</p>	<p>To help ensure students are aware of the support available. This work will encourage take-up of our new forms of support (eg our new digital provision with Big White Wall), and ensure that, from their arrival and induction at King's, students are given clear information which helps them to draw on their inner resources and informal networks, as well as accessing specialist services when appropriate. Student mental health and wellbeing issues will be placed at the heart of the emerging student communications strategy and forthcoming work to create a new student portal.</p>	<p>Director of Social Mobility & Student Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report communicated to students by October 2018. • New student communications team created and given remit for leading on wellbeing-related communications and campaigns work by September 2018. • Our main Student Services webpage (kcl.ac.uk/studentservices) enhanced within existing services. • New resource identified to enhance the way we communicate about our specialist services to students by December 2018. This work to promote specialist services to complement wellbeing promotion communications work in an integrated student communications strategy (with appropriate engagement targets for our mental health and wellbeing communications) by December 2018.

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<p>10 Develop new ways to communicate to staff about how to signpost and refer students to specialist support services appropriately, particularly when students are distressed or requiring urgent support.</p>	<p>To help ensure staff across the university know when and how to refer students into support. The key here is providing guidance on supporting students in a boundaried and role-appropriate way. This includes knowing when it is appropriate to hold distress, checking that students are aware of specialist support services should they wish to access them, and when a higher level of referral is required. It should also ensure staff are aware that students are only placed on a waiting list to see a counsellor if they have been assessed as being able to wait for this support.</p>	<p>Associate Director (Counselling & Mental Health Support) and Associate Director (Academic Support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘When to Refer’ staff guidance for specialist support services published by September 2018, with associated training on this guidance for staff. • Student mental health and wellbeing considerations incorporated into training for personal tutors, led by the new Academic Support service (see related action 5 on the Academic Support service). <p><i>Also see related action 13 on staff training.</i></p>
<p>11 Improve our systems for gathering student feedback on our support services.</p>	<p>To strengthen stakeholder engagement and service evaluation. Our teams already collect feedback, although often focusing on clinical impact. Collecting qualitative feedback in an anonymised manner from students about their experience of accessing support could be more consistent. One of the key aims of this work is to ensure we base our clinical practice on student feedback and on key principles of diversity and inclusion. This work will be further enhanced by a CRM project to develop greater online self-service access to information and support services.</p>	<p>Associate Director (Counselling & Mental Health Support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling & Mental Health Support Team and Academic Support service to review how they collect student feedback during and after support provision by September 2018. • New customer relationship management system – currently being developed for enquiry, appointment and case management across all specialist services – incorporates new methods of collecting student feedback in straightforward and appropriately anonymised ways from April 2019. <p><i>Also see related action 13 on student-led forum as a way of ensuring that services are taking account of student feedback.</i></p>
<p>12 Further enhance our support for student-led wellbeing-related activity, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuing to support our student societies and activity groups to deliver wellbeing activities • exploring the scope for establishing a new student-led wellbeing forum. 	<p>To further enhance the impact of the work we are delivering at level 2 of our support model and build upon the strong relationship between the university and KCLSU in relation to supporting student-led wellbeing activity</p>	<p>Director of Social Mobility & Student Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared memorandum of understanding between the university and KCLSU for the delivery of student-led wellbeing activity (including targets for further enhancing the impact of this activity) in place by September 2018. • Decision taken about creating a new student-led wellbeing forum by October 2018.

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<p>13 Develop and launch a new short (three hours/ half-day) face-to-face training course for university staff across the university on managing distress in students, to sit alongside our existing staff training offer. This would include guidance around appropriate signposting and onward referrals, as well as techniques for reassurance and helping students to manage lower levels of stress and distress.</p>	<p>To build on our current training offer, given our current offer is more likely to attract people with a specific interest in student mental health, given the length of the courses. A shorter course will be more accessible for other staff, who just require essential information about how to respond effectively to a student in distress.</p>	<p>Associate Director (Counselling & Mental Health Support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from current staff training offer reviewed by August 2018. • Plans for shorter face-to-face course developed by September 2018. • Pilots of this course delivered by October 2018 including a specific focus on frontline staff (in areas like Estates & Facilities, SSWS) and personal tutors. • This course to be rolled out and open to all student-facing staff from January 2019.
<p>14 Devise a plan for ensuring that our duty of care for students is reflected in the experience that our students have in all their interactions with the university's frontline services, including our security, facilities management and residences teams.</p>	<p>To support students' sense of belonging and enhance the ability of all our frontline services to pick up on, and respond to, student mental health and wellbeing issues.</p>	<p>Director of Estates & Facilities, working with the Director of Students & Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for the revision of the model agreed by December 2018. • Estates and Facilities to incorporate duty of care-related skills (with support from the Counselling & Mental Health Support Team) within the 'Fit for King's' staff training programme by December 2018.
<p>15 Explore the scope for us to develop new online support materials, starting with mindfulness, to be piloted first and then potentially made available to all students.</p>	<p>To extend and supplement existing digital support provision. Support models, such as mindfulness, are increasingly evidenced as positive drivers of wellbeing. Online delivery of content is a key mode of delivery for many students, such as distance-learners or part-time students. This activity will further strengthen support at level 1 and 2 of our pyramid model and leverage our academic and online learning expertise in these areas.</p>	<p>Associate Director (Counselling & Mental Health Support), with Director of Distance Learning Programmes, IoPPN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot online mindfulness materials launched in IoPPN and one other academic department by January 2019. • Decision on the online mindfulness offer for all students to be made from September 2019.

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that define us.*
