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| ALN Logo  **Mental Health and Well-being Advocacy Resource** | |
| **Name of the initiative** | **The work of the Student and Academic Services Wellbeing Group in supporting staff wellbeing within the Student and Academic Services (S&AS) Directorate at the University of York.**  [Student and Academic Services comprises of:   * [Academic Registrar's Office](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/Academic+Registrar%27s+Office) * [S&AS Directorate Administration Team](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=259293436) * [S&AS Directorate Projects Office](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=278006262) * [**Library, Archives and Learning Services**](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/Library%2C+Archives+and+Learning+Services) **(LALS)** * [Student Administration and Academic Affairs](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/Student+Administration+and+Academic+Affairs) * [Student Careers and Systems](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/Student+Careers+and+Systems) * [Student Life and Wellbeing](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/Student+Life+and+Wellbeing) * [York Online Learning](https://wiki.york.ac.uk/display/STUDACSERV/York+Online+Learning)] |
| **Target group** | Staff at all levels across Student and Academic Services.  (S&AS underwent a realignment in August 2021, bringing new teams into the former Directorate and reorganising structures and responsibilities.) |
| **Description** | **Why form a Directorate wide Wellbeing group?**   * This was an agreed action taken as a result of the S&AS wellbeing survey. * To ensure that staff wellbeing within S&AS is supported at both a local and strategic level. * To firmly embed staff wellbeing within the culture of the Directorate. * To enable, support and encourage honest two-way communication, consultation and collaboration horizontally across S&AS departments, and vertically from local to institutional level. * To create a framework supporting staff wellbeing within S&AS which has the authority and influence to make impactful decisions and action change at a local, strategic and institutional level (as appropriate.)   **Overall Purpose of S&AS Wellbeing Group:**  The overall purpose of the group is to lead on specific actions that will help to improve and support staff wellbeing across the Directorate.  The group plays a critical role in influencing the overall direction, development and implementation of wellbeing initiatives across S&AS.  In addition the group aims to provide a safe, trusted space to share ideas for staff wellbeing, working in collaborative and cross-boundary ways to ensure that different voices from across the Directorate are listened to and represented in the group’s approach to wellbeing and related activities.  **Who is on the Wellbeing Group?**  The S&AS Wellbeing Group includes representatives from across all S&AS departments, bringing together different experiences, knowledge and ideas to inform and shape the approach to wellbeing across the Directorate.  **Outline of Framework:**  The S&AS Wellbeing Group is at Directorate level and aims to have both local and institutional influence.  **Influencing at institutional level:**   * **S&AS Wellbeing group chair** sits on the S&AS Directorate Management team (DMT), and on the institutional workload management group. * The chair of DMT sits on the University Executive Board.   **Influencing at local level (LALS and other S&AS departments):**   * Currently three members of S&AS Wellbeing Group are members of the local LALS Wellbeing Group. * Other departments within S&AS are encouraged to set up local Wellbeing groups.   Through this framework, there is a direct route for staff wellbeing issues to be raised at any level, and escalated to institutional level (if appropriate.)  **The specific aims and responsibilities of the S&AS Wellbeing Group:**   * To discuss issues and ideas that will help to develop wellbeing across the S&AS Directorate in positive ways for all staff. * To identify specific and general wellbeing issues and needs and develop appropriate resources and activities to support these. * To provide positive challenge to ensure that wellbeing activities are well-thought through and aligned with staff needs and preferences wherever possible. * To test out ideas and outputs before rolling out to wider staff. * To represent colleagues in teams across the Directorate and act as a messenger between the group and colleagues, ensuring there is a positive and active two-way dialogue across the wider Directorate. * To share anecdotal evidence of best practice from their teams, other departments at the University and external organisations. * To identify the level of staff wellbeing through regular (quarterly) directorate pulse surveys, and implement discussions and actions at all levels to address challenges. |
| **Partners** | **LALS Wellbeing Group**  **Remit of Group:**   * To take an active role in helping to develop a culture in which staff and student health and wellbeing is actively championed and is a key focus of our ongoing dialogue within the organisation. * To improve and support wellbeing across the LALS community (including all staff and users of the service). * To identify specific and general wellbeing needs, and develop resources and activities to support these needs. * To actively engage staff and users in discussions around wellbeing, reviewing suggestions and feedback on a regular basis. * To offer support to line managers who are at the front-line of managing wellbeing within their teams. * To develop short, medium and long-term priorities and activities for the group to focus on.   **Directorate of Technology, Estates and Facilities Mental Health and Wellbeing Group**:   * Regular updates with group chair to ensure cross-Directorate collaboration and sharing of good practice. |
| **Strategy**  *How, if at all, was the activity linked into wider library or institutional strategy?* | The aim of both Wellbeing Groups is to work to ensure that staff wellbeing is supported in line with current University strategy:  “*We foster the health and wellbeing of our staff through ambitious and targeted programs, a supportive work culture, and carefully calibrated work-life balance.”*  [University of York Strategy 2020 - 2030: A University for the Public Good](https://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/missionstrategies/vision/University-of-York-Strategy-2020-2030.pdf) |
| **Evaluation**  *How, if at all, was the activity evaluated?* | S&AS led quarterly results of Pulse survey and resulting action plan available to all, and actively promoted. |
| **What worked** | **Outputs from the S&AS Wellbeing Group:**  **Issues under discussion at Directorate Management Team (DMT) level:**   * Staff resource across Directorate and within University change programme. * Road map of activities and management of staff workloads. * Empowering staff through training and development opportunities. * Dedicated training and support for managers in dealing with wellbeing issues including stress in the workplace. * Improvements to working space on campus including rooms for teams to meet in regularly, rooms for Zoom calls away from colleagues and the room booking system. * Development of specific community building initiatives across the directorate. * DMT connection to staff: continue to build visibility, engagement and understanding of everyone’s roles.   **Issues under discussion at S&AS Wellbeing Group level:**   * Considering the setting up specific S&AS wellbeing hours/mornings/days, and/or specific team activities.   What this might look like across the Directorate?   * Considering an independent channel to report wellbeing concerns. What might this look like? What might this mean for line manager? * All S&AS “thank you social” afternoon event, including DMT members, afternoon tea and prosecco, jazz band, quiz, and GSA and SU representation (planned for September 5th 2022.)   **Issues under discussion at LALS Wellbeing Group level:**   * Upgrade of two meeting rooms, including “soft” furniture, plants and nature focused images on walls sourced from a Directorate staff photo competition. (Work actioned and completed.) * Wellbeing Roadshow planned for World Mental Health Day - moving through different sites throughout the day promoting mental health and wellbeing resources and support available to staff. * Exploration of the potential role out of wellbeing hours/mornings/days. * Exploration of how work calendars can be used more successfully to support staff wellbeing (e.g. “no meeting Fridays”, no meetings over lunch period etc.) * Promoting the Mental Health First Aid course training available at the University and encouraging staff to participate. |
| **What did not work** | * S&AS level lunchtime walks around campus (low participation.) |
| **Your name, institution and contact details.**  Ruth Elder.  Collections Management Specialist / Content and Open Research/ University of York Library, Archives and Learning Services.  (Plus member of LALS and S&AS Wellbeing teams, and Mental Health First Aider (2015 - )) | |
| **Are you willing to share your contact details to other ALN staff so if they want to find out more they can contact you directly?**  Yes – ruth.elder@york.ac.uk | |

**Ruth Elder 17.08.22**