UON Student Mental Health and Well-being
Strategy: 2018-2022

University of Newcastle Commitment to Promoting Student Mental Well-being

The University of Newcastle (UON) Student Mental Health and Well-being Strategy has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders including, UON staff, students, and mental health experts. It recognises the growing prevalence, severity and reporting of mental health difficulties amongst University students. Specifically utilising the Dynamic Student Learning Support frame of the NeW Education Framework, the Framework for Promoting Student Mental Health and Well-being in Universities, the Healthy Universities Framework and the UON Student Central Success Plan, the strategy aims to positively affect student mental well-being, across the entire student journey.

The strategy explores ways in which UON can lead mental health and well-being promotion and prevention initiatives locally and globally. It expands on existing health, safety and wellness programmes and initiatives for UON students to bring a similar awareness to mental well-being that exists for physical safety. It outlines 4 key strategy areas to enhance UON’s current education initiatives and support services.

UON’s Strategic Priorities for Student Mental Health and Well-being

UON aims to:
- Review all relevant aspects of the UON’s environment to ensure UON uses best practices in promoting good student mental health and well-being;
- Actively communicate, the importance of, and expectations that, UON will be a supportive environment which celebrates difference within a safe, respectful and collaborative culture;
- Design and deliver education and training programs for both staff and students to increase their awareness and understanding of best practice in supporting mental health and well-being; and
- Enhance its delivery of self-help, and expert-led support mechanisms to enhance student mental health and well-being.

Our Commitment to Action

UON has identified the following 4 key action areas to support these strategies.

A. Reflecting ways to advocate for good student mental health and well-being in everything we do

Commitment: Through a whole of institution commitment to student mental health and well-being, UON aims to have inclusive and engaging curricula and learning experiences and develop policies and strategies that are considerate of UON’s diverse community.

As a priority the UON will define a set of key high level KPI’s upon which to measure the success of this strategy and its resulting action plan.

Action Lead: Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
B. Building and promoting UON as a supportive and inclusive community

*Commitment:* The UON aims to create and promote an inclusive university community and environment that supports social connectedness physically and virtually for social interaction, relaxation, private study and spiritual activities.

UON will strive to continue to refine the ways it promotes a strong sense of belonging through the provision of culturally appropriate messaging that acknowledges its diverse student population. Further it will seek to enhance its provision of digital messaging and resources to assist students to self-manage their mental well-being.

*Action Lead:* Associate Director Campus Life, Careers and Student Advice

C. Delivering best practice training and education for mental health and well-being

*Commitment:* Through the development of education and programs that engage and involve students and promote an understanding across cultures of supporting mental health and well-being, UON aims to enhance mental health knowledge and skills.

UON will seek to enhance the student mental health and well-being literacy in faculties, schools and across student services through a range of training and education programs. A priority action will also examine ways of embedding student mental health and well-being educative materials in all programs’ support documentation.

*Action Lead:* Associate Director, Student Care and Equity

D. Access to Effective Help and Services

*Commitment:* The UON aims to facilitate easy access for UON’s diverse student community to online and face to face mental health and support services within UON, across the locations UON operates (Sydney, Central Coast, the Hunter and Port Macquarie) and for students studying online or on placement.

UON will proactively review the services that it provides to ensure that it consistently meets the needs of our students. In particular, it will consider services from the perspective of those at risk, included those from Aboriginal community and those studying in remote locations (including placement students).

*Action Lead:* Associate Director, Student Care and Equity

Feedback

UON welcomes feedback on the Student Mental Health and Well-being Strategy. Feedback may be provided to the Associate Director, Student Care & Equity, as follows:

- **Email:** studentequityandsupport@newcastle.edu.au
- **Telephone:** +61 2 4921 6622
- **Post:**
  
  Associate Director, Student Care & Equity
  
  Student Central
  
  University of Newcastle,
  
  Callaghan, 2308, NSW