

Mental Health at Work Commitment

Guide for the Higher Education Sector

Standard six:

Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

Mentally
Healthy
Universities

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Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

This standard has two action points:

- 1 Identify and track measures for internal and external reporting, including through annual reports and accounts.
- 2 Measure organisational activity and impact using robust external frameworks, e.g. the [Business in the Community Responsible Business Tracker](#) and Mind's [Workplace Wellbeing Index](#).

The wellbeing of staff and students are two of your most important assets. So it's important to ensure you record and assess the wellbeing of both in your university's performance.

Honestly assessing and reporting on the wellbeing of staff shows people, from staff to investors and potential recruits, that you take mental health seriously.

Report publicly on your progress on mental health

Use the data you've collected to produce an annual mental health and wellbeing report. This can be shared with staff and wider stakeholders to increase accountability and encourage discussion.

Your report could include:

- a statement from leaders on your commitment to adopting the Mental Health at Work Commitment standards and the support you offer
- an update on initiatives currently in place and priorities for the future
- evidence of the impact of your initiatives or support through case studies and data like staff survey results, sickness absence and engagement in mental health activities
- how staff can feedback and ask questions on the report.

Many trade unions run surveys and report on their findings – so compare your survey findings against wider sector trends. You could take this further by benchmarking your performance against others, as well as sharing key data and information on what is working well to learn from other organisations.

The Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Health and Social Care have worked with employers to create this [voluntary reporting framework on disability, mental health and wellbeing](#) which you could use.

Use external measuring tools

Using a standardised tool or framework like the Mind Workplace Wellbeing Index or the Business in the Community Responsible Business Tracker helps you identify areas to focus on for improvement, with specific and actionable recommendations. This can create a positive cycle in which reporting, planning, taking action and measuring impact are parts of an ongoing process that continually improves outcomes for staff – and your university.

Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Index: [Our Workplace Wellbeing Index](#) is a benchmark of best policy and practice. It will help you find out where you are doing well and where you could improve your approach to mental health at work. It can also help you gain public recognition for what you're doing and find out where you benchmark in comparison to other participating universities and workplaces.

Business in the Community (BITC) Responsible Business Tracker: The [Responsible Business Tracker](#) is a measurement tool which assesses your performance as a responsible business by tracking your progress against BITC's Responsible Business Map, built on the UN's Global Goals or Sustainable Development Goals.

It enables you to identify gaps, compare your practices against other organisations in your sector and recognise leading practice.

Case study:

University of Southampton – Wessex Institute

Taking part in Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Index has helped us improve our understanding of, and support for, people with mental health issues. We believe this has benefited everyone, with 77 per cent of our workforce reporting an improvement in their wellbeing in this period (regardless of mental health issues) and 94 per cent of our workforce now recommending us as a good place to work (up from 70 per cent in 2018).

Ruth Pullen, Assistant Director – Finance, People & Business Services, University of Southampton – Wessex Institute (The University of Southampton – Wessex Institute were awarded Gold in our 2020/21 Index)

Useful links

[Mental Health at Work Webinar on Standard 6](#) featuring Mind and City Mental Health Alliance.

We're Mind, the mental health charity.

We're here to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support.

mind.org.uk/universities

We're a registered charity in England (no. 219830)

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