

Student Health Promotion 2023-25



DEAKIN
UNIVERSITY



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Acknowledgement

Deakin University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all the unceded lands, skies and waterways on which Deakin students, staff and communities come together.

As we learn and teach through virtually and physically constructed places across time, we pay our deep respect to the Ancestors and Elders of Wadawurrung Country, Eastern Maar Country and Wurundjeri Country, where our physical campuses are located.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations from where students join us online and make vital contributions to our learning communities.

Nathan PATTERSON Learning Together, Growing Together Commissioned by the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation Image reproduced courtesy of the artist.

Vision

Deakin is committed to the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of our students, enabling them to flourish as healthy, included and connected individuals. This is our continuing vision for the health and wellbeing and success of all Deakin students.

To achieve this vision we will:

- build on existing health and wellbeing capabilities
- partner with students
- foster new opportunities for collaboration.

Our commitment

We know students succeed best in their studies when they feel supported, connected and healthy. We value our students and want them to thrive.

We practice effective health promotion that:

- promotes good health and prevents illness
- views health holistically reflecting physical, social and emotional wellbeing
- allows our Deakin communities to enjoy better health and wellbeing
- moves beyond a focus on individual behaviour towards a wide range of social and environmental factors.

We align to Deakin's strategic objectives, national and international health promotion frameworks and strategies.

Our commitment to the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of our community underpins the student experience at Deakin. Our community celebrates all forms of diversity and fosters and promotes an environment and culture of safety, inclusion and respect. The Student Health Promotion Plan has been created to enable students to thrive.

This plan acknowledges and builds on Deakin's strengths as a leader in health promotion research, teaching and training, by contextualising and putting health promotion into practice with, and for, our students.

Health promotion is described as a process of 'enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health.'¹

Universities are opportune environments for health promotion, where a whole-of-institution approach can be taken to create both a healthy and supportive environment and an organisational culture that prioritises health for everyone who studies and works there.

'Health promoting universities enhance the success of institutions; create campus cultures of compassion, well-being, equity and social justice; improve the health of the people who live, learn, work, play and love on our campuses.'¹

(Okanagan Charter 2015).



An Indigenous context

The widely accepted social determinants of health - health of individuals, families and communities, gender, social gradient, early life, stress, social exclusion/poverty, work/employment, social support, addiction, food, and transport, are further impacted for Indigenous people by cultural and spiritual factors, discrimination, the history of the land dispossession, the stolen generation, social exclusion, legislation and policies of protection and assimilation.²

Health promotion should recognise and draw on the strengths, assets and capacities of Indigenous people. This will ensure a holistic approach that encourages participation and engagement. Empowerment and self-determination are crucial to success.

Guiding principles

The following principles are central in guiding Deakin's delivery of the health promotion program. These principles have been established in collaboration with stakeholders from across the University and are informed by a range of national and international frameworks, plans and strategies, and particularly align with the National Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework³ to ensure an Indigenous lens is embedded throughout.

Comprehensive, campus-wide whole-of-systems approach

We will focus on creating the conditions for health across Deakin for the long term, delivering multiple interconnected strategies for everyone in the University community.

Collaborate and partner across Deakin and beyond

We will collaborate within the University community, with local and regional partners, and with our indigenous communities to deliver Deakin-wide action built on the broader concepts of family, kinship and community and the bonds of reciprocal affection, responsibility and sharing.

Engage the voices of students and others across the university

We will align with the Deakin Students as Partners framework⁴ and guiding principles, acknowledging one another's unique perspectives and areas of expertise.

Build on strengths and actively seek new opportunities to extend capabilities

We build a culturally valid understanding that shapes the delivery of programs and services, recognising strengths, understanding problems, celebrating successes and sharing lessons learned, creating opportunities for sustainably enhanced health and wellbeing at Deakin.

Be inclusive and respectful of diversity in knowledge, culture and practices²

We will recognise social and cultural diversity and advance health promotion efforts through self-determination, engagement, and a culturally valid understanding and consideration of vulnerable and transitioning populations' perspectives and experiences. We acknowledge that Indigenous health must be viewed in a holistic context, encompassing mental health and physical, cultural and spiritual health. Country is central to wellbeing.

Encourage sustainability

We will maintain and encourage connection and responsibility of social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability in all areas of health promotion. Our natural environment is particularly important. We recognise and acknowledge the Indigenous peoples' strengths, creativity and endurance. Also, their deep understanding of the relationships between human beings and their environment.

Promote research, innovation and evidence-informed action

We will ensure that research and innovation contribute evidence to guide the formulation of policies and practices that enhance health, thereby strengthening health and sustainability in Deakin communities and wider society. Based on evidence, we will revise actions over time.

Acknowledge lived experience

We recognise that the trauma, grief, pain and anger that have resulted from the past's assimilation, segregation and protection policies are still present in the lives of indigenous people today, and the magnitude of this trauma continues to have inter-generational effects today.

Key guiding frameworks

As a university we are committed to measuring outcomes and building on success with students as our partners.

We see promoting and protecting student health and wellbeing as a significant factor in student success, and aim to mitigate the impact of poor health on student learning.

The key domains are derived from the Okanagan Charter¹, Healthy University Framework⁵ and are underpinned by the Model of Social and Emotional Wellbeing³ to guide the holistic implementation of this plan.

POLICY: Embedding health in policies

Review, create and coordinate University policies and practices with attention to health and wellbeing, so that all planning and decision-making takes account of and supports the flourishing of all people and cultures, campuses, country and communities.

'Community can take many forms. A connection to community provides opportunities for individuals and families [and our entire Deakin community] to connect with each other, support each other and work together.'

ENVIRONMENT: Creating supportive environments

Enhance the University environment, identifying opportunities to study and support health and wellbeing and resilience in the built, natural, social, economic, cultural, academic, organisational and learning environments.

'Connection to country helps underpin identity and a sense of belonging.'

CULTURE: Generating thriving communities and a culture of wellbeing

Be proactive and intentional in creating an empowered, connected and resilient student community that fosters an ethic of care, compassion, collaboration and community action.

'A connection to a culture provides a sense of continuity with the past and helps underpin a strong identity.'

LIFESTYLE: Supporting personal development

Develop and create opportunities to build student, staff and faculty resilience, competence, personal capacity and life-enhancing skills – and so support them to thrive and achieve their full potential and become engaged contributors.

'Physical health – feeling strong and healthy and able to physically participate as fully as possible in life.'

'Spirituality provides a sense of purpose and meaning.'

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES: Deliver accessible programs and services

Coordinate and design University programs and services to support equitable access, enhance health and wellbeing, optimise human potential and promote a supportive organisational culture.

'Mental health - ability to manage thoughts and feelings.'



Student health promotion framework

To address the priorities of this plan over the next three years, we will use key domains derived from the Okanagan Charter ¹³, tailored for the Deakin audience:

Policy

Embed health in all policies

Environment

Create supportive environments

Culture

Generate thriving communities and a culture of wellbeing

Lifestyle

Support personal development

Programs and services

Create or re-orient programs and services.



ENABLERS



CULTURE



ENVIRONMENT



PARTNERSHIPS



EVIDENCE

Health promotion priorities

Each health priority has a strategic focus area and key actions, representing changes we seek to influence over the life of this plan.

Mental wellbeing			Sexual health and wellbeing		Healthy eating active living		Alcohol and drugs		Personal safety
Strategic focus areas									
Promote a supportive, connected and inclusive community	Address mental health stigmatisation and promote help-seeking behaviours through peer-led initiatives	Strengthen awareness of the connection with positive mental health, physical, social and emotional wellbeing.	Promote and support optimal sexual health and wellbeing for students		Support students to understand the value in making healthier food and drink choices	Increase students' participation in physical activity and reduce students' sedentary behaviour	Continue to change risky drinking cultures, student attitudes to alcohol use and encourage alcohol reduction strategies	Mitigate the negative impacts of substance misuse by adopting a harm minimisation approach	Promote a safe and inclusive community including staying safe online.
Key actions									
Create environments (learning, living and social) that both enhance and promote positive student mental health and wellbeing, inclusion and sense of belonging with Deakin	Facilitate access to, and promote the use of culturally appropriate self-assessment and self-help tools and resources	Prioritise delivery of mental health and wellbeing activities across the University, on-campus and online	Improve students' sexual health and wellbeing literacy	Improve access to sexual health care and support	Increase students' healthy eating and food knowledge and skills * Increase availability and access to quality, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food	Expand students' understanding of the importance and benefits of regular physical activity and movement * Address barriers and increase access to leisure, sport and recreation opportunities	Create physical and social environments that positively influence drinking culture and reduce the risk of harm	Educate students on the harmful effects of, and risks associated with, substance misuse and support students to avoid, reduce or modify their use * De-normalise smoking and vaping	Ensure spaces in and around campus are safe and inclusive to prevent student injuries * Educate students on maintaining a safe online environment * Promote general community safety and wellbeing
Enablers									
Collaboration			Students as Partners				Evidence		
Partnering across Deakin and beyond Health Promotion Taskforce Priority Area Action Groups Bupa Partnership DUSA Deakin Active			Engaging the voices of students and co-design Wellbeing Ambassador Program batyr				Promoting research, innovation and evidence-informed action Inclusion & Wellbeing Student Survey (IWSS) Starting Out Survey Student Experience Survey		

Annual health promotion program

Successful initiatives from previous plans transition as part of the Health Promotion Program to an annual calendar and continue to be developed, enhanced and evaluated.

Mental wellbeing	Sexual health and wellbeing	Healthy eating and active living	Alcohol and drugs	Personal safety
Strategic focus areas				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Mental Health Day • RUOK? DAY • Mental Health Month • Mind Matters Week • Mind Matters Student Art Exhibition • Walk n Talk Program • THRIVE: Wellbeing and Study Success • DeakinWELLBEING app • Batyr Being Herd • Men’s Health Week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STI Testing Week • Women’s Health Week • You Can Ask That - Sexual & Reproductive Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Nutrition Week • Nourished@Deakin • Deakin Community Garden • Get Active April • This Girl Can Week • DeakinMOVES • DeakinPLAY • Online Wellbeing sessions • Deakin Food Charter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World No Tobacco Day • Dry July • Smoking and Vaping Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Skin Cancer Action Week • Summer Program • Online Safety - eSafety • SafeZone app • Deakin Safe
Enablers				
Collaboration	Students as Partners		Evidence	
Priority Area Action Groups Bupa Partnership DUSA DeakinACTIVE Deakin Residential Services Diabetes Australia IPAN	Wellbeing Ambassador Program batyr		Promoting research, innovation and evidence-informed action Inclusion & Wellbeing Student Survey (IWSS) Starting Out Survey Student Experience Survey	

Strategic alignment

Aligning with Deakin's strategic and legislative responsibilities.

Deakin's Student Health Promotion plan delivers on Deakin Values and the objectives outlined in Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact.

As part of **Deakin 2030 Ideas to Impact** we aim to improve health and wellbeing for our communities with a focus on:

- integrated and sustainable models of prevention
- whole-of-population health care outcomes that reduce health disparities.

Education and employability

Deakin's Education and Employability plan commits to create an engaging environment for learning that:

- builds a sense of belonging to the University; motivating and enabling students to maximise their sense of purpose and persistence.
- creates a safe, engaged communities that foster a culture of inclusion and participation, and creates a culture of belonging, safety, respect and inclusion build resilience and support all learners to achieve their goals. Students will be safe and feel safe; physically and psychologically.
- provides tailored support to promote student success. Deakin will provide tailored support to promote student success.
- fosters a culture and practice of student and staff partnership that builds respect, reciprocity and a shared responsibility.

- promotes and protects mental health and wellbeing as a significant factor in student success
- iBelong at Deakin: working with students to embed cultural intelligence including understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge in our degrees. We seek to advance Indigenous Knowledges and Peoples.

Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2022-2027

Deakin's commitment to our First Nations community through the **Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2022-2027** includes the following domains Students, Knowledge, Community Engagement, Whole of University and Indigenous Employment.

As part of Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2022-2027 strategy, Deakin recognises the value Indigenous people and Knowledge bring to our university community.

Strategic alignment

The Student Health Promotion plan aligns with and supports other Deakin strategic planning documents including the:

- Education and Employability Guiding Plan 2020-23
- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-25
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Respect and Sexual Harm Strategy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-23
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2020-25.



Governance

A coordinated 'whole-of-University' approach is being extended in the design, delivery and implementation of the Student Health Promotion Plan, ensuring inclusion and engagement across the entire student journey.

Actions will be driven from across the university and with external partnerships ensuring a coordinated effort to support the mental health and wellbeing of our students.

Governance of the Student Health Promotion Plan and Annual Action Plan will include:

- Monthly meetings of the Health Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Committee, chaired by the Executive Vice-President Futures Membership to include Executive Director Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Executive Director Student Services, Executive Director Faculty Services, Dean of Students, Director, Health and Wellbeing, Director, Institute Frontier Materials, Executive Director, Research Office, Executive Dean, SEBE, Chief People and Culture Office, People & Culture.
- Quarterly meetings of Action Leads, as listed per specific projects and initiatives. This group will report biannually to the Executive Health and Wellbeing Leadership Group.
- A Student as Partners Advisory Group (or similar) which will provide feedback, advice, and assist in program evaluation.



Evaluation framework

Improving health and wellbeing outcomes requires a long-term commitment and a shared vision and accountability across sectors. The success of this Plan requires a whole-of-University approach, bringing together specialist knowledge and expertise across a range of areas within Deakin, as well as partnerships with external stakeholders.

The measurement framework

Deakin is committed to the effective evaluation and measurement of the impact of the Student Health Promotion Plan and annual Action Plans. The 2023 Action Plan includes the development of an evaluation framework for the plan.

In the interim, progress and impact will be assessed in several different ways, including monitoring and reporting of data relevant to mental health and wellbeing as follows:

- Student lived experience and survey data
- Engagement and evaluation of health promotion and wellbeing initiatives
- A bi-annual report will be collated and provided to the Governance group, monitoring progress and guiding future actions.

The success of this plan will require a whole of University approach, bringing together research, specialist knowledge and expertise across a range of areas within Deakin.



REFERENCES

1. Okanagan Charter: An international charter for health-promoting universities & colleges. (2015)
 2. Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2023-2028, (2022)
 3. National Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework, National Indigenous Australians Agency (2017)
 4. Deakin Students as Partners Guiding Principles
 5. Healthy Universities Initiative
 6. Deakin 2030 Ideas to Impact Strategic Plan, (2021)
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