

# Student Mental Health Agreement 2024-2026

# OUR COMMITMENT

Ayrshire College and the Ayrshire College Student Association are committed to promoting the positive wellbeing of all students. This commitment is laid out in our college Equality Outcomes which are aligned to the National Equality Outcomes. You can find these here: [National Equality Outcomes](#)

The College demonstrates its commitment through the Promoting Wellbeing action plan 2024-2026 as well as the structures, processes and mechanisms currently in place including a Mental Health Liaison Officer, an Alcohol and Drugs Liaison Officer and an active Student Association.

Our SMHA is shaped not only through our commitments to students' wellbeing but through the student voice also. The student voice is heard through the VIEW Group, through our Student Executive Committee, through our Wear it on Your Sleeve and Wellbeing Ambassadors. We regularly seek the thoughts, ideas and opinions of our wider student body through our annual engagement surveys and focus groups.

This Student Mental Health Agreement is a further demonstration of the College's and the Student Association's commitment. It outlines key actions that will be taken together to ensure all Ayrshire College students are safe, supported and enabled to achieve success during their time with us.

Both the College and the Student Association will work hard to achieve these actions and will report on their successes in 2025.

The SMHA will remain active and in place throughout 2024 and 2025, and then in 2026 the SMHA would undergo a full review with a view to implementing a new agreement.

# What is available at Ayrshire College for Mental Health and Wellbeing?

At Ayrshire College we aim to offer a variety of Mental Health and Wellbeing resources for students.

The Student Experience Team offer wellbeing and pastoral support to students. They can refer you to the College's Counselling Service in addition to our Mental Health Liaison Officer and Alcohol and Drugs Liaison Officer. Our Student Experience Engagement and Wellbeing team can deliver targeted workshops covering a wide range of wellbeing topics. Our Mental Health Liaison Officer delivers specialised 121 sessions and workshops along with driving mental health and wellbeing campaigns within the college.

Additionally, there are a wide variety of dedicated digital resources for Mental Health and Wellbeing, including the Wellbeing Hub and Student Wellbeing Toolkit. These are available on our My Ayrshire College App and have direct links to resources. Speak to the Information Hub, your lecturer or the Student Experience team for more information.

New to the college is also a dedicated Mental Health and Wellbeing App called "Mind Thyself". This has been created in collaboration with the NHS, our NHS Mental Health Liaison Officer and other key staff members. The app hosts a wide range of information on a variety of Mental Health topics, contains links to websites and can start calls to Mental Health Support services when used on a mobile device.

Our students also offer Peer-to-Peer support through our Wear it on Your Sleeve Community, which is aimed at Men's Mental Health and is an online space where men can share information and resources amongst each other. Additionally, we have a small network of Wellbeing Ambassadors who offer signposting to other students to ensure that students know how to access the information and support that they need.

This is all supported by our regular Mental Health and Wellbeing Campaigns including:

- World Mental Health Day
- Time to Talk Days
- World Mental Health Awareness Week
- S-Word Campaign

# Get more details on Ayrshire College's Mental Health Services!

Ayrshire College and the Student Association work in close partnership with the National Union of Students Think Positive Project.



Ayrshire College has a "hub" on the Think Positive website which lists all of the Mental Health support services that we offer.

Visit the Hub at: <https://thinkpositive.scot/resources/ayrshire-college/>

# Our Aims and Outcomes

## Outcome 1

Students have an awareness of Mental Health and Wellbeing, how it affects their ability to live and learn and the support available

### To achieve this, we will:

1. Host and support a range of Mental Health and Wellbeing Events, that also promote college services, throughout the academic year such as Freshers, Winter well-being festival and time to talk days.
2. Continue to develop the Student Association led Wear it on your sleeve initiative which is a men focussed group for sharing mental health resources.
3. Continue to provide student clubs, groups and societies which promote a sense of belonging and encourage student self-care
4. Support at least three campaigns focussing on mental health and wellbeing in partnership with the College's Promoting Wellbeing Group
5. Raise awareness of support available including and the Report & Support reporting tool during Student Induction and Freshers and throughout the year
6. Raise awareness of suicide through The 'S' Word Campaign

### We will know we have been successful when:

There is an increased number of students using College support services. We will demonstrate this through uptake of the services, attendance at events and use of Report and Support

More male students have engaged with Wear It On Your Sleeve and we will have set up additional activities for male students such as our male mental health drop in.

We have increased the number of groups, clubs and societies from 5 to 10 and we are continuing to offer membership to students.

We have provided information and resources for World Mental Health Day, World Mental Health Awareness Week and My Mental Health Matters Month.

Students will have increased awareness of the Report and Support Tool. Staff have supported students to use the tool and information on how to access the tool is readily available.

There is an increase in numbers of students reporting through the student feedback processes that they are aware of, and know how to access support services.

**'Everyone has mental health.  
Sometimes we need help  
with ours and that's okay.**

**We want students to be  
aware of their own mental  
health and wellbeing, how it  
impacts them and where and  
how they can access help  
when they need it'.**

# Our Aims and Outcomes

## Outcome 2

Support is available and accessible to all students and the stigma of Mental Health is reduced

### **To achieve this, we will:**

1. Continue to develop and deliver a range of student workshops in relation to mental health and wellbeing such as Mental Health & Wellbeing, Drugs & Alcohol Awareness and Hate Crime workshops.
2. Continue to identify and provide safe spaces for students to talk about their mental health and practice self-care such as the counselling areas and contemplation rooms.
3. Continue to update and promote the resources available through the Wellbeing Hub and promote the Think Positive Hub
4. Develop a Student Mental Health Project to offer peer support through Mental Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors. These Ambassadors will be students who volunteer to support fellow students by signposting, raising awareness and supporting Student Association Mental Health & Wellbeing campaigns and events.

### **We will know we have been successful when:**

We deliver 40 mental health related workshops to 400 students.

There is an increased number of students using College support services.

There is an increase in numbers of students using the contemplation rooms.

There is an increase in students and staff accessing the Wellbeing Hub and Think positive Hub.

We have recruited at least three Mental Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors on each campus

**'We have a diverse student community, and we want everyone to have the opportunity to thrive by being able to access college support services quickly and easily when they need them'**



# Our Aims and Outcomes

## Outcome 3

**Students have the tools, resources and safe social spaces they require to help manage their own self care.**

To achieve this, we will:

- 1.Support the creation and implementation of social groups, clubs, societies and related activities to enable increased student access to self-care opportunities
- 2.Support the facilitation and implementation of an accessible contemplation room on each main campus and provide students with resources they may need, such as prayer mats and self-care resources.
- 3.Give students access to self-care literature, both in paper, digital and accessible formats through the Learning Resource Centre.
- 4.Ensure male Students have access to a peer support with regards to their mental health through the Wear it On Your Sleeve group
- 5.Promote the Digital Wellbeing guidance and ensure the Student Voice is at the heart of the review of the Digital Strategy
- 6.Support the implementation of the new Ayrshire College Mental Health App “Mind Thyself” which will ensure students have ready access to mental health and mental health crisis resources
- 7.Track and monitor retention and attainment of students who have declared Mental Health conditions

### **We will know we have been successful when:**

Student engagement in Student Association clubs and societies increases.

Students who take part in Student Association clubs and societies report a positive impact on their wellbeing through the Student Association evaluation and enhancement process and student voice mechanisms.

There is an increase in students accessing the Contemplation Room on each campus and through the student voice, we can evaluate the benefit to the student experience

There is an increase in male students accessing Wear it on Your Sleeve peer support group

There is a body of students who are downloading and accessing the Mind Thyself student mental health app

There is an increase in students taking up leadership & facilitation roles within the Student Association as Executive Officers, Club Facilitators or Wellbeing Ambassadors.

There is an increase in retention and attainment of students with a declared MH condition.

**'Coming to College is about more than getting an education. We need activities, opportunities and spaces which foster a sense of safety and belonging and help us to feel less isolated and part of the college community'.**

# Our Aims and Outcomes

## Outcome 4

**Staff feel confident and comfortable in supporting students to manage their own self-care and feel equipped and supported to manage their own mental health and wellbeing**

To achieve this, we will:

- 1.Ensure the Staff Learning and Development programme and the Management Development programme includes wellbeing focuses by May 2025
- 2.The number of courses with a wellbeing focus on the staff learning portal increases each year.
- 3.Identify and share examples of best practice related to wellbeing across the College through the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Newsletter and the Promoting Wellbeing Group annual report.
- 4.Deliver a staff wellbeing event each year.
- 5.Continue to work with College partners to deliver staff training

**We will know we have been successful when:**

Staff report feeling supported and have an improved awareness, knowledge and skills on mental health, wellbeing strategies and support available

The % of staff accessing non-mandatory e-learning with a wellbeing focus increases.

The number of staff engaging in staff wellbeing activities increases.

The % of staff engaging in training from College partners increases.

**'Ayrshire College can only be the best place for students to learn and grow if we make it the best place for staff to work and grow'.**

# Our Aims and Outcomes

## Outcome 5

**Ensure that robust evaluation processes are in place to monitor and review the impact of the Student Mental Health Agreement**

To achieve this, we will:

1. Include at least one question about mental health and wellbeing in the annual College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey
2. Facilitate two student focus groups per year on each campus focussing on mental health and wellbeing
3. Use the Promoting Wellbeing action plan tracker to monitor and review progress and carry out a mid-point review of the SMHA
4. The College and Student Association commit to review the SMHA self-evaluation together at the end of each academic year and submit this to Think Positive.

We will know we have been successful when:

Robust evaluation processes are in place to support the monitoring and review of progress and impact of the Student Mental Health Agreement

We have good quality student feedback with regards to student Mental Health and Wellbeing with which we can measure impact of the Student Mental Health Agreement

Representatives from the College and Student Association work together to complete and submit the SMHA self-evaluation each year.

Our successes need to be monitored and reviewed through the Promoting Wellbeing group, so that we are confident we are making a difference.

**'Ayrshire College and the Student Association are committed to supporting good Mental Health for all who come to college.'**

**We hope to make students time at the college the best it can be.'**

“Student Mental Health will always be a priority at Ayrshire College. It’s great to have this Student Mental Health Agreement in place, as it’s our pledge to the Students that we care about their Mental Health. We want everyone coming to the college to have the best experience they can.”

Tim Chan  
Student Vice President  
2023-2024

“Ayrshire College is committed to ensuring our Students are able develop their Mental Health resilience during their time at college and to be able to access the necessary support when they or a friend are struggling.”

Angela Cox  
Principal  
Ayrshire College



Tim Chan  
Student President



Angela Cox  
Principal and Chief Executive

Ayrshire  
College 

 Student  
association