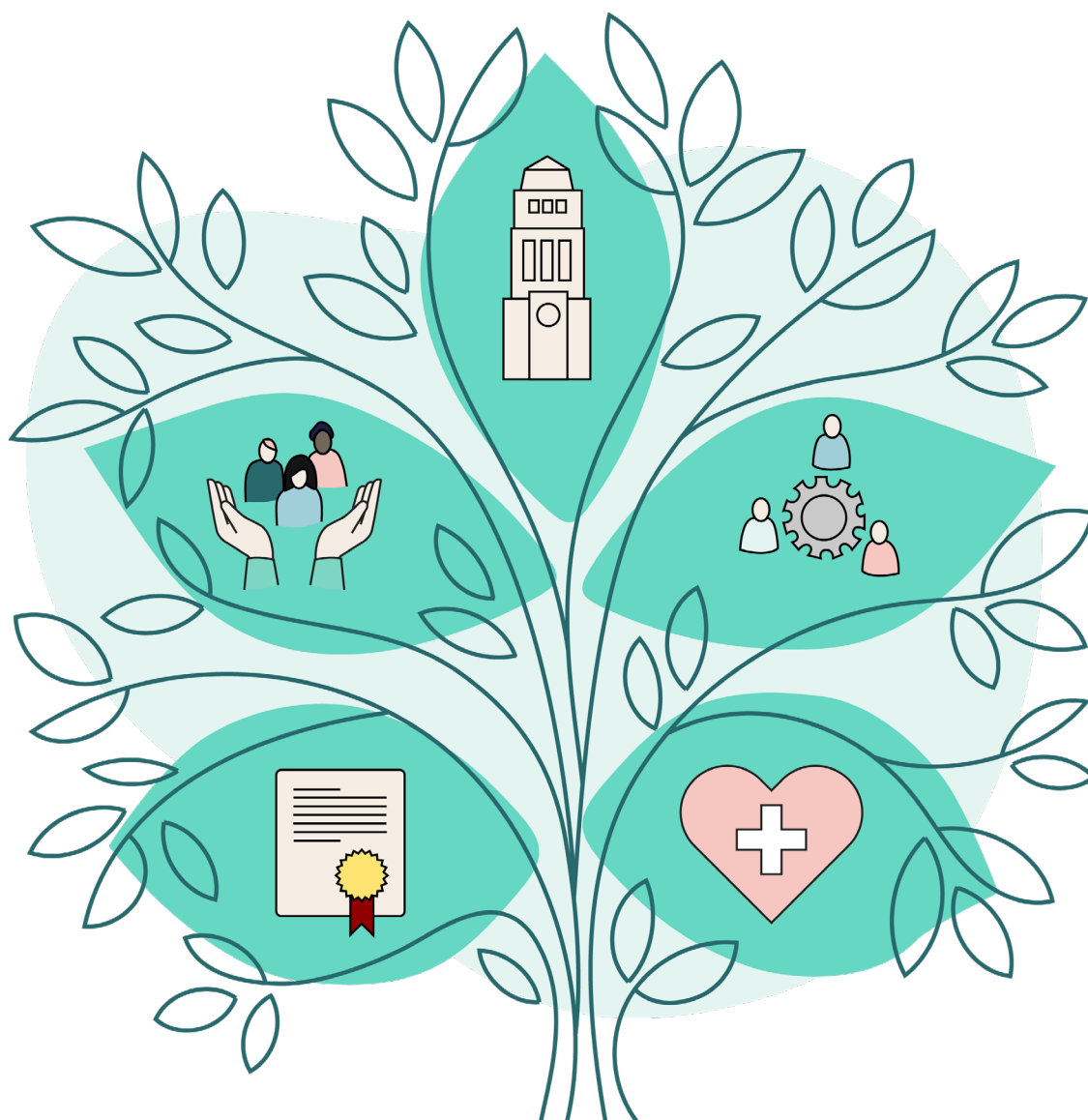




UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Wellbeing, Safety and Health

Annual Report 2023-2024



Health &
Wellbeing

you+me

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The Wellbeing, Safety and Health Annual Report provides an overview of the Service's progress and performance towards meeting its strategic aims and objectives during the period 1 August 2023 – 31 July 2024.

Foreword

2023/24 has been another productive and rewarding year for the Wellbeing, Safety and Health Service, filled with many highlights and successes. Our teams have continued to provide exceptional standards of support and consultancy across the University to ensure our staff, students, and visitors experience a safe and healthy environment at Leeds.

Over the last 12 months the Service has undergone substantial growth and transformation. We've increased our staff resources, modernised our systems and facilities, and brought several ambitious projects to life. Among these were the launch of the University's first workplace health and wellbeing plan, 'Our Wellbeing Together', and the official opening of The Wellbeing Hub. Both projects were developed in partnership with multiple teams across the University over several years, so it has been fantastic to see these initiatives come to fruition and be received so positively by colleagues.

Continuing the trend of recent years, referrals to Occupational Health and Staff Counselling have increased. Once again, the teams have responded to this growing demand with great agility and commitment, whilst maintaining a first-class service for our community. The increase in referrals is seen as a positive development, indicating greater awareness of our services and how to access them. Although more of our colleagues are seeking support, there is a reduction in the number of onward appointments required — highlighting the benefits of early intervention in minimising longer-term health issues.

The year has seen further improvements in our health and safety culture across the University. The Health and Safety Management Profile (HASMAPP) audits have proved a valuable tool in ensuring faculties and schools apply a consistent approach to embedding best practice, and we've successfully maintained ISO 45001 certification.



BritSafe training compliance remains high and advances have been made in the Occupational Health and Safety Management System - in particular, protocol developments and fire safety.

Providing direction to the Fire Safety Programme Board, and stakeholders throughout the University estate, remains a crucial area of focus. The tragic events of Grenfell and the recent inquiry report highlight the devastating consequences of major incidents. I'm incredibly grateful for the Fire Safety team's continued diligence, working closely with the Facilities Directorate, to ensure we have robust management plans in place to safeguard our community and maintain the highest levels of legislative compliance.

Looking ahead

The workplace of today undoubtedly looks very different to a few years ago. As changes in working practices continue to embed, WSH teams are constantly reviewing and refocusing work activities to ensure we maintain high standards of health and safety, and meet the evolving wellbeing needs of staff.

Over the next year, we will continue the work already underway in developing our suite of protocols and modernising our systems. Key areas of attention will be ensuring fire safety compliance with the Building Safety Act 2022, improving our risk assessment processes and exploring options to digitise how these are stored and monitored. Recent geopolitical tensions have seen major incidents occurring both at home and abroad so strengthening our travel risk assessments and our approach to supporting critical incidents will be a priority over the coming months.

The results of the 2024 Employee Engagement Pulse Survey showed progress in the proportion of staff responding favourably to 'health and wellbeing is prioritised at Leeds'. We are heading in the right direction but recognise that developing this area requires patience as we steadily work to improve cultures around wellbeing, working practices and balance a variety of perspectives and needs. Mental health awareness is an ongoing, critical area and growing the competence and confidence of our managers and staff - to discuss and facilitate mental health-related conversations - is paramount. The upcoming launch of our 'Understanding Stress' training module will help us on our way towards normalising wellbeing conversations and increasing awareness of the support available to colleagues.

This report provides just a snapshot of WSH's many achievements this year. We continue to drive improvements in our support and processes, and consistently uphold high standards of compliance in inspections and audits. I am incredibly grateful for the expertise, talent, and dedication of our teams and would like to thank everyone for their ongoing collaborative spirit and the important role they play in keeping our University community safe and well.



Paul Veevers
Director - Wellbeing,
Safety and Health

Highlights and Achievements

13th

consecutive RoSPA Gold Award



52

'Our Wellbeing Together' briefing sessions delivered to **900+** staff

14th

successive year of ISO 45001:2018 certification

121

new Fire Wardens trained, **56** Fire Wardens received refresher training

187

new First Aiders trained, **32** First Aiders completed requalification training

1159

management referrals supported by the Occupational Health Service

1148

staff members received 1-to-1 support through the Staff Counselling and Psychological Support Service

5851

immunisations and blood tests provided by Occupational Health for medicine and healthcare students

204

Health and Wellbeing Champions in post

2528

Wellbeing Hub visitors

Health and Safety: Developments and Compliance

ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems

During 2024, the University was externally audited and retained its ISO 45001 certification - the international standard for Health and Safety Management Systems. The following areas to successfully achieve this were:

- Wellbeing Safety and Health (including University Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems)
- Information Technology Service
- Facilities Directorate
- Faculty of Medicine and Health
- Faculty of Biological Sciences (now including Central Biomedical Sciences)
- Library Service

The University is continuing its aim of attaining ISO 45001 within the remaining faculties and services across the institution.

BritSafe online training

The University compliance figures for compulsory BritSafe online training are produced annually to monitor compliance. 2023/24 data indicates average completion levels are being maintained with an overall 87% across the three modules: Fire Safety (Fire); Display Screen Equipment (DSE); and Manual Handling (MH).

Compliance data for BritSafe online training as measured on 20 September 2024

	Compliance data (%)				
	Staff numbers	Fire	DSE	MH	Average
Faculty of Biological Sciences	387	86%	90%	93%	90%
Professional Services	4440	92%	92%	93%	93%
Faculty of Medicine and Health	1747	77%	84%	87%	83%
Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences	1024	92%	94%	96%	94%
Leeds University Business School	434	88%	93%	94%	92%
Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures	941	79%	84%	89%	84%
Faculty of Social Sciences	404	79%	80%	86%	82%
Faculty of Environment	761	78%	83%	87%	83%
University of Leeds	10,138	84%	88%	91%	87%

Technical support and advice

Over the last 12 months WSH has continued to offer professional technical support and advice on a wide range of construction and refurbishment developments.

The Fire Safety Programme Board has been operational during 2023/24 which has required significant support from the Fire Safety Team.

Continual liaison and assurance have been provided to the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding our residential portfolio.

Service level agreements remain in place with NEXUS (and companies operating under this agreement), Bright Beginnings, Unipol and Leeds University Union, to offer ongoing advisory support.

Health and safety training

During the reporting period, 187 new first aiders were trained at the University and a further 32 completed their requalification training.

Fire Warden training was delivered to 121 new recruits, and refresher training to 56 members of the Fire Warden network.

Enforcement visits

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Following the detection of poliovirus in a routine sewage sample at the Leeds Knostrop site, an investigation was conducted by the HSE and UKSHA to determine whether the source was connected to research activity within the Faculty of Biological Sciences.

Whilst the investigation could not identify the exact source, it was likely to have originated from University operations. Ongoing health surveillance activities were undertaken which found there had been no harm to anyone within the institution or the wider public.

The University has since undergone a comprehensive review of its procedures and practices for the safe disposal and disinfection of biological agents. A planned, external biological safety audit has provided further analysis of the strength of our systems and work is underway to build on the good work and processes, already in place, to address identified improvement areas.

Health and Safety Executive

The University was inspected by the HSE under The Management of Health and Safety Regulation 1999 and The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (as amended). The inspection focused on specific biological work at Containment Level 3, and work with larger genetically modified organisms (LGMOs).

The inspection was completed in August to the satisfaction of the HSE.

Office of Nuclear Regulations (ONR)

Inspectors from the ONR visited the University to review our arrangements and management of nuclear materials. The Inspectors reported that the onsite visit, and review of our documents were suitable. No further information or action was required.

Accident and Incident Data

The following table provides an overview of the accidents and incidents reported on the University's Sentinel system during the period 1 August 2023 – 31 August 2024. A comparison column provides 2022/2023 data.

	2023/24	2022/23
Total incidents reported on Sentinel	1667	1824
Injury or ill health	816	934
Near misses	298	289
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)	9	11
Dangerous occurrences	0	1
Reportable occupational disease	1	2
Fires	3	8
Fire alarms	428	475

None of the above accidents resulted in an investigation by the HSE.



Health and Safety Management Profile

The Health and Safety Management Profile (HASMMap) is a management standard and internal audit tool which has been developed for use in Higher Education by the Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA).

It is based on the HSE publication, ‘Successful Health and Safety Management (HSG 65)’ and aligned to BS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. HASMAP has 3 levels of assurance Basic, Substantial, and High (although Partial Basic may also be reported).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

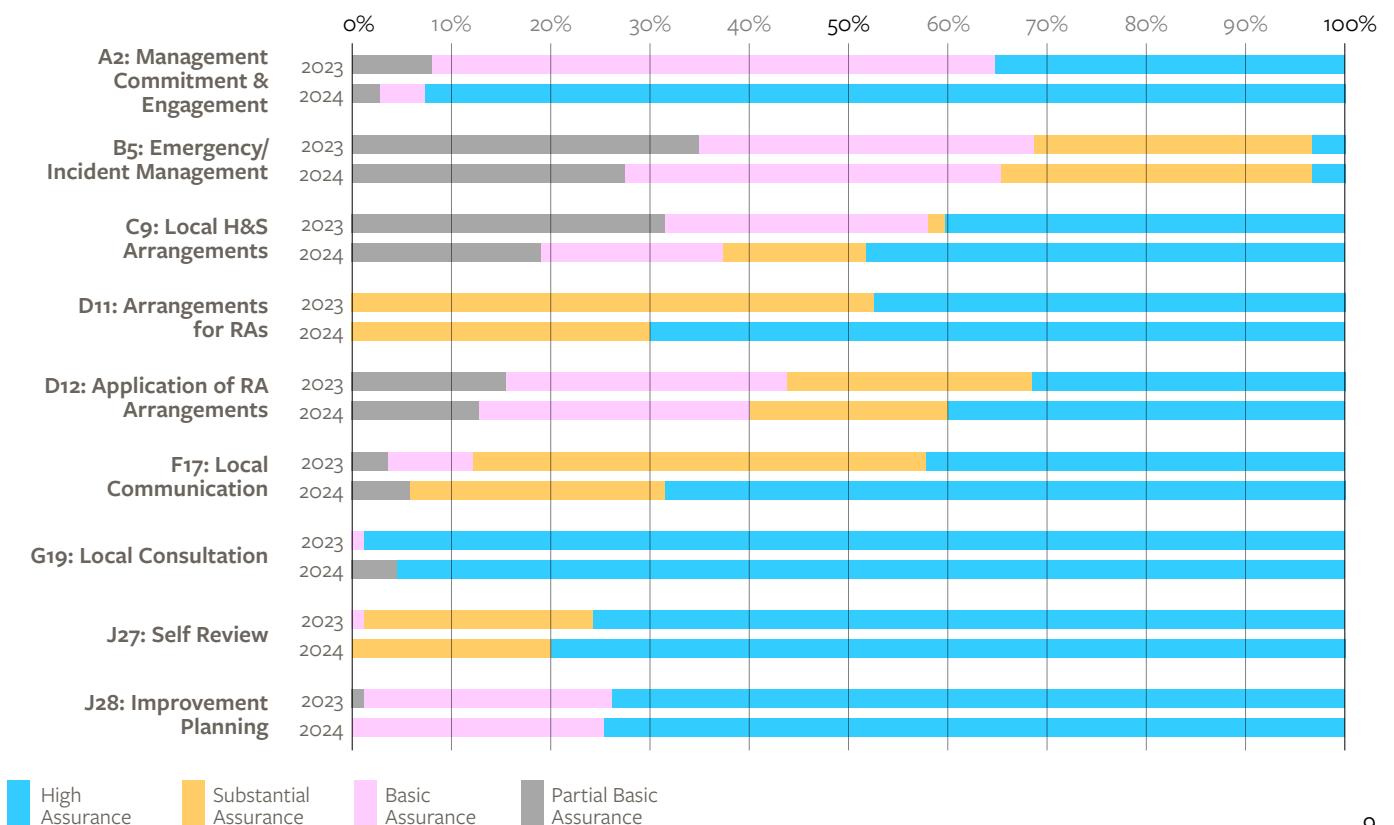
Our KPIs, which are selected from 9 themes within HASMAP, are essential to our health and safety monitoring processes to ensure continual improvement, achievement of University health and safety objectives and ISO 45001 compliance.

July 2023 data provided our first benchmark results against which future performance is measured, with the aim of achieving High Assurance for all 9 KPIs by July 2025.

The 2024 scores are summarised in the following graph, which also provides a comparison with the 2023 results and the progress made.

Summary of KPIs

Extract from HASMAP audit tool 2024



These results show that scores have improved for the majority of KPIs. A2 Management Commitment and Engagement has shown the most progress made, largely due to the completion of training. D11 Arrangements for Risk Assessments and F17 Local Communication have also shown notable improvements in their scores.

There are several areas where performance requires further development. B5 Emergency/ Incident Management indicates some improvement, but still holds the lowest score overall. Work at an organisation level relating to critical incident management plans is progressing well and we should start to see improvements in this area as these plans are embedded locally.

In line with the Health and Safety Monitoring Protocol, each faculty/ school/ service will consider their individual levels of assurance. Completion of the actions raised electronically via SafetyCulture is important to ensure that those with Partial Basic Assurance are progressed as a priority. These actions will also provide the route for attaining High Assurance by July 2025.



Protocols and Policies

Our Wellbeing Together

In March, we published 'Our Wellbeing Together' — the University's first organisational-wide approach to improving health and wellbeing in the workplace. The plan introduces a new University health and wellbeing pledge which is supported by four institutional ambitions, and a framework of detailed measurable actions.

To raise awareness of the plan, its purpose, and to gather colleague feedback, 52 briefing sessions were held across the University engaging more than 900 members of staff. To date the plan has received 1,700 unique views on the staff intranet pages.

Significant progress has already been made in delivering a range of commitments. Moving forward, priorities will be guided by the 2024/25 PwC internal audit on staff health and wellbeing provision, employee engagement survey results, and ongoing feedback from colleagues to ensure our plans are needs-driven and impactful.

Health and Safety Protocol Updates

Health and Safety Protocols establish standards, guidance and procedures to ensure any risks associated with University activities are effectively controlled, minimised or removed. Systematic reviews of protocols are led by the Health and Safety team to address legal changes, audit requirements, and the development of best practice. During the reporting period, the following protocols were revised and updated following consultation with the University community and campus Trade Unions:

- Events Health and Safety
- Health and Safety Monitoring
- Risk Management of Asbestos
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committees
- Management of Sources of Ionising Radiation

Work-Related Stress Protocol

In April, a new Work-Related Stress Protocol was launched following a review of the University's existing Management of Work-Related Stress Policy.

This included the introduction of an Individual Wellbeing Action Plan (IWAP) – a template for individuals and their managers to structure discussions about perceived stressors at work and/ or at home in order to explore support options/ temporary adjustments. The IWAP incorporates the HSE's Management Standards and is designed to be a more proactive and solution-focused tool than the previous Individual Stress Management Action Plan (ISMAP).

The transition from policy to protocol, whilst subtle, is important. It shifts the institution's approach from position and values to an auditable framework where our procedures to mitigate stress in the workplace are action-based, consistent and meet high regulatory standards.

Health and Wellbeing of the University Community

Occupational Health (OH)

Management referrals

The OH Service has seen a 29% increase in management referrals in the last 12 months. Advice on workplace adjustments, assessment of fitness to work and long-term absence/return to work advice remain the leading areas of activity.

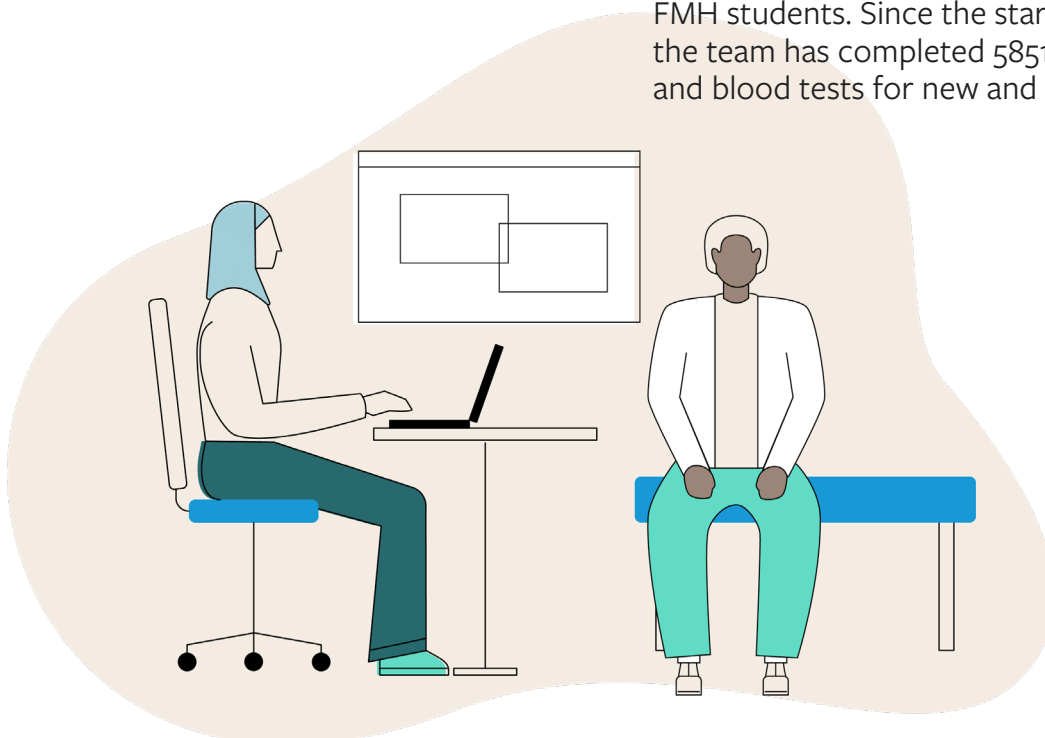
Consistent with trends at comparator institutions, there has been an increase in referrals for musculoskeletal issues. The Service's in-house physiotherapy team completed 691 consultations during the reporting period, a 50% rise from the previous year.

Management referral software update

To streamline and enhance the Service's systems and processes, OH has upgraded its management referral software to Cority. This software will be integrated with the University's Corporate Processes and Systems (CPS), offering colleagues better visibility and control over their data, as well as an improved means to capture, monitor, and report emerging trends and insights.

Faculty of Medicine and Health (FMH) contract for students

In April 2023, the OH Service began providing the University's contract for pre-registration health screenings and on course support for FMH students. Since the start of the contract the team has completed 5851 immunisations and blood tests for new and existing students.



Staff Counselling and Psychological Support Service (SCPSS)

The SCPSS team supports the workplace and/or personal wellbeing of our staff through their confidential and professional consultation service, and a rolling programme of training events, workshops and role-based consultancy sessions.

SCPSS self-referrals

2023/2024 has seen a continuing, upward trend of colleagues accessing the counselling service. 592 self-referrals were made from new clients, a 4% increase from the previous year.

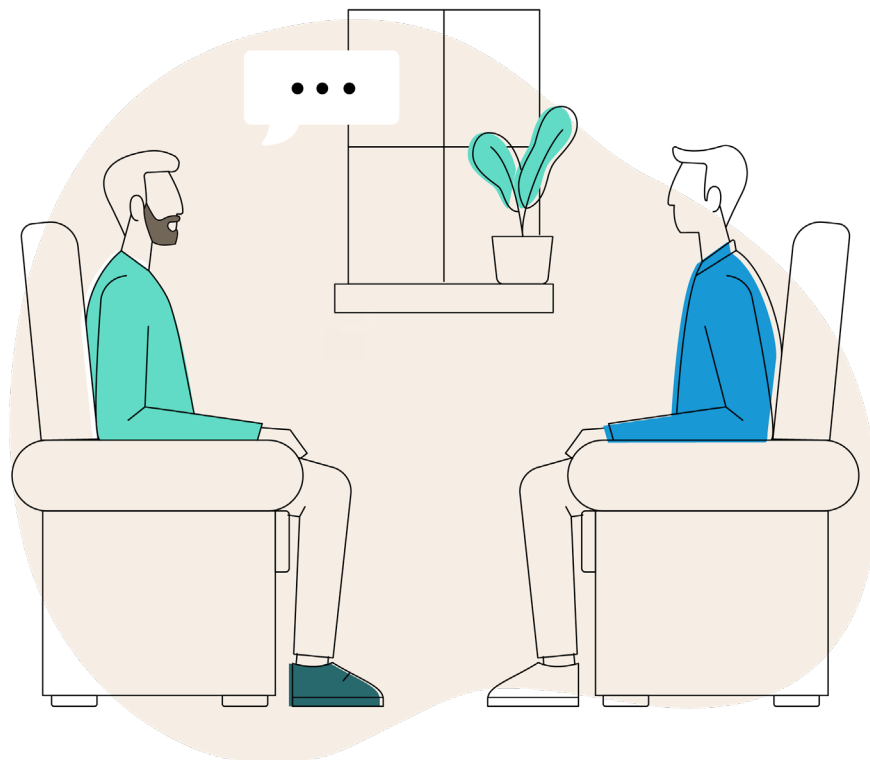
The main presenting factors to the counselling service were:

- work-related issues including workload, role expectations and career satisfaction
- cases related to anxiety
- cases related to family/ relationships
- cases related to trauma/ health

To meet the developing needs of colleagues and minimise waiting periods, an additional full-time counsellor has been appointed to the SCPSS team. We have also extended the provision available through our third-party partner, Mind Matters and actively promoted the University's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Role-Based Mental Health Training for Frontline Staff (RMBHT)

RMBHT provides tailored guidance and support to staff who are first responders to critical incidents involving students and staff. In partnership with the Digital Education Service, this workshop has been developed into a new online resource to engage a broader audience and provide 'just-in-time' support for our staff.



Health and Wellbeing Team

The Wellbeing Hub

This year, the University's Wellbeing Hub officially opened, offering a dedicated on-campus space for colleagues to access health, wellbeing, and learning opportunities. The launch of this new centre has played a key role in boosting staff engagement and expanding the range of activities we provide. Each week, a variety of scheduled health and wellbeing sessions are available, including yoga, arts and crafts, meditation and stretch, qigong, and book swaps. Since its opening in March, the Wellbeing Hub has welcomed 2,528 visitors, highlighting the significant role the hub will play in encouraging and enabling colleagues to incorporate health and wellbeing into their working day.

Training and development

Our provision of workplace health and wellbeing workshops continues to be a priority for WSH and our delivery partners. Our central Management Essentials course 'Health and Wellbeing for Leaders and Managers' remains oversubscribed, which has led to a rising number of bespoke workshop requests. Over the last 12 months, 4 workshops were delivered via OD&PL and 16 tailored sessions to a range of services and faculties – a 12% increase from the previous year.

Health and Wellbeing Champions

204 volunteers now in post across the University, a 29% increase from the previous year

Menopause Support

12 Meno-Pause for Thought Cafes

9 OD&PL Menopause in the Workplace sessions delivered

Financial Wellbeing

49 members of staff supported through the University's partnership with financial advice charity Money Buddies