



# Student Mental Health Agreement

2023 Edition



# 02

## Student Mental Health Agreement



Forth Valley College and the Student Association have developed a student mental health agreement to pledge our promise to provide students with Mental Health and Well-being support surrounding their studies and personal life and to help and support their educational attainment.

*"SIMPLY PUT, WE ARE ALL IMPACTED BY OUR MENTAL HEALTH, AND IT AFFECTS NOT ONLY HOW WE FEEL, BUT ALSO OUR ABILITY TO WORK, ENGAGE AND LEARN EFFICIENTLY."*

### Committee Members

**Head of Inclusion and Student Services**

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**Vice President, FVSA**

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# Our Aim 03

At Forth Valley College and the Student Association, we are aware of the importance of promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and members. Simply put, we are all impacted by our mental health, and it affects not only how we feel, but also our ability to work, engage and learn efficiently. We are committed to working together to offer a learning and social environment that is free from mental health stigma and that supports students to achieve their goals.

The new Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA) aims to raise awareness and promote positive wellbeing for students during their time at Forth Valley College (FVC). The agreement sets out the College and Students Association's commitment to working in partnership to promote the mental wellbeing of all students and members. The agreement intends to have a constructive impact on student wellbeing, through regular engagement and enhanced support services for students.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way we engage with students and other members of staff. This agreement has been designed with remote and blended learning in mind. All discussions to choose the pledges were held through group discussion via online meetings and by using a central working group area in Microsoft teams. To identify gaps in support, we conducted a mapping exercise for staff which allowed us to develop a student survey. The student wellbeing survey was available to identify key support requirements that students are aware of or would like to see more of. It also allowed us to examine the areas they feel most at ease with when seeking out support. Mapping and survey responses provided both qualitative and quantitative data that will be used as baseline information to build on which we felt was a good opportunity to help students improve their attainment and achievement.



**Prof. Ken Thomson OBE**  
Principal, CEO



**Claire Green**  
Student Vice President

# 04

## Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

**1.To highlight support services, both internal and external, that are available to students throughout the academic year.**

At Forth Valley College, there are many different support services, some overlapping which at times, can be confusing for students to navigate their way through. We use a variety of digital platforms such as Moodle and Microsoft Teams as well as producing monthly student newsletters. We also use social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. It is important that we raise awareness on services provided so that students know what support is available and how to access it.

**We aim to achieve this by:**

- a. Raising awareness of support on campus as well as with local and national partners.
- b. Increasing awareness of our internal services via our digital and social media platforms.
- c. Raising awareness of external support agencies via internal advertising on ezine/e-focus, and other digital sources such as Moodle.



# Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

# 05

**2. To hold mental health events and activities throughout the year to raise awareness, offer support and guidance as well as challenge stigma and discrimination.**

Managing our mental health can be challenging for many of our students, not only for those who are coping with poor mental health themselves but also those who may be supporting family members or friends. For some students, mental health may be something they do not know much about. Forth Valley College and the Student Association want to build up knowledge around mental health, what support we offer, what external organisations we work with and challenge any misconceptions of mental health issues.

**We aim to achieve this by:**

- a. Identify where mental health awareness is embedded into the curriculum, which can include; understanding the nature of mental wellbeing, promoting positive wellbeing practice and reducing stigma and look for opportunities to share best practice.
- b. Publishing a calendar of events so students see what is happening over the year and make it available in different formats.
- c. Creating a digital page on Moodle for students where all events and activities can be found in the one place.
- d. Providing a programme of events that meet the issues and interests of the students as expressed by them via feedback and evaluation.

# 06

## Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

### **3. To provide development opportunities to students to support themselves and each other.**

Forth Valley College and the Student Association want to support students in developing the skills and knowledge required to support themselves and the people around them. By developing these skills, it will help them manage their own mental health out with college and beyond.

#### **We aim to achieve this by:**

- a. The development and implementation of team building workshops to enhance social engagement and bonding within classes to reduce social isolation and enhance the learner experience.
- b. Training for Class Reps on mental health so they can support their classmates.
- c. Training courses from the Scottish Recovery Network will be available for all students who wish to support their peers in Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- d. Providing advice and guidance to students who want to support peers. This will include information of how to safeguard themselves.
- e. Gathering feedback and ideas through evaluations to develop this programme ensuring it is student led.

# Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

# 07

## **4. Develop our digital platforms and teaching approaches to give students the autonomy to navigate support and information themselves.**

Forth Valley College and the Student Association want to help students become confident, resilient and strong individuals and an important part of this is to equip them with the skills needed to be able to support themselves and each other.



### **We aim to achieve this by:**

- a. Identify where mental health awareness is embedded into the curriculum, which can include; understanding the nature of mental wellbeing, promoting positive wellbeing practice and reducing stigma and look for opportunities to share best practice.
- b. Publishing a calendar of events so students see what is happening over the year and make it available in different formats.

# 08

## Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

**4. Develop our digital platforms and teaching approaches to give students the autonomy to navigate support and information themselves.**

**We aim to achieve this by (continued):**

- c. Raising awareness of local and national digital resources via our own platforms that are subject specific.
- d. Ensuring our platforms and approaches are accessible and do not cause undue stress or anxiety.
- e. Risk assess and evaluate how we approach blended learning to identify what considerations need to be made concerning stress instigated by technology.
- f. Review, evaluate and develop our current digital platform to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the student community.
- g. Via support and teaching staff, ensure that students develop their digital skills to feel confident in using college digital platforms.
- h. Using student feedback to ensure we provide services relevant to their needs.



# Forth Valley College and FVSA Pledges

# 09

## **5. To provide students a variety of different activities that will promote relaxation and positive wellbeing.**

Supporting students who are experiencing mental ill health is vital to helping them to achieve their educational goals. It is also important that we support them to develop and maintain positive wellbeing. By providing different wellbeing activities, this will allow us to take a proactive and holistic approach to maintain mental health.

### **We aim to achieve this by:**

- a. Developing a wide range of activities to suit all interests and abilities.
- b. Utilising various online platforms to ensure accessibility regardless of location i.e campus, home etc.
- c. Working with marketing to promote these activities so that students are aware of what is available to them.



