



MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Policy Statement

Truro and Penwith College are committed to recognising the importance of mental health for students, staff and college users. Truro and Penwith College will offer advice and support for students with mental health difficulties and signpost to external agencies for continued support. Under the policy students will be encouraged to disclose any mental health difficulties in order that the correct level of support may be given.

The College's Mission is to "provide the best possible learning experience, leading to the highest possible level of achievements by our students". We are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment, in which diversity is welcomed, valued, and celebrated, so that all our students fulfil their potential. We will continue to promote equality in all our activities, tackle discrimination, widen participation and increase social inclusion.

The College Aims to:

- **Promote Mental Health Awareness:** Increase understand and reduce stigmas associated with mental health problems through Tutorial Programme, Student Services campaigns and staff development.
- **Ensure Accessible Student Support:** Provide access to mental health support through Student Services and the Safeguarding Team.
- **Foster a Safe and Inclusive Environment:** Create a supportive environment that respects the diversity of students, staff and college users including those with mental health problems. Ensuring individuals feel safe to seek help with fear or judgement.
- **Support Early Identification and Intervention:** The Safeguarding Team will support students to access support at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation.
- **Embed Mental health within Tutorial:** Tutorial Programme to have sessions on mental health, promotion of emotional resilience, stress management and coping skills.
- **Collaboration and External Partnerships:** Build strong partnerships with local organisations to ensure comprehensive support is available to students and staff.

Why do we need a specific mental health policy?

For regulatory and legal reasons to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

To ensure equal access to education at college and to provide appropriate support for all with the goal of retention and achievement of students.

To comply with recommendations regarding the "duty of care" responsibilities of the college.

To establish procedures that safeguard the college community, give guidance regarding appropriate action, and ensure accurate written records are kept.

Because it is recognised that students can be vulnerable as they are in a period of transition and therefore may experience stress or other mental health problems during their time with the college. We therefore have a duty of care to respond appropriately to situations where concerns are raised about a student.

Reasonable adjustment

In line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 the college must make 'reasonable adjustments' to support students with a disability, these will be made with the support of the relevant external agencies and key professionals. Any assessment of the individual's needs will ensure that any provision or adjustment made will be beneficial for the student and possible for the college to deliver. The college encourages applications from any learner who is able to benefit from our courses and who meets the entry requirements. We aim to ensure that an individual is able to meet the demands of the course and has the potential to succeed and achieve.

Support provisions within the College

The needs and experiences of people with mental health problems are individual to them. As a college we will endeavour to make it possible for people who experience mental health problems to complete their education and play their full part in society whilst they are initially supported through college and then signposted or referred to external agencies.

Information about a mental health problem may be made on the application form and/or may be discussed at interview. At all times it will be made clear that any information imparted will only be used in the student's interests and with her or his full knowledge and permission. The CAMF form must be completed and signed by the student. The Learning Support team will follow this up in liaison with the Team Leader for Student Services. Information will be shared with the Team Leader for Student Services so that support can be offered at the start of the course.

Not all students with mental health problems will disclose their condition on their application form and their mental health problem may become apparent during the course of their studies. Any member of staff who is made aware that a student has a mental health problem should report their concern on CPOMS and to the Safeguarding Team. Staff may also refer them for additional support to Student Services or Learning Services.

The College aims to provide support for students with mental health problems through our tutorial and Student Services provision including the Safeguarding Team. We will gain support from outside agencies where necessary, using the lead professional for guidance and support for the student.

The needs of a student with mental health problems may be complex and diverse and liaison between college staff and other agencies will enable the best integrated support. However, if the student declines support or does not wish their mental health difficulty to be disclosed, in

line with Data Protection Act the information should not be shared, unless it is considered that the student is likely to harm themselves or another person as a result of maintaining confidentiality.

We will intervene if a learner's state of health presents a risk, either to themselves or to others, or where this results in unreasonable demands being placed on staff, or that the teaching and learning environment is compromised so that we cannot ensure the health and safety of both the learner concerned and those affected by the learner.

We may require a learner who is on course to interrupt their studies, this would always be at the discretion of a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). Examples include, when a learner's conduct is presenting risks in how they behave and treat other people, how they function in managing their own health and safety and where this impacts on other learners, staff or members of the public. We do this in recognition that there may be underlying physical or mental health concerns, substance misuse or difficult personal circumstances giving rise to or contributing to unacceptable conduct.

External Liaison

Liaison with local statutory and voluntary organisations is essential in both providing individually tailored support for specific individuals and to the College's role in the community at large.

Education

In addition, the College is committed to raising awareness of mental health problems and challenging negative stereotypes. Also combating stigma and discrimination throughout the college, both staff, students and college users. This will include the provision of staff development as appropriate.

Associated Documentation and Policies

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 – 2026

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

Self-Harm and Suicidal Behaviour

Fitness to Study

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023 – 2026

Admissions Policy

Health and Safety

Student Code of Conduct