

Mandatory Self-Care Lectures at University



The Union Notes:

1 in 7 young people report low life satisfaction. Particularly underrepresented communities of certain demographics like students that live at home whilst studying at University, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, BAME students, Students with disabilities, LGBT+ students, and students that are first in their family to go to university (Times Higher Education, 2017). It was found that the above groups had lower levels of satisfaction. However, university students that seek Mental Health support has increased more than 50% within 5 years.

Higher Education in England is facing a 'mental health crisis'. Figures released by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that the number of students withdrawing from their studies due to mental illness increased from 380 in 2009-10, to 1,180 students in 2014-15 (Marsh 2017).

64% of the population of University students suffer from mental health issues. 75% of Mental Health problems are developed by the age of 25 (Education Policy Institute, 2018).

The number of completed suicides among UK students has also risen by 56% from 2007 to 2016 (Rudgard 2018). In a twelve month period ending July 2017, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) recorded 95 student suicides, with students now being at increased risk of suicide compared to young adults in the general population (ONS 2018).

The University currently promotes its own Mental Health and Wellbeing services via the Coventry University website and the wellbeing app.

This Union believes:

1. The number of students that are signing up for counselling services over the whole CU group in the previous years have been increasing, and the University does not have enough resources and services to accommodate every student's need. Therefore, the issue of sign posting students to external services has been a huge challenge for both university staff members and students.
2. Students tend to defer from seeking any sort of guidance or support when it comes to self-care and Mental Health with the fear of being judged by their peers and friends.

3. The stigma around Mental Health of students differ in different cultures. Students from different cultures should be aware of the barriers that surround Mental Health.
4. The lecture would be the first step in taking initiative towards resolving issues that concerns a majority of the student population and staff cohorts.

The union resolves:

1. The Union will work towards developing the content for the lecture by working with the student services team and director, the welfare services, and the head for Mental Health at the University.
2. To mandate the CUSU Executive officers to work with the University to ensure the implementation of self-care lectures (physical or online) during induction week for incoming and returning students.
3. The lecture would help students to take necessary action to seek support and enable students to talk or disclose a Mental Health condition.
4. It will provide the university with the means to understand the needs for students and staff, which could enable them to make necessary investments for more mental health support.

Proposed by: Nicole Desouza (Vice President for Welfare and Community)

Seconded by: Millie Mac (Vice President for Sport and Wellbeing)

References:

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