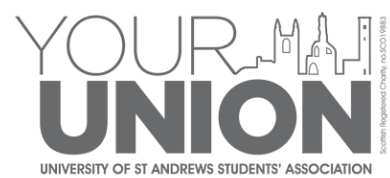




Student Mental Health Agreement 2025-2027



University of
St Andrews



The road to our new SMHA

Some of our wins from our SMHA 2022-24:

- The successful relaunch and redevelopment of GotLimits.
- We became the first university in the UK to be awarded the EmilyTest Charter.
- Work on a universal Extensions Policy, as well as a more wellbeing-focused re-write of the Academic Alerts policy.
- Further professional development for Student Services staff, including from Gendered Intelligence and Nafsiyat.
- Expanded the MHAP (now SAFE training) to SRC officers, with a permanent resource on the Students' Association website for reps to go back to.

How we arrived at our priorities and projects for 2025-27

- From November 2024 to February 2025 we shared a light-touch feedback survey, which had 103 respondents. We found that:
 - 82% of students surveyed had never heard of the SMHA before
 - The top 5 priorities (based on a ranking of 10 options) were:
 - Academic stress
 - Isolation and loneliness
 - Access to University support services (e.g. Student Services, Chaplaincy)
 - Access to external support services (e.g. NHS)
 - Cost of living
 - Qualitative feedback in the survey supported the quantitative rankings.
- We also undertook an informal feedback gathering exercise in the library spaces. This revealed the following wellbeing/self-care priorities:
 - Being in nature/outdoors/with animals
 - Space design (lighting, layout, types of spaces)
 - Affordability and availability of food and drink
 - Clarity of communication
- Very few students said they were aware of the SMHA 2022-24, so we have decided to make our 2025-27 Agreement shorter and more engaging!

Student Mental Health Agreement

2025-2027

Understanding and Dealing with Academic Stress

- Acknowledging the complexities and realities of university life – helping students to manage normal levels of stress, and to understand what is, instead, distress.
- Helping students succeed by understanding how to handle failure and setbacks, whilst using skills development services like IELLI, Student Services, Careers, StAnd Together peer support and mentoring.
- Ensuring policy is clearly communicated, understood, and applied fairly and consistently.

Accessing Internal and External Services

- Building visibility of university support services by delivering partnership activities and pop-up support in the Union, Libraries and other student spaces.
- Offering guidance and testimonies to help students optimise support services and to instil confidence for navigating appointments, referral pathways, timetables, and areas of responsibility.
- Referring students to relevant external health and wellness services, whilst signposting the advice and support found within the Student Health Hub and third-party affiliates (e.g., FRASAC).

**You're not
on your
own**

Addressing the Cost of Living and Learning

- Providing advice, guidance and advocacy support about access to accommodation and tenants' rights via HelpHub.
- Continuing support of the Campus Larder and exploring alternative cost-of-living initiatives for students.
- Raising awareness of different cohorts' needs, including postgraduate experiences, and external issues including family finances, part-time work, caring obligations, and commuting that may affect student experience.
- Acknowledging and proactively communicating the costs of being a student and clearly signposting available support.

Reducing Isolation and Loneliness

- Facilitating community-building activities that students can actively engage in.
- Promoting wellbeing-focused opportunities, including activities aligned with the "Five Ways to Wellbeing." Encouraging students to make the most of our natural environment, as well as opportunities for volunteering, recreation, and cultural engagement.
- Creating an open, welcoming culture through buddy schemes, peer support, and accessible social events.
- Continue training student leaders to create safe, inclusive spaces for all students, regardless of study level or mode.

We'll know we're on track through:

- Student feedback through Student Services and other Units' feedback gathering exercises, and feedback gathered by student representatives (both formal and anecdotal)
- Positive and meaningful student engagement with the wide range of support services available to them (e.g., Student Services, peer support activities, cost of living, advocacy & advice service, etc.)
- Successful delivery of proposed projects and promotion of resources, activities, and events

Student Mental Health Agreement

2025-2027

