



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

**STUDENT
WELLBEING**

STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICE OUR IMPACT 22/23



**FACULTY OF MEDICINE, HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES
SEPTEMBER 2023**



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Introduction

Mental health and wellbeing support is integral to ensuring Queen's students are supported and empowered to be healthy learners who can grow and develop throughout their academic journey.

The Education and Skills strand of [Strategy 2030](#) sets out the University's aspiration to provide a transformative student experience, with a full range of mental health and wellbeing support available and utilized by the student population, supported by a strong policy framework¹.

The [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy \(2022-23\)](#) recognises that all members of Queen's, staff and students, play an important role in the success of our community. A whole University approach on health and wellbeing is fundamental to ensuring a culture exists where all members can flourish regardless of their role at the University.

Student Wellbeing Services lead on the delivery of support for students, and staff supporting students, with services delivered around a Stepped Match Care model, ensuring students have access to the most appropriate level of intervention at the right time, to address their presenting issue. This may include referral to statutory services where the need is either critical and / or clinical and therefore outside of the scope of the University to appropriately support. The Wellbeing team also provides advice and guidance to staff as they support students as part of their role – whether this is in a School or on a professional support Directorate.

This report gives an overview of Student Wellbeing Service activity in relation to students registered on programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences during the academic year 2022-23.

The report gives a breakdown of the profile of Faculty students accessing the services and their presenting issues. The report also gives a high level overview of students presenting to other support services including Disability Services, the Counselling Service, the Belfast Trust Student Mental Health Project and the Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner service.

There is a summary of themes relevant to the Faculty as well as an update on University-wide wellbeing initiatives undertaken in the last year to help support students, and the staff supporting students.

The Student Wellbeing Team would like to thank colleagues in Schools, Professional Support Directorates and the Students' Union for their continued partnership as we work together to support our students.

Faculty Support

Student Wellbeing Services are delivered on a Faculty-facing model, with a dedicated Student Wellbeing Adviser working closely with colleagues in Schools, to help deliver support and interventions to students. In addition, a Faculty Assistant Disability and Wellbeing Adviser leads on supporting students at Tier 1 of the 'Stepped Care Model of Support', offering support and guidance through a triage service. Students presenting at Drop-In or through online staff or student referrals are contacted the same day and are given supportive guidance and signposted to relevant supports. Although both staff members have wider service duties, working with a dedicated group of Schools in one Faculty has helped build positive relationships with staff and allows for a better understand of the nature and demands of the programmes across MHLS Schools.

The team works closely with their colleagues in Disability Services who also deliver support for students with disabilities and long-term conditions on a School-facing model offering a holistic and joined up approach.

¹Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/QUBeWell/about/policy/>

Summary of overall activity for the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences

- There continue to be high levels of students presenting with mental health needs as a primary concern, right across all levels of study. Given the continued pressures on students, such as the cost of living crisis, it is expected this trend will continue.
- The Student Wellbeing 'Stepped Matched Care' model of support is ensuring that students are matched with the lowest and most effective form of support to address individual presenting issues; self-directed support in order to promote independence and resilience was utilised in all possible circumstances. We will continue with this model in conjunction with a Faculty Facing model.
- The Student Wellbeing Service had 2368 total student referrals in the 22-23 academic year (August 2022-June 2023). Of that, 602 (25.4%) were with students from the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences which is up one percent on last year.
- 7% of the overall student body from MHLS engaged with the Wellbeing Service in 2022-23. With 12% of the student body presenting. Biological Sciences were over represented relative to their Faculty peers, though on average with Schools in AHSS.
- The majority of students accessing the Student Wellbeing Service within MHLS present through self or staff referrals which highlights that the online referral portals are ensuring accessibility across campus. We continue to see females presenting more than males.
- Analysis shows that mental health, academic and personal issues continue to be the primary presenting issues that students disclose on initial presentation for support. Students mostly seek out support at key assessment points within their student journey. Furthermore, due to the current climate, we are starting to see a noted increase in students struggling to cope financially and contacting the service at crisis point.
- A total of 27 MHLS students presented at risk from September 2022 to June 2023.
- The rise in self-referrals and staff referrals demonstrates how preventative initiatives have been successfully informative in ensuring that students understand the most effective ways of self-referral and how to request support immediately.
- Referrals from professional programs are lower than average across the MHLS faculty and, anecdotally, it is felt this is relative to the mechanisms of support and supervision built into these courses where students tend to be timetabled 9-5 Monday to Friday with more intensive support embedded into the course leading to reporting of wellbeing issues earlier and pre crisis point.

Student Wellbeing Service: Stepped Care Model

Tier 0	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<p>Preventative and Protective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing on Weekdays activities based on the Take 5 Approach QUBeWell - Healthy Campus Campaign and Flag Days (e.g. University Mental Health Week, World Suicide Prevention Day) Transitions support Cost of Living Self-Help Hub and Resources (including Inspire Hub and website resources) Peer Support Groups (e.g. ASD, Epilepsy and Mature Students) Student-led Wellbeing Events (e.g. Mind Your Mood and International Student Guides, Consent Ambassadors) 	<p>Supportive Guidance and Signposting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop-in Clinic Walk and Talk sessions Talking Table events Active Campus Referrals Target Group Initiatives (e.g. grief peer support) Psychoeducation Initiatives (e.g. Belfast Recovery College) 	<p>Assessment, Consultation and Therapeutic Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-1 Wellbeing consultations Low-level CBT Counselling via Inspire 	<p>Risk Management, De-escalation and Crisis Support</p> <p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional wellbeing support Risk management De-escalation/ Safety planning Links with trusted contacts <p>Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Mental Health Service - BHSCT, Inspire Crisis Helpline <p>Secondary Mental Health Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPs Mental Health Liason Team Community Mental Health Team, CAMHS etc

Referral Methods

There are various access points to the service. Students normally self-refer to the service through:

- Daily Drop-in (in person in One Elmwood or telephone)
- Via the online Formmail.
- Staff can also refer students directly to the service via an online staff form.

The team offer a “same day” (or next working day if a referral is received outside of working hours) triage process for students, to ensure a thorough initial assessment with a student to talk through their concerns and identify appropriate supports and recommendations to take forward.

Students requiring secondary interventions at Tier 2 can continue to access 1-1 (50 minute) Faculty Wellbeing Adviser appointments or a disability assessment, normally within a 2-week wait time. Where a student raises study related concerns, the team work closely with staff in Faculties and Schools to try to redress these concerns, encouraging early intervention where possible and liaising closely with School Student Support Officers, Advisers of Studies and Personal Tutors, amongst others, where appropriate.

As the faculty facing wellbeing model has grown, both students and staff have become more familiar with the various referral methods with a noted increase in students and staff contacting the Faculty Wellbeing Advisers directly, recognizing them as their key point of contact.

Faculty Student Data 2022-23¹

Faculty/School	Female	Male	Non-binary	Grand Total
Medicine, Health and Life Sciences	6,597	1,943	2	8,542
Biological Sciences	835	497	2	1,334
Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences	1,954	896		2,850
Nursing & Midwifery	2,917	217		3,134
Pharmacy	891	333		1,224

Source: Corporate Reporting

¹Data supplied by Planning Office for Academic year 2022-23

Student Data and Reporting Trends

This year the Student Wellbeing Service has created and implemented a new CRM platform for the recording and management of student referrals and interactions. The new CRM system has allowed for deeper data recording by centralising student wellbeing information, tracking interactions and assessments and providing analytics. It has also enabled us to provide a richer level of data to Faculties and Schools when monitoring trends in student support needs across campus. The table below indicates the numbers of students seen by Wellbeing across all Faculties in 2022-23.

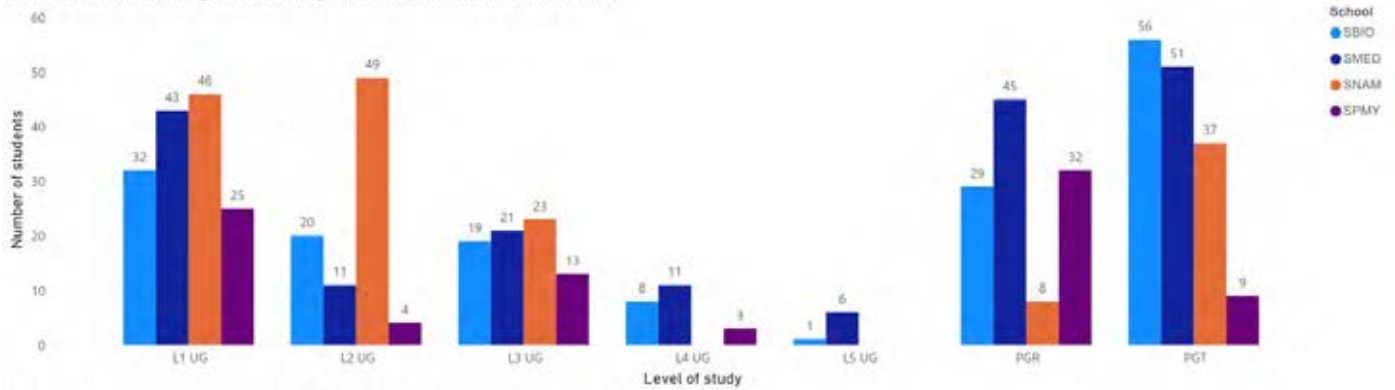


However, this new monitoring mechanism has presented challenges in comparing data with previous years as the datasets have been recorded differently this year. Therefore, data in this report is based on Service activity between August 2022 and June 2023. Numbers for July and August 2023 will be reported next year and will report on the high numbers of students presenting over the summer 2023.

1. Student Presenting to the Wellbeing Service by School and Level of Study

The faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences for this academic year has had a total of 602 students access the Student Wellbeing Service spanning across all levels of study. This represents 7% of the student population for the Faculty.

Total students accessing the Wellbeing Service by school and level of study



Of the total 602 students from MHLS who accessed Student Wellbeing Services between September 2022 and June 2023 the largest percentage represented are those within Postgraduate Taught Courses making up 153 (25.4%) very closely followed by Year 1 Undergraduates with 146 (24.3%).

Across schools within MHLS, the school of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences accounted for 188 (31.2%) of the referrals, with the School of Biological Sciences accounting for 165 (27.4%), the school of Nursing and Midwifery at 163 (27.1%) and the School of Pharmacy with 86 (14.3%).

This graph highlights that the service is utilised by all schools across all levels of study which is promising when considering student confidence in engaging the Service and asking for help, particularly at the earlier stages of their learning journey at levels 1 & 2.

When considering the importance of promoting the concept of a healthy learner across our Campus, reaching out for help and support during all levels of study is a sign that this too is a priority for our student population.

School referral as a percentage of the overall School population

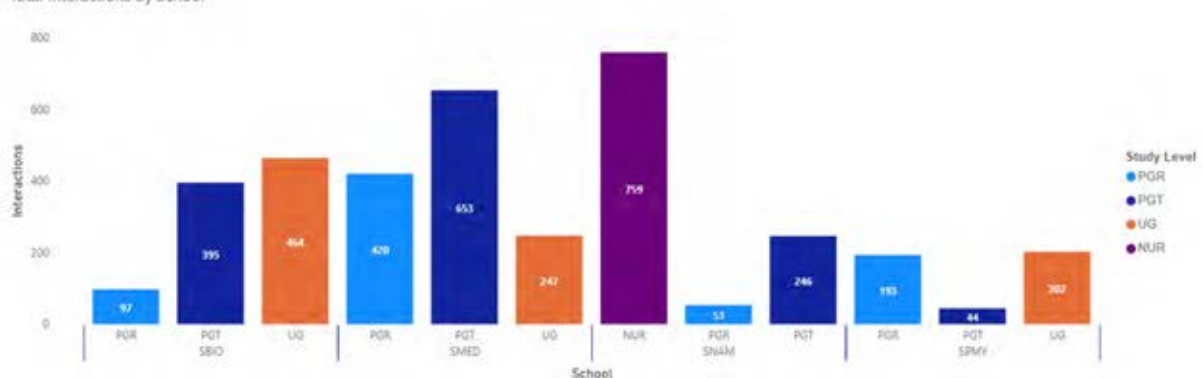
- School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences – 188 (6.5% of students in School)
- School of Biological Sciences – 165 (12 % of students in School)
- School of Nursing and Midwifery - 163 (5% of students in School)
- School of Pharmacy - 86 (7% of students in School)

These figures would suggest that students from Biological Sciences, the only non-professional practice programme in the Faculty, are the highest presenting cohort from MHLS relative to the size of the School and is worth considering when looking toward the academic year 2023-2024 and improving supports.

2. Total interactions by School

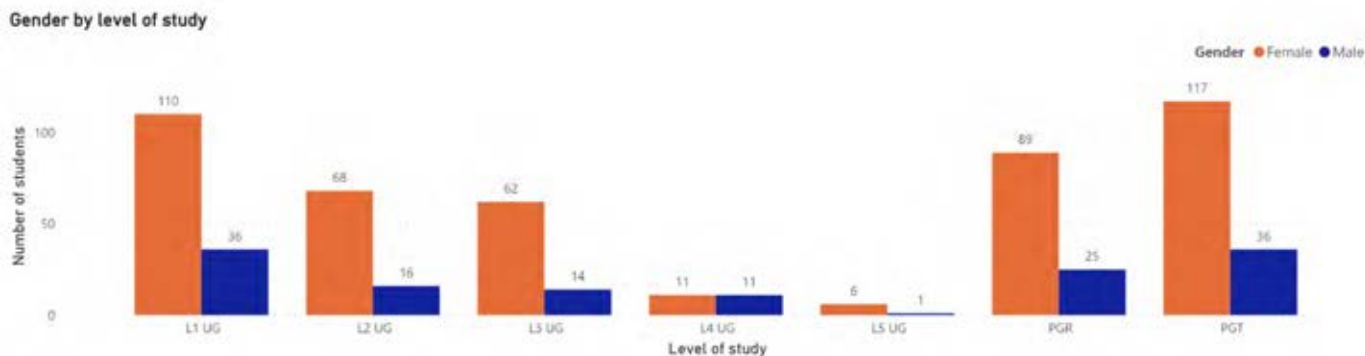
A SBAR triage is completed with all students accessing the Wellbeing service to identify their main Situation, Background (length of time the situation has been going on for), this information informs an Assessment of risk with appropriate Recommendations of support. Following this initial meeting a series of interactions take place with the student and other stakeholders involved in their support if required. These interactions will continue until such time as the student no longer requires support and that will vary for each student based on the nature, complexity and level of risk associated with their individual circumstances. Students may be seen just once or they may be seen on multiple occasions depending on the level of their need.

Total Interactions by School



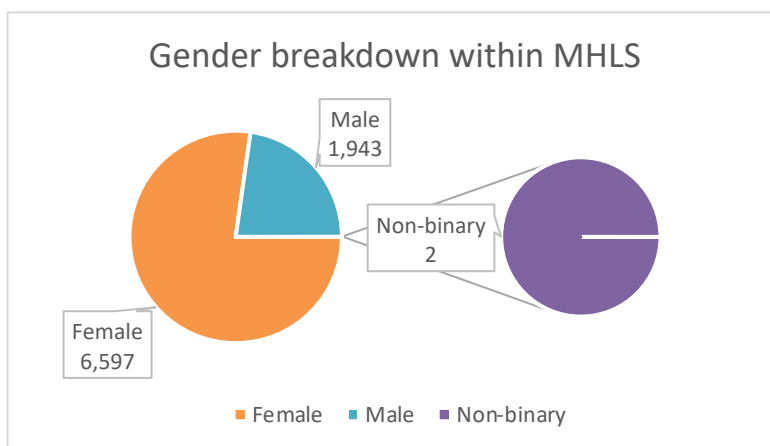
The previous table informed us that a total of 602 students from MHLS were accessing the service, table 2 (above) highlights that this has led to a total of 3689 interaction points across the faculty of MHLS for this academic year.

3. Gender by Level of Study



The table above demonstrates how students who identify as female (463) are significantly more engaged with wellbeing services compared to students who identify as male (139) across MHLS.

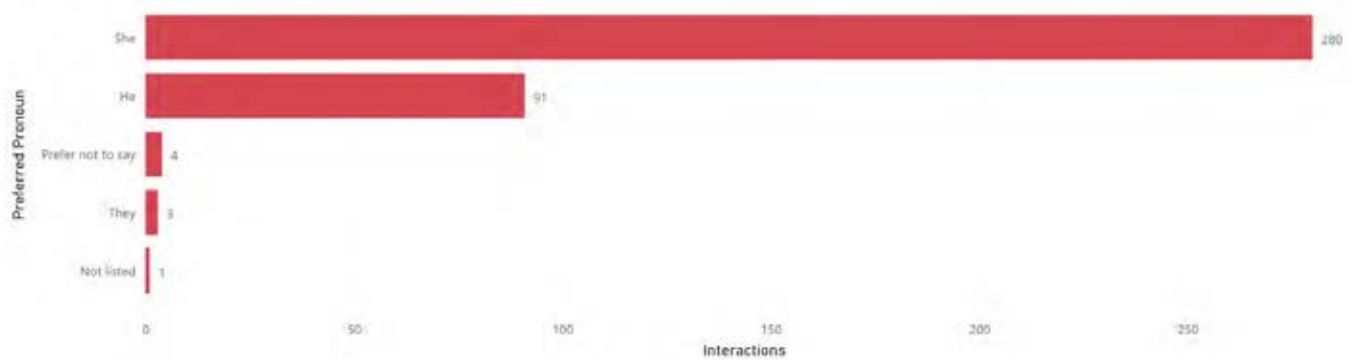
In reviewing this data, it is also important to remember the breakdown of the student demographic from across MHLS as referenced in this document. Of the 8,542 students registered with MHLS, 72% identify as female which is proportionally representative with the figure of 77% of MHLS referrals to the Wellbeing Service being female.



Whilst previous analysis of service data has led to the promotion of more targeted campaigns aimed at men's wellbeing, this year's data continues the trend of more female engagement than men and will continue to be a work in progress for the service.

4. Interactions by Preferred Pronoun

Interactions by Preferred Pronoun



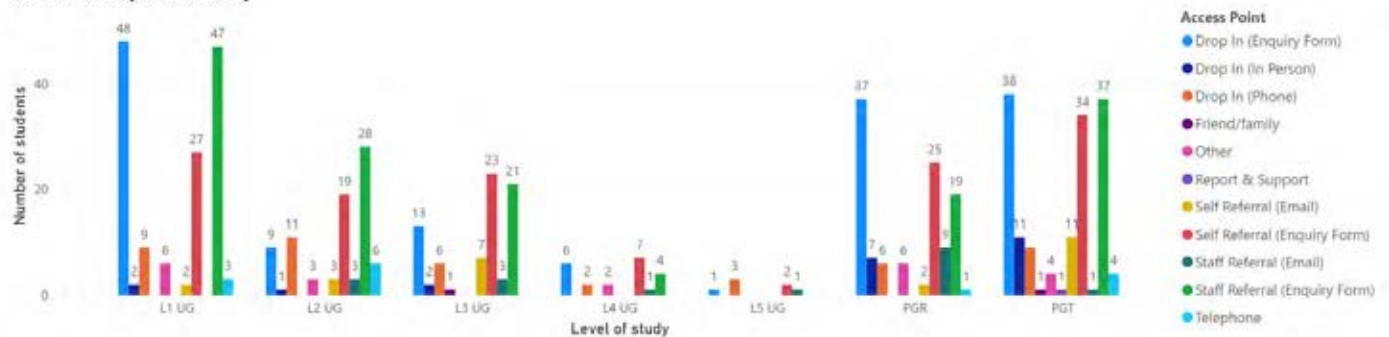
From the 602 referrals from MHLS, 379 students provided information on their preferred pronouns. The breakdown of that 379 is as follows:

- 73.9% selected the pronoun She
- 24% selected the pronoun He
- 0.8% selected the pronoun They
- 1.1% preferred not to say
- 0.2% selected Not listed

Reporting on the pronoun breakdown of referrals is an important step in creating an inclusive and respectful environment that recognises and values the diversity of gender identities among service users. It promotes a culture of sensitivity and understanding, which is crucial for the well-being and satisfaction of all individuals engaging with the service.

5. Access Point by Level of Study

Access Point by level of study



As highlighted earlier in the report, students can access the service in a number of ways, this variety serves to ensure we are accessible to as students and staff as possible.

Table 5 shows that Drop In, Staff Referral and Self Referral continue to be the most popular means of accessing our service and initiating referral pathways.

Across MHLS the breakdown of the top 3 access points are as follows:

- Drop In accounted for 241 referrals making up 40% of the faculty total.
- Staff Referral accounted for 178 referrals making up 29.6% of the faculty total.
- Self Referral accounted for 172 referrals making up 28.7% of the faculty total.

Being available and accessible across campus is one of the foundations of appropriate student wellbeing support and this is complimented by professional and academic staff engaging with referral mechanisms when appropriate. Further strengthening of communications and collaborative working between Student Wellbeing and Schools within MHLS will help to consolidate our whole campus approach to healthy learning.

6. Residency by Level of Study

Fee Status by Study Year

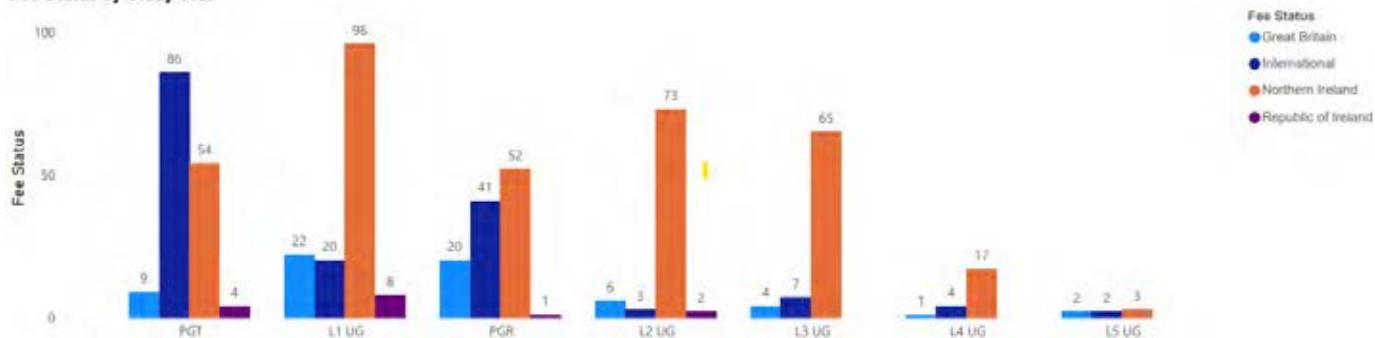


Table 6 shows that students from Northern Ireland have engaged with the service the most with a combined total of 360 which is 59.8% of MHLS referrals.

International students follow this with total referral of 163 (27.1%), then GB students with 64 (10.6%) and ROI Students (2.5%).

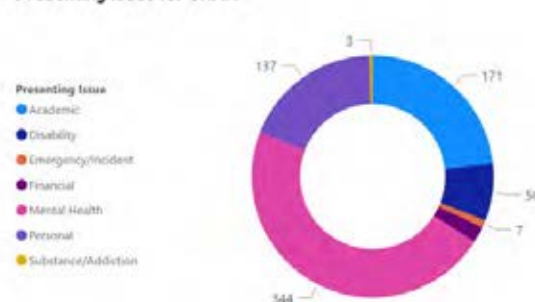
Level 1 UG and PGT continue to show the highest demand for student referrals.

7. Presenting Issue by School

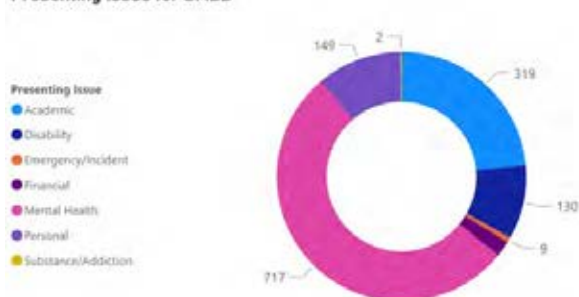
Presenting Issue for SBIO



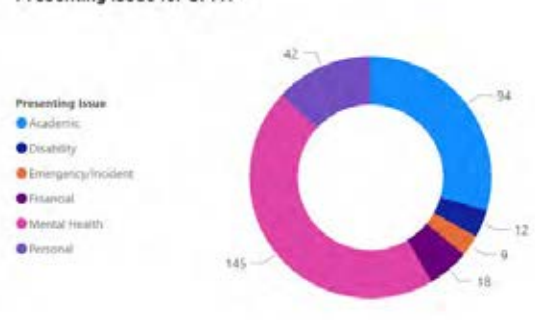
Presenting Issue for SNAM



Presenting Issue for SMED



Presenting Issue for SPMY



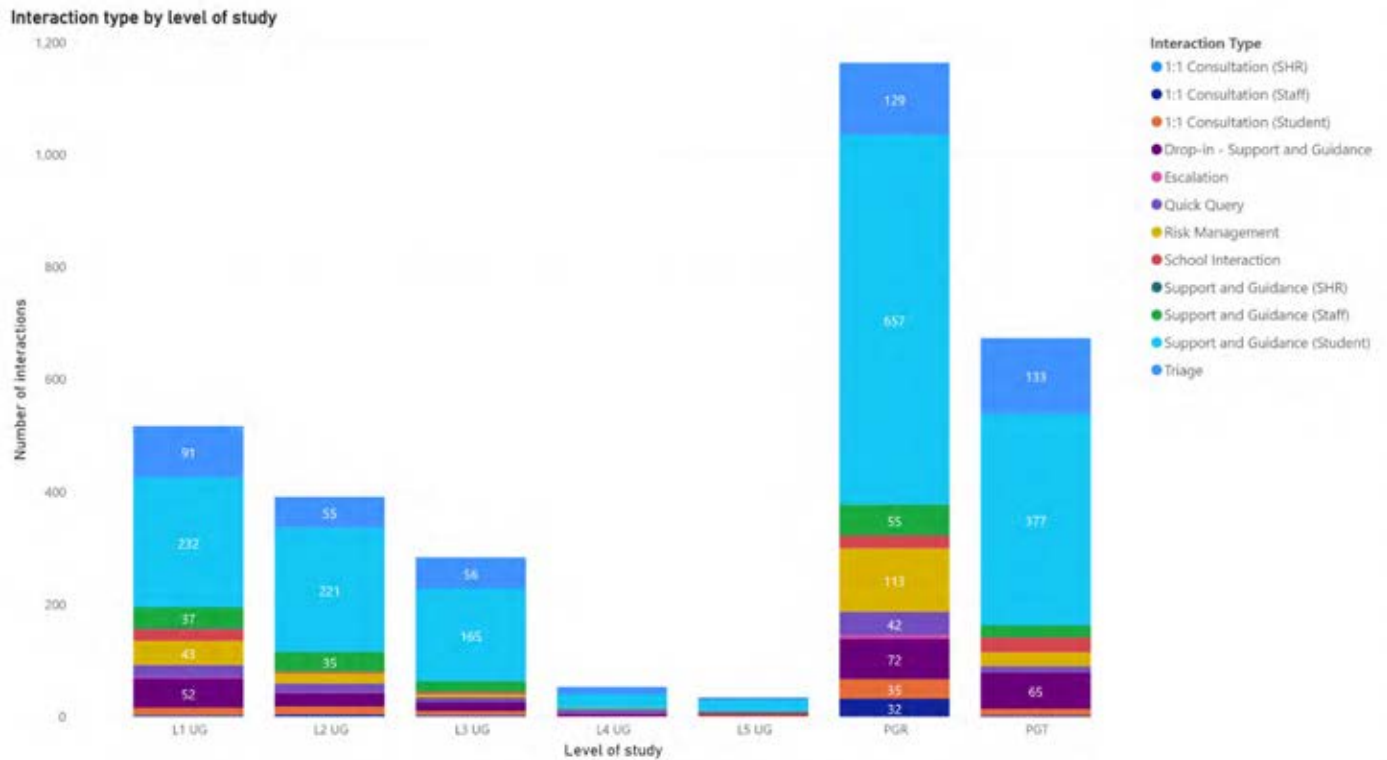
Presenting issues and triggers are often incredibly varied and widespread with a significant overlap between academic and non-academic issues. This reinforces that students' personal and academic lives are deeply intertwined and inter-connected.

In recent years, the most common presenting issues have remained the same - Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Academic pressures. This correlates with the recent Students' Union OMNI survey.

It is anticipated that findings from this report will offer a greater understanding of the issues being experienced in Schools and within the Faculty grouping. This, in turn, will enable Faculty Wellbeing Advisers to work alongside Schools to develop and deliver preventive wellbeing initiatives that respond to student needs and support staff supporting students in the academic environment.

For schools across MHLS it is clear that Mental Health and Academic pressures continue to dominate the primary referral reasons for students.

8. Interaction Type by Level of Study



Students continue to engage the range of Intervention and support options available through the Wellbeing Service with 1 to 1 support and guidance being most popular across all levels of study.

The variety of Interaction types reflect the Stepped Match Care Model employed by the service that ensures the correct level of support is offered to students in accordance with a dynamic risk assessment across the lifespan of their support cycle with the service.

As can be seen from table 8 above, the number of interactions of varying types for PGR students within MHLS is considerably higher than that of any other level of study across the faculty. This is worth noting for all schools as an indicator of the complexity of PGR referrals that lead to a significantly longer and more multifaceted series of interactions with each student. For PGR referrals the most cited referral triggers are mental health issues, academic concerns, personal circumstances, disability and finances. This is worth considering moving forward in establishing more targeted support mechanisms and initiatives for PGR students which can be enhanced by working closely with the Post Graduate Wellbeing Adviser within the Student Disability and Wellbeing Service.

Through the CRM we have for the first time been able to track where we have given support to staff who are supporting students. While we believe that there is some under recording as much of this work can be informal – it is worth noting. Often this involves reassuring staff on actions they have taken in support of a student or undertaking confidential conversations about a student to advise staff on the best course of action, how to approach a difficult conversation with a student, or how to encourage the student to engage with support services.

Students at Risk

Schools, and therefore the Wellbeing Service, have reported an increase in the numbers of students who are presenting at risk. Students at risk are defined as students who are reporting they are at risk of suicide and/or serious self-harm. Some students are also categorised as at risk if they are likely to be a risk to others. However, as they are referred into the service, they are assessed by a Wellbeing Assessment Manager and support is agreed. In 2022-23, we created a second full-time Grade 7 Wellbeing Assessment Manager post within the service to support with risk management.

All students presenting in distress to the service are taken seriously, with each case triaged to assess the level of risk. Options are to either de-escalate the student using internal team members or, where the risk is too high, support the student to access statutory services. It is the position of the University that statutory services have primary responsibility, skills and clinical expertise to respond to individuals in mental health crisis. External referral options include GP, a direct referral to the Belfast Trust Student Mental Health Service and Inspire Psychological Therapies. On occasion where a student is thought to be experiencing an acute mental health concern, they would be supported to access emergency medical support through A&E.

We continue to work closely with our colleagues across the University, for example, in Security, the Library, Estates and Accommodation to manage high risk incidents and to co-ordinate risk management support for students in crisis situations.

Links with Emergency Contacts

The University collects emergency contact details from all students at registration. This is used in emergency situations, normally defined as when there is a threat to life, or threat of harm to others. Additionally, the Disability and Wellbeing Service ask students for a 'Trusted Contact' when the student engages with services. As part of a managed and supportive conversation, it is explained to students that we believe that a 'Trusted Contact' can be a useful additional source of support at the appropriate time. In that context, it is rare that a student refuses to give details for a close friend or family member. Trusted contacts are then normally only contacted with the students' knowledge and consent.

It is our experience that students are normally content for the University to contact their nominated contact. There are rare occasions where consent is withdrawn, or students threaten to harm themselves if contact is made. These are extremely difficult judgements for colleagues, who are not working in a clinical framework, to make and advice is sought on a case-by-case basis from medical professionals. However, the latter are bound by stricter professional boundaries in relation to patient confidentiality meaning that the University can feel vulnerable in making such judgements in what can be very challenging circumstances.

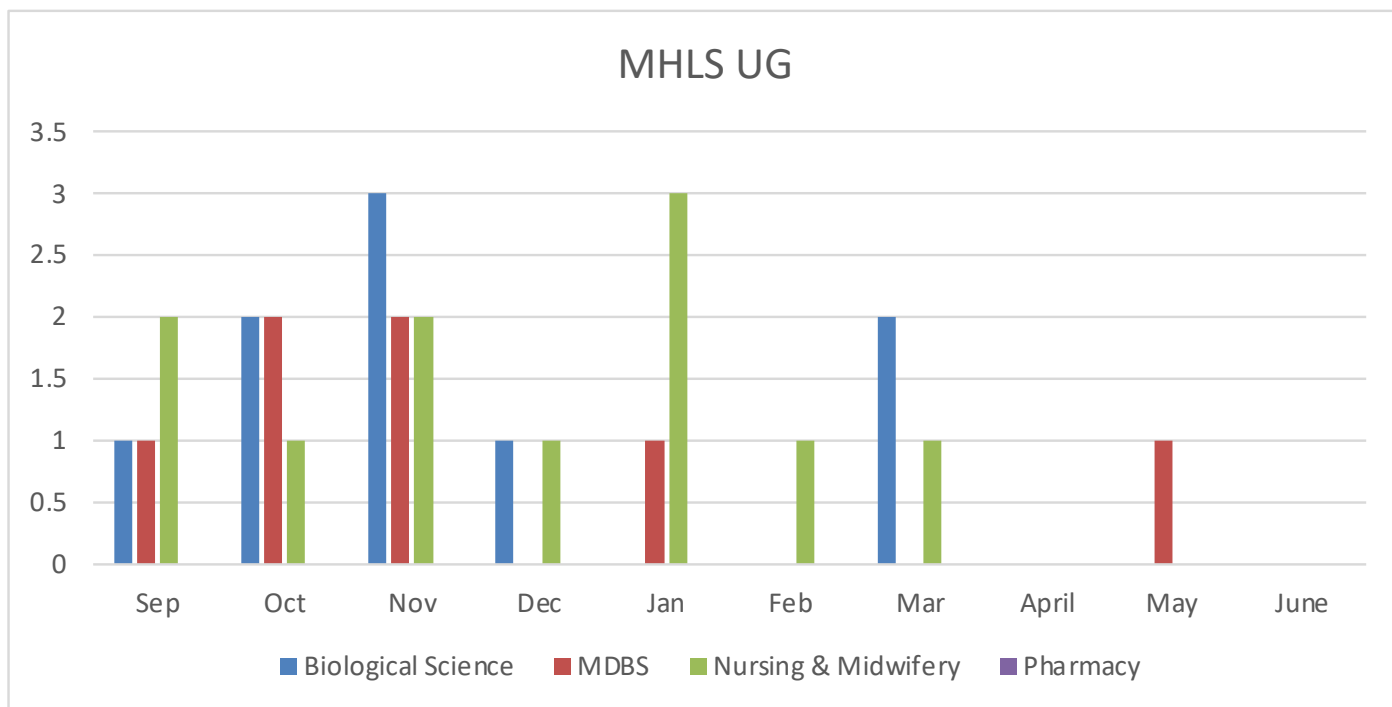
Where a student presents to a service in crisis and a Trusted Contact has not been given, the University would revert to the Emergency Contact procedure. Where there is refusal to use a Trusted Contact or there is need for an Emergency Contact to be contacted without student consent, this decision is escalated to senior management.

Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Risk Report September 2022 to June 2023

Wellbeing Services Risk Management protocol requires staff to risk assess students at each intervention. When a student presents with medium to high or high risk, staff should consult with a Wellbeing Manager who will consider and agree the most appropriate course of action. Students deemed at risk will be added to the Students at Risk List which is reviewed by management and staff on a weekly basis. Wellbeing Services work closely with internal and external services until risk has been managed, at which point the student will be removed from the risk list.

For the purpose of this report, students will only be counted once, on the month they are added to the risk list, although they may remain on the risk list for several weeks or months.

The graph below displays the students added to the Students At Risk list who are Undergraduate Medicine, Health and Life Sciences. The key provided at the bottom of the graph shows the breakdown by School per month (Sep 2022 to June 2023).



A total of 27 MHLS students presented at risk from September 2022 to June 2023.

The graph above shows that Biological Sciences students presenting at risk for 5 of the 10 months between September 2021 and June 2022, with the highest number (3) recorded in the months of November.

Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Science recorded students at risk for 5 of the 10 months with the highest number of students recorded in October and November (2).

Nursing and Midwifery also shows a pattern of students presenting at risk for 7 of the 10 months, with the highest per month (3 students) in January.

Pharmacy has no students presenting at risk during the period.

It is hoped that this information will assist Schools to identify the key periods when students appear to be struggling and are most likely to require additional support during the year. More granular information can be made available to Schools about the reason for risk and level of study of the students in each month to help better interpret what mitigations, if any, can be implemented by the School.

Referral to External Support

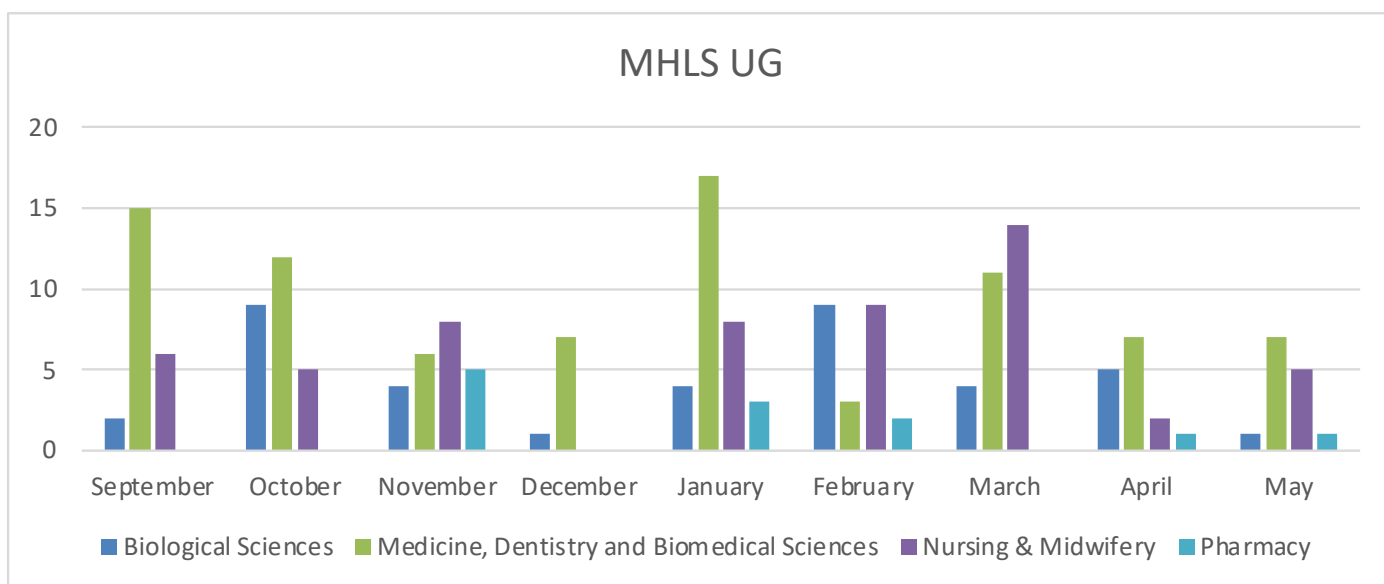
Student Wellbeing work closely with a range of external agencies, for specialized and tailored support to students. This includes the following organisations with which the University has a formal Service Level Agreement to provide services for our students:

- o Student Psychological Therapies (Counselling) through Inspire Wellbeing
- o Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners
- o Belfast Trust Student Mental Health Project

While there is no formal agreement in place, the Wellbeing Service does routinely refer students to the following for very specialist support:

- o DAISY - Drug and Alcohol Intervention Service
- o CEDAR transition support
- o NEXUS - supporting individuals impacted by sexual abuse and abusive relationships.

Number of Undergraduate MHLS Students accessing Counselling through Inspire Wellbeing September 2022 to June 2023.



The graph above shows the number of students accessing support for counselling through Inspire for MHLS broken down by School per month. A total of 195 referrals were recorded for the Faculty of MHLS for the period September 2022 to June 2023.

The highest number of referrals were recorded in January (32) followed by March (29) then October (26) with September, November and February showing an equal number of referrals (23).

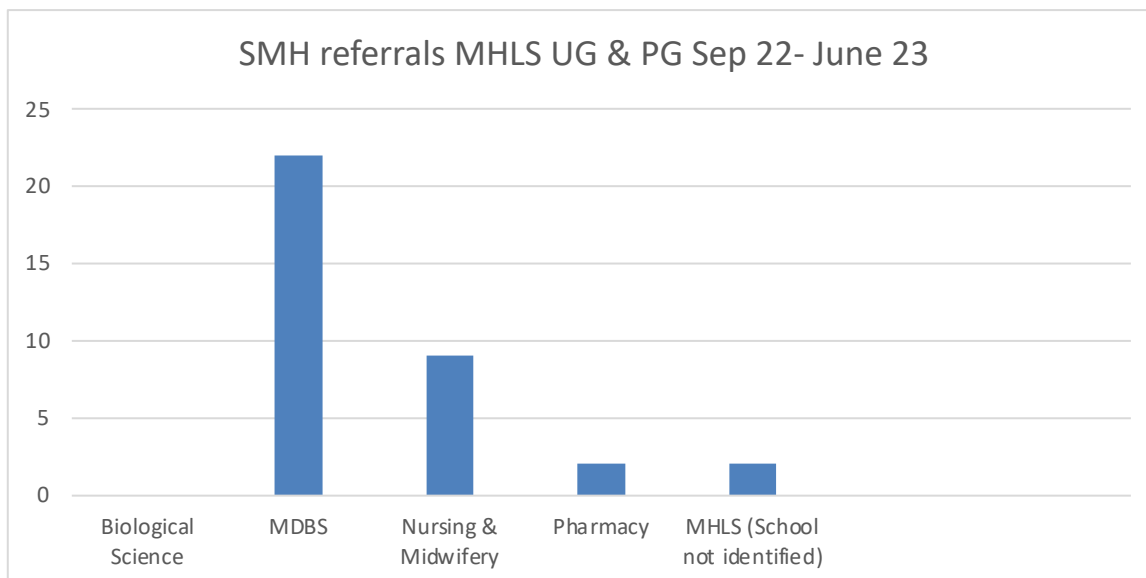
School of MD&BS recorded the highest number of referrals for the year (85) followed by Nursing and Midwifery (57). Biological Sciences shows 39 referrals and Pharmacy 12.

BHSCT Student Mental Health Referrals - MHLS UG and PG students 2022-23

In addition, we are a trusted referrer to the Student Mental Health Project through Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. This service provides a direct referral pathway for students with new and emergent mental health issues and this year has been supported by a Band 7 Community Practice Nurse (CPN), Band 6 Mental Health

Practitioner and a 0.5fte Psychiatrist. Typically, students who have emergent, undiagnosed mental health conditions are referred to the service via their GP or via a “trusted referral route” through Student Wellbeing. Students must have an address in the Belfast Trust to access the service.

BHSCT Student Mental Health is a Tier 3 service funded by Belfast Trust, Queens University and Ulster University. Students with significant new and emerging mental health issues can be referred to the service by their GP or a Trusted Referrer within Wellbeing Services, they must have a Belfast address. Students are triaged into the service and may be seen by a psychiatrist and can be seen by SMH MH specialists, prescribed medication or referred to appropriate services. Students benefit from being seen a lot faster than they would if referred to the Community Mental Health Hub. Student Mental Health can also link in with Wellbeing Services who can support students with School meetings or registering with Disability Services if necessary.



Student Mental Health (SMH) data set captures undergraduate and postgraduate therefore we cannot display this by level of study.

The chart above shows that a total of 35 referrals recorded as MHLS students were received by SMH.

The highest number of referrals were for MDBS students (22) followed by the School of Nursing and Midwifery (9), then Pharmacy (2). Biological Science recorded no student referrals and there were 2 referrals received by SMH for students from the Faculty of MHLS, however the School was not identified.

Although this service is in part funded by the University, it is governed by the NHS data protection protocols and therefore we have limited access to data about the use of the service beyond referrals. For example, we do not have access to the numbers of interventions each student receives beyond the initial assessment. The University does, however, see this as an invaluable service for supporting students who are often in considerable crisis. The most common issues reported by the service are depression and anxiety, with students not from Northern Ireland forming half of the ongoing case load.

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP) Service Referrals

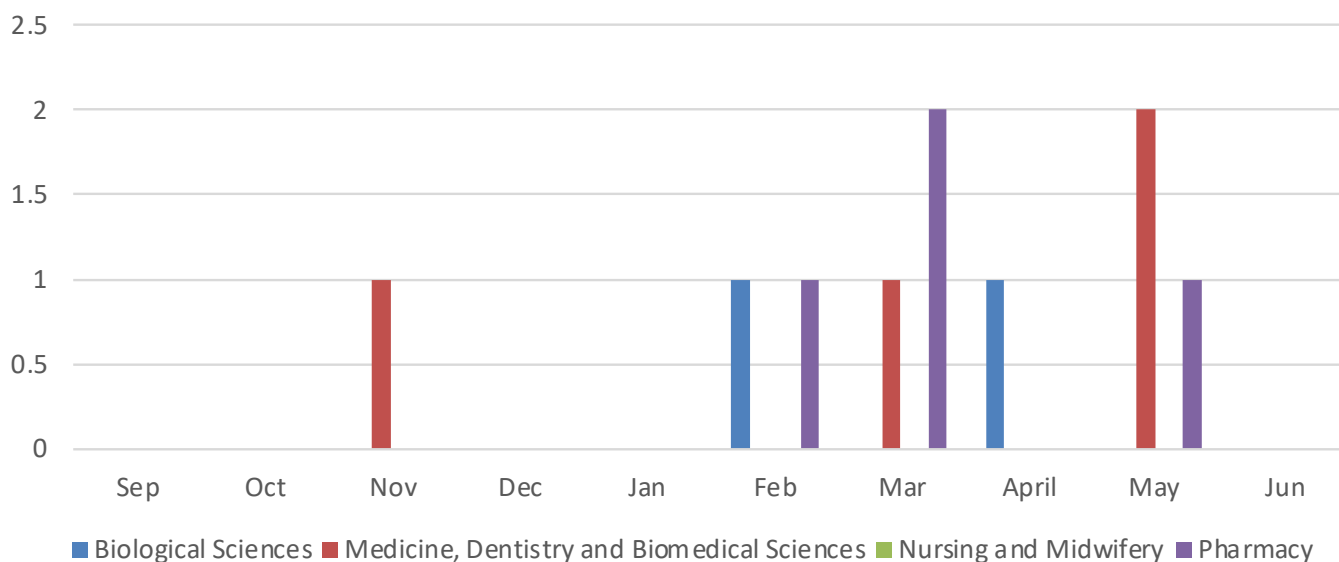
Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners are trainees on placement from Ulster University providing low level cognitive behavioral therapy. They carry out an initial assessment followed by 4 to 6 sessions of therapy where appropriate. Both Disability and Wellbeing Service can refer directly into this service where mild to moderate anxiety and/or depression has been disclosed by the student.

MHLS Undergraduate PWP 2022-23

Wellbeing Services have been involved in a project for the past two years, providing placements for two Ulster University Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) Masters students. This year we were allocated two students who commenced therapeutic interventions in November 2022 ending June 2023.

They deliver low level CBT to students disclosing depression and/or anxiety. The table below shows the monthly number of Undergraduate students from the Faculty of MHLS referred to the PWP Service during the year 2022-23, divided by School.

MHLS Undergrad referred to PWP



- A total of 10 referrals were made by Wellbeing Services to the PWP Service during November 2022 to June 2023.
- MD&BS recorded 4 students engaging in CBT, 1 in November and March and 2 in May.
- Pharmacy also recorded 4 students accessing CBT, 1 In February, 2 March and 1 in May.
- Biological Sciences recorded 2 students accessing CBT, 1 in February and 1 In April.
- There were no students from Nursing and Midwifery.

Students Registered with Disability Services

Students with a disability or long-term condition including those with a mental health condition are encouraged to link with the University's Disability Service to consider their individual needs and identify relevant support recommendations for their chosen course of study and wider participation in University life.

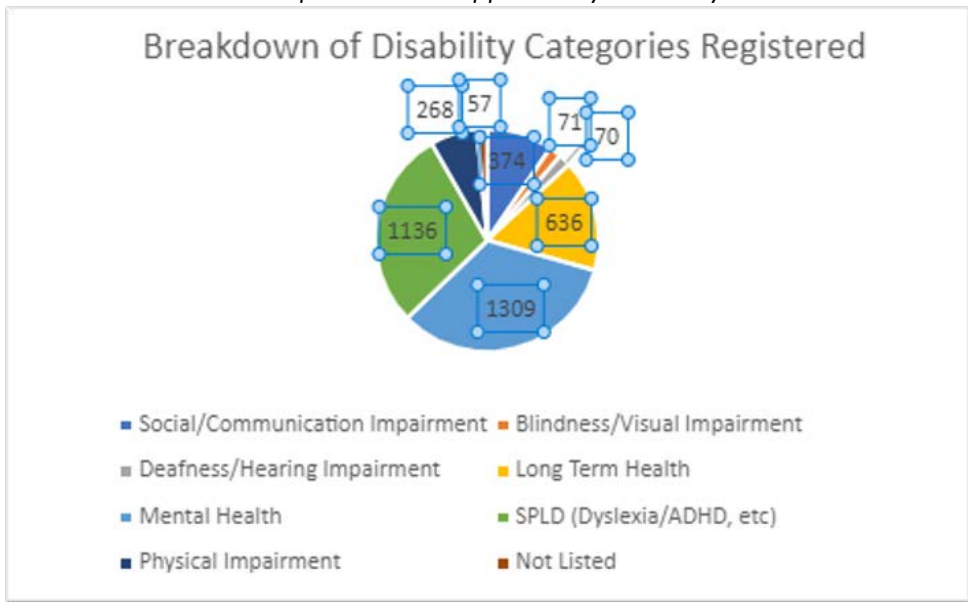
Disability Services continue to see growing numbers of students registering with the service with a number of students declaring more than one condition. In recent years, the highest category of students registering with the service has been mental health.

3,161
registered
students

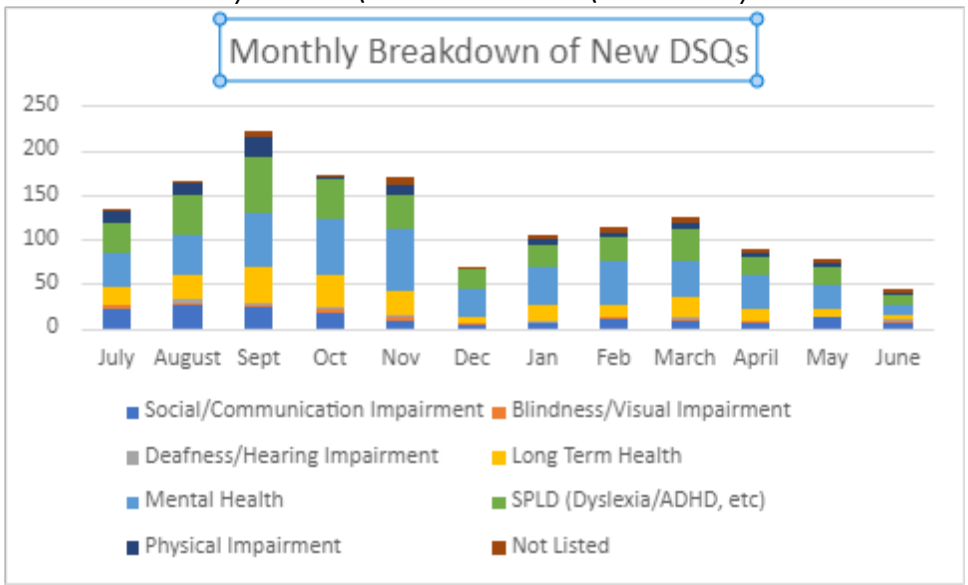
1,134 DSQs
received since July
'22

1,064 new ISSAs
completed since
July '22

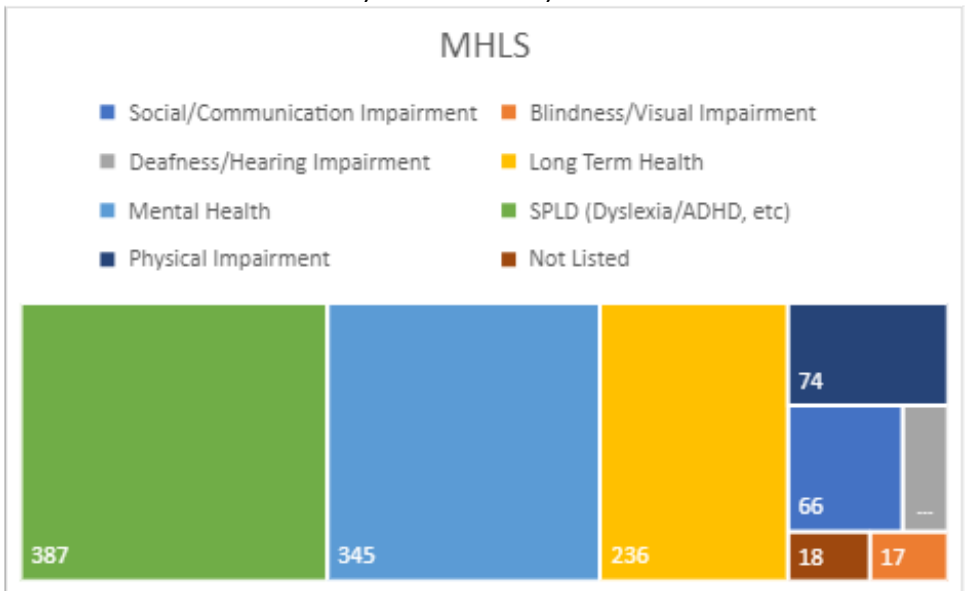
Breakdown of conditions supported by Disability Services



Disability Service Questionnaires (DSQ) received by month



Faculty Breakdown by Condition



Disability Services offer support to students throughout their academic studies from transition to the University on to graduation. The team promote the support available to prospective and current students through representation at open days and offer holder events.

In April of this year the Disability Offer Holder event took place on campus, with the team welcoming over 130 attendees to Mandela Hall. Prospective students were provided with essential information on disability support and the process of registering with Disability Services.

The event included information sessions, engaging discussions and motivating stories from current students who have thrived with the assistance of disability support services. They shared their personal experiences, highlighting the positive impact these resources can have on one's academic journey.

The team continue to encourage students to engage with the Service with plans to launch a new service video in the new academic year with the hope of encouraging eligible students to contact the Service and avail of the support. Students can contact the Service to review their support at any point during their academic journey.

Disability Services work collaboratively with a range of internal and external agencies to support students through their studies and beyond to prepare for graduation and future employment. This includes linking with colleagues in the Careers service and specialist employment services.

A new resource has been developed with the Learning Development Service (LDS) to encourage students to take responsibility for managing deadlines offering help and guidance to make the right decision for their studies whilst managing their condition.

Disability Services aim to empower students to become independent learners by increasing awareness and student engagement outside of HEI reasonable adjustments including use of funded one-to-one support and assistive technology. The Needs Assessment Centre has assessed 313 students this year for funded support and the Register of Support Providers have matched 939 students with one to one support.

Top 6 Support Recommendations

Academic Mental Health Tutor (322)

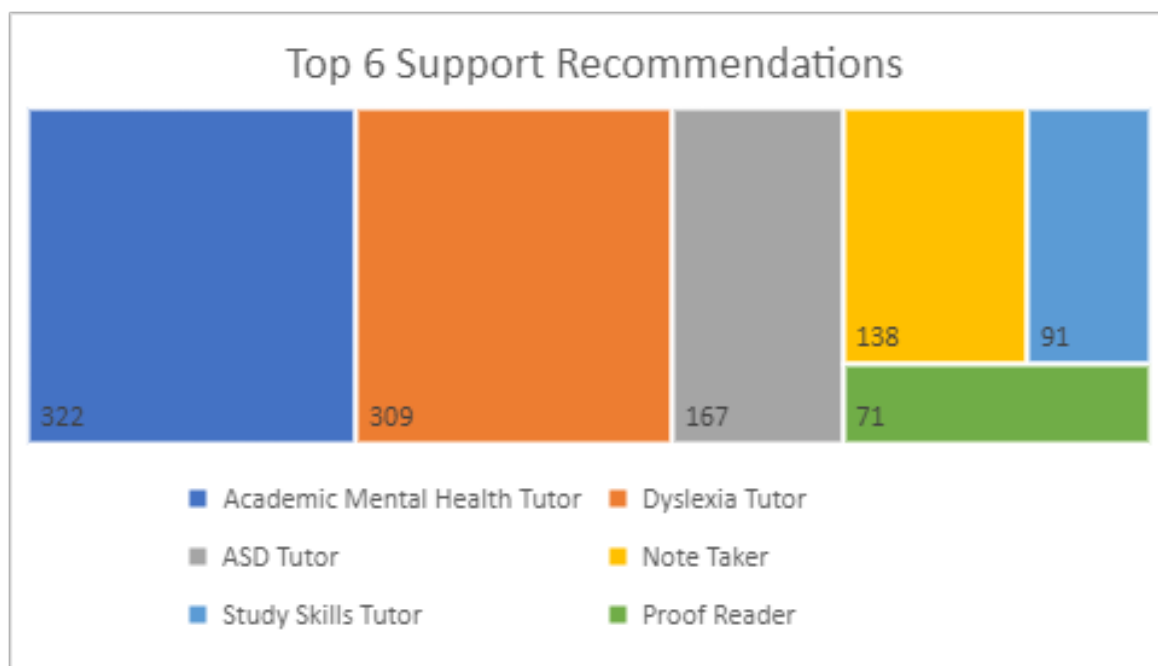
Dyslexia Tutor (309)

Autistic Spectrum Disorder Tutor (167)

Note Taker (138)

Study Skills Tutor (91)

Proof Reader (71)



Assistive Technology (AT) offers a great support, with many students recommended specialist software through DSA funding and assistive software available to all students in the campus libraries and student computing centres. The Service has committed to working with external AT providers to deliver at least two AT demonstrations per year, encouraging students to engage with and effectively use the assistive technology provided via the University.

The Service also continues to support staff supporting students by providing specialist advice and guidance including identifying appropriate support mechanisms. Disability Officers continue to link with staff across the University and deliver bespoke training, which this year has included Disability Awareness, Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SEND) and condition focused training such as supporting neurodiverse students.

The team welcome queries from staff supporting students and remain committed to supporting staff and students to identify the relevant support path for students, including those experiencing difficulty gaining a diagnosis and associated supporting documents. Staff and students are encouraged to contact the team at any point during the academic year for ongoing advice and support.

Service Wide Developments in 2022-23

- Student Wellbeing carried out 3099 Wellbeing Assessments (triage) during this academic year, with the access point for 1178 of those being self-referrals through drop in, 813 self-referrals through the online student contact us form and 885 staff referrals in addition to family/friend and report and support referrals.
- This constitutes a significant increase in access to support compared to the same period in 2021-2022.
- Reasons for increased access include a full return to campus and the opening of One Elmwood Student Services, better visibility in One Elmwood and better data recording following the combination of the Wellbeing and the Disability CRMs.
- The high staff referral rates in 2022-2023 would also suggest that increased collaboration and partnership working between Student Wellbeing and staff in Schools is having a positive impact. Given high profile cases in the sector which implied a failure in appropriate referrals to support services, the Disability and Wellbeing Team undertook a round of meetings with School Boards to ensure that staff were confident in referring students and/or knew where to access support for students. All Schools in MHLS invited the team to attend a School Board meeting.
- Most common reasons given for accessing the Service include mental health, academic, and personal issues. This is no change from previous years.
- There has been an increase in students using the Report and Support reporting tool to report incidents of bullying, harassment, hate crime and sexual misconduct. We have seen greater numbers of international students, particularly Chinese students, reporting that they have fallen victim to sophisticated online scamming schemes over the last academic year.
- While total risk numbers are similar to the previous academic year, the complexity of risk cases has increased and management of these cases employs an interagency approach in order to ensure a holistic management of risk that has ensured stronger links with schools in actively promoting our faculty facing approach to meeting both the academic and wellbeing needs of individual students.
- There is an increase in students with disabilities. The total is now 3161 with mental health being the highest category (1309) followed by Specific learning difficulty (1136) and long-term medical condition (636).
- The team was involved in reviewing a number of policies this year: A Suicide Safe Policy, Trusted Contacts, Out of Hours Support, Fitness to Continue in Study, Short Term Impairments, Supporting Students Under the Age of 18, Policy on Alcohol and Drugs, Student Disability Policy, Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. We have also been working on the Disability and Wellbeing Section of the Assessment Framework Hub in preparation for its launch ahead of the new academic year and have worked in partnership with the Learning Development Service to develop the Healthy Learners Canvas module.
- The Service has recently introduced a new CRM, integrated with the existing Disability Services system. This has allowed for more accurate record keeping within the Service, tracking all touch points and contact with students, ultimately offering a holistic picture of the student journey across the two teams. Anecdotally the team have reported an increase in students accessing the service since moving to One Elmwood. This twinned with more accurate recording of interactions and a return to face-to-face teaching, has resulted in a significant increase in data.
- The Service is currently Implementing the use of Faculty-facing micro-teams made up of a Disability Officer, Faculty Wellbeing Adviser, Assistant Disability and Wellbeing Adviser and Mind Your Mood Ambassador across all 3 Faculties and for the PG cohort. These micro-teams will work closely with Student Support Officers and other key staff within Schools to ensure that there is a holistic and joined up approach to Wellbeing support provision for students.
- A dedicated School Student Support Liaison Officer post was established to work with staff in Schools as they support students. The Officer has also established a Community of Practice which will meet six times per year.

- The Service rolled out an E-Learning Module for staff to do individually or as part of team training to give staff confidence in managing a range of common scenarios involving student mental health / ill health.
- The Mind You Mood (MYM) student led initiative celebrated its 10-year as a programme and continued to provide weekly wellbeing events. This initiative was originally started by an MHLS student who returned to the University to attend a 10-year celebration of the programme.

Recommendations for 2023-24

- The Disability and Wellbeing Senior Management Team, along with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser, Assistant Wellbeing Adviser and Disability Officer continue the practice of meeting annually with School Management Boards – to help embed the partnership approach to supporting students.
- The Faculty Wellbeing Adviser and Assistant Wellbeing Adviser continue to work closely with and build strong relationships with the MHLS Schools to identify cohort needs and interventions.
- To develop a series of MHLS Wellbeing Drop-in clinics. In 2023-24 the plan is to develop localized drop in clinics across core sites and schools within MHLS in order to further increase accessibility of referrals to students who are unable to attend the drop in service at One Elmwood. The Faculty Wellbeing Adviser will lead on this with an aim to create connections within the student cohort, signpost to further wellbeing services and provide events at specific times of the year e.g. World Mental Health Day.
- The Faculty UG Wellbeing Adviser, in partnership with the PG Wellbeing Adviser, Disability Officer and Student Support Officer (or other key School contact in Schools without an SSO role) will set up monthly/bi-monthly ‘student of concern’ joint case review meetings, commencing in two Schools (Biological Sciences and N&M) to facilitate prompt identification of students who may require additional academic and/or disability-related and/or wellbeing support and implementation of the appropriate supports.
- Schools engage with the School Student Support Liaison Officer to identify support needs for staff as they support students – including the roll out of the E-Learning Module and specific training on how to implement the revised Support to Study Procedure.
- Schools work with the Student Support Liaison Officer to identify if there are cohorts of staff requiring training in student support – such as Technicians and Trust staff.
- Schools continue to utilise the Transition Support modules on canvas as well as embed other skills modules developed by the Learning Development Service – all of which are designed to help students be healthy learners.
- Schools use the newly launched Assessment Support Hub as a tool to help students engage early with assessment support to help mitigate against mental health crisis at the time of assessment.

Student Feedback

"I have felt really supported and listened to. I have been given a lot of support services and been referred to places such as Inspire and gained a lot from this. Rob has been very supportive and has made me feel comfortable when talking about my issues and I really appreciate him for everything he has done for me."

Final Year Nursing Student, May 2023

"I felt supported, listened to and reassured. I am exceptionally grateful for the support that Rob gave me during this time, he helped me to navigate through the toughest days and was always at the end of an email or a phone call at any time I needed him.... I can truly say I would not have been able to get through this hard time and graduate without the help and support of Rob and the student wellbeing service"

Final year medical student, August 2023

"I feel it is vital to have wellbeing services and a support link within the school as it supports our role as personal tutors that we know we have that person to link in with and seek advice from. Also for our wellbeing ambassadors it is invaluable as you have the knowledge and expertise within your field which is an asset to support our wellbeing ambassadors and the staff who are supporting students."

School of Nursing Staff Member June 2023

"I found the service extremely beneficial, as it gave me great guidance in relation to what type of support and therapy would best suit my individual needs."

**First year Biological Sciences Student
April 2023**