

Learner Mental Health Policy

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Notes	This document should be used in conjunction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBXL Adult Safeguarding Policy • HBXL Adult Safeguarding Procedure

1. Introduction

This policy describes HBXL Skill’s Academy’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for learners. HBXL aims to create a supportive and healthy environment which promotes a culture of mental wellbeing and emotional resilience and where it is easy to seek help.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, HBXL aims to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, HBXL can promote a safe and stable environment for learners affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

The policy aims to:

- support and develop wellbeing and emotional resilience in staff and learners;
- promote positive mental health in all learners;
- increase awareness of common mental health issues;
- alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health;
- provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues;
- and provide support to learners experiencing mental ill health.

2. Definition

The World Health Organisation defines good mental health as, “a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

Individuals with good mental health will generally:

- feel relatively confident in themselves and having positive self-esteem;
- be able to feel and express a range of emotions;
- be able to build and maintain good relationships with others;
- feel engaged with the world around them;
- live and work productively;
- cope with the stresses of daily life; and
- adapt and manage in times of change and uncertainty (adapted from Mind UK).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote the emotional resilience, wellbeing and positive mental health of learners.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a learner should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. If there is concern that the learner is in danger of immediate harm, then the HBXL Adult Safeguarding procedure should be followed. If the learner presents a medical emergency, then the procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to Mental Health Services or other external agency is required, this will be led and managed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4. Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by learners to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included in the curriculum, for example during modules on Online Safety.

The specific content is determined by the particular needs of the learners but there will always be an emphasis on enabling learners to develop their skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

On certain courses, discrete modules on Mental Health are taught. HBXL follows appropriate guidelines to ensure that mental health and emotional wellbeing issues are taught in a safe and sensitive manner.

5. Resources

HBXL Skills Academy has the following resources to provide support for mental health and well-being:

- Learner Handbook, containing tips for staying mentally healthy, advice on keeping safe online and contact details of organisations who can support with mental health and safeguarding;
- A dedicated Learner Engagement Manager;
- Safeguarding Team including Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Staff Training;
- Links with external agencies in learner regions.

6. Signposting

HBXL Skills Academy ensures that staff and learners are aware of sources of support available to them. Relevant well-being and safeguarding services and information are highlighted in the Learner Handbook, which is shared with learners during enrolment.

By highlighting sources of support, HBXL increases the chances of learners seeking help by ensuring learners understand:

- what help is available;
- who it is aimed at;
- how to access it;

- why to access it; and
- what is likely to happen next.

7. Managing Disclosures

A learner may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or peer to any member of staff and so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a learner chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a peer, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen rather than advise, giving full consideration to the learner's emotional and physical safety.

All disclosures should be recorded using the Adult Safeguarding Report Form and immediately passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Confidentiality

Staff must be honest about the issue of confidentiality. Staff should never share information about a learner without first telling them. Ideally staff should receive their consent, though there are certain situations, such as a risk of harm to others, when information must always be shared with another member of staff or external agency, in line with HBXL's Adult Safeguarding Policy.

If a learner gives staff reason to believe that there may be underlying safeguarding issues, a referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be made immediately.

9. Training

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues in quarterly Safeguarding meetings. Staff who require more in-depth knowledge will have access to relevant training as required.

Staff can discuss their own training needs with their line manager both during their annual appraisal and at other times of the year as a need becomes evident.

10. Monitor and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and at other times in the intervening period as necessary.