

LAINE
THEATRE ARTS

MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY
2024-25

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

This policy relates to all staff and students working and studying at the College.

Mental health disorders

It is natural to experience periods of stress or sadness. Sometimes these feelings can last a short time before you feel better – but if you have ongoing symptoms you should consider speaking to your GP or on of the Student Services team.

If you have a consistent problem with your mental health you could be diagnosed with a mental health disorder by a medical professional. It is important to look after your mental wellbeing, however, even if you don't have a disorder.

Psychological, social and biological factors can impact how likely you are to experience specific mental health problems. Life experience, such as uprooting or bereavement, can also impact your mental health.

What to look out for

Common symptoms of mental health disorders include:

- Lack of energy or being tired all the time
- Loss of interest in hobbies and skills
- Lack of focus or concentration
- Extreme emotions
- Significant changes to sleeping or eating habits
- Constant worrying or struggling to cope with stress
- Addictive behaviours
- Suicidal thoughts

You might experience some of these symptoms if you are having mental health issues. You may recognise these symptoms in your daily life or a friend may point them out to you.

Mental health issues are an illness like any physical illness – it isn't your fault if you experience problems but you do have a responsibility to look after yourself. You wouldn't walk on a broken ankle and expect it to heal, so try to take the same approach to your mental wellbeing. Figure out how you can support your mental health, start any treatment, and give it time to work.

Having a disorder doesn't have to stop you finishing your training. Lots of people with mental health problems study and work successfully with the right support and lifestyle changes.

If you've been diagnosed with a mental health condition, prescribed treatments often include professional support, therapy or medical prescriptions – but the advice above can also help you improve your wellbeing.

Your mental health is unique, so treatments and therapies that work for others might not work for you, and those that work for you won't necessarily give others the same results. You may need to try a variety of options to find something that works for you.

SUPPORT IN A CRISIS

IF- you've harmed yourself or intend to do so

IF - you are having suicidal thoughts

IF - you are sufficiently concerned that either of these things could be happening to a friend

You should contact the emergency services by phoning 999. Tell the operator that you or your friend are feeling unsafe and at risk. Alternatively, if you feel you can, go to A&E with a friend and explain to the triage how you feel.

By delaying contact with emergency services, you could be putting yourself or the individual at risk

You can also contact these groups at any time:

- [Samaritans](#) on [116 123](#) provide a 24-hour listening service
- NHS Helpline (111)
- Your GP who has 24-hour responsibility for your care

You might also find these websites helpful:

- [Papyrus](#) – The national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide. They can provide you with confidential advice and support.
- [SupportLine](#) – Confidential telephone helpline and web pages with support on the issue of suicide.
- [Students Against Depression](#) – Student-focused advice and resources for those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking.

The role of the Safeguarding Team in Mental Health Crisis

The College's Safeguarding Team are available during College hours. The team will always try to help individuals experiencing mental health difficulties to seek appropriate support but they are not trained to deal with medical emergencies or suicidality. The safeguarding team will, therefore, contact the emergency services if they have sufficient concern over the welfare of a student.

ADD Team names, email addresses and hours of work

Student Services

If you are experiencing symptoms of poor mental health but do not feel you are at immediate risk of harm, you can contact Sally Hooper (Head of Student services) at sallyhooper@laine-theatre-arts.co.uk or any member of the Safeguarding Team to see how they can support you during working hours. Speak to your GP if you can – they may also have an appointment available. You can also ring the NHS helpline ([111](#)) or call the Samaritans ([116 123](#)) or go to Safe Haven in Epsom (opening times 6pm-11pm).

Include college counsellor details

Policy reviewed by Senior Management Committee. Date of next review: September 2027.