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# DEVELOPING A MENTALLY HEALTHY CURRICULUM FOR HEALTH AND EXERCISE SCIENCE

Dr Jackie Hargreaves & Professor Jim McKenna

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Carnegie School of Sport, Leeds Beckett University  
[j.hargreaves@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:j.hargreaves@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

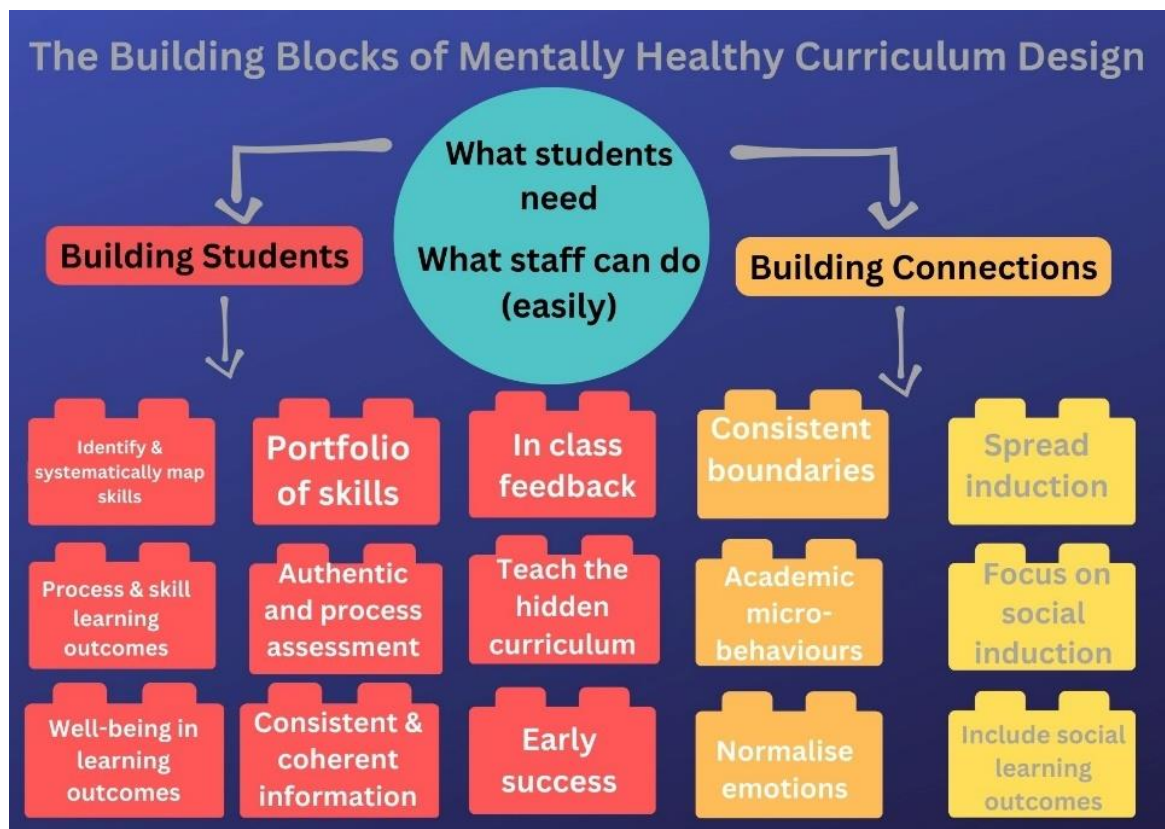
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## Executive Summary

**Background:** The rise of mental health (MH) concerns in today's Higher Education (HE) students is a growing concern. This can impact upon student satisfaction, progression and academic achievement. Enhancing the curriculum to support student's mental health could improve these outcomes. At the same time, academic staff also report a worsening MH profile, often associated with time pressures, meaning that solutions must be 'do-able' in their eyes. This report addresses how to enact a 'Mentally Healthy Curriculum' (MHC) for the revalidated course of BSc Health and Exercise Science (HEXS) in the School of Sport at LBU. This project was supported and funded through a Fellowship in the School of Sport.

**Methods and main findings:** Through a 4-month consultation with current students, academics, well-being and centre for learning and teaching colleagues we undertook interviews and workshops about how the MHC does, and might, feature across our curricula. Our analysis and interpretation of the resulting transcripts proposed two main lines of action, each with implications for HE and well-being; 'Building students' (centring on helping them navigate the nuances of the academic process) and 'Building connections' (focusing on meeting more of the ongoing social needs of young people):



The report then progresses to address how the MHC elements were developed for HEXS with specific recommendations for this course.

**Implications:** Opportunities proposed by this research lie in taking a more considered (and possibly longer) approach to induction, progressing from a primarily social orientation in the first weeks to more fundamental skills, behaviours and knowledge throughout time on their course. Systematic scaffolding of relevant skills, behaviours and knowledge across the entire course was seen as fundamental to building students confidence and could prevent both academic staff and students'

frustrations about lack of 'know-how'. Staff-student interactions and a focus on micro-behaviours could further enhance a student's sense of belonging and desire to engage. At the same time, there was a strong interest in reinstating peer-to-peer interactions to optimise informal social learning and integration. Overall, better MH will be the result of many dynamic and tricky processes.

## 1. Background

Mental health (MH) can impact on student satisfaction, engagement, continuation, completion, and progression (Hughes and Spanner, 2019). However, poor MH amongst students is increasingly reported; 57% of students self-reported a mental health issue and 24% report having a diagnosis (Student Minds, 2023). In our School of Sport 7% of students, had registered with well-being services for the academic year 2022-2023. However, specific data on mental health and well-being of our students is currently unknown.

Better MH can improve rates of student continuation (we recognise that discontinuation is a good decision in some scenarios). This has profound financial implications: MH is by far the most common driver for dropping out – about 25 percentage points more than any other reason, such as financial support or course content (Sanders, 2023). Recent UK data, drawn in January 2023, showed that (i) students who feel supported by their university feel better about their wellbeing and (ii) are significantly less likely to consider dropping out (Studiosity, 2023). Furthermore, positive MH has been associated with higher achievement, deeper learning and higher student satisfaction (Hughes et al. 2022).

HE curriculum is a guaranteed touchpoint with students and therefore is key to enhancing perceptions of student support and MH (Hughes and Spanner, 2019). Curricula which promotes mental health could enhance student learning, persistence, creativity, problem solving, satisfaction and achievement (Houghton and Anderson, 2017). However, to date, no known work has considered the design of a whole course curriculum with integrated mental health principles. The Education for Mental Health (EMH) Toolkit (Hughes et al., 2022) highlights principles which can be integrated into curriculum design to enhance student's mental health. This toolkit is underpinned by principles highlighted in the University Mental Health Charter (Learn Theme) by Student Minds (Hughes & Spanner, 2019). Leeds Beckett was awarded the University Mental Health Charter status in July 2023 and the current project was included in the submission for the award.

The principles in the EMH toolkit include: Social belonging, which focuses on the connections between the students, their tutors and their environment; Learning focus, which highlights that developing a mastery learning focus can enhance deep and meaningful learning; Scaffolded design, guides students from novice to independent learner and can provide stretch and challenge; Learner development highlights how developing students academic competencies can develop their self-efficacy, self-attribution and self-management. The definition of mental health, as outlined in the EMH toolkit and the University Mental Health Charter will be used for this project:

'Mental health refers to a full spectrum of experience ranging from good mental health to mental illness. Good mental health means more than the absence of illness (3). It will refer to a dynamic state of internal equilibrium (4) in which an individual experiences regular enduring positive feelings, thoughts and behaviours, can respond appropriately to normal negative emotions and situations and is able to make a positive contribution to their community' (Hughes and Spanner, 2019).

This project aimed to integrate principles from EMH guidance into the curriculum design of the revalidated BSc Health and Exercise Course. This resulted in a set of general recommendations for course design as well as specific recommendations for the BSc Health and Exercise Course.

## 2. Process

A case study design was conducted over 4-months, in 2023 (Figure one summarises this process). This included listening workshops with a variety of staff and students, module and course development workshops with staff developing the course and input from stakeholders. Mapping of skills and discussions with Course Directors were also part of the process.

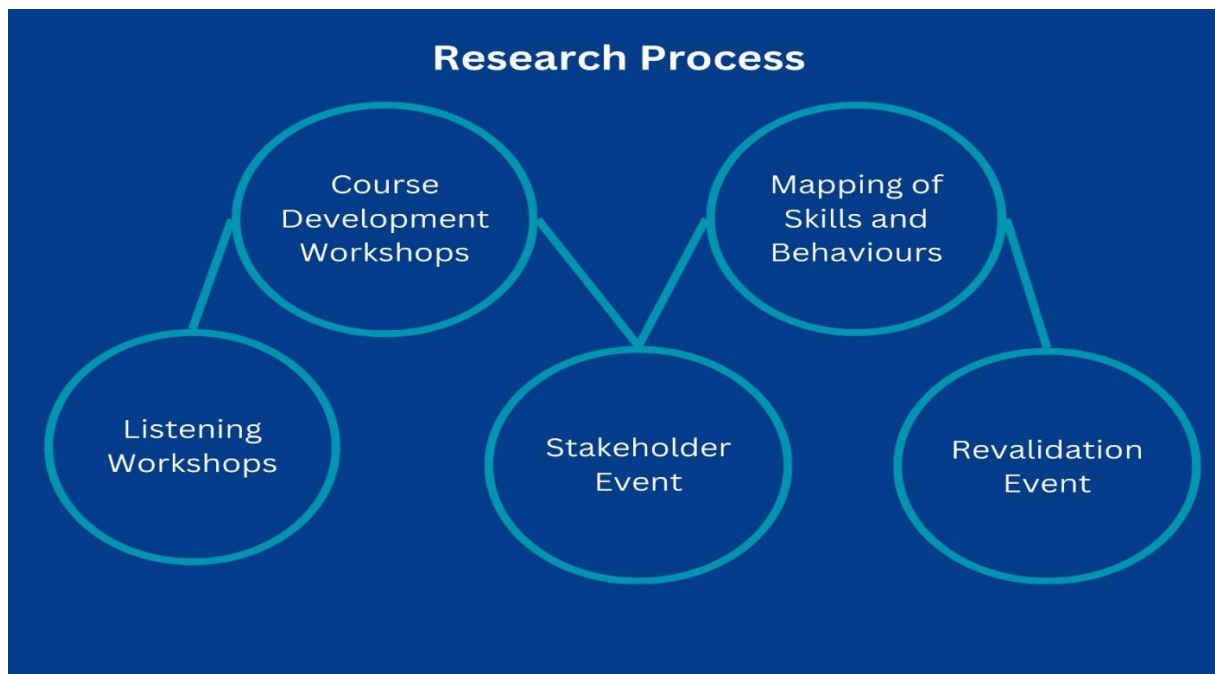


Figure One. Process of integrating mental health principles into curriculum

### Listening workshops

Three listening workshops took place with a total of 21 participants; six students, eight academics, three well-being colleagues and four colleagues from the centre for learning and teaching. Workshops lasted three hours and included small group discussions about experiences of mental health principles as outlined in the EMH toolkit. This included examples of good practice, barriers to best practice and examples which could impact on students mental health, in either a positive or negative manner.

### Course development workshops

Two course development workshops were conducted with academic colleagues (including Course Directors, Course Leaders and Module Leaders) who were developing the course for revalidation. The first workshop introduced the concept of developing a Mentally Healthy Curriculum (MHC) and highlighted some of the key principles. The second workshop shared findings from the listening workshops with the course team about how to integrate the principles into HEXS course design. Activities involved (i) sharing and discussing the skills, behaviours and knowledge to be developed through the revalidated course, (ii) mapping the skills and behaviours across the levels and modules and (iii) writing the skills and behaviours into the course and module learning outcomes, assessment and indicative content (see section four).

### Mapping Activities

The mapping process began in course development workshops. Skills and behaviours to develop across the course were identified, the course team then considered how these could be implemented

into their modules and levels. Where possible, these behaviours and skills were written into the learning outcomes and assessment. A systematic mapping process was undertaken after module specifications were submitted to Course Directors before submission to QAS. This involved JH reviewing each module and mapping where skills were identified (see Table Two, in section four). This highlighted further inclusion of behaviours and skills was necessary to fully integrate principles from the EMH toolkit. This was discussed with Course Directors, and some alterations were undertaken, however, some recommendations were not possible due to shared modules and burden of assessment on academic well-being. Specific recommendations for the delivery of HEXS are shared in section four.

#### Revalidation Event

The course was approved for revalidation and commended for the mental health support in curriculum design.

#### Thematic Analysis

A reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019) was carried out on all of the workshop data. This was informed by the MH principles in the EMH toolkit. However, wider reflections and considerations were discussed which underpin general curricula design and the specific recommendations for HEXS. Section three discusses the overall findings and section four shares the specific recommendations for HEXS delivery in 2024.



### 3. Findings

Two main themes were identified; Building Students and Building Connections, Figure two highlights these. Our focus is on 'Building' and on bricks, which fits with our emphasis on development occurring over time. The bricks show options focused on enhancing student MH. Bricks represent discrete processes for wholesale adoption. We emphasise routines since these are small, ordinary actions, meaning they are always more likely to be implemented. People affected by time-pressures and/or fatigue are often forgetful; this is another reason to favour routines - they are often activated by the inevitability of contexts, people and/or other systems. Finally, we also encourage others to develop their own bricks, to build bespoke approaches to curriculum design.

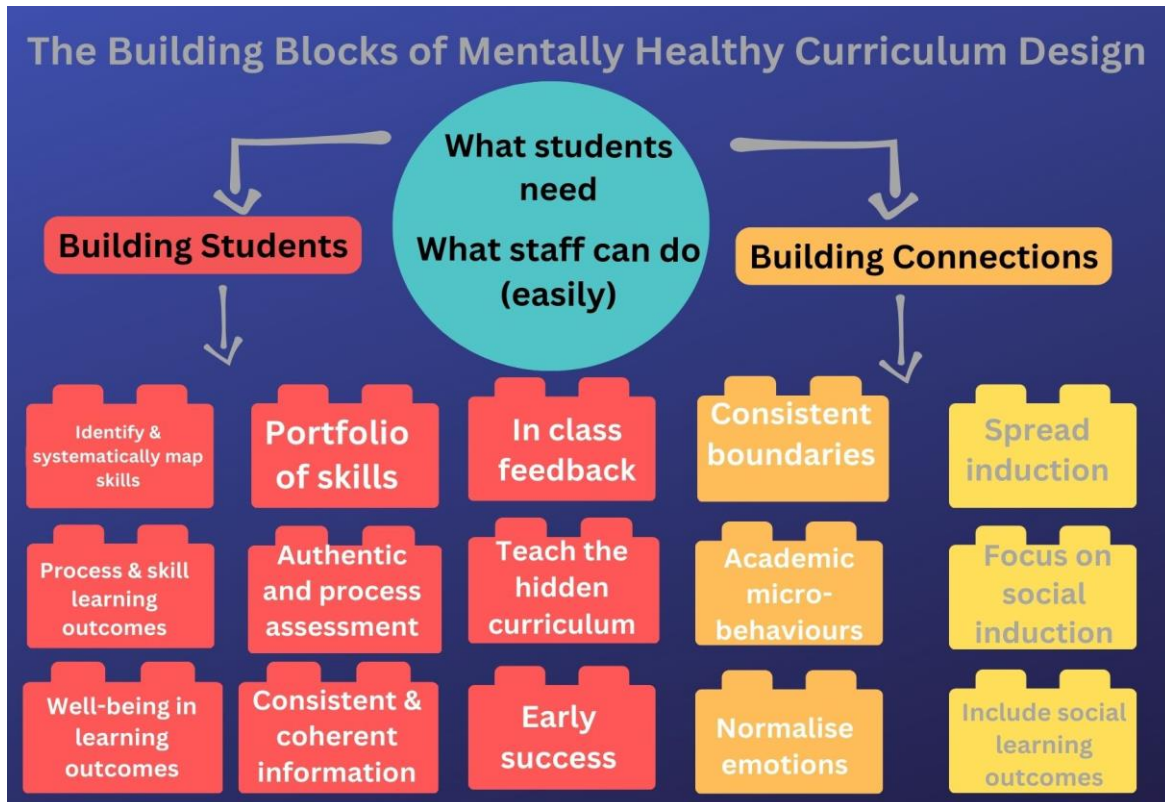


Figure Two. Overall findings: Building Students and Building Connections.

#### Building Students

'Building students' addresses how we support students to develop themselves and their commitment to learning. The workshops highlighted that activities that recur across the curriculum provide opportunities for repetition, progressive development and enhance confidence. This included developing subject-specific knowledge, developing skills and behaviours associated with being a university student and pragmatic goal setting (overly optimistic approaches tend to overlook hurdles; Dawson, 2023). Among others, *learning* (or *academic*) skills involve styles of reading (e.g., scan reading and deep reading), note-taking (e.g., Cornell, Mapping and Bullet point) and writing (drafting and editing), group work, oracy and reflection (including perspective taking and opposable thinking). It also includes the development of attention control, procrastination control, schedule planning, project reviewing and resting. Resting is also a priority for students whose MH issues emerge from intense attitudes toward achievement (Sanders, 2023). Writing skills are important; they signal – to learners and academics - about clarity of thinking on a given topic.

In developing this theme, 'tensions' were identified between what students need and are prepared to invest and what is being provided and expected. While many students progressed perfectly well, for others, discrepancies arose from assumptions made on all 'sides'; students were not universally exposed to, and/or did not engage in, deliberate, systematic use of essential skill areas either before or through their courses.

A key frustration between academic staff and students was the expectation of staff that students should 'know' things. These presumptions ranged from key information about assignments, what different resources were called, how to access basic information, to knowing who to speak to for specific information. However, students often felt that they were under-prepared, and did not know how to secure what seemed like basic information (that 'everyone else' already knew!). Academics were often frustrated by what they saw as 'handholding' and having to repeat mundane information:

*'... Lots of students will talk about the fact that they don't know what's required of them. And I always find that surprising, because I say, "Well, have you read your module handbook? Because it'll tell you in there", and often that there's a bit of confusion around what a module handbook is, or, you know, stuff that like that. I find it surprising, because I think, why is this not being explained to you..' Jane, academic*

Whole curriculum systematic scaffolding could prevent frustrations for both students and academics. While scaffolding was consistently discussed, and many examples of good practice were highlighted, few practices were consistently repeated and developed; for instance, many messages were simply annualised. Scaffolding of knowledge across disciplines appeared to dominate, rather than a focus on the development of academic skills and behaviours across the entire curriculum. As many tutors teach across modules, and often in different discipline teams, students may not experience the satisfaction associated with making sequential improvements instilled by progressions if, for example, skills are systematically scaffolded. By presuming 'someone else is covering it, in other modules', academic staff often expect students to be better at fundamental skills than they are. Writing is a particular case in point; allocating writing time in supervised sessions will ensure students do some writing. Dedicating time to writing in sessions is also an opportunity for students to realise what they know (and what they don't) about a given topic.

Not only were academics frustrated at some students' low levels of competence, but also their frustration was amplified by some students' apparent indifference to this. (NB., Projecting 'indifference' is a well-known tactic of self-protection. It directs explanations of cause to low effort, to distract from more hurtful – and potentially, socially damaging – judgements of low ability.) Yet, students told us they have often had no opportunity – nor had they ever been required - to learn and/or develop some basic competencies. Furthermore, often the step-by-step process of developing the skill development was never begun. Teaching and assessing the processes underpinning group work, making presentations, writing short sections of essays, and using reflective questioning to review study designs, were found to support students. Equally, students appreciated the value of specific session content when they see how it contributes to wider 'Why?' questions, like 'Why do I

*need to know this to do <specific work role>?'*. Developing progressive practices in these areas will build confidence and competence; this positive attention will also displace the many frustrations we heard about from students and academics. To enhance this, it is recommended that the process of skill and behaviour development is embedded in learning outcomes and assessment, thus ensuring that skills are overtly developed. Both academic and CLT staff suggested to address skill confidence, activities could be logged and reviewed in a portfolio of skills maintained by both the student and their Advisor(s).

Successes in skill-building will activate brain functioning by releasing dopamine (a brain chemical released in the pursuit of goals). These successes are important for revitalising commitments to learning (and dealing with setbacks) and for creating a new identity as a fully-fledged university student (Kirchner & Hendrick, 2020). Success rates of around 85% have recently been identified as optimising the acquisition of learning routines (Koedinger et al., 2023) and supporting academic persistence (Eskreis-Winkler & Fishbach, 2022). Once these routines are formed, they can continue to be refined across the university career and across lifelong learning. Furthermore, these skills can be developed and documented in class which can enhance students' perception of their learning as meaningful, avoiding a constant focus on assessment (Hughes & Spanner, 2019).

The Hidden Curriculum (i.e., the rules and norms of the university which are not always explicitly taught and are often assumed) was also discussed in many workshops. For example, students were unsure how to address their tutors, how to balance asking for help with developing independence and were even unsure about 'rules' for waiting before entering a teaching space. Uncertainty was also expressed about where and how to find information. Academics reported feeling frustrated when they shared information but students did not engage with it or use it when needed (while academics may have been familiar with such information – they many have used the same information for a number of years - they may overlook that students are new to this information/way of working). Therefore, information needs to be coherent and consistently shared, one way to ensure this would be to include students in the development of the course and module material.

Developing learner development skills, such as self-regulation, self-management and self-attribution were found to be an asset to any course. However, it was also clear that these skills should not be an additional aspect of the course but should be integrated into modules and include credit. Integrating learner development skills into modules and learning outcomes, will confirm our collective commitment to these features because they are so fundamental to the learning process (Stallman & King, 2016). Furthermore, developing confidence in these skills, enables further and deeper learning (Hughes et al. 2022).

#### Key recommendations for 'Building Students':

- 1) Identify the academic and learner skills and behaviours required for the course
- 2) Systematically map these skills across the modules and levels of the course. Ensuring that these are built progressively
- 3) Integrate process and skill development into learning outcomes alongside knowledge
- 4) Develop and maintain a skills portfolio
- 5) Ensure assessment is authentic/meaningful and embeds process
- 6) Ensure information is shared consistently and coherently
- 7) Include students in module and course development to ensure clarity of information
- 8) Integrate self-management and learner development skills into learning outcomes and ensure this is integrated rather than add-on module
- 9) Skill development and feedback in class could provide quick wins and early success
- 10) Well designed assessments which do not increase staff burden
- 11) Teach students how to learn and to understand the hidden curriculum. This could include a list of terms and acronyms as well as peer to peer learning. This could be part of a longer induction.

### **Building Connections**

Just as we need to Build Students, in their turn, students want and need to 'feel known' to others (Schroeder & Fishbach, 2024). Embodying this idea, 'Building Connections' relates to meeting the developmental needs of young people to feel welcome and then, to feel belonging. (A recent belonging-based RCT intervention increased students' attendance and grades in two large college science courses, Binning et al., 2020). These needs prioritise respect and involvement with others. Seen in this way it also involves social belonging and creating psychologically safe spaces where students feel comfortable in their surroundings. Crucially, interconnectedness is increasingly recognised as being a Public Health priority in its own right (Kubzansky, Epel & Davidson, 2023) and central to many of the MH problems affecting the HE community.

In the initial stages of HE induction, students were keen to avoid 'being bombarded' with information and detailed processes. Given the importance of social processes to students, essential information was often sought and passed within new networks using informal social connections. Importantly, in these new networks, even a hint of incompetence and/or ignorance risks a substantial loss of social status. Students will often avoid activities which risk, let alone confirm, low social status.

In terms of adapting to university life, foundational information often competes with other types of information. A more considerate form of induction will last longer than the conventional one week (the logic for this duration was not clear to anyone we spoke to). The 'overwhelm' of the initial experience may persist for many weeks, as has been identified in workplace inductions for 18-year-olds into PriceWaterhouseCooper (PwC, 2023). Several examples of longer inductions were discussed; from six weeks to a year. The consensus was to focus the first week of induction on social processes – learning students' names (and vice versa), doing shared activities and connecting with others – progressing, in subsequent weeks, to building their knowledge and skills relevant to the course.

*'...Getting people just having fun doing something fun together. Once people can feel at ease with each other and with you guys as the staff team, I think that reduces that sort of level of distress that a lot of students are probably feeling when they when they first land. And you can't learn when you're in that state, when you're in that fight or flight state when you're just a bit overwhelmed by everything. Whereas once you know who your mates are and you can feel safe around people, that's when the learning can start taking place.'* Helen

Connecting with others was paramount in the first week, however, this can be extended and be seen as part of a longer ongoing induction. Examples of positive inductions included residential programmes, walks, sharing a coffee and/or lunch were seen as strengthening social bonds with course mates and with academic staff. This supports students to feel like they belong in university life and affiliate with their courses.

Creating a space where students feel psychologically safe, was seen as paramount to self-efficacy and involvement in class activities. Classes were described as spaces where students should feel able to ask questions and share their thoughts and ideas. They also presented an opportunity for students to be reassured about their progress. Staff micro-behaviours appear to be paramount in developing psychological safety. Having consistent boundaries was seen as helpful here.

#### Academic micro-behaviours

Staff micro-behaviours can impact on the engagement and mental health of students, often unknowingly. Micro-behaviours include how quickly an academic speaks (or the overall academic 'level' of their vocabulary), how they enforce rules and how they communicate. Micro-behaviours include smiling, making eye contact, holding an open stance during conversations, using students' first names, sharing personal interest and experiences (hobbies, children etc) and encouraging peer-to-peer (one-to-one, one-to-some, some-to-some, one-to many, some-to-many) interactions, rather than enforcing it.

*Melissa: Yeah. I think it's nice when they talk to you about other stuff than just Uni. That's not just that module. You actually think, Oh, they're actually interested in something than their bit. ... When they tell you about the dogs. Yeah. It's nice to know about them and they know about you so it's nice to do back.*

*Laura: Yeah. It's nice. Like even yesterday in that nutrition and we were on about their marathon.*

*Melissa: It makes you want to go more if you can be chatty with them rather than sit and listen.*

These are all features that strengthen the relationships between students and between students and faculty (It may be that staff attending sporting events with students could contribute to this too). This might also entail discussing how to handle experiences that may interrupt regular attendance, including negative emotions; for example, discussing how speaking aloud and doing presentations can be anxiety-inducing and exploring options for handling that anxiety. Staff might share examples where they have also felt nervous, especially examples that show the value of slowing down on expectations. Academics may need training to enable them to have these conversations with students and to identify where any referral to well-being is required.

The key recommendations about connections are shared below:

- 1) Induction should be longer than a week.
- 2) The first week of 'formal induction' should focus on making social connections
- 3) Social activities should continue throughout level 4.
- 4) Social activities should be written into the course learning outcomes.
- 5) Easy wins: Learn names, share a bit of yourself.
- 6) Set consistent boundaries
- 7) Normalise emotions
- 8) Staff training on discussing emotions to be conducted with wellbeing services.

## 4. Specific recommendations for BSc (Hons) Health and Exercise Science

Specific recommendations based upon the analysis and mapping processes for HEXS are discussed in this section. The above thematic analysis provides further context which underpin the specific recommendations undertaken in this process. Table one demonstrates how key principles from the EMH were mapped with the findings and recommendations identified from the workshops. These include: Social Belonging should be the central focus of induction; Learning Focused discussions highlighted that assessing process and authentic assessment were essential. Scaffolded Design discussions highlighted that academic skills need to be identified and these skills need to be broken down to build the students, these should be systematically mapped across the course. Learner Development highlighted that integrating self-management and well-being skills across a course, rather than as an add-on was essential for engagement.

Table One. Mapping of MH principles from EMH to the workshop findings

Social Belonging	Induction
Learning Focussed	Assess the process of skill and behaviour development.  Provide plentiful opportunities for authentic assessment.
Scaffolded Design	Identify skills and behaviours required for a students on the course. Systematically map these across the entire course and include in learning outcomes.
Learner Development	Integrate learner development and well-being skills throughout modules and levels

Figure three demonstrates how the MH principles were then mapped into the curriculum and the HEXS modules. Figure three names specific modules where assessing the process, authentic assessment and self-management and well-being skills are developed. The identify skills column highlights indicative skills and behaviours highlighted for the course. Further detail is in Table Two.



Figure Three. Mapping of findings to the modules on Health and Exercise Science

Skills and behaviours were identified through the workshops and discussions with the HEXS course team. These were thoroughly mapped throughout the course. See table one for an overview of this mapping activity.

Table Two. Mapping of skills and behaviours to levels and modules

Skills	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Practical lab skills	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
• Analysis and interpretation	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
• Written lab reports/poster	✓	✓	✓✓
Group skills	✓	✓	
Academic skills			
• Searching	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓
• Referencing	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓
• Collating	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓
• Writing	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
• Discussing	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
• Arguing			
• Evaluating	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
• Summing up arguments		✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
• Providing conclusions	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Research skills			
• Design	✓	✓	✓
• Methods	✓	✓✓	✓
• Data collection	✓	✓✓	✓
• Analysis			✓✓
• Qual	✓		
• Quant		✓✓	
• Interpretation	✓	✓✓	✓✓
• Conclusion	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Speaking	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Self-management			
• Reflection	✓✓	✓✓	
• Stress and nerve management	✓✓		
• Conflict resolution – encouraging positive group work	✓		
• Lifestyle	✓	✓✓	
• Self-regulation	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓
• Planning	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Practitioner skills			
• Behaviour change skills		✓✓	✓✓



• Communication with clients		✓	✓
• Subject knowledge		✓	
• PA and health guidelines	✓		✓✓
• Understanding of systems		✓	✓
• Measurement	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
• Evaluation of measures		✓✓✓	✓✓✓
• Intervention design			✓✓
• Exercise programme design	✓	✓	✓
• Delivery of exercise programmes etc	✓	✓	✓
• Group delivery			
• Individual delivery			
• Communication of findings/evidence	✓	✓✓✓✓	
• Commissioners			
• Public Health			
• General population			✓
• Problem solving	✓✓	✓✓	
• Specialist pops	✓	✓	✓✓
• Learning disability			
• Type 2 diabetes			
• Pregnancy			
• Older adults			
• Dementia			
• Children – rehab from cancer			

Key ✓ = Biomechanics ✓ = Physiology ✓ = Nutrition ✓ = Psychology ✓ = PPAD/RM  
✓ = FYP/Employability

Both the mapping activities and thematic analysis demonstrate the importance of identifying skills and behaviours and teaching and assessing the process of skill development. This activity highlighted that there is some good development of skills across the course. The specific recommendations highlight how process of skills can be integrated into teaching and assessment to enhance the confidence of students. However, it was not always possible to integrate and develop all highlighted skills. This was particularly a problem for writing skills.

### Writing Skills

The mapping activities highlighted the limited opportunity to develop writing skills and specifically to write lab reports on the course. This was further highlighted at the stakeholder event and in the revalidation event. However, after discussions with the Course Directors, it was clear that this was not easily addressed. Two problems were apparent, one was that some of these modules are shared with the BSc in Sport and Exercise Science which had already been revalidated and the other problem was

that some of the assessment had been altered to an exam to reduce the burden on academic staff. The staff-student mental health paradox requires further attention, however, students could be left feeling unprepared in their writing skills, which could further lead to staff frustration. As it was not possible to integrate these skills fully into the learning outcomes and assessments across the course, further opportunities for writing should be embedded. This should be integrated into class tasks across all modules at level four and level five.

#### Academic Advisor (AA) programme

A suggestion for the AA programme is for students to develop a skill and behaviour development portfolio. This would require all students to have the skills identified for the course. The AAs can work with students to discuss where and how they are developing these skills, including academic and self-regulation skills. This can be developed across the levels and all modules, not just specific skills modules.

Table three outlines some recommendations for specific modules for the HEXS course.

Table 3. Module specific recommendations for HEXS.

L4 PPAD	Look at how this portfolio is developed. Potential that the expert statement is still too much at L4. Suggestion: Some of the assessment is on the process e.g., how they have done searches. Produce a table of search terms, state which databases they looked at, ensure a range of sources are used to provide the opportunity to practice different reference types.
L4 Health and Exercise Trainer	Suggestion: The written aspect also to develop academic writing skills. E.g. scientific report writing, exercise prescription & Interpretation of results.
L4 Physiology of the Human Body	Suggestion: As this is the first group work: Teach the process. Assess the process. Teach conflict resolution (support from wellbeing practitioner). Reflection should be part of this process, if written reflection isn't embedded in the assessment this could be informal but students should still keep a record and submit/keep in a portfolio of skills. Could also work on this in group AA sessions.  Group practical assessment – this could be a good opportunity to do a session around anxiety and management of nerves – well-being can support with this.  Writing: As no lab report, build writing of lab report skills into the classroom and exam.
L4 Functional Anatomy and Biomechanics	Ensure the why is covered in this module. Why do we need to know the specific underpinnings in an exercise and health context.
L4 Fundamentals of Exercise Psychology	Suggestion: Poster presentation - Include reference list and also evidence as to how they found the literature e.g. which database. Also identify which search terms and a reflection on how they decided on their chosen papers.

	<p>Consider this being qualitative data collection and write-up.</p> <p>Well-being and self-management/self-regulation could also be covered in this module.</p>
L4 Nutrition and Biochemistry	<p>Suggestion: The short answer exam be problem based learning. Potential to assess process of learning through exam e.g. how they are developing writing skills or skill analysis – how have they gone about solving a problem with a nutrition focus?</p>
L5 Professional Development	<p>Provide more focussed links with industry. Active Leeds and Leeds Rhinos are keen to have students and could also pay for qualifications if students then go and work for them on an ad hoc basis.</p>
L5 Research in Practice for Health and Exercise Science	<p>Group work is embedded – build on skills from L4. Ensure that students reflect on own development of analysis skills. No written assessment of analysis and interpretation – do in class as prep for L6 FYP.</p>
L5 Lifelong Public Health Science	<p>To include: fundamentals of how the NHS works, how community groups and foundations fit with this. Social prescriptions.</p> <p>Suggestion: The lit review to include some process angle – how have they carried out their searches? How have they reviewed articles eg include a review table of strengths and limitations of the paper.</p>
L5 Behaviour Change Science	<p>Written reflection on group work.</p> <p>Opportunity to look at own health behaviours they might want to alter.</p>
L5 Food and Nutrition for Health and Exercise Science	<p>Great opportunity to look at lifestyle management here and what their own diet consists of and how they could develop their own healthy lifestyle plan.</p> <p>This might look at how to translate the evidence to the general population – great opportunity to do so if not.</p>
L5 Biomechanical Evaluation of Human Movement	<p>Indicative content is very lab based. How can this be applied to the real world. Stakeholders suggested the following content: Frailty, hip replacements, strokes, neuromuscular...</p>
L5 Physiology of Health and Exercise Science	<p>Opportunity to develop processes of learning. Need to identify which specific skills – writing, interpretation. Unless students do biomechanics there is no opportunity to write up a scientific report try and do this in classes.</p>
L6 Final Year Project	<p>Keep choice. Ensure they have the skills to do the final year project.</p>
L6 Public Health Interventions	<p>First look at intervention design. Build from the bottom.</p>
L6 Biomechanics of Health and Injury	<p>An applied module. This could further consider what it would be like to conduct tests in an applied setting and outside of a lab. This is a result of stakeholder feedback – conducting tests in the community is very different to in a lab.</p>
L6 Clinical Exercise Physiology	<p>Great opportunity for some good PBL in this module. Stakeholders highlighted that the students learn the skills in a new build and this is not what it is like in the real world. How</p>

	would you conduct these tests in a private room at a pub (for example).
L6 Applied Exercise Psych	Could do some tasks in seminars which look at how to deliver to individuals or groups for people living with different conditions.
L6 Public Health Nutrition	Could this have an element as to how this information would be communicated with commissioners?  Opportunity to look at own lifestyle here too.
L6 Obesity Management	This is 100% written, opportunity to look at how to translate evidence to the public within this eg write a blog. Rather than it be solely written coursework.
L6 Cardiac Rehabilitation	Opportunity (if not already done) to look at how to deliver to individuals as well as groups.
L6 Contemporary Health Issues and PA Rehabilitation	Opportunity (if not already done) to look at how to deliver to individuals as well as groups.

## 6. Concluding comments

The process of integrating MH principles into curriculum design has highlighted the importance of both 'Building Students' (helping them solidify satisfaction with their 'university self') and 'Building Connections' (making links and finding people who will help one another). Adopting a 'social' approach is important because it consolidates students within a wider network; once established, that network can be leveraged to secure many of the outcomes valued so highly within modern HE. It will also help students to become more resourceful in connecting to the wider community. Activating these effects will also ensure positive outcomes without adding to already problematic workloads and to the variable MH status of staff.

Systematic scaffolding will enhance student MH and offset many of the frustrations reported by the different research participants. To enhance this, it was helpful to identify the important skills and outcomes for course components and map these across the whole degree. Including these skills and the process of developing these skills in learning outcomes will make them front-and-centre commitments and prioritise them in everyday delivery and in management capabilities.

Maintaining a portfolio of skills will enhance mental health by demonstrating personal achievements and academic competencies. Involving academics in this process will help establish an important continuous discovery-improvement loop. The routine micro-behaviours of academics can foster a more engaging and psychologically safe space in which students feel more confident to make active contributions and be willing to return to the classroom (this is important in the context of widespread non-attendance). Central to this is to emphasise support that moves each learner forward. To further strengthen positive social interactions with peers, administrators and tutors, a 'whole course approach' is justified, beginning in induction and continuing through to graduation.

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