

# UCL Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan

## Introduction

At UCL, we are committed to the public health ideal of protecting our students' and staff's mental wellbeing and playing our role in community-based suicide prevention.

Suicide is a complex issue which can affect anyone. Following the publication of the [Camden and Islington Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2027](#), and Universities U.K guidance we felt it was important for UCL to follow other universities develop its own action plan to encompass both students and staff. We wanted to identify all areas, including strategies already in place, across the institution that impact and are impacted by suicide.

This strategy and action plan has a specific aim, to minimise deaths by suicide and attempted suicides (as far as is possible) within the UCL community and acknowledge this will feed into other UCL strategies.

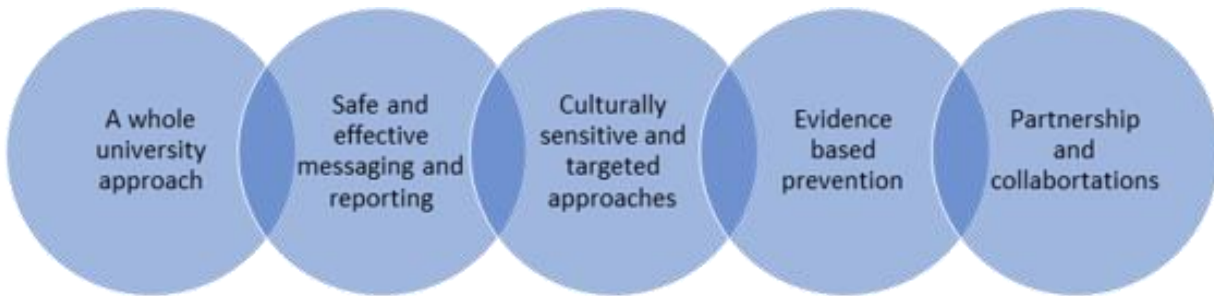
Our approach to create this action plan was to initially bring together Student Support and Wellbeing, Workplace Health, and the Students' Union to lead on the project. We then formed a wider Task and Finish group encompassing members from across the institution (including clinical academic staff, representatives from Estates, HR, EDI and UCL Arena) as well as other relevant external stakeholders (including Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust and Camden and Islington Public Health Directorate) to ensure diverse and informed input. The group placed an emphasis on the benefits of a whole University approach.

We are aware that UCL's duty of care varies depending on whether it is in relation to their staff or their students and that, whilst we have reviewed provisions, we know that not all actions will apply to both audiences. We have liaised with a variety of stakeholders to best ensure we are fulfilling our duty of care but also not stepping outside our remit. We plan to review this action plan on a termly basis, updating and amending as necessary.

Our key messages for this action plan mirror those in the Camden and Islington Public Health Suicide Prevention Strategy:

- Suicide is preventable.
- It's safe to talk about suicide.
- Suicide prevention is everyone's business

## Principles of strategy



## Implementation

Student Support and Wellbeing, Workplace Health and Students' Union will lead on the implementation of the actions identified to fulfil the objectives outlined below. The implementation will require extensive input from stakeholders, the majority of whom were included in the initial Task and Finish group during the consultation period. The members of this group provided a strong foundation to ensure connections were made with relevant departments, and colleagues with knowledge and expertise.

The implementation will consist of actioning the items under the 'how' component of the action plan (on page 3 of this document). By putting these actions in place, UCL will move closer to fulfilling the objectives outlined on page 2 of this document. Many of the actions will need careful and informed planning and will not necessarily be quick to implement. Thus, the implementation phase of this strategy will be broken down into a tiered system of short-, medium- and long-term actions to allocate appropriate time for planning and changes to be made.

## Goal

Reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts within the UCL community

## Objectives

To have robust response systems

To have and maintain a better-informed community on suicide and what support is available

Create an emotionally safe environment

Means of data collection, monitoring and impact

## Actions

Prevention, intervention and postvention

- Reduce means of access
- Safeguarding
- Tailored and targeted
- Appropriate response
- Informed assessment

- Support resources
- Workshops
- Signposting and referrals
- Suicide Awareness training
- Partnership work

- Reduce stigma of suicidality
- Campaigns
- Healthy environment and culture
- Use of appropriate language
- Reducing misconceptions

- Research
- Audits
- Completions of training
- Reviews

## Outcomes

UCL community feel confident and able to have conversations around suicide, identifying signs of suicidality and act on this appropriately

Increase help-seeking behaviour

Community feels knowledgeable and confident to intervene appropriately with someone who expresses feeling suicidal and signpost/refer to appropriate support/services.

## Enablers

Student Support and Wellbeing team  
Estates Health & Safety Committee

Workplace Health and Wellbeing team  
Academic Departments

Welcome and Induction team

Students' Union  
Task and Finish group