Universities UK

HoDoMS Annual Conference 2023

Mental health in higher education

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Today

- Mental health in higher education
- Stepchange/University MH Charter
- What works?
- Mind Mentally Healthy Universities
- Pandemic
- UCEA case studies
- Next steps
- Leadership

Our shared vision is for UK universities to be places that promote mental health and wellbeing, enabling all students and all staff to thrive and succeed to their best potential.
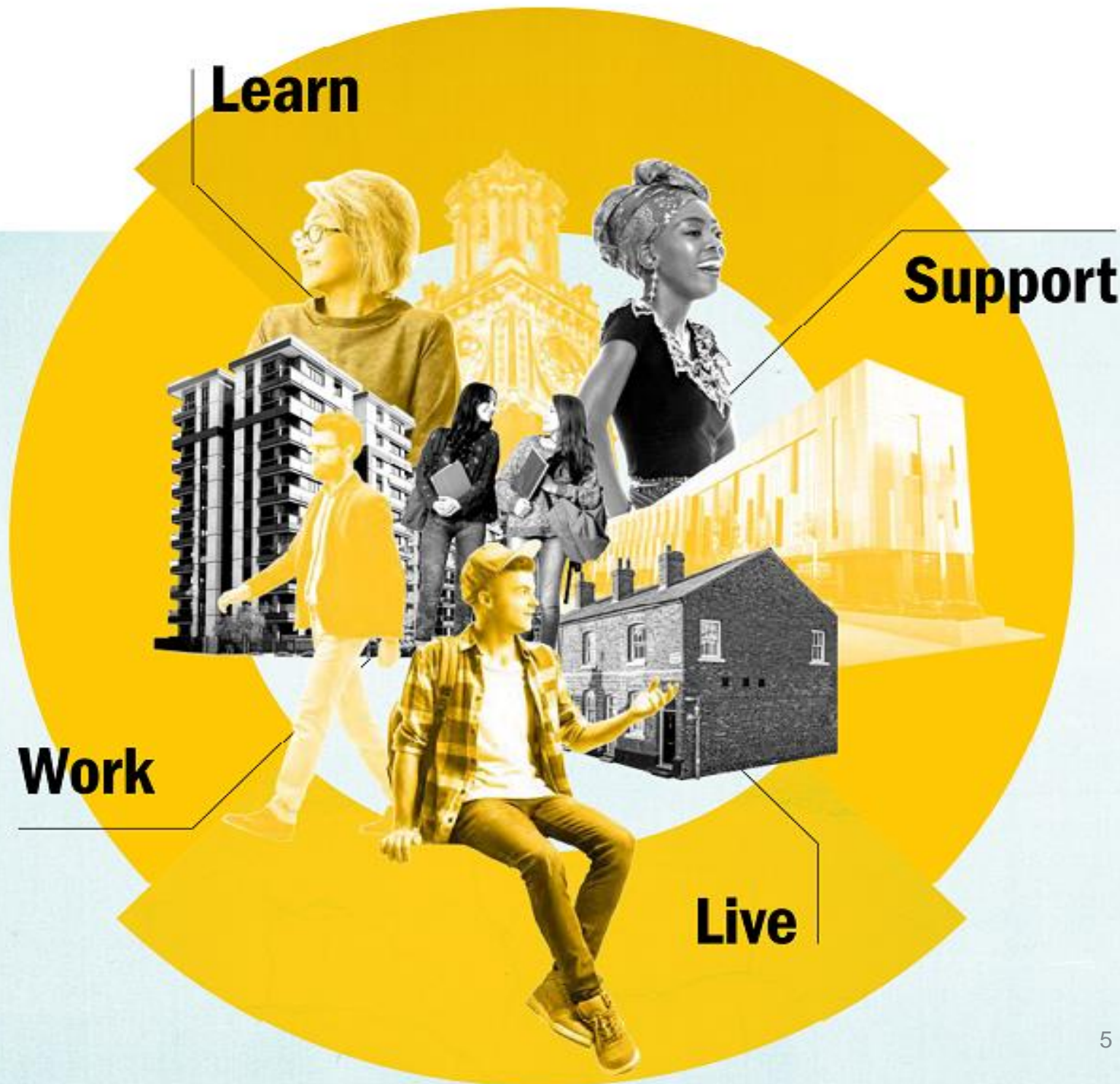
We will achieve our vision by **all universities adopting mental health as a strategic priority** and implementing a whole university approach.

WHOLE UNIVERSITY APPROACH

The Stepchange: mentally healthy universities model is formed of four domains.

Learn

Support

Work

Live

WHOLE UNIVERSITY APPROACH: ENABLERS

Five cross-cutting themes to embed a whole university approach.

Leadership

Co-production

Information

Inclusivity

Research and innovation

Questions for senior leaders

Q Is mental health a strategic priority for your institution?

Q Is mental health expressed as a priority in your strategic plan?

YES ·········· NO

YES ·········· NO

A **YES** Are you satisfied that your vision will drive long-term change across every aspect of your institution for the benefit of all students and all staff?

A **NO** Has it been discussed at senior executive and board level? Has this decision been added to your risk register? What mitigation has been agreed?

What about staff mental health?
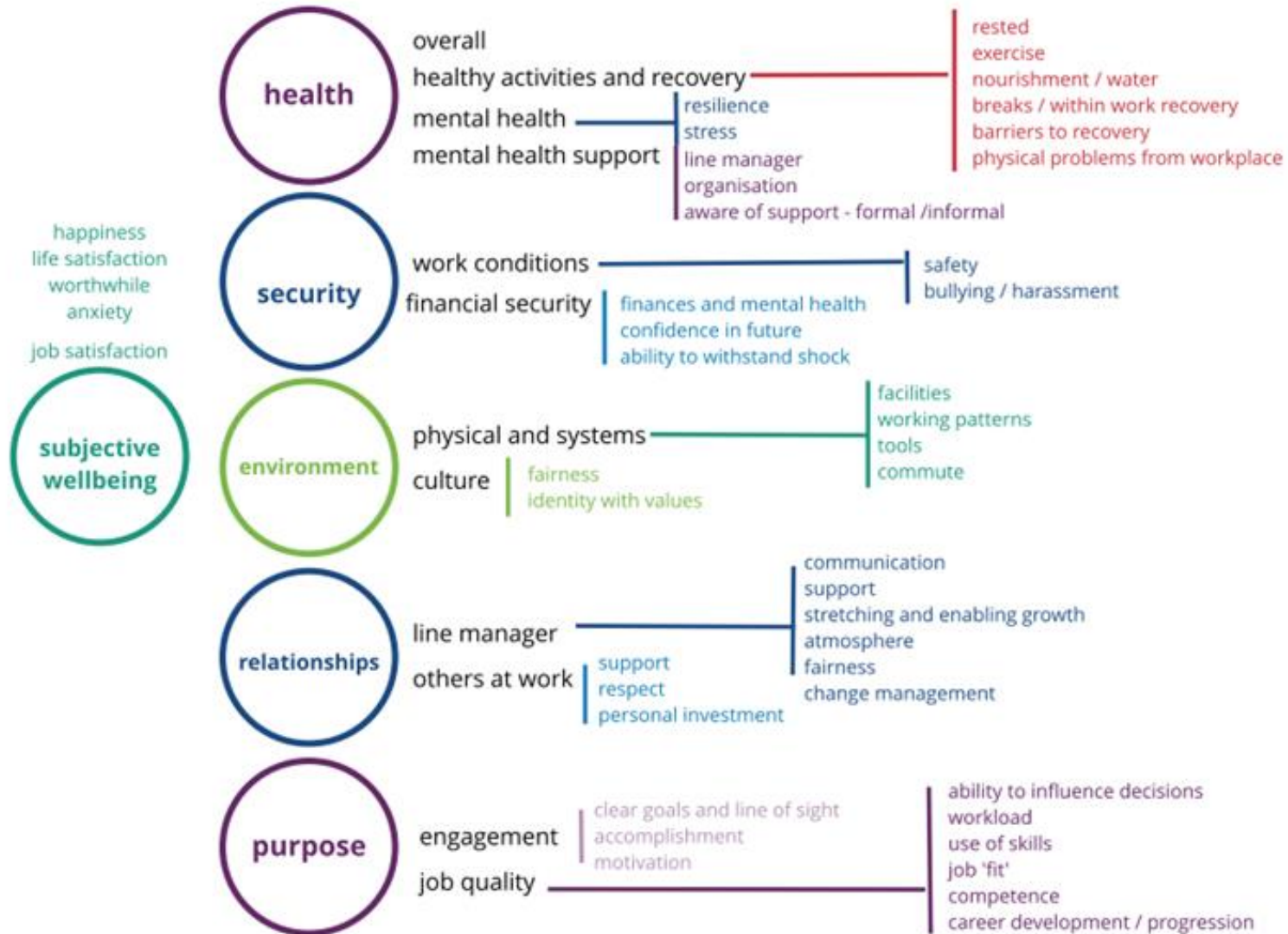
Sector fora:

MHHE
UCEA H&S Committee
HESH Forum

Workplace drivers of wellbeing

subjective wellbeing

happiness
life satisfaction
worthwhile
anxiety

job satisfaction

health
- overall
- healthy activities and recovery
  - rested
  - exercise
  - nourishment / water
  - breaks / within work recovery
  - barriers to recovery
  - physical problems from workplace
- mental health
  - resilience
  - stress
- mental health support
  - line manager
  - organisation
  - aware of support - formal /informal

security
- work conditions
  - safety
  - bullying / harassment
- financial security
  - finances and mental health
  - confidence in future
  - ability to withstand shock

environment
- physical and systems
  - facilities
  - working patterns
  - tools
  - commute
- culture
  - fairness
  - identity with values

relationships
- line manager
  - communication
  - support
  - stretching and enabling growth
  - atmosphere
  - fairness
  - change management
- others at work
  - support
  - respect
  - personal investment

purpose
- engagement
  - clear goals and line of sight
  - accomplishment
  - motivation
- job quality
  - ability to influence decisions
  - workload
  - use of skills
  - job 'fit'
  - competence
  - career development / progression

Mind: Mentally Healthy Universities

2-year pilot supported by *Goldman Sachs Gives* running from September 2019 to August 2021 in 9 universities across England.

Universities supported to meet Mental Health at Work Commitment

Standard one: Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity

Standard two: Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes

Standard three: Promote an open culture around mental health

Standard four: Increase organisational confidence and capability

Standard five: Provide mental health tools and support

Standard six: Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mentally-healthy-universities-programme/

PANDEMIC

- 'We all have mental health.'

- Unequal impact
- Return

UCEA: Case studies of approaches to staff mental wellbeing

17 case studies

UWE (Bristol) *Mental Wealth First*. Promotion, Prevention, Provision. Audit & improvement.
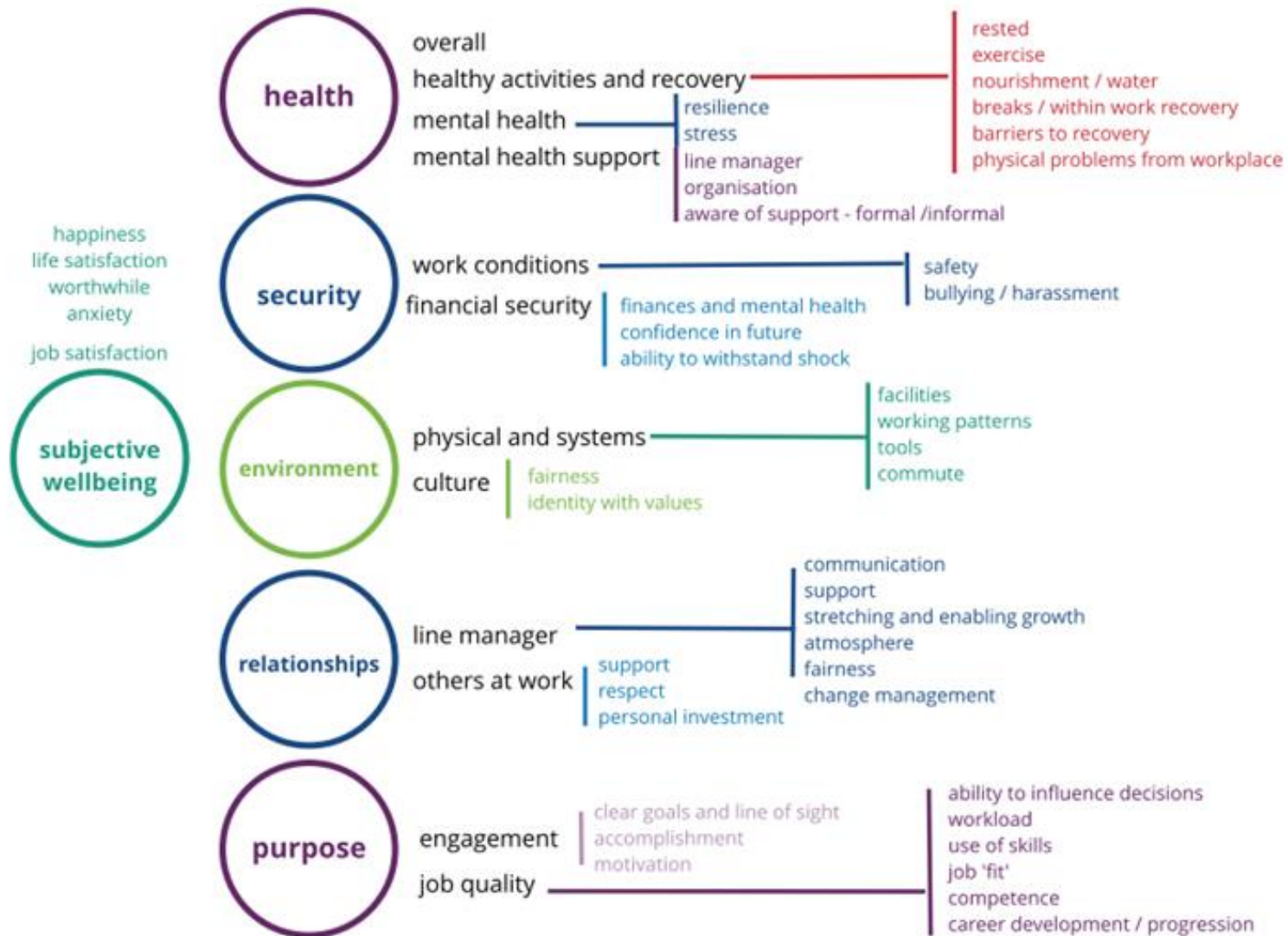
Sheffield Whole university approach. Staff & students. Aligned to *Student Minds Charter*. Mind MHU pilot.

Leeds Beckett. Appraisals to embed wellbeing via *Wellbeing Action Plans* and support for wellbeing-led line management.

https://www.ucea.ac.uk/our-work/mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources/mental-health-case-studies/

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➤ Not all 'work' is the same
What makes the biggest difference where you are?

Overall priorities
1. People work for People
Health & Relationships

2. We need to feel safe
Security & Environment

3. We need to feel fulfilled
Purpose

Next steps

Better understanding?

Driving improvement?

Looking at sector standard?

Leadership

Leadership

- Focus on individual

- Executive team

- Whole organisation

MH Leadership Tool

https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/topics/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-leadership-tool

Thanks!

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