

UNISPORT CONFERENCE 2019

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND THE VALUE OF SPORT

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# DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE & EXPERIENCE

## STUDENT ADMINISTRATION

Exams  
Graduations  
Enrolments  
Fees  
Complaints &  
Discipline

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Residential Colleges  
Orientation  
Sport  
Careers  
Student Exchanges  
Equity Office

## STUDENT WELLBEING

Medical Centre  
Health Promotion  
Unit  
Disability Services  
Counselling  
Academic Support



# DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE & EXPERIENCE



# STUDENT WELLBEING

WHAT IS IT, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?







## STUDENT WELLBEING

Sustainable state of positive mood or attitude, resilience and satisfaction with self, relationships and experiences.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT  
AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

# MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM

Exercise has been found to be as helpful to treat mild to moderate depression as some psychological therapies and anti-depressant medications (Jorm AF, Allen NB, Morgan AJ, Ryan S, Purcell R. A Guide to What Works for Depression;)

IN CRISIS	STRUGGLING	UNSETTLED	THRIVING	EXCELLING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Very anxious</li><li>• Very low mood</li><li>• Absenteeism</li><li>• Exhausted</li><li>• Sickness, physical pains</li><li>• Isolation</li><li>• Very poor sleep</li><li>• Weight loss</li><li>• Psychotic break</li><li>• Severe drug/alcohol abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anxious</li><li>• Depressed, sad</li><li>• Low self-esteem</li><li>• Tired</li><li>• Poor work performance</li><li>• Presenteeism</li><li>• Poor concentration</li><li>• Poor sleep</li><li>• Poor appetite</li><li>• Drug/alcohol abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Worried, nervous</li><li>• Edgy</li><li>• Irritable</li><li>• Frustrated</li><li>• Self-doubting</li><li>• Sad, gloomy</li><li>• Trouble sleeping</li><li>• Tired</li><li>• Distracted</li><li>• Decreased social activity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Normal mood, some variations</li><li>• Positive</li><li>• Calm</li><li>• Functioning normally in job</li><li>• Sleeping well</li><li>• Focused</li><li>• Eating normally</li><li>• Normal social activity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cheerful, joyful</li><li>• Solution focused</li><li>• Energetic</li><li>• High job performance</li><li>• Prioritising sleep and recovery</li><li>• 'Flow' – intense engagement</li><li>• Fully realising potential</li><li>• Actively seeking connections</li></ul>



# WHY DO UNIVERSITIES NEED THEIR STUDENTS TO BE HEALTHY?

1

Student  
Retention and  
Success

2

Attrition and  
Efficiency Costs

3

Regulatory  
Requirement

4

Sense of  
Belonging and  
Engagement

5

Inclusive  
Participation





# 1. STUDENT RETENTION AND SUCCESS

- Research shows that sports participants had higher course progression rates than non-sport participants.
- Lack of student engagement is a often predictor for attrition - sport facilitates engagement with students on several platforms
- "University student engagement is understood as students' involvement with activities and conditions likely to generate high-quality learning"  
(Devlin, 2009)
- Engaged students learn more, retain more and enjoy learning more than students who are not engaged (Dowson & McInerney 2001)





## 2. ATTRITION AND EFFICIENCY COSTS

### ATTRITION COSTS

- Undergraduate attrition costs Australian universities over \$1 billion per year in fee revenue
- Median-sized Australian university loses around \$26 million every year from undergraduate students withdrawing in their first year.

### EFFICIENCY COSTS

- 80% of students with behavioural misconduct are found to have health issues as well.



# 3. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

In 2018, Tertiary Education and Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) introduced the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards).

The requirements for wellbeing and safety are embedded below:

This Section encompasses a series of general and specific facets of a provider's operations that are aimed at the promotion of safety and wellbeing. TEQSA will expect providers to tailor their response to these Standards according to the scale, scope and nature of their circumstances and offerings.



## WELLBEING AND SAFETY

Broadly encompasses student's overall wellness and freedom from harm both online and on campus

Find out more at [teqsa.gov.au/guidance-notes](https://teqsa.gov.au/guidance-notes)





## 4. SENSE OF BELONGING AND ENGAGEMENT

- Participation in sport not only makes the participant healthier, but also provides enriched quality of life by stimulating participation in a whole range of non-sport leisure activities (Gratton and Tice, 1989)
- Mental health problems have been associated with increased likelihood of leaving higher education, poor academic performance and lower social engagement.

*"Student recreation is an essential structure for the education of a young person's body, mind, emotional qualities and self-disciplines."  
(David Body, 1996)*





## 5. INCLUSIVITY

- As of 2016, more than 75% of Australians identified with ancestry other than Australian.
- Sport and recreation play a vital role in improving the health and well-being of all people regardless of their age, gender, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, income or geographical location (Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries)
- For students, recreation may be the single common bond outside of structured orientation program.



# STUDENT WELLBEING

WHAT IS THE MAIN ISSUE FOR  
UNIVERSITIES?

LJWA  
VOLLEYBALL



# THE MAIN ISSUE: MENTAL HEALTH

- 94% of UK universities reported an increase in demand for counselling services in the past five years.
- Research suggests that students in tertiary education are at high risk for developing mental health problems.
- 65% of young adults (HeadSpace National Survey, 2016) reported high or very high psychological stress
- 5 times as many students as 10 years ago disclosed a mental health issue to the university (Institute of Public Policy Research)
- Likely to increase as stigma of mental health recedes



# EXAMPLE: SERVICE DELIVERY AT UWA



## INCREASING DEMAND FOR HEALTH SERVICES OUTWEIGHS SERVICE PROVISION

- In 2018, doctors provided 25, 017 consultations
- 20.1% of individuals seeking consultations had a specific Mental health diagnosis
- 5.1% of consultations were long (non standard) mental health specific consultations predominantly for developing or reviewing a mental health treatment plans for patients with moderate to severe conditions
- 4956 face-to-face counselling sessions
- 995 triaging/risk assessment sessions
- 131 emergencies/trauma debrief sessions



# THE VALUE OF SPORT

WHAT WE ALL KNOW



# WHAT WE KNOW

**75%** of students agreed on 8 benefits: fitness, feeling of physical well-being, physical strength, stress reduction, sense of accomplishment, balance/co-ordination, weight control, sports skills (Ohio State University)



## 1. PARTICIPATION

- Students who participate in sport rate their student experience more highly than those who do not participate in sport.
- 80% of all respondents indicated it was very important for the university to provide access to regular sport participation (University of Melbourne, Business Intelligence Unit Survey)

## 2. COLLEGIALITY

- Sport is a powerful tool to bring people together and create a sense of community.

## 3. FITNESS

- Research indicates that students with consistent vigorous physical activity reported better mental and physical health than their less active peers (Central Washington University).





## 4. REPRESENTATION

- 96% of students who participated in the 2016 UniGames (Perth) indicated they felt better connected to the University (Monash University).

## 5. SOCIALISATION

- Sport develops soft skills such as interpersonal relational skills, leadership and team work.
- Research indicates that exercise contributes to better self-image, stress relief and revitalisation.





# OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORT AT UNIVERSITIES

BE AN **ENABLER** FOR STUDENTS'  
HOLISTIC WELLBEING

BE A **COLLABORATOR** IN RESEARCH  
OBJECTIVES

BE A **LEADER** IN THE STUDENT  
EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

BE AN **INSTIGATOR** OF  
PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE  
UNIVERSITY



# SPORT AND STUDENT WELLBEING LINKAGE IS EVIDENT

## 1. SPORTS AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATION GRANTS PROGRAM

- **University Healthy Campus Project**

- UniSport Australia was allocated funding through Sport Australia to pilot the Healthy Campus Program with 15 universities.

- **Man Vs Fat Program**

- UWA Sport received funding for supporting expansion efforts of the Man Vs Fat Program.





# SPORT AND STUDENT WELLBEING LINKAGE IS EVIDENT

## 2. FISU HEALTHY CAMPUS PROJECT

- International Federation of University Sport (FISU) 2019 new project, 'Healthy Campus' launched to provide opportunities to all students to participate in recreational sport and physical activity.
- Program rewards universities that encourage a healthy way of life on their campuses
- There is a global increase of non-communicable diseases (responsible for 70% of all deaths globally) – physical activity is one of the best ways to improve health and quality of life for students
- Each student will have its own avatar which will progress according to its needs and will receive targeted healthy advice.

## ENABLER OF HOLISTIC WELLBEING

**UWA Law School**  
School of Law partnership

## LEADER IN STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Health Promotion Unit**  
Fit For Student Program  
(UWA)

# EXAMPLES FROM UWA

**HOW DO WE USE  
OPPORTUNITIES?**

## COLLABORATE IN RESEARCH

**STRIDE**  
On-campus exercise  
referral program for  
students

## INSTIGATE PARTNERSHIPS

**Man VS Fat**  
UWA Partnership with UK  
weight loss program





# SCHOOL OF LAW PARTNERSHIP

BE AN **ENABLER** FOR  
STUDENTS' HOLISTIC  
WELLBEING

- It was identified that students in the School of Law faced high stress and emotional impact especially during offer of clerkships.
- Strategy formed to proactively communicate with students, normalise emotions and encourage consideration for classmates.
- Every student was offered free access to UWA Sport facilities and programs for 1 week, in addition to letters of support.
- The School of Law has remained committed to their students' wellbeing through development of Wellbeing Program involving sports and fitness activities.



# FIT FOR STUDY

## BE A **LEADER** IN THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

- Awarded the 2018 Australian Award for University Teaching (Student Experiences and Learning Support Services)
- The program highlights getting active as one of the 5 ways to wellbeing.

## BE ACTIVE

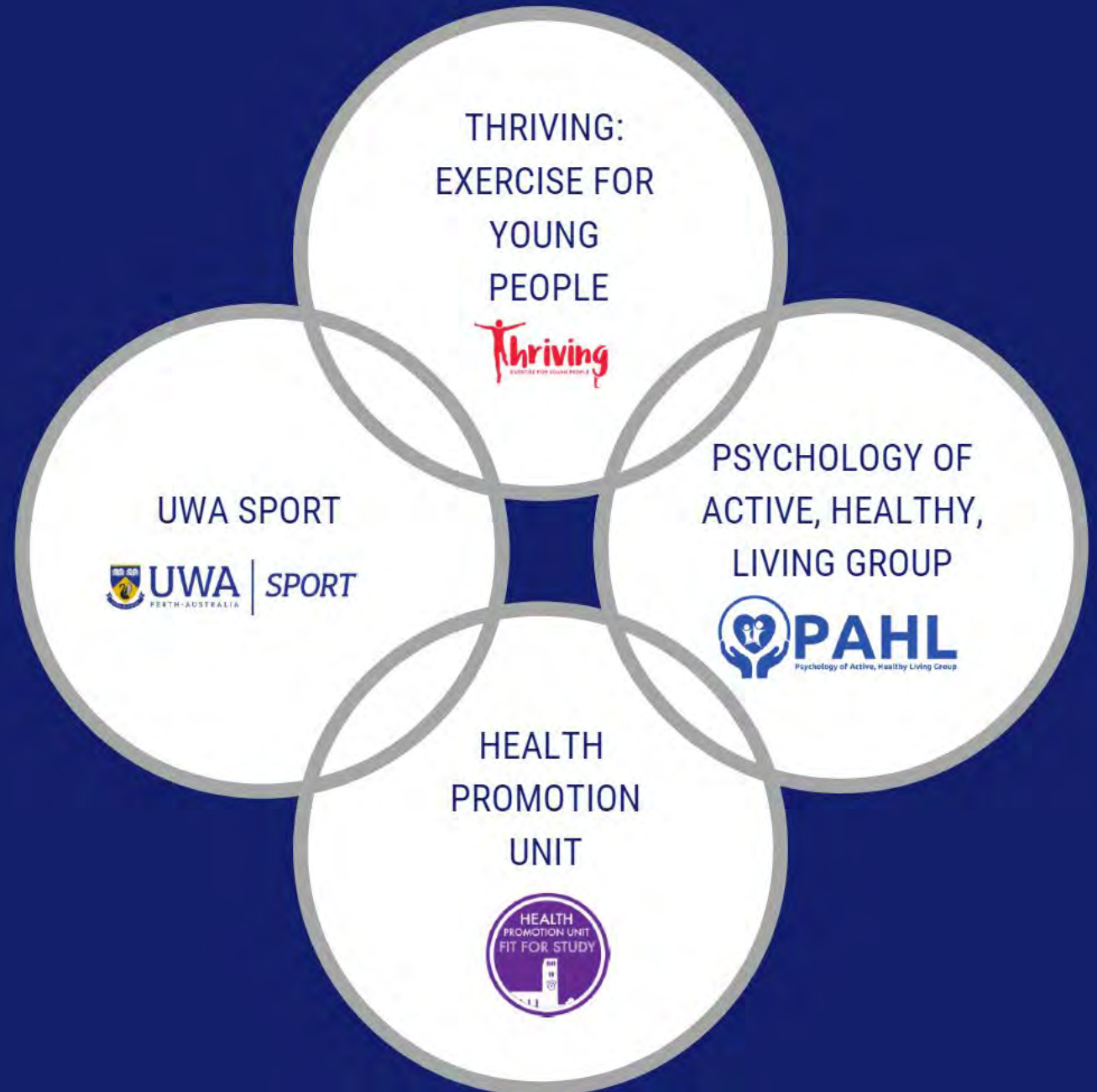
Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.



# STRIDE

## BE A **COLLABORATOR** IN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- On-campus exercise referral program for students with mental health difficulties
- Alleviate increased pressure faced by mental health services at UWA and complementing current service provision
- Patients are matched through the Accredited Exercise Physiologist (AEP) to an 'exercise mentor'
- Patients and exercise mentors work together on exercise program over course of the semester



# MAN VS FAT

## BE AN INSTIGATOR OF **PARTNERSHIPS** FOR THE UNIVERSITY

- Partnership between UWA Sport, the Psychology of Active, Healthy Living (PAHL) group at UWA and successful weight loss program from the United Kingdom (UK)
- Recognises the importance of ownership and community







# SUMMARY

- Student wellbeing is now a priority in tertiary education institutions across the world.
- Focus has to be on the preventative spectrum of student wellbeing.
- Sport can position itself nationally as a leader of student wellbeing beyond the traditional definitions of sport and recreation on campus.