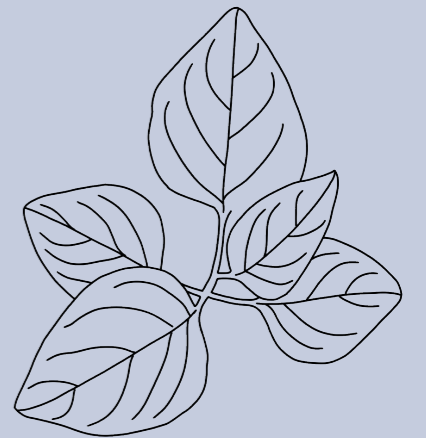
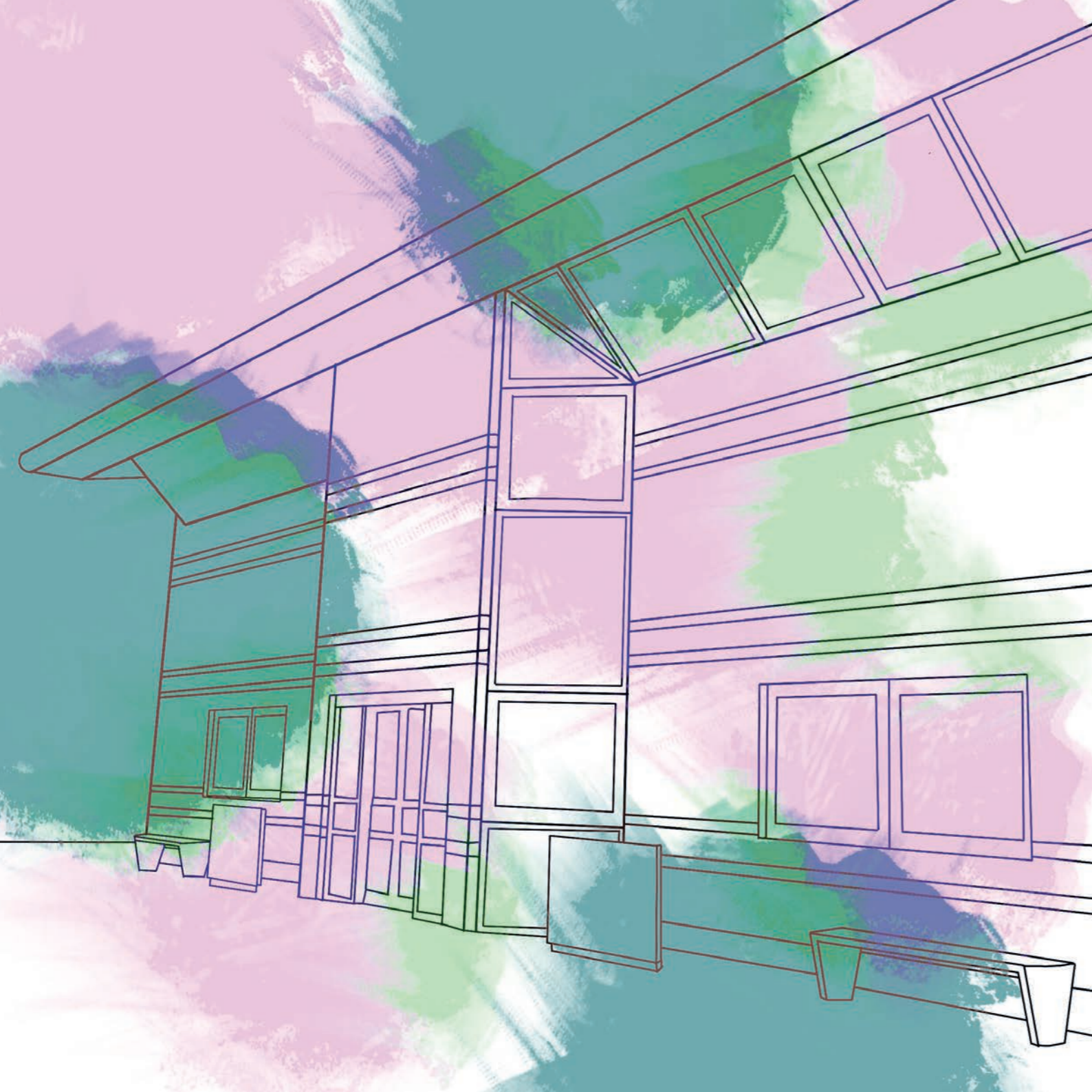


WELLBEING COMMITMENT

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

“Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community.”





Introduction

Embarking on a journey of creative and intellectual pursuit at Arts University Bournemouth, you are joining a community where innovation is not only encouraged but thrives, where collaboration binds us into a powerful collective, and connectivity ensures we grow stronger together.

Underlying the creativity and academic rigour within Arts University Bournemouth there lies a nuanced challenge: promoting and supporting the holistic wellbeing of our diverse community. The intensive cycles of the academic year, the pressures of academic, creative and professional pursuits, and the variances in individual and collective lived experiences of students and staff, require a proactive and effective whole university approach.

Recognising the profound impact and intrinsic role that wellbeing plays within our collective and individual journeys at Arts University Bournemouth, this document sets out our principles, approach and initiatives, all designed to embed wellbeing into our work, our learning environments, and our support systems. Principles not only for our present but which are sustainable for our future, ensuring a long-term commitment which promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of every individual within our community.

AUB's Wellbeing Principles

In a Hub of Creativity, Our Minds Forge the Path

We Commit to Nurturing Minds

It's our pledge to support, nurture, and guide students and staff to realise their full potential. Healthy minds are pivotal in fostering creativity, and we stand firm in sustaining a compassionate, supportive creative community.

Collective Wellbeing, Collective Growth

We believe in growing together - academically, creatively, and mentally. Our collective wellbeing underpins our collective growth and ensures we move together toward a future where our creative endeavours impact and shape the world positively.

Accessibility and Equality in Support

All members of our community deserve access to support at the point of need. We uphold a commitment to creating avenues of support that are accessible to all, ensuring every individual can find the help they need, when they need it.

Harnessing Creative Minds toward Wellbeing

We recognize the potent blend of creativity and well-being. Our commitment extends to integrating art and design with positive mental health, providing platforms where creative expression becomes a tool for nurturing healthy minds.

Resilience through Community

We pledge to forge a resilient community where mutual support, kindness, and empathy are our guiding lights.

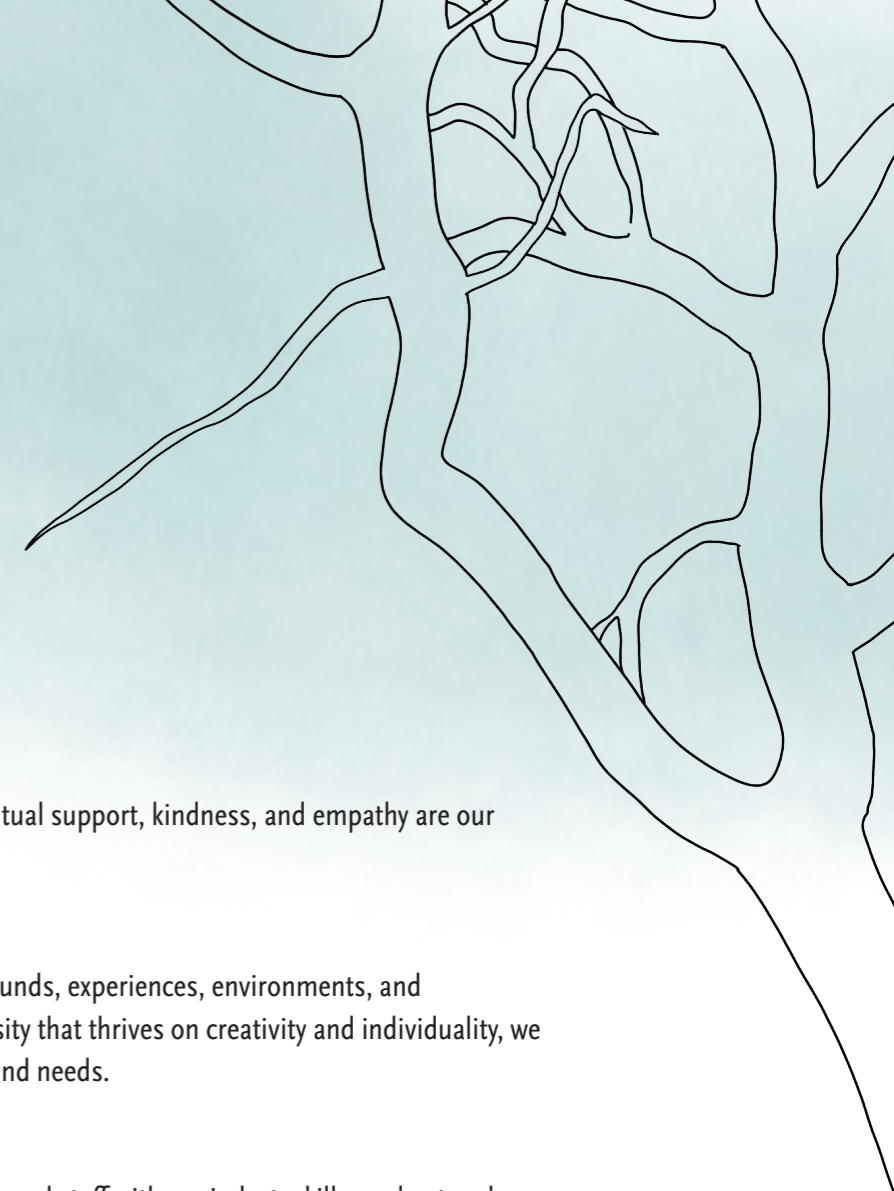
Recognising uniqueness

We understand the profound impact of our backgrounds, experiences, environments, and relationships on our mental well-being. As a university that thrives on creativity and individuality, we celebrate the uniqueness of each person's journey and needs.

A Lifelong Commitment

We commit to lay a foundation that equips students and staff with a mindset, skills, and network that will support their mental well-being throughout their careers and lives.

In our unique community of artists, designers, performers and makers, Arts University Bournemouth's Wellbeing Commitment is a pledge that your mental health, your well-being, and your academic and professional growth are paramount. Together, we can create an environment where every student and member of staff not only creates but thrives.



45%

of AUB students are currently experiencing mental health difficulties (Cibyl 2023)

60%

of Higher Education sector staff would not feel confident disclosing mental health problems or unmanageable stress to their employer. Education Support (2021)

1 in 3

higher education sector staff had experienced a mental health problem (higher than the average population) (Mind, 2021)



49%

of AUB staff agreed that they found staff wellbeing sessions effective in supporting their wellbeing (AUB staff survey 2023)

39% **68%**

of AUB students say their mental health has declined since starting university (Cibyl 2023)

of AUB students have experienced suicidal thoughts (Cibyl 2023)

3 in 4

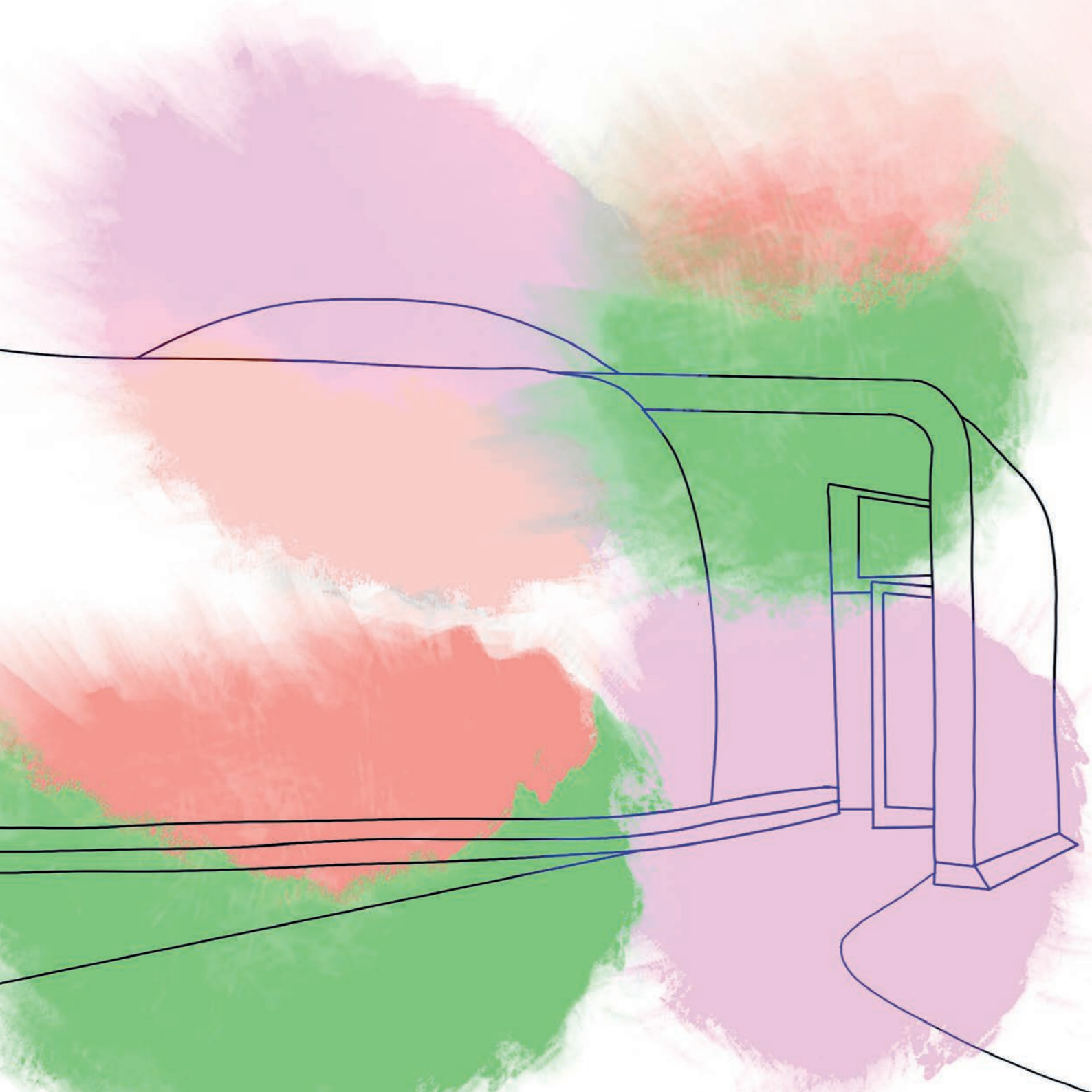
AUB students report that cost-of-living has impacted their mental health. (Cibyl, 2023)

39% **29%**

of Higher Education sector academics work more than 50 hours per week (HEPI, 2019)

of Higher Education sector staff feel emotionally drained from their work every day (Education Support 2021)





A Whole University Approach

The immersive nature of AUB's creative activities, together with the public sharing of artistic outputs, creates a push for excellence which, while driving quality, can also lead to perfectionism, heightened stress and anxiety.

At Arts University Bournemouth, we are committed to creating a safe and inclusive campus community where positive mental health and wellbeing is valued as an integral part of our experience as students or members of staff. By fostering a culture that values student and staff wellbeing through a whole university approach, we aim to graduate students and support staff members who are academically, technically and professionally accomplished but also physically, mentally and emotionally resilient, capable of making a positive impact in their communities and the world.

We recognise the value of co-production with students and staff when promoting and supporting student and staff mental health. Our commitment draws on sector knowledge and guidance, such as the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter and Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities (MHU) and Suicide Safer from Universities UK (UUK).

We encourage student and staff engagement in working groups, focus groups, and wellbeing surveys to ensure we hear a range of voices and learn about a range of experiences. We encourage students and staff to become agents of change to help us as a community to influence, improve and create cultural change.

For Students

Over the past two years we've already introduced:

Comprehensive support services

Our Student Services teams offer support with mental health, academic support, disability and inclusion, including same day mental health and wellbeing support.

University Retreat

AUB, in collaboration with BU, NHS and BCHA, established a dedicated student mental health centre, offering drop in support in afternoons and evenings 6 days per week.

Wellbeing resources

Our Library has collated a wellbeing / self-help section, offering resources to support personal growth and reflection.

AUB Community

We've increased AUB's halls of residence to provide 1,131 rooms, and introduced a comprehensive AUB Community residential life programme of events and activities to foster a sense of belonging.

Mental health champions

All AUB staff are offered Mental Health First Aid training to help them support students in an informed, inclusive way

Cost of living support

AUB offers a range of cost of living support and initiatives for students and staff, including a sharing shed, referrals to local food banks, free breakfast, and budgeting advice.

We will build on this in the next two years by:

MHFA training

We will offer Mental Health First Aid training to students, fostering resilience and a strong spirit of peer support.

Digital Wellbeing hub

We will create a digital wellbeing hub in Canvas, enabling access to supportive resources alongside academic course materials.

Compassionate communications

We will review how and when we send formal communications to students to ensure compassionate communication.

Conflict resolution

We will establish a mediation service for students to offer early conflict resolution and support difficult conversations.

Pastoral support

We will clarify the role of academic staff in supporting student health and wellbeing, ensuring that students know how best to gain support.

Work wellbeing

We will support our students to develop professional resilience to be ready for the world of work.



For Staff

In the past two years we've already introduced:

Wellbeing webinars

AUB offers a range of staff wellbeing webinars and workshops to address the impact that a range of issues/activities can have on staff wellbeing.

Health checks

We offer on campus health checks and assessments for staff.

EDI training

Our EDI team offers a range of EDI courses and training sessions for staff.

Staff counsellor

We have a dedicated staff counsellor offering confidential support to staff on campus.

Family friendly policies

We offer parental and adoption leave, special leave, agile working, and flexible working policies to support work / life balance.

MHFA training

We offer mental health first aid training to all staff.

We will build on this in the next two years by:

MHFA champions

We will introduce a team of staff mental health first aiders to offer peer support to colleagues.

Tackle stigma

We will identify and work to address barriers to staff wellbeing in the workplace.

Training and development

We will offer management training and support to manage pastoral workloads.

Manage workload expectations

We will collectively agree healthy workplace behaviours and manage expectations of students and staff.

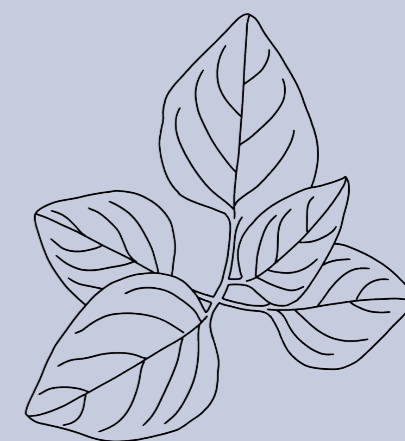
Clear leadership communication

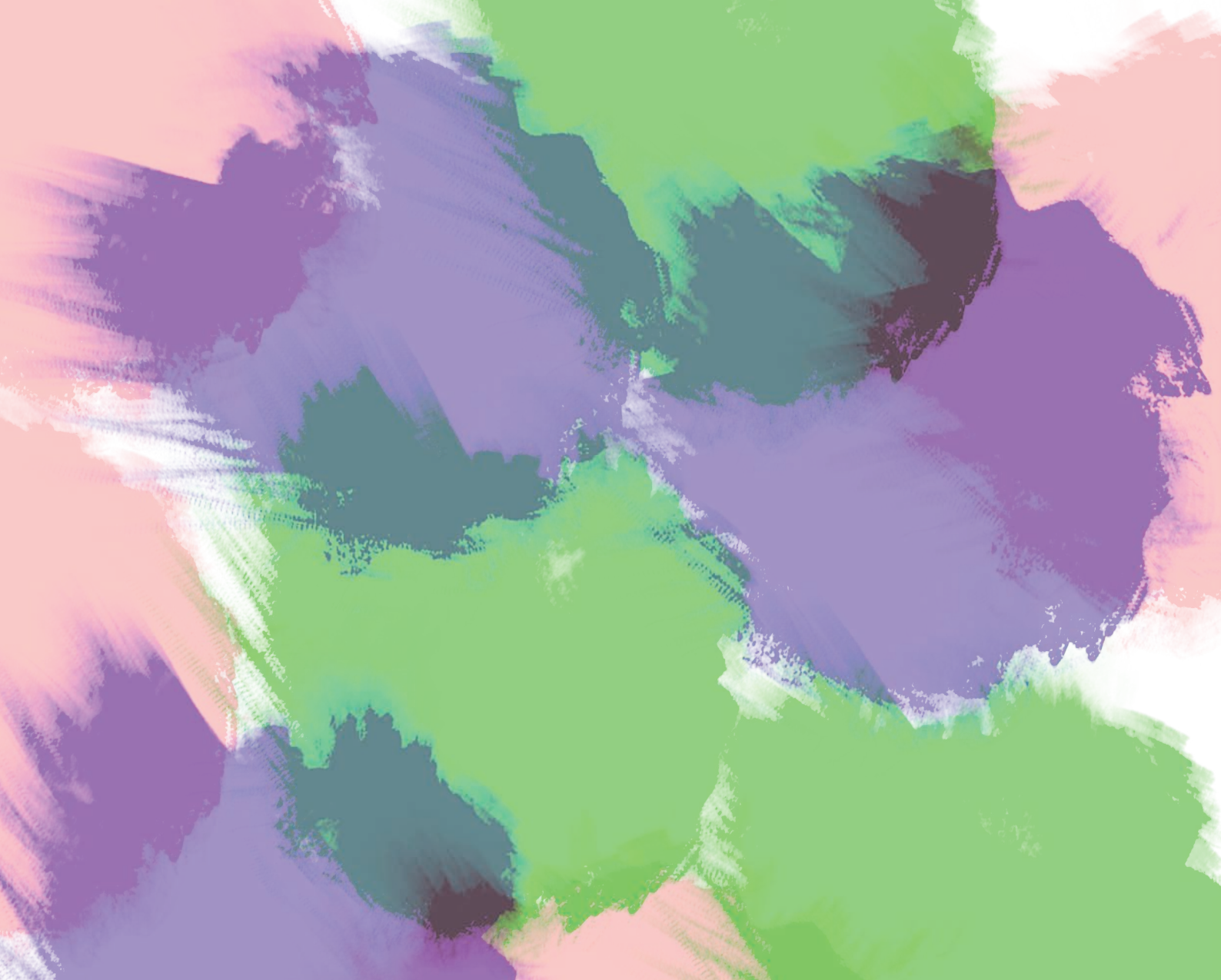
We will offer regular consultation with staff across the institution, sharing priorities, plans and outcomes.

Staff wellbeing support

We will extend the mental health and wellbeing support offer for staff.







AUB:

Collaborative | Connected | Innovative | Passionate

Illustrations and Book Design by BA(Hons) Graphic Design student: Niamh Reynolds