



# USQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016–2020





## From the Vice-Chancellor

The University community has diverse health and wellbeing needs and it is important that we develop a culture that considers these diverse needs in order to treat all staff, students, and the community with equity, fairness and respect.

A healthy work and learning environment is essential to the prosperity of the USQ community. I am dedicated to ensuring that the frameworks, programs, supports and services are in place to support positive health and wellbeing and the *USQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2020* consolidates this commitment.

I encourage you to participate in programs, and to seek information about the services and support available, whether on-campus or online.

Your capacity and willingness to support and promote positive health and wellbeing in our work and learning environments is something that will inspire and nurture others.

# 1. Objectives

The University of Southern Queensland is committed to creating a healthy work and learning environment for its employees, students and the broader University community. In creating this healthy work and learning environment, the University recognises the importance of ensuring that all employees and students are able to work and learn in a supportive, professional and caring environment where all individuals are valued and respected.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as:

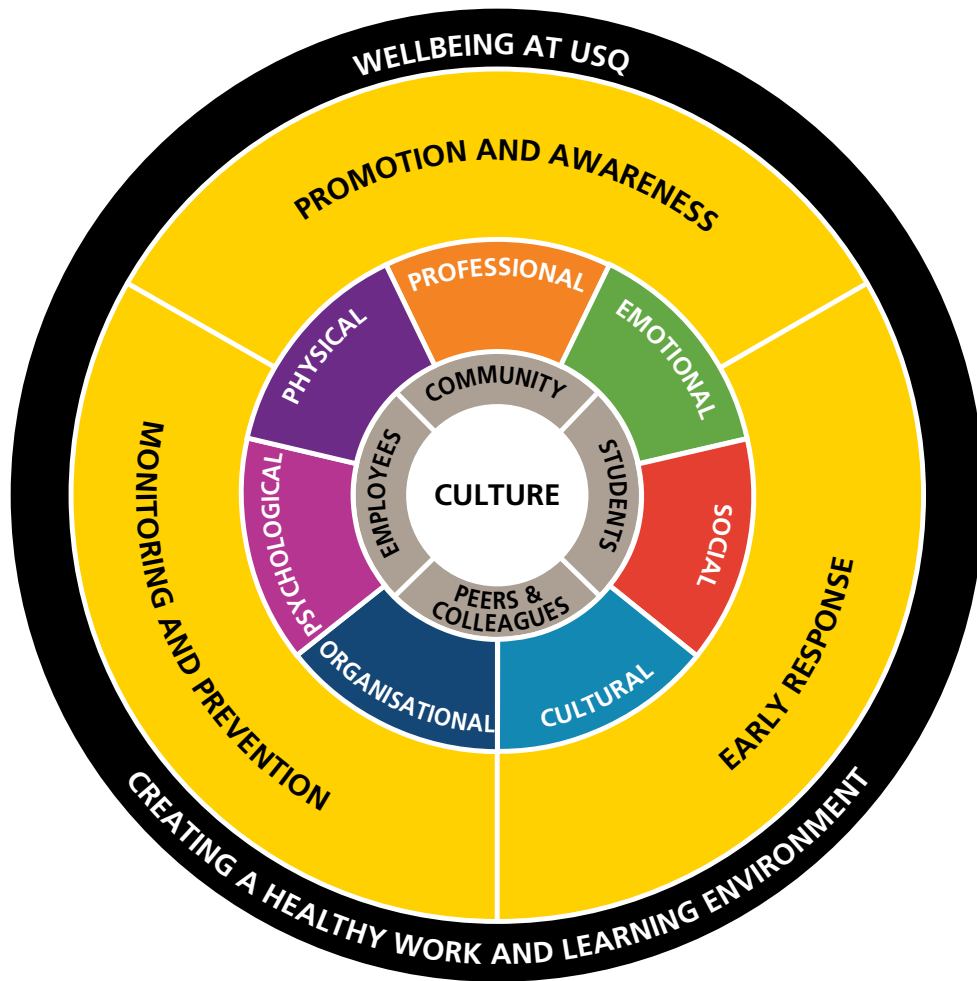
*'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'*

Mental Health is as fundamental to an individual's quality of life as physical health and positive mental health is defined by the World Health Organisation as the: *'foundation for wellbeing and effective functioning for both the individual and the community' and is defined as a state 'which allows individuals to realise their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to their community.'*

*'The capacity for mutually satisfying and enduring relationships is another important aspect of positive mental health'. (WHO 2001)*

The USQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the World Health Organisation's definitions of health and positive mental health and aims to provide the framework to support USQ's commitment to provide a coordinated, holistic approach to employee and student wellbeing. It also recognises the World Health Organisation Healthy Workplace Framework which aims to support individuals to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing through increased health knowledge and skills, promotion and encouragement of involvement in health initiatives and the provision of a range of health resources.

## 2. Health and Wellbeing Framework



This strategy is based on the USQ Health and Wellbeing Framework, which aims to create a healthy work and learning environment. This will, in turn, improve the workplace culture and morale within the University community and result in positive benefits for employees, students, the organisation and the broader USQ community. These positive benefits include improved health awareness and knowledge, improved physical and psychological health and productivity improvements. The strategy acknowledges the important role that USQ, employees and students have to play in ensuring the University's organisational culture acknowledges supports and promotes positive and sustainable health and wellbeing. The strategy also acknowledges that the University community has diverse health needs in respect of age, gender, ability and culture. The strategy will consider these diverse needs in order to treat all staff, students and the community with equity, fairness and respect.

This strategy focuses on promoting positive wellbeing from a multidimensional perspective and includes seven elements of positive wellbeing at USQ. These focus areas are as follows:

- **professional wellbeing** which recognises personal satisfaction and enrichment in one's life through work and study
- **physical wellbeing** which recognises the need to maintain a healthy quality of life through an individual's day-to-day activities including regular exercise, good nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices
- **emotional wellbeing** which recognises the awareness and understanding of individual feelings and emotions
- **social wellbeing** which recognises the importance of creating and maintaining quality relationships
- **cultural wellbeing** which recognises the need for individuals to participate in creative and cultural activities and to retain, interpret and express their history, heritage and traditions
- **psychological wellbeing** which acknowledges the need for individuals to manage the demands of daily life that are within their control
- **organisational wellbeing** which recognises the influence of policy, regulatory and governance factors on an individual's ability to perform positive health behaviours.

The University's desire to create a healthy work and learning environment will be achieved through the following three areas of activity:

- **promotion and awareness** – increasing promotion and awareness of positive wellbeing
- **early response** – preventing and minimising the impact of illness or injury and providing early intervention mechanisms for those who, regardless of proactive strategies, still require support
- **monitoring and prevention** – developing mechanisms and processes to monitor and prevent illness and injury through reducing risk and enhancing protective factors.

The University recognises its obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the *Fair Work Act 2009* and associated legislation. Further, this strategy has been developed taking into consideration a range of existing USQ health services, programs and initiatives, as well as University policy and procedures including, but not limited to:

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Employee Equity and Diversity Policy
- Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Procedure
- Employee Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Complaints against Employees Procedure
- Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Resolution Schedule
- Employee Workplace Bullying and Harassment Complaint Resolution Schedule
- Student Advice, Student Welfare and Pastoral Support Policy and Procedure
- Students with a Disability Policy and Procedure
- Equity in Education Policy and Procedure
- Prevention of Workplace Violence Policy and Procedures.

The Strategy also acknowledges that the University is required to provide employees and students with a safe and healthy work and learning environment. This includes the obligation to provide a workplace and learning environment that is free from harassment, bullying and discrimination and that reflects the cultural and geographically diverse nature of USQ and its employees and students.

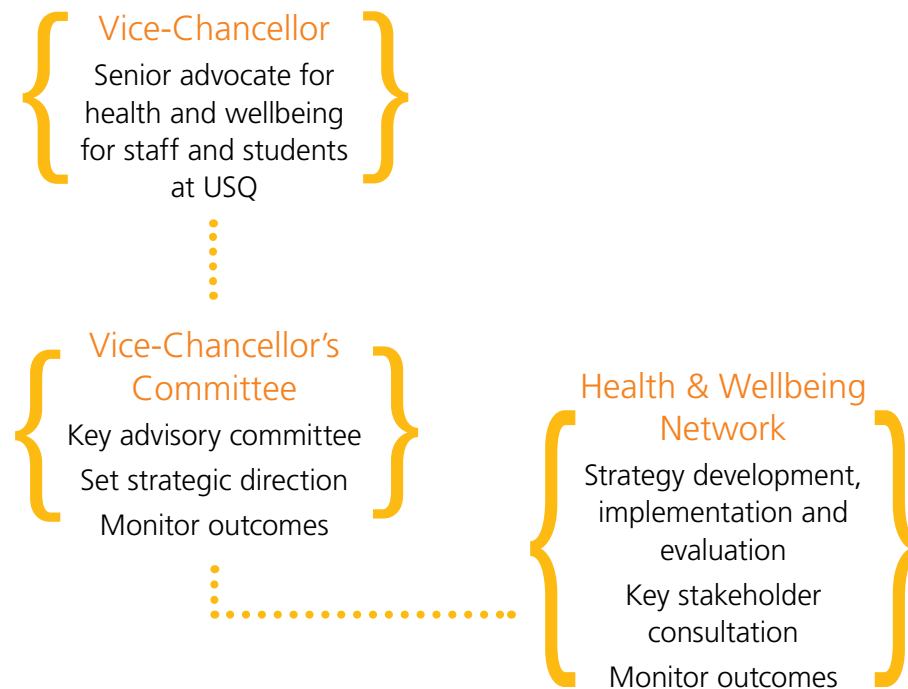
### 3. Governance

The Vice-Chancellor, as chair of the Vice-Chancellor’s Committee, acts as the clear senior advocate for strategies that support and promote employee and student health and wellbeing at the University.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Committee, as the key advisory Committee to the Vice-Chancellor on all matters relating to the management of the University and on the setting of strategic directions and the development of policy, has overall responsibility for the implementation, administration and monitoring of this Strategy. Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Directors and Executive Deans also have an influential role in the execution and monitoring of the Strategy.

The USQ Health and Wellbeing Network will be established to provide a mechanism for employees and students to actively participate and contribute to the expansion of existing health and wellbeing services and programs and to the development of new and innovative initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of USQ employees and students. The Network would consist of students and employees to act as key stakeholders to support the implementation of the strategy and provide feedback on strategy initiatives. The Network will report regularly to the Vice-Chancellor’s Committee on initiatives and ideas.

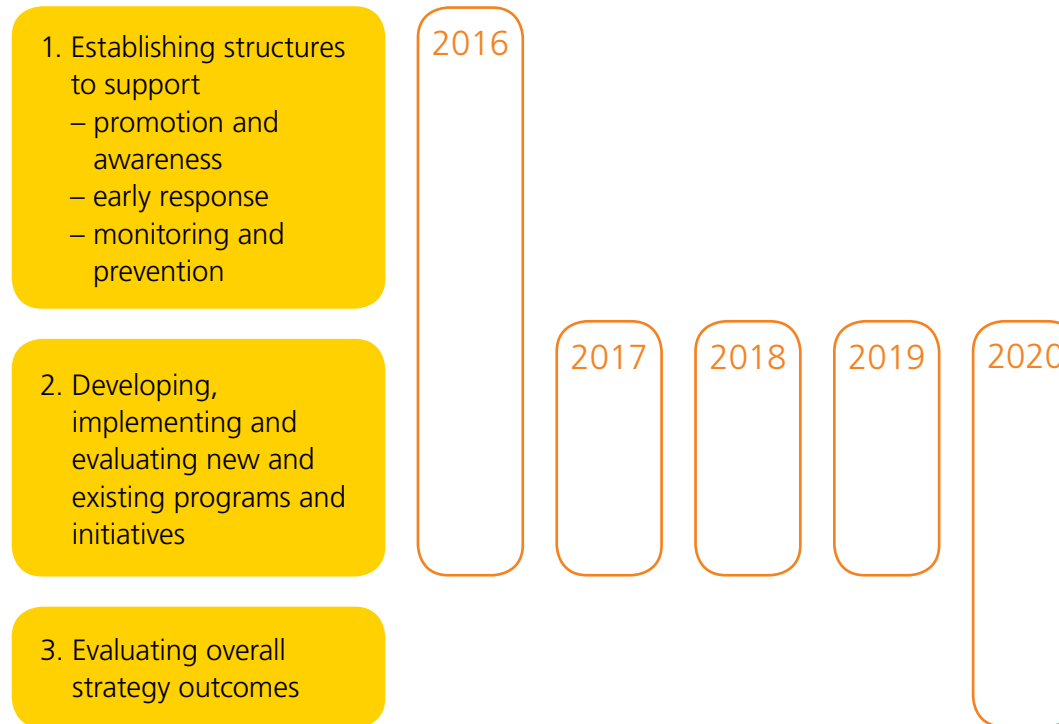
The USQ Health and Wellbeing Leadership Team will be established to assist with the development of initiatives to support USQ managers and leaders to further develop their awareness and initiatives to assist and identify health and wellbeing issues within USQ’s work and learning environments.



## 4. Actions, Timeframes and Predicted Outcomes

The *USQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016–2020* includes a number of Actions, Timeframes and Predicted Outcomes which specifically focus on:

1. establishing structures to support promotion and awareness, early response, and monitoring and prevention
2. developing, implementing and evaluating new and existing programs and initiatives
3. evaluating overall strategy outcomes.



## 1. Establish structures to support: promotion and awareness, early response, and monitoring and prevention

Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Incorporating Health and Wellbeing in USQ's strategic planning process	Vice-Chancellor	March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved organisational culture of acceptance and support for those with health and wellbeing concerns</li> <li>• Embedding health and wellbeing as important priorities and guiding principles for strategy and decision-making across all the levels of the University</li> </ul>
Develop a USQ Health and Wellbeing Policy for Employees and Students	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and understanding of USQ's commitment to creating a healthy working and learning environment</li> <li>• Support implementation of USQ's commitment to creating a healthy working and learning environment</li> <li>• Provide a formally adopted platform upon which the University can establish programs and initiatives that promote and support positive health and wellbeing in the seven areas expressed in the Health and Wellbeing framework</li> </ul>
Develop a USQ Health and Wellbeing Procedure	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and understanding of USQ procedures and processes for supporting USQ students and employees with health and wellbeing issues</li> <li>• Improve health and wellbeing for employees and students</li> </ul>
Review, update and promote existing online USQ health and wellbeing resources for staff and students	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness for staff and students about resources and support services that are available</li> <li>• Increased access to health and wellbeing resources</li> <li>• Staff and students supported to develop strategies to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing</li> </ul>



Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
<b>Establish a Health and Wellbeing Network</b>	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the development of USQ specific programs and initiatives that support the seven areas of health and wellbeing expressed in the framework</li> <li>• Ensure continual consultation with staff and students regarding the health and wellbeing strategy and programs</li> <li>• Ensure participation in development of health and wellbeing initiatives across all areas of the University</li> <li>• Ensure responsibility for developing programs and initiatives meets the diverse needs of the University community</li> <li>• Creation of a healthy work and learning environment and USQ culture</li> <li>• Employee engagement and participation in programs and services</li> <li>• Create visible role-models of positive health and wellbeing in all areas of the University</li> <li>• Provide a forum for members of the network to discuss and collaborate on health initiatives</li> <li>• Provides a forum where employees and students can share their health and wellbeing experiences.</li> <li>• Increased understanding and awareness of health and wellbeing issues and promotes positive health and wellbeing</li> </ul>
<b>Review, update and maintain the Student Services Toolkit for Staff, and expand to staff and students</b>	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to information and resources to staff and students</li> <li>• Empower staff and students to make informed choices regarding health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Provide information to staff and students on how to support health and wellbeing, specifically about accessing support</li> </ul>
<b>Establish a collaborative departmental group to assess and monitor behavioural risks and areas</b>	Director, Human Resources	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate risk-management procedure</li> <li>• Provide timely and appropriate responses to behavioural risks and areas</li> </ul>

Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
<p>Conduct a student and staff health and wellbeing needs assessment via the HealthyU project to determine priority areas and interests, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey</li> <li>- Key informant focus groups</li> <li>- Evidence-based review</li> <li>- Gap analysis</li> <li>- Key recommendations</li> </ul>	<p>Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Director, Student Services and Social Justice</p>	<p>December 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of staff and student health and wellbeing needs (priorities) and interests</li> <li>• Identification of evidence-based strategies, and comparison of these strategies against existing actions to inform future actions</li> </ul>
<p>Review existing policies and procedures to ensure that they support and promote positive health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Director, Student Services and Social Justice</p>	<p>December 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure health and wellbeing of students and staff is foundational to university policy</li> <li>• Ensure that the health and wellbeing framework is supported by existing University policies and procedures</li> </ul>

## 2. Developing, implementing and evaluating new and existing programs and initiatives

Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Develop a USQ Health and Wellbeing Professional Development Program for managers and employees	Director, Human Resources	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved skills and knowledge surrounding health and wellbeing</li> </ul>
Expand the USQ Mandatory Supervisor Training to include a Health and Wellbeing component	Director, Human Resources	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed health and wellbeing strategy in everyday management practices</li> </ul>
Promote and consider expanding the USQ Fit & Well Program to include other activities to support psychological wellbeing and healthy lifestyles	Director, Human Resources	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a greater variety of health and fitness programs to cater to the diverse interests and requirements of staff, students and the community</li> <li>Promote preventative health initiatives</li> </ul>
Conduct an annual USQ Health Expo for staff and students to promote healthy lifestyles	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement from staff and students in health and wellbeing initiatives</li> <li>Participation and collaboration from external health providers</li> <li>Raise promotion and awareness of health and wellbeing initiatives, programs and services</li> <li>Promote seven areas of health and wellbeing expressed in the framework</li> </ul>
Implement the HealthyU initiative to support student health and wellbeing, and expand to employees	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to health information for students and staff</li> <li>Improved awareness of key health issues / topics and the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle amongst staff and students</li> <li>Skills and knowledge gained by staff and students to support performance of positive health behaviours</li> <li>Increased awareness and use of USQ support services by staff and students</li> </ul>
Provide user-friendly health information online, through campaigns and via social media to improve health literacy amongst staff and students	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased student and staff engagement with health information online, through campaigns and via social media</li> <li>Staff and students reporting health information provided online, through campaigns and via social media as being effective in improving health literacy</li> </ul>

Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Implement events / initiatives and provide presentations to encourage help-seeking behaviour amongst staff and students	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased referral to appropriate support services</li> </ul>
Implement events / initiatives across campuses and online to support staff and students in engaging in positive health behaviours	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness amongst staff and students of the importance of engaging in positive health behaviours</li> <li>• Improved knowledge, skills and intention to perform positive health behaviours amongst staff and students</li> </ul>
Evaluate progress and initiatives of the strategy actions	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of initiatives and actions will influence needed changes or maintenance of proposed actions</li> </ul>

### 3. Evaluating overall strategy outcomes

Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Incorporate into the 2016 USQ Engagement Survey a Health and Wellbeing component and review outcomes annually	Director, Human Resources	February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly update health and wellbeing initiatives in order to suit changing needs of staff</li> <li>Develop preventative approaches to health and wellbeing activities identified as areas of concern for employees.</li> </ul>
Review strategy outcomes with respect to student health and wellbeing via the annual HealthyU broad project evaluation student survey	Director, Student Services and Social Justice	November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student feedback on HealthyU initiative / USQ health and wellbeing initiatives received and responded to in future</li> </ul>
Implement an online Health Risk / Health Check Assessment Tool for employees and students and review outcomes quarterly	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow employees and students to assess individual health risks</li> <li>Allow organisation to identify, monitor and act on areas of concern based on identified health risks</li> </ul>
Monitor and regularly report on participation rates and other outputs of health and wellbeing initiatives and programs	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure programs are meeting the needs of USQ employees and students and are supporting improvements in health and wellbeing</li> </ul>
Evaluate overall strategy outcomes	Director, Human Resources  Director, Student Services and Social Justice	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify overall impact of strategy actions</li> </ul>



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