



MANIFESTO ON EUR STUDENT WELLBEING

Program Student Wellbeing, June 2022

Explanation

The aim of the Student Wellbeing Manifesto is to create a shared vision on student wellbeing within EUR. We would like the Manifesto to be signed by the RM at the start of the new academic year (after which it will be sent to all students and staff for signature). This moment is the kick-off of a series of SW initiatives within the faculties in the coming six months. The Manifesto has also been sent to the RM for approval. After approval the Manifesto will be drawn up in the EUR house style.

MANIFESTO ON EUR STUDENT WELLBEING

EUR's mission is to create positive societal impact. To achieve this, the university's primary focus is on their students, the future generation entering society and the job market to make a positive impact. Personal and professional development and wellbeing are therefore at the center of the university mission.

This manifesto is part of a university-wide comprehensive program focused on the wellbeing of all EUR students. A special focus on wellbeing is crucial to fulfil the mission of educating and preparing balanced, socially involved citizens of the future. To achieve this, a shared vision on the EUR approach to student wellbeing is necessary, bringing all key stakeholders in our university together. We hope our efforts can be also used as an inspiration for other higher education institutions in supporting students along their journey into adulthood.

The EUR has adopted the UNL definition of student wellbeing (Universiteiten van Nederland)¹ which is described as 'a state of well-being in which a student is able to make use of their abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of the student life, can work productively to further their personal development, is able to maintain a balance between positive and negative aspects of student life, and is able to contribute to the academic community and society in general'.

Such definition involves a holistic, comprehensive view on wellbeing, which is 'emphatically broader than mental wellbeing alone; it also entails a degree of physical, social and cognitive wellbeing that is characterized by resilience, which allows personal and academic development to optimally flourish and which promotes student success'.

The EUR approach to promote, protect, and enhance the wellbeing of our students is driven by the following core values:

- Student-centeredness
- Inclusivity
- Accessibility
- Rooted in scientific evidence
- Innovation
- Transparency in goals and outcomes
- Free of charge

These EUR values are used consistently in the concretization of the EUR approach to student wellbeing into actions, services, tools, and policies, based on the following overarching goals:

1. **FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS:** a cultural transition from *study success* to *student success* is paramount. The current academic culture, primarily focused on performance, high achievement, and competition at all levels, can be detrimental to students' wellbeing and personal development. The university as a higher education institution is focused on both knowledge achievement as well as the cultivation of skills and individual talents that will allow our students to face challenges in their future life, both professionally and personally. **EXAMPLES:** a) implementing a teacher training focused on how educational staff can contribute to wellbeing and student success; b) implementing a tailored personal development track for all EUR students, wherein students can design their own package of personal development courses from the broad EUR range and receive ECTS.
2. **NORMALIZE FOCUS ON WELLBEING:** a key goal of including wellbeing in the fabric of the university involves normalizing the need for time, effort, attention, and care for student's personal development and wellbeing. In doing so, EUR wants to promote a 'sense of belonging' to the

university community, supporting values of collaboration and compassion. EXAMPLES: a) events such as wellbeing weeks, b) creation of a shared and free space on campus such as the EUR Living Room, c) personal development workshops around being a supportive peer, coping with stress, procrastination, perfectionism, etc.

3. FROM AND FOR ALL STUDENTS: We use a bottom-up approach, meaning that the needs and preferences of all EUR students are in the lead of the creation of tools and services supporting them (i.e., co-creation). The services offered by EUR are freely accessible to everybody at no expense and strive to satisfy the needs of our diverse student body. EXAMPLES: a) collaboration with a variety of student associations and regular focus groups with students; b) hosting of Living Room by trained students, d) students actively participating in the Student Wellbeing Learning Community.
4. UNIVERSITY-WIDE APPROACH: student wellbeing is structurally embedded in all EUR strategic policies and plans (e.g., education, support services, education staff training). All key actors and participatory bodies are involved within their own professional expertise and role (i.e., study advisors, teachers, executive and faculty boards, student support services). A comprehensive university-wide student wellbeing program involves the creation of a 'chain of care' integrating centralized as well as faculty-based support services supporting students across a variety of needs. EXAMPLES: a) in the Student Wellbeing Learning Community all participatory bodies are represented and collaborating, c) Frequent consultation with staff members, University council, student counselors and faculties.
5. DIVERSITY OF SERVICES: Free tools and services for every phase of the wellbeing journey are provided to students. To achieve this, a stepped-care approach to student wellbeing is set up involving different levels of support ranging from fostering personal development and wellbeing via universal strategies for all students, as well as implementing indicated strategies for students experiencing more severe difficulties, and referral to specialized services when needed. The variety of tools within the EUR student wellbeing program are designed to meet the diversity of students' needs and preferences. EXAMPLES: a) personal development workshops, b) peer-to-peer chatline, c) student psychologists and counselors, d) online coaching services that students can use anonymously, e) physical spaces to relax, socialize or to get peer-to-peer support (Living Room).
6. TIMELY SUPPORT: Students should be able to access the support that they need when they need it, implying that EUR wellbeing services on central or faculty level need to be findable and accessible in time all year round. The existence of an overview of the entire EUR support chain (at central and faculty level) is therefore as crucial for students as it is for staff who can refer students to it. It is essential that the overview explains how to access each component of the chain of care. Short waiting times are important so that the student quickly knows whether the chosen help is appropriate. EXAMPLES: a) reducing waiting time for support by student psychologists, b) delivering an overview of the chain of support with explanation about the components, c) training for educational staff, knowing how to detect signs of problems in students and refer them to the right service.
7. EVIDENCE-BASED INNOVATION: All services, tools, activities, and policies offered to students are driven by innovation in their design and implementation and are based on scientific insights and empirical evidence. EXAMPLES: a) yearly EUR Student Wellbeing monitor survey to underpin adjustments in policy and activities, b) collaboration with the Caring Universities consortium, c) user research and impact evaluation studies to determine the satisfaction and effectiveness of the digital wellbeing tool, d) transparent empirical and process evaluation of goals and output.

¹⁾ *Vision on Student Wellbeing. By the Universities of the Netherlands. UNL, March 2022.*