BIMM INSTITUTE | INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY THEATRE | PERFORMERS COLLEGE | SCREEN AND FILM SCHOOL

BIMM Institute Suicide Safer Strategy

Foreword

At BIMM Institute and across the group at all our constituent colleges, we are committed to creating a suicide-safer community, because we know that suicidal thoughts can be more common than openly recognised and can occur at any stage of life. We also know that the impact of death by suicide is wide-reaching and long-lasting.

This strategy is the first stage of developing a positive set of actions to enhance our community and the experience of students. We have developed an action plan to guide us and demonstrate our plans to build not only new suicide prevention measures, but a culture where we build upon the good work already being undertaken on suicide prevention across our colleges. We will take an integrated and holistic approach to supporting our students from across all our function areas because we understand that suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility.

The planning and action setting is the result of a significant activity including webinars, workshops, meetings and consultations, bringing members together from across our communities and incorporating specialist advice and guidance from external experts. We are putting collaboration at the heart of our work, ensuring multiple perspectives and voices are involved. This has resulted in a careful and sensitive range of conversations focusing on prevention, intervention, and postvention that has framed our work.

We will continue to build a safe and supportive culture, where staff understand their role in suicide prevention, have access to the right training and support in relation to suicide and mental health, and our processes are clear, systematic, and enable appropriate response to those in crisis or distress.

This strategy links with our new Higher Education Strategy, which promotes a holistic and integrated approach to enhancing the student experience. We will review and continue to prioritise areas that have the most impact on that experience and to learn and apply lessons from our own and from across the sector to make BIMM a suicide safe community.

Adam Carswell
CEO and Head of Institution

Professor Louise Jackson
Academic Director & Provost

1. Aims and objectives

'I expect all HE providers to understand the risk factors at their institution and undertake a range of prevention activity, proactively intervene to support students at risk, and deal sensitively when a tragedy occurs...it is vital that you monitor deaths of students studying at your institution, including undertaking rigorous investigations into deaths by suicide or suspected suicide. This includes conducting lessons learned exercises and a review of activities after a death has occurred, involving your local public health teams and bereaved families. Actions should be followed up as part of your ongoing activity to prevent further deaths.'

Letter to all HE Providers - July 22nd 2021
Rt. Hon. Michelle Donelan MP
Minister of State for Higher and Further Education

All Higher Education Institutions have been required to develop a strategy for suicide prevention as directed in a letter from the Minister for Higher and Further Education. This Suicide Safer Strategy intends to develop a culture across BIMM Institute and its constituent colleges, regardless of geographical location, that takes a whole institution approach to suicide prevention through the meeting of the following objectives:

1. Developing and nurturing a culture of compassion and support where students understand their wellbeing is a priority;
2. Building community resilience and social connectedness to support the development of life skills and emotional robustness;
3. De-stigmatising suicide and developing a culture of disclosure;
4. Equipping all staff with the knowledge and confidence to identify and respond to students in distress.

2. The National Context, Creative Context, BIMM Context

National Context

The latest dataset on the general population from the ONS can be summarised as follows:

- In 2020, there were 5,224 suicides registered in England and Wales, equivalent (10.0 deaths per 100,000 people). This was statistically significantly lower than the 2019 rate of 11.0 deaths per 100,000.
- The decrease is likely to be driven by two factors: a decrease in male suicides at the start of the coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic, and delays in death registrations because of the pandemic.

There has been increasing concern both nationally and internationally about incidences of suicide and attempted suicide, resulting in several strategies, including:

- National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England (Department of Health and Social Care, 2012)
- Preventing Suicide in England; A cross government outcomes strategy to save lives (Department of Health, 2017)
- Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Workplan (Department of Health and Social Care, 2019)
- Preventing Suicide in England: fifth progress report of the cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives (2021)

One of the most recent studies published on suicide among higher education students was released in 2018. The Office for National Statistics produced, from a dataset linking information from individual Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), data on university students in England and Wales to the ONS mortality records. In summary it identified:

- The number of identified students in higher education who died by suicide between 2000-01 and 2016-17 was 1,330. (Additional findings from Gunnell et al (2020) showed that the annual incidence of student suicides, although of concerns, are less than half that recorded in the general population of a similar age.)
- The rate of deaths by suicide in the higher education student population remained at 4.7 deaths per 100,000 students between the 12 months ending July 2015 and the 12 months ending July 2017.
- The number of suicides in the higher education population between July 2016 and July 2017 was 95. The rate of suicide for female students was significantly lower than the rate for male students. This was observed when looking at overall student suicides, as well as looking at the difference in studying part-or full-time, whether studying at undergraduate or postgraduate degree level, and the undergraduate year of study.
- 83 per cent of deaths by suicide (1,109) were among undergraduates and the remaining 17 per cent (221) were among postgraduates.

Many reports highlight the incidence of mental ill health in Higher Education, with levels of mental illness, mental distress and low wellbeing among students increasing:

- Reducing the Risk of Student Suicide: issues and responses for higher education institutions (Universities UK, 2016)
- Step Change in Mental Health (Universities UK, 2017)

- Suicide Safer Universities (Universities UK, 2018)
- Mental health of higher education students (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2021)

Over the past 10 years there has been a fivefold increase in the proportion of students disclosing a mental health condition to their university with 94% of universities reporting a dramatic increase in the number of students seeking counselling support (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2017).

A survey of university students undertaken by Dig-In in 2018, which had 37,654 student responses, found that 1 in 10 of those who responded think about self-harming often or all the time. A third of all respondents reported having serious personal, emotional, behavioural or mental health issues needing professional support, of which four fifths reported their symptoms first arose in high school with only 1 in 5 reporting their symptoms first commenced in university.

More recently, the ONS has conducted a survey analysing student behaviour during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The survey is called the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey (SCIS). University students included are those that are studying on Foundation to Postgraduate level programmes at universities in England. The survey was conducted between 25 February and 7 March 2022 using an online survey tool and all answers were self-reported. Findings regarding Mental Health included:

- The average life satisfaction score for students was 6.6 out of 10, which was significantly lower than the adult population in Great Britain (7.0), but not significantly different to 16- to 29-year-olds (6.6).
- The proportion of students feeling lonely often or always was 17%, significantly higher than the adult population in Great Britain (7%).
- More than a third (36%) of students reported that their mental health and well-being had worsened since the start of the Autumn 2021 term.

The organisation Student Minds have conducted research throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning with the publishing of the 2021 report: University Mental Health: Life in a Pandemic. As of April 2022, there had been three waves of findings, the most recent from a survey undertaken in January 2022. This third wave survey found:

- 38% of respondents felt that being at university in Autumn term had a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing.
- 64% of respondents felt that the Covid-19 pandemic had a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing during Autumn term.
- Academic performance continues to be students' biggest concern, and students are also worried about managing their time and keeping up with study commitments.
- 43% of respondents said they need support to manage their own wellbeing.
- 52% of respondents said they often felt lonely or isolated during Autumn term.
- 1 in 5 students disagreed with the statement "My university is taking steps to improve student mental health".

The creative arts context

This strategy recognises the specificity of challenge within the creative and performing arts sector and the challenges of working with young people who are looking to make careers in the creative industries. As an article published on the Musician Union's website in March 2022 states:

> From Mahler and Schumann to Cobain and Winehouse, there has long been a romanticised connection between musical talent and mental health problems. But while popular culture idolises

the idea of the 'tortured genius', the truth is more insidious. Not only are we losing talented artists to suicide and overdoses, but the lives of many more musicians are being made miserable by anxiety, depression, addiction and other psychiatric conditions.

A survey conducted by the University of Westminster in 2016, commissioned by the charity Help Musicians, of more than 2,000 self-identified musicians across the UK music industry, found that that seven out of ten had suffered anxiety and panic attacks, while two thirds had experienced depression – three times more than the general population. This was further supported by research in 2018 by the wellbeing charity Inspire and Ulster University, which highlighted that people working in all creative industries are three times more likely to suffer from mental health problems than the general population.

The BIMM context

Data from colleges across the BIMM Group indicates that mental health is a growing issue mirroring the national context. Student Support teams across the Group are experiencing increased demands on their services:

- The Savanta Student Retention survey (October 2020) found mental health problems were cited as by far the most prominent reason as to why students leave BIMM before the completion of their studies. Three in four students identified it as a contributory factor and a quarter said it was their main reason for leaving.
- One UK Music College reported in the academic year 2020-21 that 15% of their students were referred for counselling (up from 11% in 2018/19).
- When students at one of the UK Music Colleges were surveyed in summer 2021, 81% of respondents said they had felt 'overwhelmed' in the previous 12 months; 77% said they had felt anxious and 70% said they had experienced depression. (The overall response rate was 12%).
- Another Music College reported that within the academic year 2021-22 that 70% of student support tutorial meetings have been categorised with Mental Health as an issue. Similarly, at another college, the figure was 72.5% and at that same college, 6% of students had discussed suicidal thoughts.

3. Suicide Prevention Action Across BIMM Institute: Prevention, Intervention, Postvention

This strategy is a group wide strategy that is to be implemented across BIMM Institute and its fifteen constituent colleges operating under one of four distinct brands specific to their subject specialism:

- BIMM: popular music (8 colleges)
- Performers College: performing arts (2 colleges)
- Institute for Contemporary Theatre (ICT): performing arts (2 colleges)
- Screen and Film School: film (3 colleges)

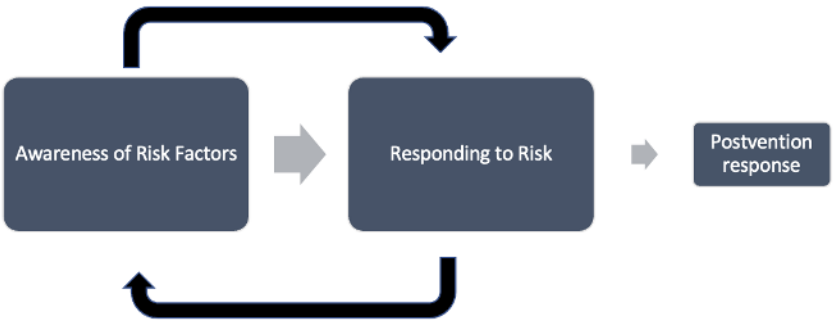
Each college has a dedicated student services provision. Each college forms relationships with local level crisis and support teams in the community. This strategy has built upon the strength of this provision, but recognises that a whole organisational approach is required to develop a suicide safer community.

Understanding Suicide

The reasons for suicide are often complex and individual. However, we know that financial difficulties, social pressures, life transitions and academic challenges can all have a significant impact on the mental health of young people. A range of factors may be associated with an increased risk of suicide and include, but are not limited to:

- A history of previous suicide attempts or self-harm
- Suffering with a mental health disorder
- Alcohol and / or drug abuse
- Relationship and / or family breakdown
- Identifying as LGBTQ+ or being unsure about sexual orientation and gender identity
- Being bereaved or affected by suicide in others
- Debt or financial worries
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Experiencing bullying including cyberbullying
- Perfectionism and the negative impacts of social media

This strategy recognises three aspects to understanding and preventing suicide amongst students:



The development of a Suicide Safer Strategy Action Plan promotes a whole organisational approach throughout BIMM Institute. It provides a framework for leadership of interventions that target whole communities with the intention to reduce risk factors and increase proactive preventative measures. The Action Plan is divided into three areas of Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention and has identified and prioritised a range of activities that cover the following areas known to be impactful on suicide prevention:

- Strategic planning
- Training for staff and students
- Communications and signposting of available help
- Mental health service provision
- Crisis management procedures and clarity of responsibilities
- Restriction of access to potentially lethal means
- Life skills to promote resilience/successful coping
- Recording/monitoring of serious self-harm combined with a data-driven quality improvement approach

Action Plan Development

The Suicide Safer strategy and action plan has been developed through cross-institutional collaboration. It is owned by the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee, a sub-committee of the Academic Board.

A Suicide Safer Working Group was established to lead on the development of the strategy and action plan. This had Executive Management sponsorship (Vaseema Hamilton; Chair of the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee). The Working Group membership was:

- Lucy Hather, Head of Student Services (BIMM Bristol)
- Sara Dyer, Head of Student Services (BIMM Brighton)
- Professor Louise Jackson, Academic Director & Provost

- Professor Jo Smith, Professor of Early Intervention and Psychosis (University of Worcester, External Advisor) and co-editor of 'Preventing and Responding to Student Suicide: A Practical Guide for FE and HE settings' (published 2021). Professor Smith was engaged as an external consultant throughout the development of BIMM's strategy and action plan.

An initial online workshop was held on 20th January 2022, introducing the development of a Suicide Safer Strategy. This was an open invitation to BIMM Institute staff members in a range of college and Group roles (as well as members of the executive team) as follows:

- College Principals
- Heads of Student Services
- Heads of Learning & Teaching
- Heads of Education
- Heads of Estates & Facilities
- Head Receptionists
- FE Course Leaders / Centre Managers
- Student Support teams
- College Counsellors
- HE Course Leaders
- People / HR Team
- Marketing & Communications
- IT
- Access & Participation
- Quality Assurance

The aim of the webinar was to begin communication and information sharing regarding the purpose and intention of this project. Following this introduction, a consultation group was established to support the Working Group in identifying and prioritising activity and consisted of members representative of all areas of BIMM Institute including academic and professional services. Volunteers were self-selective. Due to the significant interest in participating, it was not possible to include every person who put themselves forward. This was to ensure optimum size with appropriate coverage of roles and colleges.

Membership of the consultation group:

Name	**Role/Location**
Vaseema Hamilton	Executive Principal; Chair of Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee
Adam Davenport	College Principal (Performers College, Birmingham)
Anna Marks	College Principal (BIMM Berlin)
Simon Colam	College Principal (BIMM London)
Antony Greaves	College Principal (BIMM Birmingham)
Vusa Nkomo	Head of Student Services (BIMM London)
Samantha Ellis	Head of Student Services (SFS Birmingham)
Anton Rogers	Head of Student Services (SFS Brighton)
Danielle Batley	Head of Student Services (Performers College, Essex)
John Harrison	Head of Education (BIMM Manchester)
Deborah Royle	In-house Counsellor (BIMM, SFS, & ICT Brighton)
Steven Manby	Estates & Facilities (Performers College, Essex)
John Sheldon	Head of Reception (BIMM Brighton)
Cody Hodkinson	Deputy Head of Student Services (BIMM Manchester)

Niamh Jennings	Access, Participation & Outreach Co-ordinator
Joanne Williamson	Head of Exams (BIMM Birmingham)
Rory Cook	Student Support Officer (BIMM Brighton)
Triona Cummins	Deputy Head of Education (BIMM Berlin)
Rebecca Pickles	Course Leader (BIMM Manchester)
Mark Crawford	FE Centre Manager (BIMM Brighton)
Rich Harvey	Associate Dean: Academic Staff Development
Steph Purcell	Head of People
Nic Ledger	Group Head of Content and Creative
Simon Jones	Group Head of Technology & Business Applications

Three workshops facilitated by Prof. Jo Smith, Lucy Hather and Sara Dyer were held with the consultation group. These workshops explored in depth the themes of suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. After these workshops, a survey of attendees was undertaken to collate feedback on areas of activity that were considered high priority. This has contributed to the identification of planned activity presented in the action plan. Additionally, members of the Working Group used the following criteria to rate possible actions identified by the consultation group:

- Impact
- Effectiveness
- Ease of implementation
- Cost

The draft action plan has been circulated to members of the consultation group prior to a final draft being prepared for the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Committee.

After the final workshop, members of the consultation group were invited to complete a short questionnaire to give anonymous feedback on the consultative process. This feedback can be found summarised in Appendix B.

Timeline to approval:

Working Group established	30 November 2021
Introductory Webinar: Preventing and Responding to Student Suicide in Higher and Further Education	20 January 2022
Consultation Workshop 1: Prevention	7 February 2022
Consultation Workshop 2: Intervention	21 February 2022
Consultation Workshop 3: Postvention	7 March 2022
Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee	10th May 2022
Academic Board approval	Chair's Action to recommend approval to the BIMM Limited Board
BIMM Limited Board	26th July 2022

4. Strategy Recommendations, Dissemination, and Reporting

This Strategy RECOMMENDS:

1. Full approval and implementation of the action plan as set out in section 6.
2. Establishing a sub-group of the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee to oversee the dissemination of the strategy across the group and to identify group level resource need where necessary.
3. Developing a cycle of reporting from colleges and central departments that is aligned with the action plan and academic cycle to ensure timely completion of identified activities.
4. Reviewing the strategy and action plan on an annual basis to ensure actions remain relevant and measures of success are appropriate.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions

Suicide	Deliberate act of taking of one's life
Suicide attempt	A suicide attempt is a deliberate action undertaken with at least some wish to die as a result of the act. Although, the degree of suicidal 'intent' varies and may not be related to the lethality of the attempt.
Suicidal feelings	Suicidal feelings can range from being preoccupied by abstract thoughts about ending one's own life, or feeling that people would be better off without you, to thinking about methods of suicide, or making clear plans to take your own life.
Suicidal behaviour	A range of behaviours related to suicide and self-harm in vulnerable individuals, including suicidal thinking, deliberate recklessness and risk-taking, self-harming not aimed at causing death and suicide attempts.
Non-suicidal self-harm	An action that is deliberate but does not include an intention to die and often does not result in hospital care. It can be used for one or more reasons that relate to reducing distress and tension, inflicting self-punishment and/or signalling personal distress to important others. Non-suicidal self-harm is a signal of underlying mental health difficulties; people who self-harm may also make suicide attempts and be at risk of suicide

Appendix B: Consultation Group Feedback

After the final workshop, members of the consultation group were invited to complete a short questionnaire to give anonymous feedback on the consultative process.

- Motivation for volunteering for the consultation group
    - 88% said to better support high risk students
    - 69% said professional experience/interest
    - 63% said to share good practice
    - 44% said personal experience/other

- 100% said the consultative process was extremely or very well organised
- 100% said the workshops were extremely or well structured
- 94% said the involvement of an external expert made the process more meaningful
- 69% rated the overall experience excellent (25% said it was very good and 6% rated it good)
- When asked what they enjoyed most about the process, comments included:
    - *Working together with colleagues on establishing a resource/approach/policy that could improve the lives of our students, and potentially save lives.*
    - *The exchange of experiences and ideas between different colleges and different departments.*
    - *Leaving the group with tangible actions to work towards. Meeting met with clear outcomes.*
    - *Collaborating with other college representatives and feeling as though we are helping the process of putting together consistent, aligned, group-wide strategies.*
    - *I thought that the structure was excellent, and this is something that I will take into my practice. 30-minutes of expert knowledge followed by small group work was a very effective way to ensure engagement from all participants.*
- Other comments included:
    - *Thank you very much for organising, it was so carefully considered and will inform the final strategy in a hugely beneficial way.*
    - *I look forward to the next steps and truly hope this will be seen through as concrete action points that will be implemented in each college.*
    - *I would suggest holding these workshops regularly, as in every couple of years. The world changes so quickly, as does research and resources. It's important that we are up to date to offer those who need it the most up-to-date support and advice.*

6. Action Plan

The following have been identified as the recommended actions through the above consultative process (Section 3). They are listed under the headings of the three workshop themes: prevention, intervention and postvention. Note that each action listed below will need to be considered in the context of both FE and HE students and adaptations may be required accordingly.

Prevention

Suicide prevention is a collection of efforts to reduce the risk of suicide. Suicide is often preventable, and the efforts to prevent it may occur at the individual, relationship, community or society level. Many people experience suicidal thoughts and feelings. Prevention aims to catch people before they start planning a suicide or attempt it. It requires a clear approach, aiming to change the culture using a whole-university approach.

	Action	**Intended Outcome**	**Responsibility**	**Timescale**
1	Create an internet browser landing page detailing support resources for all students using student wifi in the buildings.	Information is easily signposted, and students and staff know where to find relevant support.	Central IT team	By September 2022
2	Implement an anonymous reporting form to inform the college of student welfare concerns.	Processes for students reporting concerns about their peer are clear and simple to navigate, and students understand it is safe to do so.	Central IT team and HoSS	By September 2022
3	Schedule conversations about suicide within start of year induction events.	Destigmatising suicide and offering positive messages regarding help available, someone students can talk to, how to spot signs of concern in their peers and how to support themselves.	Student Services local teams	By September 2022
4	Develop FE level-appropriate communications and discussion opportunities and work with	Destigmatising suicide and offering positive messages for under 18s regarding help available, someone	Heads of FE	Spring 2023

	external agencies to develop age-appropriate course or workshop for FE students to be delivered at induction or as part of Extended Studies sessions.	students can talk to, how to spot signs of concern in their peers and how to support themselves.		
5	Undertake initial review of BIMM premises and IT infrastructure within the framework of suicide prevention and risk assessment and offer training for Estates teams in restricting access to high-risk locations. Adapt existing estates checks to include specific section on suicide prevention.	A suicide-safe environment is promoted, suicide risk is understood, and processes to limit means to access is embedded in existing procedures.	HoE&F	Ongoing
6	Consider local known suicide hotspots and work with relevant agencies to help reduce the risk of suicide to our students.	Positive engagement with local organisations, building effective networks to create suicide safer communities.	Student Services teams	Ongoing
7	Heads of Student Services (or nominee) to request membership of local suicide prevention boards.	Positive engagement with local organisations, building effective networks to create suicide safer communities.	HoSS	September 2022
8	Develop a Group-wide 'wellbeing reminders and tips' text alert calendar (e.g. signposting to support teams, reminders of self-care, and general messages of support) to be sent to all students across the group, throughout the academic year.	Support and wellbeing approaches are normalised and support the development of a suicide safer community.	Central Marketing and Communications team and HoSS	Winter 2022
9	Introduction of wellbeing ambassadors	The role promotes and co-ordinates activities intended to promote positive dialogue	CPs and HoSS	Winter 2023

		regarding suicide prevention (through, for example, producing a college wellbeing newsletter and creative initiatives such as yarn bombing, stone painting etc).		
10	Develop a Group-wide calendar and plan for standardised wellbeing weeks and nationally recognised days (e.g. university mental health day, IWD, disability awareness)	Engagement with a wide range of social demographics and related national initiatives promote understanding of differentiated suicide risks.	Central Marketing and Communications team and Student Services teams	September 2023
11	Develop and disseminate training in an SOS procedure for staff in the event of a student presenting with suicidal plans whilst on campus.	Staff are skilled and confident in responding to crisis, and can do so according to their role and responsibility.	HoSS	Winter 2022

Intervention

Suicide intervention is a direct effort to prevent a person from attempting to take their own life intentionally. Intervention looks at how BIMM can respond effectively through targeted evidence-led interventions when individuals disclose they are having suicidal thoughts, feel 'suicidal' or are 'in crisis'.

	Action	**Intended Outcome**	**Responsibility**	**Timescale**
1	Establish two reporting tools (one aimed at internal staff and a second aimed at external parties such as stakeholders, agencies, friends or relatives of students) who may wish to pass on reports of concerning behaviour or warning signs in	Staff and external parties have an easily accessible tool to report concerns and do not hold onto information unnecessarily.	Central IT team and HoSS	By September 2022

	students. Utilise Banner CRM Advise from Sept 2023 for internal use. Create a “button” on bimmstudents.com for external use and interim internal use.			
2	Implement safety plan template for Student Services staff across the Group to implement when students present at risk.	Ensures Group-wide, standardised approach to students at risk of suicide.	HoSS	By September 2022
3	Implement suicide safer strategy as a rolling agenda item on group committee meetings and local college CMT agendas.	Ensures ongoing proactiveness from all colleges and committees in following strategy and attending to any current actions.	CPs and committee chairs	By September 2022
4	Develop template out of office and out of hours auto response emails plus email signatures for use by all staff. To include information on local and national crisis support services and 24/7 services. SHOUT text service etc. Adapt templates for different departments.	Offers out of office hours support to anyone emailing BIMM staff in crisis at weekends or evenings. Reaffirms boundaries and student expectations of university staff support.	HoDs, to disseminate to their teams for roll out	Winter 2022
5	Development of a clear policy around confidentiality and consent to share with a student’s emergency contact.	Clear guidance adopted by all in the event of a possible suicide or serious self harm risk or attempt.	MIS and HoSS	September 2022
6	Guidance for security guards via a pocket-sized card, so that they know who to contact out of hours if they become concerned about someone’s wellbeing. E.g. Samaritans, crisis team, 111/999 etc.	All members of the BIMM community have access to the right information to develop a suicide safer community.	Reception and Student Services teams	September 2022
7	Print helpline numbers and support service information on the back of	All members of the BIMM community have access to the right information to develop a suicide safer community.	Reception and Student Services teams	September 2022

	lanyard ID cards - for all students and staff.			
8	Deploy R;pple interceptive software to all available devices connected to BIMM wifi networks.	Ensure that BIMM digital spaces support a suicide safer space: R;pple presents a visual prompt when a person searches for harmful key words or phrases relating to self-harm or suicide.	Central IT Team	September 2022

Postvention

Suicide postvention is an organised response that occurs in the aftermath of a death by suicide or suspected suicide. It provides crisis and support interventions to those affected by a suicide. Having a plan in place, agreed templates for communications and a nominated lead ensures an effective, appropriate and timely response.

	Action	**Intended Outcome**	**Responsibility**	**Timescale**
1	Establish a Postvention Response Team (PVT) per college to include an identified named Lead and Deputy who will lead and coordinate any postvention response and the work of the PVT. Ensure PVT have clear roles and responsibilities and a template action plan / flow chart for use in the event of a suspected student suicide.	Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood, and a process can be deployed efficiently and effectively to support the BIMM community.	CPs	By January 2023
2	Marketing and Communications team, in conjunction with Student Services and Exec team members, to create a clear communications strategy following suspected student suicide.	Clear communication protocols are established, allowing for effective crisis and after effect communication. This should include key points on internal and external comms, press and social media management, tribute, memorial, and legacy.	Marketing and Communications Team, HoSS, Exec team members	By January 2023

3	Targeted bereavement support offered to students and staff, to include peer support group workshop, allocation of an emergency budget to enable additional counselling support and specific outreach to those who may be suicidal themselves plus close friends/housemates of the person who has died by suicide.	Recognition of the wider impact death by suicide can have on communities, and to ensure the appropriate range of support is available to those affected.	Student Services teams	Ongoing
4	Develop a protocol and guidance on appropriate, timely and sensitive communication between BIMM and the family of the deceased. Ensure an identified lead for ongoing, long-term family liaison to avoid duplicated contact with the family and to give families a single point of contact.	Clear communication protocols are established, minimising distress caused by inadequate communication processes.	Exec team	By January 2023
5	Design and implement training and support package for all PVT members. This should include inquest protocol training, MHFA training and ad hoc clinical supervision.	Training is fit for purpose and targeted, allowing for professional response to the complex requirements following a death by suicide.	People team	Summer 2023

General actions

The following actions span all three areas mentioned above and are integral to the success of this strategy.

	Action	**Intended Outcome**	**Responsibility**	**Timescale**
1	Review of recruitment and onboarding of staff: adapt all job descriptions to incorporate a statement regarding BIMM's whole	All staff members of the BIMM community are aware of their responsibilities in creating a suicide safer community. Staff feel	People Team	January 2023

	institute approach to suicide prevention; inclusion of college-specific suicide prevention information within staff induction and a requirement for all staff (freelance and employed) to complete standard, mandatory training in suicide awareness to be delivered online (for example via Educare) and refreshed regularly.	supported in delivering upon their relevant responsibilities and are more likely to have an effective impact.		
2	Development of additional, tailored training for identified staff groups dependent on role and level of student interaction. Additional to standard mandatory all-staff training. For example, MHFA, ASIST, boundary training etc	Targeted CPD provides enhanced training to ensure the right skills are developed aligned with the appropriate roles and responsibilities.	People Team	January 2024
3	Undertake an audit of existing Student Support Officer provision in each college to assess staff to student ratios, ensuring best and safe practice regarding levels of risk and duty of care for both students and staff.	Data and evidence is created and analysed to understand optimum support requirements across the group. Resource requirements are designed in relation to this evidence and implemented in a targeted and focused way.	HoSS and Director of People Team	Winter 2022
4	Connect with local halls of residence providers to establish communication pathways in the event of student mental health crisis, significant self-harm or suspected suicide.	Each college develops a positive relationship with the management of residence settings in order to clearly understand what safety measures already exist and who are the main points of contact in each context.	Student Services	January 2023
5	Ensure there is a sufficient number of internal Mental Health First Aid	Resource is appropriately deployed, with staff feeling	People Team	September 2023

	trainers to train other staff members in MHFA.	confident in their skills to respond to crisis scenarios.		
6	Update HE College Transfer policy to ensure students are aware that support notes will be handed to incoming student support team to ensure student is well supported in new location.	All students, regardless of their point of entry to the BIMM Group, are provided with a rich and supportive range of resources to support them through their studies.	Academic Registrar	September 2023