

Office for
Students

The logo for the Office for Students, featuring a dark blue square with a yellow square in the top right corner containing the letters 'OfS' in white.

OfS

Intersectional approaches to support student mental health (webinar 2)

13 June 2023

Emma Douthwaite - Safeguarding and Welfare Manager (OfS)

Event notices

- Closed captions are available – please click the CC icon
- A recording of this event will be available on the OfS website
- Please use the Q&A box rather than the Chat box to ask a question
- Use the Chat box if you would like to speak to the events team.

Agenda

1400 **Welcome and introduction**

London South Bank University: Proactive and Preventative Interventions for Black Students

ACM Guildford: Many Hands Project

St Mary's Twickenham: Mind the Gaps! First in family students and students without family support

Bristol University: Supporting the mental health of autistic students

Questions and answers

1515 **Close**

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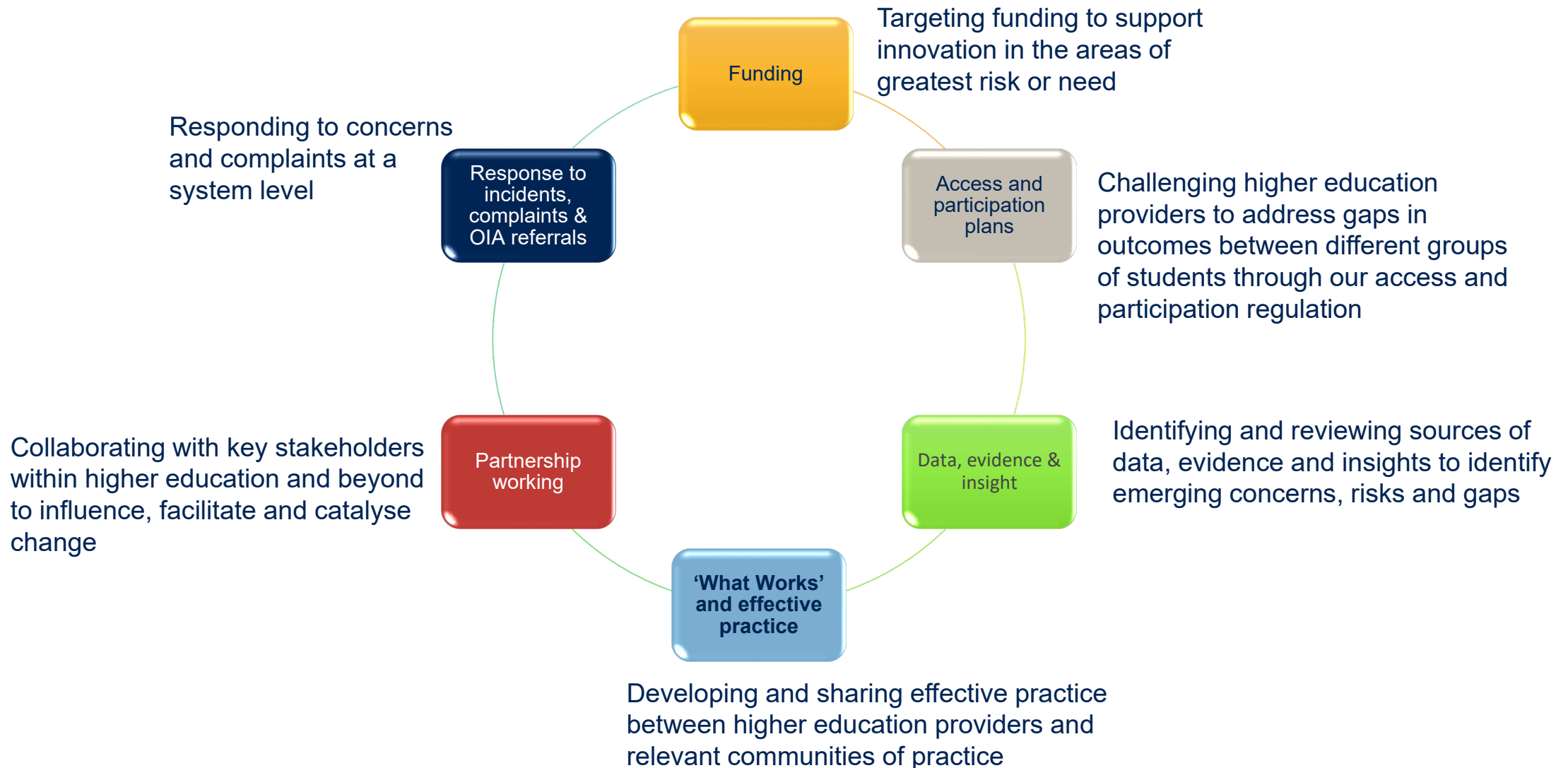
Questions and answers

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OfS approach to student mental health

- Individual institutions are responsible for developing their own mental health policies and procedures and have legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010
- However, we would encourage providers to:
 - Take a whole-institution approach with clear commitment from senior leaders and joined up thinking between academic staff and student services
 - Ensure that they have robust, evidence-based policies in place to support students
 - Encourage students to declare mental health conditions
 - Evaluate their own work and learn from others to make sure they're working in the most effective ways
 - Collaborate with other organisations
 - Put co-creation with students at the heart of their intervention planning

OfS approach to student mental health



Mental Health Funding Competition: Using innovation and intersectional approaches to target mental health support for students

- Launched in 2021 with £3 million investment from the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education to the Office for Students for a new mental health funding competition.
- 18 projects awarded and commenced in 2021.

The competition has prioritised

- students with **characteristics identified as increasing the risk of poor mental health** (e.g. ethnicity, socioeconomic background)
- students who might experience **barriers to accessing support due to their course, mode of study, or other characteristics** (e.g. those on placements as part of their course, commuters, mature students, part-time students, postgraduate taught students, international students, first in family, carers, care leavers, LGBT+).

Timeline of the MHFC



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LSBU



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Proactive and Preventative Interventions for Black Students at LSBU

ofs BLACK STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT AT LSBU

Andy Owusu



What approach did you take to working with the target group? Why was this effective/not effective?

- **Recruiting a project officer with a genuine occupational requirement: Black LSBU graduate**
- **Establishing a physical presence on campus**
- **Co-creation**
- **Merchandise and incentives**
- **Recruiting of other students: snowball sampling**

What did you learn about the target group? Was there anything surprising that other institutions may not anticipate?

- **Representation** is important at all levels of the institution
- **Financial support impacts engagement**, giving students opportunity to be fairly compensated for their contribution
- How genuinely **interested** people were to **collaborate** in **developing** their own service and resources.

What are the key learnings and evaluation findings or messages you would like the sector to know, following on from your experience in this programme?

- Value of **intersectionality** to our students
- More **academics** taking on proactive roles in their students' mental health journey
- **Language and understanding**: the language used to **describe** the mental health service and what mental health & wellbeing means to students.

What are your next steps? What resources have you produced/will you be producing and where can attendees find these?

- **Here's what we have done**

- Community development.
- Template for co-creation
- Strengthen relationships
- [NHS Good Thinking](#)
- [YouPlus](#) / Univariversity
- Content list spanning 30+ topics.

- **What's next ?**

- Action Plan
- Cocreation of resource.
- Integration of the project into existing student services.

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**Many Hands Project: Peer Mentoring For Positive Mental Health -
A Cross-provider Approach**





Key deliverables

- IHEPs collaborating to support student wellbeing – first project of its kind
- ***Peer-mentoring programme – offers students access to a larger, anonymous pool of mentors/lived experience***
- Targets – 50 mentors / 120 mentees; creative, mature and BAME students, intersectionality
- Web site – to promote programme, showcase mentors and match mentees
- Knowledge Hub – facilitate collaboration and share best practice with project partners and wider sector
- External collaboration – with MIND, to develop tutor training
- Working with the NHS and third parties – advice and guidance for IHEPs
- Benefits of collaboration – advice and guidance for IHEPs



Key learning points

Innovative IHEP collaboration - first project of its kind, led by ACM and partnering with commercial businesses and IHE. Demonstrated the power of project participation and cross-sector working: sharing and increasing knowledge and resources within and across partners; increased strategic approaches to mental health and wellbeing; creating sustainable connections. Legacy includes widening collaboration across IHE membership - mentoring programmes for students and staff

IHE sector's access to and impact on students - demonstrated smaller/specialist providers' unique ability to connect with and understand students' individual and often complex needs, building the trust essential to identifying and referring to appropriate interventions, including peer mentoring, effective for some students

Target groups - project identified that categories are very broad and associated challenges not necessarily present: most of our students don't fit or want to be grouped, preferring fluidity in identity and finding commonalities in lived experience. IHE members don't want narrow groups; future programmes to be opened up to all students, designed with risks to equality of opportunity in mind

Evaluation – Sharing our learning

Webinars – October 2023

- Engaging students from target groups – what we learned
- Setting up a peer-mentoring project – how to do it

Reports

- Collaborating for student mental health and beyond – advice and guidance for independent higher education providers
- Working with local NHS and third party providers – advice and guidance for independent higher education providers, and those who want to work with us

Contact: Lynn Blackadder | lynnblackadder@gmail.com

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St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London



Maudsley
Learning



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The Career University



Mind the Gap!

Identify, Develop, Reflect and Refine Skills to Support your Wellbeing at University

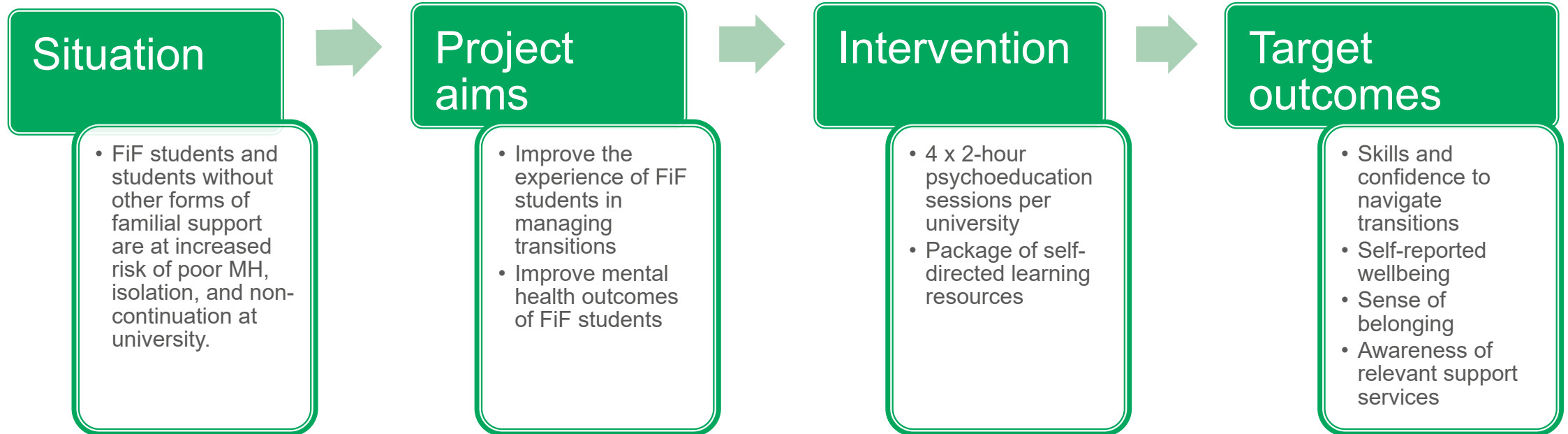


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South London and Maudsley
NHS Foundation Trust

Background

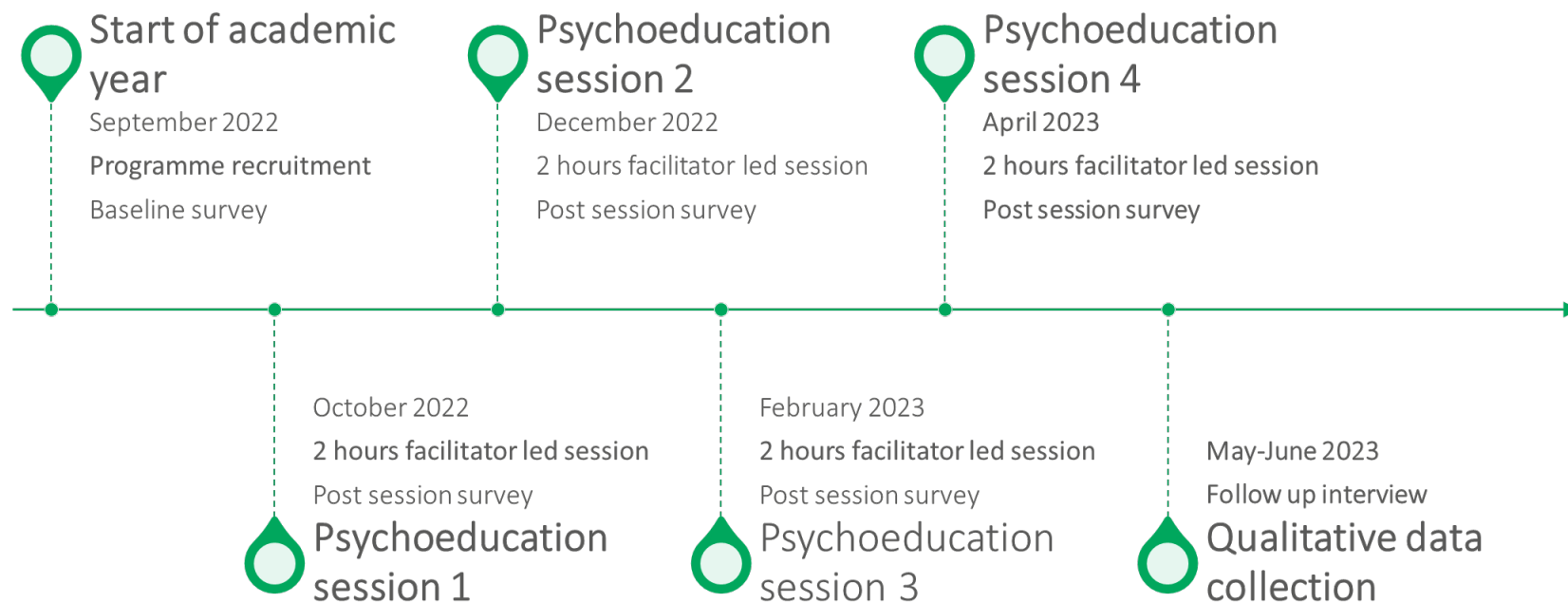


Project activities

- 18 Student collaborators
- 1 embedded student researcher
- Input from various other students
- 80 students accessing the programme

- Needs analysis
- Co-production of programme activities, including:
 - Focus groups
 - Content feedback and review sessions
 - Pilot workshop and review sessions
 - Feedback on online materials
 - Student training session
- Programme delivery
- Programme evaluation

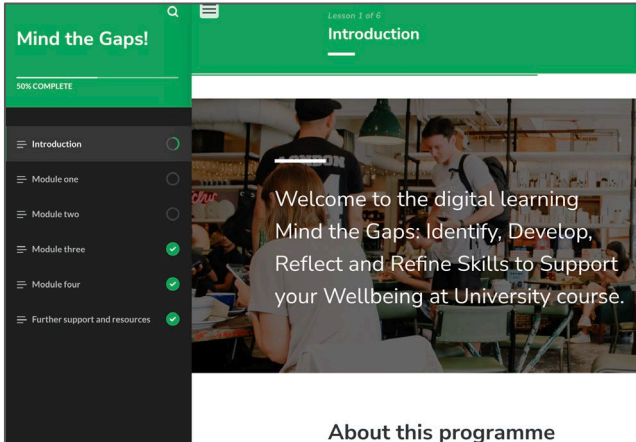
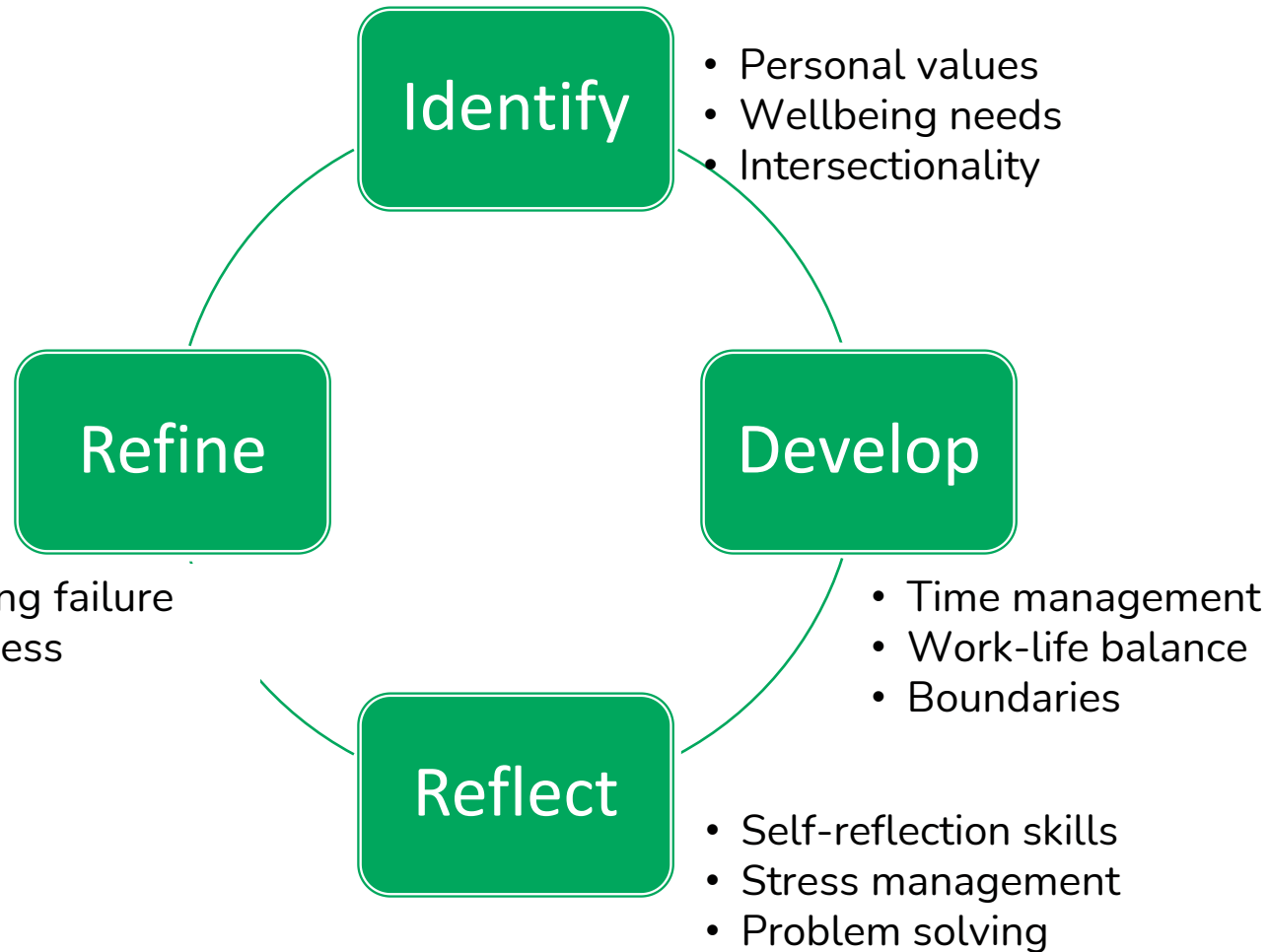
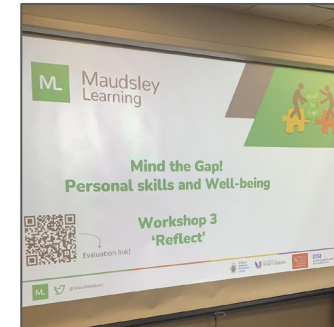
Psychoeducation Intervention Timeline



Online resource pack
Post completion surveys

Psychoeducation Intervention

Face-to-face workshops



Online programme

Findings (currently under analysis)

Attendance in the programme (out of 119 expressing an interest)

Summary	KCL	SMU	UWL	Total
Unique students	18	38	22	80
Multiple attendance (across sessions or modalities)	3	3	3	9
Student collaborators involved in delivery	3	1	3	7
Face-to-face session 1 attendance	3	9	3	15
Face-to-face session 2 attendance	3	4	6	13
Face-to-face session 3 attendance	6	17	4	27
Face-to-face session 4 attendance	1	9	2	12
Online attendance	10	4	8	28

What worked well?

“Openness between participants”

“Social and relaxed atmosphere of the session was very nice. The leads were very friendly and made me feel comfortable to chat. The activities were quite thoughtful and personally applicable.”

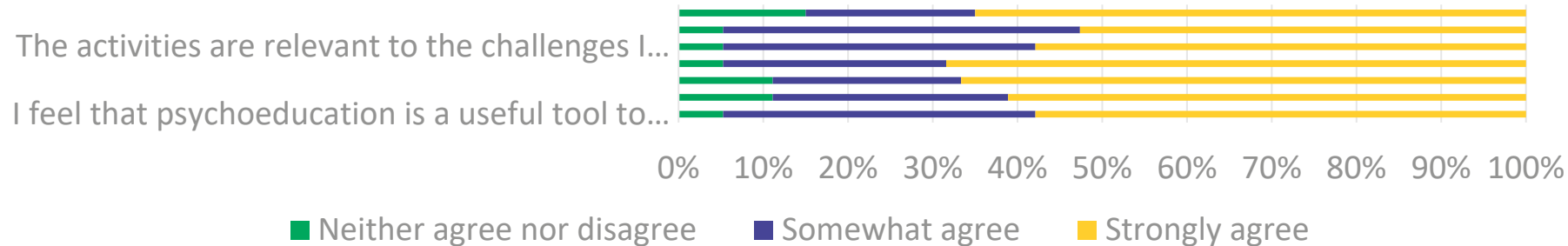
“The laid back and availability for open dialogue”

What will you take away?

“Rethink my expectations and goals for the academic year, taking personal and health circumstances into account.”

“Identifying values can help in motivating oneself to complete tasks. Making sure there is enough time for different aspects of life is very important for wellbeing.”

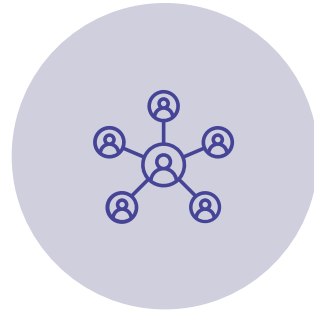
Student satisfaction with the sessions



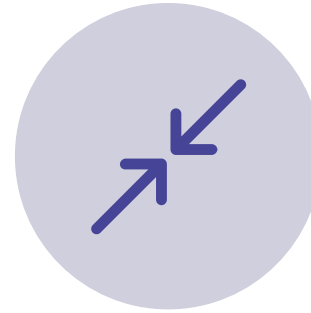
Lessons learned



NEED FOR CONTINUOUS
STUDENT OUTREACH



VALUE OF DIFFERENT
METHODS OF
ENGAGEMENT



KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE,
SHORT, AND ACCESSIBLE



SHARING LEARNING
ACROSS INSTITUTIONS

Next steps

1. Make the programme widely available to more students and other institutions
2. Continue programme delivery at partner universities
3. Analyse evaluation data to identify opportunities for programme development
4. Look for opportunities to share the findings more widely
5. Source additional funding to continue programme delivery and additional research



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Maudsley Learning



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The Career University



South London and Maudsley
NHS Foundation Trust

Thank you!



Contacts

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Developing Training for Staff Working with Autistic Students

Emma Jenks & Felicity Sedgewick



Participatory Advisory Group

- Created a list of topics and important points
- Reviewed:
 - Initial course design
 - Class slides
 - Final version with resources
- Student videos
- Conferences
- Research article



Training



- Online course
 - Debunking stereotypes
 - Autistic mental health
 - Practical strategies
- Completed by ~120 staff across three universities
- Different versions
 - Five week online
 - Online short course
 - In-person sessions
 - Develop system

Evaluation

- Pre- and post-training questionnaire
 - No differences
 - Already engaged trainees
- Interviews with trainees
 - Very positive feedback!
- Diaries over following academic year
 - Problems with uptake
 - Switched to surveys
 - Limited data from participants
 - Edited questions





Next steps

- Interviews with students
- Making the training available more widely
- Neurodiversity in higher education conference



Thank you!



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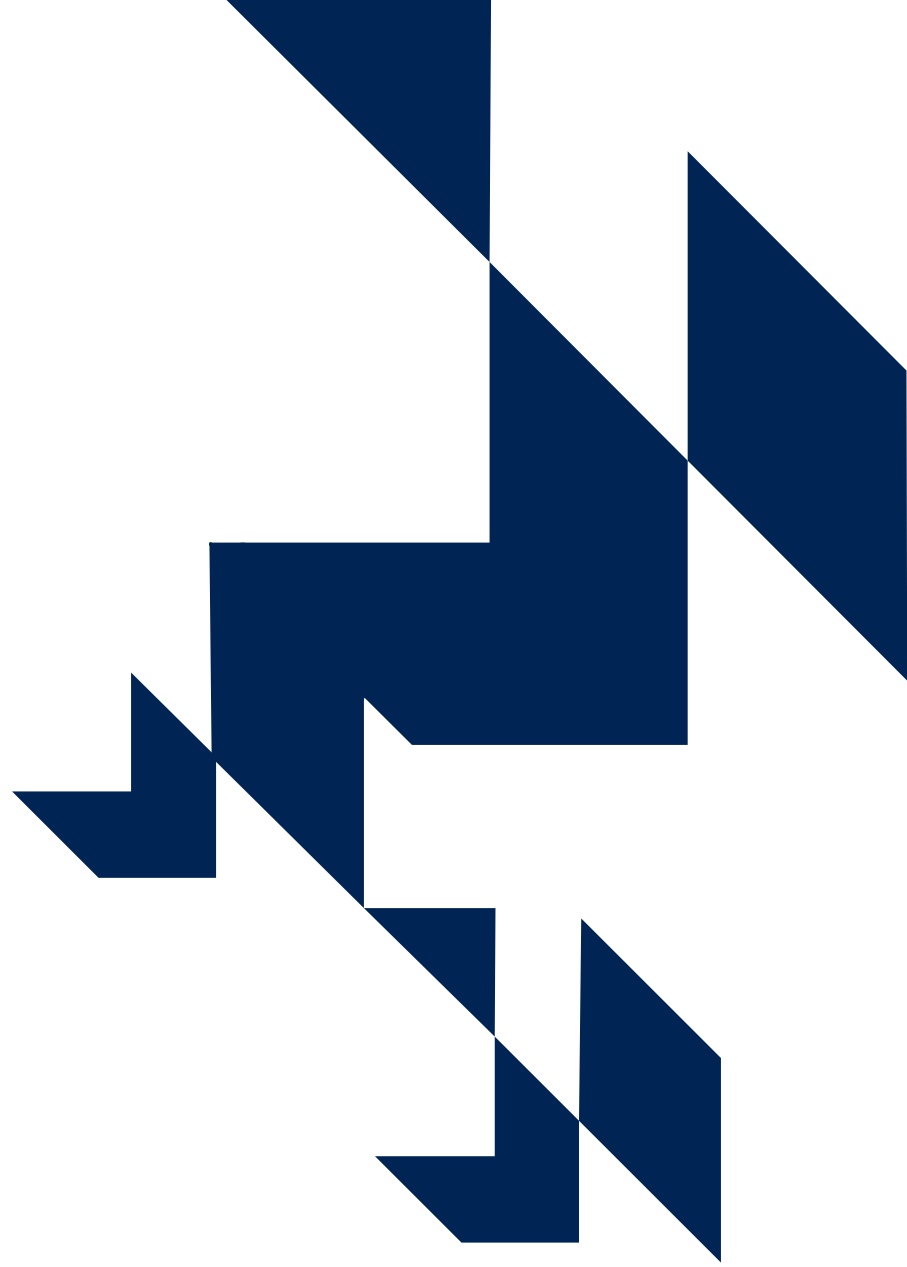
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Thank you for listening

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