



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

**STUDENT WELLBEING  
AND ACCESSIBLE  
LEARNING**

# **STUDENT WELLBEING AND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING SUPPORT IMPACT REPORT 23/24**

**FACULTY OF MEDICINE, HEALTH AND  
LIFE SCIENCES  
OCTOBER 2024**

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# SECTION 1:

## Introduction

It is a pleasure to introduce the Student Disability and Wellbeing Impact Reports 2023-24. Now in their fourth year we trust what follows is a useful overview of the work which has taken place between Schools and central support services to support students.

As well as the data for Student Wellbeing and those external services we work with throughout the year, for 2023-24 we have included more detail on those students supported through Accessible Learning Support (formerly Disability Services).

Our experience is that colleagues find the data relating to their School to be of most benefit but also appreciate seeing the wider Faculty context. We trust that by including more information on Accessible Learning Support this year colleagues find the data even more useful.

The Accessible Learning Support and Student Wellbeing Teams have put considerable effort in the last number of years into working more closely with Schools. It is therefore pleasing to see the increase in staff referring students directly to the Services, as well as more collaborative work with Schools. Both the Accessible Learning Support and the Student Wellbeing Teams very much appreciate the collaboration with School staff and the embedded nature of much of the work in the form of Faculty Drop-Ins, regular Students of Concern meetings and joint wellbeing initiatives to support preventative work.

The figures show that the numbers of students presenting with stress and anxiety continues to be high, with academic pressures and personal issues being the second and third most prevalent reason for accessing support in AHSS and EPS. In MHLS they are academic pressures and disability support. What the figures do not show are the hours that staff in the services, along with colleagues in Schools, can invest in individual students to support their wellbeing. As some of the case studies indicate, students can find themselves in complex scenarios which need multi-disciplinary support. Put simply for many students accessing support can be life changing, and in a handful of cases, life saving. We may never know fully the impact of interventions represented in this report but all of them matter.

I want to finish by thanking colleagues in the Student Wellbeing Team, Accessible Learning Support and Schools for their considerable and dedicated work in the academic year of 2023-24 in supporting a considerable number of students during their time at the University.

**Helen McNeely**  
**Head of Student Affairs**  
**Student and Campus Experience**



# ABOUT STUDENT WELLBEING

## Who is Who for You?

Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning services are delivered on a Faculty-facing model, with a dedicated staff team working closely with colleagues in Schools, to help deliver support and interventions to students. For the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences, there is a dedicated Wellbeing Adviser, Disability Officers and an Assistant Disability and Wellbeing Adviser, who lead on supporting students at Tiers 0, 1, 2 and 3 of the 'Stepped Care Model of Support', offering support and guidance through a triage service. Students presenting at Drop-In or through online staff or student referrals are contacted the same day and are given supportive guidance and signposted to relevant supports. Although all staff members have wider service duties, working with a dedicated cohort of students has helped build positive relationships with key staff contexts and allows for a better understanding of the nature and demands of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences programmes.

Our MHLS Faculty-facing team for the 24-25 academic year are:



**Majella Barr**  
**Student Wellbeing Adviser**



**Louise McQuillan**  
**Disability Officer (School:**  
**Biological Sciences)**



**Karen Harvieu**  
**Disability Officer (School:**  
**Medicine and Dentistry)**



**Rob Doyle**  
**Wellbeing Team Leader/MHLS**



**Deirdre Johnston**  
**Disability Officer (School:**  
**Nursing and Midwifery)**



**Will Daggart**  
**Disability Officer (Schools:**  
**Pharmacy and Biomedical**  
**Sciences)**

This Faculty Team are supported by **Wellbeing Assessment Managers Angela Murphy and Briege McKee, and John Finnegan, our Safe and Healthy Relationships Adviser.**

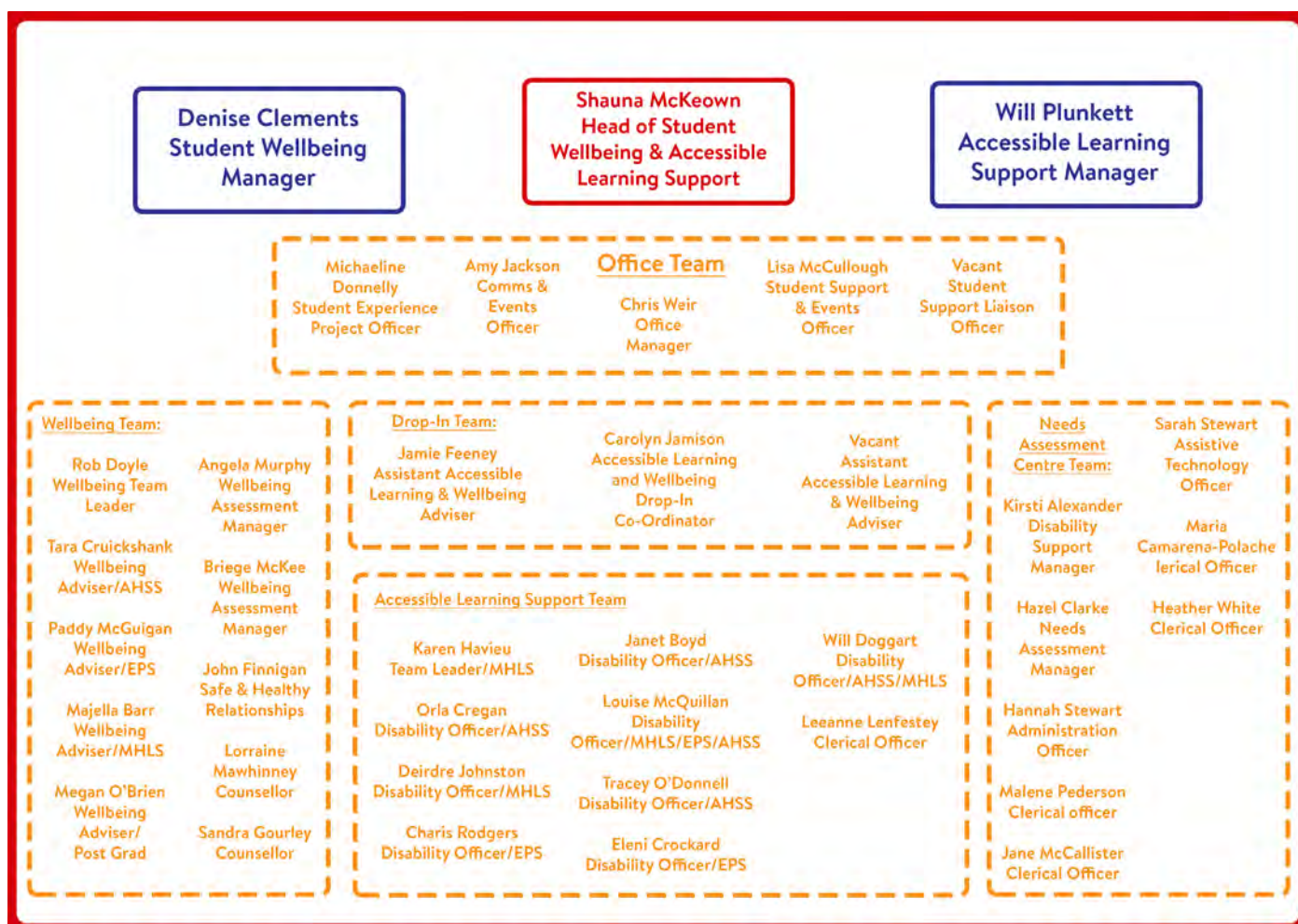


The services are led by **Shauna McKeown, Head of Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Support, Will Plunkett, Accessible Learning Support Manager and Denise Clements, Student Wellbeing Manager**





## Current Service Organisational Chart



## Service Delivery Model

Operating within the wider regional and national landscape of Student Mental Health, wellbeing support is integral to ensuring Queen's students are supported and empowered to be healthy learners who can grow and develop throughout their academic journey.

The Education and Skills strand of [Strategy 2030](#) sets out the University's aspiration to provide a transformative student experience, with a full range of mental health and wellbeing support available and utilised by the student population, supported by a strong policy framework<sup>1</sup>.

The [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy \(2022-23\)](#) recognises that all members of Queen's, staff and students, play an important role in the success of our community. A whole University approach on health and wellbeing is fundamental to ensuring a culture exists where all members can flourish regardless of their role at the University.

Student Wellbeing Services lead on the delivery of support for students, and staff supporting students, with services delivered around a Stepped Match Care model as shown below ensuring students have access to the most appropriate level of intervention at the right time, to address their presenting issue.

This report gives an overview of Student Wellbeing Service impact in relation to students registered on PG programmes during the academic year 2023-24.

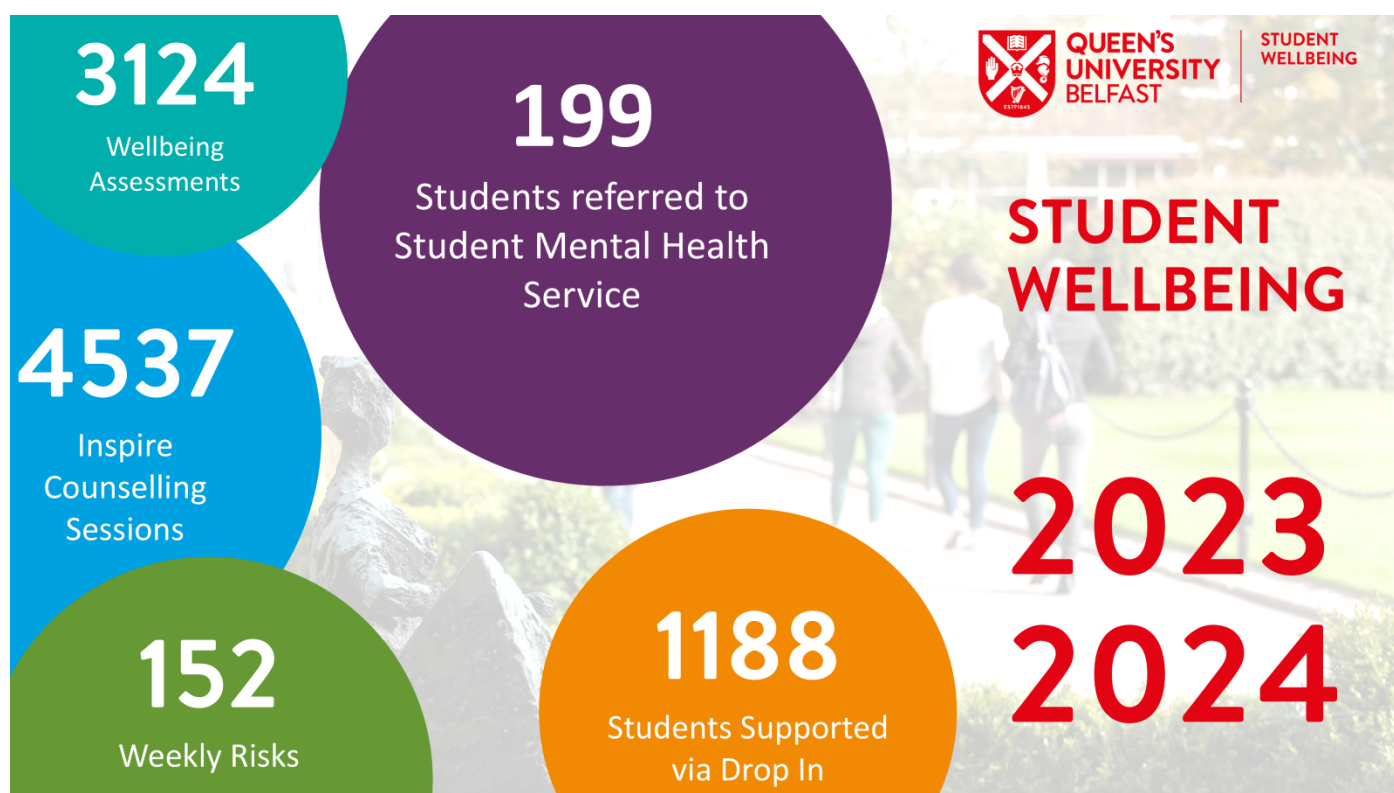
<sup>1</sup> QUBWell Policy Statement [can be found here](#).

[1] Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/QUBWell/about/policy/>

Tier 0 Preventative and Protective	Tier 1 Supportive Guidance and Signposting	Tier 2 Assessment, Consultation & Therapeutic Interventions	Tier 3 Risk Management, De- escalation and Crisis Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy habit building based on <a href="#">Take 5</a> e.g. move, connect, sleep, eat well.</li> <li>• #QUBWell – Healthy Campus &amp; Flag Days</li> <li>• <a href="#">Assessment Support Hub</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Transitions Skills support</a> for new students</li> <li>• Self-help Resources through <a href="#">Inspire Hub</a> and Student Wellbeing <a href="#">website</a></li> <li>• Peer support groups e.g. ASD, PG Wellbeing Wednesday</li> <li>• Student-led events e.g. Mind Your Mood, International Student Guides, Clubs and Societies</li> <li>• Psycho-education workshops e.g. Look After Your Mate, Active Bystander, Consent, Dealing with Grief</li> <li>• Accommodation events</li> <li>• GP registration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from the team in person and/or online to connect with campus, be a healthy learner and avoid isolation</li> <li>• Drop-in Clinic – One Elmwood and in Faculty (UG/PG)</li> <li>• Walk and Talk sessions</li> <li>• Social Prescribing referral for Active Campus, Jump In volunteering, etc</li> <li>• In School Mental Health Ambassadors</li> <li>• Support to (re)engage with Schools</li> <li>• Report and Support referrals</li> <li>• Other support service referrals e.g. LDS, SU Advice, Accessible Learning, Careers</li> <li>• Accommodation support</li> <li>• "Keep In Touch" contacts</li> <li>• GP appointment support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 Wellbeing consultations</li> <li>• Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) and guided self help</li> <li>• Low level CBT</li> <li>• Counselling referral and 24/7 helpline</li> <li>• Support at Student Progress meetings</li> <li>• Support to Participate Fully in Study and University life, meetings and review</li> <li>• Safe and Healthy Relationship guidance</li> <li>• Referrals to external partners</li> <li>• Occupational Health assessment &amp; recommendations</li> <li>• Multi disciplinary Student of Concern support</li> <li>• Reasonable Adjustments with Accessible Learning Support, including working diagnosis</li> <li>• Support for short term impairments</li> <li>• 1:1 Support provider</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management</li> <li>• De-escalation support</li> <li>• Safety planning</li> <li>• Links with Trusted Contacts</li> <li>• Inspire Support Calls</li> <li>• QUB Accommodation check-ins</li> </ul> <p><b>In liaison with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Mental Health Service (BHSCT)</li> <li>• Inspire Wellbeing</li> <li>• GP's &amp; CPN's</li> <li>• Mental Health Liaison Teams</li> <li>• Community Mental Health Teams</li> <li>• CAMHS</li> </ul> <p>  <b>QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST</b> </p> <p>  <b>STUDENT WELLBEING AND ACADEMIC LEARNING</b> </p>

## SECTION 2: A YEAR IN STUDENT WELLBEING 2023 –24

### A Year in Student Wellbeing



## GENERAL SERVICE INITIATIVES, CAMPAIGNS AND DEVELOPMENTS

- 3 Grief and Bereavement Group Support for Students Sessions Delivered
- New Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Support Staff Induction process and Training Plan created and implemented
- Framework for managing students at risk completed October 23 and recommendations actioned
- Wellbeing Advisers and Assistant Disability Wellbeing Advisors have completed training in:
  - Mental Health First Aid
  - Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Impact
  - Domestic Violence Training
  - Motivational Interviewing
  - Gambling and Addiction
- Staff Excellence Award – Winners in Best Collaboration Category
- Monthly Student of Concern meetings (Disability Officer, Wellbeing Advisor, Student Support Officer/ key School link) established in 6 Schools across the three Faculties, in MHLS these were Nursing and Midwifery and Biological Sciences, to maximise early identification of support needs and appropriate interventions and weekly Student of Concern meetings held with Accommodation Team
- Weekly Faculty drop-ins established across all three Faculties and the Graduate School
- Collaborative work with SU to take forward the SOS-UK Drug and Alcohol Charter Mark Accreditation process
- Mental Health Awareness Training delivered to Student Information Point Staff in One Elmwood
- Projects/Collaborations with other internal and external partners:
  - Social Prescribing Referral system established with the SU
  - Healthy Lifestyle Referral system established with Queen's Sport
  - Service CRM Task and Finish Group
  - Service Quality Assurance and Evaluation – Focus Groups, Feedback mechanisms introduced
  - Refinement of processes for joint management of students within Appeals process with colleagues in Academic Affairs and SU Teams
  - Cost of Living initiatives in collaboration with SU and the Cost-of-Living Group
  - Academic Campaign – joint SU/Student Wellbeing/LDS collaboration
  - Accommodation Wrap-Around Drop-Ins in Elms BT9, BT1 and BT2
  - Report and Support Campaign
  - Self-Defense Workshops for students in collaboration with SU Tae Kwondo Club
  - Safe and Healthy Initiatives Group established
  - 3 members of Staff have completed Leading and Managing at Queens modules
  - Individual PDR Goals embedded into SWEEP process
  - Assessment Support Hub designed and launched
  - Healthy Learners Module launched
- Belfast Trust Student Mental Health Service -review of pilot project with DoH
- Procedure on Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life reviewed and online and in person training sessions/workshops delivered to staff across the University
- #QUBeWell Action plan developed and rolled out based on University Mental Health Charter programme
- Incorporation of Student Voice – Mind Your Mood and Consent Ambassadors, MYM events, Walky Talky Girls
- All Student Wellbeing Team now trained as Report and Support Advocates
- Consent and Onboarding videos completed for new and returning students
- 3 Successful individual funding Bids through Alumni Fund and service bid through NI DoH/PHA
- E-Learning module rolled out to 2000 QUB staff
- Community of Practice established for staff supporting students in Schools



## SECTION 3: Faculty WELLBEING ADVISER REPORT

### Progress against 2022-23 Recommendations: Presence at School boards

Members of the Student Disability and Wellbeing Team have attended a School Board for all Schools within MHLS. This has proven to be an invaluable opportunity to present a depth of information behind the stats and to further engage teams in a collective approach to student support. We welcome invitations to School Management meetings in the coming year.



### Building strong relationships with the Schools

This year has witnessed considerable depth to the partnership working between School teams and both Rob and Sarah have been driven by the aim to understand, in more detail, the particular needs of cohorts from each School. The outcome of this has been a more tailored approach to the application of our stepped care model and more efficient management of processes such as Support to Participate Fully in Studies/and or University Life meetings and application of EC procedures.



Rob and Sarah have worked closely with all Schools within MHLS to ensure presence at key events across the academic calendar inclusive of induction presentations for new students, offer holder days for prospective students in Pharmacy and Nursing, pre placement events, fundraising events for Voicing the Void in Pharmacy and AWARENI in Nursing, Valentines Day event for final year students in Biological Sciences, attendance as guest speaker on the CEM Advisor Exchange Podcast and the delivery of AWARENI accredited training to the Staff and Student Wellbeing Ambassadors/Champions in Nursing and Midwifery .



### Specific MHLS Drop ins

Within the MBC we have implemented a 2-hour Drop In every Thursday for undergraduate students. These aim to provide closer on-site options to speak to a Wellbeing Adviser for students using the MBC.

This will enhance accessibility for students accessing on-site teaching or placement and those who may not otherwise be able to easily access on-site supports at One Elmwood.



### Student Of Concern (SOC) Meetings

Regular updates and meetings have been held with key points of contact within Schools across MHLS which has ensured that when any students of concern are known to either the School or Student Wellbeing Services that we now very quickly address those concerns and embed holistic support at the earliest opportunity. This has been particularly effective this year with the Schools of Biological Sciences and Nursing and Midwifery, who were prioritized to trial the meetings due to identification of complexity from last year. This process will continue to be refined and adapted as we dynamically engage with our diverse student population.

This year has seen the delivery of training to Staff across campus by our Staff Support Liaison Officer through both online and in person sessions. These sessions offer guidance on supporting students with Wellbeing concerns in addition to training on the Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life procedure. For the Faculty of MHLS there has been reasonable uptake on this as can be seen from the following figures:

MHLS			
School/Dept	In-Person	Online	Total
Faculty Office	7	4	11
Medicine, Dentistry, Biomedical Sciences	52	61	113
Pharmacy	47	40	87
Biological Sciences	62	35	97
Nursing and Midwifery	7	19	26

### Development of the Transitions Skills Module

In conjunction with our colleagues in Learning Development Services we have launched the transitions module which has wellbeing messaging, tips and signposting embedded throughout with the overarching aim of creating healthy learners across campus. The uptake and referral to these supports has been strong with feedback from students highlighting that they have found this academic support hugely beneficial.





In addition, the MHLS Faculty facing team have been present at a series of whole campus events aimed at University Mental Health Week and World Mental Health Day.



### Referrals to other internal supports and services

Student Wellbeing routinely refer students to the wide range of internal supports available across the University as wellbeing needs generally co-present along with a wider range of concerns including financial and academic difficulties. For example, many students benefited from onward referrals to SU Advice and from signposting to the Learning Development Service or one-to-one appointments.

Although only launched this year, students are utilising the new Assessment Support Hub, designed to help ensure that they understand assessment procedures and processes, such as Exceptional Circumstances and Fit to Sit. The site also provides information on and links to additional assessment support materials and resources. The student feedback to date is that they have found the Hub hugely beneficial.





## DATA AND TRENDS

### Student Wellbeing and Disability Drop In

The number of students using our central drop-in service in One Elmwood has remained consistent over the last two years. The drop in phone was removed in November 2023 due to the high numbers of unrelated calls received by the team – this does not appear to have adversely impacted the numbers of students accessing Drop In.

As is to be expected, UG utilisation of the drop-in service decreases over the summer, with the months of June, July and August having the least undergraduate footfall. For this year, the month in which the most assessments were completed at drop in was September, which is likely to be due to an increase in students wanting to engage with or find out about Accessible Learning Services (Disability Services), accommodation queries and students coming to drop in to ask about other services. MHLS student usage of drop-in was highest in January (32% of students using drop in were from MHLS), March (40% of students using drop in were from MHLS) and in June and September were they accounted for 31% of drop in student usage and these may correlate with key pressure points during the academic year within the Faculty.

International students are over-represented in the drop-in service, accounting for 42% of drop-in cases. Issues affecting international students commonly include isolation, homesickness, family worries and expectations and financial concerns. This year, and more specifically, conflict or instability (including financial implications such as currency crashes) have been cited by increasing numbers of international students along with financial concerns regarding payment of tuition fees.

Alongside their core student-facing work of providing the first point of contact to the Services for students, this year the drop-in team have been involved in a number of projects and collaborations including developing the 'The Drop-in Dialogues' blog series which responds to trends presenting in Drop-in e.g. transitioning, self-care, motivation at exam time and dealing with disappointing results, mobile drop-ins at Elms in partnership with the International Student Guides and DSA specific drop in sessions.

Drop-in Feedback forms were introduced in April 2024 and students have provided very positive feedback on their drop-in interactions including:

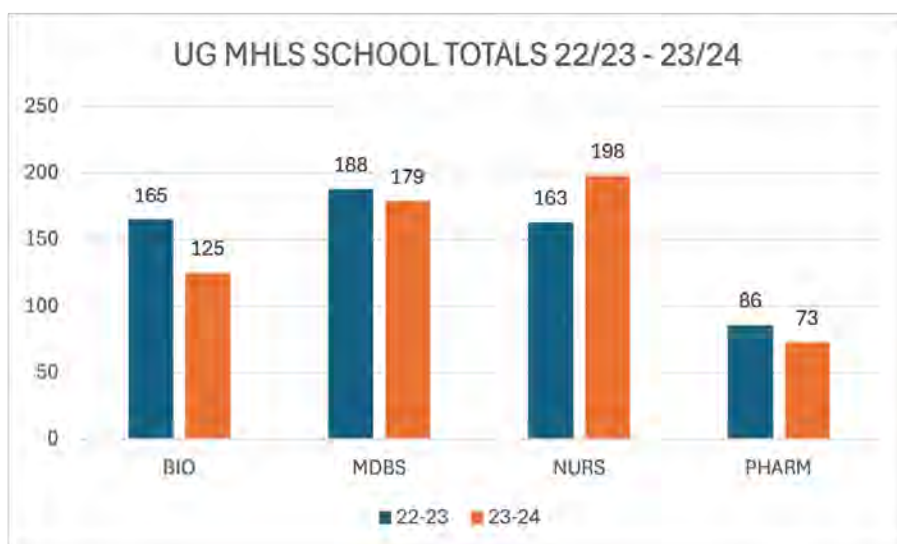
'Sarah spent time with me and aside from providing me with concrete next steps that helped me feel grounded and confident to move forward, she was more importantly, extremely attentive, compassionate and engaged with me authentically'

From this and similar feedback, we can see clearly that, when coming to drop-in, students most value, not only the takeaways of practical advice and guidance and signposting received but also, that the experience itself is one that makes them feel comfortable, encouraged, cared for and listened to and we will continue to strive to provide a consistently excellent student experience in Drop-in.

### Faculty YEARLY COMPARISON

22-23	23-24
602	575

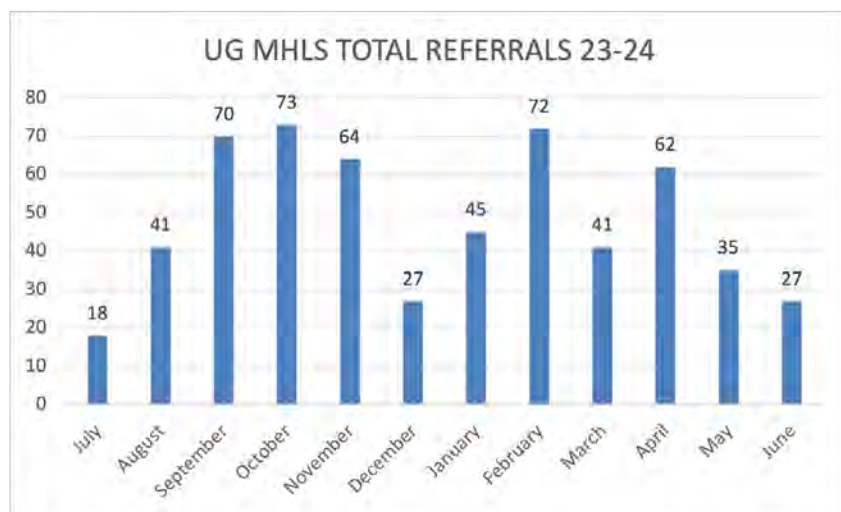
For the period between 01 July 2023 and 30 June 2024 (inclusive) the Faculty of MHLS received a total of 575 Undergraduate referrals to the Student Wellbeing Service which equates to 9.6% of the Faculty undergraduate population of 6013. This figure is a decrease of 4.5% on last year's figure of 602 total referrals for MHLS.



In subsequent sections of this report, we will explore the finer detail for all Schools however as an overview when we break down total referrals by School we can see from the chart on the previous page that:

- The School of Nursing and Midwifery had 198 referrals (34.4% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and an increase of 21.5% on last year's figure of 163. The figure of 198 is 8.7% of the School's undergraduate population of 2,283
- The School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences had 179 referrals (31.1% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 4.8% on last year's figure of 188. The figure of 179 is 8.6% of the School's undergraduate population of 2,085
- The School of Biological Sciences had 125 referrals (21.7% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 24.5% on last year's figure of 165. The figure of 125 is 12.7% of the School's undergraduate population of 988.
- The School of Pharmacy had 73 referrals (12.7% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 15.1% on last year's figure of 86. The figure of 73 is 11.1 % of the School's undergraduate population of 657.

## MHLS REFERRALS ACROSS ACADEMIC YEAR



This year we have applied considerable focus toward our students' journey whilst studying at Queen's University Belfast and have been tracking engagement with the service across the academic year. For the Faculty of MHLS we can see the basic trends of referral rates across the year with the months of September through to November showing the first initial spike as students commence their new academic year. Further to this there is a gradual increase in demand for services in the new calendar year with increases noted from January into February linked with exam periods and in April also.

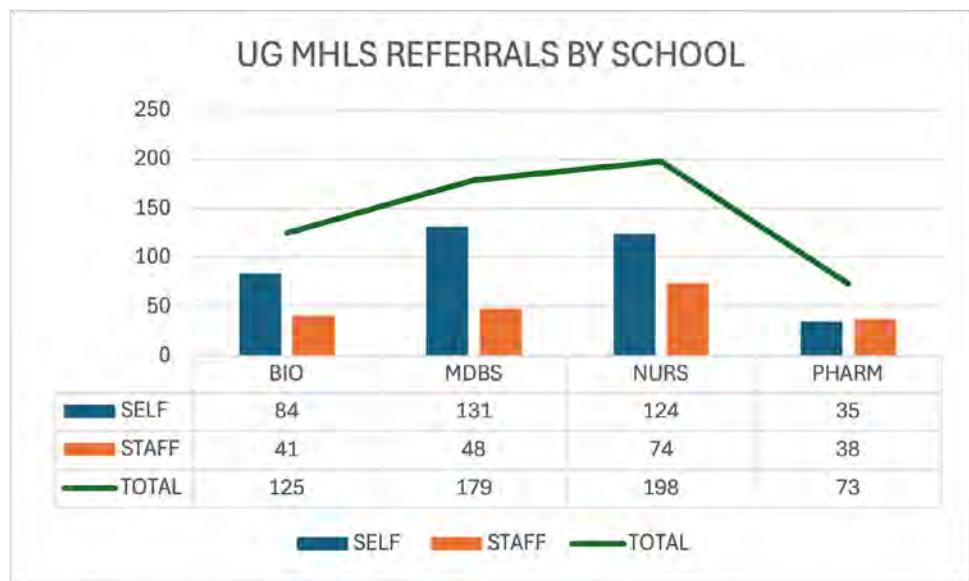
It is also important to note that August witnesses an increase in service demand linked to the University re-sit period.

## MHLS STAFF/SELF REFERRALS



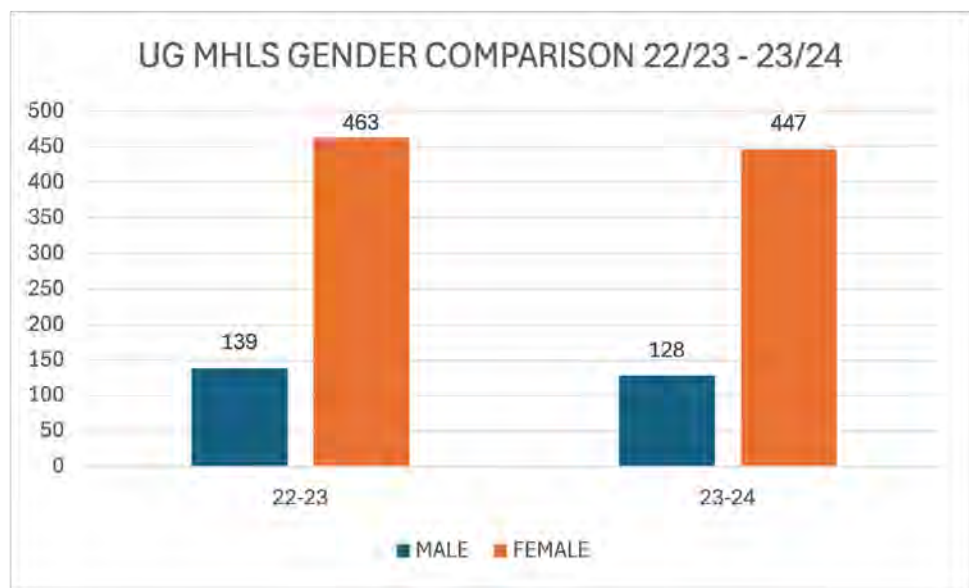
Of the total 575 referrals for MHLS this year, 201 were staff referrals and 374 were self-referrals. The Student Wellbeing Service has spent considerable time working with staff and students to increase awareness across the Faculty around the various referral mechanisms to our service and we welcome referrals from both staff and students.

The spread of these referrals across each of the Schools within MHLS can be seen below with the totals broken down for Staff and Self referrals. For all Schools except the School of Pharmacy, self-referrals outweigh staff referrals.



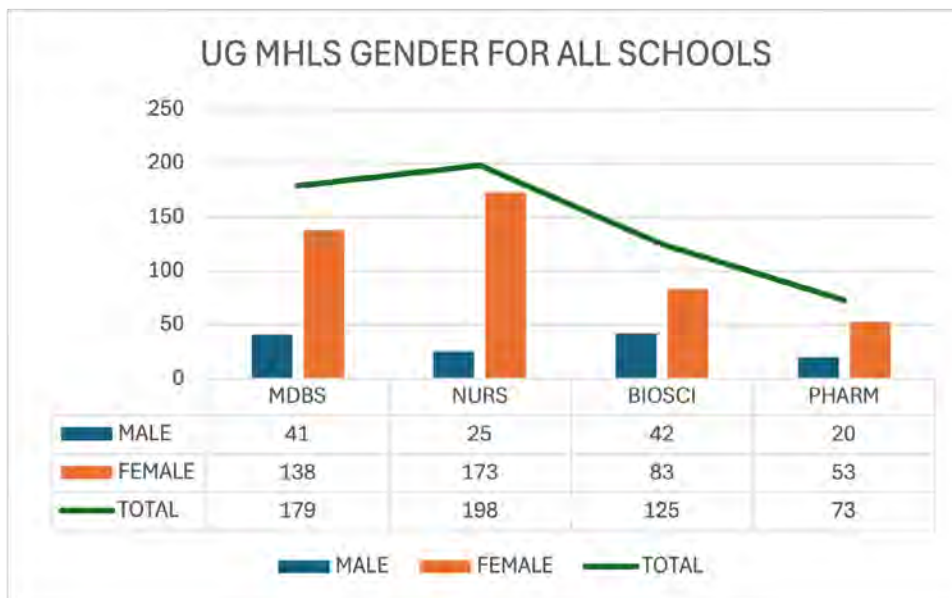
### MHLS GENDER BREAKDOWN

Last year we reported on referrals by gender for the Faculty of MHLS which highlighted that students who identified as female were significantly more engaged with Student Wellbeing Services in comparison to those who identified as male.



The image above illustrates that this year, students who identify as female continue to be much more strongly engaged with Student Wellbeing with figures showing 447 female students (77.7% of total referrals) compared to 128 male students (22.3% of total referrals). When considering the 6013 Undergraduate Students registered this year with MHLS, female students make up 79.1% making their referral figure of 77.7% representative across the Faculty.

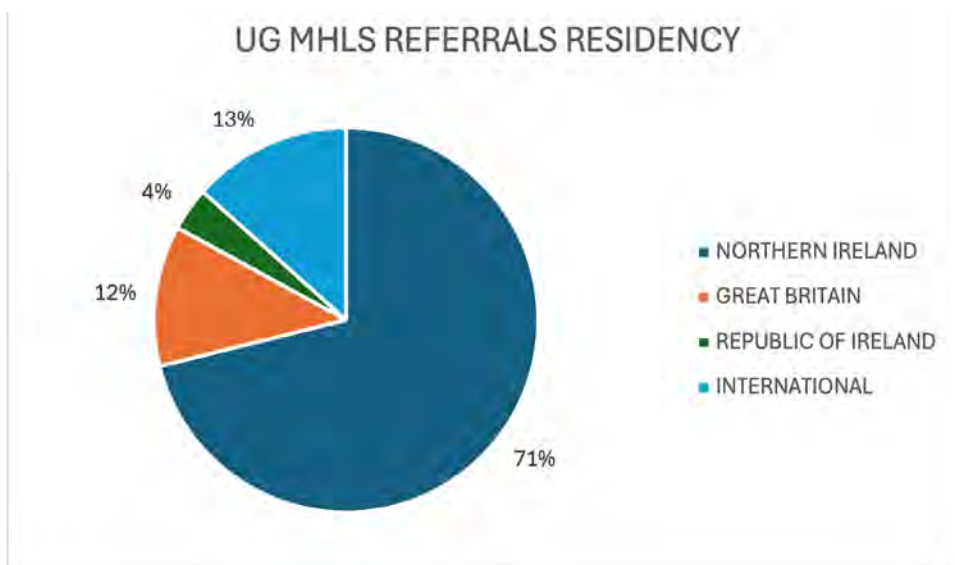




Gender spread across the Schools for this year can be seen from the graph above which indicates that students who identify as female across all Schools are much more highly engaged with Student Wellbeing.

## MHLS RESIDENCY

Last year we reported on residency data for MHLS referrals. This year we are able to draw comparisons on the percentages of total referrals for that period.



The breakdown of residency across UG MHLS referrals can be seen above and when comparing to last year's figures we can tell that:

- Northern Irish students make up 409 total referrals (71% of this year's total) compared to 360 last year (59.8% of last year's total)
- International students follow this with 77 total referrals (13% of this year's total) compared to 163 last year (27.1% of last year's total)
- GB students make up 68 total referrals (12% of this year's total) in comparison to 64 last year (10.6% of last year's total)
- ROI Students totaling 21 total referral (4% of this year's total) compared to 15 last years (2.5% of last year's total)

Of the total population of UG MHLS students registered for this year; 81.2% are Northern Irish, 7.1% are from Great Britain, 6.1% are International and 5.6% are from ROI highlighting that despite the reduction in International students being referred to the service they are still overrepresented when considering the Faculty population. This reduction in referrals may be attributed to further support for international students across campus, however the overrepresentation indicates that there are still areas of support required.

### **MHLS Presenting Issues**

The presenting issues and triggers among students are diverse and often overlap significantly between academic and non-academic concerns, underscoring the deep interconnection between students' personal and academic lives.

Over recent years, the most frequently reported issues have remained consistent: mental health concerns (including stress, anxiety, and depression), academic pressures, and personal issues. This report aims to deepen our understanding of these challenges within Schools and the broader Faculty, enabling Faculty-facing Wellbeing Staff to collaborate effectively with Schools to develop and deliver preventive wellbeing initiatives that address students' needs and support staff in their academic roles.

It is common for students to present with multiple issues when seeking help from Student Wellbeing Services. For instance, a student may report mental health challenges worsened by academic stressors such as deadlines, presentations, and group work. While the School level data that follows primarily focuses on the top three presenting issues, we also wish to highlight emerging trends related to financial stress and substance use.

### **Financial and Substance Use Trends**

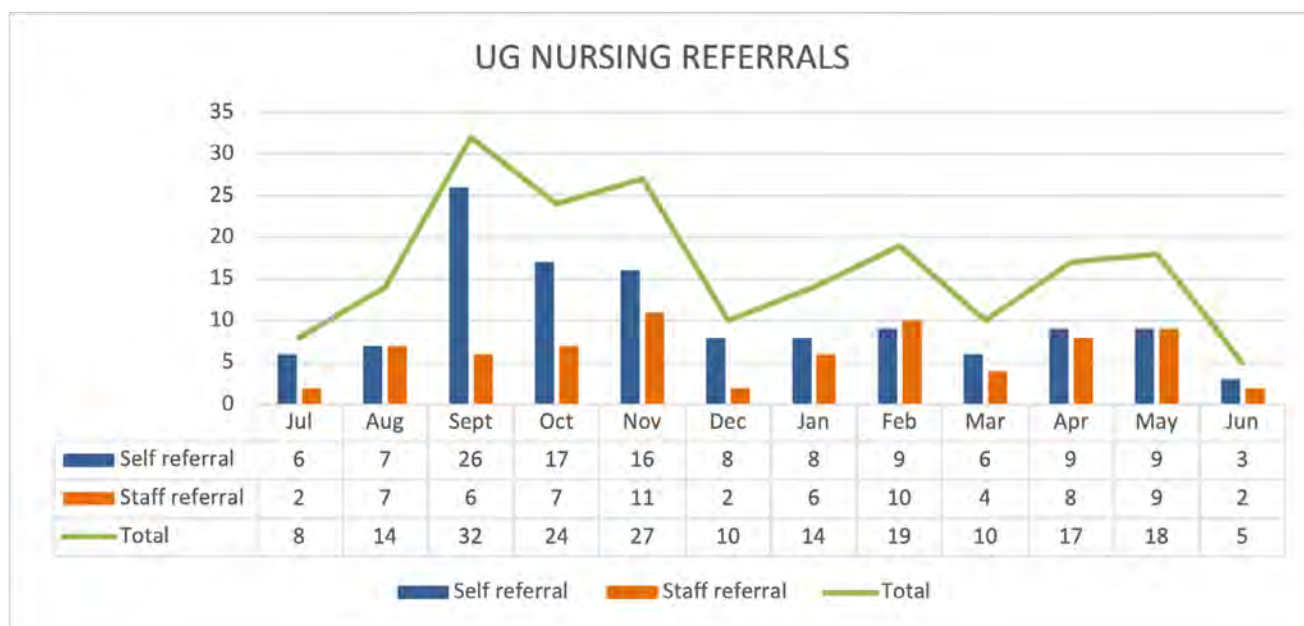
The ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to create financial uncertainty for students, impacting their ability to meet basic living and tuition needs. Consequently, we have observed an increase in students utilising various campus services, such as the Food Pantry within the Students' Union, the Student Support Fund, and access to external food banks and essential item vouchers.

Substance use has also been disclosed more frequently over the past academic year. We anticipate that these numbers will continue to rise as the University engages with the Drugs and Alcohol Impact Accreditation programme, which promotes a harm reduction approach. This initiative is likely to encourage further disclosures as students seek recovery support.

## SCHOOL OVERVIEW

### SCHOOL OF NURSING

Access Point (Self v Staff) by School

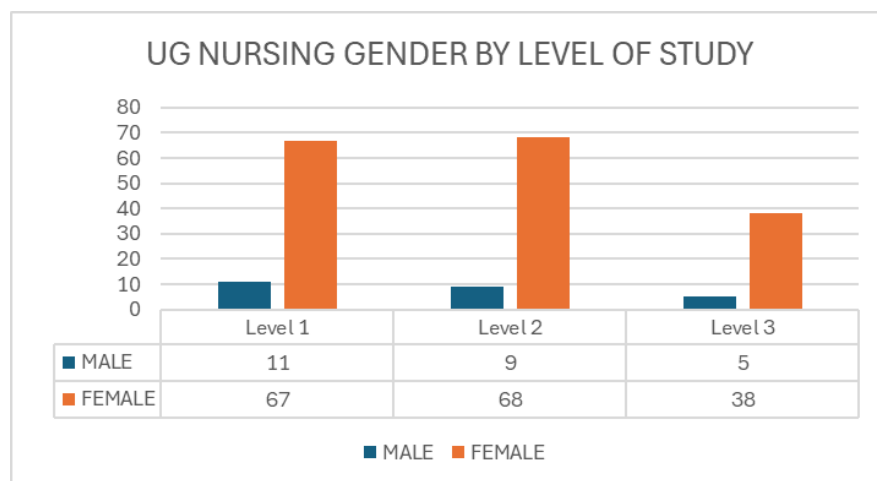


As highlighted previously, the School of Nursing and Midwifery had 198 referrals, which makes up 34.4% of the total MHLS referrals for this year and is an increase of 21.5% on last year's figure of 163. The chart above shows the breakdown of these figures across the year in order to allow us to collectively consider where some of the higher demand areas are across the year for our students within the School.

You will see from the graph above that for the most part there is a healthy balance between self and staff referrals however student referrals tend to spike in September, October, November and December with 67 self-referrals (33.8% of the School total referrals for the year) compared to 26 staff referrals for that period. It will be worth the School noting why this might be and engaging in conversation with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser in planning how to address this point in your student's journey.

Of the total 198 referrals the breakdown between self and staff referral is 124 to 74 respectively. This is a very healthy and balanced number and is testimony to the close working relationships that have been developed in recent years between the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser and staff members within the School. This also highlights the student confidence in engaging the service independently and in working with their academic support team to facilitate a referral on their behalf.

### Nursing Gender



Based upon feedback from School Boards, it was identified that a further breakdown on gender data would be appreciated by Schools in order to identify, where existing, any trends in relation to the same.



Last year it was highlighted that, of the 602 MHLS referrals, females were significantly more engaged with Student Wellbeing Services compared to students who identified as male across the Faculty.

Breaking this down for the School of Nursing and Midwifery for the academic year 2023-2024 we have identified a total of 173 referrals (87.4% of School total) identifying as female compared to 25 referrals (12.6% of School total) for students who identify as male.

School	Female	Male	Non-binary	Total
Nursing and Midwifery	2,171	111	1	2,283

When considering this against the population data for the School (above) it is evident that females make up 95.1% of the School's student population, with males making up 4.86% and one non-binary person making up 0.04%. Whilst it may appear that males are underrepresented in the Level 1 to Level 3 figures, at 12.6% of the School total, their engagement with the Student Wellbeing Service is higher than what would be expected in terms of proportional representation.

### Nursing Residency

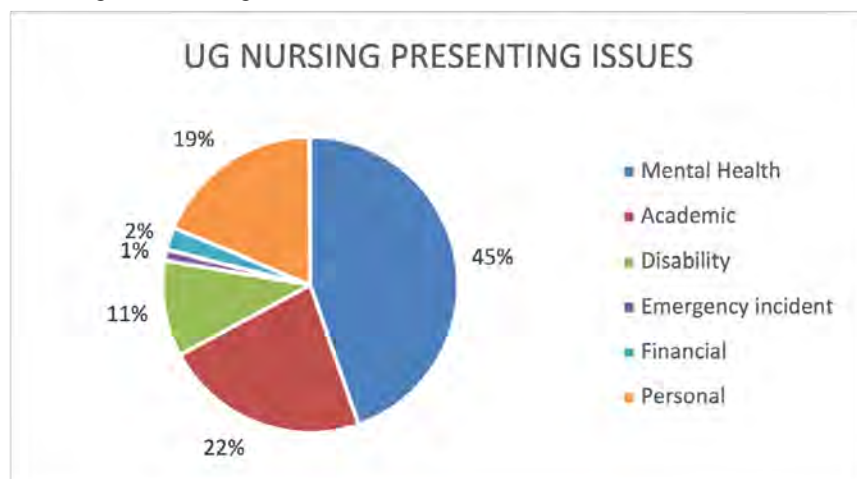


Of the 198 Undergraduate Students referred to the Student Wellbeing Service in the year 2023-24, 188 (95%) were Northern Irish, 9 (4.5%) were International and 1 (0.5%) student was from the Republic of Ireland. The breakdown in terms of level of study can be seen below with Levels 1 and 2 almost double that of level 3 service demand.

LEVEL OF STUDY	NORTHERN IRELAND	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	INTERNATIONAL	TOTAL
Level 1	74	1	3	78
Level 2	75	0	2	77
Level 3	39	0	4	43
TOTAL	188	1	9	198

Again, when comparing these figures with School population and residency data, they are proportionally representative of this year's whole School residency data wherein Northern Irish students total 2192 which is 96% of the 2283 total.

## Nursing Presenting issues



When referring to the Student Wellbeing Service both staff and students can identify why they are referring to the service by selecting several reasons from check boxes. Referring persons can select as many issues as they wish which explains higher numbers than the total number of referrals i.e. There were 198 referrals that have led to a total of 970 presenting reasons selected.

From the chart above and table below it is evident that the top 3 presenting issues are:

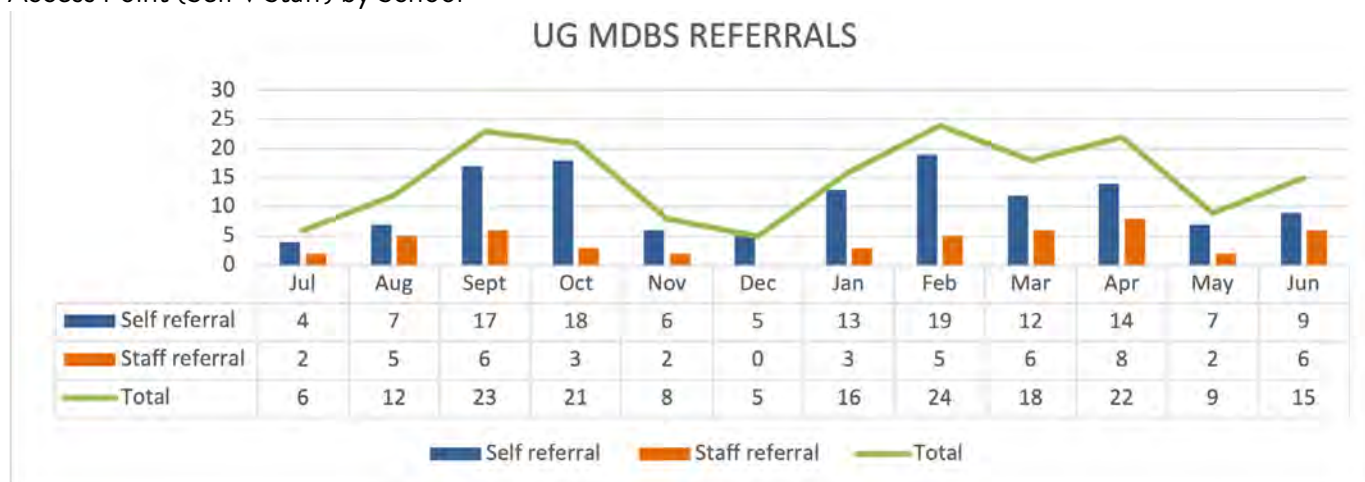
- Mental Health – most commonly stress, anxiety and depression
- Academic – exam stress and placement related issues within the School of Nursing and Midwifery
- Disability – most commonly reasonable adjustment related concerns and students awaiting diagnosis

This follows the same trend as last year with those being the top 3 for students from this School last year.

Presenting issue	UG
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>434</b>
<b>Academic</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Emergency incident</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Financial</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Personal</b>	<b>181</b>

## School OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Access Point (Self v Staff) by School



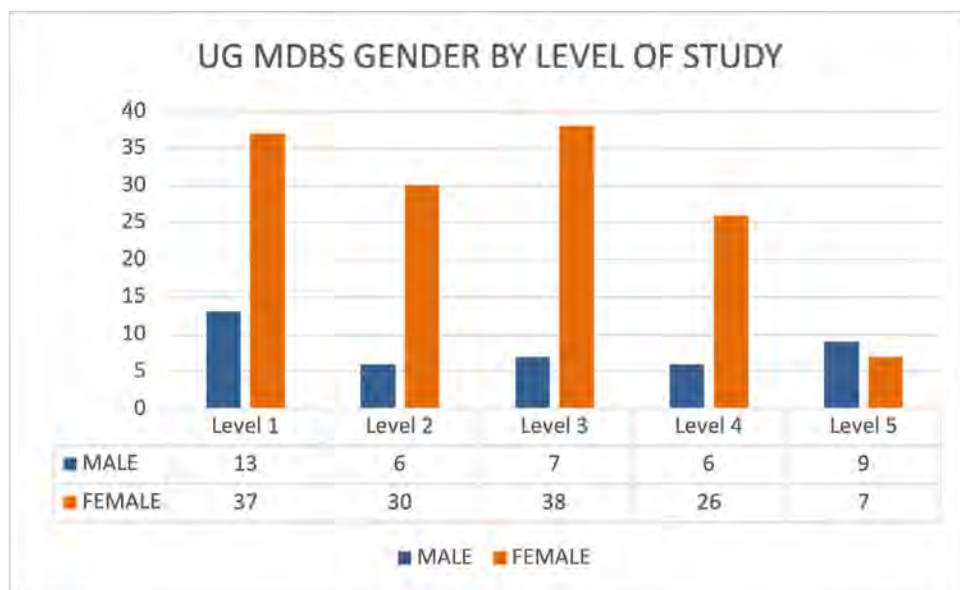
As highlighted previously, the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences had 179 referrals (31.1% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 4.8% on last year's figure of 188. The chart above shows the breakdown of these figures across the year to allow us to collectively consider where some of the higher demand areas are across the year for our students within the School.

Across the year the most notable spikes are in September-October with further increases noted from January through to April where these two periods making up 93 self-referrals (51.9% of the School total referrals for the year) compared to 31 staff referrals for that period. The School should consider exploring causality and engage in conversation with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser to plan targeted initiatives for the year ahead.



Of the total 179 referrals the breakdown between self and staff referral is 131 to 48 respectively. This is a reasonable balance however it is noted that for many of the self-referrals there were often opportunities at earlier stages for both staff and student to refer to the Student Wellbeing Service earlier prior to a situation escalating, often to a crisis point. This year has observed much closer working relationships between the Faculty Facing Wellbeing Adviser and key representatives in the School and the value of the role of the Student Support and Progress Officer within Medicine has been of notable benefit in engaging support early and enhancing efficiency of communication and action in resolving complex student issues.

#### Gender for Undergraduate MDBS by level of study



Based upon feedback from School Boards, it was identified that a further breakdown on gender data would be appreciated by Schools to identify, where existing, any trends in relation to the same.

Last year it was highlighted that, of the 602 MHLS referrals, females were significantly more engaged with Student Wellbeing Services compared to students who identified as male across the Faculty.

Breaking this down for the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences for the academic year 2023-2024 of the 179 total referrals we have identified 138 (77.1% of School total) identifying as female compared to 41 referrals (22.9% of School total) for students who identify as male.

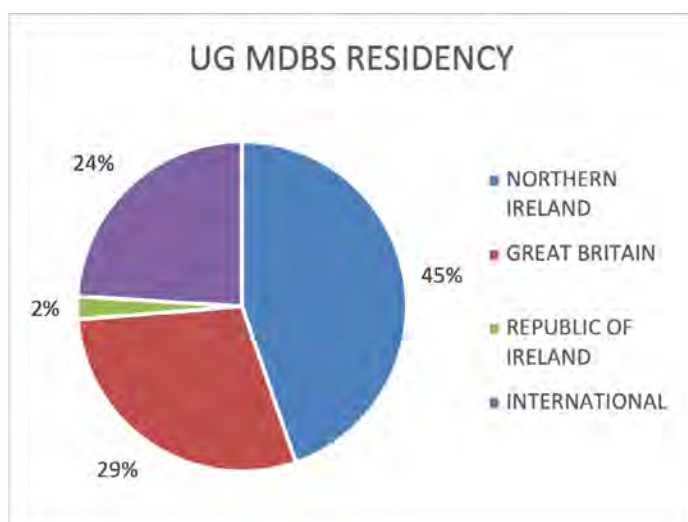


Faculty/School	Female	Male	Non-binary	Unknown	Total
Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences	1,490	595	0	0	2,085

When considering this against the population data of female to male split of 71.5% and 28.5% respectively, females are slightly overrepresented in our demand for service figures with an average difference of approximately 6% in terms of proportional representation.

Moving forward the School might want to consider promotion of initiatives aimed toward people who identify as male perhaps during men's health and men's mental health weeks.

### Residency by School and Level of Study



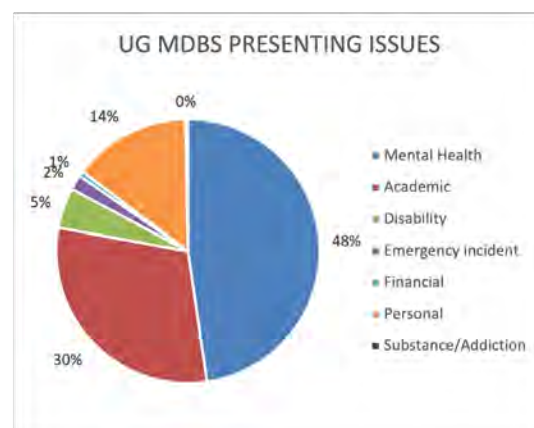
Of the 179 Undergraduate Students referred to the Student Wellbeing Service in the year 2023-24 80 (45%) were Northern Irish, 52 (29%) were from Great Britain, 43 (24%) were International and 4 (2%) were from the Republic of Ireland. The breakdown in terms of level of study can be seen below with the numbers reasonably well spread across levels 1-4 and drop in level 5. Levels 1 and 3 show as the highest, which could be reflective of the initial challenges in starting third level education for Level 1 and in Level 3 many students within Medicine for example are engaged in placement which can present its own challenges.

LEVEL OF STUDY	NORTHERN IRELAND	GREAT BRITAIN	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	INTERNATIONAL	TOTAL
Level 1	16	23	2	9	50
Level 2	17	7	2	10	36
Level 3	21	12	0	12	45
Level 4	15	8	0	9	32
Level 5	11	2	0	3	16
TOTAL	80	52	4	43	179

### Presenting issues

When referring to the Student Wellbeing Service both staff and students can identify why they are referring to the service by selecting several reasons from check boxes.

Referring persons can select as many issues as they wish which explains higher numbers than the total number of referrals i.e. there were 179 referrals that have led to a total of 325 presenting reasons selected.



From the chart on the previous page and table below it is evident that the top 3 presenting issues are:

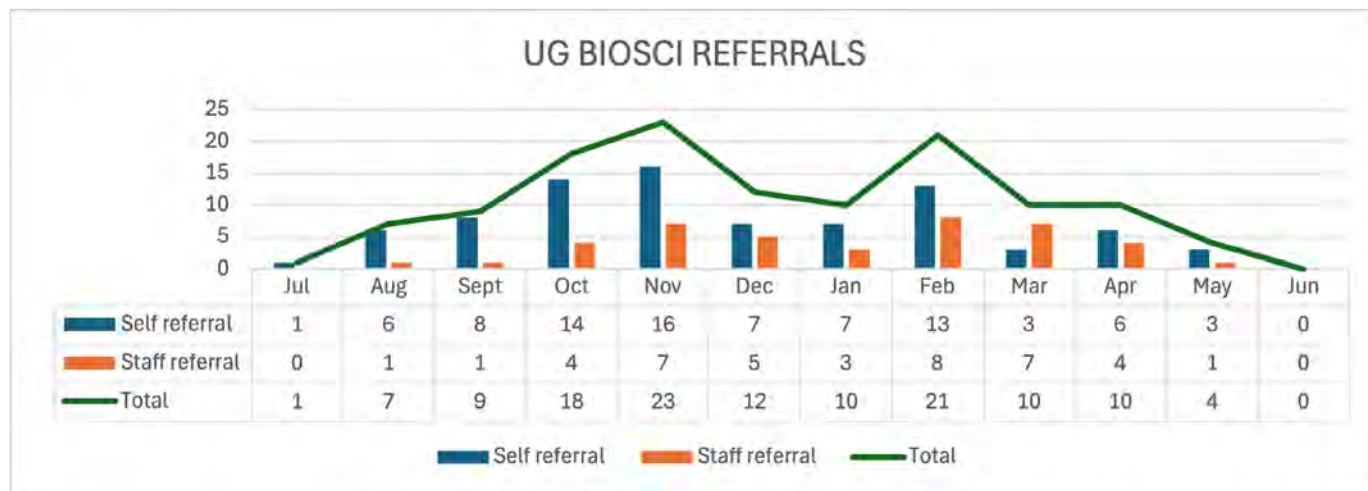
- Mental Health – most commonly stress, anxiety and depression
- Academic – assessment stress most commonly associated with exams and for those students to whom it applies OCSEs.
- Disability – most commonly reasonable adjustment related concerns and students awaiting diagnosis and for students to receive reasonable adjustments whilst on placement.

This follows the same trend as last year with those being the top 3 for students from this School last year. For students within MDBS, placement concerns are a common thread among referrals with this combined with exam/study stress having a large impact on mental health.

Presenting issue	UG
Mental Health	155
Academic	98
Disability	16
Emergency incident	6
Financial	2
Personal	47
Substance/Addiction	1

## SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

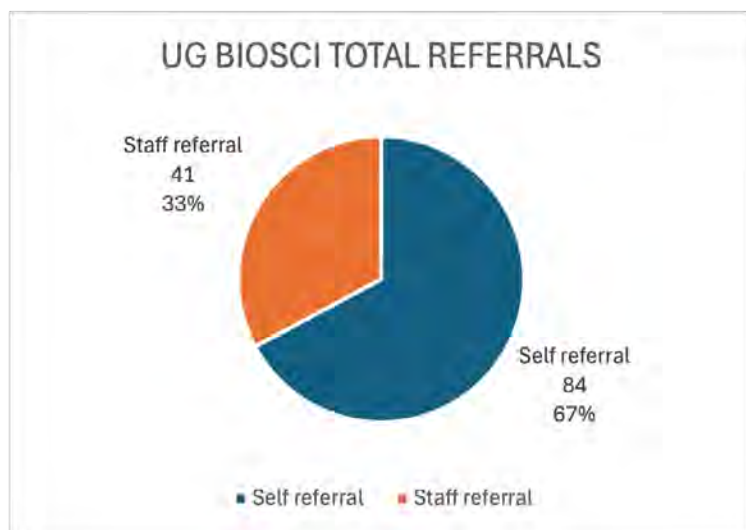
Access Point (Self v Staff) by School



As highlighted previously, the School of Biological Sciences had 125 referrals (21.7% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 24.2% on last year's figure of 165. The chart above shows the breakdown of these figures across the year to allow us to collectively consider where some of the higher demand areas are across the year for our students within the School.

Across the year the most notable spikes are in October and November with further increases noted in February and March where these two periods make up 72 referrals (57.8% of the School total referrals for the year). In the months of October and November there is quite a contrast between staff and self-referrals during this period.

It will be worth the School noting why this might be and to engage in conversation with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser in planning how to address why there are particular challenges for students during this time and what can be done to get ahead of this.

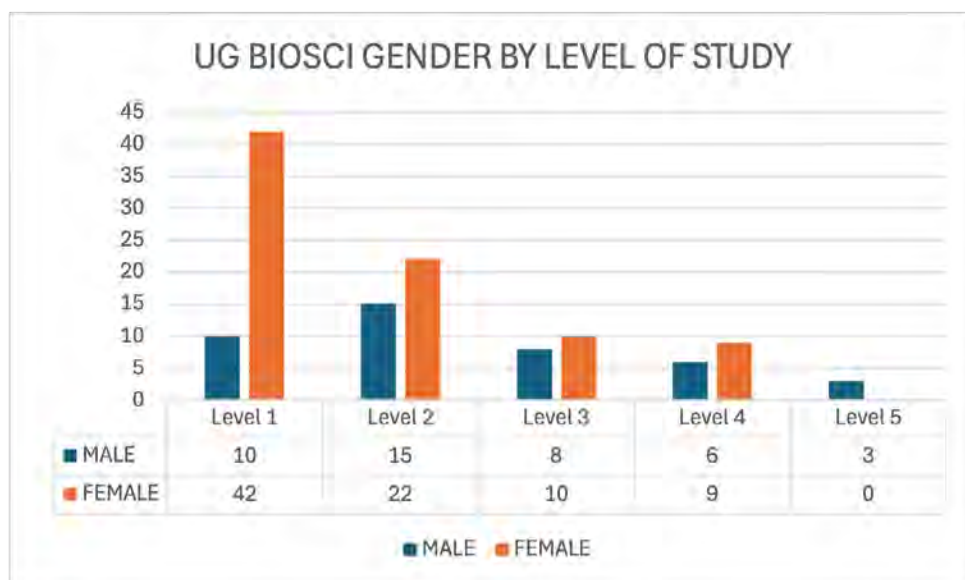


Of the total 125 referrals the breakdown between self and staff referral is 84 to 41 respectively. This is a very healthy and balanced number and is testimony to the close working relationships that have been developed in recent years between the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser and staff members within the School. There are regular check-ins with key contacts within this School that facilitate earlier referrals for students who have shown early warning signs and concerns. These figures also highlight the student confidence in engaging the service independently and in working with their academic support team to facilitate a referral on their behalf.

#### Gender for Undergraduate School of Biological Sciences by level of study

In previous years we have reported on overall MHLS gender breakdown however this year and based upon feedback from School Boards, it was identified that a further breakdown on gender data would be appreciated by Schools to identify, where existing, any trends in relation to the same.

Last year it was highlighted that, of the 602 MHLS referrals, females were significantly more engaged with Student Wellbeing Services compared to students who identified as male across the Faculty.



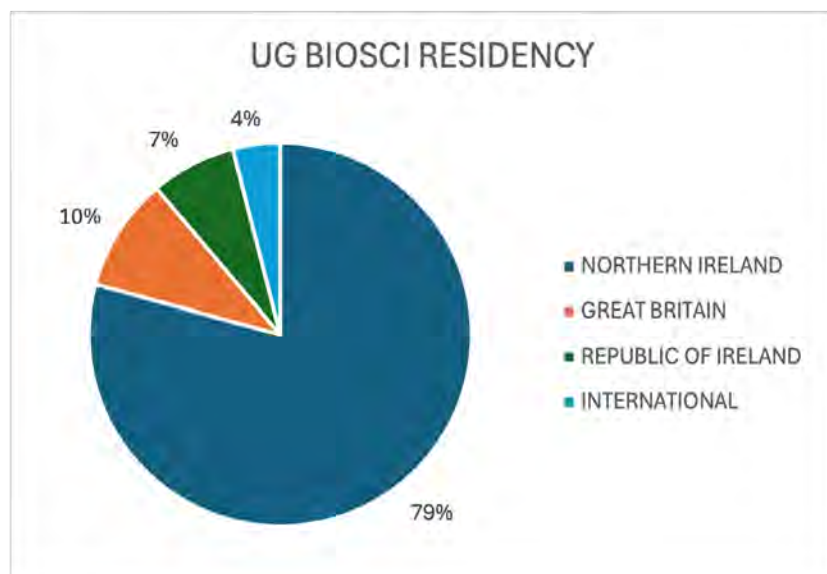
Breaking figures down for the School of Biological Sciences across the academic year 2023-2024, of the 125 total referrals we have identified 42 (33.6% of School total) identifying as female compared to 83 referrals (66.4% of School total) for students who identify as male.

School	Female	Male	Non-binary	Total
Biological Sciences	610	376	2	988

When considering this against the population data of female to male split of 61.7% and 38.1% respectively (0.2% of the School undergraduate population identify as non-binary), females are slightly overrepresented in our demand for service figures however not so much to raise concern in terms of representation.



## Residency by School and Level of Study

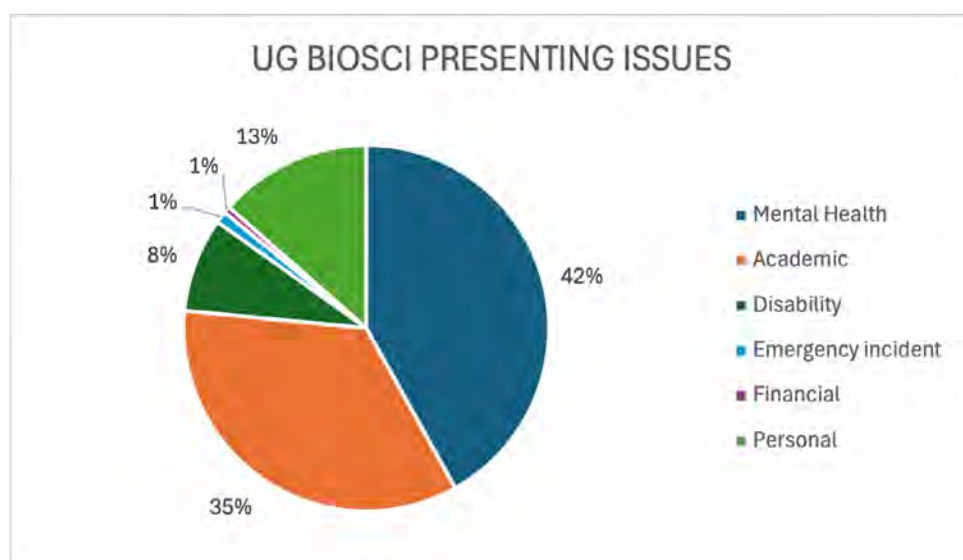


Of the 125 Undergraduate Students referred to the Student Wellbeing Service this year 99 (79.2%) were Northern Irish, 12 (9.6%) were from Great Britain, 5 (4%) were International and 9 (7.2%) were from the Republic of Ireland. The breakdown in terms of level of study can be seen below with the numbers reflecting higher engagement in levels 1 and 2 which would be natural as students adjust to their new academic pathways with numbers decreasing as students progress into their courses.

LEVEL OF STUDY	NORTHERN IRELAND	GREAT BRITAIN	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	INTERNATIONAL	TOTAL
Level 1	41	4	7	0	52
Level 2	30	5	0	2	37
Level 3	14	2	2	0	18
Level 4	11	1	0	3	15
Level 5	3	0	0	0	3
TOTAL	99	12	9	5	125

When considering these figures against School population residency data of the 988 UG students registered 84% are Northern Irish, 7% are from Republic of Ireland with 6% being from Great Britain and 3% International it highlights that NI and GB students are slightly more represented than ROI and International students. This is worth considering for future initiatives.

## Presenting issues



When referring to the Student Wellbeing Service both staff and students can identify why they are referring to the service by selecting several reasons from check boxes. Referring persons can select as many issues as they wish which explains higher numbers than the total number of referrals i.e. There were 125 referrals that have led to a total of 673 presenting reasons selected.

From the chart above and table below it is evident that the top 3 presenting issues are:

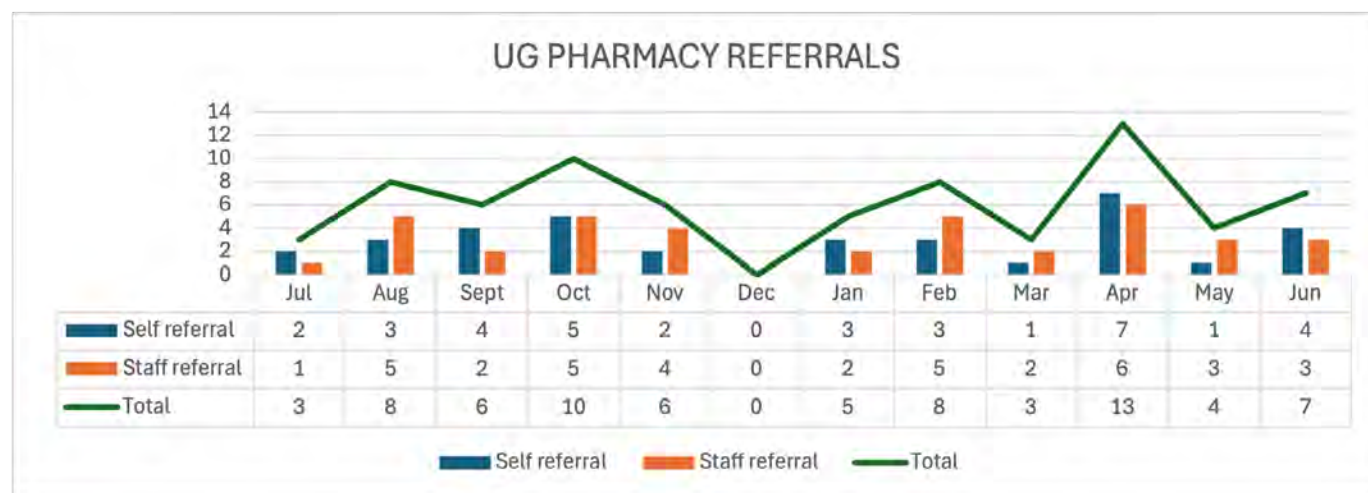
- Mental Health – most commonly stress, anxiety and depression
- Academic – assessment stress most commonly associated with exams and for many students in Biological Science coursework/dissertation concerns.
- Disability – most commonly reasonable adjustment related concerns and students awaiting diagnosis and for students to receive reasonable adjustments whilst on placement.

This follows the same trend as last year with those being the top 3 for students from this School. For students within the School of Biological Sciences however it is important to consider that students from this cohort often present a higher complexity of presenting issues. (Referral figure of 125)

Presenting issue	UG
Mental Health	282
Academic	233
Disability	56
Emergency incident	7
Financial	4
Personal	91

## SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

Access Point (Self v Staff) by School



As highlighted previously, the School of Pharmacy had 73 referrals (12.7% of total Faculty referrals for this year) and a decrease of 15.1% on last year's figure of 86. The chart above shows the breakdown of these figures across the year to allow us to collectively consider where some of the higher demand areas are across the year for our students within the School.

Across the year the figures remain reasonably consistent with the only real increases being noted in October and April. There also exists a very healthy balance between staff and self-referrals within the School of Pharmacy and is testimony to the emphasis placed upon overall student wellbeing within the School coupled with efficient responses from the academic and student support teams in the School.



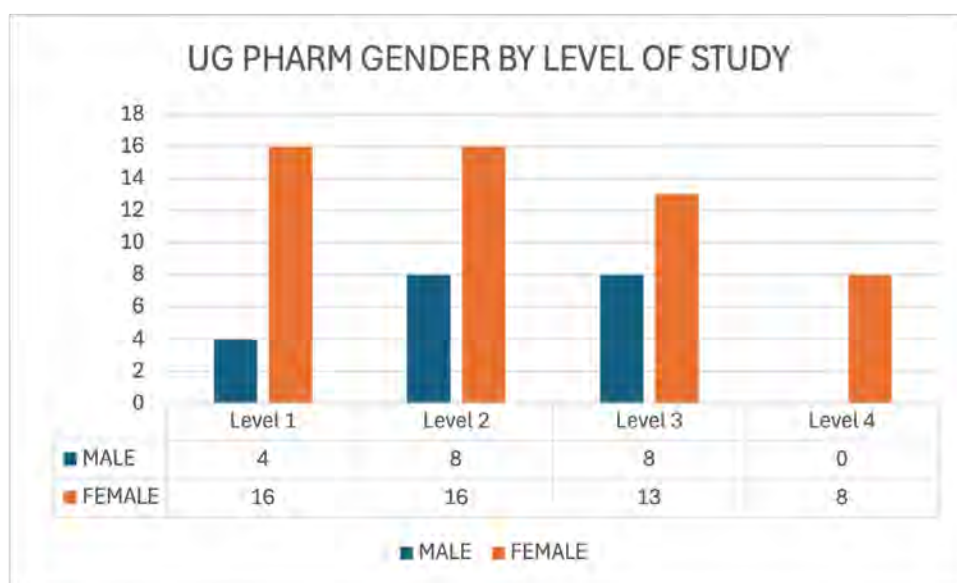
As mentioned above the staff/self-referral for the School of Pharmacy is extremely well balanced at 38/35 respectively. This is the most balanced of all Schools in MHLS and is testimony to the close working relationships that have been developed in recent years between the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser and staff members within the School.

The academic and support teams at Pharmacy are very efficient at recognising student concerns and are very swift at taking appropriate action where necessary.

### Gender for Undergraduate PHARM by level of study

In previous years we have reported on overall MHLS gender breakdown however this year and based upon feedback from School Boards, it was identified that a further breakdown on gender data would be appreciated by Schools to identify, where existing, any trends in relation to the same.

Last year it was highlighted that, of the 602 MHLS referrals, females were significantly more engaged with Student Wellbeing Services compared to students who identified as male across the Faculty.



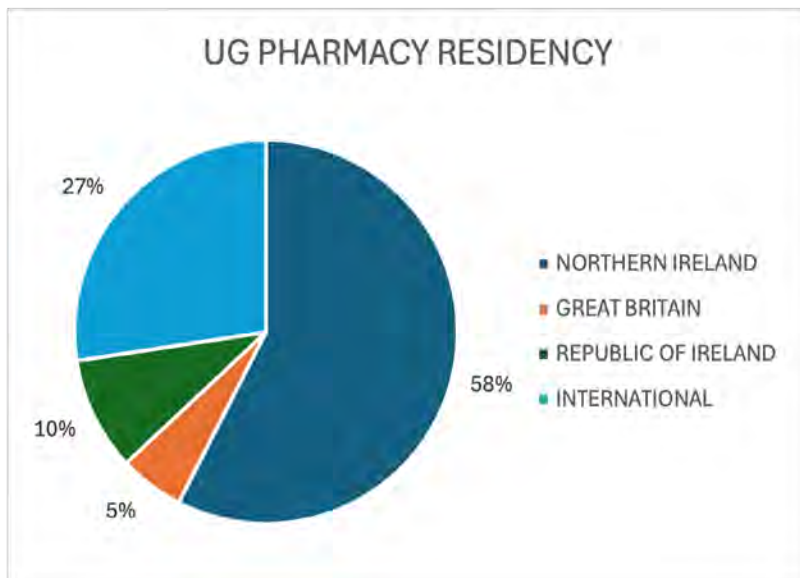
Breaking figures down for the School of Pharmacy across the academic year 2023-2024, of the 73 total referrals we have identified 53 (72.6% of School total) identifying as female compared to 20 referrals (27.4% of School total) for students who identify as male.

School	Female	Male	Total
Pharmacy	487	170	657

When considering this against the population data of female to male split of 74.1% and 25.9% respectively, the referral figures are very close to proportionally representative for the UG student population. This is a positive trend to see in terms of targeted support being effective.



## Residency by School and Level of Study

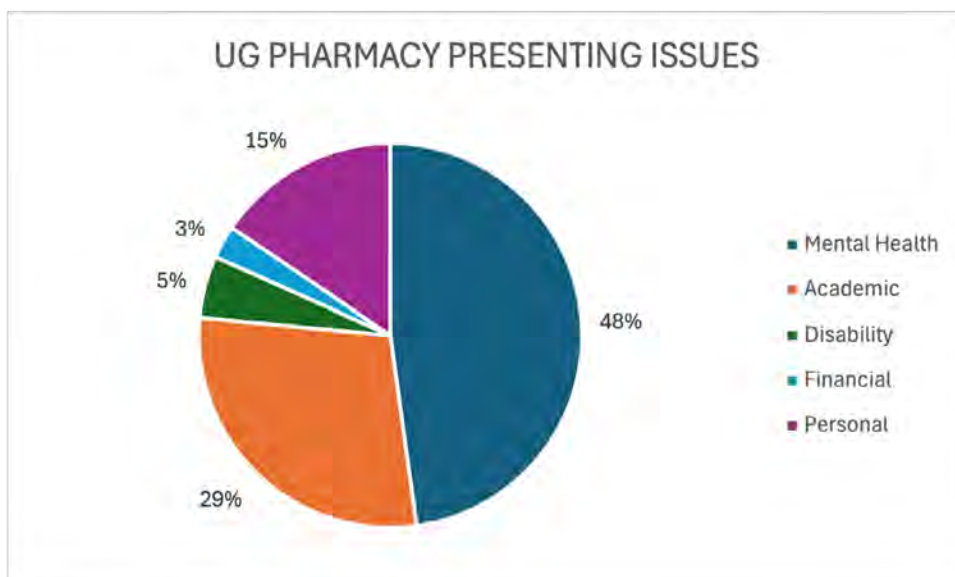


Of the 73 Undergraduate Students referred to the Student Wellbeing Service this year 42 (57.5%) were Northern Irish, 4 (5.5%) were from Great Britain, 20 (27.4%) were International and 7 (9.6%) were from the Republic of Ireland. The breakdown in terms of level of study can be seen below with the numbers reflecting higher engagement in levels 1 to 3 with no major peaks in any year group. It would be assumed that as students enter level 4, they have entered a period of stronger competence academically and professionally.

LEVEL OF STUDY	NORTHERN IRELAND	GREAT BRITAIN	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	INTERNATIONAL	TOTAL
Level 1	9	3	3	5	20
Level 2	16	1	2	5	24
Level 3	12	0	2	7	21
Level 4	5	0	0	3	8
TOTAL	42	4	7	20	73

When considering these figures against School population residency data of the 657 UG students registered 72% are Northern Irish, 16% are from Republic of Ireland with 3% being from Great Britain and 9% International it highlights that NI students are underrepresented in the figures and International students overrepresented. This is something the School could work with the MHLS Wellbeing Adviser on to address when considering targeted support and events moving forward.

## Presenting issues



When referring to the Student Wellbeing Service both staff and students can identify why they are referring to the service by selecting several reasons from check boxes. Referring persons can select as many issues as they wish which explains higher numbers than the total number of referrals i.e. There were 73 referrals that have led to a total of 251 presenting reasons selected.

From the chart above and table below it is evident that the top 3 presenting issues are:

- Mental Health – most commonly stress, anxiety and depression
- Academic – most commonly assessment stress for students in Pharmacy
- Disability – most commonly reasonable adjustment related concerns and students awaiting diagnosis and for students to receive reasonable adjustments whilst on placement.

This follows the same trend as last year with those being the top 3 for students from this School last year. For students within Pharmacy, it is important to note that despite being the lowest in referral numbers, the complexity for many of these referrals is quite high.

Presenting issue	UG
Mental Health	120
Academic	72
Disability	13
Financial	7
Personal	39

### Case Study 1: Faculty CASE STUDY

A second-year nursing student self-referred to the Student Wellbeing Service during their community-based placement. Upon initial contact, the student disclosed a long-standing struggle with an anxiety disorder, which was significantly contributing to social stress, particularly during team meetings and ward rounds.

The student was initially triaged by the drop-in team at One Elmwood and subsequently underwent a comprehensive assessment with Faculty Wellbeing Adviser, Rob Doyle, through a one-on-one consultation. During this assessment, the student expressed concerns that their social anxieties might adversely affect their placement evaluations and assessments, potentially leading to detrimental academic and professional outcomes. Although the student had previously been diagnosed with anxiety and was receiving medical treatment from their GP, they had not yet engaged with the Student Wellbeing or Accessible Learning Support services. It was only after a discussion with a member of their academic support team, through the School Wellbeing Ambassadors Group, that the student recognized the potential benefits of seeking comprehensive support.

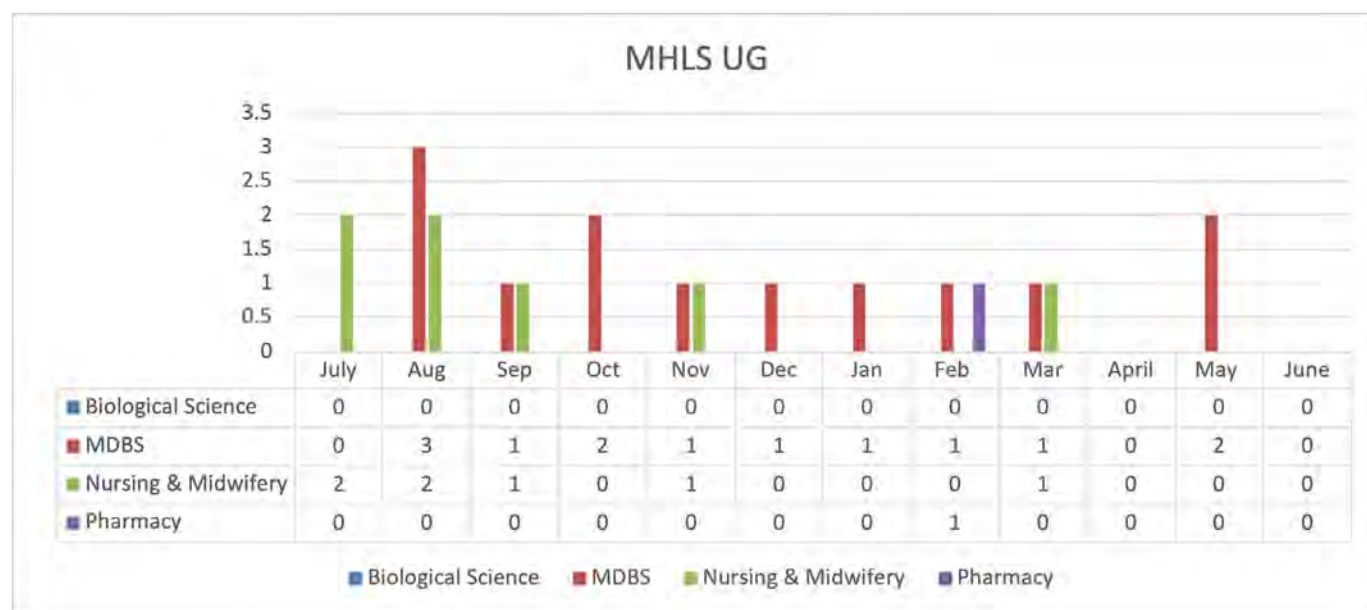
Following the one-on-one session with Rob Doyle, the student was referred to a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner for a series of low-intensity Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) sessions. These sessions aimed to equip the student with dynamic strategies to manage and mitigate the impact of their anxiety. In parallel, the student engaged with the Accessible Learning Support service, where they met with a Disability Officer. This meeting resulted in the creation of an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA). Additionally, a Level 1 support meeting was convened with the School, leading to the implementation of tailored academic supports, such as meetings with the year head and peer support, alongside the reasonable adjustment plan for the student's placement. It was also recommended that the student consult their GP for a medication review.

The collaborative efforts of the student, the School, and the Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Support services established a robust, holistic support system. This approach not only addressed the student's immediate needs but also balanced their personal accountability as an adult learner, thereby enabling them to thrive in an academically rigorous program.

## Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Risk Report, July 2023 to June 2024

Student Wellbeing Services Risk Management protocol requires staff to risk assess students at each intervention. When a student presents with medium to high or high risk, staff should consult with a Wellbeing Manager and agree to the most appropriate course of action. Students deemed at risk will be added to the Students at Risk List reviewed by management and staff weekly. Student Wellbeing Services work closely with internal and external services until risk is managed, when the student will be removed from the risk list and post-escalation support can be provided,

For this report's purpose, students will only be counted once, on the month they are added to the risk list, although they may remain on it for several weeks or months. The graph below displays the students added to the Students at Risk list who are Undergraduates in MHLS. The key provided below the graph shows the breakdown by School per month (July 2023 to June 2024).



A total of 21 students from MHLS presented at risk from July 2023 to June 2024 (compared to 27 In 2022-2023). Although risk figures have come down across the year overall, July and August saw an unprecedented increase in risk cases and risk case numbers in August, in particular, were higher in any other month of the academic year and this was a cause for concern and in many instances increased risk related to academic outcomes which were going to have a significant impact on a student's current studies or future aspirations e.g. for example non-progression into next level of study, withdrawals from courses, appeals which were not upheld.

The breakdown for MHLS Schools above shows that:

- Biological Sciences had 0 students on the risk register this year compared to 9 from last year
- Pharmacy had 1 student on the risk register this year compared to 0 from last year
- MDBS had 13 students on the risk register this year compared to 7 from last year
- Nursing and Midwifery had 7 students on the risk register this year compared to 11 from last year

It is hoped that this information will assist Schools to identify the key periods when students appear to be most vulnerable and are most likely to require additional support during the year. More granular information can be made available to Schools about the reason for risk and level of study of the students in each month to help better interpret what mitigations, if any, can be implemented by the School.

### Case Study 2 – Student At Risk

A third-year student from the Faculty of Medicine, Health, and Life Sciences (MHLS) recently demonstrated a noticeable decline in academic performance and attendance. Their personal tutor, concerned about their wellbeing due to missed classes and a significant drop in engagement, referred them to the Student Wellbeing Service.



Upon attending a drop-in session at the Student Wellbeing Service, the student reported feeling increasingly hopeless and overwhelmed. They expressed that life no longer seemed worth living and revealed a concrete plan to end their life. Recognising the severity of the situation through the risk assessment protocols, the drop-in service staff promptly escalated the case for further evaluation.

A Wellbeing Adviser conducted a comprehensive further risk assessment, confirming that the student was experiencing acute suicidal ideation with a specific plan. Given the high risk of harm, the Wellbeing Adviser, in consultation with the Wellbeing Assessment Manager, identified immediate actions to ensure the student's safety.

With the students' permission they contacted their emergency contact to inform them of the situation and request their support, and also notified the student's GP about the urgent risk and the need for immediate intervention.

Following this, the student received a call back from their GP and was scheduled for an emergency appointment later that same day. During this appointment, the student was referred to the Student Mental Health Team for further assessment and ongoing therapeutic intervention. The team was briefed on the student's situation by the GP to ensure a coordinated approach to their care. A call was organised through INSPIRE to check in on the student later that evening, providing additional support and reassurance.

The Wellbeing Adviser followed up with a call the next day to check on the student's progress with the GP. Given the student's mental health condition and diagnosis of a neurodiverse condition, the Wellbeing Adviser assisted them in completing registration with Accessible Learning Support (formerly Disability Services) to connect them with further support aimed at reducing anxiety around academic progress.

A Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life meeting was arranged with the student's School to discuss and implement holistic supports while they were undergoing treatment. A supportive and accountable structure of progression was developed to ensure the student could continue their studies with appropriate assistance and accommodations.

The student began therapeutic intervention with the Student Mental Health Team. The additional support through Accessible Learning Support and the holistic academic support ensured that the student could continue their studies with well-rounded assistance.

This case highlights the importance of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to student wellbeing. Through prompt intervention, emergency support, and ongoing collaboration, the Student Wellbeing Service provided critical support and created a structured plan to help the student manage their mental health while continuing their academic journey.

## **Referrals to External Support**

Student Wellbeing works closely with a range of external agencies, for specialised and tailored support to students. This includes the following organisations with which the University has a formal Service Level Agreement to provide services for our students:

- Student Counselling and Psychological Therapies through Inspire Wellbeing
- Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners
- Belfast Trust Student Mental Health Project
- Talk Campus

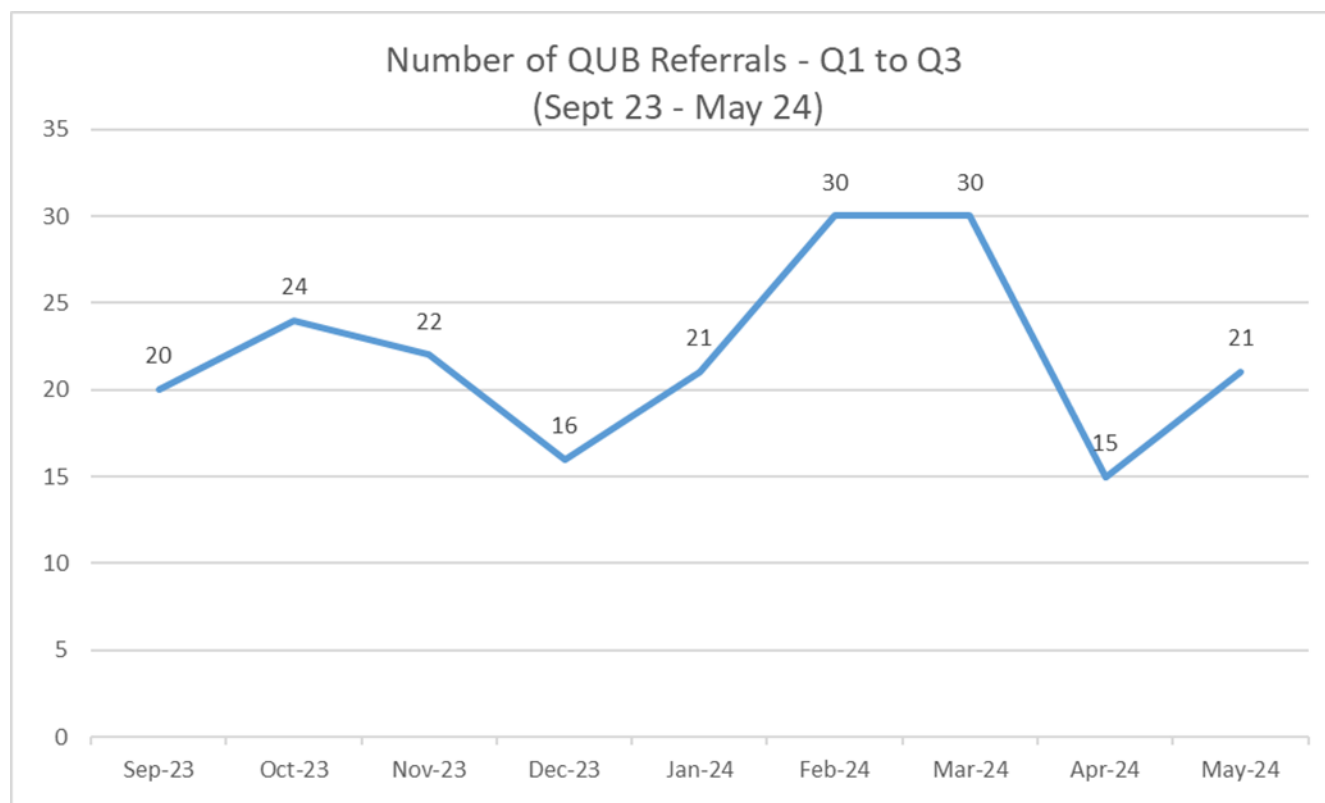
While there is no formal agreement in place, the Student Wellbeing Service does routinely refer students to the following for very specialist support:

- DAISY - Drug and Alcohol Intervention Service
- CEDAR - transition support
- NEXUS - supporting individuals impacted by sexual abuse and abusive relationships.

## Student Mental Health Service Referrals – Support for Students with Complex Mental Health Needs

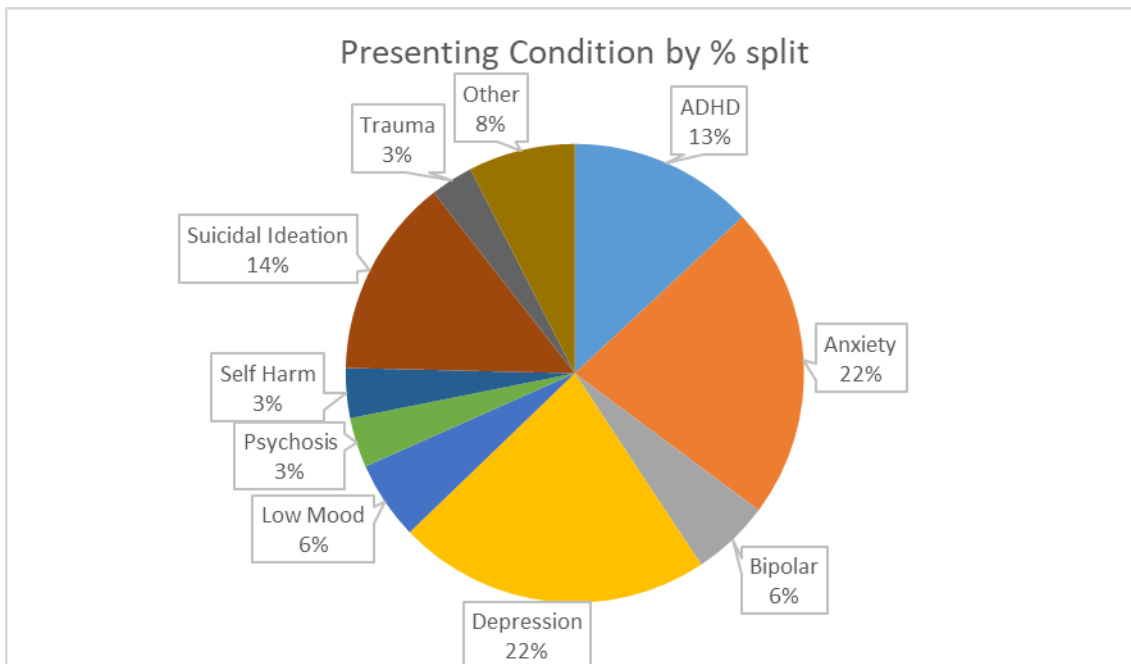
The Student Mental Health Service is a tier 3 service funded by the Belfast Trust, QUB and UU. Students must have a BHSCT term-time address, and who are experiencing significant, or emerging mental health issues can be referred to the service by their GP or Student Wellbeing. The service offers multidisciplinary clinical support to students in liaison with Student Wellbeing and/or the student's GP.

The data that follows relates to the Student Mental Health Services Q1 to Q3 reporting period from September 23 – May 24.



Total QUB Referrals in the Reporting Period: 199

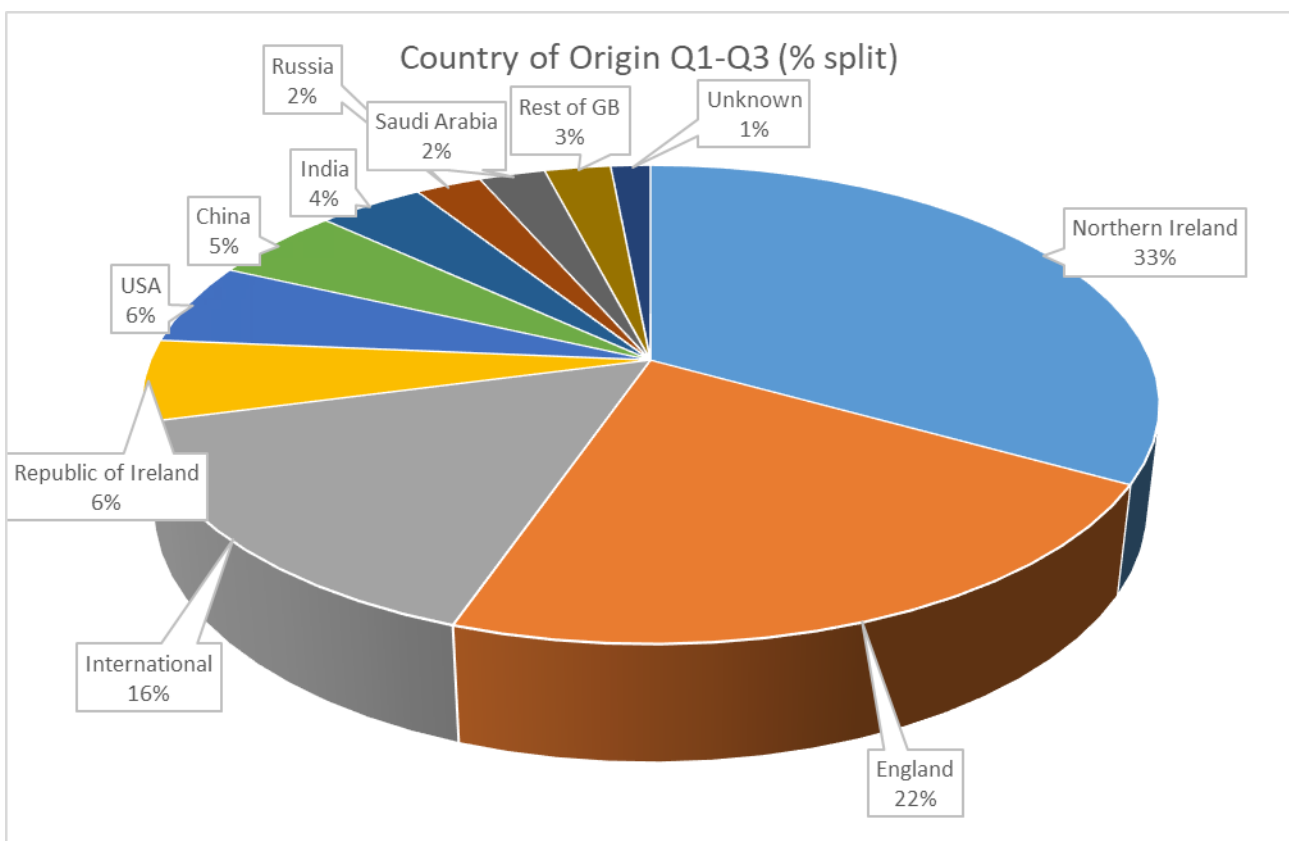
Students accessing the service benefit from prompt access to the Service in comparison to those referred to the Community Mental Health Hub. In the reporting period, the Service made contact with 98% of students within 1 day of receiving and processing their referral and the average wait time between referral date and first appointment was 13.6 working days.



Anxiety, Depression and Suicidal Ideation remain, as with last year, the top three presenting Mental Health conditions at point of triage by SMHS.

A proportion of students (13%) present with ADHD

‘Other’ is a grouping of those conditions with a value below 5.



A third of the QUB students seen by SMHS are local and 25% are from GB ROI students account for 6% of the students seen by SMHS while the vast majority of the remaining 36% are international students.

In Q1-Q3 (Sep 2023 – May 2024), 94.5% of students who completed the SMHS evaluation would recommend the service to friends and family if they needed care and treatment.

## STUDENTS AT INSPIRE COUNSELLING

All QUB students have access to short term, solutions-focused counselling support through Inspire, our counsellor partner. For this report, two of our counsellors have provided some insight into the challenges that students disclose to them when attending counselling sessions as follows:

### Counsellor Feedback:

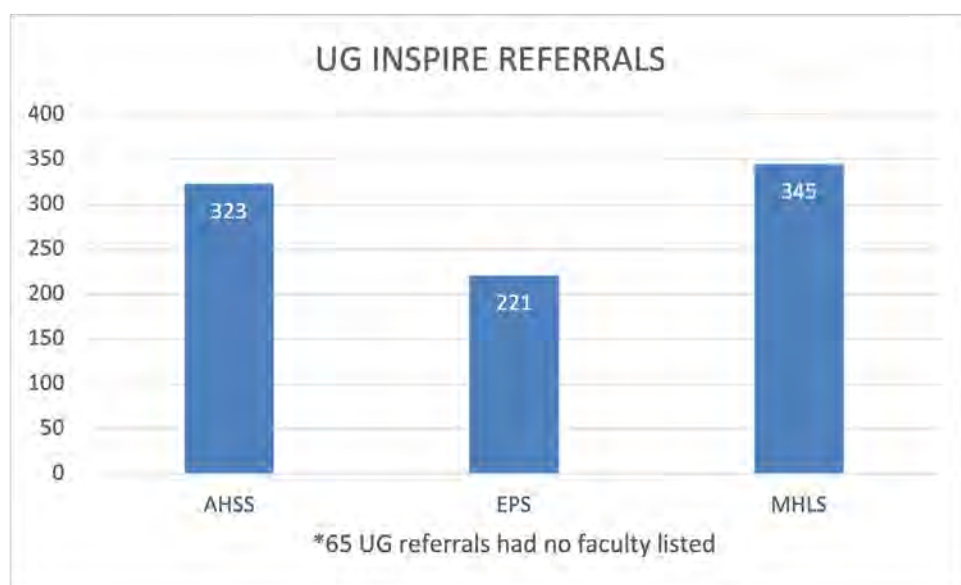
Students often present the same issues when attending counselling sessions. These can vary from academic stressors, personal/university relationships, life and traumatic experiences to physical or mental health diagnosis just to name a few. Social anxiety still exists in students, which increased over the lockdown period. Both counsellors providing feedback are seeing more students coming forward with ADHD (diagnosed and pending diagnosis) which further exacerbates why they are feeling overwhelmed and can't concentrate.

Underlying issues have been triggered due to the massive changes involved in University life, for example, living on their own, adult relationships, financial issues, family breakdown plus the loss of a secure place at home. Transitioning from a self-regulated place of home and School to University can cause huge unfamiliarity with students and further cause these issues to seem unmanageable.

Recommendations for the Schools include regular check-ins for students and creating an optimal class environment for taking in lecture information. Giving students useful wellbeing resources early in the semester, each semester and then leading into exam and assessment period would also be recommended. Also, more revision lecturer, study groups and peer/buddy mentoring scheme are potential solutions often identified by students.

It is imperative that correct provisions are put in place for students to overcome stressors they encounter. The feedback is that lots of students are not engaging with Disability Services when they are entitled for certain accommodations relating to their disability. Exploring ways for students to explore self-regulation and co-regulation and to help students break down their life and study balance and help them concentrate on certain tasks would be useful. One recommendation is that regular 1-1 academic support should be in place for students to engage to help monitor and problem solve over the academic year. Also, students are advised to engage in support as soon as possible to allow early intervention.

Last year a total of 195 referrals were recorded for the Faculty of MHLS, the total figure of referrals for this year is 345 which is a significant increase and disproportionate when compared to increases for EPS and AHSS. This year has witnessed an increase in Faculty engagements with the Student Wellbeing Adviser for the Faculty which has promoted the services available. Students are also able to self-refer to INSPIRE and it is also highly possible that students are seeking support directly without engaging first with other services.

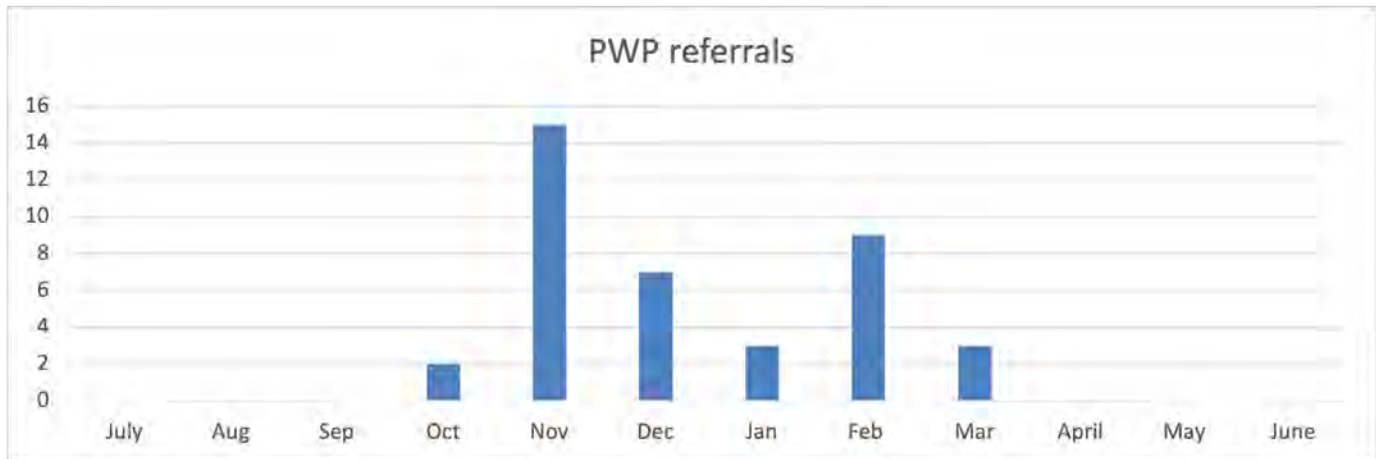




## Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners Service Referrals

Student Wellbeing Services have been involved in a project for the past two years, providing placements for Ulster University Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) Masters students, who provide low level cognitive behavioural therapy for referred students. They carry out an initial assessment, followed by up to 6 sessions of therapy, where appropriate.

Both Disability and Student Wellbeing Service can refer directly into this service where mild to moderate anxiety and/or depression has been disclosed by the student. This year we were allocated one student who commenced therapeutic interventions in October 2023 ending June 2024.



The table shows a total of 39 referrals from July 2023 to June 2024.

### Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner feedback:

Upon reflection, the Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) service within Student Wellbeing at Queen's University Belfast plays a significant role in supporting student mental health. The low-intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) offered by the service provides numerous benefits and is often preferred by students for its practical approach, equipping them with tools and strategies to manage depression and anxiety disorders.

A notable trend within the service is that client attendance tends to be lowest during exam periods, a time when symptoms of depression and anxiety are at their peak. Generalised anxiety disorder, particularly excessive worry about exams and the future, emerged as the most common issue among students. Those experiencing such worries found the problem-solving component of the worry management intervention especially effective for managing exam-related anxiety. The most frequently utilised intervention was cognitive restructuring, which involves challenging negative thought patterns. This approach, which rationalises clients' unhelpful thoughts by gathering evidence for and against them, proved highly effective. Clients were able to successfully dispute their negative thoughts, leading to significant improvements.

Cognitive restructuring was particularly popular because it is applicable to both depression and anxiety disorders. Reviewing client progress revealed that this intervention helped clients to more naturally and consistently challenge their negative thoughts, resulting in reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety. This was evident when reapplying the ABC model of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours after treatment.

On the other hand, exposure and habituation therapy was the least favoured intervention, possibly because clients were not yet ready to confront the behavioural symptoms of anxiety and preferred to address their thoughts first. The use of these interventions and guided self-help sessions significantly boosted the confidence of those who attended the service. Additionally, for clients awaiting more advanced treatment, these sessions provided valuable temporary support and an introduction to the types of interventions and work involved in CBT.

## DEVELOPMENTS AND COLLABORATIONS AT FACULTY LEVEL AND IMPACT

This year the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser has worked closely with Schools this year to become further involved initiatives and projects designed to enhance the collaborative efforts between services and Schools in conjunction with colleagues in other departments.



From the outset, Rob has been engaged with Schools during induction periods and wellness related sessions around exam times and preplacement for those about to start their placements. This is done in collaboration with ALS in order to highlight the holistic nature of our collective services.



We have been heavily involved in the Wellbeing Champions and Ambassadors events in the Schools of Nursing and Pharmacy including fundraising and training opportunities with AWARENI and Restart a Heart Campaign.



The Faculty facing team has also been present at events within the School of Biological Sciences “Feel the Love” events and events within the Students Union.



## STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICE FEEDBACK

“The Student Wellbeing Service at Queen’s has been an absolute lifesaver for me during my second year. I was struggling with severe anxiety and was on the verge of dropping out. Rob, my Student Wellbeing Adviser, was incredibly supportive and always available to talk. His guidance and practical advice helped me develop coping strategies that have allowed me to stay on track with my studies. I can’t express how grateful I am for how accessible and efficient the service has been.”

“I never expected to face such personal challenges during my time at university, but the Student Wellbeing Service at Queen’s made all the difference. My Wellbeing Adviser provided the perfect balance of empathy and practical advice, helping me manage both my mental health and academic workload. Thanks to his support, I was able to get back on top of my studies while navigating a really tough period. The service was always easy to access, and I never had to wait long to get the help I needed.”

“The Student Wellbeing Service at Queen’s is honestly amazing. I reached out when I was feeling completely overwhelmed, and they were such a huge support. Rob helped me break down my problems into manageable



steps and gave me the tools to handle the stress I was under whilst referring me to other supports across the University. The service was so quick at getting back to me and Rob's personal approach made me feel heard and understood. Without it, I don't know how I would've managed to get through my final year."

"Using the Student Wellbeing Service was one of the best decisions I made during my first year at Queen's. I was dealing with personal issues that were affecting my concentration and motivation, and I wasn't sure I could make the transition to university life and study. Having a Wellbeing Adviser helped me not only stay on track but also regain confidence in myself and I was thankful that I never felt like I was left waiting for a long time on help."

"As a lecturer, I often encounter students facing personal and academic challenges that can affect their performance. The Student Wellbeing Service at Queen's has been instrumental in supporting those students. The Faculty-facing model allows for seamless communication between academic staff and the wellbeing team, ensuring that students are connected with the right support quickly and efficiently. Rob has always been responsive, providing tailored advice and interventions that help students stay on track while navigating difficult times. It's an invaluable resource for both students and staff."

"Working closely with the Student Wellbeing Service at Queen's has greatly improved how we support students. The collaboration between academic staff and the wellbeing team provides effective, timely support, making it an essential resource for managing students' welfare and academic success."

## SECTION 4

### STUDENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH DISABILITY SERVICES

#### Overview of Service

Our University Disability Services are dedicated to supporting and empowering students with disabilities and long-term conditions, including those with a working diagnosis. They provide individual accommodations to foster inclusion, enhance academic success, and ensure a supportive and accessible university environment. They assist students with conditions that have impacted or are likely to impact them for 12 months or more.

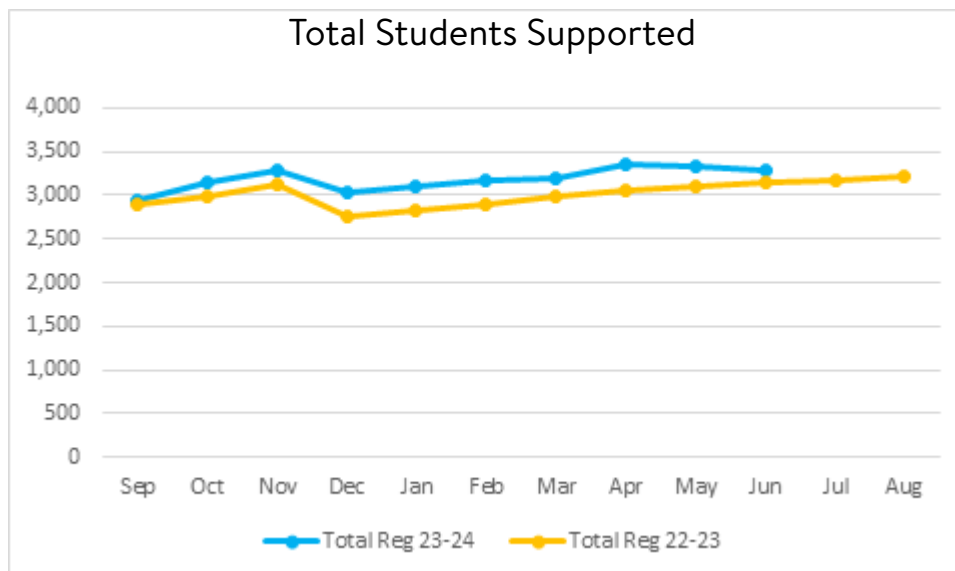
Additionally, they support staff in assisting students by offering advice and guidance on reasonable adjustments and effective support strategies for students impacted by various conditions. This includes providing direction on the most appropriate support processes.

#### A year in Disability Services





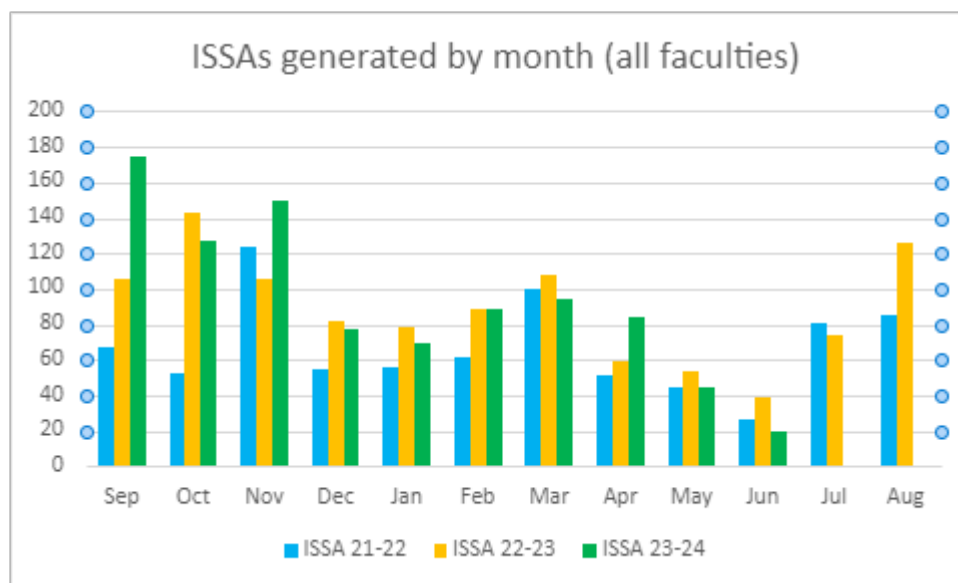
## Total Students Supported year on year



Year on year the service continues to see a significant increase in students seeking support. The majority of students supported by the service are disclosing mental health conditions, closely followed by SpLD (Dyslexia/ ADHD, etc.).

Moreover, a notable proportion of students are declaring multiple conditions, highlighting the diverse needs we continue to address.

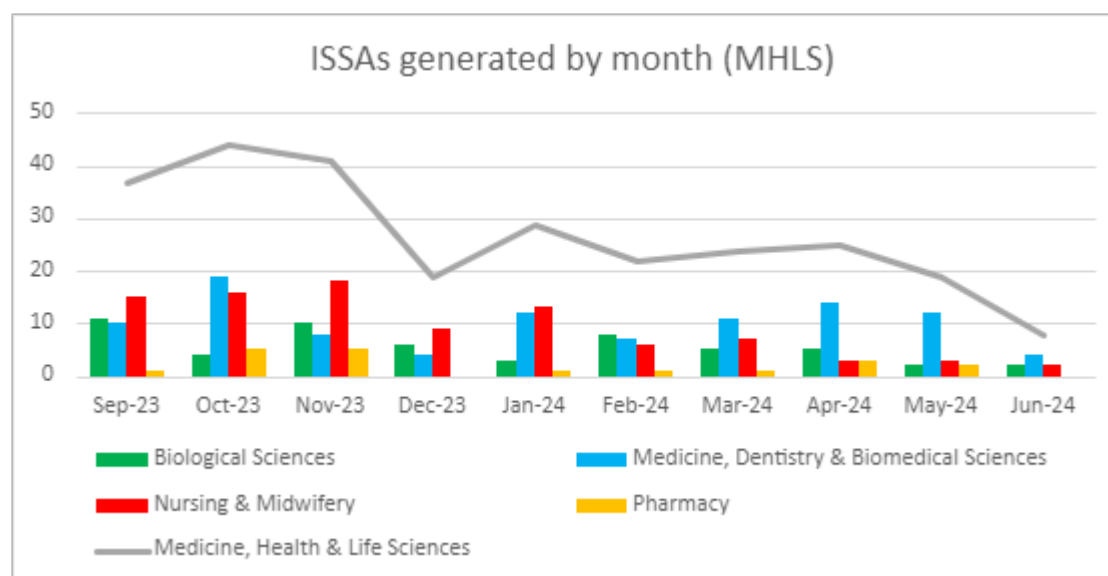
## Individual Student Support Agreements (ISSA's) generated by month year on year



The graph depicts the trend of ISSAs generated for students. The peak period for the service is from August through November. Each year, there is an increase in the number of students disclosing a disability and seeking support. Students continue to engage with Disability Services throughout the year. There is a notable increase in the number of ISSAs generated between February and April, coinciding with students' requests for support during end-of-year examinations.

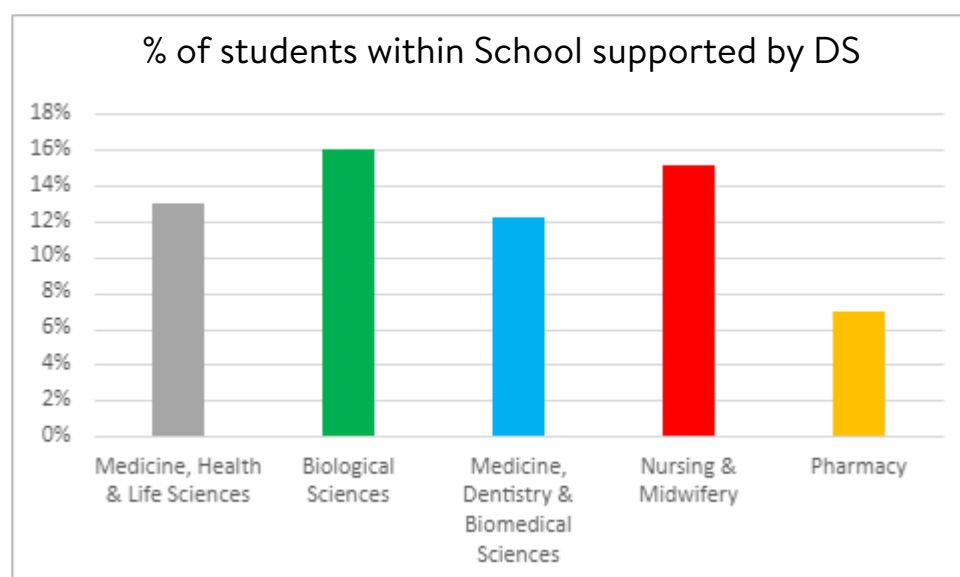
Throughout the year, current students may request a review of their support, which may lead to amendments and updates to their ISSA. These changes reflect updates to a student's condition, new conditions, or changes to support requirements.

## MHLS ISSAs generated by month



ISSAs generated for students in MHLS remains consistently high. Most Nursing and Midwifery ISSAs are created in the first part of the academic year, with an increase in advance of the February cohort starting. Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences ISSA generation is at its highest early in Semester 1 but increases again towards the end of the academic year, in advance of the exam period. During the year students can have ISSAs amended and updated with new conditions, changes to conditions or changes in support requirements. This requires interaction with the student by the DO and an admin process completed.

## Students supported by Disability Services as a percentage of School numbers



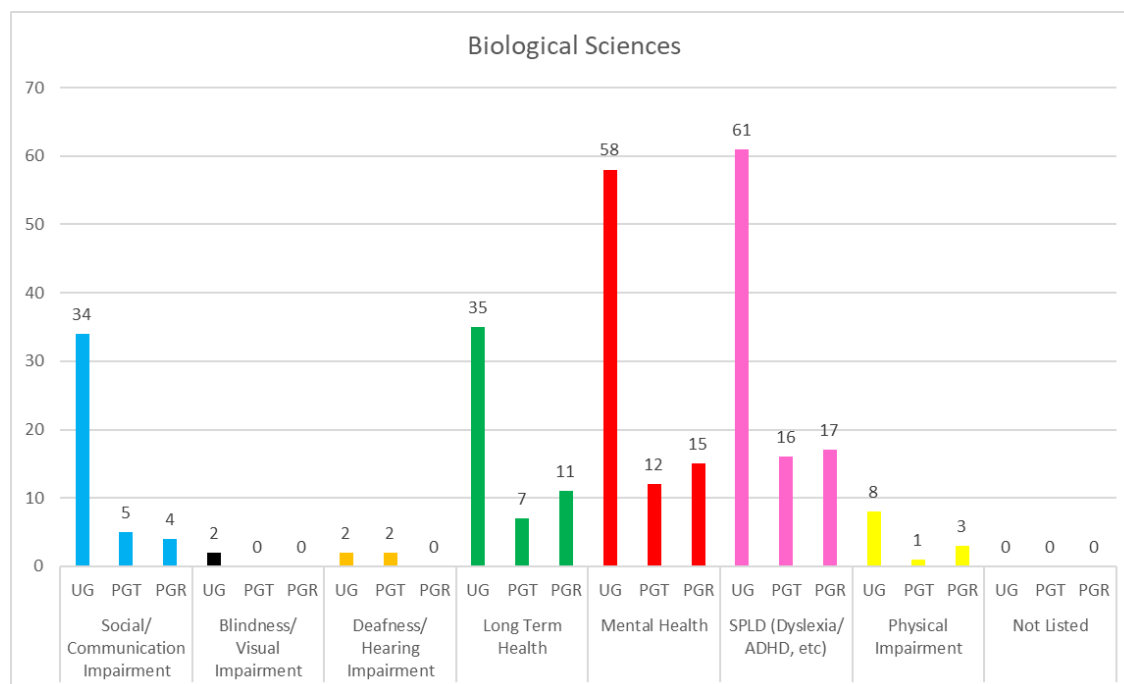
In MHLS, Biological Sciences has the greatest percentage of their student population supported by Disability Services at 16%, Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical sciences has 12% of their population supported, Nursing and Midwifery have 14% and Pharmacy 7%. These figures have increased since AY 2022-2023 across the 4 Schools. 13% of MHLS students are supported by Disability Services.

## Students supported by condition

The Service as a whole has supported an increasing number of students with complex conditions through extensive collaboration with colleagues and departments across the University, including Schools, the Estates Department, Safety Services, and Accommodation.

Continuing to support Schools through a Faculty facing model the service has also identified condition-specific focus areas for Disability Officers to drive targeted development and support. Each Disability Officer will have an area of focus from a diverse range of conditions, including neurodiverse conditions, social and

communication impairments, mental health issues, specific learning difficulties (SpLD), physical and sensory disabilities, and long-term conditions. A key initiative includes recognising flag days and sector advancements to enhance awareness and inclusivity.

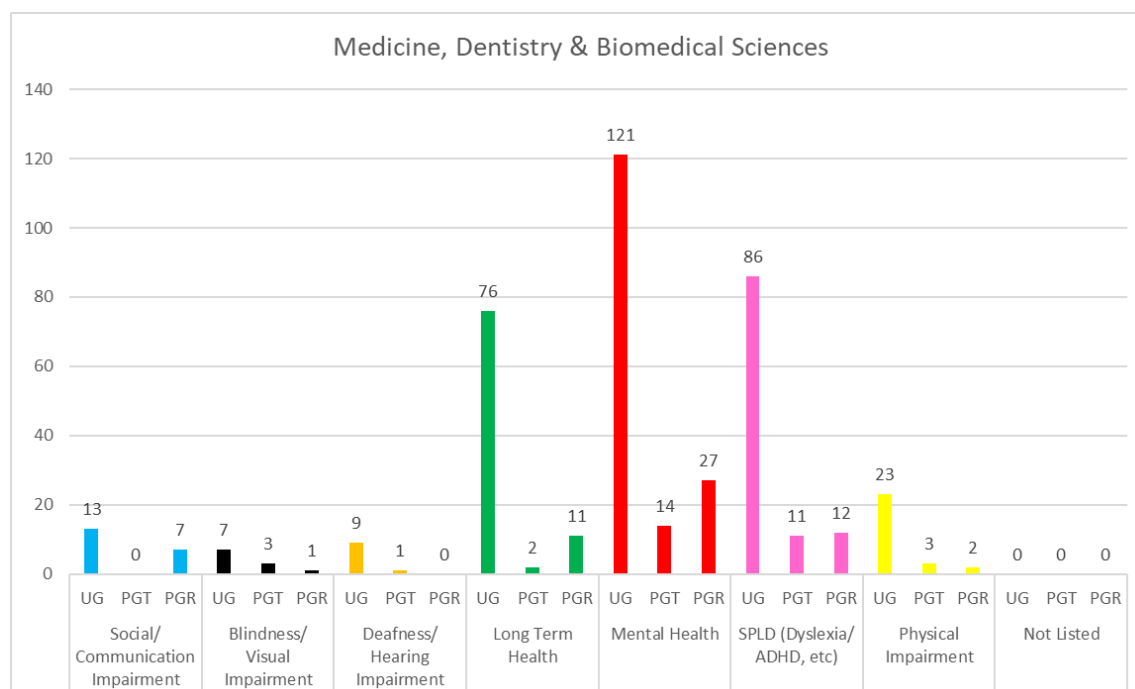


In Biological Sciences over half of the conditions disclosed to Disability Services were either Specific Learning Difficulties (32%) or Mental Health (29%) conditions, with 19% of registrations being for long-term health conditions and 15% Social / Communication impairment. Increased numbers were seen in every disability category when compared to AY 2022-2023 apart from Blindness/visual impairment which decreased.

Trends for undergraduate conditions were similar with 30.5 % conditions disclosed being Specific Learning Difficulties, 29% were mental health conditions, 17.5 % long-term health conditions and 12% social/communication impairment.

Trends were similar for postgraduate students with 35% of PG conditions disclosed being SpLD, 29% mental health, and 19% long-term health.

The pattern and percentage of the conditions disclosed from AY 2022-2023 to 2023-24 remained largely unchanged.



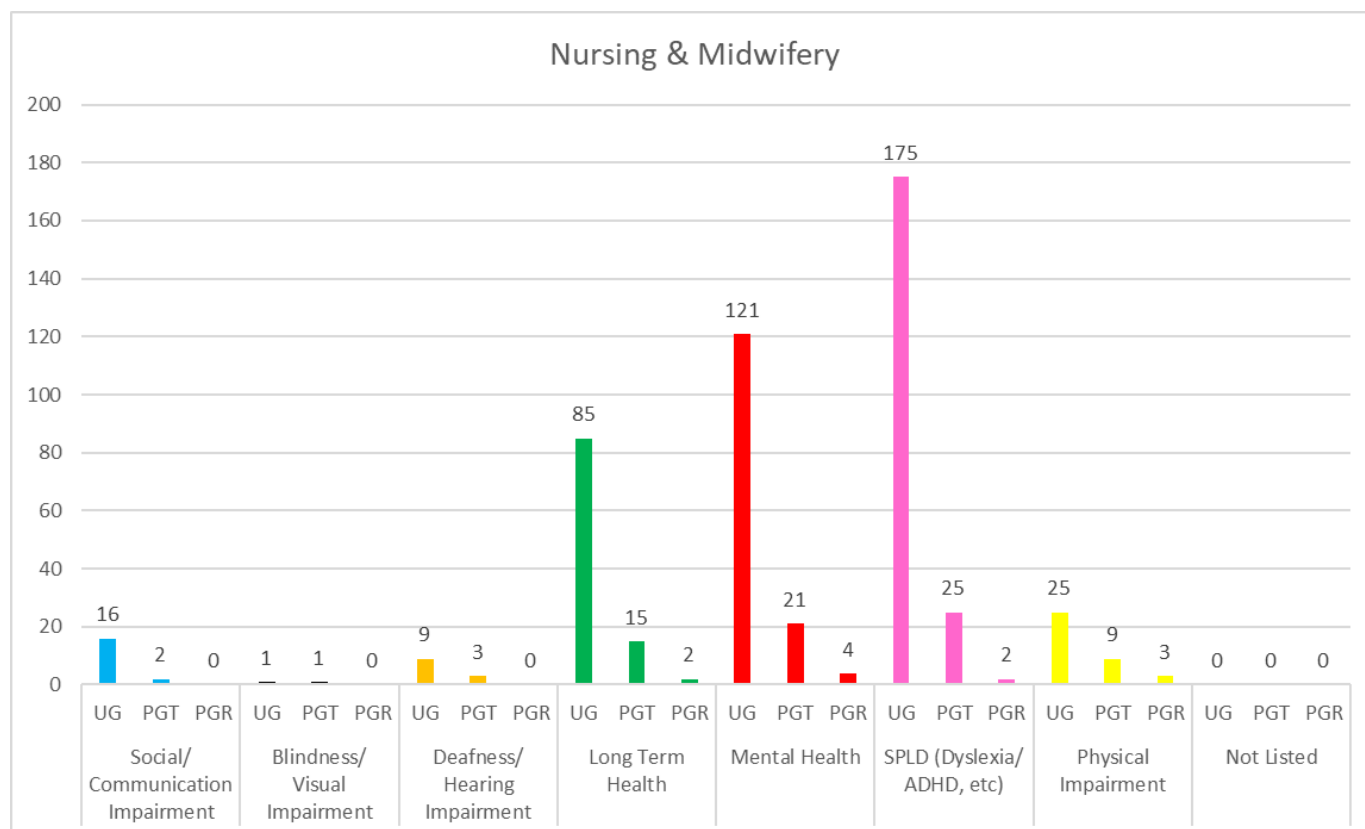
Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences had a total of 336 students supported (June 24) with 429 conditions declared.

12% of the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences population were supported by Disability Services (June 2024).

Undergraduates (78%) within the School make up the majority of the those accessing Disability Services, with 9% of those on Postgraduate Taught courses and 13% pursuing Postgraduate research.

The largest category of disability supported by Disability Services in 2023-24 academic year was those with Mental Health conditions (162), with an 18% increase from 2022-23 academic year.

The second largest category of disability supported was those with Specific learning difficulties (109), with a 5% increase from 2022-23 academic year.



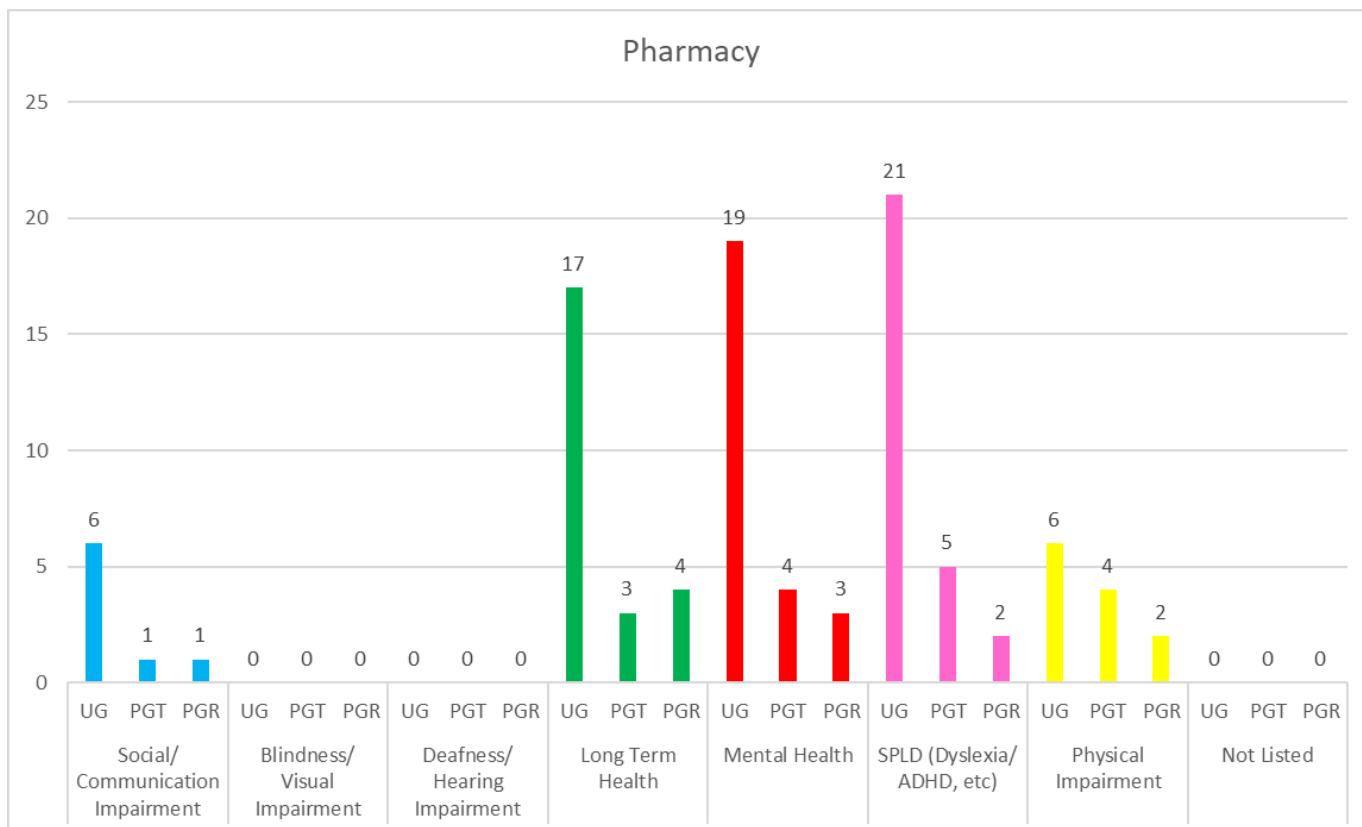
In Nursing and Midwifery over half of the total conditions supported by Disability Services were either Specific Learning Difficulties (39%) or Mental Health (28%) conditions, with 19% of registrations being for long-term health conditions. Increased numbers were seen in every disability category when compared to AY 2022-2023 apart from Blindness/visual impairment which did not change.

Undergraduate trends were similar with 28% of conditions disclosed being mental health, 40.5% Specific Learning Difficulties, 19% long term health and 6% were physical conditions.

Trends again were similar for postgraduate conditions with mental health conditions (29%) and long-term health (19.5%). 14% of conditions disclosed at postgraduate level were physical conditions, which is more than double the undergraduate level and there is a 10% reduction in the percentage of specific learning difficulties conditions disclosed at postgraduate level (31%).

The trend for conditions disclosed has stayed relatively stable, however the most significant rise in conditions disclosed from 2022-23 to 2023-24 was with social and communication impairment which has risen from 1.5% to 3.4% of conditions disclosed and also physical conditions which have risen from 4.5% to 7%.





The School of Pharmacy had a total of 90 students supported (June 24) with 98 conditions declared.

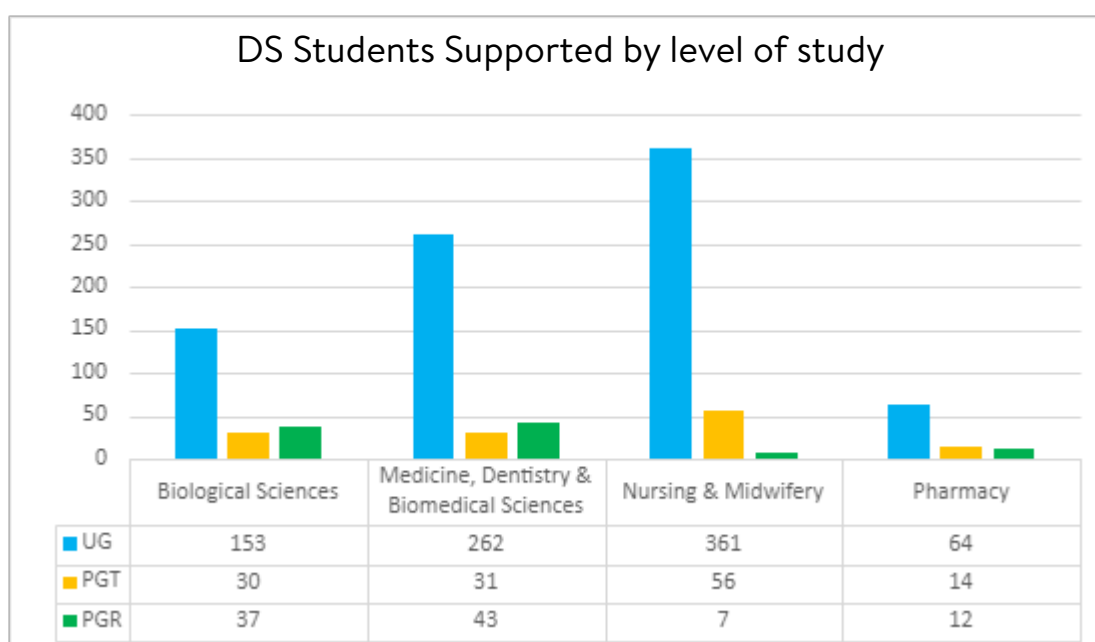
7% of the School of Pharmacy population were supported by Disability Services (June 2024).

Undergraduates (71%) within the School make up the majority of the those accessing Disability Services, with 16% of those on Postgraduate Taught courses and 13% pursuing Postgraduate research.

The largest category of disability supported by Disability Services in 2023-24 academic year was those with Specific learning difficulties (28), which was 7% decrease from 22-23 academic year.

The second largest category of disability disclosed was those with Mental Health conditions (26), with an 8% increase from 2022-23 academic year. We saw large increases in Long Term Health conditions (41%) and a 33% increase in both Physical conditions and Social/Communication Impairments. Overall, the total number of students engaging with Disability Services has increased by 5%.

#### **MHLS students supported by Disability Services by level of study**



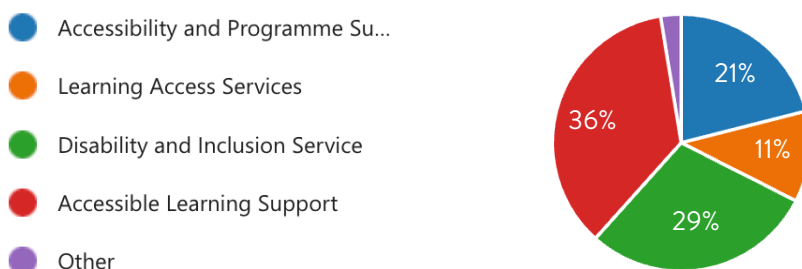
Reflecting the student population, the highest number of students accessing support through Disability Services are undergraduates. Noticeably high numbers of PGT students are accessing support within Nursing and Midwifery. Similarly, there are higher numbers of PGR students in Biological Sciences and Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences. Some of these students progress through different levels of study and choose to be reassessed by Disability Services for support in their new courses. Additionally, some students enroll in Disability Services later in their academic journey, possibly due to receiving a later diagnosis or deciding to seek support at that point.

### What's in a name?

This year Disability Services have undergone a name change with the primary aim of reaching more students, including those who may have previously been reluctant to come forward. This change responds to feedback indicating some students were hesitant to engage with Disability Services. Following a research and benchmarking exercise, and consultation with various stakeholders, including the Centre for Educational Development, Students Union, Disability Services and Wellbeing Staff, Disability Forum, pre-applicant students through the DS Offer Holder event, and the current student voice - a graph detailing the results shows that the most popular name was "Accessible Learning Support." This name reflects the ongoing commitment to supporting many students with fantastic services and aims to encourage more students who may have hesitated to seek support.

### Results of the renaming survey

Graph showing percentage of name votes



The name change will be introduced through a rebranding of the service to further promote and reach more students who may benefit from support. As part of this transition, the service is creating a new website dedicated to Accessible Learning Support. During this period, the current website will redirect users to the updated webpage to ensure continuity and ease of access. Additionally, a new email address will be introduced to accompany the name change. During the transition period, emails sent to the existing address will be automatically redirected to the new address to prevent any disruption in communication.



Gathering the next generation of student voice on the name change

There will be ongoing communication and promotion throughout the year to reach as many students as possible.

The Service aims to ensure that all students who can benefit from support, including those who may have been unsure about coming forward, feel they can identify with the Service and get in contact.

## Working Diagnosis and Supporting Documentation

This year, the Service has witnessed significant challenges with students accessing medical evidence to engage with support, exacerbated by long waiting lists for diagnoses. In response, they have reviewed internal medical evidence requirements to better accommodate students unable to obtain supporting documentation despite being impacted by their disability or condition. Several late registrations were facilitated for exam support following an all-student email, encouraging those in need of assistance to reach out. The email emphasised that students with a working diagnosis are also eligible for support. To prevent medical evidence from being a barrier to accessing valuable support, students are encouraged to contact the Service and complete a questionnaire. This allows Disability Officers to consider the information provided and guide students on possible reasonable adjustments and, if necessary, direct them to obtaining additional supporting documentation.

These changes underscore the Service's dedication to removing barriers and providing comprehensive support for all students with disabilities.

## FUNDED SUPPORT FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

### The Needs Assessment Centre and Register of Support Providers at Queen's

The Needs Assessment Centre at Queen's assesses the requirements of students with disabilities / long-term conditions who have applied for additional, funded support through schemes such as the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and similar.

The DSA award is a grant available to support students with the additional study-related costs they may incur in higher education as a direct result of their disability. DSA is not-means tested and any of the specialist equipment, software, travel and one-to-one support costs awarded through the grant do not have to be repaid at the end of a student's programme of study.

Typically, female students are more likely than their male counterparts to apply for and access funded reasonable adjustments. Although for many years, submissions based on specific learning difficulties have been the most common, applications from individuals with autism and mental health conditions have continued to increase significantly in recent years, with many students now presenting with multiple disabilities / conditions and support requirements.

Queen's has had its own in-house Register of Support Providers in place for the last 16 years to co-ordinate, deliver and assist students with the one-to-one elements of their support packages. This includes delivering support through a large body of over 200 highly qualified, experienced and professional freelancers who are engaged on a self-employed basis as Needs Assessors and Support Providers.

Recent figures compiled for the annual HESA return indicate that in comparison to 2022-23, the numbers accessing additional, funded support through DSA has increased by 7.2 % from 958 to 1027 students.

### Needs Assessment Centre at Queen's

Provision	2022/23	2023/24
Assessments	457	422
Reviews	79	89
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>511</b>

## Register of Support Providers at Queen's

KPI	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Students matched</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>1084</b>
<b>Top 6 support recommendations</b>	<b>1. Academic Mental Health Tutor (322)</b> <b>2. Dyslexia Tutor (315)</b> <b>3. Autistic Spectrum Disorder Tutor (168)</b> <b>4. Note Taker (138)</b> <b>5. Study Skills Tutor (92)</b> <b>6. Proof Reader (73)</b>	<b>1. Academic Mental Health Tutor (375)</b> <b>2. Dyslexia Tutor (329)</b> <b>3. Autistic Spectrum Disorder Tutor (231)</b> <b>4. Note Taker (136)</b> <b>5. Study Skills Tutor (122)</b> <b>6. Campus Assistant General (44)</b>
<b>Total match-ups made in relation to Note Taker Support</b>	<b>873 match-ups to support just 138 students</b>	<b>1142 match-ups to support just 136 students</b>

The number of students referred for access to one-to-one support in 2023-24 increased by 14.5% to a total of 1084.

Reflecting the rise in the numbers of individuals presenting for assessment with more complex conditions, the Register of Support Providers at Queen's has, in turn, seen an increase in the numbers of referrals for students with multiple support requirements. As securing Campus Assistance for these students remains challenging, despite an uplift to the hourly rate of pay in September 2023, the Register has continued to work with Schools to engage new Support Providers to offer support in this area, and as STEM (i.e. Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) -based Note Takers.

Once more, the numbers of students referred for Academic Mental Health Tutor support exceeded the numbers referred for Dyslexia Tutor support, reflecting the increase in mental health issues being seen across the UK in recent years, particularly amongst young people. The numbers of students with Autism seeking support through the Register has also continued to rise, with 2023-24 seeing a significant 37% increase in this support area.

As the numbers diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) continue to rise, more students with this condition were referred to the Register for general Study Skills Tutor support in 2023-24, reflected in the 30% increase in numbers recommended for the aforementioned in comparison to 2022-23.

### Supporting through transition and beyond

The Service aims to support students in their transition to higher education while managing the challenges of their individual disabilities and conditions. With several initiatives and areas of focus this year, the service has::

- Supported open days, offer holder days, and induction talks to inform students about available support and encourage early engagement.
- Held a targeted Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) Induction Event in September 2023, supporting students with ASC and their parents/guardians. The event provided guidance on what to expect in the move to HE, such as larger class sizes, less structured timetables, group work, and reading lists. Students were encouraged to join university clubs and societies, informed about wellbeing support, and given a campus tour when it was quieter.
- Developed a pilot DSA drop-in to support students in applying for funded Disabled Student Allowance through the Education Authority.
- Created the 'Handy Hints' resource to support students with DSA-funded queries. (see [www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sqc/disability/NeedsAssessmentCentre/HandyHints/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sqc/disability/NeedsAssessmentCentre/HandyHints/))



- Supported the rollout of the QUB portal, including the development of ISSA-related extension requests for deadline and exam flexibility. An end-of-year review and portal workshops indicated that 58% of staff reported improved processing of ISSAs.
- Maintained ongoing communication and review with the Exams team to facilitate exam support, including updated guidance for invigilators accommodating adjustments.
- Delivered open Assistive Technology sessions in the McClay Library, allowing staff and students to try assistive technology available on campus with the support of Assistive Technology Trainers.
- Celebrated Epilepsy Awareness Day with staff wearing purple and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities through various events. Collaborated with Queen's Sport to facilitate activities where competitive athletes with disabilities shared their experiences and set up pop-up sensory areas at One Elmwood.



Staff celebrate Epilepsy Awareness Day by wearing purple

- Held an in-person Disability Adviser meeting to recognise the work of colleagues in Schools supporting students and implementing reasonable adjustments. This was an opportunity to discuss sector changes and the support available through the Service.
- Facilitated a bespoke ASC peer support group throughout the year with events such as table quizzes, board games, pumpkin carving, Christmas crafts, an Ulster Museum trip, and a cinema afternoon, which saw good attendance throughout the year.
- Held an Annual Offer Holder Event in April for students with disabilities and their parents, receiving positive feedback and engagement. Created a 'To Do' list resource for prospective students to help them and their parents with key actions, supporting the transition to university.
- Worked with the Global Opportunities team to offer advice and guidance to students with declared disabilities as they prepare for traveling abroad.
- Linked with CED as they developed useful recourses on the accessibility of AI HUB:
- In collaboration with the Careers and Employability Services and Specialisterne, we introduced the Empower programme for neurodiverse students. 19 students joined the programme, with 6 securing job outcomes to date. Students participated in group sessions on and off campus, both in-person and online, along with substantial one-to-one support. One student had 17 one-on-one sessions, and another attended 35 group sessions. One student said, "It's reassuring to know that there is support for finding work, I have secured a placement and will be starting in a few months."

- Work has started between Occupational Health, Accessible Learning Support and Faculties, focusing on the early identification and support of students with complex disabilities, particularly those on professional programmes. This process aims to prioritise students with complex needs for Pre-Placement Health Assessments (PPHA), ideally before their course begins, to ensure both the University and the student fully understand the impact of their health condition or disability on their studies. The PPHA Task and Finish Group has been established to enhance data sharing between the University and Occupational Health, ensuring timely referrals and assessments for students requiring early intervention. Key areas of focus include improving clarity of information for applicants and students regarding the PPHA process, mapping data sharing pathways, and identifying process improvements across all Schools.



Disability Services Offer Holder Event 2024

## SECTION 5:

### Accessible Learning Support Objectives for 2024-25

Looking ahead the Service has identified several key initiatives and areas of focus to better support students with disabilities and provide guidance to staff. These include:

- Building on the renaming of the Service, there will be University-wide promotion to attract and engage a broader student population, including those who may not identify with the term “disability” but could benefit from support Services. This will highlight the excellent support available to enhance student wellbeing and academic success.
- Enhancing awareness and understanding of the support services available, enabling students to access these resources and experience the positive impact on their academic journey and overall wellbeing.
- Supporting staff and students in identifying the relevant support path for students experiencing challenges, including difficulties in gaining a diagnosis and associated supporting documents.
- Following the successful pilot, DSA Drop-in sessions will be more widely publicised in 2024/25 and will be extended from once a month to fortnightly. This will allow more students with DSA-related queries to speak with someone in person about their issues.
- The Register of Support Providers at Queen’s will continue to work with Schools to engage more Note Takers and exam support assistants with experience in STEM subjects.
- Supporting the Centre for Educational Development (CED) and Information Services to inform the work on the Video Enhanced Learning and develop a Recording of Teaching Policy. This initiative aims to offer an alternative to Note Taker support for students and provide more accessible teaching.

- Developing bespoke support and initiatives for the increasing number of students presenting with ADHD, including the creation of study skills resources. The Register of Support Providers will offer awareness training on ADHD to its Support Providers. Since individuals with ADHD are typically recommended for generalist Study Skills Tutor support, this training will help Tutors deliver more informed, focused support to students with this condition.
- Understand the impact of the Equality and Human Rights Council guidance to the sector following the case of *Abrahart v Bristol University* and support a Task and finish group to review actions needed to be taken by the University to support compliance.

### **Student Wellbeing Recommendations for 2024-25**

- The Student Wellbeing Team and Accessible Learning Support teams to continue to work in a multi-disciplinary way with Schools to help support students
- The Student Wellbeing Team and Accessible Learning Support teams to continue to contribute to wider University initiatives including the #QBeWell Action Plan, the Welcome and the Belonging projects – with a particular aim of supporting Schools to support students at key transitions of their entry to, and progress through the University
- The Student Wellbeing Team and Accessible Learning Support teams to continue to promote the use of tools such as Transition Skills for University and the Assessment Support Hub
- Progress the Drug and Alcohol Impact programme through SOS-UK, working alongside colleagues in Students Union and Queen's Accommodation. This aims to promote healthier student lifestyles, reduce substance-related harms, and create a safer, more supportive campus environment. Student Wellbeing have set up a weekly Drugs and Alcohol specific drop in for students, and a focus has been put on arranging more alcohol-free initiatives for students across campus.
- There continues to be high levels of students presenting with mental health needs as a primary concern, right across all levels of study. Given the continued pressures on students, such as the cost-of-living crisis, it is expected this trend will continue and interventions must be timely and appropriate and address both predicted and emerging trends.
- The Student Wellbeing 'Stepped Matched Care' model of support is ensuring that students are matched with the lowest most effective form of support to address individual presenting issues; self-directed support to promote independence and resilience was utilised in all possible circumstances. [Continued focus on normalising stress, building effective coping strategies and empowering students by equipping them with independent problem-solving skills will enable students to address concerns early and through lower tier supports](#)
- There continues to be a higher representation of females to males across the Faculty and whilst for the most part this is proportionally representative to School populations, within the Schools of MDBS and Biological Sciences, this could be a potential area of focus to understand these high and low uptakes and to create initiatives specific for both Schools.
- In terms of presenting issues, across the board there are no major fluctuations in all categories. We are seeing a very slight increase in substance misuse, however there is also some focused work being conducted on this. Mental Health continues to be the strongest factor in referrals. Schools within MHLS continues to develop localised initiatives such as Wellbeing Ambassadors/Champions in Nursing and Pharmacy which are proving highly effective in maintain a culture of wellbeing and peer support, this type of work should continue to be developed across all Schools.
- Large numbers of International students accessed the Student Wellbeing Service, often at times for solutions around GP registration and finance related issues. Targeted initiatives to signpost students to the appropriate services for these issues would serve to prevent them becoming problematic later on.

- Peaks in presenting student numbers, and for those presenting at risk, continue to be evident during all assessment windows, including the supplementary Summer period and Academic concerns are a commonly cited stressor. While the Assessment Support Hub should provide some additional support for students in this area, further collaborative work between Student Wellbeing and the Schools should focus on identifying strategies and supports to encouraging proactive wellbeing amongst the student in advance of assessment windows.
- The regular meetings with the School of Biological Sciences on students of concern or potential risk have been very effective this year, reducing students at risk for this School to zero. It would be recommended for other Schools within MHLS to engage with the Faculty wellbeing adviser early when particular students are beginning to become known to academic staff as struggling. This early intervention has been shown to provide support early and often prevents a student's situation from escalating.
- Placements have been a theme for students within the School of Nursing and Midwifery this year, often around placement allocation and proximity to home. This then lends itself to further stresses around travel, time, finances and personal responsibilities at home. The School offer some very detailed inductions to students around placements and the challenges they pose for students. It would be recommended that this messaging is consistent across all nursing cohorts and years in order to ensure students continue to be prepared for the challenges of placements and limitations to their allocation.
- Based on the referral data by gender, the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences might want to consider promotion of initiatives aimed toward people who identify as male perhaps during men's health and men's mental health weeks.
- Based on the referral trends across the years for the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences it would be worth collaborating with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser to explore interventions that could be developed to address the periods of higher referral cross the academic year.
- Based on the referral trends across the years for the School of Biological Sciences it would be worth collaborating with the Faculty Wellbeing Adviser to explore interventions that could be developed to address the periods of higher referral cross the academic year.

## THANK YOU



We would like to extend our sincerest and heartfelt thanks to all our colleagues across the Schools, Faculties, wider University and beyond who have supported our work and been invaluable partners and collaborators on initiatives that support both our students and staff supporting students. We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to working with you in 2024-25!