

# Vision - Wellbeing Network

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## *Introduction*

We all recognize the importance of improving wellbeing, hence there has been an explosion of initiatives targeting student wellbeing in the past few years. The student wellbeing network came into life when Groep-één|ESR noticed that all these initiatives were independent and therefore communication and cooperation was minimal. If the TU/e community would work together on matters of wellbeing, we would have the possibility to make changes that are bigger than the sum of our individual efforts and thereby have a greater reach. Thus, this synergetic student wellbeing network aims to fill the gap by improving the communication and coordination between parties working towards fostering greater student wellbeing at the TU/e. By including both students and support staff, this network further operates as an advisory body for matters related to student wellbeing policy. The vision and aim of the network will be further outlined in this document.

## *Defining wellbeing*

Wellbeing is a broad term, with different meanings attached by different users. An overarching definition has been termed by the World Health Organisation and states “*Wellbeing is a state in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community*”. Moreover, the TU/e has defined 5 dimensions of student wellbeing including Social, Emotional/Mental, Physical, Academic and Financial. A definition of these dimensions, which together make up student wellbeing can be found in the appendix 1. In accordance with these dimensions, the SWeN aims to address all 5 areas of wellbeing. Nevertheless, if a topic should arise that does not fall under one of the dimensions it may be picked up by the SWeN as an extra topic to discuss. Moreover, while we aim to cover all areas of wellbeing, there may be aspects that require specific attention such as attenuating the stigma currently associated with mental health and the taboo of speaking up about issues one is facing.

## *Network Composition*

All members of the Student Wellbeing Network, stimulate choices and realize activities with the intention of achieving at least one of the five elements of wellbeing. This includes university support staff, who work on matters related to student wellbeing within the TU/e, and wellbeing representatives of student, study associations and other student led groups. Furthermore, the SWeN is made up of a core group of 4 students and two staff members, the Student Wellbeing Policy Officer and the Student Diversity Officer. This core group functions similarly to a board; organising meetings, coordinating, and communicating with the network as well as other relevant staff members. In order to make sure each topic of wellbeing is accurately addressed, the network will be divided into 5 subgroups. Each sub-group will focus on one of the wellbeing dimensions and will specifically pay attention to matters related to this topic.

## *Visibility and Accessibility*

The first goal of the student wellbeing network is to raise awareness about the importance of student wellbeing and to increase the cooperation amongst the different parties to improve and sustain wellbeing across the TU/e community. By increasing the visibility of the importance of wellbeing, we not only aim to raise awareness of the initiatives and support systems within the

university, but also hope to extend this awareness to the wider community in Eindhoven and the Netherlands as a whole. Visibility needs to be combined with easy access, thus our second goal is to make these initiatives and systems of support more accessible. In doing so we strive to help create a cultural shift to a more open, inclusive, accepting and supportive university environment.

### *Cooperation*

The network aims to unite all involved parties to support and strengthen cooperation and communication with the aim of increasing student wellbeing. This includes the opportunity for co-organizing events, sharing best practices, shared promotion as well as the opportunity to provide advice and act as a sounding board for the university on matters related to student wellbeing. As such, members can give advice on (political) issues inside the TU/e, using their network and knowledge to help others. By increasing coordination the network strives to create a more open, caring and welcoming TU/e community where prevention is key and everyone feels comfortable speaking up about their vulnerabilities. This will make it easier to promote and foster student wellbeing going forward.

## Appendix

### 1. Wellbeing Dimensions

**Student Wellbeing:** a state in which each student feels physically and mentally healthy, is able to fully engage in their studies, can autonomously deal with the normal stresses of student life, and feels included, safe and welcome within the TU/e community.

**Social wellbeing** refers to diverse students feeling comfortable, safe, accepted and included within the TU/e community, and being able to engage with peers in a healthy and positive manner.

**Emotional/Mental wellbeing** can be defined as a student's ability to process, acknowledge and manage both positive and negative emotions. Students should be promoted to build mental resilience to appropriately manage their studies and social life, while experiencing a sense of greater life purpose.

**Academic wellbeing** enables students to fully engage with their studies, acquire knowledge and skills that are in line with their goals, and feel comfortable in such a way that they can graduate in a healthy and positive manner, while making the most of their time at TU Eindhoven.

**Financial wellbeing** refers to students' abilities to manage their own budget and financial situation autonomously. Additionally, they should not be structurally hindered from successfully participating in their study or student life for lack of financial means.

**Physical wellbeing** relates to how physically healthy a student feels. This includes their sleep quality, diet, physical exercise, as well as their ability to engage with drugs and alcohol responsibly. Additionally, students with a high physical wellbeing are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and have enough autonomy to lead one.

