



**SARVAJANIK
UNIVERSITY**

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SARVAJANIK UNIVERSITY
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Sarvajanik University

Policy on Mental Health and Well- Being





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List of Abbreviations

DMHP	District Mental Health Programme
HEIs	Higher Educational Institutions
MANAS	Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System
MHWBC	Mental Health & Well-being Centre
MHWBMC	Mental Health & Well-being Monitoring Committee
NMHP	National Mental Health Programme
PSW	Psychiatric Social Worker
TeleMANAS	Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States
UGC	University Grants Commission
UMMEED	Understand, Motivate, Manage, Empathize, Empower, Develop





Glossary of Terms

Crisis Management	Immediate, short-term and coordinated actions to provide safety and scope for recovery in response to severe psychological distress, risk to self or others, or other emergencies.
Early Identification & Intervention	Mechanisms for recognizing signs of distress early and providing timely peer support and professional help for improved outcomes and building life skills.
Good Faith	Acting honestly, responsibly, and with a reasonable belief that the action is necessary to protect the well-being or safety of an individual.
Informed Consent	Informed consent is the voluntary and informed agreement of an individual to participate in a mental health assessment, counselling, treatment, or related intervention after receiving clear and adequate information about its purpose, procedures, potential benefits, risks, confidentiality, and their rights, including the right to refuse or withdraw consent at any time without coercion.
Mental Health	Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn, and work well, and contribute to their community.
Mental Health and Well-being Centre	The institution's primary hub that provides mental health support and guidance, psychological services, crisis support and develop awareness or promotion programs consistent with the emotional climate of the HEI campus.
Peer Support	Structured student-to-student assistance through trained student mentors or volunteers to foster a sense of belongingness and to build life skills.
Resilience	The process and outcome of successfully adapting to challenging life experiences through cognitive, psychological and behavioral flexibility.
Well-being	Well-being is a positive state and low levels of distress experienced by individuals, and societies, along with overall good physical and mental health, a good quality of life and the ability to engage and contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose.



1: Introduction and Foundations

1.1 Preamble

Sarvajani University's Policy on Mental Health and Well-Being is framed in alignment with national public health frameworks and educational directives such as the UGC Mental Health Guidelines F. No. 8-8/2025 dated 13th January 2026, the judgment of the Supreme Court of India dated 25.07.2025 in C.A. (Crl.) No.3177/2025 in Sukdeb Saha -vs- The State of Andhra Pradesh issued Office Memorandum vide No.J.18/32/2025-JUDICIAL dated 08.08.2025, UMMEED Guidelines, Mental Healthcare Act 2017, Manodarpan Initiative and the National Suicide Prevention Strategy and shall comply with all regulatory frameworks in the future too.

Sarvajani University recognizes that maintaining an emotionally secure and supportive campus climate is essential to educational excellence. Psychological well-being is not separate from academic achievement; rather, it is a core pillar of institutional health. The University shall endeavor to facilitate timely access to appropriate support while respecting the dignity and rights of every individual.

1.2 Policy Objectives

The primary objectives of the policy are to:

- Promote positive mental health, emotional well-being, and a supportive campus culture that encourages open dialogue.
- Establish institutional mechanisms for early identification, guidance, counseling, and referral of individuals with mental health concerns.
- Ensure timely, confidential, and equitable access to counseling, professional services, and community care networks.
- Prevent and address stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, self-harm, and other psychological concerns through proactive interventions.
- Organize awareness, sensitization, and capacity-building programmes to enhance mental health literacy across the University.
- Foster collaboration among the University, families, and external healthcare providers to deliver coordinated psychosocial support.
- Develop, recommend, and periodically review institutional policies and initiatives to strengthen mental health and well-being.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of mental health programmes while ensuring confidentiality, inclusivity, and respect for individual dignity.



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1.3 Scope and Jurisdiction

This policy shall operate subject to applicable laws, University Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations. This policy is broadly applicable to:

- The entire Sarvajani University community across all academic, administrative, residential, and extracurricular settings.
- All registered students and research scholars.
- Teaching faculty, non-teaching staff, and contractual employees.
- Hostel residents and visitors participating in University academic activities.
- All academic programmes, departments, centres, offices, and University-managed facilities.





2: Institutional Governance Architecture

2.1 Mental Health & Well-being Monitoring Committee (MHWBMC)

To ensure structured accountability and uniform compliance with national directives, the University shall constitute a permanent Mental Health & Well-being Monitoring Committee (MHWBMC), to be headed by the Provost of the University. This committee will serve as the primary institutional body responsible for supervising the mental health ecosystem across academia. The Committee will meet quarterly to review initiatives, reports, training programs and resource needs. The Committee may also convene within a day's notice in case of an emergency.

- **Composition:** The MHWBMC shall be composed of key institutional stakeholders, including the In-charge of the Well-being Centre (such as the Dean of Student Welfare), faculty representatives, non-teaching staff representatives, student representatives, family & alumni representatives, and residential or hostel wardens.

No.	Post	Designation
1.	Chairman	Provost
2.	Convener	Dean, Student Affairs
3.	Member	Assistant Registrar (HR)
4.	Member	Senior Faculty
5.	Member	Senior Faculty
6.	Member	Senior Faculty
7.	Member	Senior Faculty
8.	Member	Mental Health Professional
9.	Member	Non-teaching staff (Male)
10.	Member	Non-teaching staff (Female)
11.	Member	Hostel Warden (Boys)
12.	Member	Hostel Warden (Girls)
13.	Member	Student Representative
14.	Member	Alumni Representative
15.	Member	Family Representative

- **Responsibilities:** The committee is tasked with overseeing the smooth functioning of campus counseling infrastructure in accordance with legal and ethical standards. It will collect and evaluate anonymized service-utilization data and report relevant metrics to regulatory bodies. For seamless compliance, the committee shall appoint a designated Nodal Officer whose role shall be administrative and will serve as the active regulatory bridge between Sarvajani University and the University Grants Commission (UGC) for reporting, national audits, and training compliance.





2.2 Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC)

The University shall endeavor to establish a dedicated physical space, provisionally designated as the Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC), to serve as the campus hub for psychosocial care.

- **Composition:** The composition of the MHWBC shall be:

No.	Post	Designation
1.	In-Charge	Dean, Student Affairs
2.	Psychologist / Clinical Psychologist / Psychiatrist / Social Worker	Psychologist / Clinical Psychologist / Psychiatrist / Social Worker
3.	Support Staff	Faculty
4.	Support Staff	Faculty
5.	Support Staff	Administrative staff
6.	Support Staff	Peon

- **Design and Environment:** The physical infrastructure will be designed to prioritize privacy, ease of access, and emotional safety. It will provide safe, confidential rooms for individual consultations alongside appropriate spaces for waiting and administrative support.
- **Visibility and Access:** Contact information, hours of operation, and digital portals for the support center shall be prominently and widely publicized across campus notice areas and the official university website.

2.3 Human Resource Framework

To guarantee high standards of psychological care, the University will work towards embedding qualified professionals into its support systems.

- **Professional Staffing:** The policy permits the university to engage licensed or recognized mental health professionals, which may include Clinical Psychologists, Counselors, Psychiatrists, and Psychiatric Social Workers, based on institutional requirements and standard recommendations.
- **Caseload and Care Ratios:** The University authorities will periodically review and set appropriate institutional ratios for professional staff, faculty mentors, and student peer support structures to ensure sustainable coverage for the student body.





3: Preventive and Supportive Ecosystem

3.1 Awareness and Anti-Stigma Campaigns

Sarvajani University acknowledges that the best defense against psychological anguish is an environment that is open and supportive. The university will actively work to foster a good psychosocial campus environment by normalizing discussions about mental health and resolutely combating all types of marginalization, bullying, and discrimination.

- **Destigmatization Efforts:** The institution will implement periodic awareness campaigns emphasizing that seeking psychological help is a sign of strength and self-awareness.
- **Inclusive Climate:** Institutional efforts will be directed toward ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds can access supportive resources safely and equitably, without fear of ridicule or negative academic consequences.

3.2 Institutional Mentorship Framework

To ensure structured, continuous student support, the University shall rely on a comprehensive Mentor-Mentee (Proctor) System integrated across all colleges and administrative units.

- **Role of Faculty Mentors:** Designated faculty mentors will conduct regular interactions to monitor basic academic performance, attendance, exam-related anxiety, and general socio-emotional adjustment.
- **Referral Pathway:** While mentors are not clinical diagnosticians, they act as critical touchpoints. In cases where a student exhibits signs of persistent distress or emotional difficulty, the mentor shall facilitate a supportive, voluntary referral to the campus counseling professional.

3.3 Peer Support System

Acknowledging that peers are often the first to notice changes in behavior, the University framework incorporates a student-led support system.

- **Role of Peer Supporters:** Selected student volunteers will be trained to act as empathetic listeners and facilitators of institutional belongingness.
- **Oversight:** The peer support network will operate under the guidance of the Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC), ensuring student volunteers are adequately equipped to **identify distress**, recognize warning signs and suggest professional help channels when necessary. Peer supporters shall neither diagnose nor counsel students.



4: Counseling and Intervention Services

4.1 Service Modalities

The Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC) shall provide structured, professional psychological services to support the diverse needs of the university community.

- **Access and Standard Pathways:** The Centre will accommodate voluntary appointments, scheduled sessions, and walk-in access for acute emotional, academic, or personal concerns. Such sessions shall ensure totally confidentiality. The Committee may identify students requiring support through:
 - Faculty referrals
 - Mentor observations
 - Self-referrals
 - Peer referrals
 - Hostel wardens
 - Medical officers
 - Counseling requests
- **Scope of Care:** Professional services may incorporate short-term individual counseling, group therapy sessions, psychoeducational group sessions psychological screenings & assessment administered by qualified professionals, and stress management guidance. Counseling processes are strictly supportive and developmental in nature, remaining entirely separate from the university's disciplinary frameworks.
- **Referral Mechanisms:** When an individual requires care beyond the campus framework, the professional staff will coordinate with hospitals and mental health professionals.

4.2 Confidentiality and Ethical Standards

To encourage trust and lower barriers to help-seeking behavior, the University guarantees a safe, non-judgmental, and highly private environment.

- **Core Principle of Privacy:** All personal information, clinical details, and session notes shared during counseling shall remain strictly confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law.
- **Non-Punitive Support Protection:** No student or employee shall face any academic, administrative, or disciplinary disadvantage merely for seeking counseling services, participating in well-being initiatives, or reporting psychological distress. Seeking counselling shall not itself result in discrimination. Academic requirements shall continue to be governed by University Regulations.



- **Permissible Exceptions to Confidentiality:** In strict alignment with ethical codes and national directives, confidentiality may be overridden only under extraordinary circumstances. These are limited to situations involving an imminent threat to the life or safety of the individual or others, emergency medical requirements, or explicit statutory legal obligations. In such cases, only the minimum necessary information required to ensure safety shall be disclosed to authorized entities or emergency services.

5: Crisis Readiness and Management Protocol

5.1 Risk Identification and Warning Signs

The University community shall be educated to recognize early indicators of psychological vulnerability and acute distress.

- **Behavioral Indicators:** Stakeholders will be trained to notice significant changes in behavior, such as sudden academic absenteeism, profound social withdrawal, severe emotional agitation, signs of substance misuse, or explicit verbal/written expressions of self-harm and hopelessness.
- **Proactive Reporting:** Any student, faculty member, or staff person who observes these warning signals is expected to approach the individual with empathy and report the concern to the designated campus support authority or the Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC).

5.2 Emergency Response Mechanisms

When an imminent crisis or safety risk is identified, the university shall activate a coordinated, immediate protection protocol.

- **Immediate Stabilization:** The primary objective during an acute crisis is ensuring physical safety; an individual identified as being at high risk of self-harm must not be left unattended and reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure continuous support.
- **Stakeholder Mobilization:** Designated campus authorities will immediately mobilize emergency care resources, which may include campus security, medical personnel, or transport to the nearest tertiary care facility.
- **Caregiver Communication:** The institution will notify the student's parents or official guardians thoughtfully and sensitively, arranging an immediate point of contact at an appropriate location, such as the medical center or counseling office.
- **Emergency Disclosure Clause:** In situations of imminent danger to life, the University reserves the right to share critical health information with medical providers or family members without prior consent.





- **Incident Documentation:** Every crisis intervention will be thoroughly logged by the designated authority, detailing the timeline, individuals involved, actions taken, and the subsequent referral pathways utilized.

5.3 Post-Crisis Care and Reintegration

Following the resolution of an immediate mental health emergency, the university commits to supporting the individual's long-term recovery and return to academic life.

- **Academic Accommodations:** To alleviate undue pressure, the university may provide compassionate structural flexibility, such as modifying assignment deadlines, rescheduling exams, or offering temporary academic breaks with clear re-entry pathways.
- **Structured Follow-Up:** The MHWBC will design a customized post-crisis plan requiring regular, supportive follow-up counseling sessions to monitor stability and prevent recurring distress.
- **Campus Reintegration:** The student will be matched with dedicated peer or faculty mentors to facilitate a smooth, welcoming transition back into the campus environment and residential life.

5.4: Legal Safeguards & Good Faith Action

- **Protection of Good Faith Action:** Any student, faculty member, or administrative staff member who acts in good faith to report, escalate, or intervene in a perceived mental health crisis or self-harm risk shall be fully protected from any academic, administrative, or disciplinary retaliation. Willful neglect or dismissal of credible distress signals by institutional authorities may be subject to administrative review.





6: Capacity Building and Campus Engagement

6.1 Mental Health and Well-being for the University Community

Sarvajani University adopts a whole-institution approach to mental health and well-being, recognizing that a healthy academic environment depends on the collective well-being of students, faculty, non-teaching staff, hostel personnel, support staff, and all members of the University community. The University shall endeavour to promote a respectful, inclusive, and psychologically safe environment by creating awareness, facilitating access to appropriate support services, encouraging early help-seeking behaviour, and fostering a culture of empathy, dignity, and mutual respect.

6.2 Capacity Building and Stakeholder Development

The Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC) shall organize periodic awareness, orientation, and capacity-building programmes tailored to different stakeholder groups.

- **Students:** Programmes shall promote life skills, resilience, stress management, digital well-being, healthy relationships, and emotional well-being, consistent with the Ministry of Education's UMMEED framework.
- **Faculty Members:** Faculty shall receive orientation on student mental health, active listening, and early identification of distress, classroom well-being, safe referral practices, and workplace wellness. Faculty members shall also have access to counselling, stress-management initiatives, peer support, and professional development. Participation in counselling or wellness services shall remain voluntary, confidential, and shall not affect service records, performance appraisal, promotion, or academic responsibilities.
- **Administrative and Support Staff:** Non-teaching employees shall be provided awareness programmes, life-skills and stress-management sessions, psychological first-aid orientation, and access to counselling and referral services to promote a supportive and respectful workplace.
- **Hostel Wardens and Residential Staff:** Hostel wardens, mess personnel, and other residential support staff shall receive periodic orientation to recognize general signs of student distress, respond empathetically, and facilitate timely referral to appropriate University support services. They shall not be expected to diagnose or provide mental health counselling beyond their designated responsibilities.

6.3 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The University shall strengthen mental health promotion through collaborative engagement with internal and external stakeholders by:





- conducting periodic sensitization programmes for parents and guardians to encourage supportive family engagement;
- promoting student-led awareness campaigns and observance of national and international mental health initiatives to reduce stigma;
- encouraging alumni mentorship to support students' academic, personal, and career transitions; and
- collaborate with healthcare institutions, mental health professionals, and community organizations for expert guidance, outreach programmes, and awareness activities.

6.4 Well-being Promotion and Campus Environment

To strengthen resilience and promote positive mental health, the University may:

- organize mindfulness, meditation, relaxation, and self-care programmes;
- progressively integrate life skills, well-being, and happiness education into academic and co-curricular activities through credit or non-credit courses, wherever feasible;
- establish quiet or reflection spaces for relaxation and emotional well-being; and
- encourage creative expression, journaling, art-based activities, and other non-clinical well-being initiatives.





7: Administrative Compliance and Data Governance

7.1 Data Protection and Record Maintenance

To ensure the absolute privacy of all stakeholders seeking psychological support, the university shall enforce rigorous data management standards.

- **Informed Consent:** The University Mental Health & Well-being Centre shall obtain informed consent through a prescribed application and consent form before initiating counseling or psychological support, except where immediate intervention is required to prevent serious harm.
- **Anonymization Protocols:** The Mental Health & Well-being Centre (MHWBC) will ensure that all session records, clinical observations, and therapeutic tracking notes are securely stored in an encrypted format.
- **Access Restriction:** Personal identifying information must be separate or coded, with access restricted strictly to authorized mental health professionals within the center.
- **Data Lifecycle and Destruction:** Aggregated, fully anonymized service utilization data may be retained for institutional planning and review as per the University's policy on record retention and applicable guidelines. Individual clinical files will be stored or destroyed in accordance with legal timelines and institutional bylaws following a student's graduation or departure from the university.
- **Third-Party Transfer Protocols:** No clinical data or therapy-related records may be shared with external third parties, including potential employers, academic departments, or families, without the explicit, written, and informed consent of the individual, except during high-risk life safety emergencies.

7.2 Statutory Reporting and Regulatory Alignment

The University commits to full structural accountability by aligning its internal dashboards with national public health and educational regulatory systems.

- **Reporting Matrix via MANAS-SETU:** The designated Nodal Officer of the Mental Health & Well-being Monitoring Committee (MHWBMC) shall regularly submit comprehensive well-being and compliance reports to the University Grants Commission (UGC) via the central MANAS-SETU portal.
- **Scope of Monitored Data:** In accordance with regulatory requirements, these submissions will contain strictly anonymized metrics, including the volume of general screenings conducted, outreach programs held, faculty-mentor sessions logged, internal peer-support interactions, and external healthcare referrals managed.





- **Annual Quality Audits:** The MHWBMC will oversee an annual institutional self-audit to evaluate campus safety, lighting in high-risk residential areas, CCTV coverage, and the overall accessibility of well-being facilities.
- **Feedback Integration Loops:** Establish confidential digital channels to gather feedback from students, faculty, and family members regarding the effectiveness and delivery of campus counseling services to drive continuous policy improvement.

7.3 Media and Communication Framework

To safeguard the psychological well-being of the campus community and prevent behavioral contagion or distress replication, the university will maintain strict public information controls.

- **Centralized Communication:** No individual student, faculty member, or administrative staff person shall issue statements or interact with external media outlets regarding sensitive on-campus mental health crises or incidents of self-harm without explicit written authorization from the head of the institution.
- **Responsible Reporting Guidelines:** All institutional communications, public updates, or authorized media briefings regarding mental health matters must strictly avoid sensationalism, respect the privacy of families, and actively integrate information regarding verified helpline networks and support pathways.
- **Digital Communication Monitoring:** The University shall monitor its official communication channels and issue timely clarifications to reduce misinformation during crisis situations.
- **Resource Display Mandate:** Ensure that all official university websites, social media channels, and public digital bulletins permanently display contact numbers for 24/7 helplines, Tele-MANAS, and local emergency links.

7.4: Budgetary Allocation and Resource Planning

- **Resource Commitment:** The University, under the direction of the MHWBMC, shall progressively shall endeavor to allocate dedicated financial resources annually, subject to institutional approval and budgetary provisions; specifically dedicated to supporting well-being initiatives, maintaining MHWBC infrastructure, executing capacity-building workshops, and securing emergency transport services.





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Disclaimer:

This Policy is intended to provide a framework for promoting mental health and well-being within the University community through awareness, prevention, support, and referral mechanisms. It is designed to facilitate access to appropriate resources and services and shall be implemented in accordance with applicable laws, statutory regulations, University Ordinances, Rules, and administrative policies.

Nothing contained in this Policy shall be construed as creating any legally enforceable right, entitlement, contractual obligation, or cause of action beyond those provided under applicable law or University regulations. The University reserves the right to modify, interpret, or implement this Policy in accordance with evolving legal requirements, regulatory guidelines, institutional needs, and available resources.

