Healthy Sydney University: Guiding Principles

Healthy Sydney University (HSU) aims to create a healthy learning and working environment for students and staff at the University of Sydney. HSU brings together students, professional staff, academics and researchers from across our faculties and professional service units to plan, implement and evaluate healthy university strategies. These strategies are informed by the best available evidence and are rigorously evaluated to ensure we generate new evidence around healthy learning and working environments. Our focus is across three key areas: *healthy people*, *healthy places* and *healthy policies*.

The five guiding principles[1] underpinning Healthy Sydney University are:

1) **Evidence informed and evidence generating:** Projects carried out under (or in association with) Healthy Sydney University should be evidence-informed and evidence-generating;

2) **Collaboration:** Projects affecting staff or student life should be developed in collaboration with staff or students and their representatives;

3) **Holistic view of health and wellbeing:** Projects implemented and/or endorsed by Healthy Sydney University recognise the relationship between physical and mental health and wellbeing;

4) **University-wide engagement at all levels:** Academic and professional staff, management, students and champions across all sections of the university must work together – top-down and bottom-up;

5) **Population, settings-based approach** Activities should adopt an integrated, sustainable, population-based approach, rather than address individual health needs.

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[1] The following research was used as an evidence basis for the development of the framework for these guiding principles:
Byggeth, S, Broman, G,& Robert, K. (2007) A method for sustainable product development based on a modular system of guiding questions, Journal of Cleaner Production, 15; 1-11
King, L, Gill, T., Akkender, S. & Swinburn, B. (2010) Best Practice principles for community-based obesity prevention: development, content and application, Obesity Prevention, 12, 329-338.

Guiding Principle 1: Evidence Informed and Evidence Generating

Projects carried out under (or in association with) Healthy Sydney University should be evidence-informed and evidence-generating

Process	Guiding questions
Identify a need and define goals **Identify how the initiative meets a need for students and/or staff and define goals and objectives**	• Has a need for this kind of activity been identified? • Has any existing action around the University related to this activity been identified? • Have clear goals and objectives been set for the activity? • How and when will we know if the activity has or hasn't been successful?
Ensure the initiative is evidence-informed and evidence-generating **Inform projects with best available evidence** **Incorporate monitoring and evaluation to build new evidence**	• Is there existing evidence on this kind of activity? • What new evidence will be generated in doing this activity? • How will data be collected and stored? • Is there a plan for how outcomes will be measured against objectives? • Can data collected during the evaluation of the activity be fed into research activities within the University? • What impact or outcome measures will be included? Will structural and/or policy changes be measured alongside behavioural change? • Has there been consideration of how the activity might influence policy and process within the university?

Guiding Principle 2: Collaboration

Projects affecting staff or student life should be developed in collaboration with staff or students and their representatives

Process	Guiding questions
Identify and engage key stakeholders **Ensure Involvement and collaboration across all levels**	• Have all of the key stakeholders affected by this activity been identified? For example, external stakeholders and internal stakeholder representatives and existing groups within the University? • What has been done to initiate broad engagement among these stakeholders? • Is there a plan to create support and initial action on this activity? • Are initiatives affecting students and staff driven with key stakeholder representatives?
Participative planning **Develop a comprehensive and ongoing program of consultation to inform and engage key stakeholders**	• To what extent have staff and students had the opportunity to contribute to the development of this activity? • Is there opportunity for two-way dialogue and feedback into the initiative from all relevant stakeholders? • Does consultation with stakeholders need to happen more than once? • Is there a mechanism for feedback from stakeholders at program milestones?
Build program engagement & identify and support Champions **Customise the initiative to meet the needs, interests, and concerns of staff and/or students**	• Are there individual champions who can promote and create broader enthusiasm for the initiative? • Which faculties or services have the most enthusiasm for the initiative? Can these units initiate the changes required to start activities rolling? • How has this activity been adapted to meet the identified needs, interests and concerns of staff and students within the university? • Is the activity open to and accessible by all students and/or staff within the University?

Guiding Principle 3: Holistic view of health and wellbeing

Projects implemented or endorsed by Healthy Sydney University recognise the relationship between physical and mental health and wellbeing

Process	Guiding questions
Mental and physical health and wellbeing **Adopt a holistic view of health & wellbeing**	• Does the activity adopt a holistic interpretation of health and wellbeing? • Is it anticipated that this activity will impact positively on the physical and/or mental health and wellbeing of students and/or staff? • Can links be made between physical and mental health and wellbeing with this activity? • Does this activity contribute to a greater sense of community within the university?

Guiding Principle 4: University-wide engagement at all levels

Our approach is university-wide, with DVCs, Directors of Professional Service Units and Deans of Faculties and champions across all sections of the university, including students and student organisations working together

Process	Guiding questions
Engage Support from the top-down and the bottom-up **Work collaboratively on strategies**	• Have the appropriate decision makers been identified? • Have senior management been engaged? Does the activity have their support or endorsement? • To what extend have students and staff had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the activity? • Are student and/or staff representatives involved in driving the initiatives that affect them?
Market and communicate the initiative **Ensure the initiative is clearly branded and fits under the Healthy Sydney University. Identify appropriate channels for the target audience.**	• Has the activity been included under the Healthy Sydney University brand? What identifies it as part of the initiative? • Is there a marketing or communication plan around this activity? • What communication strategies have been developed to ensure this activity connects with the target group? • Does this strategy involve a range of media?

Guiding Principle 5: Population, settings-based approach

Our activities should adopt an integrated, sustainable, population-based approach, rather than address individual health needs

Process	Guiding questions
Take a University-wide approach to key action areas: healthy people, healthy places, healthy policies **Build upon existing actions and initiatives to create a university setting that promotes the health and wellbeing of its students and staff**	• Does the activity fit within a key Healthy Sydney University action area: healthy people, healthy policies, or healthy places? • Could the activity be adapted for different people or groups within the university? • Could this activity be implemented across a range of different environments across the University? • Where possible, does this activity build upon existing actions or initiatives within the university? • Is there a plan for staged introduction of the activity throughout the university? • Does the activity take advantage of any existing internal and external organized events, programs or services or does it require novel resources? • Does this activity integrate with other activities to help address identified needs?
Build sustainability **Provide incentives and recognition to sustain involvement. Put in place measure to encourage long-term sustainability**	• Does the activity have the flexibility to develop as feedback is gained from students and staff? • What incentives are there for this activity to be adopted and sustained by staff and students? Does this reward structure require approval by senior management? • Has a plan been developed to ensure the longer term maintenance of the activity? • Is there a succession plan for future versions of the program to ensure its sustainability?