Wellbeing
Mental Health First Aid Network

- At University of Sussex, we have over 30 staff across the campus who have received the Mental Health First Aid 2-day training.
- Mental Health First Aiders are trained to listen non-judgementally, provide support and reassurance and signpost to appropriate professional services.
- If you are experiencing poor mental health - or are concerned about a colleague - talking to a trained Mental Health First Aider could help.
- Please browse through the profiles below to identify someone with whom you’d feel at ease engaging in conversation with.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy Wilkins</td>
<td>I’m the Student Experience Coordinator in MPS. I’m on campus Monday/Wednesday/Friday (School Office, Pevensey 2) and also available on Teams or email if you want someone to listen and chat over a (real or virtual) cup of tea.</td>
<td>Contact Amy <a href="mailto:amy.wilkins@sussex.ac.uk">amy.wilkins@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brigette Groves</td>
<td>Contact Brigette <a href="mailto:Bg32@sussex.ac.uk">Bg32@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Cathy McDonnell</td>
<td>Staff wellbeing is a key area of work in my team and I am passionate about staff having access to support. I'm very happy to be contacted if you would like to have a confidential chat.</td>
<td>Contact Cathy <a href="mailto:c.mcdonnell@sussex.ac.uk">c.mcdonnell@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Chloe Isley</td>
<td>I find that sometimes a conversation with someone who is removed from the situation is all you need to feel a little lighter about the toughest things in life. I'm always here for anyone who wants to talk as I know how good it can feel to have a chat where there's no expectations or need to be strong - sometimes all you need is someone you can be honest with to release some of the stress you've been carrying around with you.</td>
<td>Contact Chloe <a href="mailto:cli21@sussex.ac.uk">cli21@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deema Sonbol</td>
<td>If you're feeling anxious, constantly worried, and have very high expectations of yourself that get in your way, welcome to the club! You are not alone, and we are here to support and listen to you. Remember, we are all human behind the facades we create.</td>
<td>Contact Deema <a href="mailto:D.Sonbol@sussex.ac.uk">D.Sonbol@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Dominic O'Brien</td>
<td>I am a lecturer in the Anatomy at the medical school and trained to be a mental health first aider after realising how important it is to be able to support my students through difficulties with the course or wider personal issues. Having support is important for everyone, and I’m happy to help where I can.</td>
<td>Contact Dominic D.O'<a href="mailto:Brien@bsms.ac.uk">Brien@bsms.ac.uk</a></td>
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Ellen Thomas
I work in the UK student recruitment team. If you are having a hard time and want help or would just like to chat, I'm happy to help! You can find me in Bramber Floor 4, by 402B - or feel free to message me over Teams.
Contact Ellen
Ellen.Thomas@sussex.ac.uk

Emily Winstanley
I became a MHFA in 2017 after getting support for my own depression/anxiety which is currently well managed. I work Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays in JMS and happy to meet in person or Teams/Zoom. I am here to listen with an open, compassionate mind and non-judgementally.
Contact Emily
ew290@sussex.ac.uk

Emma Hallett
I have recently qualified in MHFA. I believe everyone should have someone that they can confide in. I have a family history of bi-polar & depression & understand the stigma that surrounds mental health. In a professional setting, I previously worked as a manager and now I am in a student facing role, so I have experience of listening without judgement.
Contact Emma
e.r.hallatt@sussex.ac.uk

Gavin Mensah-Coker
alongside my teaching role, I am an Academic Advisor for students on the Foundation Year and in the School of Media, Arts & Humanities. I am also the Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Lead for Foundation Year and Deputy Race Equality Director in MAH. Happy to listen and chat in confidence where suits you best.
Contact Gavin
glm27@sussex.ac.uk

Holly Foster
Contact Holly
hf245@sussex.ac.uk

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Contact Gavin
glm27@sussex.ac.uk

Holly Foster
Contact Holly
hf245@sussex.ac.uk

Jackie Knight
Alongside my academic role, I have a professional background in Mental Health nursing. I'm also a trained professional life coach supporting individuals in their professional development, personal and mental well-being. I am passionate about Staff and Student having access to support. I am happy to be contacted if you would like to have a confidential chat.
Contact Jackie
J.knight@bsms.ac.uk
James Ward-Lee (they/he).

I’m the chair of the Trans and Non-Binary Staff Network, and I work in LPS as an assistant coordinator. I used to work in children’s mental health and have ADHD myself. Please reach out if you’d like a chat, either on teams/email or in person!

Contact James
J.Ward-Lee@sussex.ac.uk

Jason Evans

I am the Quaker Chaplain at Sussex, with experience listening without judgement to students and staff whatever issues they might be having. Whatever you are struggling with, talk to me."

Contact Jason
j.k.evans@sussex.ac.uk

Keira Thomas

Having supported individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, I offer support and a safe space during times of difficulty. My Mental Health First Aider role works alongside my roles as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion for DSE, joint Co-chair of the LGBTQ+ Staff Network, and volunteer for West Sussex Mind.

Contact Keira
kt436@sussex.ac.uk

Kirsty Hart

I believe that staff wellbeing should be a priority in the workplace, and it is important that people feel supported. This was why I wanted to become a Mental Health First Aider. If you are struggling and want to speak to someone in confidence, please contact me.

Contact Kirsty
Kirsty.Hart@sussex.ac.uk

Laura Gallagher

I have a background in mental health and wellbeing research. One of the things I valued most about this work was being able to give time to provide practical and emotional support and direction in relation to mental health and wellbeing. I look forward to doing more of the same as part of the Mental Health First Aider Network and welcome anyone who has concerns to come and speak to me in confidence.

Contact Laura
lg405@sussex.ac.uk

Lisa McDonald

I became a trained Mental Health First Aider in 2023. Reaching out and simply speaking to someone can be a powerful first step to help you reclaim your mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing and I’m here to support you should you need someone to talk to. We can meet either in-person or online, whichever you feel more comfortable with.

Contact Lisa
L.mcdonald@sussex.ac.uk
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<td>Lily Murphy</td>
<td>I work in the Business School’s Student Experience Team &amp; I’ve recently qualified as a Mental Health First aider. A large part of my role involves supporting students in distress and I would love to be able to use these skills to also support my colleagues. Please feel free to reach out to me if there’s any difficulties you’re experiencing and you’d like to chat. I’m available over teams or email. Contact Lily <a href="mailto:alm50@sussex.ac.uk">alm50@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Lisette Whittaker</td>
<td>I work in the Marketing Team, based on the 4th floor of Bramber House. As well as being MHFA trained, I’m also a Menopause Champion. If you find yourself struggling, or would just like to chat things through with someone, please feel free to contact me via email or on Teams. Contact Lisette <a href="mailto:L.Whittaker@sussex.ac.uk">L.Whittaker@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maxine Angel</td>
<td>I work in the Marketing Team, based on the 4th floor of Bramber House. As well as being MHFA trained, I’m also a Menopause Champion. If you find yourself struggling, or would just like to chat things through with someone, please feel free to contact me via email or on Teams. Contact Maxine <a href="mailto:m.m.angel@sussex.ac.uk">m.m.angel@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Davy</td>
<td>I work in both ESW and LPS. I studied Art History at Sussex and have been around for quite a long time! If you need someone to listen to you or just chat things over in confidence then please get in touch! Contact Mike <a href="mailto:m.j.davy@sussex.ac.uk">m.j.davy@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Naomi Harris</td>
<td>I recently became a mental health first aider to support my work with students in distress and would love to also help my colleagues. If you are having a hard time or would like to talk something through, please feel free to email or teams me. I am also co-chair of the Staff Disability Network and part of the Sussex mental health forum. Contact Naomi <a href="mailto:naomi.harris@sussex.ac.uk">naomi.harris@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Nichola Sedge</td>
<td>I work within the HR team and I have been at the University since 2018. We can all experience mental health concerns, at any time of their life and the most powerful step you can take is to talk about how you are feeling. If you want to make that first step and have a confidential chat, feel free to make contact with me and I would be happy to listen. Contact Nichola <a href="mailto:NC354@sussex.ac.uk">NC354@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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Paul Gunnell
Seasoned senior manager with an eclectic background history of both highly varied working environments and life experiences along with performance coaching and active listening skills.

Contact Paul pag24@sussex.ac.uk

Pav Virk
I recently settled in Sussex and have worked at the University for nearly a year. I love to bake in my spare time and spend time by the sea. I am a big foodie and a great listener!

Contact Pav PVirk@sussex.ac.uk

Sally Porter
Before joining Sussex, I was a teacher for many years and supported young people and carers with their mental health journeys. Talking about your mental health can be difficult but incredibly powerful. If you need someone to talk to, in a judgement-free space, I would love to be there to listen.

Contact Sally S.Porter@sussex.ac.uk

Sam Bates
I'm passionate about mental health and wellbeing in the workplace and feel it should be a safe space for us to discuss the challenges we may face and access any support needed. I'm available in person and online, if you would like to reach out, for yourself or for a colleague.

Contact Sam S.R.Bates@sussex.ac.uk

Sarah Cox
I have recently qualified as a Mental Health First Aider but I also have experience of supporting colleagues with sensitive, personal and/or confidential situations in my role at the University, having worked in the HR division for 16 years.

Contact Sarah s.j.cox@sussex.ac.uk

Simon Barton-Jones
I’m keen to help others and being a MHFAider is a great opportunity to understand the challenges we all face. I was diagnosed with Bipolar Type 1 in 2001 after struggling since my teens and having several mis-diagnosed episodes. I love to see MHFA’s continuing to create these open conversations and break down the stigma around mental health.

Contact Simon S.barton-jones@sussex.ac.uk
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<td>Sonya Barnett</td>
<td>Need someone to listen to you? I am friendly approachable and have been here at Sussex for over 15 years. My current day job is as an Employability Advisor for students/graduates, but I have done various roles. Here to listen to you in confidence. Contact Sonya <a href="mailto:srb26@sussex.ac.uk">srb26@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Sophie Corton</td>
<td>I am here to support anyone with any worries or concerns they may have around their mental health, even if it’s just to offer a listening ear. I am available to meet in-person or virtually if you would like to talk to someone in confidence. Contact Sophie <a href="mailto:S.C.Corton@sussex.ac.uk">S.C.Corton@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Sophie Valeix</td>
<td>As a mental health first aider, I deeply care about mental health, I have lived experience of mental health problems since I have been a student (here at Sussex) and are passionate about how we can support one another without judgement. I am also a facilitator of Mental Health Workshops for PhD students as part of the Doctoral School. You can find me in Room 301 of Jubilee building or on Teams/email. Contact Sophie <a href="mailto:S.Valeix@sussex.ac.uk">S.Valeix@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Tahsin Ahmed</td>
<td>I have recently become a Mental Health First Aid trainer to support me in working with distressed students in the Student Centre. If you’re also having a difficult time or would like to speak to someone confidentially, I’m always up for a coffee or a walk. I’m passionate about mental health and having open and honest conversations about our wellbeing is vital in the workplace. Happy to meet online or in person. Contact Tahsin <a href="mailto:Tahsin.Ahmed@sussex.ac.uk">Tahsin.Ahmed@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Vicki Love (Currently on mat leave)</td>
<td>I became a trained Mental Health First Aider in 2009 and went on to become an MHFA Instructor. I'm passionate about MHFA and its ethos that you don't have to be a mental health professional to talk about mental health. I'm happy to talk to someone if they are worried about their mental health - or have concerns about someone else. I can meet in-person or virtually. Contact Vicki <a href="mailto:v.love@sussex.ac.uk">v.love@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Zahid Pranjol</td>
<td>Besides my academic role, I look after students wellbeing and academic support. I am also a trained mediator in the school. All my work remain strictly confidential. So, please feel free to get in touch. We can go for a coffee or have a chat wherever it suits you best.&quot; Contact Zahid <a href="mailto:zp64@sussex.ac.uk">zp64@sussex.ac.uk</a></td>
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