

QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATION

 gateway
qualifications



Mental Wellbeing (Entry 3 – Level 1)

Access to HE

Apprenticeships

Digital

Employability &
Enterprise

English & Maths

ESOL

Personal & Social
Development

Professional
Development

Vocational

This qualification specification covers the following qualifications:

Qualification Number	Qualification Title
603/3356/X	Gateway Qualifications Entry Level Award in Mental Wellbeing (Entry 3)
603/3357/1	Gateway Qualifications Level 1 Award in Mental Wellbeing

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1.2 (October 2021)	Guidance for Pre 16 age range.	Page 10
1.3 (January 2023)	Updated Funding section, removed address and changed back cover.	Page 7 & 21
1.4 April 2024	Amended unit content and updated indicative content	Pages 24 & 27
1.5 June 2025	Amended achievement methodology section and TQT section has a bullet point added	Page 10

About this qualification specification

This qualification specification is intended for tutors, centre quality managers and other staff within Gateway Qualifications recognised centres and/or prospective centres.

It sets out what is required of the learner in order to achieve the qualification. It also contains information specific to managing and delivering the qualification including specific quality assurance requirements.

The specification should be read in conjunction with the Gateway Qualifications Centre Handbook and other publications available on the website which contain more detailed guidance on assessment.

In order to offer this qualification you must be a Gateway Qualifications recognised centre.

If your centre is not yet recognised, please contact our Development Team to discuss becoming a Gateway Qualifications Recognised Centre:

Telephone: 01206 911211

Email: enquiries@gatewayqualifications.org.uk

Website: www.gatewayqualifications.org.uk/recognition

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1. Qualification Information

1.1 About the qualification

These qualification are regulated by Ofqual (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) that regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England, and Qualification Wales that regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in Wales.

These qualifications are intended to support centres in developing learners' understanding of mental health wellbeing. They were initially developed in collaboration with a large further education college.

1.2 Objective

The qualifications provide an introduction to mental health wellbeing: including what constitutes positive mental health and what could result in mental ill-health; how to keep mentally healthy; how to recognise deteriorating mental health and support friends and family with mental health issues; how to access available support.

1.3 Funding

For information on potential sources of funding in England please visit the Education and Skills Funding Agency:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/qualifications-approved-for-public-funding>

<https://hub.fasst.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

For information regarding potential sources of funding in Wales please visit Qualification Wales:

<https://www.qualificationswales.org/>

Current funding information for Wales is available on [Qualifications in Wales \(QiW\)](#)

1.4 Geographical coverage

These qualifications have been approved by Ofqual to be offered in England and by Qualification Wales in Wales.

If a centre based in Northern Ireland or overseas (including Scotland) would like to offer the qualifications, they should make an enquiry to Gateway Qualifications.

1.5 Progression opportunities

The knowledge and understanding developed through undertaking the programme of learning should support further study relating to mental health wellbeing, health and care and those subjects based in the social and health sciences

1.6 Equality, diversity and inclusion

It is Gateway Qualifications' aim that there shall be equal opportunities and the promotion of inclusion within the organisation and in all the services it provides and within its recognised centres and via the services they provide and so meet the organisation's legal responsibilities to prevent discrimination.

In particular, it is the organisation's intention that there should be no discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic including age, disability, gender assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. It is acknowledged that this is not an exhaustive list.

2. Learner Entry Requirements

2.1 Key information

Qualification Titles	
Age	These qualifications have been approved for learners aged pre-16, 16-18 and 19+. Whilst some of our qualifications are regulated for pre 16 learners our minimum age is 14.
Prior qualifications or units	There is no requirement for learners to have achieved prior qualifications or units in the particular sector prior to undertaking these qualifications.
Prior skills/knowledge/understanding	There is no requirement for learners to have prior skills, knowledge or understanding.
Restrictions	There are no restrictions to entry.
Additional requirements/guidance	There are no additional rules or guidance regarding learner entry requirements.

2.2 Access to qualifications for learners with disabilities or specific needs

Gateway Qualifications and recognised centres have a responsibility to ensure that the process of assessment is robust and fair and allows the learner to show what they know and can do without compromising the assessment criteria.

Gateway Qualification has a duty to permit a reasonable adjustment where an assessment arrangement would put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. Please refer to [Section 4.11 Access Arrangement, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations](#) for further details

2.3 Recruiting learners with integrity

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity with regard to qualifications. Centres must ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification and that the qualification will meet their needs.

The recruitment process must include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification. Such an assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the qualification.

3. Qualification Details

3.1 Achievement methodology

The qualifications will be awarded to learners who successfully achieve the single mandatory unit via an online multiple-choice examination.

3.2 Qualification Size

Qualification Title	Total Qualification Time	Guided Learning	Credit Value
Gateway Qualifications Entry Level Award in Mental Wellbeing (Entry 3)	20	20	2
Gateway Qualifications Level 1 Award in Mental Wellbeing	20	10	2

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could be reasonably expected to be required for a Learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of the qualification.

Total Qualification Time is comprised of the following two elements:

- the number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and
- an estimate of the number of hours a Learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place by – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

3.3 Qualification structure (rules of combination and unit list)

The knowledge that will be assessed as part of each qualification is set out within the unit specification. These include the learning outcomes, associated assessment criteria and indicative content.

Gateway Qualifications Entry Level Award in Mental Wellbeing (Entry 3)

Learners must achieve the single mandatory unit.

Unit Number	Unit Title	Level	Guided Learning	Credit Value
M/617/1243	Understanding Mental Wellbeing	Entry 3	20	2

Gateway Qualifications Level 1 Award in Mental Wellbeing

Learners must achieve the single mandatory unit.

Unit Number	Unit Title	Level	Guided Learning	Credit Value
K/617/1242	Understanding Mental Wellbeing	1	10	2

3.4 Recognition of prior learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) provides learners and Centres with an alternative assessment method by which a learner's previous achievements can meet the assessment requirements for a unit/qualification through the knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and so, do not need to develop these through a course of learning.

It enables the recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable to contribute to a unit, units or a whole qualification according to the RPL criteria for a given qualification.

The process of Recognition for Prior Learning is not applicable to this qualification.

3.5 Links to other qualifications

There are no direct links to other qualifications.

4. Assessment

4.1. Method of assessment

The method of assessment for these qualifications is through an externally set and marked on demand online multiple-choice test.

When we set up a centre in Surpass (the platform for externally set examinations) we will also set up two generic users; Admin and Invigilator. If your centre requires more users please inform us by emailing the Customer Excellence team at enquiries@gatewayqualifications.org.uk.

The overall grading type is Pass/Fail.

4.2. Assessment language

These qualifications are assessed in English only.

4.3. Time limit

The total time permitted time to complete the assessment is 40 minutes. Reasonable adjustments are applicable to time limits. The process of application for reasonable adjustments is detailed below.

4.4. Assessment guidance

Learners must be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the online platform before taking the multiple-choice test.

4.5. Assessment conditions

Any room in which an assessment is held must provide learners with appropriate conditions for taking the assessment. The centre must pay attention to conditions such as heating, lighting, ventilation and the level of outside noise. The centre must ensure that the room is accessible and appropriate for learners with disabilities (in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010).

Display material (such as maps, diagrams, wall charts and projected images) which might be helpful to the learner must not be visible in the assessment room.
Suitable IT should be available

Persons present

Only candidates taking the assessment and authorised centre staff, i.e. the supervisor/s are allowed in the assessment room.

Gateway Qualifications reserves the right to visit centres during the assessment to inspect the arrangements made for the security of confidential examination material and for the conduct of the assessments.

A sign must be placed on the door to alert others that an exam is taking place.

Seating arrangements

The seating arrangements must prevent candidates from overlooking (intentionally or otherwise) the work of others.

Before the assessment

Assessment conditions are deemed to be in progress from the time the candidates enter the room until all candidates have completed the assessment and left the room.

Before candidates are permitted to start work the supervisor must:

- inform the candidates that they are now subject to assessment conditions and read out the relevant notices and warnings
- warn candidates that any unauthorised material must be handed in (this should also include any food or drinks, which may only be allowed at the discretion of the centre)
- remind candidates that they are forbidden to communicate in any way with, seek assistance from, or give assistance to, another learner whilst they are in the assessment room.
- mobile phones are not permitted in the room.

Conduct of candidates during assessments

Candidates must be supervised throughout the progress of the assessment. Supervisor/s must give complete attention to this duty at all times, being vigilant and remaining aware of emerging situations, looking out for possible cheating, malpractice or candidates feeling unwell. Any irregularities must be recorded, please refer to the invigilator guidance. Supervisors are required to move around the assessment room quietly and at frequent intervals.

How should contact between the supervisor and the candidate be monitored and recorded?

The supervisor should keep a record of feedback and advice provided to groups of learners and to an individual learner where this may affect the assessment outcome.

Misconduct

This type of assessments relies heavily on the integrity of the learners. In those cases where misconduct occurs, or is thought to have occurred, this will be investigated by the quality team at Gateway Qualifications and results may be withheld.

Candidates leaving the room

Candidates who are allowed to leave the assessment room temporarily must be accompanied by a member of staff. Those candidates may be allowed extra time at the discretion of the centre.

Candidates can leave the room quietly once they have completed their assessment.

Evacuation procedures

Staff, supervisors and candidates must be aware of the evacuation procedure in case of an emergency, such as a fire alarm or bomb alert. The following action should be taken:

- stop the candidates by pausing the assessment online
- collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
- evacuate the assessment room
- candidates should leave the room in silence
- make sure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the assessment room to make sure there is no discussion about the assessment being sat
- make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- allow the candidates the full working time for the assessment
- make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the Customer Excellence Department at Gateway Qualifications.

4.6. Learner registration and assessment booking

Learners should be registered via the Quartzweb online portal. For all externally assessed qualifications, a second step of assessment scheduling (booking) must also be carried out.

An assessment window is permitted for these qualifications. The dates between which the candidates will sit must be entered. This window should be as small as practicable (for example, we would suggest no longer than one month).

Applications for reasonable adjustments should be made at least 5 working days prior to learners undertaking the assessment and are subject to approval by the quality team at Gateway Qualifications.

4.7. Additional requirements/guidance

Staff should be aware that mental health can be a sensitive topic and that, due to their own circumstances or those of friends and family, some students may find some of the content challenging. They will, therefore, need to deliver the content of the qualification with sensitivity. Staff should familiarise themselves with the support services available within their own setting and beyond so that they are able to signpost students to these if necessary. The overall emphasis of the awards, however, is on good mental health and strategies to promote and maintain this.

4.8. Suggested resources

Useful websites

Epic friends - how to help friends who might be struggling emotionally.

Young Minds - Provides information for children and young people on mental health and emotional wellbeing issues.

Teenage Health Freak – Information and advice on feelings

Royal College of Psychiatrists - Information for young people

Charlie Waller Memorial Trust – Information for young people, parents and professionals on mental health and wellbeing and mental illness

MHFE provides a network particularly for those interested in adult education and mental health. It provides updates on recent research projects and also case studies of innovative practice

NUS FE and Mental Health – experiences of FE students

Action for Happiness – website focused on increasing wellbeing

Remploy – mental health and the workplace, including details of support services for apprentices

Mind – mental health charity website

MindEd - free educational resource on children and young people's mental health

StudentMinds – information hub on mental health for students

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/topic/mental-health> This is specific children's mental health

4.9. Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Gateway Qualifications understands its requirement as an awarding organisation to make reasonable adjustments where a learner, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

Gateway Qualifications has identified reasonable adjustments permissible for the Mental Wellbeing online assessment as detailed below. A reasonable adjustment is unique to an individual and therefore may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Centres do not need to apply to Gateway Qualifications for approval of reasonable adjustments unless adaptation of online assessment material is required. All reasonable adjustments made by the centre must be recorded on the Gateway Qualifications'

Reasonable Adjustments Form and should be made available to Gateway Qualifications upon request.

Additional time up to 30 minutes and formatting changes can be made directly within the Surpass system by the centre without formal approval by Gateway Qualifications. Further guidance is available on the Gateway Qualifications website: [Surpass administrator and invigilator guidance for centres](#). For any other adjustments, centres will need to apply to Gateway Qualifications. Guidance on this process can be found on the Forms and Guidance page of Gateway Qualifications' website.

Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and no later than 5 working days after the assessment. Please refer to the [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy](#) for circumstances where requests for special consideration may be accepted after the results of assessment have been released.

The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered for the purposes of facilitating access, as long as they do not impact on any competence standards being tested:

- adapting assessment materials
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes
- adaptation to equipment
- assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille
- assessment material in different colour format or in audio format
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- changing or adapting the assessment method
- changing usual assessment arrangements
- extra time
- language modified assessment material
- practical assistant
- prompter
- providing assistance during assessment
- reader
- scribe
- transcript
- use of assistive software
- using assistive technology
- use of CCTV, coloured overlays, low vision aids
- use of a different assessment location
- use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

It is important to note that not all of the adjustments (as above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.

Learners should be fully involved in any decisions about adjustments/adaptations. This will ensure that individual needs can be met, whilst still bearing in mind the specified assessment criteria for a particular qualification.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular learner may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements specified above.

Special Considerations

Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible. Please refer to the [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy](#)

5. Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval

5.1. Qualification-specific centre requirements

Centres must provide sufficient devices available for candidates to undertake the online test. Centres must also ensure that hardware and systems meet the minimum requirements for the delivery of this online test, details of which are available on the Gateway Qualifications website:

<https://www.gatewayqualifications.org.uk/advice-guidance/help-admin-tasks/external-assessment/online-assessment-system-and-hardware-requirements/>

Please note that the online assessment platform does not support tablet/mobile devices.

Centres will be subject to external monitoring to ensure compliance to centre recognition terms and conditions.

5.2. Qualification-specific tutor requirements

The centre must provide staff with appropriate inductions and professional development (including a development plan) to ensure staff can maintain their expertise and competence for the delivery of these qualifications. The centre must ensure that staff involved with a qualification will fully understand the relevant qualification specification provided by Gateway Qualifications and will comply with its provisions.

Guidance on staffing requirements can be found in the Centre Handbook:

<https://www.gatewayqualifications.org.uk/advice-guidance/delivering-our-qualifications/centre-handbook/quality-compliance/>

5.3. Supervision arrangements

The Centre must ensure that learners are supervised whilst taking the online assessment.

The Teacher/Tutor can act as the supervisor.

The Centre must ensure that:

- all candidates are within direct sight of the supervisor throughout the assessment
- display materials which might provide assistance are removed or covered
- candidates do not have access to e-mail, the internet or mobile phones
- candidates complete their work independently and that interaction with other candidates does not occur
- staff supervising the assessment are familiar with any specific instructions relating to the assessments
- learners are not offered any advice or assistance other than accessing the assessment.

6. Quality Assurance

6.1. Qualification-specific quality assurance requirements

There are no additional internal/external quality assurance requirements for these qualifications.

The qualification will be subject to external quality assurance visits to check centre and qualification compliance in line with the centre recognition terms and conditions and qualification requirements.

6.2. Malpractice

Malpractice is any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the internal and external assessment process, and/or the validity of certificates. It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- the assessment process
- the integrity of a regulated qualification
- the validity of a result or certificate
- the reputation and credibility of Gateway Qualifications
- the qualification to the public at large.

Centre staff should be familiar with the contents of Gateway Qualifications Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, <https://www.gatewayqualifications.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Malpractice-and-Maladministration-Policy.pdf>

7. Learner Registration and Results

7.1. Re-sitting an assessment

Learners may re-sit the assessment. In order to schedule a re-sit, centres will need to use the Quartzweb online portal and schedule a new assessment. This is available once results are released following the initial sitting.

There is no minimum time between assessment attempts although learners should be given adequate opportunity to improve their knowledge before re-sitting the assessment.

Please see Section 4.7 Learner registration and assessment booking.

7.2. Awarding

The qualifications will be awarded as Pass or Fail. Learners must achieve the assessment criteria to be awarded a Pass.

7.3. Marking and results

The assessment is marked externally within the online assessment platform. Centres will be able to report from the online assessment platform to determine results.

Certification of learners will follow within published timescales.

7.4. Enquiries

Enquiries about assessment decisions should be made once the centre has followed its internal enquiries and appeal procedures.

Contact details are available on our website:

<https://www.gatewayqualifications.org.uk/contact-us/>

9. Gateway Qualifications

Gateway Qualifications, a not for profit registered charity, is an Awarding Organisation based in Colchester.

We work with learning providers and industry experts to design and develop qualifications that benefit the learner and the employer.

We support flexible, responsive and quality assured learning opportunities whether it's in the classroom, at work, in the community or through distance learning.

We are recognised by Ofqual, to design, develop and submit qualifications to the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

10. Appendices

10.1. Appendix 1 – Unit Details

Understanding Mental Wellbeing

Level:	Entry 3
Credit Value:	2
GLH:	20
Unit Number:	M/617/1243

This unit has 4 learning outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1 Understand what is meant by 'mental health'.	1.1 Give a definition of 'good' mental health. 1.2 Give a definition of mental ill-health. 1.3 Identify some common emotional states, which may be unpleasant to experience, but do not count as mental illness.
2 Understand how to look after own mental wellbeing.	2.1 Describe key features of a lifestyle that supports good mental health. 2.2 State some key signs of deteriorating mental health 2.3 Give examples of positive ways to cope with stressful situations.
3 Understand how to support friends and family with mental health difficulties.	3.1 List the signs of poor mental health in others 3.2 Identify ways they can support someone with mental health difficulties positive mental health in others. 3.3 Give examples of situations when it is better to seek professional or emergency help rather than offer support themselves.
4 Know about support for mental ill-health.	4.1 Identify sources of support relating to mental health.

Indicative Content: Understanding Mental Wellbeing – Entry 3

Staff should ensure that the emphasis in their teaching and learning is on mental health wellbeing (rather than mental ill-health) and positive ways to maintain this. They should ensure that learners understand that, while mental ill-health is relatively

Indicative Content: Understanding Mental Wellbeing – Entry 3

common, it is quite distinct from some of the negative feelings (such as exam stress or sadness) that they may encounter in their daily lives. Learners should be taught about strategies to cope with these situations, as well as ways to recognise when mental health issues may be occurring and how to seek help for these.

Learning Outcome 1:

- Basic definitions such as:

‘Good mental health means being generally able to think, feel and react in the ways that you need and want to live your life’. MIND
- Mental ill-health is the experience of symptoms that stop you being able to think, feel and react in the ways that you need and want to live your life. MIND
- Emphasis that good mental health is important for everyone, no age barriers, gender divisions etc
- What are the benefits of having positive mental health?
- Symptoms may come and go or be present most of the time. Symptoms can affect your mood (e.g. feeling depressed or anxious) or the way you see/understand the world (e.g. hearing voices or thinking people are saying nasty things about you).
- Common emotional states which are distinct from mental illness: sadness; everyday anxiety or nervousness (e.g. before a performance); feeling a bit stressed in response to events/circumstances such as having to hand in work by a deadline.
- These do not count as mental illnesses in themselves because:
 - they are natural responses to events or circumstances
 - they tend to pass quite quickly
 - they don’t generally stop people from getting on with their day-to-day lives.

Learning Outcome 2:

- Features of a healthy lifestyle: healthy eating; regular sleeping patterns; limited use of alcohol; avoiding drugs; taking exercise, having friends; doing things you enjoy; not worrying too much about what other people think of you; talking about things that worry you rather than bottling them up.
- How to recognise changing patterns in your mental health?
- What everyday challenges can impact on good mental health?
 - How to promote own good mental health
- Coping strategies: breathing exercises; relaxation techniques; distraction techniques; focusing on positives; keeping things in perspective; asking for help.

Indicative Content: Understanding Mental Wellbeing – Entry 3**Learning Outcome 3:**

- Signs of deteriorating mental health: excessive crying; not wanting to spend time with other people; excessive drinking or drug-taking; behaving in a way that is not 'normal' for that individual – e.g. losing interest in a football team they were previously passionate about or for someone who was a 'party animal', not going out at the weekend any more, lack of attention to their appearance.

All of the above are possible indicators of mental ill-health – not everyone behaving in this way will have a mental illness.

- Ways to support: talking and listening; involving friends in social activities; encouraging them to ask for help; reminding them that they are not alone/other people feel this way too.
- Situations in which to seek further help:
 - Emergency services:
If you're worried about a friend's safety
 - Trusted adult or professional:
If you're not sure what to do next;
If their symptoms are extreme (e.g. delusions/hallucinations);
If you don't feel that you are helping anymore;
If your friend is asking you to support them to make contact with a mental health service.

Learning Outcome 4:

- School/college-based professionals such as counsellors, student support or welfare officers and on-site information hubs, e.g. a wellness noticeboard or leaflet table/shelf; key helplines or websites; local services; GP.
- Online support
- Perhaps something about getting support does not mean a weakness

Understanding Mental Wellbeing

Level:	Level 1
Credit Value:	2
GLH:	10
Unit Number:	K/617/1242

This unit has 4 learning outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1 Understand what is meant by 'mental health'.	1.1 Explain what is meant by 'good' mental health. 1.2 Explain what is meant by mental ill-health. 1.3 Explain the difference between mental illness and normal responses to difficult circumstances.
2 Understand how to look after own mental wellbeing.	2.1 Describe ways of looking after own mental health. 2.2 Outline ways in which an individual can offer support to friends or family members with mental health difficulties 2.3 Explain the positive effects of different strategies on mental wellbeing. 2.4 Describe how specific strategies or techniques can be used to cope with commonly-arising difficult situations or uncomfortable feelings. 2.5 Explain the importance of emotional resilience in maintaining good mental health.
3 Understand how to support friends and family with mental health difficulties.	3.1 Describe signs of deteriorating mental health in self and others. 3.2 Differentiate between situations where it is appropriate to provide support and where they should seek professional or emergency help. 3.3 State ways to maintain own wellbeing while providing support to someone with mental ill-health.
4 Know about support for mental ill-health.	4.1 Identify sources of support relating to mental health. 4.2 Outline the types of support available from different sources.

Indicative Content: Understanding Mental Wellbeing – Level 1

Staff should ensure that the emphasis in their teaching and learning is on mental wellbeing (rather than mental ill-health) and positive ways to maintain this. They should ensure that learners understand that, while mental ill-health is relatively common, it is quite distinct from some of the negative feelings (such as exam stress or sadness) that they may encounter in their daily lives. Learners should be taught about strategies to cope with these situations, as well as ways to recognise when mental health issues may be occurring and how to seek help for these.

Learning Outcome 1:

- Definitions of good mental health: e.g. 'A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life and can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community' World Health Organisation.
- 'The ability to learn, the ability to feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions, the ability to form and maintain good relationships with others, the ability to cope with and manage change and uncertainty' Mental Health Foundation.
- 'Good mental health means being generally able to think, feel and react in the ways that you need and want to live your life'. MIND.
- 'Mental disorders comprise a broad range of problems with different symptoms. However, they are generally characterised by some combination of abnormal thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others.' World Health Organisation.
- Mental illnesses are often categorised into two broad groups: neurotic (e.g. anxiety, depression) and psychotic (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder).
- Neurotic disorders relate to mood and can be seen as extreme versions of more normal emotional states. Neurotic disorders can develop for a number of reason including:
 - Biological (e.g. chemical imbalance in the brain)
 - Psychological (e.g. people with low self-esteem appear to be more prone to developing a disorder)
 - Environmental/social (e.g. in response to trauma).
- Psychotic disorders affect a person's perception, the way they see the world, and affect their thoughts and judgements. These are much less common than neurotic disorders, accounting for roughly 10% of mental illness. (Psychotic disorders can be triggered by drug use particularly where there is an existing vulnerability and/or history of mental illness in the family.)
- Mental illness is the experience of symptoms which affect our ability to function effectively. Symptoms can be fluctuating and often people with a mental illness experience long periods feeling completely well. Treatment or management techniques often allow people with a mental illness to lead perfectly normal lives.
- Differences between mental illness and 'normal' emotional states or rational responses, e.g.:

Indicative Content: Understanding Mental Wellbeing – Level 1

- depression versus sadness
- anxiety disorder versus everyday anxiety
- phobia versus fear
- bipolar disorder versus having up days and down days
- obsessive compulsive disorder and enjoying routine or liking things tidy.
- Examples:
 - Sadness is a natural reaction to a situation that causes upset or pain (like a bereavement); it is temporary and over time it fades; it is not usually overwhelming so that at times, people can feel briefly happy or laugh at something funny. Depression lasts for a longer time; it is not always triggered by an external event; it is all-consuming and affects a person's ability to function at work or in their personal lives; often it will cause suicidal thoughts.
 - The main difference between normal anxiety and an anxiety disorder is the cause and the intensity of the experience.
 - Normal anxiety comes and goes and is a reaction to certain events or situations. It is often a good thing; being anxious when you're walking in a dark place late at night makes you alert to possible dangers. With an anxiety disorder, the anxiety tends to be there all or most of the time; it is irrational and impacts negatively on how people live their everyday lives.

Learning Outcome 2:

- Ways of looking after own health including:
 - **physical aspects** such as exercise, balanced diet, sensible drinking, avoidance of drugs, good sleep and rest
 - **behaviours and attitudes** maintaining social contact, talking about feelings, asking for help in difficult situations, focusing on what you're good at, accepting self as you are, having a goal and a purpose, having a sense of balance between college/work/school and leisure/friends/relationships, building a support network.
 - Reasons why different strategies are effective in promoting wellbeing, e.g. physical exercise releases endorphins in the brain which make you feel good; the brain needs good nutrition to function effectively; talking about feelings helps keep things in perspective and allows other people to offer support
 - Techniques and strategies: revision strategies; breathing exercises; yoga; stress management techniques such as use of stress balls; distraction techniques; visualisation techniques; relaxation techniques.
 - Commonly-arising difficult situations such as exams; falling out with a friend; relationship breakdown and uncomfortable feelings such as anxiety, stress, nervousness.
 - Emotional resilience - the ability to: reduce feelings of pressure and cope with the stress they cause; 'bounce back' from negative experiences; adapt to difficult

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circumstances and learn from them. Emotional resilience allows us to encounter negative experiences without being overwhelmed by them.

Learning Outcome 3:

- Indicators of deteriorating physical signs, e.g. poor personal hygiene; lack of attention to appearance; loss of or gaining of weight.
- Indicators of behaviour signs, e.g. increased use of alcohol/drugs; self-isolating; crying; hyperactivity; changes to own 'normal' behaviours.
- What people say (e.g. I don't want to carry on living; I feel worthless; I'm just a burden to everyone)
- Professional help should be sought when someone is displaying the signs of disturbance and disorientation, when you feel concern that someone's low mood is not improving and that they are not responding to suggestions to seek help.
- Emergency help (e.g. calling 999) should be sought when someone is at risk of causing serious harm to themselves or of harming others (very rare), or of taking their own life.
- Ways to support: showing empathy, listening, suggesting services that could help, encouraging participation in activities that reduce stress etc, e.g. by inviting them to join in a football game
- Ways to look after own wellbeing: knowing own limitations and seeking help when needed; talking to others about your feelings; maintaining friendships beyond the one with the person you're supporting; having a social life; keeping active and eating and sleeping well.

Learning Outcome 4:

- Sources of support: school/college-based; websites; helplines; GP; A&E; community groups and networks)
- Types of support:
 - information
 - signposting
 - listening services
 - advice
 - medical referral
 - self-help guidance
 - emergency help in crisis situations
 - post-diagnosis services including peer support groups.



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