



Spring into Wellbeing

Brief & Guidelines



Over the last three years we have offered colleagues the opportunity to take part in a team challenge to encourage activity during the cold months and help put us into a positive mindset as we navigate the dreich days. Colleagues have found the walking challenges and BRIT Challenge fun and enjoyed a bit of healthy competition within their teams and across the University.

2024 Challenge

On Monday 4 March we will launch a new colleague challenge called **“Spring into Wellbeing”** which will build on previous ‘Walking Challenges’ and BRIT Challenge.

Aim

The Spring into Wellbeing challenge will promote and encourage:

- health and wellbeing among our colleagues
- an understanding of the benefits of physical and wellbeing activity (it doesn’t always need to be physical!)
- opportunities for team building
- colleagues to explore and make use of our fitness facilities and to try new activities.

Our focus is to deliver a challenge that is both enjoyable and inclusive and one that seeks to deliver lasting impact on participants on their physical and mental wellbeing.

The Challenge

The Challenge will start on **Monday 4 March** and run for **eight weeks** concluding on Friday 26 April 2024 (Spring starts on Friday 1 March hence the title “*Spring into Wellbeing*”).

Unlike in previous years, participants in their teams will be encouraged to focus on **accumulating minutes of exercise and wellbeing activity** rather than steps or distance measures. We will also encourage participants to accumulate minutes across both the working week and at weekends. This builds in greater inclusivity and opportunity to participate for those who cannot commit to completing long hikes, runs or cycles etc for various reasons, or who find it challenging to engage in exercise during the working week. We will encourage (and provide opportunities) for colleagues to try new activities such as badminton, table tennis, short tennis and gym awareness through ENGAGE etc, while other colleagues can collect minutes by gardening, walking the dog, walking or cycling to work rather than taking the bus/car etc.

Create Teams

Feedback from participating colleagues suggest that we should retain a ‘team’ focus. As in previous years we will encourage colleagues in Professional Services/Schools to pull together teams to encourage camaraderie and friendly competition.

This year we suggest five colleagues per team.

Set Clear Rules and Guidelines

We will clearly communicate the rules and guidelines of the challenge, including how collecting minutes will be tracked and measured.

Incentive

We have collaborated with ENGAGE and there will be prizes for the most successful team collecting the most minutes of activity by the end of the challenge.

1st prize: 3 month free membership at ENGAGE

2nd prize: 1 month free membership at ENGAGE

3rd prize: ENU T-shirt

Physical and wellbeing activity to collect minutes

While we are keen to encourage physical activity during the challenge to encourage colleagues to get out and about in the fresh air and try new activities, we acknowledge that not everyone wishes to, or can, partake in physical activity. Therefore, we are encouraging colleagues to try other activity to promote positive wellbeing, and this can be lighter activity such as gardening, walking the dog, yoga, mindfulness, going to the park with the kids or volunteering.

Minutes can be accumulated by doing the following activity each day:

Physical

Running	Swimming	Group sport (football, hockey, rugby etc)
Walking	Gym	Skating
Cycling	Horse riding	Fitness classes

These are just examples, not an exhaustive list. Walking/cycling to work rather than driving or getting the bus is another one to try this challenge to create a new habit if possible. We are trying to encourage you to create a new positive habit by trying a new activity or getting back into an activity you have stopped doing.

Wellbeing

Yoga	Art classes	Listening to wellbeing podcast
Mindfulness	Gardening	Reading
Massage	Pilates	Journaling

These are just examples, not an exhaustive list. Basically, any activity which is giving you time to relax and do things to improve your wellbeing and practice self-care that you may not usually do. We are trying to encourage you to create a new positive habit.

Volunteering

Litter picking	Foodbank volunteer
Charity Shop volunteer	Help in your child's school
Link in with charities to help others with gardening, decorating etc	

These are just examples, not an exhaustive list. Volunteering is known to promote positive wellbeing by helping others consider doing some volunteering during this challenge and you may find something you enjoying doing.

What is NOT included

Doing the housework and daily chores is **not** included and also cooking. We are aware that cooking can be an activity some people do to relax but it's too vague to add to this challenge as most people have to cook if they like it or not.

We also **not** including social activity such as meeting friends/family for lunch/dinner, going to the pub, cinema etc as while these may be relaxing for some people, they can be too vague.

We are wishing to encourage colleagues in their team to try new physical and wellbeing activity OR go back to an activity they may have done but stopped as life got in the way. This is the time to make some time to do something for yourself ad create new habits.

Collecting and recording minutes

- 1) Team members will be encouraged to accumulate minutes of physical and wellbeing activity each day, recording the total amount each day for a full week (Mon to Sun).
- 2) Team members will give their total accumulated minutes to their Team Captain on a Monday from the previous week.
- 3) The Team Captain will give the total Team accumulated weekly minutes to the Colleague Health & Wellbeing Lead every Monday so team progress can be monitored and matched against the other teams.
- 4) A Leader Board will be created and communicated to create fun competition and engagement throughout the duration of the eight-week challenge.

A simple table can be used to collect minutes of activity per day such as;

W/C Mon 4 March

Date	Activity	Minutes	Total Mins for Day
Mon	Get off the bus three stops before usual stop on way to campus	20	
	Podcast eating lunch	10	
	Walk the dog PM	40	70
Tue	Bootcamp class PM	60	
	Mindfulness App before bed	15	75
Wed	Walk the dog AM	30	
	Art class PM	45	75
Thur	Yoga session from MCL Medics app	35	35
Fri	Swimming PM	45	45
Sat	Gardening	45	
	Walk with friends	90	
	Cycle to shops	25	160
Sun	Help neighbour with fence painting	120	
	Reading to relax	50	170
TOTAL			630

Team collection

W/C Mon 4 March

Team Name: ABC Team

Team Member Name	Total minutes accumulated
Team Captain	630
Team member 1	480
Team member 2	985
Team member 3	540
Team member 4	235
TOTAL for week	2,870

Use Fitness Tracking Apps

We encourage colleagues to use fitness tracking apps or devices to monitor their progress easily and to calculate minutes such as Fitbits, MyFitnessPal or simply use their watch to log start and end time of an activity.

Opportunities for activity

ENGAGE have pulled together fun taster sessions for teams to get involved during lunch breaks on a Wednesday and Thursday such as table tennis, badminton, short tennis etc...we may even suggest a friendly 5-aside football game between teams (dust off those football boots!) if there is interest.

For example:

Date	Time	Activity
Wed 6 th March	12.00-13.00hrs	Gym Awareness Session
Thur 7 th March	12.00-13.00hrs	Table Tennis
Wed 20 th March	12.00-13.00hrs	Badminton
Thur 21 st March	12.00-13.00hrs	Gym Awareness Session
Wed 27 th March	12.00-13.00hrs	Short Tennis
Thur 28 th March	12.00-13.00hrs	Badminton
Thur 18 th April	12.00-13.00hrs	Take colleague suggestions
Wed 24 th April	12.00-13.00hrs	Take colleague suggestions
Thur 25 th April	12.00-13.00hrs	5 aside football

Please note, there will be no arranged activity during the Easter holidays.
Teams/Colleagues are welcome to visit the gym for an awareness session at any time.

The MCL Medics APP has a FITNESS section which includes yoga sessions for bedtime (video), workout videos etc.

The ENGAGE team also have suggestions for activity and workouts.

The Environmental & Sustainability Team have cycles routes to help support cycling to campus and other routes for pleasure.

Create a Supportive Environment

We have set up a [TEAMS “Spring into Wellbeing” site](#) to encourage teams to post photos, support each other, have some competitive banter to encourage engagement.

Teams can set up their own chats within the TEAMS site to share their progress, motivate each other, and ask questions.

We will use the H&W fortnightly Newsletter to encourage a positive and supportive atmosphere to keep everyone motivated and we will celebrate achievements and milestones to keep participants motivated through The Bones.

We will recognise and celebrate team achievements at the end of the challenge with 1st/2nd/3rd prize.