Mental Health Awareness Slides

What will we do:

1. Lobby the university to include information about support services in all introductory lectures, across all years and courses. Work in conjunction with the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures to make slides more accessible to our international students.
2. Lobby the University to update its website so links to support services are more easily accessible.
3. Include details of mental health services in welcome packs sent to all students, and distribute leaflets in student halls.

Background to this:

1. Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will suffer a mental health problem every year.¹
2. Edinburgh ranked 117th out of 122 Universities for Student Satisfaction in the Complete University Guide, improved mental health awareness and support could improve student satisfaction scores and ultimately the University's rankings².
3. For 65% of students it took more than 1 week to access counselling, and for 36% of students it took more than 4 weeks. With 1 in 3 waiting roughly a month to speak to someone, improved knowledge of other resources would help sustain students who need help. Further to this, the number of students seeking counselling for mental health at Edinburgh University doubled over 5 years from 2012/13 to 2016/17, increasing by a further 13% last year to 3,398 referrals.³
4. Overall usage of the Student Counselling Service was 4,004 people over 2017/18, 9.7% of the student population. This shows high demand for good support services, however there is a reduced knowledge of other services the University provides, e.g. the Feeling Good App, reaching less than 2% of Edinburgh Students in 2017/18.

Beliefs and Motivating Actions:

1. University can be an incredibly stressful time for many students, and fundamental pastoral services the University provides are not clearly conveyed to students which is detrimental to the effectiveness of such services.

² https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings?r=Scotland
2. Dissolving the stigma surrounding mental health by rooting the conversation in class, reinforcing and illustrating to students that university staff acknowledge and understand pressures put on students during their academic life.

3. Leaving home can be daunting, especially for international students. The University has a duty of care to students, and to help promote a wider sense of community wellbeing.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures