

# SEDA Spring Conference 2024



**Session Title:** Curriculum design to enhance student wellbeing

**Session Type:** Workshop

## **Main presenters:**

Phil Carey, Liverpool John Moores University

Wendy Garner, University of Chester

Wendy Johnston, Liverpool John Moores University

**Session Summary:** This workshop provides delegates with a chance to explore how curriculum design and operation can support institutional efforts to protect and enhance students' wellbeing. The focus will be on curriculum practices as opposed to content. The workshop will also provide an opportunity to consider the impact of local policies and procedures on efforts towards more compassionate curricula.

**Session Outline:** There is increasing concern across UK Higher Education of the effect of university studies on students' mental health and wellbeing (Berry et al, 2024). Increasing levels of debt, the cost-of-living crisis and the ongoing impact of Covid have created a challenging environment for students. Add to this a social and political atmosphere that can appear to be hostile to the younger generation, and it is no surprise that many students feel overwhelmed by the added pressures of university life, course workload and assessment deadlines. The development and delivery of the curriculum may contribute to the problem or provide a route to a solution (Upsher et al, 2023). This workshop will explore how teaching practices, assessment design, academic support, as well as activities to encourage connectedness and belonging can be mobilised to reinforce both learning and wellbeing. It will also consider how institutional procedures and regulations may support or constrain the construction of the curriculum into a compassionate and supportive space for students.

## **References:**

Berry J, Cook F, Dunbar-Morris H et al. (2024) Embedding Wellbeing into the Curriculum: A Global Compendium of Good Practice. AdvanceHE, York.

Upsher, R., Percy, Z., Cappiello, L. et al. (2023) Understanding how the university curriculum impacts student wellbeing: a qualitative study. *Higher Education* **86**, 1213–1232 .