STUDENT WELLBEING REPORT

HOTELSCHOOL THE HAGUE
Hospitality Business School



HOTELSCHOOL THE HAGUE
2021

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INTRODUCTION

A tiny spark can become a flame, and a flame a fire. In this case, a fire that sheds light on the topic of wellbeing among Hotelschool The Hague students.

In fact, the obtainment of the Comenius Grant through Ms Oruc's intervention, a subvention that encourages and promotes educational innovation and improvement, represented the genesis of a movement that revolves around research concerning different aspects that characterise student wellbeing. Indeed, it created the conditions to unify numerous independent projects, such as the research on the stress journey conducted by Dr Sok and Mr Kapur and the "Study Success" activity conceived by Ms Paoletti. Moreover, it has involved LYCar students and lecturers. As a consequence, 30 LYCar reports are now part of the Comenius project, thus providing a complete overview of the various facets of student wellbeing at Hotelschool The Hague.

That said, this report aims to summarise and expose the interesting findings, suggestions and initiatives proposed by or derived from these studies.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank Dr Sok, Ms Oruc and Ms Paoletti for the precious guidance, support and availability experienced throughout the redacting process of this document.

I genuinely hope you will enjoy and appreciate reading this HTH student wellbeing report.

Yours sincerely,

Stella Torazzi
2021



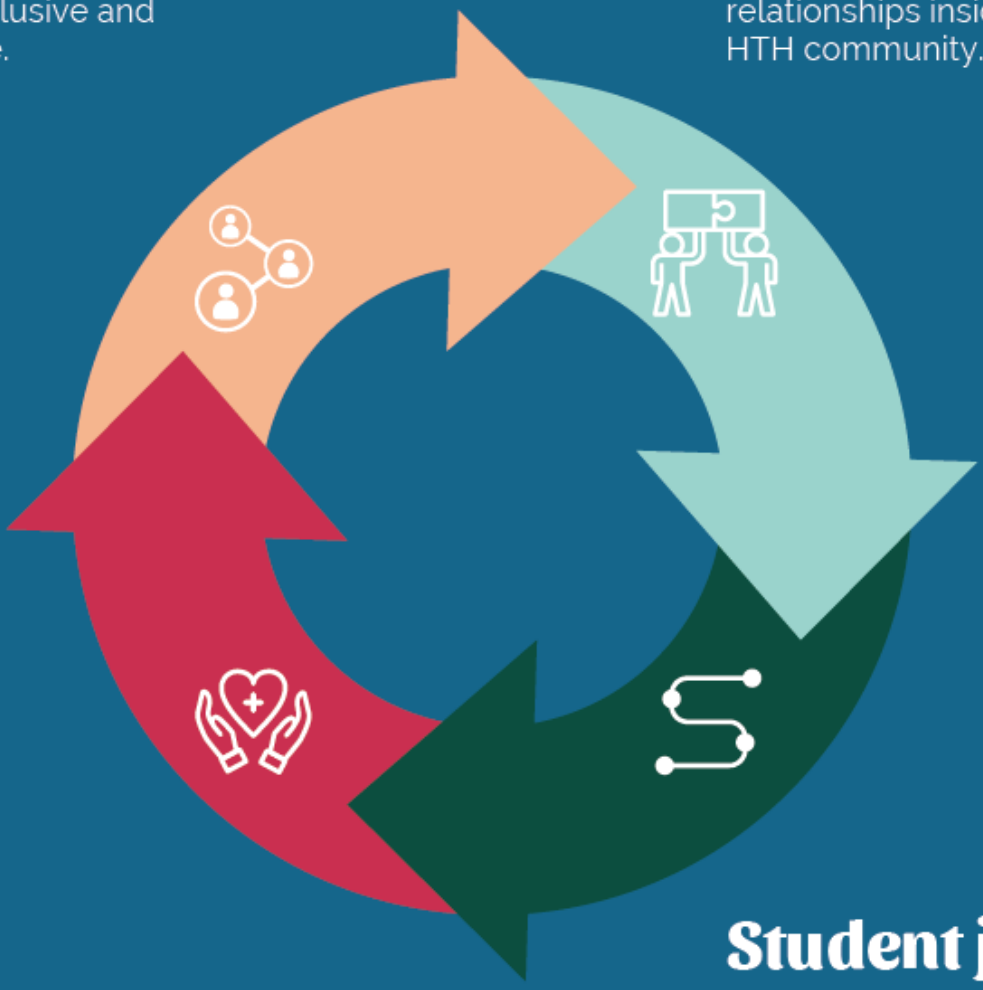
HTH Student Well-Being Framework

Community

HTH at the heart of hospitality; connected, inclusive and diverse culture.

Stakeholders

Students' professional and social relationships inside and outside the HTH community.



Health

Supporting development of physical and emotional health of self and others consistently with focus on turning obstacles into opportunities.

Student journey

Facilitating authentic, active and engaging student participation by providing significant learning experiences offered through a positive flow.

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COMMUNITY



Communities represent a complex and multifaceted topic. On one hand, they protect and stimulate its members. In fact, students engaged in their studies receive higher grades and are less likely to suffer from burnout in later academic life (van Zeeland, 2019).

On the other hand, large communities might constitute a threat for the individual, due to the peer pressure experienced to "fit in", especially at a younger age. Furthermore, these might be difficult to manage and guide, as they are constituted by different people, all with unique backgrounds (Potharst, 2020).

"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals" (Koyenikan, 2016)

Student resilience, self-esteem, and peer pressure

Research conducted by Diederik Potharst (2020), analyses the relationship between self-esteem, resilience, and peer pressure among Hotelschool The Hague students.

- Hotelschool The Hague students are characterized by an above-average resilience level.
- In general, Hotelschool The Hague students have a moderate level of self-esteem and a positive perception of themselves.
- Hotelschool The Hague students display high resistance to peer pressure. However, undergraduates members of fraternities and sororities have a lower resistance to peer pressure.

Acculturative Stress Among International Students

Hoteschool The Hague strives to create a diverse, multicultural and international community. Yet, stress can be experienced when relocating to a host culture (Elsayed, 2020) (Vos, 2020). Therefore, what are the most common stressors encountered by international students during Phase-One and Phase-Two?

Top 5 stressors:



Language barrier



Housing



Communicating the HTH experience to relatives



The animosity between Dutch and international student bodies



Managing personal finances

Recommendations

Research conducted by LYCar students has highlighted areas of improvement concerning the HTH community and has designed several recommendations. Therefore, hereby 5 suggestions that contribute to the improvement of our community.



No. 01 — Onboarding Literature

Students should be provided with onboarding literature that details the HTH experience to limit the acculturative stress that results from unmet expectations (Elsayed, 2020). Information to be presented include the average duration of the Bachelor Programme, the percentage of Dutch and international students and an explanation of the first-year courses and their internationally-known equivalent (ibid).



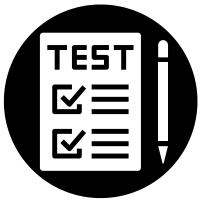
No. 02 — Online Support Platform

An online support platform encourages students anxious to seek help in a real-life context to do so in an anonymous manner (van Zeeland, 2019).



No. 03 — Housing Portal

An HTH housing portal, either via Facebook or on the Hotelschool The Hague website, specifically focused on housing support to international students (Elsayed, 2020).



No. 04 — AQ Profile Test

An AQ Profile Test enables students to gain an insight in individual responses to adversities as well as to get acquainted with this crucial concept in the HTH curriculum (Potharst, 2020).



No. 05 — Wellbeing Workshops

Wellbeing Workshops concerning different topics, for instance, anxiety and resilience allow students to develop tools to protect and enhance their mental wellbeing (van Zeeland, 2019).

STAKEHOLDERS



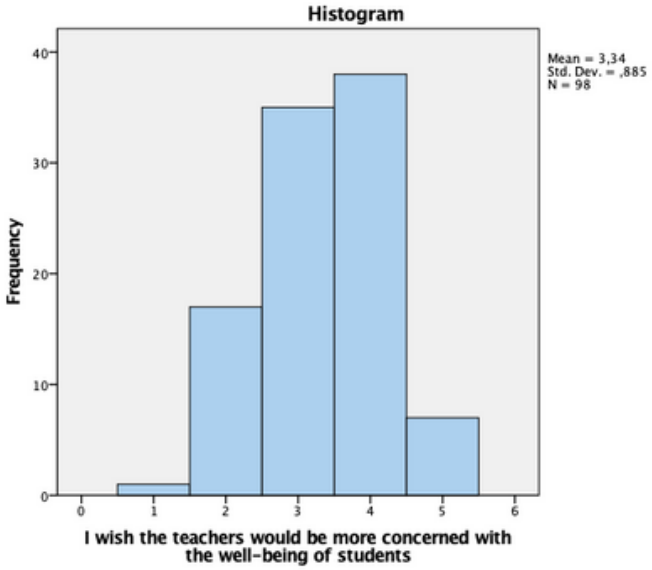
"The relationships we maintain with others hold a significant key to our overall health.
Interacting with others, fostering an attitude of care and concern for each other,
enhances our sense of purpose and connectedness to society and to ourselves" (Gowty, 2018; Patton et al. 2000; Rowe et al., 2007; Soutter 2011, cited in van de Ven, 2020).

Moreover, students who experience positive, close and supportive relationships generally have higher levels of achievement (Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilos, 2010 in van de Ven, 2020).

"Good connections and social support can improve health and increase longevity" (Harvard Health Publishing, 2019)

Faculty Relations

Student-teacher relationships have been associated with academic achievement and wellbeing (van Zeeland, 2019). These, together with social support, revealed to have a strong relationship with stress (de Keijzer, 2019). In fact, the higher the perceived stress from a student, the lower the perceived support is from the teachers and tutors, indicating that support plays an important role in stress (ibid). LYCar research has demonstrated that most students feel the need for increased support from both teachers and tutors (van Zeeland, 2019) (de Keijzer, 2019). Indeed, undergraduates mentioned being dissatisfied with the current support received, which also seemed to have a negative influence on their wellbeing (ibid).



(van Zeeland, 2019)

49.7%

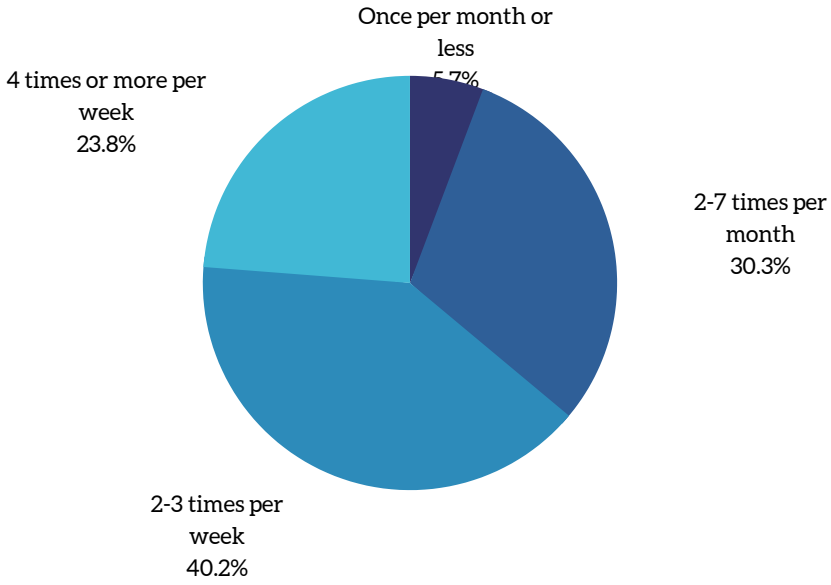
Students that state to be satisfied with the relationship between the student and teacher.

32.7%

Students that state to have a neutral relationship with their teachers.

Social Relations

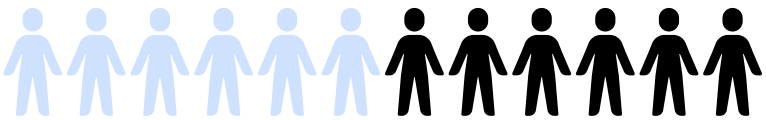
Hotelschool The Hague offers a very socially active environment. Skotel, the different student associations, fraternities and sororities are just a few examples of the numerous social occasions. Whereas these have a positive impact on social acculturation, strong social bonds and a high sense of freedom might also represent a threat to students' health. Research conducted by David van Westrop in 2020 indicated that alcohol consumption at HTH is significantly higher than at other universities in the Netherlands with socializing as the primary reason for drinking.



(van Westrop, 2020)

Unfortunately, the HTH social scenario features a marked social divide between Dutch and international students (Elsayed, 2020) (Vos, 2020). Although it might be considered as a naturally occurring event, the separation negatively affects the group work experience with Dutch students (ibid).
Students felt the extracurricular activities and groups offered by HTH, specifically the fraternities, sororities, and student associations are geared more towards Dutch students than internationals (ibid). Therefore, many are disappointed by the segregation of Dutch and international students in the fraternities and sororities (ibid).

6 out of 12 students feel the divide between the Dutch and the international students (Elsayed, 2020).



5 out of 12 international students feel isolated from their Dutch peers (Elsayed, 2020).



STUDENT JOURNEY



Every student's journey is unique and special; characterized by unforgettable moments, challenges, and milestones.

Yet, there are some experiences, events, and feelings that unite and connect most of their journeys.

It is extremely interesting to discover what stress levels do students perceive during all three phases of the curriculum offered at Hotelschool The Hague.

"The journey matters more than the destination"

Phase-One

Two out of three students in Phase-One are severely stressed, with the other third perceiving moderate levels of stress (de Rijcke, 2019). It seems females are usually more severely stressed than males, and Dutch students seem no more stressed than internationals (ibid). Peer pressure to socialise, keep an image up and attend parties is high in Skotel (ibid). Moreover, finding a practical placement is perceived to be difficult and stressful (ibid). It seems alcohol consumption increases upon enrolling in HTH, as does drug usage of international students (ibid).

Block	Touchpoints	Perceived Stress
CHI	• HTH career starts • Skotel • First assessments in HTH	• Mild stress • Moderate stress • High stress
CBV and E&S	• Next block starts • CBV exam (week 6) • Skotel • Final assignment E&S and CBV exam	• Mild stress • High stress • Moderate stress • Severe stress
PE	• PE "just works his shifts" • Placement office first workshop • Rejected from first internship hotel	• Mild stress • Mild stress • High stress
DWG and RIB	• RIB first assessment in week 5 • Got accepted for practical placement • Final assessment of Phase-One	• High stress • Mild stress • Severe stress

The displayed information refers to the 2019 HTH curriculum. Since then, several improvements and changes have been taking place based on students' recommendations.

Recommendations



Instruct faculty members to recognize symptoms and expressions of distress (de Rijcke, 2019).



Design a more balanced Phase-One curriculum in terms of workload distribution (ibid).



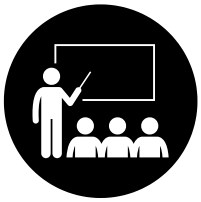
Assign a Phase-Two student to every Phase-One student in order to establish buddy relationships (ibid).

Phase-Two

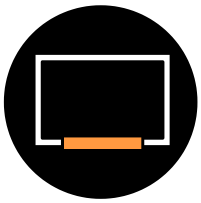
Phase-Two students from HTH have moderate perceived stress (Irion, 2019). The perceived stress level does not differ significantly between groups. The first stressor discovered is the lack of clarity that is experienced in this phase (ibid). This entails that students' stress level increases when they are unsure of what is expected from them in a course (ibid). Moreover, the financial situation of students on a monthly basis, the search for study space in HTH, the pressure to participate socially, and the search for a house after practical placement or summer preparation course are found to have a relation with the perceived level of stress of students (ibid).

Block	Touchpoints	Perceived Stress
PP	• Searching for housing	• Moderate stress
MFD, APC and BE2	• Phase-Two starts • IFT and regular students merge • Search for housing • Phase-One resits • Exam weeks 9 and 10	• No stress • Mild stress • Moderate stress • Mild stress • High stress
QM, RM and Language 2	• Working in teams • Not having passed Language 1 • Exams weeks 9 and 10	• Moderate stress • Mild stress • High stress
MO	• Ppressure to participate socially • Lack of time management skills • Financial situation	• Moderate stress • Mild stress • Mild stress
ABI and DMO	• Lack of clarity in the course • Finding a study space • Exams weeks 9 and 10	• Moderate stress • High stress • Moderate stress

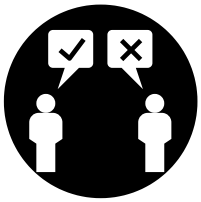
Recommendations



Offer a mandatory syllabus class at the beginning of the block (Irion, 2019). it is recommended to spend the first class of each block by going through the syllabus in a classical manner, as well as discussing the end result of the course by means of an example (ibid).



Introduce co-working classrooms bookings (ibid).



Inform regular and IFT students of differences in courses and expected attitudes (ibid).

Phase-Three

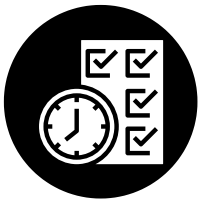
The majority of Phase-Three Hotelschool the Hague students (63%) appear to experience a high-stress experience (van der Vaart, 2019). Significant stressors in this period include starting Phase-Three with resits from previous blocks, confusion, and tensions between team members (ibid).

Block	Touchpoints	Perceived Stress
SDV	• Phase.Three starts • Other courses resits • SDV assessment	• No stress • High stress • High stress
MCH	• MCH starts • Troubles tackling academic expectations • Team tensions	• Mild stress • High stress • High stress
BMI	• Last block of Phase-Three • External expectation • Personal pressure	• High stress • High stress • High stress
LYCar	• LYCar period starts • Applying for internship companies • Thesis	• High stress • High stress • Mild stress

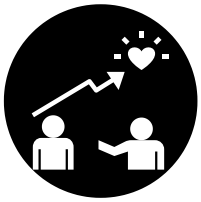
Recommendations



Next to curriculum improvement efforts consider not allowing students to start Phase-Three when he or she still has to resit exams from previous courses (van der Vaart, 2019).



Offer workshops that focus on challenges that students might encounter concerning time management and planning (ibid).



Consider extending the IMP course through all phases (ibid).

HEALTH



Health is one of the most important assets of one's life and it is also its prerogative.

Unfortunately, according to research, university students are a very high-risk population for psychological distress and mental disorders (Stallman, 2012).

What is the current status of Hotelschool The Hague students' health? How can it be improved?

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 2021)

HTH Student Health

Drinks at least twice per month (van Westrop, 2020)

Might be experiencing issues with sleeping (Jacobs, 2019)



Did not visit a practitioner in the past 6 months (Bauer Igartua, 2020)

Most probably struggles to cope with stress (Adriaanse, 2020)

Has become less physically active since the start of HTH, but wishes to exercise more to stay healthy (Den Bieman, 2019)

6.98

overall wellbeing score (van Zeeland, 2019)

Would like to join a mindful course in the future (Adriaanse, 2020)

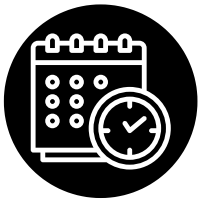
Recommendations



Implement a mindfullness course in the regular school curriculum (Adriaanse, 2020). Implementing a course would help students to gain more knowledge about stress handling, which can be beneficial for the rest of their professional careers (ibid).



Integrate physical education into the curriculum for Phase-One students and make it compulsory (Den Bieman, 2019). After their first phase, this will no longer be part of their curriculum, however, it will considerably increase the chance of continuing this healthy habit during the rest of their Hotelschool journey, and the threshold for doing this will be considerably lower (ibid).



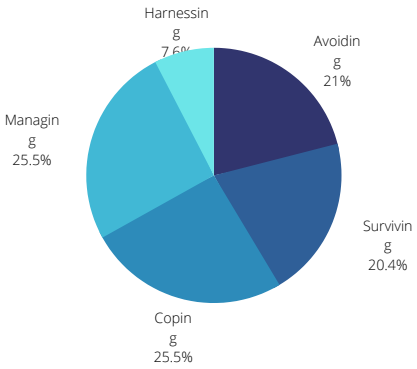
Create a consistent schedule for students, where classes have the same time slot on a daily basis (Jacobs, 2019). By designing a consistent schedule for students, where classes have the same time slot on a daily basis, instead of having different starting times each day of the block, students could gain a healthier quality and quantity of sleep (ibid).

COVID-19

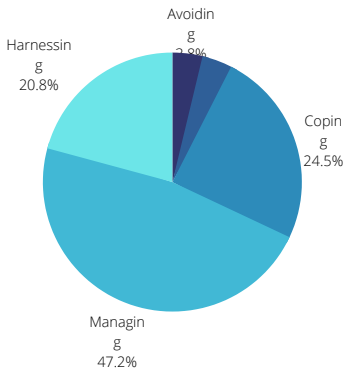
The diffusion of COVID-19 has created a worldwide, economic, societal and political crisis. The Coronavirus has been and still is creating a period of uncertainty, fear and danger (Alcalay, 2020). Its effects have deeply influenced the lives of millions of workers, entrepreneurs and students globally. Therefore, how did the Hotelschool The Hague students respond to this adversity both personally and educationally?

Personal life

First week of lockdown

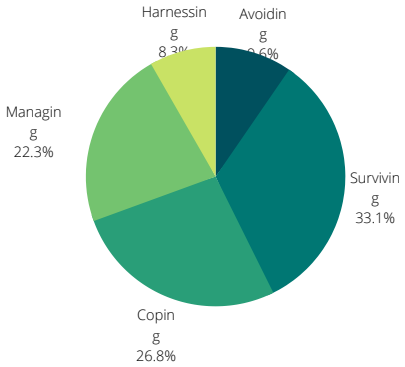


Block 2019 D

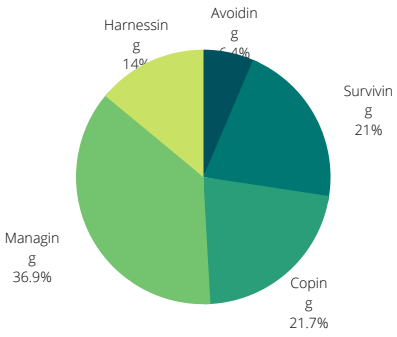


Educational life

First week of lockdown



Block 2019 D



Hotelschool The Hague students experienced more difficulties with their initial response to COVID-19 in their personal lives than in their educational lives (Passier, 2020). However, as time progressed, it appeared that, on average, students adjusted better to the situation (ibid). Survey responses indicated that students felt like digital education did not offer them many opportunities and freedom of choice (ibid).

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