

Education Report

## Toward a Culture of Care in Music Higher Education: Setting the Scene for Collective Wellbeing

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Over the past decades, research into musicians' health and wellbeing has provided consistent and compelling evidence of the physical and mental occupational hazards associated with professional music-making. National initiatives such as Healthy Conservatoires (UK) and Health Promotion in Schools of Music (USA) have emerged to address these pressing challenges using more holistic approaches. Recently, international experts from music and health-related disciplines have developed global guidelines for health and wellbeing in music training. Central to these guidelines is a call to move beyond individualistic approaches and instead address the systemic and cultural conditions that shape musicians' experiences.

In this position paper, we build on these perspectives and advocate for a salutogenic approach—one that emphasizes the promotion of health and wellbeing through supportive environments, resources, and relationships—toward fostering a holistic culture of care in higher education music institutions (HEMIs). Based on a literature synthesis of research in musicians' health and previous prevention and health promotion interventions, this vision includes not only students as aspiring professionals, but also educators, staff, and senior leadership, recognizing that wellbeing must be embedded across the entire institutional ecosystem.

We further argue for the development of a reliable and valid instrument capable of capturing the multifaceted nature of musicians' health. Such a tool would serve both as a longitudinal evaluation instrument for institutions and as a feedback resource to empower musicians in accessing external support and activating internal coping strategies. By integrating a salutogenic framework across institutional structures, HEMIs can develop sustainable wellbeing strategies, inform curriculum design, and promote a long-term cultural shift that can be continuously monitored and refined using the proposed measurement tool.

With this paper, we aim to contribute to ongoing international conversations about health in music education by offering a conceptual foundation for institutional change and a practical direction for future development.