

# STUDY GUIDE

## ***Well-Being Skills for Higher Education: Mindfulness, Self- Compassion & Psychological Flexibility 26-27 S1***

**Organised by  
Polytechnic Institute of Viseu**

| 1. IDENTIFYING DATA.             |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|-------------|--|---------------|--|-----------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| · Course Name.                   | Well-Being Skills for Higher Education: Mindfulness, Self-Compassion & Psychological Flexibility 26-27 S1  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · Coordinating University.       | Polytechnic Institute of Viseu   |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · Partner Universities Involved. | Not apply  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · Course Field(s).               | Education<br>Public Health<br>Education in health  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · Related Study Programme.       | Not part of a study program  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · ISCED Code.                    | ISCED 0313 e ISCED 091 – Health (focus on prevention and health promotion)   |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · SDG.                           | SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being<br>SDG 4 – Quality Education<br>SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities<br>SDG 5 – Gender Equality<br>SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals   |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · Study Level.                   | Bachelor (B), Master (M)   |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| · EUNICE Key Competencies        | <p>The course strongly promotes self-management, problem solving, teamwork, communication, and cognitive flexibility (green). It moderately contributes to and global intercultural competence (orange). Digital and technical competences are only partially addressed (red).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green – strongly</li> <li>• Orange - moderately</li> <li>• Red – partially</li> <li>• Blank cell - not at all</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Problem solving</td> <td style="background-color: #76b82a;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teamworking</td> <td style="background-color: #76b82a;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Communication</td> <td style="background-color: #76b82a;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-management</td> <td style="background-color: #76b82a;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cognitive flexibility</td> <td style="background-color: #76b82a;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Problem solving |  | Teamworking |  | Communication |  | Self-management |  | Cognitive flexibility |  |
| Problem solving                  |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| Teamworking                      |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| Communication                    |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| Self-management                  |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |
| Cognitive flexibility            |  |                 |  |             |  |               |  |                 |  |                       |  |

|  |                                 |  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  | Digital competence              |  |
|  | Technical competence            |  |
|  | Global intercultural competence |  |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| · Number of ECTS credits allocated. | 4 ECTS   |
| · Mode of Delivery.                 | Online live and Online self-study  |
| · Language of Instruction.          | The language of instruction will be English  |
| · Course Dates.                     | 1 <sup>st</sup> semester of the academic year (October 7, 2026, to January 20, 2027)   |
| · Precise Schedule of the Lectures. | <p>Synchronous sessions (live online): 20h; 8 sessions of 2.5 h each biweekly<br/>                 2 Asynchronous activities (self-study): 20 h; 8 sessions of 2.5 h each, biweekly<br/>                 Autonomous / Independent work: 62h<br/>                 Total = 102 h</p> <p>Preference: All sessions will preferably take place on Fridays, from 10:00 to 12:30 at 1st semester 2026-2027<br/>                 Week 1 – Oct 7, 2026: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 2 – Oct 14, 2026: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 3 – Oct 21, 2026: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 4 – Oct 28, 2026: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 5 – Nov 4, 2026: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 6 – Nov 11, 2026: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 7 – Nov 18, 2026: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 8 – Nov 25, 2026: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 9 – Dec 2, 2026: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 10 – Dec 9, 2026: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 11 – Jan 6, 2027: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 12 – Jan 13, 2027: Asynchronous (Self-Study) – 2.5 h<br/>                 Week 13 – Jan 20, 2027: Synchronous (Live Online) – 2.5 h</p> <p>Note: These hours are flexible and dates can be slightly adjusted to accommodate participant availability. Sessions are preferably scheduled on Fridays from 10:00 to 12:30 (but can be flexible). Schedules and dates may also vary depending on the academic calendar.</p> |
| · Key Words.                        | Well-being   |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
|                  | <p>Mindfulness<br/>Compassion<br/>Psychological flexibility<br/>Resilience building<br/>Mental health<br/>Stress management<br/>Higher education</p> |
| · Catchy Phrase. | <p>“Empowered with mindful-compassion, self-care and psychological flexibility tools, I navigate campus life with resilience and joyfulness”</p>     |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| · Prerequisites and co-requisites.                                   | <p><b>Prerequisites:</b> No specific courses are required prior to enrolment. A general interest in well-being, mindfulness, and personal development is recommended.</p> <p>Study levels: Bachelor and Master students.</p> <p>Basic skills in English comprehension, writing, and reading.</p> |
| · Number of EUNICE students that can attend the Course.              | 50 (total number)  |
| Number of EUNICE students that can attend the course per institution | 5 reserved spots per partner university  |
| · Course inscription procedure(s).                                   | Eunice Application Portal  |

## 2. CONTACT DETAILS.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| · Department.       | Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences                  |
| · Name of Lecturer. | Cátia Magalhães  |
| · E-mail.           | <a href="mailto:cmagalhaes@esev.ipv.pt">cmagalhaes@esev.ipv.pt</a> |
| · Other Lecturers.  | Not apply  |

## 3. COURSE CONTENT.

This course introduces students to evidence-based practices in well-being, mindfulness, compassion and psychological flexibility emphasizing their application in higher education and campus life.

Participants will explore theoretical foundations, experiential exercises, and reflective activities to develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, and interpersonal skills. The course combines lectures, interactive workshops, and guided practice to foster personal growth and enhance academic engagement. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with practical tools to support their own well-being and contribute positively to the campus community.

#### 4. LEARNING OUTCOMES.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the theoretical foundations of mindfulness, compassion, psychological flexibility and well-being.
2. Apply evidence-based mindfulness and compassion practices to enhance personal resilience and emotional regulation.
3. Develop self-awareness and reflective skills to manage stress and improve decision-making.
4. Enhance interpersonal skills, including empathy and collaborative problem-solving.
5. Integrate well-being strategies into daily routines to foster academic engagement and community contribution.

#### 5. OBJECTIVES.

The main objectives of this course are to:

1. Introduce participants to the concepts and evidence-based practices of mindfulness, compassion, psychological flexibility and well-being.
2. Equip participants with practical tools to manage stress, enhance resilience, and improve emotional regulation.
3. Foster self-awareness, reflective thinking, and personal growth in academic and professional contexts.
4. Develop interpersonal and collaborative skills to support positive relationships and teamwork.
5. Encourage the integration of well-being strategies into daily routines to promote mental health and academic engagement.

#### 6. COURSE ORGANISATION.

##### UNITS

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. | Foundations of Well-Being and Mental Health:<br>- Key concepts of mental flourishing and psychological well-being<br>- Theoretical models and evidence-based approaches                    |
| 2. | Mindfulness and Compassion Practices<br>- Practical exercises to cultivate awareness, presence, and self-compassion<br>- Techniques for reducing stress and enhancing emotional regulation |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 3.  | Psychological Flexibility and the ACT Model<br>- Introduction to Acceptance and Commitment approach/principles<br>- Applying psychological flexibility in personal and academic contexts                  |
| 4.  | Integrating Well-Being and compassion mind-training into Daily Life<br>- Strategies to enhance resilience, motivation, and life satisfaction<br>- Reflection and exercises to embed practices in routines |
| 5.  | Applied Skills and Experiential Practice<br>- Group exercises, self-reflection, and peer feedback<br>- Linking theory to practice and fostering sustained behavioural change                              |
| <b>LEARNING RESOURCES AND TOOLS.</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Core textbooks on mindfulness, compassion, and psychological well-being</li> <li>- Selected research articles on mental flourishing, Compassion mind training and ACT (Acceptance and Commitment approach in a mental health promotion way)</li> <li>- Guided mindfulness and compassion exercises/meditations/body-scan (audio/video)</li> <li>- Case studies and practical scenarios for applied learning</li> <li>- Online platforms for discussion, reflection, and collaborative exercises</li> <li>- Self-assessment tools and reflective journals (measure and reflect on their own learning and personal development)</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>PLANNED LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND TEACHING METHODS.</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging readings on mindfulness, compassion, and psychological flourishing</li> <li>- Selected cutting-edge research articles and case studies</li> <li>- Interactive guided exercises (audio/video) to practice skills in real time</li> <li>- Practical scenarios linking theory to everyday life</li> <li>- Online discussion forums for reflection and peer learning</li> <li>- Self-assessment tools and reflective journals to track personal growth</li> </ul>   |   |

## 7. ASSESSMENT METHODS, CRITERIA AND PERIOD.

Participants will complete a: 1) reflective journal, based on the asynchronous activities, practical exercises, and experiential tasks carried out during the course. This journal will consolidate learning, promote self-awareness, and track personal growth; 2) A short project or report, synthesizing the learning outcomes and demonstrating applied competencies. This may include case studies, reflections on practical exercises, or proposals for implementing mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychological flexibility strategies in higher education contexts.

Note: An examination or special examination period is available for students who do not achieve a passing grade in the final week of the course.

Assessment Period:

Reflective Journal: entries are submitted digitally after each asynchronous session, ensuring ongoing engagement and reflection throughout the course.

Short Project/Report: submitted digitally – and consider both asynchronous and synchronous sessions - within a designated deadline (at the end of the sessions)

The course will be graded on a scale from 0 to 20.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

- The reflective journal encourages ongoing engagement with exercises and self-awareness; maintain a personal journal throughout the course to track insights and personal growth
- The short project/report provides an opportunity to synthesize learning outcomes and demonstrate applied competencies.
- All submissions are digital and may include optional feedback sessions.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND TEACHING MATERIALS.

Baer, R. A. (2015). *Mindfulness-based treatment approaches: Clinician's guide to evidence base and applications* (2nd ed.). Academic Press.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. Bantam Books.

Neff, K. D. (2011). *Self-compassion: The proven power of being kind to yourself*. William Morrow.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D., & Wilson, K. G. (2012). *Acceptance and commitment therapy: The process and practice of mindful change* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Shapiro, S. L., & Carlson, L. E. (2017). *The art and science of mindfulness: Integrating mindfulness into psychology and the helping professions* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association.

Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 822–848. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.822>

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. K. (2018). *The mindful self-compassion workbook: A proven way to accept yourself, build inner strength, and thrive*. Guilford Press.

Goodman, F. R., & Kashdan, T. B. (2017). Psychological flexibility and well-being: The role of mindfulness, acceptance, and values. In S. J. Lopez (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 445–459). Oxford University Press.

Hooper, N. (2024). *The unbreakable student: An evidence-based wellbeing guide for university students*. Pavilion Publishing & Media Ltd. <https://www.nichooper.co.uk/the-unbreakable-student>

Serrão, C., Rodrigues, A. R., & Ferreira, T. (2022). *The effects of a mindfulness-based program on higher education students*. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, Article 985204. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.985204>

Serrão, C., Valqueresma, A., Rodrigues, A. R., & Duarte, I. (2022). *Mediation of self-compassion on pathways from stress and anxiety to depression among Portuguese higher education students*. *Healthcare*, 11(18), 2494. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11182494>

Sahinler, Y. S., Dindar, M. D., & Koc, M. C. (2026). *The effect of psychological flexibility, self-compassion, and mindfulness on mental health among university students*. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 17. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1757032>

## Teaching Materials & Tools:

- Guided Mindfulness & Compassion Exercises (audio/video) – integrated with reflective journal for experiential practice.
- Reflective Journal – includes reflections on exercises, links theory to practice, tracks personal growth; submitted weekly and informs final short project/report.
- Case Studies & Practical Scenarios (PDF/online) – apply ACT, mindfulness, and compassion concepts to campus and higher education contexts.
- Online Discussion Forum – structured peer-to-peer discussion to reflect on exercises and readings.

Notes: Essential readings are accessible through university libraries and open access. Teaching materials support experiential learning and are directly linked to reflective journals and the final project/report.