

Stride at UNSW



Photo: Stride Program

What is Stride?

Stride at UNSW is a free, on-campus physical activity program for UNSW students experiencing mental health challenges (Mentees). Over 12 weeks, Mentees receive individualised, one-on-one sessions with exercise physiology work-integrated learning students (Mentors), in a safe, supportive and non-judgmental environment. Stride aims to reduce barriers to exercise, build confidence, and support both physical and mental wellbeing.

Why does Stride exist?

Around one in four university students experience poor mental health, driven by academic pressure, financial stress and social adjustment. Physical activity, especially when peer-led, is increasingly recognised for reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression while building social connection and engagement. At the same time, there is a growing industry need for exercise professionals equipped to support populations experiencing mental health challenges.

Mental health challenges are a growing concern among tertiary level students



Physical activity interventions are increasingly recognised for supporting mental health



Growing industry need for exercise professionals working with mental health populations

What is the impact of Stride?

Stride turns exercise into a bridge between mental health, social connection and confidence, while helping future health professionals learn to deliver care with empathy and purpose. Mentees build routine, confidence and practical strategies for their wellbeing, while Mentors gain real-world experience delivering inclusive, person-centred care in the growing field of exercise physiology for mental health populations.

HIGHLIGHTS



Improved mental health symptoms



Increased social connection



Increased real-world learning

"The main thing ... I really liked about Stride was just getting to know each individual and feeling as though in a small way you were maybe making their day a little bit lighter."

- UNSW Exercise Physiology Mentor, 2026



UNSW
SYDNEY

Stride



Please scan for more information

Interested in collaborating?

We welcome opportunities to collaborate with researchers, health professionals, university services and community partners who are interested in student mental health, physical activity and peer-led support.

Please contact:

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