

1 N: Hi everyone. Welcome, everyone. Is it fine if I record the session guys?

2 P6: That's fine.

3 N: Okay, thank you. We are just waiting for P3.

4 N: Can I give her a quick call? (On-call)

5 Hi, how are you? Just waiting on you. Are you managing to get on?

6 N: Okay. Okay

7 Thank you. Okay, see you now (Hangs up phone).

8 Okay, she's coming on now.

9 Hi, everyone. Welcome, everyone. Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in  
10 my focus group, I really appreciate it. My focus group is on wellbeing, on factors that  
11 contribute to wellbeing in students with disabilities at university.

12 Okay, before we start, I think we can all just introduce ourselves. Is it possible for  
13 you all just to um...open your video cameras, if it's fine? Then we can all just see  
14 each other? And then we can all just introduce ourselves.

15 Okay, I'll start with myself, I'm Naciema. I am a master's student, in educational  
16 psychology, my second year in master's now. Ours is a two-year course. And my  
17 umm...thesis is on factors that support wellbeing of students with disabilities at  
18 university. It's part of a three-phase project, which is conducted by two professors at  
19 the university. And it consists of three different phases.

20 Phase one was um...a questionnaire, which people filled in at the different  
21 campuses of the University of Pretoria. It was focusing on wellbeing, they answered  
22 particular questions on what supported their wellbeing at university.

23 And then phase two was with different focus groups on the different faculties. So,  
24 each faculty had a focus group on factors that support their wellbeing as well.

25 And we are part of phase two. So, I'm doing the part with students with disabilities at  
26 the university. And then phase three is basically implementing the different  
27 interventions which they have come up with, which will support wellbeing at the  
28 university. And um...so, that's ongoing now, it has started already. And it's still going  
29 on as we are getting feedback from the different groups.

30 So, I think it's a very interesting project. And I'm glad that you can all participate in it  
31 and give your input about what *you* feel is important to *you* and what would support  
32 you in your journey in university to help you, to support your wellbeing. Okay, so can  
33 everybody unmute, just take turns to unmute and introduce themselves?

34 P6: Okay, I'll go first. So, I'm not like sitting at my laptop right now. So, um., I'm doing  
35 a master's in bioinformatics and yeah, well I don't know if there's anything specific  
36 you want to know about us that, we should, you know, include in our introduction  
37 or...

38 N: Okay, what would be nice as well is as my focus is on students with disabilities to  
39 maybe just say what your disability actually is.

40 P6: Okay, so, I'm blind.

41 N: Okay. Thank you, P6.

42 P1: Okay, I'll go next.

43 N: Oh, would it perhaps be possible to show your video so we can see you when  
44 you're talking?

45 P1: Ah, I don't know. I don't think my cameras working. And I don't have like extra  
46 webcam.

47 N: Oh, no problem.

48 P1: Um, but yeah, okay. So okay, so my name is P1, and I'm currently doing my  
49 honours um... in learning support. And my disability is that I am visually impaired.

50 N: Okay. Thank you so much.

51 P3: Okay. My name is P3. I am a master's student, specializing in social work. My  
52 disability is physical, I have a physical disability.

53 N: Okay. Thank you.

54 P2: I guess I'll go next. I'm P2. I am a second-year BA general student, um, and I  
55 am blind. I am studying psychology and languages.

56 N: Thank you, P2.

57 P5: Um, I'll go next. My name is P5. Final year student studying Supply Chain  
58 Management.

59 N: Okay, and what is your disability, P5?

60 P5: Oh um, I'm partially sighted, with albinism.

61 N: I just realized now that one um...of our participants hasn't joined us yet. It's P4.  
62 I'm not sure what her story is. Anyway, we can carry on so long. Okay. So, basically,  
63 what do you understand by wellbeing? We are talking about wellbeing here. What do  
64 you understand by it? Does anybody want to volunteer, give us their opinion, their  
65 input?

66 P2: Well, well, what I think. What I think or understand about wellbeing is it can be  
67 like your emotional wellbeing um...at university, obviously, as a student, or social  
68 wellbeing or, like, it's just how people accommodate you, and how you feel  
69 supported, I guess.

70 N: Yes, that is true. Anybody else want to add?

71 Okay, very simply wellbeing is like you said its feelings. You get eudemonic  
72 wellbeing and also hedonic wellbeing. Hedonic wellbeing concentrates on feelings  
73 and happiness, and eudemonic normally concentrates on um... meaning and  
74 purpose.

75 It consists of five domains actually. And it's your feelings, your experiences,  
76 relationships, accomplishments, and engagement. It's how Seligman puts it, the  
77 PERMA theory of wellbeing, so this incorporates five different elements, and then  
78 also, in addition, there is the PERMA plus also, which also includes physical  
79 exercise, nutrition, and sleep. So, it encompasses a broad range of things. And it's  
80 um...ultimately, our whole persona basically. It envelops so many things. It's  
81 basically if you look at a car, basically, and if the brakes don't work in the car, the  
82 car's not gonna work properly. So, in the same way, if you are not going to have  
83 proper nutrition and you're not going to get the exercise your wellbeing is not going  
84 to be at the level it's supposed to be.

85 So, wellbeing is the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity which includes  
86 having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose and

87 also the ability to manage stress. So generally, it emerges from your thoughts, your  
88 actions, your experiences, most of which you have control over. So, it encompasses  
89 your emotional, your physical, your social, your wellbeing at university, if you  
90 working, and societal wellbeing. It incorporates a lot of things as well.

91 Okay, if you think about your wellbeing at university, what's the first factor that you  
92 think of when I ask you, "what contributes to your wellbeing?"

93 Okay, can you all take turns to unmute, and just tell me what you think contributes to  
94 your wellbeing, just the first thing that you think of.

95 P1: Does academic wellbeing count?

96 N: Ok, that's true because you're at university and you want to actually do well.

97 P1: Yes, and you have to be supported to be able to do well especially if you have a  
98 disability and not all lectures understand how to accommodate all disabilities.

99 N: Okay, so for like, academic wellbeing is important, and input of the lectures as  
100 well. They need to support you adequately. Okay.

101 P1: Yes. And I also think it also goes along with emotional wellbeing, because  
102 ultimately, if you're not supported academically, well, then obviously you feel some  
103 emotions and you'll feel like you can't do it, you're doubting yourself. So, I think  
104 emotional wellbeing is also important.

105 N: Yeah, definitely. Because it impacts on your moods, and everything else as well.

106 N: Hi, P4. How are you?

107 P4: Hi. I'm okay, how are you?

108 N: I'm good. Thanks. Can you just introduce yourself? Just tell us what you're doing  
109 at university and what your disability is?

110 P4: Um...My name is P4, I'm doing psychology honours and my disability is  
111 muscular dystrophy

112 N: Oh okay. Sorry, um...P4, I was just asking everybody. We're talking about  
113 wellbeing. And what is the first factor that you think of when I ask you what  
114 contributes to your wellbeing at university?

115 P4: Um, for me, it's being able to adjust to the university environment. I believe that if  
116 students with disabilities... say, okay, let me just speak for myself. If I have the  
117 necessary support that I need to get through the day, then um...I guess that  
118 contributes positively to my wellbeing.

119 N: Okay, that's true. So, it's the adjustment to university and support that you get to  
120 help you.

121 P4: Yeah

122 N: Thank you.

123 Okay, who's going next?

124 P3: I can go next. Um, for me, what matters most is more like general support.  
125 Because when you are living with a disability it's quite challenging to adapt to a  
126 different environment. So, if you have support, for instance, from the disability unit  
127 and from the lecturers as well, it becomes easier to adapt and to study well. But if  
128 you do not have support, then it becomes challenging, even if you don't know. So, for  
129 instance, where you can go and talk about your challenges or where you can go and  
130 seek help. So, for me in general, I mean, wellbeing it's all about having general  
131 support within the university.

132 N: Okay, Thank you, P3.

133 P2: I guess I'll go next, I um... I think, like, support has been said like over and over  
134 again. And it's definitely the first thing I thought of um...But I think for me um...  
135 another big thing is like umm, the kind of feeling able to express yourself in terms of  
136 your disability and not feeling like that like, like, that's um... a taboo thing to talk  
137 about, um...You know, look like your life experiences are still valid, because that's  
138 the only thing you know, and that's how you kind of, that's how you go through your  
139 life. And if you feel like you can learn by relating things to your personal situation. I  
140 feel like you should be able to do that without feeling like it's wrong, I guess

141 N: Okay, thank you, P2. So, basically, the first thing is the support that everybody  
142 needs.

143 Okay, who's next? P6?

144 P6: Okay, so, not necessarily the first thing I thought of, but I guess what, something  
145 that is also important that hasn't been mentioned yet. Umm...is having, you know, I  
146 guess some kind of social connections like, not, you know, being able to make  
147 friends or something. You know, not being alone, basically, I think that also  
148 contributes to wellbeing at university.

149 N: Definitely. So, you need support from friends as well, not just lecturers. Is that  
150 what you mean, it's your personal connections as well.

151 P6: Yeah.

152 N: Okay, P5?

153 P5: I just wanted to add on what P6 was saying that, um...wellbeing basically for me,  
154 means how you feel compared to the rest of your community. So, yeah, being  
155 socially, emotionally, and um...in other ways, as well, like, basically how you feel,  
156 compared to your community.

157 N: Okay, so it comes down to your feelings, basically, your perception of yourself. Is  
158 that what you saying? Or is it about how you feel about being accepted?

159 P5: Um, let me just say both.

160 N: Okay. Thank you so much. Is there anything else that you think of that has not  
161 been mentioned, but it's also important to consider in your wellbeing at university? Is  
162 there anything else that you'd still want to add that you feel someone else hasn't  
163 added?

164 P3: I'm not sure if it was mentioned. But also, another thing that is important as well  
165 is economics. I don't know if I should call it economics or what, but something like  
166 that. Because if financially, you're not fine, and you do not have the necessary  
167 financial resources, it is difficult to cope in such an environment. So, for instance,  
168 you do not have money, to have enough food or to have to come with lunch, such  
169 things needed to be impacted because it forces a student because I'm talking from  
170 experience, sometimes you'll have to attend classes without having enough food, so  
171 it's very difficult. So, I'm not sure if it was mentioned?

172 N: No, it wasn't mentioned, that's a very important one as well. Basically, you're  
173 talking about your basic needs. Your basic needs are something which, obviously, if

174 we can't fulfil our basic needs, it's gonna impact on our wellbeing and everything  
175 else. So, that is a big one as well. So initially, it was like I said, was the first thing that  
176 you think of that you need in your personal wellbeing at university. And I thank you  
177 for sharing all of that with all of us.

178 And now, I think there's a lot of other things that are also important to our wellbeing  
179 at university, and which would assist everybody in achieving wellbeing because  
180 without wellbeing we're not going to have academic success; it impacts on our  
181 university life basically. And the aim, I mean, what is the goal of being at university?  
182 It's that you want to achieve your degree, you want to do well, and the means of  
183 getting there is very important to us. So, it's like, what can the university do to help  
184 us? Are the lecturers there? Is the support there? Like you said our basic, our basic  
185 needs have to be met.

186 What else do you both think is important at university? Oh, before we go on, if we do  
187 get kicked out, normally, the zoom sessions are supposed to be 40 minutes, and  
188 then we must log in again. So, if that does happen, then we just log in again with the  
189 same um...invitation. Okay, but I did get a message to say that they are extending it.

190 P6: So, yeah, it seems like they've upgraded this session. So, I think we should be  
191 fine.

192 N: Yeah, thank goodness (laughs).

193 N: Okay, so what um...

194 What else is important at university to support wellbeing? I know that you're not  
195 really at university as such, physically. It's been, because of COVID, it's been a very  
196 different university life from the normal or how you actually started university. So how  
197 are you coping with that? Is it better? Is it worse, how is it impacting you? On your  
198 wellbeing?

199 P2: Okay, I guess I'll start because I have a lot to say.

200 N: Okay. (laughs)

201 P2: I feel like, for me, personally, it's worse. I was on campus for a month and a half.  
202 And I honestly, like, for me, as a blind student, like, who uses, you know, speech  
203 software, it's easy for me to pay attention to two things from two different like, sides

204 of my auditory field, if that makes any sense. So, if I'm sitting in a class, I can listen  
205 to a lecturer. And like, type on my laptop, and I don't necessarily have to have my  
206 speech going. But if I do need to have it going, I kind of pay attention to my speech  
207 with one ear and my lecture with my other ear. But now being online, I kind of have  
208 to pay attention to both from the same place. And for me, it's meant that I can't take  
209 notes as well as I could before. I know that not everyone works the same way. But  
210 I've definitely had that problem.

211 Also, I feel like socially, I'm just not, anywhere right now. I don't feel like I'm getting  
212 any kind of social gratification. Umm, I don't know people, you know. And I feel like  
213 that's also hard. When you can't like, see someone on a group or like someone's  
214 WhatsApp status and just reach out to them. I don't know, for me, that's hard.

215 N: Yeah, it is definitely hard. Because like you said, you've only been there for very  
216 few or a short amount of time, so you haven't had time to actually make connections  
217 with people physically. So, that's a big one as well. So, umm...yeah, thank you so  
218 much for sharing that.

219 So, it's basically when you started off, obviously, none of us had an idea what's  
220 going to happen and we're going to be working online for most of the time. So,  
221 accessing your lectures and things; is it better this way or not, like, like in the sense  
222 that now, the lectures are online, so you can actually like go back and listen to it  
223 again. Do you find that helpful at all?

224 P2: I, personally have a very low attention span. So going back and listening to a  
225 lecture I've really had to suffer and sit through, umm is not my idea of good time. It's  
226 the reason I didn't record my lectures to begin with.

227 N: Okay.

228 Okay. Thanks, P2. Okay, anybody else? How's your experience now with online  
229 learning?

230 P5: For me the experience has been both nice and terrible. Nice because of, I can  
231 access obviously my materials.

232 N: Sorry E, it's a bit low, can you speak a bit louder?

233 P5: Oh, so I'm saying my online experience has been both terrible and nice.



234 N: Okay

235 P5: Nice because I obviously, you are able to access your learning material on your  
236 laptop and you are able to listen to your lectures while doing whatever you want,  
237 you're doing. And you can listen, me just say that the lecture, the lecture, the lectures  
238 are all recorded. So, you can like, go back, if you didn't understand. Because of while  
239 we were on campus, we couldn't do that. So, I kind of enjoy the versatility of online.

240 Um... terrible because of, I cannot interact with other people and not collaborate  
241 with my classmates and so forth.

242 N: Okay. So, a big one now with COVID there is no interaction with anybody, you  
243 don't actually see anybody as such.

244 P5: Yeah.

245 N: Okay, Thank you, P5.

246 P5: Oh, no, I forgot to mention another thing. Um, the tests... like the, the tests and  
247 exams that you are writing now are longer. They require us to write, like, maybe 70%  
248 of the textbook, most of the time, because of the assessment route, and all those  
249 things. So that has been a downside. Because of when we're writing exams on  
250 campus, the exams and tests were actually shorter and anyone would have been  
251 able to complete them in in the given time, but now that they assume that we are  
252 copying, the notes, they just give us a long, long test, or an exam, that is the  
253 downside.

254 And obviously, most people cannot. Let me not say most people, I think this year I  
255 have never finished my tests. So even though I've never finished my test because  
256 they are so long, even with my extra time.

257 N: Okay, so you find it more difficult to write exams now basically than it was before?

258 P5: Yes, Is because they're so long.

259 N: Okay. I'm sorry about all the difficulties.

260 P2: I actually also have another thing to add. Umm...I realized this year, with you  
261 know, being with new lecturers and um...potentially like new classmates from  
262 different like, you know, who are either re-doing modules or, you know, that joined

263 the, like your module for whatever reason, I've had to disclose my disability instead  
264 of someone just seeing that I'm disabled, which has often been really awkward. And  
265 if I haven't done it, and a lecturer has done it on my behalf, it's even worse. So, I  
266 think that's definitely something that's negative um...about the whole online  
267 experience. And also, reaching out to lectures feels harder, for some reason.

268 N: Yeah, it's always harder if you're not physically there, it makes a big difference.

269 Okay, P6?

270 P6: Um...Well, I guess one positive is that because all the meetings are online now.  
271 So before sometimes like, there would be a meeting that would be somewhere that I  
272 don't really know the way to get to that area exactly. And, yeah, so I ended up not  
273 going. So now it's easy to just like, click on the zoom link, and then you didn't have to  
274 physically be able to get to that place. So, that's an advantage. But, yeah, I guess  
275 the downside, basically, is what other people have said, as well as not being able to  
276 interact with people as much as you normally would.

277 N: So, all of you are saying that basically, it's a social support, which you're not  
278 um...able to access right now. You know, you can't get the social support. So is  
279 um...okay for you, I suppose for you P6, it's probably a bit better because you've  
280 already got like your network of people with you because you're a master's student  
281 now. So, you have got your network from honours that went on to masters. Has that  
282 made a difference to you?

283 P6: It does somewhat, I mean, it's definitely better than it would have been  
284 otherwise.

285 N: Yeah, because if I look at you and look at P2, P2 basically just started and COVID  
286 happened. So, she was really out, basically left out on her own. She didn't really get  
287 to know the other students as such, yet. I think that's a really big one where the  
288 social supports not there, because that's a big one to contribute to our wellbeing. So,  
289 um...yeah.

290 Okay, so maybe a way to get through that is maybe WhatsApp groups and things  
291 like that. Do you people have WhatsApp groups? Like a class WhatsApp group? Or  
292 something like that?

293 P2: Too many of them.

294 N: Okay. So, you don't find that it's um...supportive?

295 P2: No, and also, they're not supportive, social groups, like they are groups for when  
296 it's the night before an assignment. And you really need people to tell you what's  
297 going on. It's not, it's not a social situation. Like if you didn't make friends before  
298 COVID. And you're as early into your university career as I am. You don't really  
299 have options right now. Getting to know people, like new people, especially right now  
300 is virtually impossible, tricky pun not intended, but yeah.

301 N: Okay. Thank you. Who's going next?

302 P3: For me, I do like online learning. But I've also realized that it has got some form  
303 of an impact when it comes to mental wellbeing because, for instance, I'm  
304 unemployed, and even though I'm trying to get a job, it's very difficult. So, I'm also  
305 surrounded by, by people who are busy going to work, and I'm all by myself most of  
306 the time. So, it kind of affects me sometimes mentally because I don't really go out.  
307 And the only work that I used to go across to go to school, go to the library, you  
308 know, it will just keep me busy and focused. But now because of COVID and no  
309 longer going to the school, it's sometimes, it impacts me mentally. I do feel that I may  
310 be overwhelmed because of not showing up more often than before.

311 N: Okay, definitely. So, it's basically the isolation just getting to you?

312 P3: Yes,

313 N: Okay. Thank you.

314 P6: Okay, so I can add something else. Another downside is just, you know, being  
315 stuck at your home with everyone else is, that there's a lot more distraction than  
316 there normally would be. Because if you go into the campus in your there, like, in  
317 that space where you're supposed to, you know, you're supposed to work now. But if  
318 you're at home, and I mean, like everyone is at home, because, like most people  
319 work from home now and so on. So, there's constantly like people coming in asking  
320 you to do something quickly, or wanting to know something or, like, yeah, or, you  
321 know. So, it's a lot more distracting in order to just like, sit and focus on something  
322 without the interruptions.

323 N: Okay. Yeah, definitely. Because at home, it's different. Whereas at varsity you  
324 were, you're basically there, some people staying near the university or in the res or  
325 whatever and it makes a difference when you're there and you're concentrating on  
326 your studies. As you said, there aren't distractions and that connection, that does  
327 impact a lot on your wellbeing as well. That's a big one as well. Thank you. P1? P4?

328 P1: Yeah, I don't think it is that different for me. Um... Because when I was in my  
329 first year, for example, it was all those fees must fall striking things. So, I'm kind of  
330 used to doing things online, I think. The only downside for me, is perhaps,  
331 connectivity, you know, sometimes the Wi-Fi won't work. And then you can't access  
332 your classes quick enough and then you will come in late, and then you miss what  
333 they said, or something like that, or load shedding, you know, um... where your class  
334 is scheduled at a certain time. And then your load shedding is also scheduled at that  
335 time, I think that can also be an inconvenience.

336 And I think, perhaps another thing is that if you're not physically in class, and you're  
337 not physically with your lecturer, you can't explain your disability as well and express  
338 exactly what you need from them. Because I feel like they are not always uh  
339 informed well, or they don't have the knowledge, umm, how to assist your specific  
340 umm, disability. So, and then when you're doing it virtually, it's difficult to explain that  
341 to them. Because you're not really one on one, live them. I think that can be the only  
342 downside from this.

343 N: Load shedding is a big one because everybody goes through that. And yeah, I  
344 don't know, by us they don't even give you prior warning. It's just like there it's gone,  
345 electricity is gone. And when you just stuck, and your computer didn't charge. Yeah,  
346 it's a lot of things.

347 P1: Yeah

348 N: That's a difficult one.

349 P4?

350 P4: Sorry. I think they've covered everything. Just to add that when we moved to  
351 online learning, we were expected to just go with it. It took time for the university to  
352 tell us about the data. We had to find things ourselves, which was very difficult for  
353 most of us. Okay, that was last, and then only now, some of us have adjusted to the

354 whole online learning situation. Umm...Our sleeping patterns got messed up. And  
355 also, social life, like, they've been saying. Yeah, I think, I think everything was  
356 happening

357 N: Okay, so basically how does online learning contribute to your wellbeing? If you  
358 look at it. We have spoken a lot about the good and the bad. Yeah. So, the good  
359 about online learning, let's just recap really quickly. The fact that you don't have to go  
360 physically anywhere, that it's online, that's a positive thing, okay, and umm...what  
361 else is positive about it? There're no interactions are negative. So, what's positive in  
362 it? About the lectures, it's you can go back and listen to it again?

363 P4: We don't have to deal with people flooding the elevators, because that was a  
364 major thing, especially for physical disabilities. You measure the time that you take to  
365 get to class, but then you have to wait a few minutes. Because these people don't  
366 need the lift, but they flood the lifts, they block the corridors, and, and, and, and, but  
367 besides that, I'm okay.

368 N: Okay, so that's a big plus for you as well. Okay, are there any positives about  
369 online learning, which we haven't mentioned that you can think of now?

370 P2: Being able to sleep until just before your class. That's also nice. Okay.

371 N: So, it's basically travelling, hey, you're cutting out all the travelling time?

372 P6: Yeah, so the travelling is actually a big thing. Because so for me, because I'm  
373 not in res, I'm at home. But so, whenever I had to go in now, I always had to try and  
374 get some kind of transport arrangement and find out who's available? Who can take  
375 me? Who can come to fetch me? I mean, you can Uber, but it's quite expensive. I  
376 mean, it was last I checked. I might be remembering wrong, but I'm sure it was  
377 something like R120 or R130 for a one-way trip. So that, that is expensive. Yeah, so  
378 I would never be able to, like, you know, do that regularly. So, I always had to try and  
379 make transport arrangements, try to fit into other people's schedules. And that was  
380 always, an, you know, ongoing battle. So definitely just being able to, you know, join  
381 anything without actually having to travel there is definitely an upside.

382 P1: Sorry.

383 P2: No, please go. Okay.

384 P1: And I just wanted to say that I agree with P6 on that one. Um...Because I am  
385 currently studying at Campus 2 .And the disability unit is situated on Main Campus  
386 on Campus 1. So, whenever I had to write a test or an exam, I had to take the bus  
387 from Campus 2 to Campus 1. And then I would sometimes miss some of my classes  
388 because the bus schedule is different than my classes. So, I sometimes had to miss  
389 some of my classes so that I will be able to get onto the bus fast enough to get to  
390 Main Campus, write my test, and go back to Campus 2. So um, yeah, I think that is  
391 why online is better because everything is in one place. You don't have to rush and  
392 miss classes and stuff like that.

393 N: Okay. Yeah, that's a big one hey, that there's only actually one disability unit that's  
394 actually covering all seven campuses.

395 P1: Yeah, and I was actually trying to get them to you know, build or whatever a new  
396 disability unit on Campus 2 so that you don't have to go from one campus to another  
397 because that was really inconvenient. So, yeah, that is a huge plus for me.

398 N: So, all the exams have to be written at the disability unit?

399 P1: Yes, preferably because there you can sit and they will give you your extra time  
400 if you are in need of extra time. Um...I don't know, like the lecturers and the people at  
401 Campus 2 there are not as accommodative as the lecturers on Campus1. Um, I  
402 know some of my friends who did study on Main Campus, their lecturers actually  
403 organized that they don't have to always write at the disability unit. But like my  
404 lecturers, they just never understood, like, you know, how to accommodate me how  
405 to give me extra time, things like that. So, it was necessary for me to go to the  
406 disability unit.

407 N: Okay, so they weren't really very clued up about what your needs are, basically.

408 P1: No, some of them were. Um, but yeah like some of them didn't even know there  
409 was a disability unit, and they didn't even like know how to get my paper to the  
410 disability unit, like simple, easy stuff like that? They were not clued up at all.

411 N: That's a big one. You know, when I actually asked the um...reception, I asked  
412 them, like, Where's the disability unit? And then they're looking at each other, and  
413 someone told me, "I don't know." Then somebody directed me to someplace, and  
414 then another place, and direction to another place. And then eventually, they said,

415 “no, there's no disability unit here, it's at the other campus.” So, I found it very, like I  
416 found it very strange and very, it's very negative that they actually didn't even know  
417 where the disability unit was.

418 P1: That's really bad.

419 N: It was bad. And they didn't know where it was.

420 L: Oh, yeah, like, the people at my campus are really not very accommodative, like  
421 even the library people like, I've learned how to deal with it now, because I'm already  
422 in my honours and everything. So, I've, I've known how to do that. But there was this  
423 other guy that also studied at my campus. And he actually depended a lot on me,  
424 because then I had to, like help him, tell him where to go, stuff like that. And he was  
425 actually like, he also had a physical disability, and then Campus 2 doesn't really  
426 consist of a lot of lifts, or, like, they just have lots of stairs. So, with him, it was  
427 difficult for him to access the stairs, obviously, with his physical disability, and there  
428 is no ramps for wheelchairs. So, yeah, they're not very accommodative for any type  
429 of disability actually.

430 N: Yeah, there's a lot of steps there, you're right there.

431 P1: Yep, and hills in it.

432 N: Sorry, P2, you wanted to say something earlier?

433 P2: Oh, gosh. Okay, so, now you've given me time to think, thank you. Okay, I have  
434 a guide dog, and I love her to pieces. But on campus, it's really hard to, and this also  
435 ties into the social thing. Like, if someone tells you I'm like, no, it's important to note  
436 that I'm not the kind of person who would say yes to this kind of thing. But if  
437 someone tells you like, oh, hey, you know, let's go out to whatever place, or you  
438 know, after class, or whatever, like, let's go for a drink or whatever, you know,  
439 students do. You know, you have to bear in mind, like, I have an entire extra being  
440 coming with me. And I didn't pack food for her, or I did pack food. But where am I  
441 going to feed her, or I know where to feed her, but where am I going to take her out if  
442 she needs to, you know, go outside like or, or are they going to let me in with her.  
443 It's, it's constantly thinking about this extra being that's with you. And so, being at  
444 home, it's a lot easier because I don't have that added responsibility and that kind of

445 added umm, thing that I need to constantly, like consciously bear in mind. So that's,  
446 that's definitely nice.

447 And also, other people, like, lack of knowledge/ lack of consideration for me and my  
448 guide dog. Everyone thinks she's very cute. And she is, but you know, it's, it's yeah. I  
449 don't have to deal with that.

450 N: Okay, so there are like, quite a few positives. Is there anything else that you could  
451 think of or that you want to add on there?

452 Okay, earlier you mentioned about, when we just started with, all of you actually  
453 mentioned the lecturers as well. The support from the lecturers. So, on the whole,  
454 how do you find the lecturers? Do you find them supportive? Or not? How'd you think  
455 that things can be improved? What can they do to assist you? To improve your  
456 wellbeing. What can they do about the lecturing?

457 P6: I think it is a difficult question to answer. In general, because it depends, you  
458 know, on the, more on the subject, I don't know, because it's, it tends to vary  
459 depending on what you do. Like, it's hard to give like a broad, you know, general  
460 answer for everything in all situations. And about how I find them, it that varies a lot  
461 like that. They like, go, though, you know, they'll go the whole spectrum from  
462 extremely helpful to extremely unhelpful, you know. So, it depends a lot on the  
463 person you end up getting, you know, some are really nice, some just ignore you or  
464 refuse to help or don't really want you to take their subjects and try to convince you  
465 to drop it and others, more, you know, go above and beyond what they need to do,  
466 and go out of their way to help you. So, it's yeah, it varies a lot.

467 N: What do you find is the most, umm... what factors contribute most to your  
468 wellbeing? If you look, think about your lecturer now, think, okay, that's one thing that  
469 really works for me.

470 P6: Sorry, could you just repeat that?

471 N: Like, what is the one thing that you think that's really important for the lecturers to  
472 have which to be able to do for you? Or what should they have, that would contribute  
473 to your wellbeing? What's an important thing?

474 P6: I don't know. How to answer that.



475 N: (Laughs) Okay. Um, yeah, so I think...

476 P1: I think, I think, eh what lectures perhaps need to, can I say, improve on or try to  
477 do is just to have an understanding of the certain type of disability, you know, maybe  
478 they can ask you, you know, the person who has the disability, they can ask them.  
479 How can I support them? What do they need? And then they can also go and do  
480 some research about the specific disability, you know, so they can just perhaps, like,  
481 know, sharpen their knowledge or whatever. Yeah, and it is quite a difficult question  
482 to answer, because you're, there's a lot of disabilities that need to be considered. But  
483 I think, at the university level, I don't think you will get more than, let's say, five or I  
484 don't know. I don't want to say a specific number, but I don't think you'll get a lot of  
485 disabilities. I think it's more like, yeah, you can just like ask the person or do some  
486 research about it, umm, to better support the learner, I guess. And also, just know,  
487 and just know, you know, to have I don't want to say empathy or sympathy, but not to  
488 be like, also try to embarrass the specific learner in the class, because I think most  
489 lectures won't know exactly how to approach it, and then they will announce the  
490 disability to the rest of the class. And I feel like that's unnecessary at times. So yeah,  
491 I think just to know where to stop or not to just embarrass the person in the class or  
492 something like that.

493 N: So maybe, basically, what you're saying is they need to maybe have like a one  
494 on one with you before time so that they can understand what your needs are, and  
495 that's the way they can give proper support. Am I right?

496 P1: Yes, I think that is the best way to approach something, because not everyone  
497 with a disability is as confident about it, you know, they are still trying to figure out it  
498 themselves or, you know, so I think it's, yeah just have a one on one and also trying  
499 to get into contact with the disability unit, because they are there for a reason. So,  
500 the lecturer can also get into contact with the disability unit, and talk to those people  
501 for also a better understanding. Yeah, I think that's, yeah, I think that's the one thing I  
502 can say.

503 P6: Yeah, that's happened to me, too. Like the lecturer literally just like, announces  
504 to the whole class like, hey, look, here's P6, he's blind. What, what? (Everyone  
505 laughs) I think, I think the average person doesn't like being put on the spot like that,  
506 you know?

507 N: Yeah, that's quite embarrassing.

508 P5: And then what the lecturers can improve on, okay, not the lecturers, because of,  
509 I feel like this is due to a lack of maybe the education, degree, it doesn't make  
510 training teachers aware that they are going to be exposed to a whole lot of different  
511 people. So that's why some lectures are blatantly ignoring, some don't even care. I  
512 feel like maybe, if I don't know, some sort of like, a course before, some sort of like a  
513 course before, maybe lecturers or people who are going to be teaching students can  
514 be incorporated, I feel like maybe some course like that should be included in the  
515 curriculum, before they graduate. Umm, I think maybe that will make things better,  
516 because they will graduate knowing that, you know, I'm going to work with different  
517 people and when they enter a specific university, they will know they might be  
518 exposed to this and that and that will make them less, less ignorant.

519 N: Okay, So, you're saying that they should have a course which is open to the  
520 students. Is that what you're saying? Or is it for the lecturers?

521 P5: Yeah, I don't know maybe a course or something, but something that will make  
522 them aware of what they are going to do, something that will make them aware of  
523 who they're going to interact with, or who they're going to lecture because this is not  
524 only lecturers, teachers in high school. They assume, and they are ignorant like  
525 everyone in the education, not everyone, but like most teachers, lecturers, they're  
526 just they don't know what to do when approaching someone with a disability. So  
527 yeah.

528 N: Okay. Thank you. And the academic support from the lecturers. Do you find that  
529 you get that from them basically, are they open to accommodations for you and all  
530 that type of things?

531 P2: Okay, can I jump in with this one because, okay. It's I think it's more of a problem  
532 than even I thought. I had lecturers last year, I have a lecturer this year, who are,  
533 who remains blissfully unaware, even after you approach them with solutions to  
534 academic issues. And it's horrible. Like, especially for, you know, for me when like, I  
535 have to work with a table or images or graphs, or any kind of umm, like  
536 predominantly visual thing, or an inaccessible app, or platform, it's really hard to get  
537 a lecturer to kind of figure out, umm, like to figure out with a lecturer how to kind of  
538 accommodate you. And they always expect you to have the answers. And like, I

539 don't know, for me, it's been really tough to even approach lecturers about things  
540 that I'm struggling with, like I will do everything that I can before going to a lecture  
541 and saying that I'm struggling, because, at this point, I know that they're unlikely to  
542 listen to me unless I tell them what to do. And it's, it almost feels unfair. You know,  
543 like, I'm here to learn, I wish that lecturers would be aware of, umm, what's the word,  
544 like, kind of like replacements, like replacements, accommodations, that kind of  
545 thing.

546 N: So, you find that they're not really helpful academically, basically.

547 P2: No one like, I also, like I have started take Spanish. And, you know, Spanish is  
548 hard for anyone. But they the Spanish department keeps using books that I cannot  
549 get online. The only online versions that are available are scanned images, it is a  
550 disaster. I'm having to have people re-type things for me. Like my classmates are  
551 having to retype parts of the textbook for me, it's unfair to everyone except the  
552 lecturer, the lecturer is the only person who doesn't suffer at all.

553 N: Okay. Yeah. And basically, if you look at it, you expect them to support you,  
554 because it's basically that part of their role is to support the students. Does anybody  
555 else want to add to that, to see that, ... you wanted to say something?

556 P3: I want to add something. What I've realized is that there are also differences in  
557 terms of the way lecturers are. For instance, I was once, I was, I started with IT  
558 actually before I went to social work. So, I noticed a difference. Like those lecturers  
559 in careers like IT, they're not as supportive, supportive as lecturers within the  
560 humanities side. Because, for instance, there was, there was an instance where I  
561 had no one to take me to school, and there was no way I could get into campus. But  
562 the lecturer was not understanding at all and busy making examples, by comparing  
563 me with students who are living in Johannesburg, but making sure that they come to  
564 campus. But it's completely different when I entered the humanities department,  
565 that's when I received a lot of support, social support, academic support. And an  
566 example I can make, in this instance, it was when it was raining, it was during a time  
567 when there was no rain. So, I didn't have any form of transportation to school  
568 because I was staying inside, right? So, during that day, the lecturer was very  
569 understanding, and he just taught me that I shouldn't come to school because I will  
570 catch cold as it was raining, and I didn't have any form of transport. So that is what

571 I've noticed is that there is a difference within the humanities side. They're very  
572 compassionate compared to those other lecturers. So, I don't know if it is based on  
573 the on the, on the modules provided or what, but I've noticed a difference.

574 N: The attitude of lecturers depends on the module that they're teaching?

575 P3: It is completely different. They're not even understanding when it comes to, for  
576 instance, assistive devices, because I was working in a class with another guy was  
577 with an eyesight problem. They were not understanding that when they come with  
578 their... there's this other, umm I don't know what they call it, but they usually put it on  
579 this other machine. And then it's like a projector kind of thing. So, the lecturer was  
580 told that the other day, is big for, you know, the proxy, but it was very difficult for the  
581 lecturer to do this as such to understand. So, I think, yeah, they're not understanding  
582 when it comes to disability, like those within the humanities department.

583 P1: Yeah, I think it comes down to they are not, not all lectures or as sensitive to  
584 these matters. I feel like I'm not one of my experiences, where I told you previously,  
585 where I had to take the bus from this campus to the main campus. And I went to, I  
586 actually went to the lecturer, and I said I missed this class because I had to take the  
587 bus to write my test for another module at the disability unit. And the lecturer didn't  
588 like, want to help me in that regard. She was just like; she didn't understand why I  
589 had to go to the disability unit. She was like, why can't you write here, like all the  
590 other normal students, and the word normal was not, I felt like, you know, that was  
591 insensitive, you know, and they didn't, they didn't have the knowledge. Because now  
592 they are comparing me to normal students. Why can't I write with the normal  
593 students, and then I tried to explain, but I would love to write here on this campus,  
594 but no one is accommodative. And, umm and then the, the lecturer literally said to  
595 me that now I must arrange with the bus driver, so that the bus driver can change his  
596 schedule, to drive me alone, you know, to the main campus, and I'm like, I can't do  
597 that, you know, the bus schedules are according to like, everyone. They can't just  
598 make an exception for me, and I will definitely not go and arrange with the bus driver  
599 to wait for me and make all the other students late when they also have to go to  
600 another campus, I just think it comes down to not all lecturers is sensitive to, you  
601 know, the situations or they just don't understand or yeah. I think they just need to  
602 better that.

603 N: Okay. And tell me, if I listen to you all, where are you're actually getting your  
604 psychological and emotional support from currently? Who contributes or what  
605 contributes to that right now?

606 P1: Well, I think, in my case, I think an advantage of that is that like, when I went to  
607 school, my primary school and high school. I was in a mainstream school, so I never  
608 like went to like, a special needs school specifically for my disability. And I think I,  
609 um, I got the support from my teachers in the schools. I had like a lot of friends who  
610 understood me so I never felt, can I say, I always felt confident with my disability if I  
611 can say so. So, I knew how to approach these things when I got to university. And,  
612 yeah, I think I'm just in general myself, I think I'm a confident person and like, my  
613 parents, both my parents also are visually impaired. So, I think they understand me  
614 where some people would have a disability, they parents doesn't always have a  
615 disability. So, the parents can't always what's gonna I don't know the word but they  
616 don't understand the child as much even though they are trying to. And yeah, I think I  
617 just have a lot of friends who accept me and I think I just have a lot of support from  
618 friends and families. Yeah, I don't. I'm not really affected always by all these things. I  
619 just know it can be difficult for people who do not always have the support.

620 N: So, you basically get your support from your parents, your friends and family.

621 P1: Yes, basically.

622 N: Thank you. Anybody else? What do you feel, what gives you psychological and  
623 emotional support? Where does it come from?

624 P6: Umm I guess sometimes they just actually just get it from each other, because  
625 then I don't know, like you talk to other people, and they'll have similar issues or  
626 issues of their own. And I don't know, it kind of helps to know that. It's not just you.  
627 You know if that makes sense.

628 N: Okay, so it's basically, um, socially then, friends of yours that might give you  
629 support?

630 P6: Yeah, I feel like from other people who also have disabilities that...

631 N: Are In the same position as you.

632 P6: Yes, exactly. In the same position.

633 N: Anybody else want to add anything? What do you feel that is important for you?  
634 What helps you?

635 Okay, Achievement and accomplishment. I think that's a big one here at university  
636 because we all want to achieve and accomplish things. And do you think this is  
637 important? Why do you think it's important? And how does it contribute to your  
638 wellbeing?

639 P6: Can you just repeat that

640 N: Okay Your achievement and accomplishment? Is it important to you? And how  
641 does it contribute towards your wellbeing? What do you see as accomplishment as a  
642 student?

643 P1: I think it is important, I think, any achievement or accomplishment is very  
644 important, because it will not only motivate you, but it will also inspire people around  
645 you. And they will start believing in you where perhaps at first, they didn't think you  
646 were able to do that. And when you show them wrong, they now know that, okay,  
647 this person is actually more capable than I thought. umm, So, it's just for inspiring  
648 other people and making you believe in yourself and know for a fact that, okay, I  
649 know now I could do this, but now I've actually proven this to myself. So, I know now  
650 I really can do this.

651 N: Okay, so basically, it impacts on your sense of achievement in yourself. And  
652 that's what contributes to wellbeing. it's basically what you're saying am I right?

653 P1: Yes

654 N: Okay, anybody else want to add to that?

655 P2: I think for me, it's like, umm, I don't know if, if any of the others can kind of relate  
656 to this. But like coming from a really small school, where the classes were, honestly,  
657 tiny in comparison to like a mainstream environment. um, you very much got caught  
658 up in like a kind of comparison game. And now that you don't have that, there's no  
659 kind of external force that kind of drives you to do better. And that's something that I  
660 guess helped me in school. And so, like having, you know, achieved things and  
661 accomplished things, gives me a sense of, like, I'm doing well, and I'm doing enough.  
662 And like, enough, for me isn't necessarily enough for everyone else, but I know that

663 I'm kind of keeping to my own standards, and I don't need to like have everyone  
664 else's marks thrown in my face. To kind of realize that about myself. So, it's definitely  
665 a very introspective like, I have a better view of myself because I'm not constantly  
666 being compared to everyone. But I do know that I'm doing better than most.

667 N: Yeah, that is a big one in school, it was more. What's the word I'm looking for  
668 now? There's more competition I would say. Open competition as such.

669 P2: Yeah.

670 N: Anyone else?

671 Okay. basic needs. Does anyone want to add to that, that we spoke of right at the  
672 beginning. P3 brought that up. If your basic needs are not satisfied, you cannot  
673 actually go further. Um...so what do you think is more important there? Do you think  
674 it's food, hygiene, transport, security? What would you say? Which of the basic  
675 needs, would you say would contribute to your overall wellbeing? If you look at the  
676 different ones. Like I said, it's food, hygiene, security, transport.

677 P6: I mean, they're all pretty important. Can't really...

678 N: You won't really put one above the other?

679 P6: I suppose you need food to survive. So, I guess that is top priority? Yeah.

680 I don't know, umm... And then, you obviously need transport to get to campus or to  
681 get places otherwise you're not really going to be able to achieve anything. And what  
682 was the other one?

683 N: Security?

684 P6: Oh, yeah. I mean, I guess that's important in that I'm guessing you mean security  
685 as in being safe from like, the...

686 N: Feeling safe, yes. At campus. So, at the moment, if you look at it, that aspect isn't  
687 really um...viable, because you're not really at campus you're at your own space.  
688 So, I suppose in that respect, it's like, you safer right now than what you were before,  
689 when you actually at campus.

690 P6: When on campus. Like it, it does help to, like, I guess, have the gates and the  
691 security guards because then you know, you're fine. You don't have to stress if you

692 walk around whereas if you go outside the gates and you walk you know, in Hatfield,  
693 you might actually, like, people do get robbed and people do like, so you have that I  
694 guess that extra stress when you're outside that you don't actually have to worry  
695 about inside so, yeah. That's very important.

696 N: So, you used to feel safe at campus, is that basically what you're saying?

697 P6: Yeah.

698 N: And um... what other...

699 P2: I think

700 N: Sorry

701 P2: Sorry, I just want to touch on the security thing. I think like online, obviously, it  
702 doesn't really, you know, you're at home. So, it's fine, but as like, as a disabled  
703 woman, especially, umm who has experienced, you know, like things that no human  
704 should experience. I definitely feel like it's, it's really, really, like intimidating to be,  
705 like, on campus, especially like, early in the morning, when not many people are  
706 around or later in the afternoon, or if you have to stay for like, an activity, and in  
707 particular late, like, it's always very, very scary for me, especially to like, have to walk  
708 anywhere on my own. And so I almost always have someone with me. And it feels  
709 almost like, I can't like, protect myself, which is a very weird thing to say, because I  
710 have a whole dog. But like, you know, it's a very umm... like, it's a situation that you  
711 kind of have to be very careful of like, even in broad daylight. I feel unsafe a lot of the  
712 time, I feel vulnerable. So, I think security for me is like, I don't even know how that  
713 need would be met. Never mind meeting it.

714 N: So, at the campus itself, do you not feel safe then, like P6 was saying?

715 P2: I mean, I've never, I've, I've no I've, like not on campus? I wasn't there long  
716 enough. But, you know, I've had things happen to me in situations whereby all  
717 accounts, I should have been safe. And I apparently wasn't. So, you know, it's, it's  
718 very. Like it's, it's like, it's a very sensitive thing, obviously, you know, it's, if someone  
719 doesn't see it happen, it's your word against someone else's. So ultimately. Yeah, I  
720 don't know.

721 N: Yeah, that's true.



722 P6: I mean, I guess we're easy targets in general. I mean, someone can just grab  
723 your phone and run, and not really much we can do about that.

724 N: Yeah, that's true.

725 P6: For example.

726 N: And generally, the more vulnerable people have always moved from being  
727 attacked to being something. Something that I haven't touched up...Sorry P2, you  
728 wanted to say something?

729 P2: No, it was my microphone.

730 N: Tell me the infrastructure at university, when you people were there, what  
731 impacted your wellbeing. What did you find was what contributed to your wellbeing?  
732 Surroundings?

733 P6: So, like, just campus in general, I guess, with infrastructure, do you mean just in  
734 general, you know, because um, one issue that we had to deal with a lot was, so  
735 um...when they do construction, they so Okay, so the way we, if you can't see  
736 anything, you kind of just learn a route that you kind of memorize. And that's the way  
737 you know how to get somewhere. So then one day, there'll randomly just be a  
738 construction there. And would basically be impossible. And if you don't really know  
739 an alternative way to get there, then it's an issue. Also, sometimes they were not  
740 very good with their safety precautions. I mean, I've had where I like kind of fell into a  
741 hole where they would literally just like put a cone next to it. And obviously, I can't  
742 see the cone, so I just walked past it into the hole.

743 N: Oh no

744 P6: So that happens. Yeah, so that, that is a problem. That was quite painful.

745 N: Okay, And, considering, I know P1 was saying at Campus 2, there was a problem  
746 with ramps, obviously they didn't have enough ramps, have more steps. So, it wasn't  
747 really conducive to manoeuvring around there and the lecture hall, the lecture rooms,  
748 the labs, how was that? How did you find that?

749 P2: So, I had a situation once umm. where I was sitting at a desk, and I didn't realize  
750 that there was this protruding piece of metal under the desk. And I scratched my leg.  
751 But the thought that immediately went through my head was if my dog had been

752 under that desk, she could have gotten seriously hurt. And like, it's a safety hazard. I  
753 can't see it. No one's looking under my desk because that would just be weird. And  
754 it's dangerous, like, silly things like tiny things like that, that go unnoticed can be a  
755 Yeah, like, saying dangerous, again, feels redundant. But it's honestly like scary. I  
756 feel like I have to check all the time.

757 N: So basically, you don't feel safe then? It comes back to safety.

758 P2: I suppose so, yeah.

759 N: Is there anything else that you people find a problem with infrastructure? The  
760 Internet access, do you all have free internet access? That's not a problem.  
761 University provides internet access. Am I right?

762 P1: Well, when you are on campus, there is at least Wi-Fi. Um...So I think the  
763 internet is fine. Well, for me, it was fine.

764 P6: So, I'm sorry did someone else wants to say something?

765 N: No, you can go ahead P6.

766 P6: Yeah. That is the issue. So, you know, the Chancellor's building, right? Oh,  
767 well, okay, actually, you're from another campus. I guess you don't know the main  
768 campus that well. But anyway, so it's, it's that thing that P3 was saying about, like  
769 people. So, it's literally like, a few steps that you go up. And then you're like, it's not  
770 that many steps, but then there's also a lift. So, people always use that just for some  
771 reason. So, it breaks very often. Um, I don't know why that particular lift breaks, but it  
772 just had a tendency of breaking. And when that happens, it's literally impossible for  
773 someone in a wheelchair to, you know, attend any of those classes.

774 N: Okay. Tell me how do you contribute to your own wellbeing? Anybody want to...  
775 start with that one?

776 P6: Can you maybe just clarify exactly what you mean?

777 N: Okay, how do you contribute to your own wellbeing? How important do you think  
778 you are in determining your own wellbeing? What can you basically do? Do you think  
779 that um, because we spoke a lot about the infrastructure and the lecturers and all the  
780 other things now, looking at you yourself? How important do you think you are in  
781 determining your wellbeing?

782 P1: Well, I think for me, personally, I think, just to be organized, and, umm, you  
783 know, implement well, time management skills. Umm, I think that the most important  
784 for me is to, you know, organize my work and know when to do what so that I don't  
785 feel overwhelmed and stressed all the time. So, and then if I do need support from  
786 someone like a family member, or a friend, I will just tell them, Listen, this is what I  
787 need. This is the type of support that I need. And then yeah, then they will try to help  
788 me wherever they can. I think that for me personally is how I can contribute to my  
789 own wellbeing.

790 N: Okay, So, it's basically time management and, and support from your friends to  
791 help you when you need that support from them.

792 P1: Yes, I feel time management is very important because like the lecturers will give  
793 you a certain deadline or a due date for something to be handed in. But then I have  
794 to take into account that I read or work slower than other learners, or other students,  
795 so um, I have to manage my time very well so that I can still hand in the assignments  
796 at the same deadline the lecturer provided. So yeah, I think that's very important.

797 N: Yeah, it definitely is. Anyone else?

798 P4: For me, it's been surrounded by positive people. And also creating time for  
799 myself, making sure that I do my schoolwork, but also take time to rest.

800 N: Okay, so it's basically organizing your class time management, making time for  
801 everything making time for your studies and for relaxation and sleep, exercise and all  
802 of that as well.

803 P4: Yes

804 N: Anybody else?

805 P3: Okay, I think something that really helped me a lot. And it still happens. Now it's  
806 having my, because even if we can have all the support services, and lecturers going  
807 all the way to support us and made sure that the work completed in university, if we  
808 don't speak up, or if we do not know what we want, then we're gonna keep on  
809 complaining that we are not being supported. And, and, and. But if you speak up for  
810 yourself, if you do stand up for yourself, then you don't really get affected much. I  
811 don't know if that makes sense.

812 N: Yeah, it does. It definitely does. It's basically knowing what's important for you.

813 P2, you wanted to say something earlier.

814 P2: So, for me, I, um, when I like knew that, you know, which classes I was taking,  
815 and, you know, when I registered and, like, had everything in place to start doing  
816 things for myself, I came up with a strategy, in terms of like, what I would um, do, like  
817 when I would work out my timetable, or, umm how I would approach lecturers, or  
818 even stuff like that. And I think the important thing for me is like realizing when  
819 something isn't working, and taking that into my own hands to the point where I make  
820 it work, like, you know, realizing that, umm, something in a class isn't going well, or  
821 that I can't access something and taking, like, the initiative to kind of make that better  
822 for myself, because if I don't do it, no one's gonna do it for me.

823 N: Okay, That's good.

824 P6: Okay yeah, So I agree with P4 and P2, basically, just to add on to what they  
825 said it's, yeah, basically, that it shouldn't just, you know, accept things, like because  
826 some people just like, okay, yeah, that's, like, if you, you, let's say you need  
827 something and you're asked the lecturer and they don't want to and then they're just  
828 like, okay, fine, whatever they don't want and then you just leave it like you shouldn't  
829 really just accept things or just like, Should actually try and fight for what you need  
830 and, you know, try to push for it and otherwise you, you might not really end up  
831 getting anywhere.

832 N: Okay, anyone else?

833 We, umm, somebody mentioned earlier about making time for other things as well  
834 for yourself basically, and for sleep and exercise. We actually didn't touch on that,  
835 like what do you people do? What activities or sports or hobbies do you do that  
836 contribute to your wellbeing? Do you do any? Does it help?

837 P6: Does sleeping count?

838 N: (Laughs) Yes, really.

839 P2: Sleeping is a hobby as a student. (Everyone laughs).

840 N: (Laughs). Okay, Sleeping does contribute towards your wellbeing, it's a big one  
841 as sometimes you sit so much with your work, you don't have time to sleep.

842 So, do you have time for sports and hobbies? Do you people make time for that?  
843 Does it contribute to your wellbeing at all?

844 P2: So, for me, I am very musical. So, I last year, and this year was going to be a  
845 part of UP acapella. And, like, yes, it was still a campus thing. But I realized, like the  
846 little bit that I did made me really, really happy and kind of gave me like, a chance to  
847 get away from like, all of the academic stress and stuff. And I also like, you know, I  
848 do things with music for myself. I also read a lot. So, for me, it's kind of just like  
849 escaping from all the demands of my real life. And getting involved in something that  
850 actively makes me happy.

851 N: Anybody else?

852 P6: Well, I don't know if this counts, because it's not really a hobby as such, but I  
853 guess just having time to you know, like, so. I don't know like chill with your friends,  
854 or you know, go out to... to have a drink or go eat something, go do something just  
855 like to catch up.

856 P4: Watch series

857 P6: Yeah, oh, yeah, watch series.

858 N: Well, yes. It's all part of recreation. What you doing when you're not sitting with  
859 your books. You need to like do something that will contribute to your wellbeing that  
860 is not just academic. So, yeah.

861 P6: Yeah,

862 P1: I feel like I am like, just if I'm not working then I'm just like watching series so I  
863 feel like that really helps me to um, relax and not to worry anymore about the work  
864 and I think socializing is also a very important one for me. I feel like going out to a  
865 restaurant have a nice meal. That is always very nice. And to celebrate, you know, if,  
866 if you, you know did well in something then I feel like you know, that's also like, the  
867 type of relaxation to go and celebrate and do something nice or shopping or  
868 whatever. That's, that's really nice.

869 N: Okay. That's good. Anyone else? What do you do people do to chill basically?  
870 Okay, um...

871 P6: I think everyone watches Netflix or YouTube or something. Really sure that one  
872 is like pretty, yeah, universal.

873 P1: Yeah

874 N: Okay, so there's no hobbies that you actually do as such in sports. Okay, and  
875 spirituality?

876 P1: Sorry, I just wanted to say I used to do like lots of, like, sport and cultural things,  
877 but yeah, not anymore. It's I would say like um, something that used to be a huge  
878 hobby was um, like acrobats or gymming or something like that. So um, yeah, that  
879 would also that also used to relieve stress and yeah, contribute to relaxation.

880 N: Did you used to use the UP gym?

881 P1: Yes, actually, I have the one on Campus 2. I used to, um. Yeah, I had like, if I  
882 can say a membership or something so, yeah.

883 N: So, did you find that that contributed to your wellbeing?

884 P1: Yes, because that, yeah, that does, um. You know, relieve stress, if you had a  
885 stressful day, it would help you to relieve that stress. And, you know, I used to love it.  
886 And it just made me relax more.

887 N: Okay. Did anyone else use the gym, make use of it? No?

888 Okay, and spirituality, religion? How does that contribute to your wellbeing?

889 P3: Can you repeat that?

890 N: Um, how do you think your own spirituality contributes to your wellbeing?

891 P3: Do you want to say something?

892 P3: Oh, yes, I wanted to say, I feel like it's, it's important. Because if I'm not you  
893 know, spiritually, definitely, it's going to affect my overall wellbeing because I feel like  
894 all different parts of like, all the components of wellbeing must be balanced in order  
895 for one to, to, to be well.

896 N: Okay. Anybody else?

897 Okay. What do you think is the smallest thing that university can do that will have the  
898 greatest positive impact on the wellbeing of students? Let me repeat that one, what's

899 the smallest thing that university can do that will have the greatest positive impact on  
900 wellbeing of students?

901 P3: For me, I feel like the most important thing is firstly, is to know if they can  
902 provide some form of workshops that does lead to, to educate people that are not  
903 directly involved with a specific disability, such as lecturers in terms of what is it that  
904 they can do? What is the kind of support they can provide us to like, to educate them  
905 about disability and how they can help us as well?

906 N: Okay, so you think workshops to educate people on disabilities.

907 Okay. Anybody else? What's the smallest thing the university can do that will have  
908 the greatest positive impact on the wellbeing of students?

909 P6: So, for me, it would just be like, trying a bit more to like, you know, include us in  
910 certain things. So, okay, just like as an example, so whenever things happen, like  
911 usually they'll have the maybe put, like, posters up, or they will do things-

912 P5: Sorry. Like, can I disturb you? I'm also seeing that my phone is low, so I have to  
913 leave the meeting now. Because it's going to switch off now.

914 N: Okay, before you go, what do you think is the smallest thing that university can  
915 do to help students?

916 P5: I'm not sure, I feel like maybe they can, consideration, especially in policy  
917 making and then motivating the employees, or like giving them some sort of like, a  
918 test or like a tutorial, or like, give workshop on how to, especially lecturers on how to  
919 work with students having disabilities. And yeah, policy making as well as should be,  
920 people with disabilities should be incorporated in policies of the university.

921 Goodbye, guys.

922 N: Yes, that's a good one. Thank you so much for attending. I appreciate it so much.

923 Okay, P6. Sorry about that.

924 P6: That's fine. So, I was just saying that, yeah, like, for example, when they have,  
925 like physical things up that we can't really see or read. If they could just like put that  
926 online, like, literally just put it on our websites, then we would be able to read it. Like,  
927 yeah, I feel like there are little things that are, you know, I don't, I don't know, but I

928 don't think that are, that much effort to actually do that could actually really make a  
929 difference.

930 N: It's basically the little things which count so it makes a big difference on your  
931 wellbeing. It's the little things which kind of irritate you.

932 P6: Yeah,

933 P3: I think, I think um, communication, I feel like that is a very small thing that they  
934 can do to improve the wellbeing of, you know, disabled students like, and that is like  
935 for all disabled students. I feel um, if they communicate with the students themselves  
936 to understand the specific students, and communicate with each other, like the  
937 lecturers among themselves, and then also, communicating with the disability unit. I  
938 feel like, yeah, I feel that communication is the key, you know, if you don't  
939 communicate, you won't understand the needs and how to accommodate those  
940 needs, um. And yeah, I think, what P6 said is also true, is inclusivity, just to include  
941 all, um all learners. So yeah, I think that is, and with the workshops, I feel like that is  
942 also a great idea to um, implement workshops to educate lecturers more on how to  
943 accommodate students with disabilities. But I think it can also be helpful to other  
944 students as well. So that the students in the class understand the disabled students  
945 as well. So, I think it's not just lecturers, I think some students also don't understand  
946 the needs of their classmates. So, I think that this is small things they can do.

947 N: Okay. Anything else? The disability unit? Sorry. Okay, P2, carry on.

948 P2: No, no. I actually wanted to say something about the disability unit. Um, like, my  
949 small thing has to do with that. But I feel like um, you know, lecturers should know  
950 that the disability unit is just a student thing. Like, it's not just up to us to take  
951 advantage of the, like, um advantages that the disability unit gives us, but it's also up  
952 to them to communicate with the unit to see how they can help. And for lectures to  
953 assume that it's all on us because, you know, it's, it's an "us" problem not a "them"  
954 problem, quote, unquote, you know, I feel like it's almost irresponsible. And it makes  
955 them look worse, honestly. But yeah, I just think, yeah, it shouldn't be seen as  
956 optional for them.

957 N: They should actually be more involved with the disability unit. Is that what you  
958 saying?



959 P2: Yes, that's it definitely. It shouldn't be seen as optional.

960 N: Okay. Do you find a disability unit helpful?

961 P6: Yeah, for me definitely. I don't think I would have, no, actually, I'm fairly sure I  
962 wouldn't have been able to, to do my degree without their help. So yeah, it definitely  
963 helped me a lot.

964 P2: Yeah, I also find the disability unit to be very helpful. Especially according to my  
965 needs, um. I feel like they have been very accommodative. So yeah, I find them very  
966 helpful.

967 P2: I'd say helpful, but definitely understaffed.

968 N: Okay.

969 P6: Yeah, that that is an issue. They, they are a bit understaffed, so they could do  
970 with a few more people. I think sometimes. I think that people are, they are  
971 sometimes a bit overworked, in, in certain situations, like when you know, for  
972 example, during exams, or like, if there are a lot of tests going on, yeah.

973 N: So, isn't there enough space for everybody to um, to accommodate them, or what  
974 is it actually, is it a long waiting period?

975 P6: No, no, it's not that. It's that I don't think there's enough funding for them to hire  
976 enough people if that makes sense.

977 N: Okay, and the actual accommodations that they give you? Do they give you like  
978 support structures, things in braille, or, you know, things like that? Is there a problem  
979 with those things?

980 P6: So, yeah, they do have things like that. They have braille printer if you do need  
981 that, although we don't use that very often actually. But it is there and they have you  
982 know, computers they have screen readers and magnifying software and they have  
983 yeah, what do you call those magnifying things that you'd put a paper under it and  
984 it's?

985 P1: Yeah, it changes the font and you can also change the colour of the background  
986 so if you're like light sensitive or something, so yeah. They do have actually a lot of  
987 assistive devices

988 N: Oh okay, so you find them very helpful basically. So um, P4, P3 how do you  
989 people find the disability unit? Have you had any contact with them? Do they, how do  
990 they support your wellbeing?

991 N: Okay, is there anything else you would like to add to the disability unit? Wellbeing  
992 generally, are there any factors that you still want to add on, that will contribute to  
993 student wellbeing?

994 P4: I'm just...It's just something that came to mind now. The one thing that I'd like the  
995 university to do or be is to be more flexible when it comes to students with  
996 disabilities, because they have all these policies in place. That is sometimes  
997 inconvenient as well. I'll make an example where tax rates. Every year they have fire  
998 drills and stuff, and they would want students to vacate their rooms immediately. And  
999 some of us with certain disabilities cannot do that. And the house management, if I  
1000 can say, isn't trained to handle some disabilities, if I can put it in that way, and then it  
1001 becomes an inconvenience, then you have to pretend that you are not in your room,  
1002 or you have to wait and hope that there's not going to be a fire drill anytime soon.  
1003 which becomes a problem because a drill is more like a real fire. That will be a  
1004 problem if there's a real fire and they do not know how to assist you, then it means  
1005 you're going to be in trouble, that the management is going to be in trouble, the  
1006 university's going to be in trouble, which they will probably cover up. But those kinds  
1007 of things. And they will put up all these rules that you're not supposed to do this with  
1008 the students, you're not supposed to do that and do that. But then it's not always the  
1009 case that we have our assistant next to us. So, we'd need the people, who are  
1010 always around to assist us. And they will tell you that it takes this many years to  
1011 amend the Constitution. And it doesn't really make sense for me.

1012 N: Okay. So, basically, they're not considering you in the rules that they are  
1013 implementing.

1014 P4: On their side, it seems like they are but for certain disabilities, not really.

1015 N: Thank you. Anyone else? We're running overtime already.

1016 P2: The only thing that I wanted to add to was about the sports thing earlier, which I,  
1017 the only reason I didn't say it was because the subject changed, and I thought that  
1018 was more important than saying it. But like, the only reason I think I don't actively

1019 participate in, like sports, and or go to, like, the university's gym, or like anything like  
1020 that, is like accessibility is just like, a straightforward issue all the time. There aren't  
1021 many sports that are made accessible, especially for visually impaired people. And if  
1022 there are, they can, you know, it's like hard to get there, or it's, you know, like,  
1023 expensive. Um, so it's just an ongoing issue, or like, going to the gym on my own is  
1024 hard. And I don't really want to see my like, how, like, have my friends watch me  
1025 work out. So, you know, it's kind of just picking your battles. And I've, I guess, picked  
1026 the side where I don't do anything.

1027 P6: Yes, so there actually used to be, I'm not sure if you know what gobo is, but it's,  
1028 probably not, but it's something that the university used to have that either we could  
1029 play, but that didn't last very long. So, and that I kind of get because there are not  
1030 that many of us, I guess, like, you know, having to have like attention on like  
1031 separate sports just for the few of us. I guess that isn't really worth it for them. But I  
1032 mean, if you really think about it, what actual sports are there can we actually do?

1033 N: Okay, so you find some limitation on that basically, and if there is available, they  
1034 don't really accommodate you. Is that what you're saying P6?

1035 P6: Yeah, just, it's just like, it doesn't even necessarily mean that they're not  
1036 accommodating you just that, just by the nature of like how the sport works. We can't  
1037 really do that in, you know, compete on with people who can see, it's just not like,  
1038 it's, it's not really going to work. You know, it's just not. I don't think there really is  
1039 much that can be done about that. It's just, yeah.

1040 N: Okay, thank you. Is there anything else that anybody wants to add?

1041 Um, okay, there's one last one. What's the most important thing that you think the  
1042 leaders of the university should know about your wellbeing?

1043 P2: Ooh okay, I actually want to go first, and it's just a very short thing, but my  
1044 wellbeing isn't less important just because I'm a minority. Like it isn't. Yeah, it  
1045 shouldn't be acknowledged less because there are less of us.

1046 N: Okay

1047 P6: And that does tend to happen because like we have heard, like, if you ask for  
1048 something, and then they're like. Well, you know, basically what she said like, you

1049 know, we're a minority, I can't like, you know, do that just for us. It's not, you know,  
1050 so few of us that will actually benefit from, you know, something in that line. So yeah,  
1051 that does make sense.

1052 N: So that comes back to basically a lack of accommodation, accommodating you  
1053 people. That's basically what it amounts to. Does anyone else want to add what you  
1054 people think is the most important thing they should know about your wellbeing?

1055 P3: Well. just to add to what P6 and P2 have already said. Um, accommodating  
1056 persons with disabilities should not be a speciality. So, it shouldn't just be with  
1057 disability units that are supposed to be that. But the fact that the university deals with  
1058 people, they should expect all kinds of people there and they should be ready to  
1059 accommodate them.

1060 N: Thank you. So basically, you feel that this disability unit should be more all-  
1061 encompassing, I would say, that it's not just like, it's basically stuck on one corner.  
1062 And it needs to be more, everybody needs to be more aware of it and what their role  
1063 is and participate in it. Not just make it their role it's supposed to be everybody's role.  
1064 Is that what I'm hearing?

1065 P3: Yes.

1066 E: Yes

1067 N: Okay, and that's a very big one, that it should not just be confined to them. It  
1068 should be part of everybody. Everybody has students that need certain  
1069 accommodations and needs specific attention. It should be everybody's, should have  
1070 the knowledge of knowing what to do, how to do when to do, how to do it. So that  
1071 everybody, that will basically contribute to everybody's wellbeing.

1072 P1: Yes

1073 N: Is there anything else that you want to add on to that?

1074 Okay. I enjoyed the afternoon; I find it interesting. And it was good to listen to all of  
1075 you, and to hear what contributes to your wellbeing and supports you. And um, I  
1076 hope that we can make a difference and get to the people. Hopefully they'll take  
1077 notice of us and implement some of the things which you have brought up here.

1078 And um, thank you all for your participation, and, yeah, I wish you all the best for  
1079 your studies for the rest of the year.

1080 P1 Thank you, bye

1081 P2: Thank you, bye

1082 N: Okay, thank you. Thank you so much. Really appreciate it. Okay, bye.

1083 P6: Bye

1084 P4: Bye

1085 P3: Bye