

# “Even in Chaos, There Is Order”

A Campus Installation for Reflection and Balance

## Overview

This proposal introduces a creative wellbeing initiative designed to help students manage stress and find perspective during challenging times. The project combines visual art, augmented reality (AR), and philosophy to deliver short moments of mindfulness and reflection throughout campus environments.

## Concept

At the heart of the installation is the Möbius strip, a symbol of infinite continuity and the cyclical balance between chaos and order. Accompanying this is the quote:

“Even in chaos, there is order. Everything continues.”

The quote acts as a reminder that even in uncertainty or difficulty, life maintains its flow, offering reassurance and calm during moments of stress or self-doubt.

## Implementation

### - Physical Posters & Stickers:

Minimalist designs featuring the Möbius strip and the quote will be placed around high-traffic student areas; libraries, common rooms, and study spaces.

### - AR Interaction (via QR Code):

Each poster includes a small QR code. When scanned, it opens an AR experience showing a floating Möbius strip rotating in front of the user’s phone camera. The animation subtly shifts between states of “chaos” (stormy textures) and “order” (smooth, calm materials), representing the balance of student life.

### - Philosophical Series:

This installation could be part of a broader campus art initiative called “Moments of Thought”, featuring other short philosophical quotes from thinkers such as Marcus Aurelius, Alan Watts, or Lao Tzu — each paired with minimalist visuals and AR experiences.

## Target Audience

Primarily aimed at students who experience stress, burnout, or academic anxiety. The installation provides a quiet moment of perspective, something calming, grounding, and aesthetically engaging that doesn’t demand time or effort.

## **Aims & Objectives**

- Encourage mental wellbeing and reflection through art and technology.
- Create interactive, positive spaces across campus.
- Promote self-awareness and philosophical curiosity in daily environments.
- Use accessible technology (QR + AR) to engage students in a low-barrier, high-impact way.

## **Visual Direction**

- Aesthetic: Minimalist, monochrome or muted colours, subtle gradients.
- Symbolism: The Möbius strip as the unbroken link between order and chaos.
- Typography: Clean sans-serif for the main quote, small serif subtext for philosophical context.
- Optional addition: Light background textures (waves, honeycomb, waterfalls) to reflect balance and continuity.

## **Potential Development**

- Create a digital gallery or map of all installations on campus.
- Add sound design. Ambient tones that evolve as the Möbius rotates.
- Collaborate with student wellbeing services to link to mental health support via QR code options.

## **Conclusion**

“Even in Chaos, There Is Order” invites students to pause, reflect, and remember that moments of disorder are part of a continuous flow, not an end. Through a simple yet profound message, this installation aims to promote balance and resilience in student life, merging art, philosophy, and technology in a meaningful way.

## **How to Engage Students and Integrate Research**

To ensure the project genuinely resonates with students and reflects their real experiences, I plan to involve them throughout the design process using the following methods:

### **1. Student Surveys and QR Feedback:**

Short digital surveys will be shared through posters and social media (via QR codes), asking students about their main causes of stress, anxiety, and burnout. Example questions include:

- What currently causes you the most stress at university (e.g., exams, finances, housing, social life)?
- When you feel overwhelmed, what helps you regain calm or focus?
- Would you interact with short reflective installations (like this one) around campus?

This will help identify the most relevant themes to represent visually, such as chaos, order, and continuity.

## 2. Pop-Up “Reflection Booths” or Workshops:

A small event or temporary booth could be set up in busy areas (library foyer, student union) where students can:

- View the AR experience in person.
- Leave anonymous sticky-note reflections on what “chaos and order” mean to them.
- Suggest additional quotes or visuals that could be used in future iterations.

This creates active participation and a sense of ownership over the project.

## 3. Collaboration with Student Services:

Working alongside the Student Wellbeing Service or Student Minds representatives, the installation could include QR links to mental health resources, peer support groups, or mindfulness materials. This ensures the project complements existing campus wellbeing strategies.

## **Integrating Research**

The project will draw on both academic and organisational research into student mental health and wellbeing. This ensures the design is not only aesthetic but also evidence-informed.

Key supporting sources include:

-Student Minds Insight Briefing (2023): Found that \*57% of UK students\* report ongoing mental health difficulties, with stress and academic pressure as leading causes.

Frontiers in Psychology (2022): Identified strong correlations between academic stress, anxiety, and reduced wellbeing.

The Mental Health Foundation (2023): Reports that visual and creative activities can reduce stress and support emotional expression.

“Understanding the burden of depression, anxiety and stress among university students” (2024, PMC): Found that over 70% of students\* experience moderate to high stress levels, reinforcing the importance of preventive, everyday interventions.

These studies demonstrate the need for accessible, low-barrier wellbeing prompts on campuses. My project applies this research by combining visual design, philosophy, and interactivity to create a short reflective pause within students’ daily routines.

### ***Expected Outcomes***

- Increased student awareness of self-reflection and mental wellbeing.
- Collection of anonymised feedback data to inform future wellbeing design work.
- Integration of creative design with research-led wellbeing practice, demonstrating the role of graphic design in positive social impact.