Counselling Service

Your Guide to Confidentiality & Record Keeping

On Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and Paisley Campuses and online at www.uws.ac.uk/counselling

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT
On each campus, you can contact the Counselling Service as follows:

Ayr Campus
Student Link, Student Services
T: 01292 886 005
E: counselling@uws.ac.uk

Dumfries Campus
Student Link, Dumfries & Galloway College Building
T: 01387 345 825
E: counselling@uws.ac.uk

Hamilton Campus
Student Link, Almada Building
T: 01698 894 448
E: counselling@uws.ac.uk

Paisley Campus
Student Link, Elles Building West
T: 0141 848 3803
E: counselling@uws.ac.uk

We aim to be accessible to all users. If you require support to access any of our services, please let us know. We are happy to make this publication available in an alternative format.

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CONFIDENTIALITY & RECORD KEEPING

This leaflet outlines the Counselling Service policy on confidentiality and record keeping. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, you will be asked at your initial appointment to electronically complete a Consent Form to confirm your acceptance to notes about you being kept.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal information about you is not normally available outside the Counselling Service.

Personal information will only be passed on in the following circumstances:

i. If you have given explicit consent for information to be disclosed to a specific person or organisation.

ii. If you, your counsellor, or someone else is in serious danger.

iii. If the counsellor would be liable to civil or criminal proceedings if the information were not disclosed.

Consent to disclose information will be sought whenever possible.

If your counsellor needs to consult with another member of the Counselling Service, their line manager, or external supervisor, they will do so in a way that is both discreet and protects your identity.

RECORD KEEPING

- When you come for your initial appointment with one of the counsellors you will be asked to complete a Consent Form. This will enable us to hold a record of your counselling on our record-keeping system. The Consent Form and the record of that session are only accessible to staff working in the Counselling Service.

- After your initial appointment, your counsellor will keep a brief record of each counselling session with you. These notes will only be accessed by your counsellor unless there are exceptional circumstances. Then, they would only be shared with another member of the Counselling Service with your consent.
- Our record-keeping system enables us to view your personal details on Banner, as already supplied by you to UWS.

- If at any point you ask a counsellor to send a letter to another member of staff or your GP, for example, a copy of this will also be kept on our record-keeping system. Unless you ask us not to, your address, phone number, or email address may be used to contact you, e.g. if it is ever necessary to rearrange an appointment.

- Please ask your counsellor if you have any concerns about record-keeping.

Records relating to your counselling will be retained for 5 years after the end of the academic year in which your counselling finishes. After that, your counselling notes will be securely disposed of.

**ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Under the Data Protection Act, you have the right to see records that are kept about you. If you would like to do this, please ask your counsellor. They will explain anything in a record which is unclear. You have the right to correct any part of the record that you believe is wrong. There are two exceptional circumstances in which access may be refused to any part of your record. These are:

i. Where the counsellor believes that it would seriously harmful to you to share this information.

ii. Where information has been supplied confidentially by a third party. (Consent must normally be obtained from that person first of all).

If you disagree with a counsellor’s decision to refuse access please take this up with the Head of Student Services.
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