



COUNSELLING POLICY

This policy is available on-line at: www.stc.ac.uk

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please contact: Head of Student Services
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.
- All our policies are subject to equality impact assessments*. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to these impact assessments. Please contact: Head of Student Services

*Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person:
SEG	v.6	January 2015	January 2018	Head of Student Services

Equal Opportunities: Impact Assessed

Review:

POLICY NUMBER 15

SOUTH TYNESIDE COLLEGE

COUNSELLING POLICY

1 Policy Statement

South Tyneside College aims to provide a supportive environment in which students and staff can work effectively to achieve personal, professional and organisational goals.

2 Scope

The policy covers all members of the College Community.

3 Legislation

The Human Rights Act 1998 applies to this policy.

4 Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring:

- 4.1 The policy is known, understood and implemented.
- 4.2 Their behaviour at all times takes into account the sensibilities of others.
- 4.3 Everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

Within this general responsibility there are some specific responsibilities:

- 4.4 The Head of Student Services for the effective implementation of the policy
- 4.5 The Director of HR, for provision of agreed training and to meet new training needs as identified.

5 Actions to Implement and Develop Policy

5.1 Counselling

Counselling will be offered for personal issues which impede personal performance, student learning or staff effectiveness.

5.1.1 Student Counselling

The following are the anticipated issues to be encountered in student counselling:

Therapeutic

- Relationship problems
- Separation anxiety
- Domestic and home problems
- Bereavement
- Problems centring on sexual and personal identity
- Difficulties that may be exacerbated by transition to further education; but which may have earlier roots
- Clinical anxiety including phobias and obsessions
- Clinical depressions including those who have made suicide attempts or have such ideas
- Eating disorders including bulimia and anorexia
- Sexual abuse including child abuse and incest

Development

- Difficulties relating to the psychological stages of development
- Disorientation problems e.g. transition from school to college or of return to a learning environment
- Culture to culture
- Regional and local culture difference
- Problems associated with study and learning
- Problems of living away from home

Welfare

There is often a need for counsellors to offer support over practical issues. Many students present problems concerning the following:

- Finance
- Housing
- Legal rights and benefits

Experience suggests where specific welfare issues are concerned, referral to specialist agencies is most appropriate.

5.1.2 Staff Counselling

Counselling will be available to all College staff for their personal and professional support.

5.1.3 Counselling Sessions

Counselling sessions will usually be one hour long – fifty minutes counselling and ten minutes to write up records and prevent users meeting each other at the door. These will be planned around a counselling 'brief' (i.e. a focused service), where counsellor and user agree initially on up-to-six sessions. This can be reviewed and extended when therapeutic issues demand.

5.1.4 Referrals

An important aspect of the counsellor's work is to recognise the onset of serious physical and psychological disturbances and refer appropriately. This may be to the GP or psychiatrist or other medical consultant for expert opinion. The appropriate therapeutic work may still be done by the counsellor, or by a specialist agency.

5.2 Support and Consultation

Counsellors will offer support and consultation to tutors who are involved in helping their students. Thus, many students can be helped through the tutorial system without tutors always having to refer directly to the counselling service.

5.3 Staff Development and Tutor Training

Appropriate training will be offered to tutors and other relevant members of staff.

5.4 Ethical Framework

To ensure that the service is operated in accordance with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) ethical guidelines.

5.4.1 Minimal confidential records will be securely kept for seven years.

5.4.2 Counselling staff will have external supervision. Under BACP guidelines, the minimum supervision required per month is 1½ hours per counsellor.

5.4.3 Counselling staff will undergo training and development to achieve/maintain BACP Registration.

5.5 Insurance and Legal Issues

Counsellors will be supported by the College e.g. in the case of complaint against staff.

5.6 Counselling Accommodation

Counselling rooms, that are pleasant, comfortable and with physical access; which does not embarrass or stigmatise users; will be available at the South Shields site.

5.7 Booking and Secretarial Support

Access to the service will be freely but discreetly available via Student Services or by direct contact with the counsellor.

5.8 Publicity

The service will be advertised in ways which present it in a positive light i.e. helping students and staff cope more effectively with personal issues, stress and distress in order to enhance their studying or working lives.

5.8.1 The Counsellor will manage the counselling service Moodle site which provides information on the counselling service as well as useful resources for staff and students

5.9 Confidentiality

The counsellor takes care to ensure the counselling remains largely confidential, subject to the limits of confidentiality outlined in the contract.

6 **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The Head of Student Services receives a termly report of general statistics. (The statistics are compiled to prevent individuals being identified from them)

7 **Related Policies**

There are currently no directly related policies.