

The University of Bradford Counselling Service

Counselling and Mental Health Service Quality Standards

1. The Standards

- 1.1. This document sets out the aims and objectives of the University of Bradford Counselling and Mental Health Service with regard to the range of services it makes available to all students and staff at the University.
- 1.2. In line with the University commitment to enable as many people as possible to successfully access and succeed in higher education, the Counselling and Mental Health Service provides support for a range of issues that may hinder the student's capacity to study and seeks to promote mental and emotional wellbeing.
- 1.3. In consideration of the role that staff play in supporting students, the Counselling and Mental Health Service also offers counselling provision to staff at the University. In addition, this provision plays a key role in supporting the duty of care which extends to people's mental health and wellbeing at work, which may be affected by pressures of work and/or external factors.

2. Operational Objectives

- 2.1. To provide a high quality, free at point of access, professional and confidential Counselling Service to all students and staff at the University.
- 2.2. To provide a high quality, free at point of access, professional and confidential Mental Health Service to all students at the University.
- 2.3. To ensure accessibility to the Service for all.
- 2.4. To develop the ethos of the Counselling and Mental Health Service in line with the University of Bradford values.
- 2.5. To maintain the efficacy of the Counselling and Mental Health Service.
- 2.6. To provide an up-to-date referral network, within the University of Bradford and to external services and organisations.
- 2.7. To sustain viable links for liaison across the institution.
- 2.8. To ensure adherence to the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, or the ethical frameworks from other professional bodies such as University Mental Health Advisors Network (UMHAN).

2.9. To monitor and evaluate the Counselling and Mental Health Service in order to demonstrate continuous improvement in meeting the needs of Service Users, including the needs of the institution.

3. Implementation

3.1 Quality Standards - *The Service*

- 3.1.1 The Counselling and Mental Health Service provision consists of a team which comprises:
- Core Team of permanent, trained, experienced, accredited Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors.
 - Fully qualified and experienced, sessional (paid) Counsellors.
 - Fully qualified associate (volunteer) Counsellors working towards accreditation.
 - Trainee Counsellors on recognised training courses working towards qualified practitioner status.
- 3.1.2 Intake Interviews (25 mins) by appointment with a designated Counsellor or Mental Health Advisor. This will be offered within 7 working days of contact with the Counselling and Mental Health Service, where possible.
- 3.1.3 Every attempt will be made to provide urgent interviews within 24 hours (weekdays).
- 3.1.4 Individual counselling or mental health advice appointments in a private room for up to 50 minutes duration or by telephone/video conference/email counselling.
- 3.1.5 Intake procedure including verbal contract between Counsellor/Mental Health Advisor and Service User and Service User /Counselling and Mental Health Service.
- 3.1.6 Ongoing counselling or mental health advice arrangements or referral to relevant agencies/services (internal or external).
- 3.1.7 Up to four session counselling contracts for students and up to six session contracts for staff. These can be extended on rare occasions when necessary and appropriate. Mental health advice appointments may vary according to need. Students can access counselling multiple times throughout the academic year. They are asked to take a break of 4 weeks before they refer for further counselling. Staff can access one contract of six counselling sessions in each academic year.
- 3.1.8 Liaison with other agencies/internal staff and external services may take place with the consent of, or at the request of, the Service User. Issues around confidentiality will be addressed to protect the Service User's best interests and the integrity of the Counselling and Mental Health Service.

3.1.9 The Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager reserves the right to ascertain the eligibility/suitability of a prospective/existing client to use the Service.

Performance Indicators

- Appointments calendar (Titanium, a CRM system designed for Counselling and Psychotherapy services)
- Database records
- Annual report
- Evaluation procedure
- Supervision arrangements (in-house and external)
- Recruitment/selection procedure
- Staff appraisal
- Continuous Professional Development plan (see appendices)

3.2 Quality Standards – Access

- 3.2.1 Review and overhaul of Service publicity conducted yearly.
- 3.2.2 Presentation at induction events.
- 3.2.3 Marketing via student and staff intranets, student and staff publications etc.
- 3.2.4 Counselling and Mental Health Service website.
- 3.2.5 Varied appointment times and methods of making appointments.
- 3.2.6 Support for critical incidents.
- 3.2.7 Advice and information on request.
- 3.2.8 Response to urgent situations by Mental Health.
- 3.2.9 Reasonable adjustments made under the terms of the Equality Act for students classed as having a mental health disability.
- 3.2.10 Information regarding choice of Counsellor/Mental Health Advisor.
- 3.2.11 Impact assessment of access.

Performance Indicators

- Information about the Service disseminated via information technology, through liaison and networking with staff (within the University of Bradford and Bradford College).
- Publicity material disseminated widely throughout the year.
- Information leaflets regarding a variety of issues relating to staff and students on Self Help resources page on website and intranet site.
- Record of appointments (Titanium).
- Demographic data collected via Intake procedures (Titanium).

- Record of Learner Support Profile and Disabled Students Allowance on University data system (SITs).

3.3 Quality Standards - *Ethos*

- 3.3.1 All Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors operate within the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, or other (see above).
- 3.3.2 The Counselling and Mental Health Service adheres to the Equality Act, GDPR, and other relevant legislation.
- 3.3.3 The Counselling and Mental Health Service works to facilitate, enhance, and complement the academic aims and values of both institutions in alignment with the University of Bradford's strategic aims and values.
- 3.3.4 The Counselling and Mental Health Service keeps abreast of research and changes which impact on counselling and mental health within the sector.
- 3.3.5 The Counselling and Mental Health Service aims to provide an environment that is conducive to counselling and mental health advice delivery.
- 3.3.6 All Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors maintain the currency of their skills and knowledge by undertaking regular CPD.

Performance Indicators

- BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- Counselling and Mental Health Service Privacy Notice GDPR.
- Policy on retention of client records.
- Internal/External Supervision records/contracts.
- Staff Development and internal training programmes.
- CPD Development plan.
- Service Guidelines for service team.
- Core Team Meeting (weekly).
- Membership of HUCCS (Head of University Services)/AUCC/BACP/UKCP/FE Counsellors Network/NACHE.
- Sound proofed (where possible) and comfortably furnished accommodation.
- Confidential booking arrangements.
- Secure storage of client records.
- BACP accreditation renewal every 5 years.

3.4. Quality Standards - *Efficacy*

- 3.4.1. Reception staff via Client Liaison Administrator.
- 3.4.2. Flexible appointment system – Service remains open during lunchtime, early morning appointments.
- 3.4.3. Annual Report produced at end of academic year.
- 3.4.4. Review of all policies and procedures etc. conducted at end of academic year.

- 3.4.5. Consultancy offered to departments.
- 3.4.6. Liaison with colleagues in other student support services to monitor “at risk” students. Service Manager (Chair) and MHA Coordinator attend Student Cause for Concern group.
- 3.4.7. Cohesive team approach towards the aims of the Service.
- 3.4.8. Service User feedback on quality of Service.
- 3.4.9. Development of counselling and mental health advice practice.
- 3.4.10. Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of counselling and mental health issues and factors affecting the sector.
- 3.4.11. All Service Users are assessed for their suitability for counselling and mental health advice.

Performance Indicators

- Individual Performance Review/Staff Appraisal.
- CPD records.
- Statistical returns for anonymised feedback purposes.
- Annual Report submitted to appropriate committees and published on Counselling and Mental Health Service website.
- Service User Evaluation collated and analysed and included in Annual Report.
- Core Team Away Day and Whole Team Away Day (Summer Term).
- Complaints Procedure.
- Regular In-house training.
- Regular In-house supervision (mandatory).
- Guidelines and policies for Service.
- Assessment criteria.

3.5. Quality Standard (005) - Referral

- 3.5.1. Maintaining a full, contemporary, on-line resource file
- 3.5.2. Liaison with services and networks across the institution.
- 3.5.3. Counselling and Mental Health Service website with useful links.
- 3.5.4. Liaison with networks outside the institution, Health Assured 24 Hour Helpline, NHS MyWellBeing IAPT, GPs and Student Medical Health Practice, CMHTs, Social Services, First Response, NHS Early Intervention in Psychosis.

Performance Indicators

- Agencies invited to meetings and induction events to promote services/networking.
- Regular review of website and intranet.
- Development of contacts with external agencies.
- Updated referral information.

3.6. Quality Standards (006) - *Cross institution liaison*

- 3.6.1 Promotional seminars to staff groups at institutional, departmental and course level.
- 3.6.2 Contribute to planning for mental health/wellbeing of students and staff, in conjunction with HR and other relevant departments.
- 3.6.3 Maintain and develop Counselling and Mental Health Service input into institutional structures.
- 3.6.4 Maintain and develop informal links with other departments within the University of Bradford.
- 3.6.5 Facilitate and attend cross-institutional meetings for student support staff and other interested parties.
- 3.6.6 Information regarding the Service disseminated widely via University and web pages.

Performance Indicators

- Minutes of meetings where the Counselling and Mental Health Service has participated within University of Bradford committees, working groups (Digital Mental Health Project for example) etc.
- Records of consultation to staff and departments.
- Training events for departments/staff members.
- Records of disseminated information.
- Policies developed regarding mental wellbeing of students.
- Monthly supervision in compliance with UMHAN requirements for mental health specialist study coaches.
- Monthly supervision for Student Life Team staff members.

3.7 Quality Standard (007) - *Ethical Framework*

- 3.7.1 Contractual Agreements (CMHS/Counsellor MHA; CMHS/External Supervisor; CMHS/Training Agency (Diploma in Counselling)).
- 3.7.2 Paid external supervision to comply with BACP (Core Team plus contribution towards Associate Counsellors).
- 3.7.3 In-house supervision for all volunteer Counsellors (trainees and associates).
- 3.7.4 Continuous Professional Development for Counselling and Mental Health Staff in accordance with identified needs.
- 3.7.5 Monitoring trainee Counsellors individually and via group supervision.
- 3.7.6 Complaints procedure.

Performance Indicators

- Access throughout the year to Staff Development.
- Training events display (local, regional, national, international) in office.

- Risk Assessment.
- Records of contracts.
- CPD policy and request form.
- Records of complaints.
- Diary of supervision dates.

3.8 Quality Standards (008) - Evaluation

- 3.8.1 Benchmarking for making comparisons with Counselling and Mental Health Services in other educational settings.
- 3.8.2 Feedback to the institutions on general issues and trends presented by Service Users.
- 3.8.3 Client feedback postcards and evaluation questionnaires distributed to Service Users.
- 3.8.4 Regular review of aspects of the Service, e.g. drop-in; staff counselling.
- 3.8.5 Assimilating institutional changes into the Service where possible e.g. where accommodation changes, increased collaboration etc.

Performance Indicators

- Annual Report.
- AUCC annual survey of University and College services nationwide or other national data collection.
- Presence/attendance within local, national professional and sector bodies (HUCS, NSGCHE, AMOSSHE, BACP, AUCC , FE Counsellors Network UKCP).
- Evaluation questionnaire returns and reports.
- Perceptions of Service feedback surveys.
- Assessment criteria.
- Referral routes.
- Reporting to wider meetings.

