

R U N S H A W C O L L E G E

POLICY TITLE: Student Counselling Policy		
APPROVED BY: SMT	AUTHOR: Janet Hodgson	
POLICY OWNER: Marie Fairhurst	POSITION: Assistant Principal	VERSION: 9
LAST UP-DATED: December 2020	REVIEW DATE: December 2023	

1. Purpose

1.1 The aim of the counselling service is to enable the students to reach their potential both personally and academically.

1.2 Objectives

- To enhance wellbeing/mental health
- To develop autonomy and resilience
- To add value to college student experience
- To provide emotional support

1.3 Counselling is offered to enable students to stay on their course of study and to be successful. It is recognised that without it, students may be overwhelmed by personal concerns and be unable to complete their course of study.

(Staff counselling is covered in the Wellbeing At Work Policy)

2. Principles

2.1 The College is accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapists (BACP). The College Counselling service adheres to the (BACP) ethical framework.

2.2 Counselling will be available to all students regardless of ethnicity, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief and age or any other distinction which cannot be objectively justified.

2.3 Counselling interviews will be confidential following the standards of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Profession. If a counsellor has safeguarding concerns they will discuss this with the student and seek consent to share information. A counsellor may on occasions refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without consent if the risk is assessed as serious.

2.4 All Counsellors will be trained to at least Diploma level, and hold or working towards BACP accreditation and will be expected to undertake regular CPD.

2.5 All Counsellors will receive external supervision in accordance with BACP guidelines. Counsellors will have a minimum of 1 hour 30 minutes supervision per month and are responsible for making sure this takes place.

- 2.6 All Counsellors will work to contracts agreed with their students at the start of their relationship and reviews will take place every fourth session.
- 2.7 Whilst counselling needs may be ongoing, the length of the contract will be discussed at the start and any further needs will be referred to external agencies as appropriate to ensure maximum availability to all students.
- 2.8 Counselling will be conducted in a confidential environment.
- 2.9 The length of each counselling session will be decided in advance and will be no longer than 50 minutes.
- 2.10 Counsellors offer an initial assessment to ensure each student that makes a request for counselling will be seen by one of the team to ascertain what the students' needs are.
- 2.11 Counselling will encourage students to become autonomous (self-reliant).

3. Organisation

- 3.1 The College counsellors will be part of the Student Services Team managed by the Head of Student Services.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Head of Student Services:

- 4.1.1 Line manages the counsellors.
- 4.1.2 Ensures appropriate supervision is in place and liaises with external supervisors as appropriate.
- 4.1.3 Ensures counselling is offered according to the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- 4.1.4 Maintains quality assurance and monitoring arrangements.
- 4.1.5 Reports on the operation of the Counselling Service confidentially.

4.2 Counsellors:

- 4.2.1 Work to BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- 4.2.2 Offer counselling to agreed appointment schedules.
- 4.2.3 Keep effective confidential records of their counselling (as required by the Quality Assurance arrangements) and keep these records in accordance with GDPR requirements
- 4.2.4 Meet as part of the Student Services team to ensure effective liaison.
- 4.2.5 Conduct self-assessment and meet regularly with the Head of Student Services to review the effectiveness of the service.
- 4.2.6 Report on the operation of the service as required.

5. Review and Evaluation

- 5.1 The College Senior Management Team (SMT) will receive reports on the operation of Student Services including the Counselling service.
- 5.2 An annual self-assessment report will result in an action plan, which will form part of the Student Services SAR and be validated in a review meeting with the Head of Student Services, the Deputy Principal and Principal.
- 5.3 The Counselling Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) will meet regularly with the Head of Student Services to evaluate the service.

6. Accessibility

- 6.1 The Student Counselling Service is fully accessible to the whole college student population. The service ensures it is fully adaptable and is able to meet the needs of the students on an individual basis.
- 6.2 The majority of appointments are face to face, but appointments are available on line and the counsellors have undertaken professional training to facilitate such sessions.
- 6.3 An action plan is completed and updated on a biannual basis to ensure the service meets the needs of all students

7. Feedback

- 7.1 The College uses a number of different methods to gain stakeholder feedback on the Student Counselling Service including PT reps, Student Council, and uses the feedback to inform a CIT action plan which is reviewed on a regular basis

8. Other Associated Policies

- Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Fitness to Study and Special Admissions Policy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Student Harassment and Bullying Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

This appendix should be read in conjunction with Runshaw College's Student Counselling Policy version 9 which was updated in January 2021. This appendix highlights the key changes to the policy that all staff need to be aware of during the current ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As college continues to deliver a mixture of on site and remote on-line learning it is essential that staff are aware of the counselling provision college can provide

2. Counselling provision

The Student Counselling Service is fully accessible to the whole college student population. The service continues to ensure it is fully adaptable and is able to meet the needs of the students on an individual basis. We offer both face to face, and on line sessions and the counsellors have undertaken professional training to facilitate all types of delivery

3. Mental health and Wellbeing

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of everyone. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

Mental Health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. If we are in a lockdown situation and are unable to offer direct face to face guidance for students due to COVID 19 circumstances we will signpost students -:

Safeguarding - message on referral system and safeguarding e mail for students who self-refer
Thank you for your safeguarding referral. As you are aware college is closed at the moment but your referral has been logged and as soon as college is open again we will follow up this referral.

If a student needs to talk to someone urgently they should -:

TALK to someone **outside** of college this could be-:

- Parent, Carer or Friend
- Samaritans – 116 123 (24 hour service) or email jo@samaritans.org (response time – 24 hours)
- Childline - 0800 1111
- Papyrus (prevention of young suicide) – phone 0800 068 4141 text 07786 209697

In an extreme emergency call 999 or go to the nearest A & E department or police station depending on the issue

Counselling – message on counselling appointment system and counselling email for students who self-refer

Thank you for your request for a counselling appointment. College is closed at present but your request has been logged and a member of the counselling team will contact you to arrange a on line appointment.

In the meantime, if you feel you need to talk to someone urgently the following services all provide free support

[NHS Choices Home Page](#)

www.nhs.uk

NHS Choices homepage, Your Health Your Choices

[Samaritans](#)

www.samaritans.org

A UK charity offering support to people who are suicidal or despairing, and are on hand 24 hours a day, every day of the year. An English Language Email service is ...

[Childline | Childline](#)

www.childline.org.uk

Childline 0800 1111: get info and advice about a wide range of issues, talk to a counsellor online, send Childline an email or post on the message boards.

[Prevention of young suicide UK | PAPYRUS](#)

www.papyrus-uk.org

PAPYRUS is the national UK charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide.

[About Big White Wall](#)

www.bigwhitewall.com

About Big White Wall. A safe online community of people who are anxious, down or not coping who support and help each other by sharing what's troubling them, guided ...



[Home | Mind, the mental health charity - help for mental ...](#)

www.mind.org.uk

Extensive collection of information about mental health and related topics. Mind is a national UK charity with many regional branches.

[Child & Adolescent Mental Health - YoungMinds](#)

www.youngminds.org.uk

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

[Stop panic attacks with our free online course](#)

www.panic-attacks.co.uk

Get help with panic attacks or panic disorder with our free online course. Panic attacks and panic disorder can be helped very quickly with the right approach...

[Grassroots Suicide Prevention](#)

www.prevent-suicide.org.uk

Grassroots is a suicide prevention charity

[Getselfhelp.co.uk CBT self-help and therapy resources](#)

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

CBT Self Help & Therapy Resources ... This mobile-friendly version of the website has replaced the old site. You can still access the old site by clicking on the Old ...

[Students Against Depression](#)

A website offering advice, information, guidance and resources to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking. Alongside clinically-validated information and resources it presents the experiences, strategies and advice of students themselves – after all, who better to speak to their peers about how depression can be overcome?

www.studentsagainstdepression.org

[The Mix](#)

The Mix is the UK's leading support service for young people. We are here to help you take on any challenge you're facing - from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs. Talk to us via online, social or our free, confidential helpline

<https://www.themix.org.uk/>

In addition to the above, regular motivational and wellbeing articles are being included in the student bulletin, on the website for parents, carers and students and being emailed directly to our most vulnerable students. We have also just introduced a new Instagram account – Runshaw Wellbeing and a number of staff and students are now following this account.

4. Online safety

It is more important than ever that college provides a safe environment online. College will continue to ensure that appropriate filters are in place to protect students when they are online on the college's IT systems or recommended resources. If you are piloting new technology or have any concerns, please contact the IT Service Desk for advice and guidance.

It is especially important that all staff who interact with students, online, continue to look out for signs a student may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required the police. Students may also benefit from counselling at this stage and the student should be made aware of the Student Counselling Service and a referral for counselling made, either by the student themselves, or the member of staff.

Staff need to consider the safety of their students when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in the college or college's code of conduct.

College must ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirement.