Student Counselling Service - information for students

The information in this sheet answers the most frequently asked questions. It's important that you read all the information as this will serve as a working agreement. We hope you'll find it helpful.

Assessment appointment
This appointment is used to establish:

- What your concerns are
- If counselling with us will help and if you're able to commit to it
- If you'd be better supported by another service

We will discuss the range of support we offer and which option might suit your particular needs. This could include individual or group work or signposting to online information and resources. We may establish that your needs should be met by another service, for example, via our internal and external partnership support services.

If this is the case, we can support you to access the most appropriate service.

Sometimes the assessment appointment can resolve the current concern and you may not need any further support.

What happens next?
If we're best placed to support you, you'll be offered further sessions with one of our therapists - this may not be the person who conducted your assessment appointment. During very busy times there may be a wait between your assessment appointment and the start of your ongoing counselling appointments. During this period you can access online information and resources by visiting www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/support/resources/self-help.htm

Counselling sessions
Counselling is about enabling you to explore your experiences, feelings, behaviours and relationships in order to gain a more confident perspective and make choices that will improve your wellbeing.

We provide up to 6 sessions of counselling (face-to-face, telephone or online). Sessions last up to 50 minutes and will usually be on the same day and time each week. It's important to attend on time as we work to an appointment system. If you attend late for an appointment, your session may not take place.

Non-attendance and cancellations
If you miss a session, or cancel without giving us at least 24 hours’ notice, that session will count as one of the 6 we can offer and your appointment space may be given to another student. Please let us know as soon as possible if you won’t be able to attend one of your sessions. We cannot guarantee future appointments if you repeatedly miss appointments or fail to cancel appropriately.

Confidentiality
Confidentiality is an essential part of the therapeutic process. No personal information, either verbal or written, will be disclosed to anyone outside of the Student Health and Wellbeing Service without your consent, unless we believe you or someone else is at risk. Disclosures will normally take place in close collaboration with you, unless to do so increases risk for you or someone else.

All therapists are required to have a clinical supervisor who monitors the quality of their work. The process of supervision is conducted in a way that maintains your confidentiality.

Records
We keep brief records about your contact with us, your notes will be kept in safe storage.
**Evaluation**
We want to provide you with the very best service possible and will ask you to complete a small number of questions at the start and end of your counselling, this helps us to ensure we are supporting you effectively and makes positive changes to the services we provide.

**PEC evidence**
Assessment appointments should not be booked solely for PEC evidence. You should contact your GP to obtain this evidence. We are only able to provide PEC evidence for students who are currently accessing the service, or have historically accessed the service. Visit the Student Progress webpage If Things Go Wrong (where to find help) at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/help for further details about the PEC process.

**Concerns or complaints**
If you have a concern or a complaint about the service we ask that you talk with your therapist in the first instance and follow the universities complaints process at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/complaints.htm

**Emergencies/out of hours**
The Student Counselling Service is not an emergency service. We do not operate an out of hours service.

If you’re concerned about keeping yourself safe, or need immediate help and support, you should contact your GP. If you feel your life is in imminent danger, you should call 999 or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital. Visit www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing for more information.

**Contact**
You can contact us by telephoning + 44 (0) 191 208 3333, by completing an enquiry form at my.ncl.ac.uk/students/contact or by leaving a message in person at the Helpdesk on level 2 of the King’s Gate building. The Helpdesk is open 09.00 to 17.00 on weekdays (except on Wednesdays when it opens at 10.00).

We will only use your University email address (rather than a personal one) so do please check this regularly. We may also contact you by telephone so it’s important you also check your voicemail regularly if you’ve given us a phone number.

We may contact you from time to time with information which we think you’d find helpful. If you’d prefer not to receive any communications from us, please let us know.

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