

COUNSELLING POLICY

(Approved by Policies & Procedures Committee 28/09/2017)

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DATE: September 2017

COUNSELLING POLICY

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear statement of the counselling service offered by the Advice and Guidance Team within Learner Services. It outlines the initial assessment from referral the ways in which this service can be accessed by learners and the supervisor and support that is offered. The counselling policy operates under the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.

2 SCOPE

This policy relates to all learners of the College and at the out centres it's out centres, and includes work based learners and apprentices. All learners are entitled to access the counselling service.

3 DETAILS OF POLICY

Responsibility
Publicising the Service
Referral
Monitoring
Supervision & Support
Assessment Procedure
Confidentiality
Related Forms

4 MONITORING

The team will be responsible for designing and implementing appropriate monitoring and evaluation procedures for the service provided, and annual report will identify and evaluate the following elements:

5 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

QAF 1.17A Assessment Sheet
 QAF 1.17B Client Information Leaflet

6 POLICY REVIEW

Prepared by:	Authorised by:	Date:	Review Date:	Committee
Manager of Learner Services	Policies & Procedures Committee	28 Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Policies & Procedures Committee

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

First Assessment Conducted by:	Date:	Final/Approved Assessment Conducted by:	Date:
The author conducts the first review	28/09/2017	A member of the EDI Group conducts and approves	28/09/2017

8 PUBLICATION

Audience:	Published:
Staff	Staff Internet
	College Website

Responsibility

All College staff have a responsibility to promote learner awareness of the counselling service and to refer learners who demonstrate a need of counselling. The counselling team has a direct responsibility for the delivery of personal counselling and the provision of referral to appropriate external agencies.

Publicising the Service

The service will be publicised through:

- Induction talks to new learners
- Corporate staff induction
- Information given to personal tutors and teaching staff
- Leaflets/posters available in key positions on all sites
- Information on **Moodle, Staff Intranet and the and College Website**

Referral

Referrals may be by:

- Self referral by contacting the service directly in person, **e-mail** or by phone
- Learner Advisers
- Teaching staff
- Progress Coaches
- Additional Learner Support
- Admissions staff
- Other College departments and services
- External agencies

Monitoring

The team will be responsible for designing and implementing appropriate monitoring and evaluation procedures for the service provided, and annual report will identify and evaluate the following elements:

- Response times
- Impact on learner retention
- Numbers
- Ages
- Ethnicities
- Number of times learners seen
- General presenting issues

The report will be compiled by the counselling coordinator and submitted to the Manager of Learner Services and Admissions who will report the findings to the College Leadership & Management Team. Figures will also be highlighted within the department SAR

Supervision & Support

All practising members of the counselling team will receive supervision on a regular basis. Supervision will be given by a trained professional working outside the institution. It is recommended that counsellors themselves receive supervision of at least 1½ hours per month.

Assessment Procedure

- When a referral to the service is received the counselling coordinator will contact the learner to book a mutually convenient first appointment. Learners will be asked whether they would prefer a female or male counsellor. If appropriate, other members of staff within the Advice and Guidance Team are able to book appointments using the diary system.
- At first contact the coordinator will complete QAF 1.17A Assessment Sheet with the learner, which contains contact details, doctor's details, other contact with professional organisations and presenting issues. They will discuss how counselling could help the learner, and if appropriate the counsellor may refer to other specialist services at this point, with the learner's agreement. The learner is asked whether they would like an appointment to be made for them, or are given the contact details of the outside agency.
- The counsellor will ensure that the learner fully understands the role of counselling, and if it is agreed that the learner would benefit from the counselling provided, they will then be told that they will be contacted as soon as possible to get booked in for the counselling to commence.
- At the first session the counsellor will give the learner a copy of the QAF 1.17B Client Information Leaflet which covers the issues of confidentiality, supervision and circumstances in which information may have to be passed on to other organisations. This will then be fully discussed with the learner. It will clearly be explained that the counsellor will only contact other agencies if they have serious concerns that the learner is at a high risk of harming themselves or others. It will be explained that the counsellor would always try to discuss this with the learner first.
- Once the QAF 1.17B Client Information Leaflet and QAF 1.17A Assessment Sheet are signed then the counsellor and learner will arrange the next appointment. It will be explained to the client how to cancel/re-schedule appointments.

Confidentiality

- The counselling service is confidential, and operates under the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions
- A client information leaflet will be given to learners explaining this.
- The only exceptions to confidentiality are under the Children's Act 2010 (see QAP 1.15 Safeguarding Policy). Also if the counsellor believes that the learner is unwell or incapable and unable to take responsibility for their own safety and may be at risk of fatally harming themselves, or there is a risk of someone else being harmed.
- The counsellor will always try to talk to the learner first before contacting other agencies.

Related Forms

QAF 1.17A Assessment Sheet

QAF 1.17B Client Information Leaflet