



UNIVERSITY of
BRADFORD

.....
Counselling Service

The Counselling Service

Annual Report

2016/17

Bradford College
...Further and Higher Education

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Counselling Service Team

Head of Service

Penelope Aspinall

Permanent staff (core team)

Yvonne Messenger, senior counsellor (0.6 fte)

Peter Wakefield, senior counsellor (0.5 fte)

Gill Barlow, counsellor (1.0 fte)

Sarah Farnell, counsellor (0.6 fte)

Stuart Yates, counsellor (0.5 fte)

Administrative Staff

Gilly Butcher, administrator, (0.55 fte)

Helen Trevisani, administrator (0.6 fte)

Sessional Counsellors (casual hours)

Agnes Ndebele

Barbara Rundle-Smith

Brian Lambert

Associates and trainees

In addition to paid permanent counsellors, we use a team of associates and trainees to deliver the service. Associates are qualified counsellors who work on a voluntary basis in order to gain more experience and accrue the necessary hours in order to be eligible for BACP accreditation (or equivalent). Trainees are counsellors in training who, as an essential part of their training, need to be on a placement in order to gain the necessary experience as a course requirement. Both associates and trainees are provided with appropriate extensive supervision, training, mentoring and support in order to ensure that they provide the best service for our clients. In 2016/17 we had five associates and six trainees in the team.

Introduction

2016/17 was another busy year, which also saw a lot of change. Penelope Aspinall, the Head of Service had a change in role and has had Disability and Mental Health added to her remit, meaning she has had less time to dedicate to the Counselling Service. The two senior counsellors, Peter Wakefield and Yvonne Messenger have taken more of a deputising role and we were delighted to have Stuart Yates join the team as 0.5 fte counsellor.

In total, 1497 people used the service for individual counselling and workshops. 1103 clients registered with the service for one-to one counselling, we saw 932 individual clients and offered 4988 appointments, a 10% increase on last year. In addition we increased our workshop programme to include a weekly *Mindfulness for Students* session as well as the monthly *Space to Breathe* for staff. We also ran a monthly *Creative Space* workshop and a course on *Overcoming Procrastination* for Post Graduate students. This is in addition to our substantial contributions to the Staff Development Programme.

We continued to develop our provision for staff, making the service more responsive and appropriate to the needs of the University and College staff.

About the service

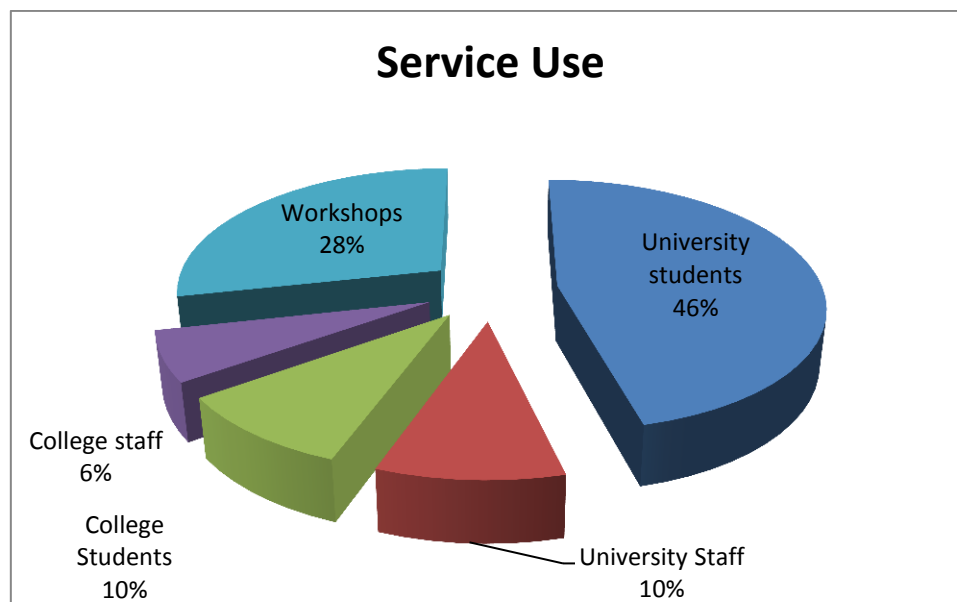
The Counselling Service provides counselling and psycho-educational training for the students and staff of the University of Bradford and Bradford College. We are a busy service, and in order to accommodate the numbers of clients and minimise waiting times, we usually offer a brief therapy model of up to four sessions for students and 6 for staff in the first instance, after a 25 minute intake interview to assess need and/or offer immediate help. We will always endeavour to extend this contract when appropriate, in cases of risk, for example, or where the work cannot be usefully or ethically contained in four sessions. Most counselling takes place at our premises in Student Central, although we do run a service where students can be seen for pre-booked Intake appointments at Bradford College three times a week. We also developed links with Faculty of Management and Law, reintroducing our service at the Emm Lane Campus, so that clients can be seen for pre-booked Intake appointments there. However, this service has seen a poor uptake, in part to due to a major restructuring of all student facing services across the University. Prospective clients need to access the service through an on-line registration form; they will then be offered an Intake appointment.

Service Use

Headline Statistics

	2015/16	2016/17
Individual Clients registered	1003	1103
Individual Clients seen	855	932
Appointments provided	4616	4988
Appointments attended	3076	3262
Workshop attendees	258	384

Figure 1: Service use



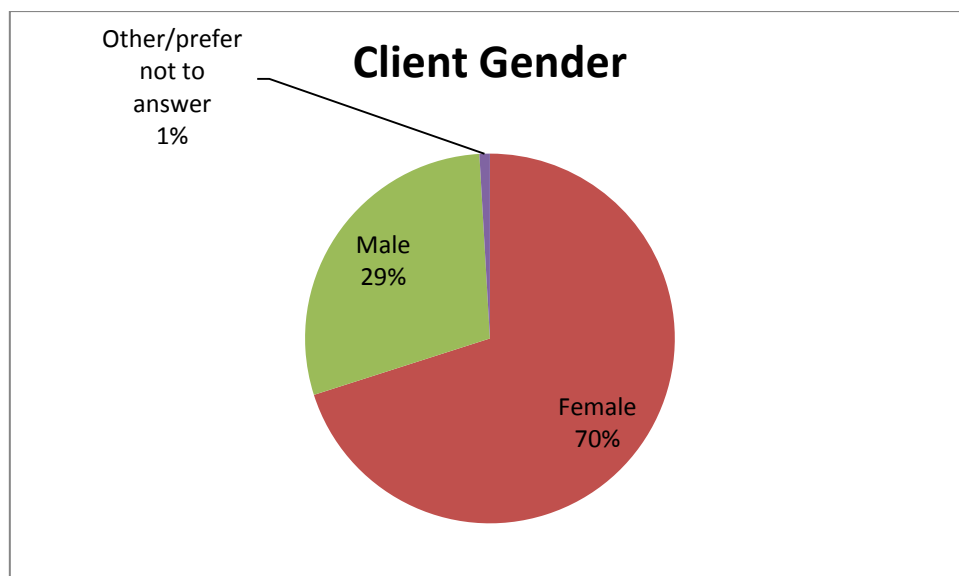
67% of clients using the service for one-to-one counselling were University students, 623 in 16/17 attended at least the service, an 8% increase over the previous year and

representing 6% of the University student population. As student numbers were lower, this actually represents a greater increase proportionally in service demand and use. We also saw a substantial increase in numbers attending our workshop programme for students and staff. Psycho-educational workshops are designed as preventative measures, helping people develop the skills they need to build resilience and manage difficult situations. 128 members of staff from the University (8% of the University staff population) attended for one-to-one counselling, a 24% increase over the previous year.

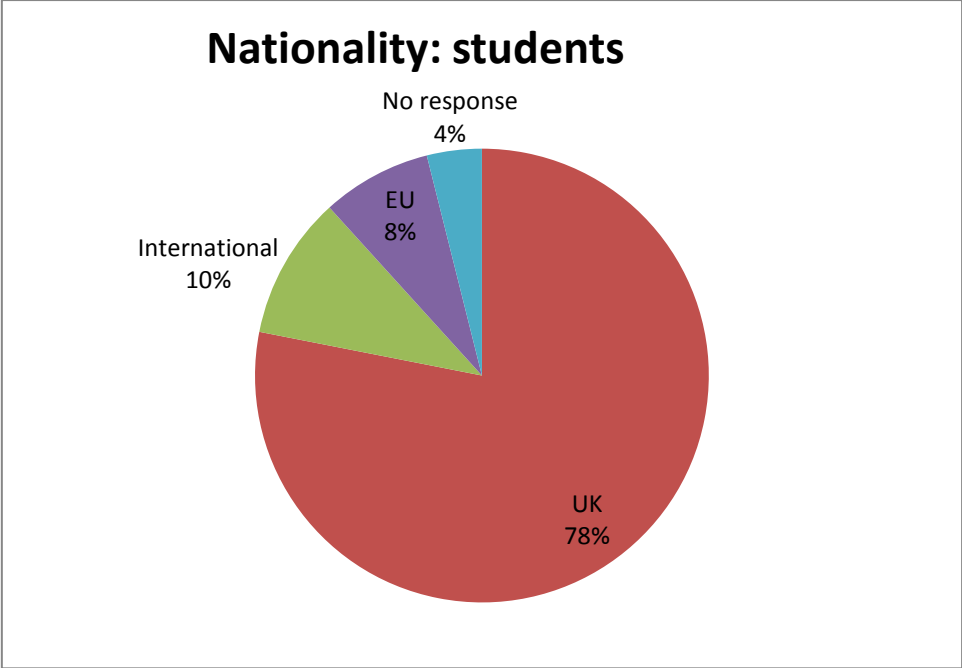
We worked particularly hard to reduce the numbers of DNAs and cancellations this year with success. We do this by a variety of means but most popular are text reminders sent before each session. Our CRM system, Titanium, is extremely effective in helping us to manage demand and reduce unnecessary administrative time. This all means that we can maximise our resources and provide a quick and ethically responsible service. We introduced a new screening and Outcomes measures tool (CCAPS) which is integrated into Titanium. This helps us to pick up students at risk as soon as they register with the service. We can then triage appropriately.

Demographics

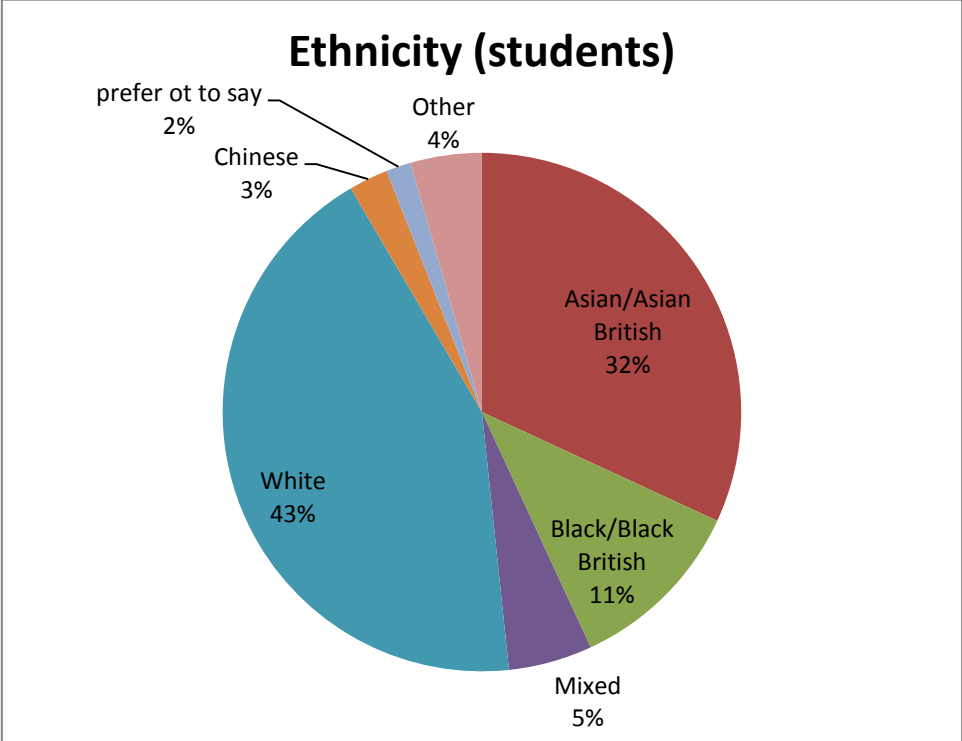
The majority of our clients are female (70%), though the ratio of female clients to male was higher with staff than students. This is typical of Counselling Services across the sector, although we did see a slight (3%) increase in male students from last year.



Looking at all our student clients, 78% are from the UK, with 18% from EU or International and 4% giving no response, a very slight dip from last year. The majority of staff (83.4%) are from the UK.



When we look at the ethnicity of our student clients, we see what a diverse population we have in Bradford, with 43% being white (British or other). 32% are Asian or Asian British, a slight increase on last year.



Presenting Issues

The main presenting issue was anxiety, followed by depression and relationships, the same as last year. However, most of our clients are complex with multiple problems. 'Presenting issue' is what is identified by the counsellor on Intake as being the primary initial problem. This year we saw a very slight reduction in *Anxiety* and *Depression* as presenting issues, with *Self & Identity* overtaking *Loss* as the fourth most common presentation.

1. Anxiety	29.4%
2. Depression	21.4%%
3. Relationships	15.7%%
4. Self & Identity	9.2
5. Loss	8.2

Waiting times

The Counselling service believes that clients should be seen as soon as possible and work very hard to keep our waiting times to a minimum. In 16/17, the average waiting time for an Intake was 3.13 days. The average waiting time for a counselling appointment following Intake was 7.21 days.

What we have done

In addition to one-to-one counselling, the service has been involved in training and outreach initiatives.

Group work and training

The service saw 384 students and staff as part of its groupwork programme. The people we saw were a mixture of previous clients and entirely new contacts. The programme offered to the People and Organisational Development department was expanded to reflect the impact of a time of major organisational change and restructure. We collaborated with HR to run *Building Resilience* training for managers alongside new workshops eg *Living Through Anxious Times* and repeating the ever-popular *Developing Assertiveness*. We expanded the Mindfulness offer to include a weekly (in term-time) mindfulness for Students, in addition to the monthly *Space to Breathe* for staff. We have also provided bespoke Mindfulness workshops for both College and University staff. We started looking at the specific needs of Post Graduate students and offered a 3 session course on *Overcoming Procrastination* during the summer academic break which was well

attended and successful. We also collaborated with colleagues in Academic skills on their writing week, providing input into areas such as writer's block and procrastination.

Website and Self-help

We revamped our website and created a series of leaflets on common problems. These are extremely attractive and have proved very popular, available on-line and in paper format. Bradford College have customised them and again these have been very successful – even praised in their recent OFSTED inspection.

Open days and wellbeing fairs

We have focused on widening our participation and presence at university and college open days and wellbeing fairs this year, attending evening and weekend as well as daytime events. We have developed a more interactive approach to engaging with students and staff. Our 'tree' is especially very popular providing a fun way to engage people in how to care for their wellbeing and mental health.

Staff counselling

185 staff attended the Counselling Service this year, 128 from the University (8% of all University staff) and 57 College staff. This is a substantial increase over last year. The majority (28.5%) were Academic, followed by Administrative (26.4%). This is a change from last year where most of the clients were Administrative. 14.5% were Academic Related, 14% other and 1.6% ancillary. Most (77%) were at work throughout, with 4.5% off work at the start and then returning, 9% off work throughout and 6.4% off work at first and then returning. This field was not completed by 10.8%. 79.6% of these clients were described by the counsellor as experiencing anxiety, depression, stress or a combination of these. 46% (70 clients) of these clients saw this primarily as work-related. This shows a big change over last when this was identified as work-related by 40 clients.

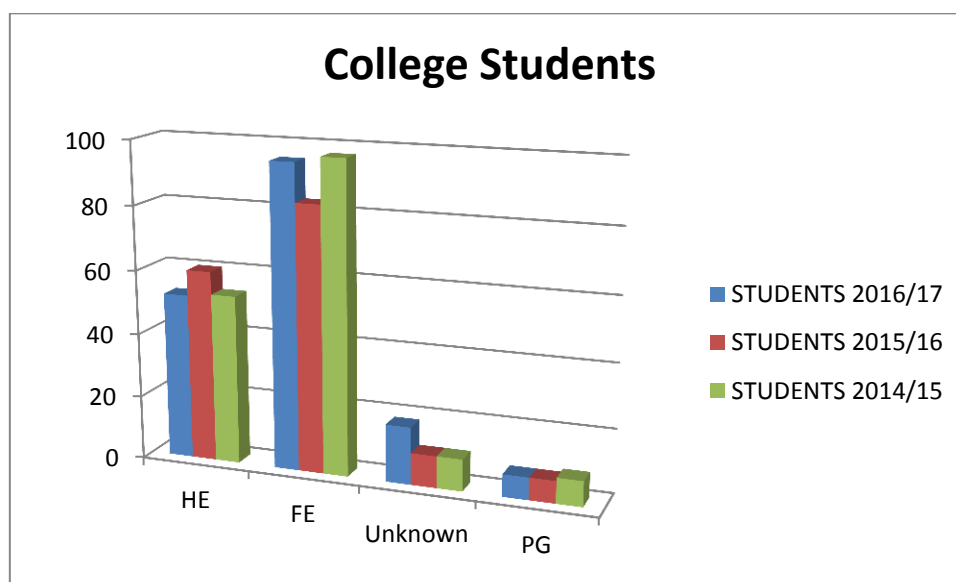
All staff are required to complete a Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation (CORE) 10 form on registration, before the first ongoing counselling session and at the last session. The average score on registration was 18.8 and at ending 11.8. The clinical cut off point is 12. This means that after a brief 6 session intervention a clear improvement from substantially above the clinical cut off to below was achieved.

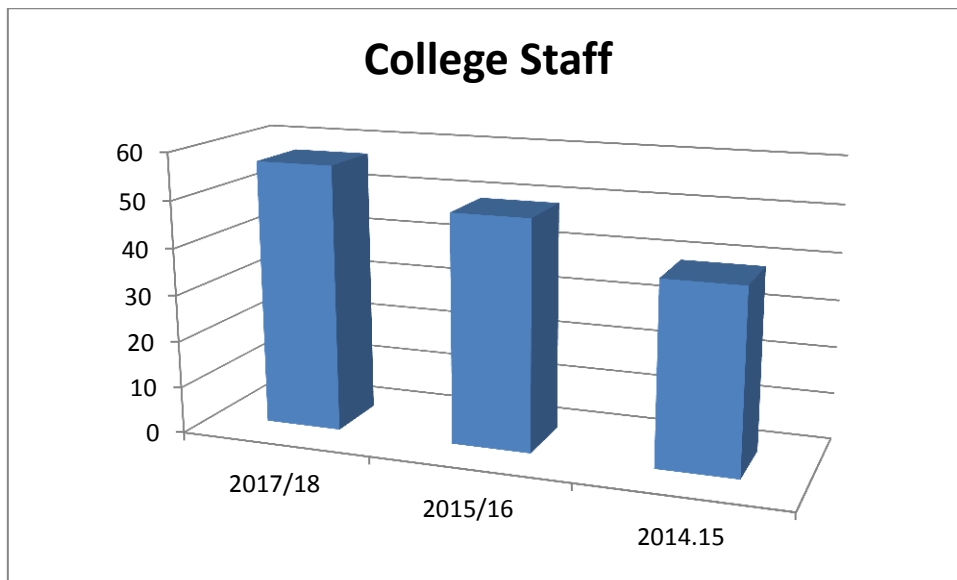
Building on from the improvements developed in 2015/16, we simplified our staff offer. All staff are now given a contract of up to 6 sessions. Staff continue to be seen by either core team members or associate counsellors.

In addition we have continued to provide a staff only drop-in at 8.30 on Friday morning, although there is very low uptake on this, and the monthly lunchtime mindfulness sessions (*Space to Breathe*). These are bookable via the People Development website and have proved to be very popular.

Bradford College

The University continues to work in partnership with the college to provide a counselling service for its staff and students. Last year, we saw 187 clients from the college, 130 students and 57 staff members. This is similar to last year in terms of overall numbers but we are seeing an increase in staff attending and a slight decrease in students.





We continue to provide intake appointments three days a week at the college, in the Madiba room. This service is well used. We do, however, continue to see high incidents of college students either cancelling or not turning up for their appointments; 30% in 2016/17, similar to 2015/16 and 7% higher than the University students. This represents a large waste of resources in terms of counsellor time. We are constantly working to reduce this, for example, using text reminders and giving clear guidelines.

In addition to providing one-to-one counselling, we ran several mindfulness sessions at the college TAP days for staff, attended open days, had stands on wellbeing fairs and gave student inductions. Both college staff and students have access to our workshops, including *Space to Breathe*, a monthly mindfulness session for staff.

Equality monitoring

All students registering to use the service are invited to complete an equality monitoring form, looking at most of the protected characteristics. We try to ensure that the service remains accessible to all our students. See also *Demographics p. 8*.

As with most Counselling Services, the majority of clients both students and staff are female. We do, however, see a sizeable proportion of male clients who engage with and benefit from using the service. The ethnicity of our clients reflects that of the general student population as does the use by International and EU students.

We continue to monitor all aspects of the way we deliver provision, including staff recruitment, in order to ensure that the service feels accessible to all who might benefit from using it.

Evaluation

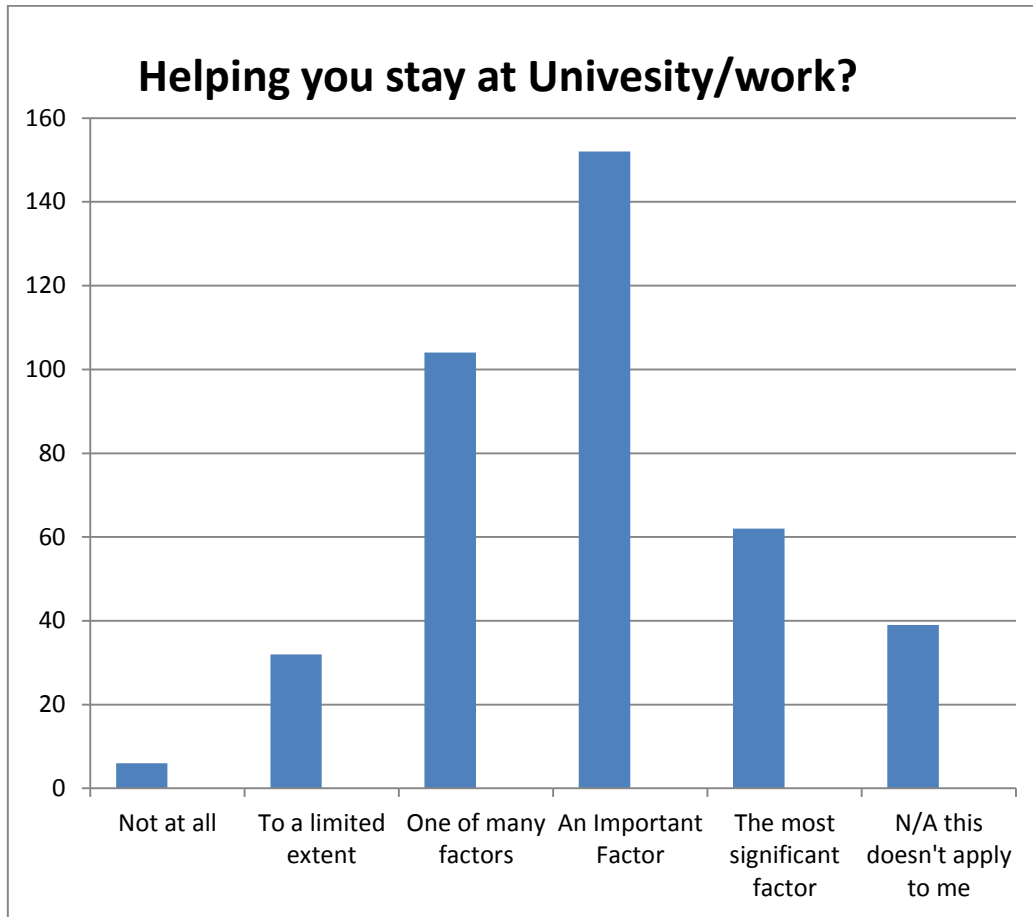
We continue to use the highly successful feedback postcards which are given to each client at the end of each contract. We also do a 'Snapshot' week three times a year where every client who uses the service that week is given a more extensive feedback form to complete. Attendees at all our workshops also complete a feedback post card. We have found these tools to be extremely effective, yielding a response from 48% of clients attending the service for one-to-one counselling. The charts that follow show the combined feedback for one-to-one counselling ie the post cards and student and staff snapshot week.

The feedback is all extremely positive, with 90% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that they had a positive experience of the counselling service.



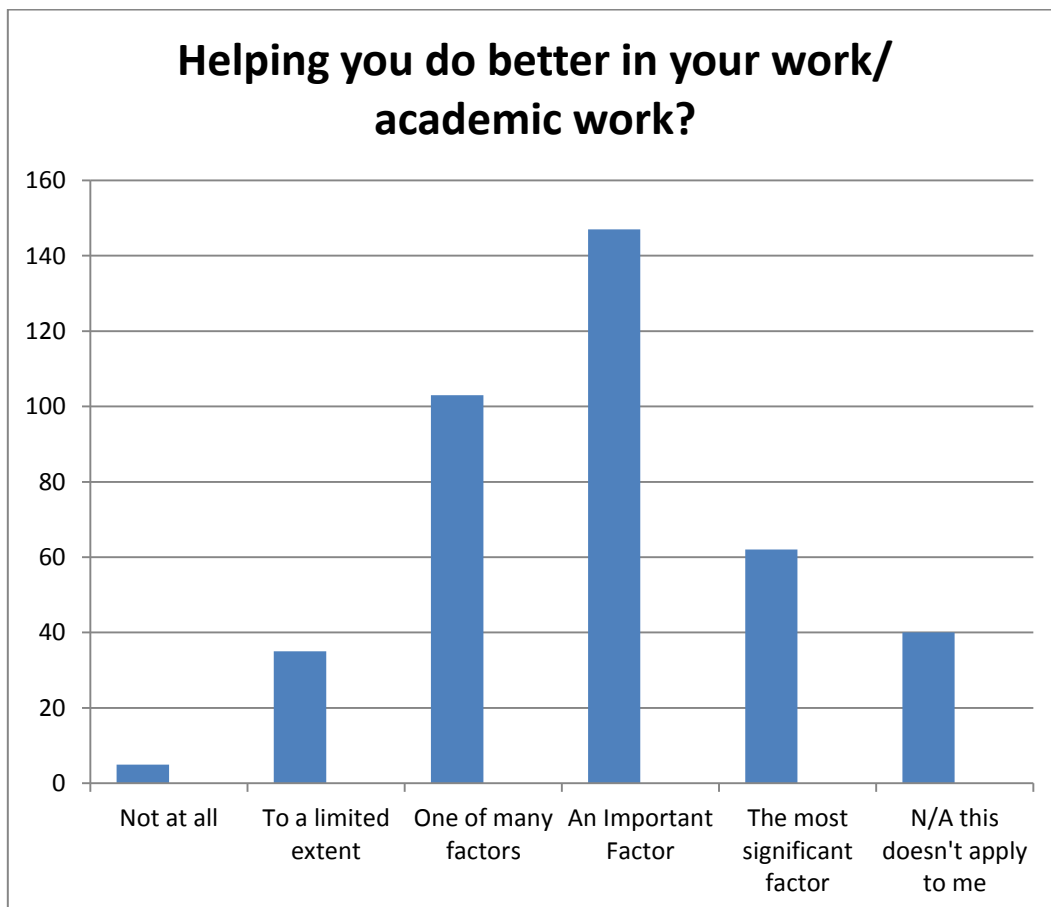
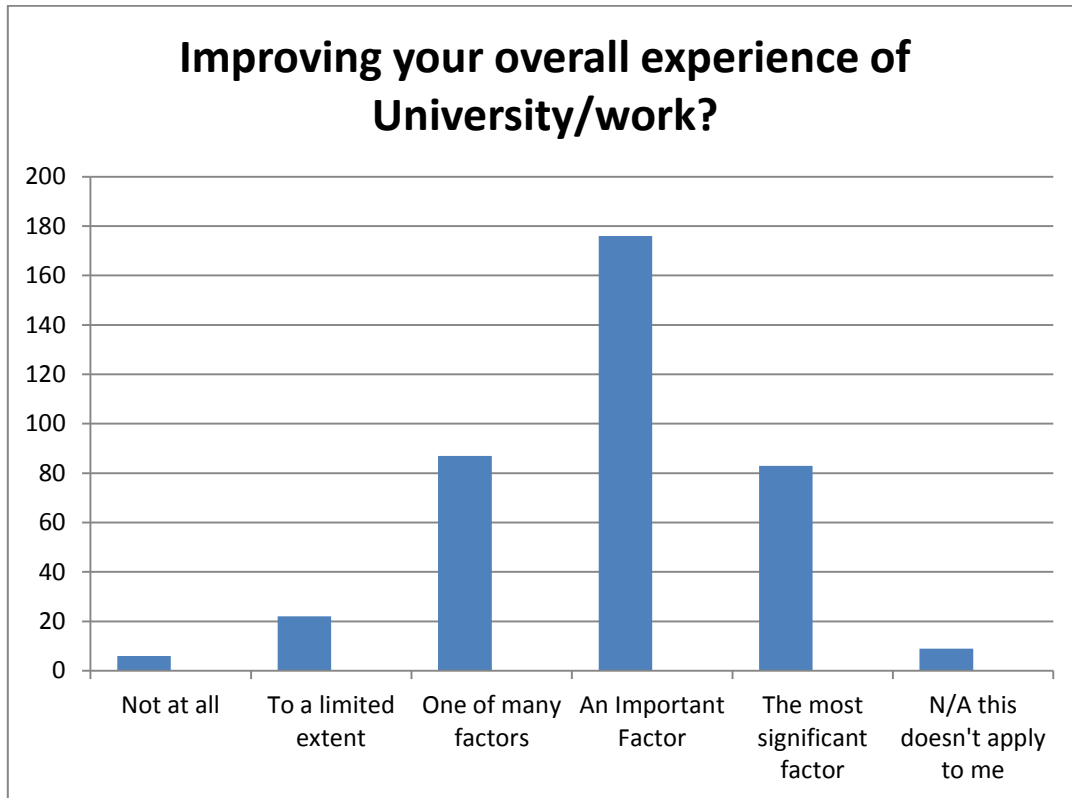
Clients are asked to complete questions from the Clinical Impact on Academic Outcomes (CIAO) measure. This is a measure devised by the BACP and used by many HEIs to measure the impact of counselling on important areas such as retention, progression, student experience and employability. We have slightly amended the way we use it to encompass staff clients as well. The results show that attending counselling plays a significant part in all the areas that it measure. In 2016/17, 62 clients felt that attending the counselling service for one-to-one was the significant factor in helping people stay at University or at work (staff).

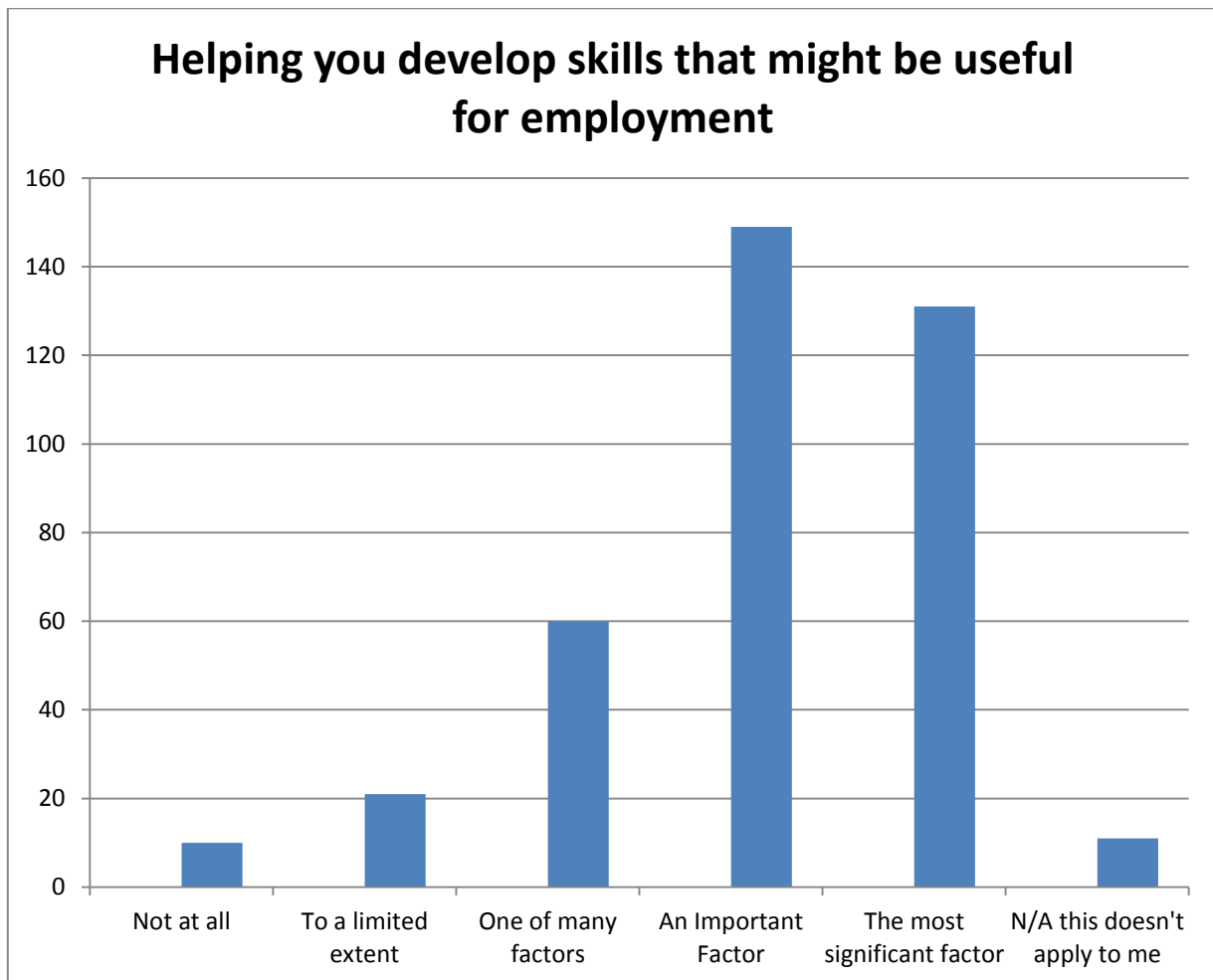
To what extent would you say that the Counselling Service is:



The experience of counselling also showed significant benefit on academic performance and overall experience. Especially notable were the responses to the questions about 'helping you develop skills that might be useful for future employment (eg building resilience, self-understanding, understanding of others, managing difficult feelings better, increased confidence/assertiveness. Of the people who completed the questionnaires, 280 (75%) felt that counselling was either an important (149) or the most significant (131) factor.

To what extent would you say that the Counselling Service is:





Comments

The comments we get on both the feedback postcards and snapshot week forms are overwhelmingly positive. Here are just few:

Engaging in the sessions was a wonderful experience to help me deal with my grief

Been very useful, made me think about things in a different way and also made me realise how much I can talk and how much goes on in my head

Both the counsellors and this service has helped me tremendously over major life changes. Really confusing and challenging circumstances presents itself and the counsellor shone a light through the mist, listening, reflecting, advising.

Just being there as a support is amazing. Thank you deeply.

I had great counselling sessions and it could be (is) life changing experience for me! I got the opportunity to freely talk about my situations and get great advice and counselling!

I didn't quite know if this would work at first. But now I'm very happy I came for this. I leave here very happy.

Had I known about this service earlier in the year, I would not be going through what I am now. The counselling service really helps. They listen and give good advice. Thank you.

Always leave the session feeling better. Talking things through helps you sit back and evaluate the position you have found yourself in as it is always easier to see a way out when you are looking down at the maze

Wonderful sessions with my counsellor, she listened to me and helped me to think positive about life and be able to manage difficult feelings. Many thanks to the team.

This professional help completely changed my outlook and life to be honest in a very positive way indeed. I came here as a very depressed person and now I can say with confidence that I have started to enjoy my life.

I have suffered from anxiety since I was young & never really spoke about it to anyone. Counselling has finally shown me ways to feel better, in a way curable. I thought I couldn't be helped it was all my head but thank you for understanding. Finally someone understands, I honestly would not have been able to get past my traumatic experience if it was not for counselling.

I obtained an appt quickly enough & very helpful & accommodating. Whole experience from registering & booking an appt has been excellent. Staff are very welcoming, accommodating & supportive.

Where comments are critical, it is usually about the location within a busy part of student central or the limitation of availability.

Having people sitting outside the counselling door and watching you go in. It made me feel a bit uneasy

If not confident about coming to counselling it is very obvious to others where you are going if you walk in

Possibly for some the open location in SC; however in reality I don't think people really notice the comings and goings because it is a busy SC

In the Student Central – very public, can be seen entering/leaving.

Walking past everyone in the SU to get in.

I suggest the counselling service has an emergency member of staff for the weekends especially during exam season

Waiting list during exam period is quite long

Time for appointments, no late appointments after 5pm, my timetable varies each week

It would be lovely if the waiting list would be shorter, as in more counsellors.

We are very aware of the difficulties of being placed in such a public area and do our best to ensure that furniture (and, therefore, students) is not just outside our entrance. This has improved since the Union Mall has been redesigned. It is a concern that sometimes students might have a longer wait than we would like, especially if their time-tables limits their availability. However, we work very hard to keep our waiting times to a minimum and provide extra information about services that clients can use to help while they are waiting.