

The University of Bradford Counselling and Mental Health Service

Confidentiality Statement

The Counselling and Mental Health Service provides the opportunity to speak confidentially with a Counsellor (Bradford University students and staff) and / or a Mental Health Advisor (University students only). This statement outlines in detail what is meant by confidentiality in this Service.

- Confidentiality is maintained between the service user and the Counselling and Mental Health Service team.
- If the Counsellor or Mental Health Advisor has reason to believe that the service user or a third party is at serious risk of harm to themselves or that they are likely to cause harm to another, they may consider talking to a professional outside of the service, e.g., the GP, First Response, or another agency. Wherever possible this would be discussed with the service user first.
- There are also a few occasions when the law requires Counsellors / Mental Health Advisors to tell the police about specific offenses including acts of terrorism and information regarding the laundering of drugs money. In all other instances, if courts of law require a Counsellor to disclose information held in client notes, they will need to obtain a subpoena if the client withholds permission.
- Other reasons to disclose would be because the employing organisation places a duty to disclose upon their staff e.g. in relation to safeguarding children.
- Any request for information about a client of the service will not be released unless the client has given their express permission for the information to be disclosed or if a subpoena is served. This includes information about whether an individual is a client of the service.
- Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors keep brief notes of all sessions. All service user information (including notes) are kept on a secure data system, accessible only to Counselling and Mental Health Service staff. It is deleted after 7 academic years unless the service user is still active within the service.

- If University students see a Mental Health Advisor and apply for Disabled Students' Allowance, or have a Learner Support Profile in place, records of their LSP and DSA application will also be kept on University systems. These will be accessible by the Disability Service for processing of applications and profiles purposes.
- The Mental Health Advisors and Counsellors may ask students to give their consent to share key information in a relevant and appropriate way based on a need-to-know basis. This is only where there is a legitimate interest for University colleagues, or external professional staff, to understand a student's situation and need for support.
- Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR 2018), the client is entitled to see their notes. If anyone wishes to access their notes, we advise them to discuss this with the Service as a first step. Please see our Record Keeping Requests Policy and Procedure 2024.
- Information provided on the online registration form is stored in a password protected database. This is used for anonymised statistical analysis as part of the review process.
- All Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors attend regular supervision where casework is discussed to ensure that they are working ethically and safely and that the counselling / mental health advice they provide is purposeful. Identities are protected in supervision.