Counselling
Information for Staff
One of a series of fact sheets for staff

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Counsellors are qualified professionals and provide free confidential counselling to students. Counsellors can help develop strategies to positively deal with a range of personal issues such as:

- depression, anxiety and stress
- living away from home
- adjusting to university life
- family and relationships
- substance abuse
- eating and body image
- grief and loss
- self-esteem and confidence

We assist students to gain a better understanding of their problem, strengthen their resources and help them to find effective solutions.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Counselling staff can provide support and advice to staff to assist them to work with students presenting with complex issues. This may be provided by telephone or email consultation, or where deemed necessary, attendance at appropriate meetings or activities.

STAFF REFERRAL

Students are able to contact the Student Centre directly to make an appointment. However it may be useful to recommend counselling to the student if:

- you have a student who is experiencing difficulty and you believe that our service could assist;
- you believe that a student’s level of functioning is significantly impacting on academic performance;
- you feel that the student is at risk to themselves or others; or
- a student’s behaviour is interfering with others in lectures/tutorials.

If you are unsure if referral is appropriate, please contact us and we can discuss this with you.

- You can suggest that the student contacts us.
- You can ask the student’s permission to discuss the situation with us or to make an appointment on their behalf.
- If you feel that the student is a high risk to themselves or others, please contact us (or emergency services if the risk is imminent) immediately.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND EXTENSIONS

Staff sometimes refer students to a counsellor to obtain supporting documentation for an extension or special consideration. It is usually better for the student to discuss these issues directly with their lecturers and obtain any necessary documentation from their doctor or health professional in line with School policy.
With the student’s permission, school/faculty staff can request additional information if required. We can only provide documentation if:

- the student has already been attending counselling and we are familiar with the presenting issues; or
- the student is unable to discuss the matter with staff due to the personal nature of the issue and there is no other treating professional.

In such situations, counselling staff make a recommendation based on their professional judgement and will only support special consideration if the student is experiencing significant distress as a result of extenuating circumstances.

As counselling is confidential, we are unable to provide feedback regarding a student’s attendance or issues discussed without the written permission of the student.

**COUNSELLING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

A student cannot be forced to attend counselling. If you feel that a student is a danger to themselves or others you should contact a Student Centre counsellor, the student’s GP or emergency services if there is imminent danger.

**WORKSHOPS**

Student Centre counsellors can run workshops in accordance with the needs of schools and students. We can offer the following workshops for students:

- stress management
- dealing with procrastination
- managing fear of failure

Counsellors also run workshops for staff. We offer workshops on:

- Mental Health Awareness (2 hr)
- Managing Difficult Behaviours (2 hr)
- Mental Health First Aid (2 day)

If your school has other specific needs in relation to either staff or students, please contact Counselling and Consultancy in the Student Centre on your campus.

**TRAUMATIC EVENTS**

UTAS has established the Crisis Management and Recovery Team (CMRT), which will be convened in any serious incidents involving UTAS students, staff or property.

Support for students, staff and others affected by a crisis will generally be coordinated by the Student Centre Recovery Team, working with CMRT and relevant schools, faculties and sections.

For more information, see the ‘Responding after a Traumatic Event’ fact sheet for staff.

**If an incident or fatality occurs in your school, please contact Security in the first instance:**

- **Hobart**
  - 6226 7600

- **Launceston / Cradle Coast**
  - 6324 3336