

About Counselling

Counselling is an opportunity for you to discuss any concerns or issues you may have in a supportive and safe environment. Your counsellor will work with you to help you understand what is going on for you and to find a positive way forward.

All counsellors are required to adhere to the University's usual regulations, including confidentiality and data protection policies.

The University Counselling Service offers short-term counselling – the number of sessions will be agreed between you and your counsellor. Students are offered (as appropriate) one set of counselling sessions in each academic year.

What to expect

During your first appointment, the counsellor will answer any questions you may have about confidentiality, our record keeping, and other aspects of how the service works. You will also need to fill in a consent form and return this to us before the appointment goes ahead. We will go through your completed Mental Health and Wellbeing Questionnaire or referral details and explore what it is that has brought you to counselling.

Sometimes the counsellor may direct you to other University support or external services instead of, or in addition to, counselling. Please note that information about you on your completed Mental Health and Wellbeing Questionnaire, and information disclosed by you in your counselling appointments may be discussed by service staff and clinical supervisors.

A session lasts 50 minutes. If you are late, it is unlikely your session will be extended due to other appointment times.

We would appreciate it if you would switch off your mobile phone when you are attending counselling, providing this is not the device that you will be using for your appointment. We also ask that you find a quiet (and safe) space for your appointment, to minimise any background noise as much as possible.

Missed or Cancelled Appointments

If you find you have no alternative but to cancel an appointment, we require as much notice as possible - a minimum of 24 hours; this allows us to offer the time to someone else.

If you miss your first appointment without cancelling, we will assume you no longer require counselling and will remove you from the waiting list, so it is important that you get in touch if you are unable to attend. If you have started counselling and do not attend without letting us know, your counsellor will email asking you to confirm within 2 days that you wish to continue. It is important that you respond otherwise we will assume that you no longer require counselling. **Please be aware that each missed session with no notice will count as one of your sessions.**

If you cancel with less than 24 hours' notice on two occasions during the course of the counselling work, the second occasion will count as one of your sessions.

If you cancel and/or do not attend (DNA) on 3 occasions during the course of the work then your counsellor will notify you that the counselling will end. You will be able to re-access counselling at a later date should you feel more able to commit to the work.

If we have to cancel an appointment with you, we will give you as much notice as possible and will offer you an alternative as soon as we can.

How the appointments will be held

We will be offering support through Microsoft Teams (audio and video calls), email or telephone depending on how comfortable you are with these approaches.

If an appointment has been booked and you have chosen to have your sessions through Microsoft Teams, you will receive a separate confirmation email containing a link with guidance on how to use the software.

If you are having any technical difficulties at the time of your appointment, or have been waiting more than 10 minutes for contact from your counsellor, please alert staff by emailing enable@soton.ac.uk who will investigate the issue for you.

Contacting Us

Email: enable@soton.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/edusupport>