

STUDENT SERVICES
**COUNSELLING
SERVICE**



What is Counselling?

Counselling happens when a Counsellor meets with a client/student in a relaxed, confidential setting to explore an area of concern or difficulty the client is experiencing. Counselling is about being listened to properly, being heard with acceptance and respect; understood without judgement.

How it may help

Counselling provides an opportunity for you to explore and clarify issues. It can help with immediate concerns or long standing issues. A Counsellor gives you time, support and encouragement to talk through any problems and issues that may be affecting your life in a negative way. Conversations with the Counsellor aim to help the client make choices and come to decisions about their life. These issues may be personal, relationship difficulties, homesickness, depression, stress, anxiety or course related concerns. You will be helped to find appropriate strategies to cope, manage changes in your life and change those things within your control.

Why do people go for Counselling?

Counselling may be useful for anyone who feels that talking may help to understand their sense of self better so that they can work out ways of living in a more positive and fulfilling way.

Sometimes people bring specific issues to a counselling session such as bereavement or other trauma, anxiety, stress and a range of emotional difficulties, (perhaps brought on by the pressure of work or of being away from home, etc.). Sometimes people want to find new coping strategies because existing ones have ceased to be effective or have become problematic themselves e.g. drug and alcohol. Often there is just awareness that things are not 'right' in their life. Counselling may help improve self-esteem and confidence or reduce confusion and distress.

Counselling is confidential

The Counsellor is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and works within its code of Ethics and Practice.

The Counsellor will not reveal anything discussed in the counselling room to anyone, unless specifically asked to do so by the client. This means that a Tutor or Student Advisor will not be given any information from the Counsellor. This also applies to your family or partner.

There are **exceptions** to this if:

- The Counsellor thinks there may be a substantial risk or harm to yourself or others
- The Prevention of Terrorism Act or Children's Act apply

- The Counsellor is required to appear in court to testify under oath about a legal case you are involved in

In any of these exceptional cases, we would attempt to discuss with you any consideration of breaking confidentiality.

Eligibility for Counselling

The Counselling Service sees students from many different walks of life including disabled students; international students; lesbian; gay; bi-sexual and transgender students.

Counselling is available to you, whatever your background and need. The Counsellor is not there to judge but to listen to you carefully and sensitively.

Frequently asked Questions

What do I say on my first appointment?

Whatever you like – it is often difficult to know where to start. There are no right and wrong things to say. Sometimes you may find you want to remain silent until you feel more comfortable and confident to speak. At other times you may find yourself saying things that surprise you, which the Counsellor will help you explore.

What can I expect when I come to a counselling appointment?

You can expect to be treated with respect by your Counsellor. You can also expect her to listen to your story, without judging you. The Counsellor helps you to explore and clarify issues, and develop more constructive ways of dealing with them. You will be encouraged to discuss your progress and review goals with your Counsellor.

Is counselling confidential?

The information you share in counselling is primarily confidential. The Counsellor doesn't release or discuss any information about you to a third party without your explicit consent. However, there are exceptions to confidentiality which are set out above.

How many counselling sessions will I need?

You may want a single appointment to talk about what is troubling you or you may choose to have regular sessions over a period of time. The Counsellor will discuss options with you. There is no time limit or session limit while you are a CCAD student. Some students use the service as a 'safety net' and dip in and out as appropriate.

What if I need more help than the service can provide?

Some issues and difficulties might be best dealt with by more specific services. If this is the case, the Counsellor will discuss appropriate referral options with you.

What if counselling doesn't work?

If you feel that you are not getting what you want from counselling, it may mean that it is not the right time for you to work on the issues you are bringing or be ready to make changes in your life. Talk to the Counsellor about these feelings; don't just 'give up'. It may mean that the Counsellor needs to explore different conversations that will be more useful to you.

Doesn't going for counselling mean I am weak or a failure?

No. It can take a great deal of courage to access counselling and to face the difficulties you have been struggling with. This is a positive step towards making changes or finding different and less problematic ways of coping.

Counselling Options

One to one personal counselling

The College Counsellor will see you on a one to one basis for each session which will normally last for 50 minutes. The number of sessions varies from student to student and can be anything from two to three sessions, extending up to support over a number of months if you are working with complex issues. Some students dip in and out of counselling over a number of years and use it as a safety net.

Family/ relationship counselling

The College Counsellor has qualifications in family therapy and relationship counselling.

Students are able to invite family members or partners into their counselling sessions. This gives an opportunity to work collaboratively, gain a joint understanding of the difficulties being faced and to find workable strategies together. These sessions are arranged beforehand with the Counsellor.

Focused sessions

This will allow you to explore specific areas of your lifestyle that you are concerned with or want to change. You will be asked to fill in a short questionnaire at the beginning of the session to help identify what you would like to concentrate on. This focused session will help you identify practical ways to help and consider barriers to moving forward.

Book therapy

We have a number of self-help books available in the resource centre. The Counsellor may recommend one of these books on the understanding that you discuss your thoughts and how you have used the ideas within the book to help. This discussion would be aimed at helping you use the book in a positive and constructive way.

CCAD U

CCAD U has a counselling section with basic information about a variety of issues and difficulties people may bring to counselling. The Counsellor has also included referral agencies and useful websites.

On the Hartlepool HE site, students are asked to email Anne for an appointment:
anne.russell@ccad.ac.uk

If you do not wish to access the Counselling Service at CCAD but wish to find some information that may help you, please talk to a Student Advisor. Jess and Catherine have information that they can make available to you. If you are waiting for counselling either from CCAD or from your GP, ask in Student Services for a Self-Help Plan and/or Waiting for Counselling. These documents help you focus on what specifically the 'problem' may be and give information/websites about other agencies which may be able to help.