

## Student Welfare Policy

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### INTRODUCTION

1. This policy outlines the welfare support which New College of the Humanities (the College) gives to its students. It aims to ensure students are aware of what the College can provide for them. The College, where possible, ensures that all students are supported to enable them to be happy, healthy and successful.

### OVERVIEW

2. Students are given the opportunity to complete a Student Disclosure Form on enrolment at the College. This form is used to disclose any type of condition the student feels the College should be aware of. The student selects with whom this information is shared. The Student Wellbeing Coordinator (SWC) meets privately with each student who completes a form to discuss their needs further. The SWC then informs those members of staff the student has selected on their form of the student's disclosure and any necessary and useful information. If students request specific arrangements (for example, special exam conditions) they are asked to submit up-to-date (within the last three years) and approved documentation and a completed Specific Examination Requirements Disclosure Form to the SWC by the 1 December.
3. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their welfare and seek help from staff of the College when problems first arise; all students who seek help are treated fairly, sensitively and with respect. Students may choose, as their first port of call with problems, the SWC, their Personal Tutor (see 5. below) or the Student Union Welfare & Diversity Officer.
4. The SWC is there to advise, listen and take further action if necessary. However, it is vital to note that they cannot provide a professional level of counselling or psychotherapy. Generally, students can meet with the SWC a maximum of five consecutive times regarding the same matter, after which they must seek external help. In more serious cases, when the issue is long-term, the SWC can arrange to meet with the student on a more regular basis. If a counselling/psychotherapy level of service is required by the individual, the SWC can follow the referral procedure outlined in 5.
5. Each student is allocated to a Personal Tutor, whose primary role is to provide pastoral and academic advice for the duration of their time at the

College. The student will meet their Personal Tutor at the beginning of their first year, after which the tutor will normally invite the student to a meeting at the beginning and end of every term, as well as being available for *ad hoc* meetings at other times. Tutors are not trained counsellors, they will advise students with serious problems to consult the SWC to discuss the possibility of seeing such a counsellor. A student wishing to change their Personal Tutor should consult the SWC in the first instance.

### COUNSELLING SERVICES

6. If a student expresses the need for counselling services to the SWC, they must book an appointment with their GP to discuss their problems and have their name added to the NHS counselling waiting list. The current waiting list is generally six to eight weeks; therefore, the College can finance up to eight private counselling sessions to cover the wait until the commencement of the first NHS appointment. The private sessions can only commence once the student has given the SWC documentation from their GP to show that they have been placed on the NHS waiting list. Once the referral letter has been received, the SWC will put the student in touch with a counsellor at the external counselling service used by the College. The College uses an external counselling service that is a private practice that has been working with NCH to support students. The College anticipates that when the eight sessions have been completed, a place on the NHS should become available. If a student is in a position to fund private sessions, and does not want to go via the NHS, they can be put in touch with the external counselling service for them to arrange their own sessions.
7. Once the appointments begin, the counsellor will provide the SWC with the invoice(s) at the end of each month and payment is then arranged. The SWC will seek to obtain feedback from students regarding the counselling session but respects privacy. Strict confidentiality is maintained throughout the whole process.
8. College-funded private counselling services are available to students who contact the SWC between the start of Freshers and the end of Trinity term. They are not available to students who are on a break in studies.
9. The external counselling service also offers a Triage service.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

10. The College is committed to maintaining confidentiality between the student and the member of staff from whom they have requested this from. Therefore, students should be reassured that they seek help in confidence and the information they reveal will not be shared without their permission. However, if a student is deemed a danger to themselves or others, the SWC or other member of staff, are obliged to notify relevant other people of the situation. Students may be encouraged to give permission for information about them to be shared in less serious cases – for example, a student with dyslexia who wishes this condition to remain confidential from their tutors

should have it pointed out to them that their tutors may be able to teach them better with this knowledge – but the decision remains their own.

11. If a student is concerned about another student’s welfare, they should first encourage that individual to seek advice from the SWC or other relevant member of staff. If this proves to be difficult, the person with that concerning information should seek advice themselves, in confidence, from the SWC or other member of staff. If the College feels it is necessary to intercept and involve either other members of staff or external professionals, the individual providing the information will remain anonymous.

**SUMMARY**

12. Overall, the College aims to provide a supportive environment that will help students with welfare issues to realise their full academic potential, to successfully complete their course and to graduate from the College feeling fulfilled both academically and personally. It aims to facilitate and promote positive mental health and wellbeing to all students, in order to ensure that each student has the best possible experience of the College.

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