

Please read the following information and sign below to indicate that you understand and agree with how the Counselling and Mental Health Service will be working with you and processing personal data, which is recorded about you. The document covers:

- a) Counselling, Mental Health and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018
- b) informed consent;
- c) the boundaries of confidentiality and when confidentiality may be broken.

You may also talk to your counsellor/mental health advisor about this when you speak to them during an appointment/session.

Data Protection Act and Record Keeping

What Data is recorded about me?

At an Initial Consultation or during a Urgent Appointment session

You are asked to provide some key data at an initial consultation , for example, your name, address and any contact details including email, phone number , the course you are studying, medical history, your GP details, and a summary of your reasons for coming to see a counsellor/mental health advisor.

After each session

Further *concise* records are also kept of individual appointments. These records contain attendance dates and a summary of what was covered during a session.

Why does the Counselling and Mental Health Service need this information about me?

The Counselling and Mental Health Service requires this information so that we can:

- a) easily make contact with students/staff to arrange appointments;
- b) make an accurate assessment of student counselling/mental health needs;
- c) ensure appropriate allocations to a suitable counsellor/mental health advisor take place;
- d) provide statistical information to the university about the quality and usage of the counselling and mental health service;
- e) track the progress of a student and number of sessions attended.
- f) So that we can appropriately signpost you to other/further services, with your written permission.

How is this data stored and processed?

All records are stored electronically on a secure site and only members of the Counselling and Mental Health Service have access to them. Records will be stored for a maximum of 6 years.

Your counsellor or a member of the Counselling and Mental Health team are the only persons who will have access to your records. All records are kept in accordance with GDPR and DPA 2018. You can find more information about Data Protection at <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/data-protection-and-freedom-of-information/data-protection> . You can find further information about the GDPR from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) www.ico.org.uk.

Informed Consent

The GDPR and DPA 2018 requires that we gain your explicit, informed consent to maintain these records. Your counsellor/mental health advisor will discuss this further with you during your initial appointment/drop in session. At the end of this form you will be asked to sign, giving your consent for your personal information to be processed and held by the counselling and mental health service. If you do not want some information that you disclose recorded, please speak to your counsellor/mental health advisor who will gladly comply with your wishes. If you do not understand anything please do ask, it is important that you can give your informed consent.

Access to Records

The GDPR and DPA 2018 allows client's access to their records on request. After you have forwarded your request, in writing, to the University Data protection Office - <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection> your notes will be forwarded to you.

Release of information

Students who are engaged with the counselling and mental health service, may request letters:

- a) in support of extenuating circumstances,
- b) for funding agencies or medical or psychotherapeutic agencies.
- c) When making a referral to an internal or external service or agency

However, before any information can be released, you will be asked to give your consent by signing a "Release of Information" form specifying who we may contact and broadly agreeing what will be said.

Letters in support of compensation claims or legal matters cannot be provided by the Counselling and Mental Health Service.

Confidentiality

The Counselling and Mental Health Service operates with the highest levels of confidentiality. On occasion, the counsellor/mental health advisor may need to discuss details with another member of the team on a need to know basis. This will normally be to enhance the quality of service available to you. The counsellor/mental health advisor will always aim to discuss this with you, wherever possible, before taking any action. You and your counsellor/mental health advisor will make a confidentiality agreement at the first meeting that you have. For further information, you may contact the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) www.bacp.co.uk/Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) www.nmc.org.uk Note, there are some exceptions to maintaining confidentiality.

Exceptions to confidentiality

Risk of Harm to Self or Others - If a counsellor/mental health advisor believes there is serious risk of harm to yourself or others, they may need to disclose information to a third party (e.g. a GP or a Student Services colleague). We would always try to discuss this with you first and gain your express written consent to the disclosure.

In very extreme situations, for example where an individual has disappeared in worrying circumstances, or it is believed that a client is unable to make rational decisions regarding their own or others' safety, information will be disclosed without first discussing it.

Confidentiality and the law

Civil or Criminal Court Proceedings – Counsellors/mental health advisors may also disclose sensitive personal data where refusal would make them liable to civil or criminal court proceedings. Your counsellor/mental health advisor would inform you of this need to break confidentiality should a situation arise.

Terrorism Act 2000 - This Act places an obligation on counsellors/mental health advisors, as citizens, to pass on information about a planned or actual terrorist offence. Failure to do so is a criminal offence. It is also an offence for counsellors/mental health advisors to inform the client or any other person that information has been passed to the authorities, where such a disclosure is likely to prejudice any investigation.

Supervision

All counsellors/mental health advisors are obliged to receive supervision from another professional, which is usually another counsellor/mental health advisor. This involves sharing information from sessions and is aimed at ensuring that our practitioners provide a quality service and appropriate support to clients. Supervision is also a confidential process and no personal information is shared that might lead to the identification of clients.

If you are not able to sign and return this document, please can you email the Counselling and Mental Health Service - confirming the following :

I confirm that I have read and understood this form, and agree that my personal information can be collected, processed, and held by the Counselling and Mental Health Service at Liverpool John Moores University, for the duration as specified.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Print Name: _____ Student No: _____