
Our Counselling Service

Who we are

We are a team of experienced professional counsellors based across the four campuses. All of our counsellors are accountable to the University and to our main professional bodies of which they are members.

What we offer

We offer free short-term counselling to any students currently enrolled at UCA. Counsellors are available on each of our four campuses most weekdays during term-time, with some limited support out of term. We offer a range of services including:

- Individual face-to-face assessment and appointments
- Drop-in sessions
- Online e-Counselling
- Group workshops and sessions on topics like relaxation, self-esteem and how to improve your mood

We will offer an initial assessment to any student who requests it; if on-going support is appropriate, we may offer you a contract of counselling. We offer short-term counselling only, and in some cases we may refer you to another UCA service or for external support, such as with your doctor.

At certain times of the year we may operate waiting lists for on-going counselling due to high demand. We aim to keep this wait to minimum, but we cannot guarantee how long this may be.

What we don't offer

As we are not a crisis service, we're unable offer emergency support at any time it is needed. We do not provide counselling to staff, but we may be able to offer informal support and advice to staff who have concerns about students. We are unable to offer support for mitigation or appeals when a student has not been engaged in using our services.

What happens in an assessment?

Your assessment session is a chance for you to begin to explore your situation with us. It lasts between 30 and 60 minutes and is a chance for us to decide together whether counselling is appropriate at this time.

If counselling is offered, we will agree how many sessions we are able to offer and when it will happen. If counselling is not appropriate, we will explain why, and will refer you to services that would more likely fit your needs at the time.

GP (doctor) registration

We ask that you provide contact details of your GP before counselling begins; it is a requirement that you are registered with a GP for the duration of your counselling contract. Your GP has overall care for your wellbeing, and it is essential you are registered in case you need further or on-going support during or after your counselling contract completes.

Ongoing sessions

On-going counselling sessions (or appointments) last 50 minutes. We ask that you arrive on time for your session.

Cancelled or missed appointments

If for any reason you are unable to attend, please contact the service to cancel in advance, giving as much notice as possible – ideally 24 hours. If you do not attend an appointment without previously contacting the service, this will count as a missed session and be taken from your allowance. You will then need to contact your counsellor if you wish to have further appointments. If your counsellor cancels an appointment for any reason, this will not count against your agreed contract.

Data Protection & Confidentiality

Personal data and information you share with us will be processed in line with the University's Data Protection Policy and relevant Privacy Notices. Private and sensitive information will be subject to additional consent to share protocols and we will also work within the terms of the Library & Student Services Confidentiality Statement.

Supervision

All counsellors are required to undertake supervision by an external, independent supervisor who provides professional support regarding the counsellor's clinical work.