



STUDENT COUNSELLING POLICY

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SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

A.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the scope of the Counsellor's services which provide access to independent and confidential counselling at the South Australian University of South Australia (SAIBT) and Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia (CELUSA). Counselling is intended to provide support and/or intervention (practical or therapeutic) in order to enhance student well-being and/or academic progress.

A.2 Scope

This policy covers all current students of the:

- South Australian Institute of Business and Technology (SAIBT)
- Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia (CELUSA)

Word/Term	Definition
Academic Director	Manager responsible for academic leadership and management of all courses and programs, staff and students in the relevant academic directorate
Attendance	The presence of students in class during scheduled class time
Child or young person	A person under 18 years of age as defined in the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017
Class	A scheduled teaching block
Counsellor	According to professional standards and required understandings, a <i>Counsellor</i> actively listens and works to empower students to desire and bring about change in the way that they experience themselves, their personal circumstances and/or their academic studies
Intervention	Measures, strategies or practices which have a theoretical and professional basis
Limited Disclosure	Revealing essential details about a student's circumstances in order to restore stability, safety and functioning at a time of personal crisis. Disclosure may occur within SAIBT/CELUSA or to external agencies
Non-award ELICOS	English language study that does not result in a qualification
Orientation	An information day/week that all students attend when commencing their program or course or non-award ELICOS

Program	An approved combination of approved courses in which a student is enrolled
Registered Medical or Health Practitioner	https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registers-of-Practitioners.aspx
Risk	Circumstances that could potentially be a threat to life, health, well-being and academic success
Staff	All employees, contractors and volunteers of Navitas SA (excluding IELTS examiners and invigilators or casual exam invigilators and short term professional appointments such as external auditors or consultants)

A.4 Acronyms

Abbreviation	Phrase or Word
ACA	Australian Counselling Association
CELUSA	Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
PACFA	Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia
SAIBT	South Australian Institute of Business and Technology

SECTION B - POLICY STATEMENT

B.1 Principles

Students will have access to independent and confidential counselling from a dedicated, professional Counsellor.

Providers of counselling at SAIBT/CELUSA will pay attention to the individual circumstances and needs of enrolled students. In order to encourage the achievement of full potential, counselling addresses personal, mental and physical health issues as well as specific learning issues with the intended result that, where a student seeks, or is referred for, counselling the student's success and enjoyment of the academic experience will also be improved.

B.2 Policy

1 Referrals

1.1 Referrals to the Counsellor

Referrals to the Counsellor may be recommended/initiated by:

- Self-referral;
- Academic Directors or members of academic staff
- Any member of general staff
- A parent or carer, including home-stay parents. (Note: Student permission is required in order for the Counsellor to discuss academic progress or personal issues with the parent, carer or homestay of any young person)
- A registered medical or health practitioner

Any member of staff may encourage students to access counselling without the need for discussion with, or approval of, others about the students or their circumstances.

1.2 Referrals to other professionals

The Counsellor will provide support and therapeutic intervention and may refer for other specialist advice and assistance where it is considered necessary. In such cases the Counsellor may continue to work in collaboration with the student and the external agency.

2 Interventions

2.1 In working with a student the Counsellor's approach will be flexible, using a variety of professionally recognised interventions with the aim of empowering the student to bring about change in self or circumstances and to enhance the likelihood of improved personal and/or academic outcomes.

2.2 The Counsellor will liaise with relevant academic staff, where appropriate, in responding to requests for assistance and in the provision of support to students deemed to be at academic risk.

2.3 Joint intervention involving other relevant staff and/or students may also be undertaken in particular situations where the participants agree to meet.

3 Appointments with the Counsellor

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of a student to ensure that appointments with the Counsellor do not clash with class/lecture times, unless in a genuine emergency.
- 3.2 The frequency and length of appointments will depend on the nature and complexity of the issue(s) involved, and/or the point reached within an intervention.
- 3.3 The Counsellor is available during working hours and often available after hours in an emergency. If the Counsellor is not available in an emergency, students can access [Lifeline](#) or the [mental health triage service](#).

4 Confidentiality

- 4.1 The relationship between the Counsellor and the student is considered to be fundamental to effective counselling. It is an essential professional requirement of counselling (ACA and PACFA professional bodies) that the confidential nature of the information provided by the student is respected.

Student permission to share information (as detailed above) may not be needed in circumstances as detailed in 4.2 and 4.3 below.

- 4.2 In accordance with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, in certain circumstances the Counsellor has a legal obligation and duty-of-care to the student to report any instance of child abuse or neglect

In South Australia once a young person reaches 16 years of age they have the right to seek medical consultation and to consent to or refuse treatment.

- 4.3 Where the Counsellor believes that a student is clearly at risk or in danger of attempting or completing suicide, is unable to function, care for his or herself, make his or her own decisions or is deemed to be at risk of harming another person, external assistance may need to be sought. Gaining assistance may require limited disclosure. Close examination of individual circumstances will determine who should be privy to information.

In rare circumstances the Counsellor may be required to disclose information from counselling case notes to outside authorities. Any disclosure of confidential information will be restricted to relevant information, conveyed only to appropriate people and for appropriate reasons likely to alleviate the exceptional circumstances.

The requirement for confidentiality still applies to children and young people. Individual circumstances and duty of care will determine to whom disclosure is made if at all. For instance, parents will likely be contacted and often the Counsellor may share limited/essential information with other key people.

All students over the age of 18 have the right to reverse or negate previous permission noted on the student management system in regard to releasing information to parents/family.

- 4.4 The Counsellor may, with the student's permission, share information with *key people* within SAIBT/CELUSA where it could be beneficial to the understanding of extenuating personal circumstances that impact on well-being, and hence, academic progress and/or attendance. Any member of staff made privy to such information is required to observe confidentiality and not discuss details with others either within or external to SAIBT/CELUSA.
- 4.5 The Counsellor's obligations regarding confidentiality and duty of care requirements and practices will be specifically explained to students at counselling, including obligations relating to circumstances outlined in 4.2 and 4.3.

- 4.6** All students present at orientation will, where an opportunity is offered, be made generally aware of confidentiality and of the requirements for disclosure under certain circumstances of risk.

5 Counselling records

5.1 Professional records

In order to comply with professional counselling standards, records confidential to the Counsellor will be maintained with each student's name, the date of counselling, a brief account of the issue(s) discussed and/or of interventions undertaken. Notes will be taken of relevant telephone conversations and/or email discussions relating to a student's situation and retained by the Counsellor. Confidential case note books and/or files will be kept in a secure place by the Counsellor.

5.2 Student records

Where issues are relevant to a student's academic circumstances and/or their attendance pattern, the Counsellor may place a note on the Student System indicating that the student sees/has seen the Counsellor. Relevant academic staff may then consult the Counsellor in order to make informed decisions on the basis of any extenuating circumstances that are able to be revealed.

5.3 Reports to SAIBT/CELUSA Executive Group

Six monthly reports will be submitted to the SAIBT/CELUSA Executive Group. A general indication of trends may be included in order to inform and advise.

5.4 Length of maintenance of counselling records

Counselling records will be kept for 10 years except in the case of students who are under the age of 18. In the case of students who are under the age of 18 years, records will be retained for an additional year for each year a student is underage, i.e. 11 years where a student is 17 years, 13 years where a student is 15 years.

SECTION C - GOVERNANCE

C.1 Responsibility

Identification	Student Counselling Policy
Policy Owner	Counsellor
Approving Authority	SAIBT Executive Group
Initial Issue date	May 2012
Directory Location	Student Services, Policies

C.2 Version Control

Current Version Number	2.0
Date of Effect	March 2018
Review Date	March 2021
Privilege Level	Public

C.3 Legislative and Organisational Context

Name
Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017
Australian Counselling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Practice
Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Standards/Code of Conduct
The National Code of Practice 2017

SECTION D - PROCEDURE

D.1 Related Procedures

Student Counselling Procedure

D.2 Related Policies

None