

Student Counselling Service

Privacy Notice

Introduction

Your privacy and trust are of paramount importance to us and this Privacy Notice provides essential information about how South Lanarkshire College Counselling Service handles your personal data.

The College is committed to complying with all applicable Data Protection legislation; this includes the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. In addition to this, to ensure we run an ethical counselling service, we strictly adhere to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework.

South Lanarkshire College is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office, registered number Z825523X. Our Data Protection Officer (DPO) is Lorna Miller, dpo@slc.ac.uk.

Purpose for processing

We use the information you provide to deliver an effective, person-centred ethical counselling service. This information is collected when you enquire about our counselling service on the phone, via text/SMS, email or when you fill in our registration form. This information includes your name, contact details, your availability, your health and other relevant personal sensitive data to help us understand your needs and to provide the best support to you.

To help develop and enhance future support we use your information for data analysis and statistical reporting. All identifying information is removed and all data is anonymised in this process.

We use the information you provide from your experience through formal and informal feedback to improve the service. All feedback provided remains anonymous.

The information we collect:

- Personal contact details including your name, address, telephone number and email address
- Date of birth
- Gender Identity
- Medical Information
- Engagement with mental health practitioners
- Support from other agencies
- Record of support

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Our legal basis for processing your information

There is more than one legal basis for the use of your data and the service will only use your data when the law allows us to do so. We will only process your personal information:

- To perform the contract we have entered into with you i.e. we will process your data to enable us to meet our commitments to you in providing a confidential therapeutic counselling service
- When processing is necessary for the legitimate interest of the College (or those of a third party) and your interest and fundamental rights do not override those interests
- Where we need to protect your vital interests (or someone else's vital interests)
- Where you have given specific, explicit consent for the Counselling Service to process your personal information for a specific purpose.

Who we share your data with

The service is committed to paying careful consideration to client confidentiality and consent. Counsellors respect the client's right to privacy and only in certain situations will any personal data be passed to anyone outside the Student Counselling Service.

These situations are:

- Where you have given your consent to disclose information to a specific person, or agency.
- There is a legal obligation to do so where the Counsellor would be liable to civil or criminal proceedings if the information were not disclosed.
- You, the Counsellor, or someone else is in serious danger. If the risk is believed to be sufficiently severe, the Counsellor will pass on the information, irrespective of client consent.

In most cases, the Counsellor will normally encourage the client to personally pass on information to the relevant person, or agency. Consent to disclose information in most circumstances will be sought, if possible.

Clinical supervision is a fundamental requirement of practicing counselling. It also ensures that practitioners are practising safely and effectively. In line with the BACP Ethical Framework, counsellors receive supervision from a supervisor who is independent of the College. Individual clients may therefore be discussed with clinical supervisors external to the College for reflection and advice. All identifying information is removed and the client remains anonymous in this process.

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Third Parties

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for the Counsellor to liaise with, or write to, a third party (e.g. course tutor, faculty/senior management or doctor). In all cases, the purpose of the communication and the nature and extent of the information disclosed will normally be agreed with you prior to being made.

If any communications are received from a third party (i.e. college staff, parents or carers, friends etc.) the service will not disclose any information without your explicit permission, unless the previous noted exceptions apply. This will include whether or not you are being seen. In most cases, you will be informed of any contact from a third party, as soon as it is reasonably possible.

Overseas transfers

The Student Counselling Service does not send data outside the European Economic Union.

Security and retention

We will take all reasonable precautions to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of information you give us.

The information you provide will be entered into a filing system and will only be accessed by authorised staff of the service. This information will be retained by the College for six years after your last attendance, and then destroyed confidentially.

Any paper written case-notes, forms and letters are stored in locked cabinets. Electronic records, which may include case-notes, forms and letters are stored securely within the College network and are password protected. All records (paper and electronic) are only accessible to the staff of the service.

The College has robust Information Security and Data Handling policies in place to protect all the data it holds, including your personal data. You can read more about these policies and technical standards on the College website.

Your rights

Under data protection legislation, as a 'data subject' you have a number of rights. Some rights are things that you can expect the College to do, e.g. transparency and breach notification. The other rights are things that you can choose to exercise.

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- Access – you have the right to find out what personal information we hold about you.
- Rectification – if any of your details are incorrect or incomplete you can ask us to correct them for you.
- Erasure – you can also ask us to delete your personal information in some circumstances.
- Restriction – you have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your personal information in certain circumstances.
- Data Portability – in some circumstances, you can ask us to send an electronic copy of the personal data you have provided to us, either to you or another organisation.
- Object – If you have any concerns about how we are using your information, in some circumstances, you have the right to object.
- Automated Processing including Profiling – you have the right to object to automated processing where decisions are being made about you that have no human intervention and the decision made could potentially have a significant impact on you. The College currently does not operate any automated processes or profiling activities with human intervention, so this right should not be relevant to you in relation to your college activity.
- Breach Notification – You have a right to be notified of any breach of data protection that could affect you without undue delay in the event the security of your personal data has been compromised.

Please note that the above rights are not absolute, and we may be entitled to refuse requests where exceptions apply. For more information on your rights, please see www.ico.org.uk.

Should you wish to exercise any of the rights outlined above, you should send a request to: dpo@slc.ac.uk or Data Protection Officer, South Lanarkshire College, College Way, East Kilbride G75 0NE.

As a data subject you have a right to request a copy of the information the Student Counselling Service holds about you. This is known as a 'Subject Access Request' (SAR). For more information see <https://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/about-us/procurement-policies/how-to-request-information/>

Your responsibilities

You are required to read this privacy notice during the initial contact stage, along with the Confidentiality and Management of Records Policy and Counselling Service Information Leaflet. It is essential that you do so, as they contain important information about the service, how we use your personal data and your rights.

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The College strives to ensure your personal data remains accurate, to assist with this please ensure you keep your record up-to-date via the College Student Portal. For information on the College's Data Protection policies and procedures see <https://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/about-us/procurement-policies/general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

Complaints

If you think there is an issue in the way in which we handle personal data, you have the right to raise a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office at <http://www.ico.gov.uk> Their website contains details of how to make a complaint. However, we request that you raise the issue with our Data Protection Officer in the first instance.