



Confidentiality and Data Protection Statement

UEA Student Services provide a range of resources and facilities aimed principally at students. Student Services include the Careers Centre, the Dean of Students' Office and the University Counselling Service¹. They also work in close collaboration with the Chaplaincy, the University Medical Centre and University Dental Practice; these have their own policies in respect of confidentiality and data protection.

This document outlines responsibilities and practices in respect of information relating to users of the Student Services, and explains the Services' policies on confidentiality and data protection. The information contained in this leaflet is also available in alternative formats on request: please contact any member of Student Services staff or e-mail j.abson@uea.ac.uk

Confidentiality

All information given to Student Services staff will be treated with sensitivity, care and discretion. In most circumstances, the information you provide will be treated as confidential, but members of staff may discuss aspects of your enquiry or circumstances with their immediate colleagues or, if relevant, with the Dean of Students (as Director of Student Services) or her Deputy. The purpose of such discussion would normally be to seek information, confirm the best course of action or to help the member of staff reflect on their work with you. Whenever possible, such discussion will take place without identifying you individually. The Counselling Service strictly limit such discussions to the Director of Counselling, other Counselling colleagues or their clinical supervisor except when there are clear indications that you present a serious risk to yourself or others.

Student Services staff will not normally pass on personal information about you (including information relating to attending an appointment) to anyone outside Student Services (including University staff, relatives, friends or external agencies) without your permission, subject to the following exceptions:

- when we are legally required to do so by the police or other law enforcement agencies;
- when we may be required to do so by a University regulation, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or the UK Research Councils² (although this would not apply in the case of any information held by the Counselling service); if you are under 18 years old and we have a serious concern about your well-being;
- when there are clear indications that you present a serious risk to yourself or others;

¹ Physical Education and Sport is also one of the Student Services but given the nature of its provision and the type of information held about customers, the arrangements outlined in this guide are not generally applicable.

² The Careers Centre, on behalf of the University, is required by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to conduct an annual survey of recent graduates' early career destinations by means of a postal/telephone survey. The information is submitted in an anonymous format and considerable care is taken to ensure that individuals cannot be identified in any publication or other dissemination of the results. The Careers Centre also supplies information on first career destinations of those in receipt of Research Council Scholarships. For further information, please contact the Director of the Careers Centre.

- when contact with another member of UEA staff will help resolve a routine matter.

In any of these circumstances Student Services staff will seek to obtain your consent prior to disclosure of any personal information but, if the risk of non-disclosure is judged to be sufficiently serious, the information will be disclosed without your consent. Under all circumstances the information that is disclosed will be kept to the minimum necessary for effective response to the particular situation.

Codes of Ethics and Professional Practice

University Counselling Service staff adhere to the Ethical Guidelines of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP); copies are available from the Counselling Service or from the BACP web site (www.bacp.co.uk/). All Student services staff adhere to the Student services Code of Professional Practice, copies of which are available from the Student Service web site

https://www1.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.91080!code_prof_practice.pdf

In order to respond effectively to your enquiry or concern, it may be appropriate for a member of Student Services staff to contact a third party eg your adviser on your behalf. In these cases the member of staff will explain the benefits of that contact and will seek your permission. If you do not give permission, other than in the exceptional circumstances outlined above, staff will not initiate discussion or correspondence with others in a way which allows you to be identified. If you do agree, the nature of the contact will be agreed with you in advance. In the case of telephone calls, the purpose of the call and information given will be agreed with you beforehand. In the case of written (letter or e-mail) correspondence, the content will be agreed with you before it is sent.

Students with specific learning difficulties and disabilities

If you have told us that you have a disability, the University is legally required to make reasonable adjustments to help you participate to the fullest possible extent in the educational and other opportunities provided by the University. Information about your disability and requirements will be limited to that necessary to ensure that appropriate adjustments can be made to help you gain the maximum benefit from your student experience at UEA.

Information held by Student Services will normally be passed to others only at your request or with your permission. When you first make contact with a member of the disability team within the Dean of Students' Office, you will be asked to complete a form identifying those to whom we may disclose information. If you do not give permission for information to be disclosed, the possible consequence may be to restrict the scope and nature of any adjustments the University can make on your behalf and will be pointed out to you. Further information on the implications of disclosure is available from the Disability Co-ordinator (j.abson@uea.ac.uk) or the Mental Health Co-ordinator (beckie.davies@uea.ac.uk).

Record keeping and Data Protection

Student Services record basic information such as name, course, contact details and other biographical detail) for administrative purposes. This information may be held on paper and/or electronically and is used to make appointments and to produce anonymised statistical information about users and use of Student Services for monitoring and planning purposes.

Keeping information up-to-date

Where one of the Student Services has reason to keep your contact details eg to manage appointments, it is important that you inform the relevant staff if your contact details change.

Personal Records

During formal discussions with members of Student Services staff, you may provide information of a personal and sensitive nature concerning, for example, finances, disability, a medical condition or personal difficulties. A record of the discussion may be kept to ensure that the appropriate guidance or response is provided, particularly at any subsequent visit. Notes may record the key points or issues raised, the advice or information given by the member of staff, relevant background information, any action to be taken and details of any follow-up action together with any related correspondence; points of concern may also be noted.

Access to records

Under the Data Protection Act (1998), clients have the right to access information held about them. If the records include references to other individuals, those references may have to be removed from the records as those individuals also have protection under the Act. If records include letters or information from a third party (eg a letter from your GP) consent from that person must be obtained before the information is disclosed.

Students may request a copy of the personal data held about them. If you wish to access your Student Services records, please write to the Dean of Students in the first instance or to the Director of Counselling in relation to Counselling records. Your request may be referred to the University's Data Protection Officer in the Planning Office in Registry and the standard fee of £10 may be payable.

Further information about the way in which the University deals with student data is set out in the Data Protection Notice for Students contained in the Guidance Notes provided with your initial University Registration Form.

Security

Files containing personal information are kept securely locked within the Student Service concerned or stored as secure computer records. The period for which records are retained before destruction is informed by current data protection legislation and good practice within the higher education sector.

Further information and complaints

If you have any concerns about data protection or confidentiality, please raise them with any member of Student Services staff. If your concerns are unanswered or you have a complaint about the way in which information you have disclosed has been used, please write to the Dean of Students, Dr. Annie Grant.