



The University of
Nottingham

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University Counselling Service

Annual Report
2012-13



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Contents

Head of Service Report	1
Statistics for the Academic Year 2012-13	4
Counselling provision at other University of Nottingham campuses	7
Groups and Workshops Report	8
Client Feedback	9
Appendix 1	11
Appendix 2	12

Head of Service Report

The Orchards

The University Counselling Service was re-located to The Orchards on University Park in January 2013. This fine building has been internally re-structured and refurbished and is already proving to be excellent accommodation for our work. The feedback that we have received from clients has been positive, with students describing it as a very calm building that helps them relax when they arrive, and staff saying that they experience it as private and discreet which encourages them to feel safe to attend for appointments. It is a good space allocation for the Service and is already enabling us to continue to grow, and to hold meetings, deliver workshops and therapeutic groups within our own building.

Staffing

The total number of permanent staff at UCS in the academic year 2012/13 was 14, comprising eleven counsellors, two administrators and the head of service (FTE 10.3). In addition we were able to increase our administrative staffing by employing a temporary part time receptionist from January 2013, and we hope that this will become a permanent post as the administrative workload has grown so much that it has become impossible for two administrative staff to manage. We also employed some temporary term-time counselling staff. As in previous years we had one trainee working

with us who had clinical supervision within the service.

I have now completed the maximum six year term of office on the HUCS (Heads of University Counselling Services in the UK and Southern Ireland) Executive Committee having held the role of Chair in 2009/10, representing the University of Nottingham at a national level.

Integration with the University community

UCS is well embedded in the University. Within the Student Operations and Support Division of the Registrar's Department we work with Robin Dollery and Stephen Dudderidge whose support for the work of UCS is invaluable. I work closely with the Student Services Management team. Training sessions and consultancy have been offered to the Human Resources department, Hall Wardens, hall tutors, the Senior Tutor network, Academic Services, Work and Wellbeing Review Group and Students Union officers during the last year.

As a service we are available for consultation to staff concerned about students' wellbeing. This can reduce staff anxiety about students and help them to judge whether or not a referral to the Counselling Service and/or to their GP is appropriate. Provision of support and advice in this way often enables academic staff to continue helping students while

maintaining the boundaries of their roles. In addition we continue to offer specific training in the form of one day workshops on "Listening and Responding to Students in Difficulty". We also run the Student Support Forum for staff with a student support role which includes student support officers. It meets three to four times a year.

Parents of students contact us frequently, particularly at the start of the academic year, and whilst we cannot give information about students who are attending the Service due to confidentiality we are able to offer information and advice in response to their concerns.

Contribution to the student experience

While the clinical work of the service contributes directly to the individual experience of students, UCS makes a wider contribution to student wellbeing. This includes regular liaison with the GPs at Cripps Health Centre and the Mental Health Advisers to establish clear and effective referral pathways; liaison with the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust in order to enable students to access additional psychological therapies and secondary health care provision where this is needed; supporting the development of the EDISS clinic for eating disorders at Cripps Health Centre; and liaison with the Students Union through regular meetings with the SU Officer for Equal Opportunities and Mental Health.

"*Listening and Responding to Students in Difficulty: A Guide for Staff*" has been re-issued and re-launched as part of the Student Life Cycle project. The guide was originally published by UCS in 2003 to help University staff support students in whatever way is appropriate to their role, and has been regularly updated since then. The Vice Chancellor wrote a letter to all staff which accompanied the new publication.

A national conference on the student experience was hosted by the University of Nottingham at the East Midlands Conference Centre in April 2013. The AMOSSHE conference "Making the most of Counselling Services" was an extremely well attended and successful event.

Ningbo campus

The University Counselling Service has now existed on the Ningbo campus for four years. The service is currently growing strongly and is increasingly well used by both students and staff. In 2012/13 there was a 31% increase in client numbers from the previous year. The total of 174 clients in 2012/13 is 2.7% of all registered students and staff on the campus. 66% of the clients are Chinese students. The problems students and staff bring to the service in Ningbo are varied, with anxiety about academic concerns and relationship difficulties being the most common. A significant number present with mental health problems including depression. We are pleased to support the development of the

Counselling Service at Ningbo as the UNNC moves towards providing a world class student experience.

Support and liaison with professional colleagues is vital to Gayle Chell, the Head of the Service, in the pioneering work at UNNC. I have continued to have fortnightly telephone meetings with her and a fruitful collaboration has developed. Ching Ting Huang, a counsellor able to offer sessions in both English and Mandarin has been in post since August 2012 and she has received support from her mentor, Helen Kerry, one of the counsellors at UCS in Nottingham during this year.

Pat Hunt
Head of the University
Counselling Service

Statistics for the academic year 2012-13

Introduction

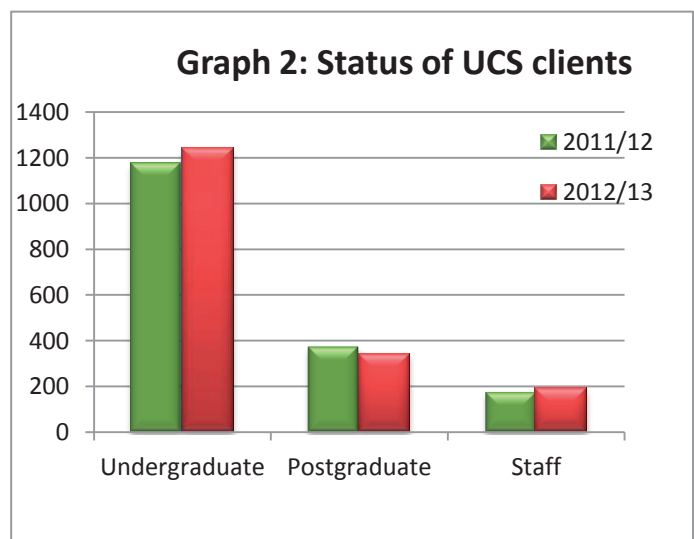
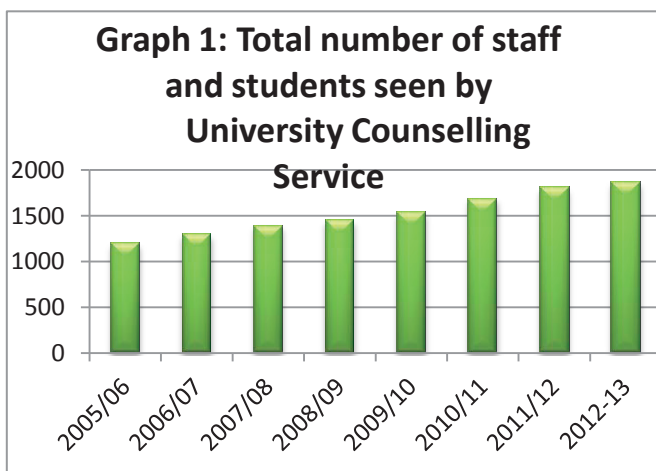
The statistics in this section of the Annual Report are drawn from comprehensive data recorded for each student and member of staff who contact the University Counselling Service (UCS) and attend for an appointment. In the year 2012-13 the SPSS license used for the analysis of statistics was discontinued, and thus this is a shorter report than usual. During the last three years we have been collecting parallel data for students who attend our therapeutic groups and workshops, and these statistics are included in the Groups and Workshops section of the Annual Report.

Increase in numbers

We saw a total of 1861 staff and students between 1st August 2012 and 31st July 2013. This was a 2.8% increase on the previous year when the total was 1810.

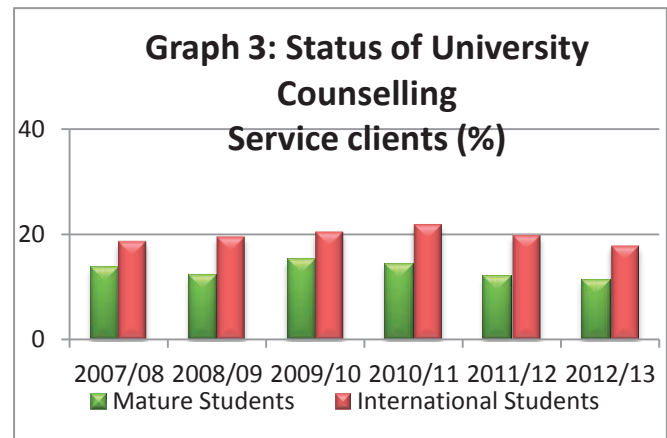
1861 staff and students is 4.6% of the total University population (4.5% in 2011/12). The number of undergraduate students who came for appointments is 1242, which is 5.1% of the undergraduate student population (4.7% in 2011/12). The number of postgraduate students who came for appointments is 342 and this is 4.2% of the postgraduate student population (4.6% in 2011/12). We record the School and Department for each undergraduate and postgraduate student and the data confirms that all Schools and Departments use the Service.

The number of staff who came for appointments was 189 (10.6% of the total), slightly higher than in 2010/11 when the number was 176. It is important and encouraging that staff from all areas of the University use the service - academics, senior managers, administrative staff, security staff and cleaners.



The proportion of male students and staff increased in the six years between 2005-06 and 2010-11 from 29% men and 71% women to 34.9% men and 65.1% women. The proportion of men who attended UCS in 2012/13 was 32.1%. The School of Nursing is one of the biggest users of our Service and it has a very high proportion of female students and staff.

Both the number and proportion of international students who attend UCS increased between 2005-06 and 2010-11 from 15.7% to 21.8%. In 2012-13 the percentage was 21%. 12.7% of the undergraduate students who came to UCS were international students, and this is an under-representation in relation to the proportion of undergraduate international students in the University (18% in 2012/13). However 49.7% of the postgraduate students who came to UCS were international students. 40.7% of full time postgraduate were international. It is important to continue to ensure that international students are well informed about the existence of the Counselling Service and what we provide, especially as the majority of international students come from countries where counselling is either not in existence or not easily available. UCS provides information each year through a presentation given to students as part the International Students Welcome Week organised by the International Office and we believe it is important that this continues.



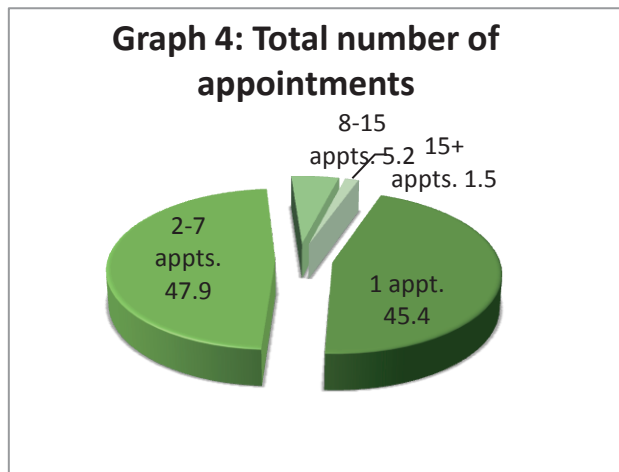
The percentage of mature undergraduate students who used the service is 13.4%. The percentage of mature students in the undergraduate student population is 5.4%. This is an over-representation of mature students and perhaps reflects that they experience additional problems in student life and often attend the Counselling Service for help with unresolved problems from earlier in their lives. Mature students may also have additional responsibilities including families and aging parents. In addition the proportion of mature students in the School of Nursing is high.

Waiting times

The average waiting time for an initial appointment was 7.63 days. The waiting time between the initial appointment and the first ongoing appointment was recorded. 56% of clients were offered an ongoing appointment within 4.0 weeks. 91.8% of staff and students were offered an appointment within 12 weeks, and we are seeking to improve on this during the academic year 2013/14 so that no-one waits longer than 12 weeks. The waiting

times for ongoing appointments were shorter in 2012/13 than in 2011/12.

Number of appointments offered



45.4% of clients attended for just one appointment. This represents those students and staff who only need to come for one appointment to resolve their situation, and those who were referred to one of the University Counselling Service groups or workshops or to other sources of help within the University and beyond. This figure also includes those who were offered additional appointments but only attended for one (12.7%).

There is always a proportion of students who attend UCS for one appointment only who have come to request extenuating circumstance evidence. In 2012/13 this number reduced, perhaps reflecting welcome changes to the University Quality Manual which now authorises certain members of staff in Schools and Departments to give extenuating circumstance evidence.

47.9% of students and staff came for between two and seven sessions. This is a combination of those who came for short term weekly therapeutic work which gives sufficient opportunity for working through moderate emotional and mental health problems, and other clients, mostly students, who attend for intermittent appointments spaced out during the academic year. In 2011/12 41.9% came for between two and seven sessions, and the increase in 2012/13 reflects a change to offer more short term contracts.

6.7% of staff and students came for more than eight sessions. This represents therapeutic work with those who have more difficult or enduring problems. In 2011/12 the figure was 8.7% and the difference reflects clinical management decisions taken to reduce some of the long term therapeutic work in order to increase the amount of short term work than we can offer to the ever increasing numbers of students and staff who are requesting help from us. There is a fine balance to be maintained here, and it is vital that in the future UCS continues to offer long term therapeutic interventions as there will always be a proportion of staff and students of the University who need this.

Pat Hunt
Head of the University
Counselling Service

Counselling provision at other University of Nottingham campuses

The University Counselling Service provides a limited, but consistent, counselling service and occasional workshops, to University students and staff, based at sites other than University Park.

Derby, Lincoln, Mansfield and Boston

The satellite services at Lincoln, Boston, Mansfield and Derby have been established for many years and mainly serve the nursing, midwifery and Graduate Entry Medical students.

The Schools of Nursing at Lincoln, Boston and Mansfield are moving towards closing, or a change of function, in 2014. This period of transition and uncertainty is challenging for students and staff and the Counselling Service is liaising with Centre staff to monitor and adjust provision, during this period.

The Counselling Service for students and staff based in Derby has moved to the Medical School at Derby Royal Hospital, which has offered improved access for medical and nursing students and the new undergraduate course.

Jubilee Campus

This service for students and staff continues to be well used. Verbal

client feedback indicates positive appreciation for this on-site service. Forty-five individuals accessed the service, maintaining the thirty-six percent increase noted last year. The two workshops offered at Jubilee: 'Perfectionism and Procrastination' and 'Self-esteem' were well attended.

Sutton Bonington

Over recent years student numbers in both Schools at the Sutton Bonington campus have expanded and this, combined with other factors, has led to a significant increase in demand for counselling support. Extending the counselling provision into the vacation periods means that students and staff can be seen throughout the academic year. For most of the year a prompt and flexible response was offered for those seen for an initial assessment session. However, during particularly busy times, some clients have had to wait a little longer. In order to address the level of demand the Service increased counselling provision at Sutton Bonington. Workshops have been provided for students which have been well attended and feedback has been positive.

Heather Nelson Counselling Co-ordinator

Groups and Workshops

Workshops

The workshop programme offers practical support in coping with emotional problems commonly encountered in student life. The workshops attract increasing numbers of students each year.

Attending a workshop may offer sufficient help for many students. Others may access the programme in addition to 1:1 appointments.

Group work

Some of our work in the Counselling Service is to do with normalising emotion that is difficult and uncomfortable but which is also an inevitable aspect of everyday life. Our therapeutic groups allow students the opportunity to share their difficulties with each other; to discover that they are not alone in their experience; to develop healthy resilience in the face of emotional challenge and to increase their understanding of how they affect and are affected by others.

New resource for staff

The development and maintenance of resilience is also very relevant for staff members and in 2012-2013 we continued to facilitate the Student Support Forum. This is an opportunity for staff to meet as a group at regular intervals during the course of the academic year in order to share and reflect on their

experiences of supporting students and the ways in which this impacts on them. The Forum was well attended and will continue this year. Feedback from attendees is positive.

"I have attended most of the Student Support Forum meetings over the past year and enjoyed the support and guidance provided. I always feel better informed and more confident after attending these meetings and it helps to know we are not alone when dealing with the complexity of student issues."

Evaluation and development

We evaluate, modify and develop the Groups and Workshops programme using statistical data and written feedback to ensure that it is relevant and responsive to current student needs. We also meet with group and workshop facilitators from other UK university services to compare our provision and to share and generate new ideas for practice. In April Pat Hunt gave a talk on 'The role of higher education counselling services in proactive, preventative practice' at the AMOSSHE conference – the first of its kind, bringing staff from Student Services around the country together with Heads of University Counselling Services to consider how to provide effective student support.

Lucy Rowley
Groups and Workshops
Co-ordinator

Client feedback 2012–2013

Highlights

- 75% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the service
- 82% of student respondents said counselling improved their overall experience of university
- 74% of student respondents felt that counselling had helped them do better in their academic work
- 86% of staff respondents felt that having counselling helped them do better at work
- 96% of staff respondents felt that counselling had helped them develop skills that might be useful in their work

Why we ask for feedback

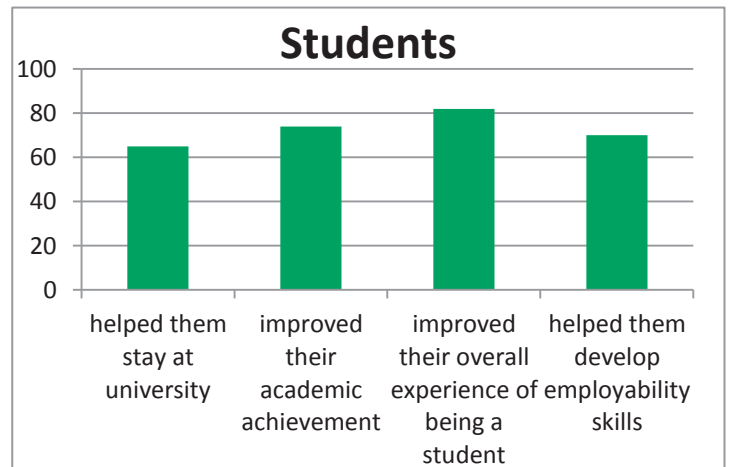
The University Counselling Service is committed to providing a high quality service that is responsive to the needs of the University community.

The primary aim of this exercise is to obtain feedback from clients to help the counsellors to reflect on their individual practice and the quality of the Service. Complaints are considered seriously and acted upon where possible. It also provides an opportunity for clients to reflect on their experience and the outcomes of counselling.

Counselling and the student experience

In 2012 a report⁽¹⁾ from large scale, sector wide research into the impact of counselling on various aspects of the student experience concluded that over 75% of students who accessed counselling at their college or university found it benefitted

them. The University of Nottingham Counselling Service contributed to the data set which brought together over 5000 responses from 65 different universities and FE colleges. Our feedback survey conducted this year with clients of the Counselling Service confirms these findings.



Counselling and workplace experience

Similar reports of benefit from counselling came from staff who had used the service.



Methodology

We use secure software provided by 'Survey Monkey' to create an accessible, online survey which is efficient to administer and anonymous.

Students and members of staff who use the University Counselling Service are invited to complete an online questionnaire approximately one month after their final contact with us. The questionnaire elicits both quantitative and qualitative data. Comments in this report are quoted with the permission of respondents.

Response rate and respondent profile

This year (between 1 August 1 2012 and 31 July 2013) 993 clients were sent an invitation to leave feedback and 250 did so: a 25% response rate. This means that received feedback from 13% of our total client group (1862).

The respondents are a self-selected group in that the completion of questionnaires is entirely voluntary. The make-up of respondents to the

questionnaire reflects broadly the usage pattern of the Service.

Comments

"I would not have finished my course if it had not been for my counsellor, it taught me things about myself, resilience, etc. that I didn't think I had."

"It was very helpful to get an outsiders perspective of how I was feeling. It made me think differently about the situations concerned."

"The things I have learnt from counselling have helped me through my everyday life..."

"It made me see that I could have a balance between work and my social life"

"It gave me the space to offload which is needed with the pressures of academic life."

"Helped me to realise I was depressed and review my life and university thus far which led to the decision to repeat the year which was very helpful."

References

⁽¹⁾'The impact of counselling on academic outcomes: the student perspective – final research findings, implications and future developments', Patti Wallace, Association for University and College Counselling Journal, November 2012

Mel Wraight Counsellor

Appendix 1

Staff

Head of Service

Pat Hunt (UKCP, BACP, HUCS, BACP-UC)

Counselling team

Anita Bartys (BACP)
Marion Dillon (BACP, BACP-UC, UKRC)
Alison Hammond (BACP-UC, UKCP, UKAPI, AUCC)
Helen Kerry (UKCP, GPTI)
Heather Nelson (BACP)
Sarah Olds (UKCP)
Daniel Pitt (UKCP)
Lucy Rowley (BACP, AUCC)
Rob Sharp (UKCP, Survivors UK, PTUK)
Val Watson (BACP, BACP-UC, BAPCA, HEA, ACW, UKRC, UKCP, CCYP)
Myra Woolfson (UKCP)
Mel Wraight (BACP)

Administration & support staff team

Ruth Kneale
Sarah Brumpton
Bev Gwaza

Professional association abbreviations

ACW	Association of Counselling in the Workplace
BACP	British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
BACP-UC	British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (Universities and Colleges)
BAPCA	British Association for the Person-Centred Approach
CCYP	Counselling Children and Young People
GPTI	Gestalt Psychotherapy Training Institute
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HUCS	Heads of University Counselling Services
PTUK	Play Therapy UK
UKAPI	United Kingdom Association for Psychotherapy Integration
UKCP	UK Council for Psychotherapy
UKRC	United Kingdom Register of Counsellors

Appendix 2

Professional Activity

External commitments

- Consultancy and professional support for University Counselling Service at UNNC (PAH)
- Lecture delivered to the Hallam Institute of Psychotherapy (PAH)
- Member of HUCS (National Heads of University Counselling Services) Executive Committee, Meetings & Mentor Scheme (PAH)
- Member of the working party for AMOSSHE conference (Student Services Organisation) (PAH)
- Voluntary Independent Adoption panel member – Adopt Together (VW)
- Membership of Integrative Psychotherapy professional development group (AH, HJK, RJS)
- Open House Post-Natal Depression Support Group (SEB)
- Presenter, Samaritan's Purse International Relief (RK)
- Therapy reading group (MMD)
- Voluntary Supervision consultant - Contacts Counselling (VW)

Meetings/networking

- Counselling Service at UNNC (fortnightly phone meetings) (PAH)
- Meetings with Cripps Health Centre GPs (all counselling staff)
- Meetings with SU Equality & Welfare Officer (PAH)
- Meetings with Head of Student Operations and Support & Head of Student Services (PAH)
- Managing external research requests (VW)
- Meeting with Students' Union Executive Committee (PAH)
- School Safety Officers update meetings (AH)
- Staff BME Network Co-ordinator (VW)
- Student Support Forum (MW, VW)
- UCS Groups & Workshops Co-ordinator (LR)
- UCS Team Forum – Chair (MCW)
- UCS Management Information System Group (SEB, AH, HJK, RK, DP)

- UCS Statistics Working Group (AH, DP)
- Writing and editing Exam Anxiety website and the Listening and Responding guide (MW)

Policy/steering groups

- Student Services Management Team (PAH)
- Groups and Workshops Steering Group (MMD, LR, RJS, VW)
- Mental Health Advisor Steering Group (PAH)
- SEDAG (Staff Equality and Diversity Advisory Group) (VW)
- Student Life Cycle (PAH)
- Work and Wellbeing Review Group (PAH)

Publicity talks/fairs

- Training for Hall Wardens (PAH)
- International Students Welcome Week induction presentation (PAH, AH)
- International Students Welcome Week fair (AHH, RK, DP)
- New students welfare event, Sutton Bonington campus (ALB)
- Presentations to Senior Tutor Network (PAH)
- Supervisors Training - School of Clinical Science (VW)
- Welcome presentations to nursing, midwifery students at Nottingham and Derby, Boston (HN, RJS)
- Welcome Event for new staff (RK, VW)

ALB	Anita Bartys
SEB	Sarah Brumpton
MMD	Marion Dillon
AHH	Alison Hammond
PAH	Pat Hunt
HJK	Helen Kerry
RK	Ruth Kneale
DP	Daniel Pitt
LR	Lucy Rowley
HN	Heather Nelson
RS	Rob Sharp
MW	Myra Woolfson
MCW	Mel Wraight
VW	Val Watson

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