

Student Counselling Policy		
Lead: Group Safeguarding Lead		Status: Approved
Version: 2023		Date of Version:
Approving Body: Executive Team		Supersedes: 2019 Policy
Approved on: 21 March 2023		Next Review date: January 2026
Equality analysis tool ¹		
1.	Is the policy relevant to the public sector equality duty?	No
2.	Have any concerns previously been raised about this policy or practice?	No
3.	Is likely to result in discrimination against a protected group?	No
4.	Does this policy positively contribute to the participation of under-represented groups in the College's activities?	No
Version Control		
Version	Date	Change(s)
Access		
Location	Address/Link	
Sharepoint	Safeguarding	
Service Centre	Safeguarding Service Centre	
Document Centre	A-Z	
Communication		
Medium	Audience	
Safeguarding Development Group		
Safeguarding Network Forum		
Corporate News		
Virtual College	Staff	

¹ If the answer to any of these questions is yes, please complete the Screening Template provided and include as an Appendix to your policy.

Website	Parents
Moodle	Students

Heart of Yorkshire Education Group

Student Counselling Policy

Review Cycle: **Every 3 years**

Next Review Date: **January 2026**

Person Responsible: **Group Safeguarding Lead**

Approving Body: **Executive Team**

1 Purpose

In presenting this policy the Group seeks to:

- express its commitment to supporting learners through the provision of a professional counselling service;
- recognise the contribution of counselling to participation, retention and achievement.

2 Aim

To provide a framework for a counselling service which will:

- provide a safe, confidential environment in which an individual can begin to explore and identify issues which could prevent them from completing their studies successfully;
- comply with nationally recognised guidelines on professional practice;
- comply with legislation regarding child protection;
- meet the requirements of the Group policy and procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults with care and support needs.

4 Statement of Policy

- 4.1 The Counselling Service will be available to all learners during term time subject to the availability of counsellors and take place in person or by telephone or online by agreement in line with student preferences.
- 4.2 Counselling will only take place following an assessment, and where the counsellor and the client agree the terms of a counselling contract with clear boundaries and limitations. Counsellors will refer clients to alternative support if more appropriate.
- 4.3 Clients will be assessed within 10 working days of initial contact. Counselling will then be offered at the first available opportunity.

4.4 All counselling contracts will be ended by the end of the academic year.

4.5 Confidentiality will be maintained for all clients. The only exceptions to this are:

- a) Risk of significant harm to self or others.
- b) Involvement in any major criminal activity e.g. money laundering, drug dealing or terrorism.

This information may be passed on without their prior knowledge and is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR May 2018.

4.6 The Counselling Service at Wakefield and Castleford works in accordance with the guidelines for best policy and practice laid down by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and the Association for University and College Counselling (AUCC), HE/FE division. Selby College additionally works in accordance with National Counselling Society (NCS) or BACP.

4.7 All practitioners working in the colleges will work in accordance with the Ethical Framework of BACP or equivalent professional bodies for the Counselling Professions.

4.8 Clients will be asked to complete feedback and evaluation forms which will be analysed to inform developments in service.

4.9 Counsellors will be professionally qualified and accredited or working towards accreditation.

4.10 The Colleges will operate an Associate Counsellor scheme.

5. Monitoring

- Counselling data will be monitored through Group Board of Governors via annual Safeguarding report and interim updates.
- Counselling activity will be recorded on databases kept separately from student records.
- Client feedback will be obtained through evaluation forms and SPOCs
- The services will be reviewed annually and will be evaluated in line with performance indicators and standards.

Appendix One: Screening Tool

Public sector equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires College to have **due regard** for the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; this involves considering the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics;
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in activities where their participation is low; and to
- foster good relations between people from different groups - this involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

Consequently, we need to assure ourselves that our policies will not have an adverse differential impact on any particular group. This pre-screening section will enable you to identify whether your policy is likely to have an adverse differential impact.

Please use the following template to help determine whether an equality analysis is required

Name of the policy	Safeguarding Policy
Author(s):	Carol Price

Author(s) of Equality Analysis:	
Name:	Carol Price
Job title:	Group Safeguarding Lead
Date:	4/10/2022
Signature:	C.Price

In order to decide whether the policy requires further action, please complete the following questions:

1. What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of the policy?

- To demonstrate the Group's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection.
- To fulfil requirements of Section 175(4) of the Education Act 2002 which states that governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools), further education institutions and management committees of pupil referral units must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

2. Will these aims affect our duty to:

	Yes / No	How?
advance equality of opportunity?	No	
eliminate discrimination?	No	
eliminate harassment?	No	
foster good relations between people from different groups?	No	
tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people from different groups?	No	

3. What aspects of the policy, including how it is delivered, or accessed, could contribute to inequality?

- The policy is not standardly offered in other languages although could be made available on request.

4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the experience of people, including those who share a protected characteristic?

4.1 Please complete the following table:

Protected characteristic	Meet needs of people with this characteristic	Encourage participation (if under-represented)	Remove or minimise disadvantages	Possible negative impact
Race	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Religion / belief	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Sexual orientation	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Gender reassignment	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Pregnancy /maternity	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Age	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Marriage / civil partnership*	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A

4.2 In addition, please consider whether this policy may indirectly discriminate against young adult carers (16-24). Although not a legally protected group, this group often suffers disadvantage due to their caring responsibilities and we have a moral duty to protect them.

Evidence: Changes in working practices including online may facilitate greater ability to participate while caring than previously

4.3 What different needs, experiences or attitudes are particular communities or groups likely to have in relation to this policy?

Some barriers may be experienced in cases of language and communication difficulties – ie for deaf students or students requiring translation services the counsellor client relationship may be inhibited by a third party presence.

Next steps

If your answers to these questions have identified potential negative impacts, then you should consider further consultation or action to minimise the differential impact. Please contact the Executive Director Quality and Planning for support.

If no further action is required, please sign the declaration below and include with all published copies of the policy.

Declaration

The policy does not have a significant impact upon equality issues and therefore does not require any further action.

Author(s) of EA.	
Name:	Carol Price
Job title:	Group Safeguarding Lead
Date:	13/03/2023
Signature:	C.Price