

## **Mental Health Services Privacy Notice**

Our Mental Health service provides a range of support to help you to maintain good mental health and engaging with our services will require the University to process your personal data, including special category personal data about your health and wellbeing.

We respect the sensitive nature of the information you share with us, and this notice describes how, when, and why we will use and share your information in line with Data Protection Legislation.

Detailed records of your support will only be routinely accessible to the specialist advisors, practitioners and support staff that are helping you to access support on a need-to-know basis.

However, there may be times when we need to share some information internally or externally for specific reasons. Sometimes this may be a one-off referral or discussion and sometimes it may involve an ongoing dialogue to support you by sharing information about changing needs or deterioration of a condition, or where we think there is a risk to yourself or others.

When you approach us or are referred to us for support, we will ask you to confirm that you want to engage with our services. However, we will not usually rely on your consent to process your personal data. As a university we have a legal duty of care to deliver educational and pastoral services competently and, in carrying out our services and functions, to act reasonably to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students. The University also has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to do everything reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of their students. This requirement means we are legally required to maintain certain records of our work with you including case notes and relevant documents related to your support. These records are maintained by staff within our Wellbeing & Welfare Services.

You will be at the centre of all decisions we take regarding your support, including how we share information. External sharing may involve services such as your GP or other NHS services, Social Services or Local Authorities, support services and charities relating to wellbeing and welfare and your academic school where reasonable adjustments need to be made to accommodate any additional support requirements you may have. There may also be internal sharing on a need-to-know basis, for example, the accommodation or campus security team may be asked to complete a welfare check. The information shared in these circumstances will be limited to what is necessary to ensure you are safe. In most cases and wherever possible we will do this with your understanding and agreement at the point of sharing, allowing you to discuss any concerns you may have. We will explain our reasons to you and advise you about who we feel needs to have information about you. We usually do this verbally but may sometimes ask you to confirm your response in writing. We understand that circumstances can change so we will revisit these conversations with you regularly throughout the time you work with our service.

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Although rare, there may be times where we have to share information even if you don't want us to. This may include:

- Occasions where you or another person may be at risk of serious harm;
- If we are advised to share information by a medical professional responsible for your care;
- If there is a concern regarding safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults;
- If there is a legal requirement to share, for example at a court hearing.

### **How we obtain your personal data:**

Personal Data is predominantly collected from you directly when you engage with any of our support services. We may access some information which you have already provided to the University during enrolment and study and which is stored in our student information system (SITS) or in some cases if we are contacted by other specialist services that may be supporting you, such as your GP. Our mental health advisors and councillors may request health information about you from other external support services you access (such as your GP or another mental health professional) to support any decisions made about your care.

### **What personal data is processed**

If our Service is supporting you they will maintain records about you which will differ according to your individual needs but are likely to include:

- 1.1 Details about you from the student information (SITS) database. These include your name, student number, University and home addresses and contact details, and your registered next of kin, plus any information you have additionally consented to being shared with us during registration, for example information about your health, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and religious beliefs;
- 1.2 Course and dates of study and academic progress and attainment (where relevant);
- 1.3 Notes and reports about your needs. This may include sensitive information about you (also known as 'special category data') such as information about your health;
- 1.4 Details about the information, advice and support offered;
- 1.5 Documents or medical evidence you supply to us;
- 1.6 Information from external agencies such as your GP surgery, NHS services, and other external support providers;
- 1.7 Relevant information from other University services who have a duty of care towards you, including:
  - 1.7.1 Accommodation Team;
  - 1.7.2 Campus Security;
  - 1.7.3 Office for Student Complaints and Regulations (OSCAR);

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- 1.7.4 Other University professional services such as the Health & Safety Team or Legal & Governance Services;
- 1.7.5 Your Academic School;
- 1.7.6 The Students' Union.

The records may be electronic, on paper or a mixture of both, and we use a combination of working practices and technology to ensure that your information is kept confidential and secure.

### **How we use and share your personal data:**

- Members of the University team providing support to you will have access to your information on a need-to-know basis. Sometimes the staff that support you may change because of absence or due to workload allocation and we cannot always guarantee that you will work with the same person.
- We may share your information for **direct care** purposes with other professionals in local hospitals, social care teams and GPs in order to facilitate multi-agency support for your health and social care needs.

### **Lawful Basis**

The main legal basis for which we process your personal data is contractual – the terms and conditions you signed on enrolment place responsibilities on the University to keep you safe.

The University has a duty of care to deliver its educational and pastoral services competently and, in carrying out its services and functions, to act reasonably to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students. The University also has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to do everything reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of their students.

In addition, the nature of our services means we sometimes hold sensitive information about you such as health issues or details about your sexuality (this is known as 'special category data'). We hold this information in order to provide you with the support you need and is therefore necessary for the provision of health and social care.

### **Trusted Contacts:**

A trusted contact is someone who you would be comfortable to be notified if there are serious concerns about your safety or mental health. This may be a parent, partner, sibling, friend etc. You do not have to name your next of kin as your trusted contact if you would not feel comfortable about information being shared with them.

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The Wellbeing and Welfare Service can hold trusted contact information for you in order for them to be notified in the event that you are experiencing a crisis. For example, mental health crisis or emergency situation.

If you feel this applies to you, please raise this with your advisor in your assessment appointment.

**Please be advised that as this is a local arrangement the service cannot guarantee that your trusted contact will be notified in every crisis situation, as the service may not have involvement in every instance.**

**If you require any further information about how your personal data is processed, you can contact the Information Governance Team at [DPO@tees.ac.uk](mailto:DPO@tees.ac.uk) or by calling 01642 342563.**

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