

2023
V3

Counselling Policy

Introduction

Debut Academy recognises its pastoral role in the welfare of their employees and learners. The counselling services our Safeguarding or other support staff provide is part of a range of services offered to support to enable both employees and learners to feel supported with any personal, emotional, or mental health problems. By providing appropriate and free counselling support for Debut's employees this will hopefully allow them to continue working and financially support themselves. In addition, by providing similar support to learners, this can allow them to continue with their learning programmes and successfully achieve their qualifications.

Definition

Counselling aims to help individuals feel they are in control of their own lives and able to make positive, confident choices and decisions. It is a way of helping people cope with the difficulties in their lives, by talking through personal problems and dealing with emotional issues. Counselling is entered voluntarily and offers the opportunity to talk and be heard in a safe, non-judgemental environment. The counsellor does not give advice but will help the person find her/his own answers.

At Debut Academy, our employees and learners have free access to counselling via our in-house counsellor Kay Dodd, who attends Debut premises monthly. Individuals that are interested in counselling will complete a registration form to provide Kay with information on areas they would like counselling support. Following this, the individual will be sent a link to book a counselling session via Kay's diary. Counselling sessions are usually 90 minutes for the initial appointment, followed by 30 minute sessions thereafter and can be provided either face-to-face, over zoom or via a telephone call to aid flexibility.

Here is the link to the counselling registration request form:

[Counselling Request Form](#)

The designated support personnel are:

Jade Schaverien

Student Liaison Officer

01268 560552

jades@debutacademy.com

Linda Edwards

Designated Safeguarding Lead

01268 560552

linda@debutacademy.com

Policy Standards

Debut Academy offers, without discrimination, free, impartial counselling sessions, which are accessible to all employees and learners at Debut. Counselling is offered within the limitations and knowledge of the staff and any areas that falls beyond this will be referred to outside agencies.

Learners – Risk of Withdrawal

Debut understands that failure to support learners with emotional or other problems will usually result in them withdrawing from their training and failing in their qualification. This can also negatively impact on the learner's future destination, whether their intention was employment or education. Ultimately, this will also impact on the Academy's success and retention rates.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with debut's Confidentiality Policy. In exceptional circumstances, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; for example, a break in confidentiality may be made:

- Where there is a threat to human life or physical danger (either of the learner or somebody else)
- Where there is a Safeguarding concern (reported direct to Safeguarding Officer)
- If there is a major threat to the interests of the College
- If ordered to do so, by Court Order or anything else pertaining to the Law of the Land.

Responsibilities

The Counsellor will:

- Develop and maintain an effective network of internal and external referral agencies and share good practice throughout the college, to develop outstanding counselling services at Debut Academy.
- Be a suitably qualified and experienced member of staff and have awareness of counselling guidelines and procedures.
- Have undergone a DBS disclosure.
- Work with staff across the college including all Assessors, the Center Manager, Study Skills Tutors for learners with mental health and/or behavioural problems likely to impede learning or Student Liaison Officer and Safeguarding team.

Supporting Learning & Equality & Diversity

Learner Services has a full range of services available for learners to get the most out of their time at Debut Academy. This includes financial advice and support, welfare and counselling services and learning support. The Academy welcomes applications from learners who have a disability, learning difficulty, mental health or medical condition and actively encourages early disclosure of support needs and requirements to ensure effective support can begin from the start of a learner's journey.

Counselling & Welfare

Pastoral Care at Debut Academy is of the utmost importance. Each learner is assigned a course or personal Assessor who is available for regular tutorials to ensure your learning journey is progressing well, as well as being there to address any worries they may have. Our Safeguarding Officer Helena Lungley or Learning Mentor Kersti Harding will be able to provide help and advice on any personal, social, emotional, or practical problems. Learners have access to confidential support and the Academy will link up with outside agencies or charities, as well as South Essex College if external support is required.

Please refer to Debut's linked policies below for additional information regarding Counselling Standards:

- Admissions & Application Policy
- Mentoring - Staff Policy
- Mentoring – Learner Policy
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Grading, Academic Standards and Feedback Policy
- Staff CPD/Personal Development Policy
- Standards Moderation Policy
- Access to Fair Assessment Policy
- Careers Advice & Guidance Policy
- Employer (Work Based) Support & Expectation Policy
- Equal Opportunities & Inclusion Policy
- Functional Skills Policy
- Initial Assessment Policy
- Induction Procedure – Staff Policy
- Induction Procedure – Learner Policy
- PSED Support Policy
- Review & Appraisal – Learner Policy
- Testing & Invigilation Policy
- Communications Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Learner Contribution & Learner Voice Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Confidential & Disclosure Policy

Policy Revision

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