



TCF 02

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for Students

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Reviewed by	Mimie Hollist/Sonja Hutchinson
Support/Co-review	Training Management Committee
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Policy: The Counselling Foundation is committed to the safeguarding of its staff, students and counselling clients including vulnerable adults. This policy outlines the procedure to be followed by students and staff when a student's health is at risk and deemed to be sufficiently unsafe for the student to need to be removed from the course and/or placement pending an investigation.

Purpose: To protect staff, students and counselling patients and to support students and staff by providing a clear strategy of action where safeguarding is at risk of being compromised.

Scope: All students of The Counselling Foundation while in training or on placement.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been designed to support staff in dealing with a student whose health is considered to be sufficiently unsafe as to warrant investigation and escalation to the Clinical Committee as set out below.

While the following list is not exhaustive, it serves to provide examples (in line with the terms and conditions of training) of the circumstances in which this policy can be applied i.e. where The Counselling Foundation feels that:

- The student's mental or physical health is at risk if he/she continues with the course and the course material.

- The presence of a student constitutes a serious risk to their clients (if on placement), staff, fellow students, her/himself or The Counselling Foundation property (e.g. suffering from unresolved, or uncontained, mental health issues.)
- The student failed to disclose or supply written evidence of a pre-existing medical or mental health condition which later comes to light.

2. PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

In cases where there is a risk or an issue that warrants immediate action, the Programme Tutor or Tutor may ask a student to leave the course, as authorized by the Head of Counselling and Training and one other member of the Executive Committee. In cases such as gross misconduct the student may be asked to leave the class immediately.

3. MEETING

The student will be contacted in writing by the training team and offered a meeting, with a minimum of 5 days' notice, and attended by:

- Two representatives of the Foundation, including the Programme Tutor.
- The student, who may invite another party such as their Student Representative
- Independent person to record the proceedings.

All parties should make themselves available and the environment should be undisturbed.

The representatives review the matter with the student and the student is interviewed for a period of time (20-50 minutes).

Where possible, the investigators agree a way forward with the student, be it a conditional re-joining of the course e.g. return with a care plan in collaboration with healthcare professionals, deferral, suspension or withdrawal from the course.

Following the meeting, the minutes of the meeting and any recommendations made by the training team will be forwarded to the attendees and the clinical committee for consideration. If the trainee disagrees with the minutes, a statement can be submitted by the trainee to the clinical committee in addition to the minutes.

4. THE CLINICAL COMMITTEE

The Clinical Committee membership includes the senior clinicians within The Counselling Foundation, including the Head of Counselling and Training, Senior Supervisor and Senior Clinical Manager.

The Clinical Committee will consider the case in question and have jurisdiction in all clinical matters arising with one exception. In the case where a suspension or withdrawal from the course is indicated the Clinical Committee will minute a recommendation for consideration by the Executive Committee who will make the final decision.

5. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee membership includes the senior managers within The Counselling Foundation, including the CEO and Heads of Clinical, Training, Marketing and Operations.

The Executive Committee will review the case in question and have jurisdiction in all matters arising where a suspension or withdrawal from the course is recommended by the Clinical Committee. The Executive Committee will seek to review such a recommendation and provide a decision in writing.

6. COMMUNICATION OF THE OUTCOME

A letter outlining and confirming the findings and decision from the Clinical Committee will be sent by the Head of Counselling and Training, or nominated deputy, to the student where possible within fourteen (14) working days of the decision being made at the Clinical Committee meeting. Students may appeal against the decision of the Clinical Committee in writing to the CEO. CEO will respond to this appeal within one month.

7. MAKING A COMPLAINT

If a student wishes to make a complaint, their privacy and confidentiality will be respected. That said, where a complaint is raised against an individual, it may not be possible to avoid the identity of the complainant being known to the subject of the complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated. Complaints will be taken seriously until or unless they are found to be malicious.

The Head of Counselling and Training has discretion to dismiss without further consideration complaints that are judged to be out of time, malicious, frivolous or vexatious. Perpetrators of such complaints may face disciplinary action.

Decisions made by The Counselling Foundation will have regard to any applicable law and/or BACP ethical framework. You are entitled to be accompanied at all stages of the complaints procedure by a person of your choosing. If a legal representative is chosen, you must give The Counselling Foundation prior notice in order that it may consider similar support.