

Counselling Service Agreement for Students

Counselling Service, Student Wellbeing Service · Version: v3 · 10 September 2026 · Review September 2027

About this agreement

The information below sets out how the Counselling Service works, what you can expect from us, and what we ask of you. The assessing counsellor will go through the main points of this agreement at your assessment appointment. Then you'll be asked to confirm that you understand how the service works, including the arrangements for cancelling, rescheduling, and missing appointments, as well as the limits of confidentiality.

What we offer

We offer brief, focused counselling. It is designed to help you with something specific that's getting in the way of day-to-day living. Most students have between one and four sessions. Where more would help, we can offer up to six per academic year, following your assessment. The right number for you is agreed with your counsellor and reviewed as you go. Appointments last 50 minutes and usually take place weekly, though in some cases your counsellor may suggest meeting fortnightly. Appointments take place at the Student Wellbeing Service offices or online via Zoom.

What we do not offer

- Longer-term or open-ended psychotherapy
- Support whose primary aim is to address a longstanding mental health issue. If counselling within our service isn't the right fit, we will discuss this with you and, where possible, point you towards other forms of support.
- Diagnosis, medication, or assessments for conditions such as ADHD, autism, or specific learning differences
- An emergency or crisis service
- Counselling alongside ongoing counselling or psychotherapy you are receiving elsewhere
- Evidence for extensions or deferrals, other than confirmation of your appointment dates. For more information on Student Wellbeing Service documentation, please refer to [LSE Standards of Evidence](#).

What you can expect from us	What we ask of you
• to treat you with respect and without judgement • to be honest about what we can offer, and about the limits of brief therapy • to treat what you tell us as confidential, within the limits outlined below • To do our best to give advance notice if there's an unplanned counsellor absence. If we need to cancel, it never counts as one of your sessions • to keep brief, factual, and accurate notes, and to store them securely • to take your feedback and complaints seriously, and to act on them	• that you only cancel/reschedule an assessment or counselling appointment when absolutely necessary • that you attend the appointments you've agreed, and provide us with at least 48 hours' notice if you cannot • that you arrive on time and, if possible, give notice of late arrival to your appointment • that, for online appointments, you are somewhere private where you cannot be overheard • that you tell your counsellor if the work is not helping you • that you do not use recording devices to maintain a record of your appointments

Cancelling, rescheduling, and missing appointments

We offer a limited number of appointments and there are always other students waiting for support. An appointment you cannot use helps someone else in need, but only if we know in time to offer it to them.

Please give at least 48 hours' notice to cancel or reschedule an appointment. Our inbox is not monitored at weekends. For a Monday or Tuesday appointment, please email us by the Thursday or Friday before.

- To reschedule an assessment appointment, please do so through the self-booking portal.
- To reschedule a counselling appointment, email student.wellbeing@lse.ac.uk with the date and time of the appointment and the name of your counsellor, so that we can pass the message on to them.

Cancelling or rescheduling a counselling appointment with less than 48 hours' notice, or not attending it, counts as a late change. Late changes use up one of the sessions you've agreed with your counsellor. However, if something genuinely unavoidable happens (such as a severe illness or an emergency) please tell us. Your counsellor can ask the Counselling Service manager to consider your circumstances.

Your counsellor will continue waiting for 15 minutes if you are running late. After that, your appointment is recorded as missed. An appointment that starts late still finishes at its scheduled time, because there is usually another appointment straight afterwards.

If you miss an assessment or counselling appointment, or if we notice a pattern of repeated rescheduling, we will contact you to confirm whether counselling within our service is currently the right fit for you. If we don't hear back within five working days, or if you miss and/or reschedule more than two appointments in a row without good cause, we will discharge you. You would be welcome to access our service later in the academic year by booking and attending a Wellbeing Appointment. That is not a penalty and not a judgement about you – it's a consequence of the high demand for our service. Please be aware that if we are concerned about your wellbeing, the service will keep trying to reach you.

Confidentiality and your records

We will not without your agreement tell your department, your family, or anyone else outside the Student Wellbeing Service that you're seeing us. Within the Student Wellbeing Service, staff work as a team and may discuss your situation with one another to work out how best to support you.

There are two exceptions: where we reasonably believe there is a serious risk of harm to you or to someone else, or where the law requires disclosure. We would normally speak to you first, unless doing so would increase the risk or is not possible. We share only the minimum details necessary with those who need to know.

Your counsellor keeps brief notes on a secure system separate from your student records, which nobody outside the Student Wellbeing Service can access. Notes are kept for seven years after you leave LSE and then securely destroyed, in keeping with the [Student Wellbeing Service Confidentiality Policy](#).

Online appointments

We will email you a Zoom link once your appointment is arranged. Please join from somewhere private and quiet where you cannot be overheard. If you are in a public place, your counsellor will not be able to go ahead. This is because of our commitment to protecting your confidentiality. Legal and insurance restrictions on practising across borders mean your counsellor cannot go ahead if you're in the United States or Canada, or if we cannot establish where you are.

If you need help urgently

We are not an emergency service. Our counsellors cannot be contacted directly between appointments, and our service inbox is not monitored outside of office hours. The LSE website outlines how to access [24/7 support outside of working hours](#). If someone's life is in danger, call 999.

Feedback and complaints

If something about your counselling doesn't meet your needs, we encourage you to raise your concern with your counsellor directly. If doing so does not feel comfortable, please email the Counselling Service manager in confidence at student.wellbeing@lse.ac.uk.

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of the situation, the [Student Wellbeing Service complaints procedure](#) sets out the stages that follow and how to take a complaint beyond the Service. Raising a concern will not affect the support you receive from our service.