

# Student Counselling Service

## Annual Report 2010-2011



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## The Report

This annual report was produced in January 2012 and covers the academic session from August 2010 to July 2011. In order to give an up-to-date picture, we also report on key issues beyond August 2011.

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This report can be provided in alternative formats on request.

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## Acronyms

AUCC: - Association for University and College Counselling  
BACP - British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy  
CBT - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy  
CORE - Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation  
CSE - College of Science and Engineering  
DoS - Director of Studies  
EBVC - Easter Bush Veterinary Centre  
ECA - Edinburgh College of Art  
EMDR - Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprogramming  
GISC - Gestalt International Study Centre  
HSS - College of Humanities and Social Science  
HUCCS - Heads of University Counselling Services  
HUCSS - Heads of University Counselling Services Scotland  
IAD - Institute for Academic Development  
KPI - Key Performance Indicator  
MVM - College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine  
NEECS - North East Edinburgh Counselling Service  
NLP - Neuro Linguistic Programming  
PF - Pastoral Foundation  
PTSD - Post-traumatic Stress Disorder  
PGT - Postgraduate Taught programmes  
QAC - Quality Assurance Committee  
SASG - Student and Academic Services Group  
SCS - Student Counselling Service  
SDS - Student Disability Service (formerly Disability Office)  
VTO - Veterinary Training Organisation



The Service reception area in the Main Library

## **Executive Summary**

### **Rising Demand**

- The Service saw an overall increase in referrals of 3.5%, with substantially larger increases experienced during both teaching blocks.
- Over the year 958 students had one or more appointments with a counsellor.
- 104 students participated in our group and workshop programme.

### **Move to the Library**

- Successful move to the Main Library June 2011.
- Improved awareness of the service and accessibility.
- 40% rise in demand in the first semester 2011-12 alone.

### **Waiting Times**

- Increasing demand, and the pattern of referrals, resulted in increased waiting times for students not at risk.

### **Merger with ECA**

- Successful merger of the Student Counselling Service with the counselling service at Edinburgh College of Art.
- The new provision is not proving to be a barrier for ECA students finding support and they are benefiting from the extended provision and resources.

### **BACP Service Accreditation**

- The service was reaccredited by the BACP in March 2011.

### **Easter Bush Veterinary Centre**

- The pilot provision of counselling at Easter Bush Veterinary Centre was completed and reviewed in 2010-2011, and is now being funded on a permanent basis in new school premises at EBVC .

### **Challenges on Resources**

- There was a reduction of resource in 2010-11, and a cut in the Service budget for 2011-12.
- A new Mental Health Advisors post would fill a gap in provision for the University.
- Without additional resources for the service, which is already lean, the Service will be limited in the way it can meet the demands placed on it by the University community

**“It is a very important service to have and has made a vital difference in my experience of University.”**

Student feedback

# 1 Quality of student support opportunities

## 1.1 Key features of service provision

The Student Counselling Service supports the key University strategic themes of enhancing our student experience, promoting equality and diversity, building strategic partnerships and collaborations, and assisting students to realise their full potential.

The Service is committed to the Student and Academic Services Group aims of

- Providing a high-quality service to the University community
- Further developing and sustaining a responsive service culture
- Pursuing continuous improvement of the Service.

Our goal is to deliver an efficient and timely service that is customer-focused and of world-class quality.

The primary purpose of the Student Counselling Service is to provide a free confidential professional counselling service to all matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh.

The counselling offered by the Service is short-term of up to six sessions, subject to clinical need, and is offered by a team of experienced professionally-qualified counsellors. Many other university counselling services in the UK are adopting similar models of delivery. The counselling offered by the Service includes email counselling, hypnotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, and from September 2011 we have been piloting the provision of EMDR. A wide range of self-help resources are available through our website, our own publications, through resources from other providers (e.g. NHS) and through the Bibliotherapy project.

The secondary objective of the Student Counselling Service is to enhance and encourage the emotional well-being and mental health of University of Edinburgh students and those who support them. The Service seeks to reach this objective by

- Facilitating personal development and psychoeducational groups and workshops for students
- Encouraging students to support themselves through the Bibliotherapy Scheme
- Offering advice and support to academic staff concerned for the mental and emotional well-being of their students
- Contributing to training and development programmes organised for staff and students by other departments of the University
- Collaborating and liaising with colleagues in other University services, the Edinburgh University Students Association, and the University Health Centre
- Collaborating with the Student Disability Service in supporting the Mental Health Mentor Scheme
- Participating in the Welfare Consultative Group, the Disability Committee and the Mental Health Sub-Group.
- Offering high-quality training places to trainee counsellors.

The main strands of the Service model of counselling provision are

- To assess suitability for counselling at referral
- To offer an initial appointment allowing for assessment and exploration of what the next steps might be
- To provide short term counselling of up to six sessions (subject to clinical need) where short-term counselling is an appropriate intervention and is desired
- To refer on to other agencies, external to the University, for students whose issues require longer-term counselling or psychotherapy, and to refer to services both internal and external to the University where interventions or supports other than or in addition to short-term counselling are appropriate.
- To offer alternatives to one-to-one counselling such as bibliotherapy, psychoeducational groups and workshops, and mental health mentoring.

Our model of service delivery deals effectively with crisis intervention, minimises risk, and enhances the student experience. Students identified as being at risk are given priority for appointments. The Service is committed to early intervention where possible and uses a triage approach both prior to and after the initial appointment students have with a counsellor.

**“Counselling hugely impacted on myself and my thoughts. My scepticism about the benefits of counselling has been eliminated. It’s all about finding someone you feel comfortable speaking to.”**

Student feedback

### **1.1a Group and Workshop programme**

2010-2011 was a successful year for the workshop and group programme, with 104 students attending, an increase of 15.5% on the previous year and representing 11% of the total number of students using our service. Our administration team work hard to ensure the smooth running of the programme. The groups and workshops are advertised on our website, through printed flyers and on MyEd, and students can sign up for these through the student portal. A large number of international students participated in the programme.

The programme is an example of current best practice – part of a tiered approach of support choices to meet the needs of the individual student. Having a number of more informal means of receiving support makes the Service more accessible to the wider student body by allowing students to formalise their support to the extent that it suits them. The programme promotes mental health and wellbeing and can help prevent the need for other support in the future. Student peer support groups can develop as a result of the programme.

**Table 1: Groups and Workshops 2010 – 2011**

Workshop	Date	No. booked	No. attended
Confidence Building	27 Oct 2010	19	10
Living with Dyslexia	03 Nov 2010	18	25
Procrastination	10 Nov 2010	21	16
Out of your head	16 Nov 2010	8	4
Procrastination	23 Feb 2011	20	18
Confidence Building	25 Feb 2011	13	12
Out of your head	09 Mar 2011	12	11
Living Life to the Full (7 week programme)	02 Feb – 16 Mar 2011	15	11
TOTAL		126	104 (83%)

**Procrastination** has been run as a half-day workshop with the Institute for Academic Development (IAD). A total of 34 students attended, and feedback remains very positive. However the IAD study advisors who worked on this programme are developing other areas of work and this workshop was not offered in the first semester of 2011-12.

#### **Confidence Building**

This short workshop was run as part of OLL's (Office of Lifelong Learning) 'Moving On' course before Semester 1, and repeated in October and February. A total of 22 students attended the semester-time workshops and again feedback remains positive.

#### **Out of Your Head** – relaxation workshop

This short workshop was run in the first semester with four students participating. Due to pressure on resources and the relatively poor uptake we did not plan to repeat the workshop in the second semester. However a session was requested by students at EBVC and the workshop was successfully delivered there to 11 students.

#### **Living with Dyslexia**

This workshop is run jointly with the Student Disability Service, with input also from the Careers Service. The workshop is aimed at students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia during the course of the year to offer information, advice, support and a perspective on the psychological impact of receiving such a diagnosis.

We had planned to run the '**Dr Who?**' group for PhD students jointly with Transkills. However due to staff illness the group was cancelled.

**Living Life to the Full** is our group for students with mild to moderate depression: 11 students participated. This year one counsellor ran the group. Held over seven weeks, the sessions were well attended, and the feedback remains positive. An online version of Living Life to the Full is run by Action on Depression and is available with links from our website.

## Semester 1 2011-12

After our last annual report QAC recommended the service consider the future balance between the delivery of the core service and the provision of specialist services in the context of rising demand and reduced resource. After a cost/benefit review of the groups and workshops a limited programme was offered in the 1st semester that minimised resource commitments and maximised collaborative working. Despite the workshops being oversubscribed attendance was poor. In view of the demand for counselling we are not offering the programme in the second semester.

**Table 2: Groups and Workshops Semester 1 2011-12**

Group/Workshop	Date	No. booked	No. attended
Confidence Building	28 Oct 2011	23	7
Confidence Building	18 Nov 2011	19	12
Living with Dyslexia	16 Nov 2011	39	11
Out of your head	26 Oct 2011	10	6
Out of your head	23 Nov 2011	17	8
Dr Who	25 Oct – 22 Nov 2011	20	6
TOTAL		128	50 (39%)

## 1.2 Key Features of Student Users - Indicators and Trends

The figures in Appendix A show statistical indicators and trends. The trend of increasing demand on the service continues (**Figure 1**, page 26). In 2010-11 there was an increase of 3.5% in the number of students approaching the Service for counselling. There has been an increase of 5.8% over the last three years. Including students attending groups and workshops, 2010-11 was the busiest academic year for the Service to date. **Figure 2** shows the rise in student numbers and average number of sessions.

### Profile of Student Users

#### Gender balance

**Figure 3** (page 26) shows that there is virtually no change in the ratio of male/female students over the past five years. Men are still under-represented. We know from our CORE evaluations that male students are more likely to present with significant psychological distress. Yet these statistics are consistent with other student counselling services in Higher Education and in counselling services in general. The new website has specific pages for men aimed at explaining counselling and overcoming men's reluctance to self-refer to talking therapies. Another strategy would be a targeted poster publicity campaign, but there is a dilemma over raising expectation and creating more demand than we are able to meet. Also evidence suggests that male students are more likely to use groups and workshops as a way of seeking help and support.



## **Undergraduate Students**

73% of the students attending the service were undergraduates.

**Figure 4** Undergraduate Students by year per College (six-year comparison)

**Figure 5** Undergraduate numbers (2010-2011) 3 year trend by College

The statistics show that undergraduates present fairly evenly across the years. Presentation is generally in proportion to the total number of undergraduates in each College. The marginal increase in students from the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine may reflect the increased provision and profile the Service has at the Vet School.

## **Postgraduate Students**

27% of our student users were postgraduates

**Figure 6.** Postgraduate numbers (2010-2011)

Postgraduate students present fairly consistently across HSS and MVM, with a rising number of students presenting from Science and Engineering. Also note:

- A drop this year in referrals from PhDs by research
- A small increase in Masters by research
- An increase in students presenting from HSS postgraduate diploma and certificate courses

**“Focussing on myself, my desires and expectations as well as my difficulties has made it easier to engage with my research.”**

Student feedback

## **International students**

**Figure 7** demonstrates a marked rise in the number of international students using the Service over the past year, up 33%. International students are now 24% of our client population. Our information leaflet for International students is being updated and reprinted.

**“I have found the service very beneficial. The staff were always very welcoming and friendly and my counsellor made me feel comfortable and thus able to talk about very personal things. I would really like to thank you because my experience using the Service has been positive and has really helped me work through my problems.”**

International student

## **Students with Disabilities**

**Figure 8** Students presenting with disclosed disabilities

Currently 8% of University of Edinburgh students disclose a disability. 20% of our clients disclosed disabilities, a rise of 25% on the previous year.

**Figure 9** lists the disabilities disclosed by Student Counselling Service users

The largest single group of students with disclosed disabilities (47%) were those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, 9% of the total number of Service users. We have seen a rise in students with diagnosed mental health difficulties, up 50% on the year before and representing about 4% of our total. It is likely that more students

have mental health difficulties but choose not to disclose this to the University. Students in this population often present with more complex needs.

## Referrals

### Figure 10 Sources of Referrals

The number of referrals from Directors of Study over the past two years may reflect the increased training and consultation work we do with members of academic staff. The number of GP referrals is returning to earlier norms, but may also reflect the increased number of students disclosing mental health problems. The new website is proving increasingly to be a source of information for self-referrals (now 32%): see Appendix D Website report.

## Presenting Issues

There is no significant change over five year period as evidenced in **Figure 11** (page 29). The most common presenting issues are anxiety (including e.g. stress, panic attacks and PTSD), depression, relationships, self and identity (includes e.g. self confidence, self esteem, perfectionism, and issues around sexuality).

## Current and likely future demand

The remaining statistics show our response times to students in the past year. These inform two of our KPIs (waiting times from referral to initial appointment, and from initial appointment to first counselling appointment), the results are discussed below.

### Number of students being added to the waiting list for counselling

**Figure 12** - page 29. This graph shows the number of students being added to our waiting list for counselling each week during Semesters 1 and 2. A consistent identifiable pattern of referral is emerging, and has continued into the first semester of 2011-12. As in 2009-10 we started Semester 1 with a waiting list for appointments, as the Service has become very busy during the summer vacation especially from PGT programmes. Over the summer vacation we have a maximum of 3.2 fte counsellors, who can also have commitments to training, service development and annual leave during that period.

Although the overall increase in demand over the year was 3.5% there was a significant increase in demand during Semester 1 compared to last year, so that by October we were experiencing up to 18% increase over the same period in 2009-10. As in other years demand tails towards the end of the semester. Semester 2.1 started with another significant increase in demand, up to 12%. This graph does not show the extent of the waiting list, only numbers being added to it week by week.

## Semester waiting times

**Waiting times – referral to initial appointment. (Figure 13 - page 29)**

Our KPI target is to see students for an initial appointment within one week of registering with the Service. During Semester 1 our response rate was not as good as last year but the same as in 2007. However we still saw 91% of students who refer to the Service for an initial appointment within two weeks of contact.

#### **Waiting times - initial appointment to counselling (Figure 14 – page 30)**

Our KPI target is to see students for counselling appointments within three weeks of their initial appointment. During Semester 1 our response rates were poorer than in 2009. Students at risk are prioritised and are seen within our target times, unless there is an exceptional difficulty with the student's availability.

### **Annual waiting times**

**Figure 15** – page 30. Length of waiting time from referral to initial appointment  
**Figure 16** – page 31. Length of waiting time from initial appointment to counselling  
When the annual figures are looked at over a six-year period it is clear that there is a gradual decline in our rate of response for initial appointments and ongoing counselling, and a difficulty in being able to improve consistently our response rate for counselling appointments.

These statistics should be seen in the context of a 12.8% increase in demand over the six-year period, yet only a 3% increase in our core counselling staff resources to meet that demand. The slower response rates do not occur throughout the year but during times of peak demand when the referral rate dramatically increases. Five of our counselling team have contracts weighted towards working semester time, to increase our capacity to meet the peaks in demand, and our sessional counsellors work semester time only.

After the spring vacation we decided to offer a 'fast track' approach to final year undergraduate students who were not already prioritised: limited to three sessions but allowing counselling support during final examination period. This worked well and will be repeated in Semester 2 of this academic year.

### **Semester 1 2011-12**

Since the Service's main office was relocated in the Main Library the number of students using the Service has risen in the first semester of 2011-12 by an average to date of 40%, an unprecedented increase in demand. By the middle of October the increase was 48% though we were managing to see the vast majority of students within our KPI targets despite a waiting list of 115. However by the middle of November the average waiting time had increased to four weeks, and to six weeks by December. Semester 1 ended with us having 175 students on our waiting lists for appointments. The implications of this are discussed further in section 4 below.

## 1.2a Key partnerships and their features

**Table 3: Key partners**

Careers Service	Students are referred both to and from the Careers Service, and Careers staff provide reception for counsellors working at The King's Buildings.
Student Disability Service	Students are referred both from and to the SDS, in particular to the Mental Health Mentors. SCS has provided non-managerial supervision for Advisors and MH mentors. SCS collaborates with SDS in running mental health awareness workshops for academic and other student support staff, and 'Living with Dyslexia' for students. Both services collaborate in the publication 'Helping Distressed Students'. SCS staff contribute to the work of the Disability Committee. Frontline administrators from both services now staff our joint reception area.
Chaplaincy	Students are referred both to and from the Chaplaincy.
EUSA	Students are referred both to and from the Advice Place, and EUSA provides informal feedback on behalf of students, both users and non-users. SCS is asked to provide resources and workshops for EUSA's wellbeing weeks.
University Health Centre	Students are referred both to and from the University Health Centre, and we liaise with the GPs and Community Mental Health team for advice and information.
Institute for Academic Development	Students are referred both to and from the Study Development Advisers, and the workshop on Procrastination has been run jointly with IAD. SCS contributes to the Postgraduate Certificate In University Teaching. Transkills staff share in the 'Dr Who' group.
Accommodation Services	Students are referred to and from the Residence Life Team, and both services liaise in supporting students at risk living in University accommodation.
Academic Staff	SCS offers consultation and advice to academic staff concerned for their students and liaises with staff for evidence for special circumstances and appeals. SCS provide student mental health training for staff.

Royal (Dick) Veterinary School	SCS provides counselling at EBVC and liaison with DoSs, VTO and Staff Student liaison Officer. SCS staff provide induction input for new students and for DoSs.
Office of Lifelong Learning	SCS provides a workshop and participates in the induction session of the 'Moving On' programme (Widening Access).
Centre for Sport and Exercise	SCS refers students for consultation and support with exercise programmes, particularly for students with mild to moderate depression
Ten for Ten	Ten for Ten is a project whereby counsellors and psychotherapists in private practice in Edinburgh offer up to ten low cost counselling sessions specifically for students whom we have assessed.
Local counselling agencies e.g. PF, Wellspring, NEECS, Saheliya, Gay Men's Health, Couple Counselling Lothian	SCS maintains contact with free or low cost counselling agencies for referral information for students

### 1.3 Evaluation of the Service

The primary sources of evaluation of the work of the Service are the Evaluation Survey and CORE (Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation). We also have feedback available from the International Student Barometer. Since the move to the Main Library we have initiated a comments box in our waiting area. During the course of the first semester 2011 we have been taking part in BACP funded research with other student counselling services in the UK and Ireland through the AUCC into the effectiveness of student counselling. Preliminary results, from a relatively small sample can be found in Appendix B (page 32). The format has been incorporated into our evaluation survey and a full year's results will be available next year, together with a comparison of the AUCC study.

The Evaluation Survey invites feedback from service users on their experience of the Service and a summary of the findings are included in Appendix B. The Survey is anonymous and submitted from all four sites where counselling is conducted. The Service provides the reception and waiting areas at two of the four sites. It has been a strategic aim of the Service to increase the number of responses each year, and this year we increased the response rate by a further 18.6% to 255 i.e. 27% of students who received counselling.

Key points from the 2010-11 survey are the drop in the number of students finding the waiting times to be too long, either from referral to initial appointment, or from initial appointment to first counselling session. 89% and 76% were satisfied with the respective waiting times even though more students have waited longer than the previous year.

The key points from the evaluation Survey of Semester 1 from 2011-12 are:

- No significant change in satisfaction with discreetness. We recognise that sharing a reception with SDS does make the Service less discreet, however this is a significant response in the light of students' concerns prior to the move to the Main Library.
- There is a significant increase in satisfaction with our publicity (averaging 84%) . Certainly moving to the Main Library has raised our profile but the same response is being received from students being seen at our other locations. We have taken steps to improve our publicity through new printed material, through the website, and having our email address on new matriculation and staff cards.
- There has been no significant change in satisfaction with waiting times.
- Of the new questions included for the AUCC research 64% responded that counselling helped them stay at University, 74% that counselling helped with their academic work, 94% that counselling improved their experience of University, and 86% that counselling helped develop employability skills.

We are not complacent and constantly seek to reduce the times students wait, though a number of students do wait longer because they offer very limited times when they are available for appointments, or wish to see a specific counsellor, or do not accept the first appointments offered to them.

## **International Student Barometer**

The feedback for 2010-11 showed that we perform relatively poorer than the other University of Edinburgh student services, being ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 65 UK universities, and 9<sup>th</sup> in the Russell Group. Our poorer performance was attributable to two strands of feedback: too few sessions (in our short-term counselling model) and waiting times too long. A different model of service delivery might be able to respond positively to one of these, but without additional resources it is unlikely that we can address both.

## **CORE**

The Service uses the CORE system as the tool to measure the level of psychological distress with which students present to the Service and the clinical improvement in students as a result of therapy. Last year we secured SASG funding for the use of CORE over four years. CORE is widely used in NHS Primary Care services and increasingly in other university counselling services. CORE provides robust data and allows for accurate benchmarking with counselling in Higher Education and in Primary Care. The funding has allowed us to produce reliable CORE statistics for 2010-11:

- 75% of students presented in the clinical range i.e. are those experiencing a significant level of psychological distress. Male students coming for counselling are more likely to have significant psychological distress.
- 78% of clients showed improvement following their counselling sessions. Our KPI for this figure is 75%.

## **EUSA**

The most common feedback from EUSA has been that waiting times were too long and that six sessions were too few, although the latter tends to be from students who have not used the Service. EUSA does realise that waiting times for psychological services in NHS Lothian, and for counselling through local voluntary agencies, are often much longer than those experienced by students during the times of peak demand on the Service.

The Service took part in the NUS Scotland Survey 'Silently Stressed' (2010). The follow up report 'Breaking the Silence' (2011) recommends examples of best practice already implemented by the Service:

- Providing a "tiered approach" of support choices to meet the needs of the individual (workshops, bibliotherapy, website self-help, counselling)
- Maintaining close partnerships with external agencies in the wider community
- Tracking counselling service outcomes
- Collocation of student services
- Referrals to programmes of exercise

**"I was going through a difficult time during my finals and using the counselling service really helped me, which had a very positive effect on my studying and exam performance"**

**Student feedback**

## **1.4 Promoting Accessibility**

Equality and Diversity are fundamental to our professional Ethical Framework and Guidelines for Good Practice, and key criteria for our Service accreditation.

The Service has an Accessibility Strategy which meets our BACP Service Accreditation criteria. Our strategy aims at promoting and improving accessibility for students. When students register with our Service they are invited to let us know of any adapted facilities or assistance that they may require, such as mobility, access, hearing, vision or easy-read formatting.

The Student Counselling Service is unique among the student-facing student services in now being permanently located over four sites: Main Library, Holyrood Campus, The King's Buildings and EBVC. All our sites have wheelchair accessibility, accessible toilets, loop systems available at the reception areas and staff trained in their use. Portable loop devices can be made available to counsellors as required.

Our website is designed in line with the University's website and accessibility help and advice information. Service staff are given training in equality and disability awareness and our administration team has been given training in student mental health.

Material printed by the Service is in accordance with good practice guidelines and can be made available in alternative formats as required. As described above the Service has developed a workshop with the Student Disability Service (Living with Dyslexia) aimed at students who have been given this diagnosis.

For students off campus the Service continues to offer email counselling, and we have attempted to raise the profile of this provision on our website. This year we had eight students who used this therapeutic approach, which perhaps reflects the student need identified in our analysis of pre-initial appointment questionnaires last year (reported in the Annual Report for 2009-10) for individual face-to-face contact. Our website has an extensive section of links to other sources of self-help for students.

## 1.5 Staff Development

The Service has a Training and Development policy which meets our BACP Service Accreditation criteria. In November 2010 the Service held a further training day for counsellors on Attachment Styles, and November 2011 in partnership with NHS Lothian we provided training in working with students with Borderline Personality Disorder/Self-harm. Both training days were well attended by counsellors and trainees from the Service and counsellors working in other Higher and Further Education institutions in Scotland. We have also arranged and contributed to joint training events for frontline administration staff with SDS.

Counsellors are encouraged to attend the AUCC Annual Conference, which provides a forum for student counsellors from throughout the UK and Ireland to meet and share best practice. In addition counselling staff are encouraged and supported to pursue their individual continuing professional development in line with the requirements for individual accreditation as counsellors and psychotherapists. Over the past year counselling staff took part in training programmes for EMDR, NLP, email counselling and Mindfulness. The Director and Office Manager attended a day conference on 'Making the most of CORE' and the Director also attended a GISC programme on Transitions.

The support offered to our trainee counsellors is an example of best practice as recommended by BACP.

The role of Duty Senior Counsellor has been created. The Senior Counsellors share in a rota of being first point of contact for consultation and advice for academic staff concerned about students, but also respond to contacts from parents and students. We participate in the Postgraduate Certificate for academic staff run by IAD and also provide training on student mental health for academic staff as required.

**"Thank you so much for developing the mental health session for us last week. We've had a lot of positive feedback from those who attended, and we especially appreciate it knowing how busy you are . "** Lecturer and Academic Coordinator

We also participated in a series of presentations for Library Helpdesk staff and the Staff services day in Semester 1 2011.



## 2. Quality and Standards

### 2.1 The management of quality and standards

The Service is an organisational member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. This is the leading professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in the United Kingdom, with more than 32,000 members. The BACP participates in the development of counselling and psychotherapy at an international level.

Since 2006 the Service has had Accredited Service status awarded by the BACP and our application for reaccreditation in March 2011 was successful. In making the award Helen Coles, Head of Professional Standards, BACP commented: **“The Assessor wishes to commend your application for its thoroughness, clear presentation and clear evidence, highlighting a highly organised, efficient and professional service. This is no doubt a valuable resource to the University community and one of which it should be proud. Please accept my congratulations on continuing to meet the high standards of the BACP service accreditation scheme.”**

The BACP Service Accreditation Scheme provides status and validation for the accredited service, and also provides robust evidence of service quality and professionalism. In addition, Accredited Services are bound by the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy. All BACP Accredited Services have demonstrated a high quality of service delivery, meeting benchmark standards that are maintained by annual monitoring and reporting.

The Service Accreditation Scheme criteria cover areas of

- Policy (aims and objectives, publicity, staffing, equal opportunities)
- Management and Administration (service structure, community liaison, health and safety, administration and management)
- Delivery of service (accommodation, professional conduct)

The Student Counselling Service continues to be one of four such accredited services in Scotland. It is currently the only student counselling service of any Scottish University and one of four Russell Group university counselling services to have BACP Service Accreditation.

The Service also commits itself to following the AUCC Good Practice Guidelines. These guidelines outline the role of counselling services in Further and Higher Education, the activities undertaken by counsellors in such institutions and the working structures required to maintain good practice.

Our Key Performance Indicators derived within SASG are three-fold:

1. Waiting time of up to one week from referral to initial appointment
2. Waiting time of up to three weeks from initial appointment to first counselling appointment

3. A minimum of 75% of clients showing recovery or improvement on basis of CORE scores

We have a Service Level Agreement with the Vet School to provide three counselling sessions per week during semester time on a Wednesday afternoon at EBVC. Vet students tend not to have classes at this time and can access counselling more readily than at the city sites. The Vet School funds this provision and has also set aside a resource/counselling room and a waiting/interview room as part of student support provision. The pilot project ended in May and the Service provided a report to the School. There has been a very high level of uptake of the sessions, though we also see Vet students at our other locations. The School have been keen to continue the provision, and we have developed contacts with the Veterinary Training Organisation (VTO) and the School's Staff Student Liaison Officer.

## 2.2 External reference points - Benchmarking

In addition to our Evaluation Survey and KPIs we also benchmark counselling provision against other services. The AUCC benchmarking is currently under review. We also benchmark through CORE and through HUCCS and HUCCS Scotland.

### **CORE benchmark: waiting times referral to initial assessment**

The CORE median waiting time between referral and first assessment is eight days, indicating that at a service level 50% of clients referred to HE therapy and accepted for therapy are assessed in just over a week. Furthermore, 75% of clients were seen in less than two weeks. From our statistics (Appendix A) 56% of student are seen within seven days, and 85% seen within two weeks.

### **CORE benchmark: recovery and improvement**

The average proportion of HE clients 'recovered' or 'improved' is 75% (i.e. three quarters of clients with post-therapy data were recovered or significantly improved at the end of treatment) compared with 71% in Primary Care. Our KPI is 75% recovery or improvement. Our CORE data for 2010-11 shows that we had a recovery or improvement rate of 78%.

Benchmarking exercises with HUCCS and HUCCS Scotland compare service resources, the level of demand and delivery of counselling.

**Table 4: HUCCS Benchmarking – key comparison with Russell Group**

HUCCS Benchmarking – Russell Group	Russell Group Average 2010-11	University of Edinburgh 2010-11
FTE Counsellors	5.8	5.83
Student body	22,541	28,974
Clients seen	996	958
Counsellor: Student ratio (FTE to student body)	1:3,886	1:4,969
% student population seen	4.5%	3.5%

The most recent benchmark with HUCS and HUCS Scotland shows that our service continues to be comparatively under resourced when compared with other Russell Group and Scottish universities.

**Table 5: HUCS Scotland Benchmarking – key comparisons with Scottish HEIs**

2010-11	Scottish HEI Average	University of Edinburgh
Counsellor: student ratio (FTE to student body)	1:4,642	1:4,969
% student population seen	3.5%	3.5%
Average no. of sessions per client	4.8	5.4

Of the ten Scottish HEIs participating in benchmarking for 2010-2011 the University of Edinburgh was the largest, with the largest student counselling service seeing the largest number of students, and offering the most extensive range of counselling and other interventions.

**“It was perfect. I found it difficult to come to counselling as I saw it as some sort of weakness. However I have found it not at all like that and it has been very beneficial. I would recommend it to anyone.”**

Student feedback

## **2.3 Approach to Monitoring and Quality Assurance**

As reported in section 2.1 our BACP Service Accreditation is supported by annual monitoring. The Service is required to confirm that it continues to meet the criteria for accreditation, provide supporting evidence and must report on the following: changes to the service, provision, policies, procedures, resources; confirm the Head of Service who holds clinical responsibility; report any BACP complaints or appeals, any equal opportunities or ethical issues or changes in publicity material; confirm professional indemnity insurance. Since accreditation in 2006 BACP monitoring has resulted in no further recommendations being made as we continue to meet the criteria for accreditation.

## **3. Enhancement and sharing good practice**

### **3.1 The management of enhancement and sharing of good practice**

The Service developed a five-year strategy (2006-2011) for enhancement based on the SASG strategic plan (Appendix D). Implementing the plan to date led to the development of our current model of delivery and other key achievements highlighted above. The last stage of the Strategy was completed with the move to the Main Library. We anticipate developing a further strategy for enhancement following the current review of Student Services being carried out by Dr Sue Rigby, Assistant Principal Taught Postgraduate Programmes, and the new University Strategy.

### **3.2 Overview of Good Practice for dissemination**

Service review days are held regularly in March, May and followed up in September to monitor our progress, to reflect on service delivery and to plan ahead for the next academic year. We review our KPI performance, benchmarks, CORE results and evaluation survey outcomes. It is the responsibility of the Director to consider and implement QAC recommendations. We hold core team meetings regularly, as well as clinical meetings, and administration team meetings. We have enhanced our internal communication since relocation to the Main Library via weekly email bulletins and a wiki (internal website).

All our counsellors have clinical supervision which is a professional requirement, plus regular peer group supervision during the semesters. Counsellors attend regular clinical meetings within the Service to discuss issues of clinical concern and to share best practice. The Director meets frequently with individual counsellors for caseload management discussions.

The Service continues to take a lead in arranging training days for student counsellors, not only for our own staff team, but for colleagues in both HE and FE in Scotland and Northern England. This allows for cost-effective sector-specific training input to enhance the Service, increase our knowledge base and share best practice with other colleagues. In addition we have taken a lead in organising frontline training for receptionists and administrative staff in HE counselling and other student services. Over the period covered by this report the Service met with visitors interested in our work from Peking University and the University of Kwa Zulu Natal, and the Director also delivered a presentation on the work of the service to the Academic Standing Committee of the General Council. Our webpage information for staff is now being adopted for use by Charles Sturt University in Australia.

The Service has over a number of years participated in the work of the AUCC, HUCS and HUCSS.

## **4. Issues and themes specific to the Service**

### **Move to the Main Library and resultant impact**

Having been planned since 2008 the move took place successfully in June 2011. A considerable amount of time was spent by the Director in meetings with the heads of service from Careers and SDS, architect, project manager, and Library staff to finalise the design layout and furnishings so that the premises could be fit for purpose and meet our accreditation criteria. Particular attention was paid to students' concerns over service confidentiality and discreetness within the Main Library. The final design included a graphic wall which masks the entrances to all three Services, with appropriate signage and flat screen information.

Time was spent by the Service management in planning, preparing and coordinating the move, and meetings with the office managers of all three services. The move

necessitated a review and change of working procedures for the new working environment with a shared general office, reception and waiting area. Our website, leaflets and publications were updated and reprinted. The Service was open throughout the move with counselling being delivered from our Holyrood campus premises.

In addition to the shared facilities described, we now have nine counselling rooms, one of which can also be used for small meetings, another small meeting room shared with Careers and SDS, and with these services we have priority booking for two seminar rooms on the third floor. There is a shared tea point and staff area. Like any new build there have been snagging issues but these are being addressed by the Project Manager, architect and builders.

The experience of other student counselling services located in hubs of student activity is that demand increases with a higher profile and ease of accessibility. This has been true of the move to the Main Library. So far the co-location has been successful. Our presence in the Main Library is overwhelmingly being seen as a positive move by students, as evidenced by the increase in demand and feedback in other areas (see Evaluation survey), but we need additional resources to meet the demand.

## **Merger with ECA**

The University of Edinburgh merged with Edinburgh College of Art on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011. Preparations for the merger of the two counselling services were initially not straightforward, due to prolonged merger discussions at an institutional level. Counselling at ECA was managed by the Head of Student Services, and was largely provided during semester time by two counsellors (0.6fte). Informal discussions were held between the respective heads of service and the counsellors at ECA from the point when the decision had been made to merge the institutions, but detailed planning was delayed until the institution-level discussion had been completed. We were able to talk about what a merged service might look like, but not where it would be delivered nor by whom.

The merger has resulted in unified service. A resource room for student services has been made available at the Hunter Building and counselling can be accessed by students of the ECA at any of our central campus sites and they now have access to the full range of services we provide. Information was sent to all ECA students advising them of the service available to them as students of the University and we developed a webpage specifically for ECA students. We welcomed two new colleagues, Ada Blair and Colin Carson to our counselling team. In the first semester we saw 44 students whom we have identified as students on programmes that would have been offered by the former ECA, representing 37% of the previous year's clients of the ECA service in three months. To date the feedback from students has been positive in what we are experiencing as a successful merger.

## Resource issues

During the year 2010-11 the Service had a core staff of ten counsellors including the Director (5.66fte) and four admin staff (2.64 fte) working over four sites, with two sessional counsellors (0.17 fte) and two trainee counsellors. After the appointment of the new Director in November 2010 the Deputy Director's post was not filled in view of the prospect of the service budget being cut as part of the 2011-12 planning round. This represented a cut of 0.35 fte counselling provision. However resources were able to be reallocated and a further five sessional counsellors (0.23fte) were recruited for a limited period during the second semester.

The Service started 2011-2012 with an overall budget cut of 6%, but with an additional £20,000 allocated towards our operational budget for sessional staff. By further cost cutting we were able to devote additional funds for this purpose which allowed us to have sessional counsellors start working as soon as waiting times began to go beyond our KPI targets. In view of the 40% increase in demand, SASG has provided additional resources allowing us to recruit another 5 sessional counsellors and a sessional administrator, and increase the existing hours of some part time counselling and administrative staff on a temporary basis. As noted above two colleagues from ECA joined our team from the start of the semester.

While sessional counsellors are a valuable resource there are disadvantages to a reliance on sessionals rather than permanent members of staff. We recruit sessional counsellors who are well qualified and experienced, but they tend to work from a half day to two days per week for us. All our sessional staff currently have other part-time employment in the voluntary or public sectors or in private practice. This commitment, plus the pressure on counselling room usage, does limit their availability to work for the Service. Their contracts are flexible, but three of the sessionals employed in 2010-11 were not available for work this year. Recruitment, induction and management of a larger team does take a considerable amount of time.

The level of frontline administration provision has had to be increased

- to support the additional counselling hours being offered by a larger team, so that appointments can be filled and associated administrative tasks be done as efficiently as possible
- to provide the additional frontline reception and administrative cover we require as a result of the move to our new premises. In order to maintain the level of confidentiality required, 30% of administrators' tasks are done at the reception area, 70% must be done in the general office. However because of the level of demand our frontline administrators are spending 70% of their time on reception duties.

Even with this extra provision we have not been able to open our office at the Holyrood campus on Tuesday mornings this year as we cannot provide adequate reception cover. However in the second semester we are able to double the provision of counselling at The King's Buildings where we use the Careers Service reception.

The additional resources made available to us this academic year have been very welcome, and will have the effect of preventing waiting times becoming even longer during the second semester, with the hope that these can be cut from the Spring vacation through to the end of May.

## **Database**

As reported last year, DACS (student administration system) was decommissioned as part of the EUCLID project. The student counselling database system was built directly on the DACS/NESI schema and as a result ceased to work beyond July 2010. A new database is now in place; however the BOXI Universe tool for data analysis is inadequate and currently not fit for purpose. We are in ongoing discussions with Information Services to resolve this.

**“Thank you, this has been a great help to me. This is a professional service and the counsellors are approachable and easy to talk to. If I ever felt I needed help in the future I would return.”**

Student feedback

## **5. Forward Look**

The ongoing challenge to the Service is how to respond to the rise in demand, not only in numbers but in the severity of mental health problems with which students present, and to respond promptly.

As reported last year there is little provision for counselling available through the NHS in Edinburgh. In South Central area where the main campus is located and the University Health Centre is based, provision for psychological therapies is limited to those patients with severe and enduring mental health problems. Provision of long-term psychotherapy within the NHS in Edinburgh is limited and has long waiting lists, as do the specialist services e.g. for eating disorders. Agencies in the voluntary sector are limited in their ability to offer counselling to students on restricted budgets, though some are able to offer lower-cost counselling at rates that some students can afford, but there are often longer waiting times for these services than for our own.

Counselling is by its very nature labour intensive and without any economies of scale. We practise within a clear Ethical Framework and Guidelines for Good Practice which limit the number of clients each counsellor can see in a working week. Demand continues to be for individual one-to-one counselling. We have embraced a clear short-term counselling model, but the number of sessions offered cannot be reduced ad infinitum or the therapeutic intervention for most students becomes unhelpful. There are other models of service delivery, but these are based on fewer counselling sessions and/or longer gaps between an initial therapeutic appointment and additional counselling appointments, and are supported by greater NHS provision.

We continue to look at efficiency savings but there are few avenues for us to generate income without diverting time and resources away from our core activity.

## **Royal College of Psychiatrists Report on the Mental Health of Students 2011**

The Report describes the development in recent years of the recognition in many universities of the needs of vulnerable students with disabling mental health disorders and the consequent expansion of numbers of staff, such as mental health advisors, with a specific remit to support them. Staff with this remit, together with counsellors, can play a central role in the coordination of care provision to students and can assist with the development of mental health policies. They can offer direct advice and support to troubled and vulnerable students with mental disorders, and establish links for mentally troubled students and NHS services. The Report recommends that all higher education institutions give careful consideration to enhancing the academic and personal support available to mentally troubled students.

The Disability Committee's Mental Health Sub Group, chaired by the Director of SCS, has already been exploring this gap in the University's provision, and mental health advisors as described above are becoming the norm in Russell Group universities. Support for this has been received from academic staff, SDS, Accommodation Services and EUSA. In the light of the Sub Group's exploration, the RCP report and the University's decision to invest in improving student support, we have submitted a proposal for the creation of such a post as part of this year's planning round.

## **Distance Education Initiative**

As part of our preparation for the potential impact on the Service of this initiative we have invested in training another member of our counselling team in email counselling. In any given population around 3-4% will use a counselling service. It would be reasonable to estimate that for students on distance education programmes, where an existing model of online counselling is available, that the same percentage of population would access email counselling. For every 5,000 distance learners we could anticipate up to 200 students seeking to use email counselling. Email counselling can be as effective a therapy as traditional counselling, but there are no time or resource savings to be made through email counselling.

## **Personal Tutors**

The impact of the proposed move from the Director of Studies system to that of Personal Tutor is as yet unclear. We anticipate in the short term having more input into personal tutor training, raising awareness of student mental health and the supports available, and in the long term responding to increased referrals to the Service as a result.



## Key Priorities

The key priorities for the coming year are

- to secure additional resources for a permanent increase in both counselling and frontline administration staff
- to improve response times
- to secure funding for the creation of a Mental Health Advisors post
- to review the Service after our first year in the Main Library and develop a new strategic plan
- to review the Service structure to improve strategic development and benefit operational management.

In view of the existing support from SASG, the review of Student Support services and the University's decision to invest in improving student support, we are optimistic that additional resource needs will be met.

This has been an exceptional year for the Service with many challenges. Thanks are due to all Service staff and trainees for their hard work, forbearance, team spirit and commitment, and also to Shelagh Green, Jim McGeorge and Kim Waldren for their ongoing support of the work of the Service.

Ronnie Millar  
Director, Student Counselling Service  
31 January 2012



Counselling room in the Main library

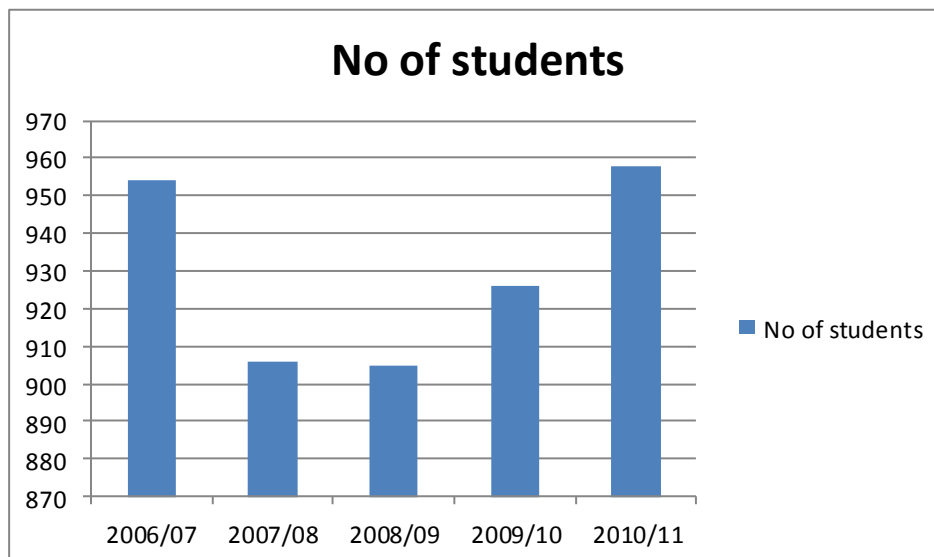
## Service Staff during 2010-2011

Ronnie Millar	Director (Acting Director from July 2010, appointed Director in November 2010)
Moira Tattersall	Senior Counsellor, Workshop Coordinator
Christine Walker	Senior Counsellor, Trainee Unit coordinator
Marc Richelieu	Senior Counsellor, CORE and Medical Liaison
Iola Wilson	Senior Counsellor, email counselling
Barbara Malinen	Counsellor, Training Coordinator
Yolanda Strachan	Counsellor
Iris Sloan	Counsellor
Ali McBride	Counsellor
Maggie Coombs	Cognitive Behavioural Therapist
Dagmar Alexander	Sessional Counsellor
Lesley Gray	Sessional Counsellor
Diana Sim	Sessional Counsellor (semester 2)
Dawn Wilson	Sessional Counsellor (semester 2)
Christie O'Conner	Sessional Counsellor (semester 2)
Kate Fletcher	Sessional Counsellor (semester 2)
Ciara Torbet	Sessional Counsellor (semester 2)
Fiona Switzer	Sessional CBT therapist (semester 2)
Meg Stroud	Office Manager
Angela Robertson	Frontline Administrator
Nicky Mackenzie	Frontline Administrator
Joanna McKenzie	Clerical Assistant
Maria Pournara	Trainee Counsellor (October 2010 till August 2011)
James Coyle	Trainee Counsellor (October 2010 till August 2010)

## Appendix A

### Key Features of Student Users - Indicators and Trends

**Figure 1.** Number of students attending the Student Counselling Service



**Figure 2** Student numbers and average number of sessions - six year comparison

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
No. of students attending Initial appointments	839	857	754	765	875	790
No. of students attending counselling	698	646	616	678	751	646
No. of counselling sessions	3079	2465	2349	2960	3342	2883
No. of students total	958	926	905	906	953	849
Average no. of sessions including initial appointments	5.4	5.11	4.8	5.36	5.45	5.46

**Figure 3.** Female/Male ratio - five year comparison

Gender	2010/11*	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8	2006/7
Female	72%	70%	71%	68%	72%
Male	28%	30%	29%	32%	28%

\*No students self-identified as transgender

**Figure 4.** Undergraduate numbers 2010-2011 by College

Undergraduates	HSS	MVM	S+E	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> year	13%	2%	5%	20%
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	19%	3%	9%	31%
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	14%	3%	6%	23%
4 <sup>th</sup> year	13%	3%	7%	23%
5 <sup>th</sup> year	1%	1%	1%	3%
Total	61%	12%	27%	100%

**Figure 5.** Undergraduate numbers three year trend by College (in percentages)

%	HSS			MVM			S+E			Total		
	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09
1 <sup>st</sup> year	13	20	6	2	2	1	5	7.5	1.5	20	29.5	8.5
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	19	19	14	3	2	2	9	7	5	31	28	21
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	14	12	17	3	1	3	6	8	8	23	21	28
4 <sup>th</sup> year	13	14	25	3	2	4	7	4	10	23	20	39
5 <sup>th</sup> year	1		0.5	1	0.5	1	1	1	2	3	1.5	3.5
Total	61	65	62.5	12	7.5	11	27	27.5	26.5	100	100	100

**Figure 6.** Postgraduate numbers 2010-2011 (in %percentages)

%	HSS			MVM			S+E			Total		
	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09
PhD (res)	17	23	20	3	5	5	12	14	15	32	42	40
PhD (xres)	1	2	1	1	0	0	1.5	0	0.5	3	2	1.5
MSc (res)	9	5	5	1	2	1	1	0.5	0	11	7.5	6
MSc (xres)	33	38	42	0	0	2	9	8	5.5	46	46	49.5
Dip-cert	8	2	3	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0	8	2.5	3
Total	67	70	71	8	7.5	8	25	22.5	21	100	100	100

**Figure 7.** International students attending for counselling- six year comparison

Year	% international students	% sessions	average no. sessions	
			Home	International
2005-06	15%	16%	4.3	5.2
2006-07	15%	14%	4.4	4.4
2007-08	18%	18%	4.4	4.4
2008-09	18%	16%	3.9	3.4
2009-10	18%	15%	4.6	4.1
<b>2010-11</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>

**Figure 8.** Students presenting with disclosed disabilities

Year	08-09	09-10	10-11
No. of students using counselling service with no disclosed disabilities	773	770	<b>765</b>
No. of students using counselling service with disclosed disabilities	135	143	<b>193</b>

**Figure 9.** Breakdown of listed disabilities disclosed by service users

Disability	08-09	09-10	10-11
Disability not listed	4%	8%	<b>11%</b>
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	47%	40%	<b>47%</b>
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
Blind-partially sighted	1%	2%	
Deaf-hearing impairment	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
Mental health difficulties	17%	14%	<b>21%</b>
Multiple disabilities	2%	6%	<b>2%</b>
Unseen disabilities e.g. diabetes	18%	26%	<b>15%</b>
Wheelchair user-mobility difficulties	9%	2%	<b>2%</b>

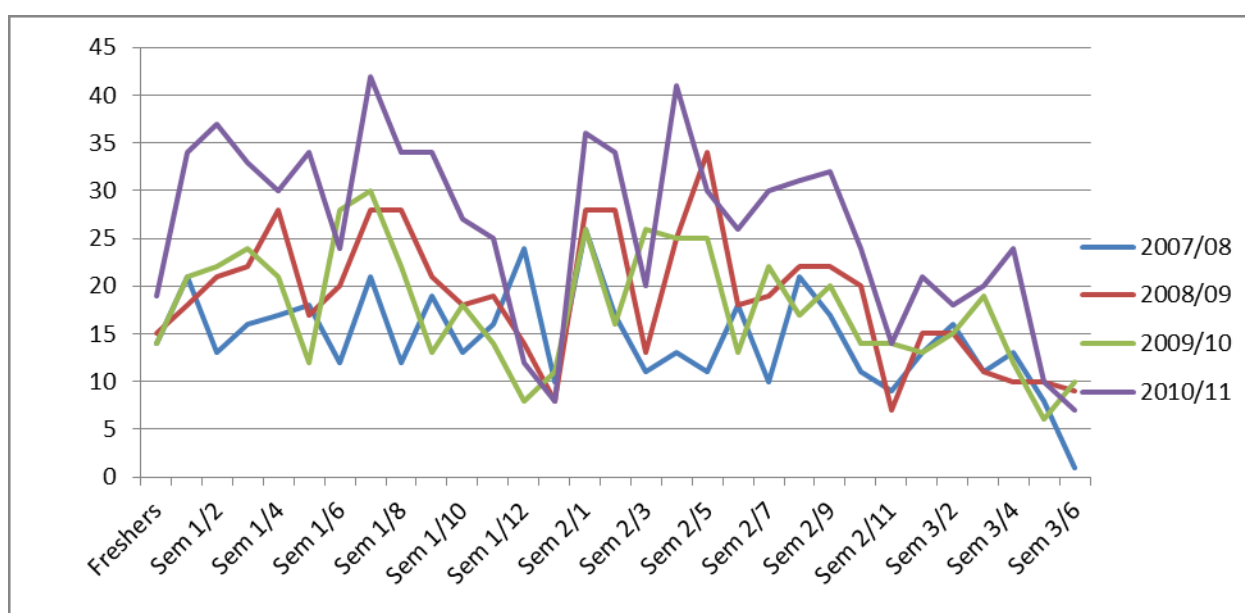
**Figure 10** Sources of Referrals

%	10-11	09-10	08-09	07-08	06-07	05-06
School	<b>2</b>	4	5	1	0.5	0.5
DOS	<b>16</b>	17	13	12	11	11
Friend	<b>10</b>	14	13	13	15	17
GP	<b>21</b>	17	17	24	23	22
Leaflets	<b>5</b>	4	5	6	7	9
Website	<b>32</b>	21	22	25	28	25

**Figure 11** Presenting issues (% of clients seen)

Presenting Issues – reasons for using the service (%)	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07
Abuse	3	4	3	4	3
Academic	10	11	13	11	11
Addictive behaviour	0.5	0.5	1	1	1
Anxiety	22	19	23	22	22
Depression, anger & mood change or disorder	20	20	18	20	24
Eating disorders	2	3	3	2	3
Loss	10	9	10	10	9
Other mental health conditions	2	2	2	1.5	1
Physical health	3	3	1	2	1
Relationships	12	12	12	14	13
Self and identity	12	13	11	9	7
Sexual issues	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Transitions	2	2	2	2	3

**Figure 12.** Number of students being added to the waiting list for counselling



**Figure 13.** Waiting times – referral to initial appointment (percentages)

No of Weeks	Semester 1			Semester 2.1			Semester 2.2		
	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09	10-11	09-10	08-09
1	<b>60</b>	78	83	<b>53</b>	72	70	<b>56</b>	65	67
2	<b>31</b>	18	14	<b>38</b>	23		<b>10</b>	27	24
3	<b>5</b>	2	2	<b>6</b>	3	4	<b>13</b>	5	5
3+	<b>4</b>	2	1	<b>3</b>	2	4	<b>21</b>	3	4

**Figure 14.** Waiting times - initial appointment to counselling. (percentages)

No of Weeks	Semester 1			Semester 2.1			Semester 2.2		
	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
1	<b>27</b>	43	54	<b>14</b>	28	40	<b>33</b>	20	36
2	<b>15</b>	27	34	<b>17</b>	13	28	<b>15</b>	17	12
3	<b>10</b>	13	8	<b>5</b>	9	16	<b>13</b>	17	10
3+	<b>48</b>	17	4	<b>64</b>	50	16	<b>39</b>	46	42

**Figure 15.** Length of waiting time from referral to initial appointment

Year	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	3+ weeks
2005 - 06	89%	7%	1%	3%
2006 - 07	89%	8%	1%	2%
2007 - 08	81%	15%	3%	1%
2008 - 09	76%	17%	4%	3%
2009 - 10	73%	22%	3%	2%
<b>2010 - 11</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>

**Figure 16.** Length of waiting time from initial appointment to counselling

Year	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	3+ weeks
2005 - 06	22%	21%	15%	42%
2006 - 07	24%	29%	18%	29%
2007 - 08	27%	19%	14%	39%
2008 - 09	45%	27%	11%	17%
2009 - 10	31%	19%	12%	38%
<b>2010 - 11</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>53%</b>

## Appendix B Evaluation Survey 2010-11

**Figure 17 Evaluation survey summary and three year comparison**

<b>Evaluation survey</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>09-10</b>	<b>08-09</b>
No. of students responding	<b>255</b>	215	171
Respondents as % of total no. of students seen	<b>27%</b>	23%	19%
Satisfaction with reception and waiting areas (helpfulness- welcome-comfort)	<b>97.5%</b>	97%	97%
Satisfaction with accessibility	<b>97.5%</b>	99.1%	96%
Satisfaction with discreetness of service	<b>95%</b>	99.6%	95%
Satisfaction with service publicity	<b>64%</b>	62%	65%
% of students reporting counselling as having been helpful	<b>100%</b>	100%	100%
% of students reporting waiting time for initial appointment as "too long"	<b>10%</b>	18%	5%
% of students reporting waiting time for counselling as "too long"	<b>29%</b>	33%	14%
Satisfaction with number of sessions offered	<b>98%</b>	99.1%	98%
% of students reporting counselling as having a beneficial effect on their studies	<b>88%</b>	96%	88%

**Figure 18 Evaluation Survey Summary Semester 1 2011-12**

<b>Semester 1 2011-12</b>	<b>Evaluation Survey - Main Library</b>	<b>Evaluation Survey - All Locations</b>	<b>Academic year 10-11</b>
No. of students responding	75	93	255
Satisfaction with reception and waiting areas (helpfulness, welcome and comfort)	99%	99%	97.5%
Satisfaction with accessibility	100%	99%	97.5%
Satisfaction with discreetness of service	92%	94%	95%
Satisfaction with service publicity	85%	83%	64%
% of students reporting waiting time for initial appointment as "too long"	11%	12%	10%
% of students reporting waiting time for counselling appointments as "too long"	24%	23%	29%



**Figure 19 Evaluation Survey Summary Semester 1 2011-12**

<b>New survey-AUCC study: "To what extent would you say that counselling ..."</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>To a limited extent</b>	<b>One of many factors</b>	<b>An important factor</b>	<b>The most significant factor</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
helped you to stay at university?	2%	2%	16%	38%	10%	32%
helped you do better in your academic work?	2%	14%	25%	39%	10%	10%
improved your overall experience of university?	nil	6%	30%	52%	12%	Nil
helped you develop skills that might be useful in obtaining future employment?*	6%	8%	19%	46%	21%	Nil

\* Defined as eg self understanding, understanding of others, managing difficult feelings better, increased confidence, assertiveness

## **Appendix C**

### **Synopsis of the Student Counselling Service Strategic Plan 2006-2011**

#### Introduction

- To make operational the Student and Academic Services Group strategic plan
- To anticipate moving to the Main Library 2011

#### Aims - To provide a high-quality service through

- Professional service accreditation
- Quality assurance - e.g. CORE, satisfaction surveys
- Recruiting and keeping highly qualified staff
- Monitoring and improving our service

#### Priorities

- Provide excellent core services
- Take measures to improve response rates
- Improve rate of inclusion of under-represented groups

#### Key Issues

- Regulation of the counselling profession
- Increasing demands for counselling
- Changing profile of the student population
- Increasing numbers of students with mental health difficulties
- Continued budgetary pressure
- Clarity over what we can offer to which students
- Additional pressures due to semesterisation

#### Objectives

- To be fast, friendly and fair
- Encourage inclusivity
- Continuously improve quality and effectiveness

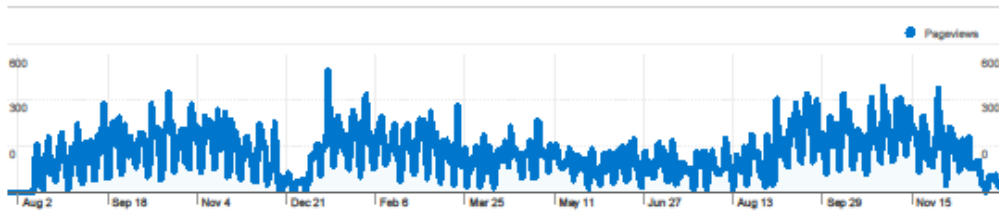
#### Strategies

- Monitor and make provision for changing and increasing demand for our services
- Lobby for more resources particularly for students with mental health difficulties
- Increase efficiency through rigorous referral, assessment and triage
- Improve procedures through intranet and other efficiencies
- Provide a flexible workshop programme and working with other services
- Increase published and web-based self-help material
- Anticipate changes needed for move to new location
- Work even more closely with other services, especially the Disability Office
- Increasing data sets on CORE

# Appendix D

## Student Counselling Service Website report

Jul 28, 2010 - Dec 31, 2011



132 pages were viewed a total of 87,500 times

Content Performance					
<b>Pageviews</b> <b>87,500</b> % of Site Total: 0.09%	<b>Unique Pageviews</b> <b>67,012</b> % of Site Total: 0.09%	<b>Avg. Time on Page</b> <b>00:00:39</b> Site Avg: 00:01:02 (-37.18%)	<b>Bounce Rate</b> <b>37.54%</b> Site Avg: 50.31% (-25.39%)	<b>% Exit</b> <b>15.75%</b> Site Avg: 21.43% (-26.50%)	<b>\$ Index</b> <b>UK£0.00</b> Site Avg: UK£0.02 (-100.00%)
Top content		Pageviews			
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling		15,864	18.13%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/services/short-term-counselling		6,009	6.87%		
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www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/services		3,341	3.82%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/students/appointments/making-an-appointment		3,153	3.60%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/home		3,005	3.43%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/self-help		2,792	3.19%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/list-groups-and-wrkshops		2,563	2.93%		
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling/services/specialist-counselling		1,916	2.19%		