

Employee Support Confidentiality Policy

The Employee Advice and Support Services are dedicated to providing a safe, independent and confidential arena for staff to seek advice and support. Employee Advice and Support Services is an informal, neutral body that was established to meet the needs of all staff and some students to deal with both personal and professional challenges.

Our focus is mainly on staff issues but we do offer a Harassment Advice Service to students and utilise a joint mediation service. The Services also offer a first port of call to help staff identify what options are available to them to address both personal and professional problems through the Employee Advice and Listening Service.

How is confidentiality assured?

The Employee Advice and Support Services do not report the names of visitors and will not act without permission, except in cases of serious risk to individual safety or if required by law, after all reasonable steps have been taken to protect confidentiality.

The Employee Advice and Support Services include the Harassment Advice Service, Employee Advice and Listening Service, the University Mediation Service, Employee Disability Service and the Mental Health Assessment and Counselling Service.

General contact information is maintained by Employee Support Services and clients may request to see what information is held about them by the Service. Under the Data Protection Act you can make a "Subject Access Request" to Legal Services for disclosure of any records relating to you. Information will be held for six years by the Service and will not be available to any other area unless you have provided consent.

When visiting any of the services for the first time you will be asked to read and sign a Confidentiality and Disclosure Statement, which provides information on service requirements and data protection procedures. In addition you will be asked to fill in, or provide data for, the Case Contact Sheet, which enables all Employee Advice and Support Services to hold some general contact information and contact dates.

The Employee Adviser, Employee Disability Adviser, Harassment Advisers and Mediators may take forward requests to raise specific issues with Human Resources or relevant management bodies. In order for this to happen the Informed Release of Consent section on the Confidentiality and Disclosure statement will have to be signed.

In addition, referrals to other services may be made with your agreement, and requests for information to be released to them or other referral agencies such as General Practitioners and Staff Counselling may form part of this process.

What data is reported to the University?

The Employee Support Services provide activity reports on a quarterly basis. These include data about general categories of visitors to the Services, such as student, support staff, etc. and the range of concerns that have been raised. The data collected is anonymized, with no information that would identify individuals included. Over time, this data may signal emerging issues, indicate trends, highlight vulnerable groups of students or employees, or suggest areas for improvement.

What is Employee Advice and Support Services' link with Human Resources?

Employee Advice and Support Services as part of Workplace Wellbeing resides within the same budget centre as and works together with Human Resources(HR) Operations and Policy to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all staff and students. Referrals to and from Human Resources Operations may be made with your agreement. Outcomes of mediations and dispute resolutions may be notified to HR with both your agreement and that of any others parties involved.