Cardiff University Students' Union
Undeb Myfyrwyr Prifysgol Caerdydd

Case Management Policy and Procedure

Person responsible for this Policy:	Head of Student Advice and Wellbeing
Who the Policy applies to:	Student Advice Employees
Date issued	April 2021
Date to be reviewed:	April 2022

Unless expressly stated otherwise, this policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and the contents are not contractually binding on the Students' Union or its employees. However, failure by any employee to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken and, in the most serious cases, may result in dismissal. The Union reserves the right to amend the policy from time to time.

For the purposes of this policy the terms 'Union' and 'Students' Union' includes Cardiff University Students' Union, Cardiff Union Services Limited and any subsidiary of the Company or of its holding company. These terms shall have the meaning given them by the Companies Act 2006.

Contents

The heart of the Cardiff student experience
Wrth galon profiad myfyrwyr Caerdydd

Introduction

Ensuring that a robust Case Management System is in place is essential to guarantee the client's matter is dealt with professionally, in a timely manner, and with a positive outcome wherever possible. At Student Advice, case files are stored consistently to ensure that:

- Case records/files are accessible, orderly and easy to locate from initial registration to case closure;
- Case records/files are stored confidentiality and in password protected secure devices;
- Progress of the client's case and outcome can be easily identified and monitored;
- Client case records in use by other staff and volunteers can be traced at any time;
- All supporting documents relating to the client's case are filed appropriately;
- Open and closed cases (active and inactive) can be distinguished (numbers for both provided) and can be easily located;
- Cases can be selected by Line Managers/Supervisors to undertake independent file review and case progress checks.

This procedure is made available to all Student Advice staff and volunteers during induction. The procedure will be referred to during staff training, team meetings and in supervision sessions.

Allocation Procedures – How a Case is allocated

1. Enquiries

Queries received that do not require advice will be dealt with by the Student Advice and Wellbeing Assistants and logged as an enquiry.

2. Cases

Any query that is identified as requiring advice will be categorised as a case and will usually be allocated in the first instance to an Advice and Advocacy Coordinator. Allocation at this stage is usually on a rota basis, alternating between Coordinators, unless case load or absence requires anything different.

If the case appears to be particularly complicated, or looks likely to become so, the Advice and Wellbeing Assistant should ask the Student Adviser responsible for advice supervision that day, where it should be allocated. If the case is beyond the current competence of the Advice and Advocacy Coordinator, it can be allocated as follows:

- To the Coordinator, to be guided through by an Adviser. This may be appropriate where the case is not too far beyond the Coordinator's capability and can be used to further develop knowledge; or
- Directly to the Adviser. This will be appropriate where the case is far beyond the current competence of the Coordinator and/or resource at the time means that direct referral is preferable.

*nb a case can and should be escalated to an Adviser at any point if that becomes necessary due to complexity/competence. Escalation can be requested by a Coordinator or an Adviser.

Opening and Managing Case Files

All engagements with Student Advice must be recorded for the benefit of future data analysis and to maintain accurate records of the advice the department delivers.

Engagements in Student Advice are recorded in two ways:

1. Case management spreadsheet and
2. Coordinator/Adviser case files.

Opening a Case File

When an engagement is categorised as a case and is to be allocated to a Coordinator or Adviser, the Wellbeing Assistant must create a folder for the client in the appropriate week and month of the Coordinator/Adviser case management files within the L Drive.

The folder should have the title as the student name and student number, followed by 'OPEN'.

If a client has refused consent for their data to be shared with an AQS Assessor, 'CONSENT REFUSED' must be added after 'OPEN'.

Once the relevant folder is created, the Assistant should add all details of the initial contact from whichever mode of communication was used, e.g. the email conversation or dated notes of the telephone conversation. A "Client Case Update Form", in which all correspondence regarding that client will be logged, should be saved and added to the client's case file.

The Assistant should then email the Coordinator/Adviser with the details of the allocation. Where a case is identified as requiring a more urgent response, the Assistant should also call the Coordinator/Adviser to let them know.

Managing Case Files

Once allocated to a Coordinator/Adviser, the Coordinator/Adviser must ensure that a record of all contact, including details of any discussions and advice given, is stored in the case file.

The progress on case files and information records should be clear (including handwritten case notes) to any other Coordinator/Adviser. Case files must include a clear written record of the advice the client has received, agreed actions and who is responsible.

The Client Case Update Form must be updated to include every contact had with the client on that case.

Where a conversation/advice takes place verbally, e.g. by telephone, Zoom, or in person, the Coordinator/Adviser must also include

- Full details of the conversation/advice in the form of notes; and/or
- A copy of their confirmation of advice email, which must cover everything that was discussed.

Storing Case Files

All case files are to be stored electronically, within the Case Management folders on the L Drive, for a minimum of 6 years.

Confidentiality and Access to Service Users' Files

Student Advice has arrangements in place to ensure the client confidentiality and privacy can be maintained during advice sessions:

1. Reception Services

- The Student Advice Reception is a private space, separate from other services within Cardiff University Students' Union.
- When attending an appointment or drop-in session, the client will register using an iPad located at the reception desk. As such the client will not need to disclose any personal information in the client waiting area.
- When answering a call reception staff will take basic information only. Name, student number and reason for the call will be taken before transferring the call to a member of the team. No advice will be given in the waiting area that is detailed and specific to the client. Generic advice may be given.
- Advice room doors will always be kept shut during discussions with a client. A radio is played in the waiting area to ensure conversations within advice rooms cannot be overheard.

2. Face to Face Sessions

- All face-to-face advice sessions must take place in private rooms.
- Staff must ensure during a drop-in session, and in between appointments, that all notes and papers and computer screens are cleared of previous client information.
- Staff will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that consultation rooms are confidential, being mindful of visibility and sound. Staff will ensure that case discussions, telephone calls, and other sensitive discussions cannot be overheard either in the interview room or the waiting area.

3. Remote meetings with clients

- Remote meetings take place via Microsoft teams, Zoom or Skype.
- All remote meetings must take place in a private space. This might be in the workplace or in a private room at home, should the member of staff be home working.
- Remote meetings are always arranged with the client in advance so they will be expecting the call and can arrange a private space for themselves if necessary.
- The client will be asked at the beginning of the call if they have concerns about their privacy and if so, an alternative arrangement will be made.

4. Working from home

- Home workers must ensure client confidentiality and privacy by using private workspace, where conversations cannot be overheard. If this is not available, the member of staff will be permitted to work in the Student Advice Centre or other suitably private space within Cardiff University Students' Union.
- Homeworkers must ensure that no clients record are accessible. Computers must be locked, and password protected at all times. Any identifying notes should be destroyed. Any paper records that need to be kept must be locked away and not accessible to other members of the household.

5. Phone calls

The following applies to telephone contact with clients:

- Advice via phone will take place in a location that is private unless the advice is very generic;
- Where there is a call back request the client will be asked to give explicit consent;
- Voicemail messages will only be left where the client has given explicit consent;
- The client will be asked at the beginning of the call if they have concerns about their privacy and if so an alternative arrangement will be made.
- Phone calls are not currently recorded but if this is put in place at a later date client will be advised of call recording;
- The Student Advice number is routinely withheld;
- Notes of all telephone conversations will either be scanned, typed into a Word document, or added to a confirmation of advice email. This document will then be electronically stored in the client's case file on the L Drive and any paper notes destroyed. If electronic storage is not possible immediately, any paper notes must be stored securely until it is.

6. Outreach and attending hearings

Staff provide advice in various locations throughout the Cardiff University Campus:

- Heath Park Campus
  - Cardiff University Students' Union has a Hub at the Heath Park Campus. Private rooms are available at this site for advice sessions. Secure IT equipment and a telephone is also available.

- Meeting a student prior to a hearing or meeting with University staff on the University campus
  - It is common for staff to meet clients outside the office and prior to a hearing or meeting when some last-minute advice and preparation might take place. In these situations, client confidentiality and privacy are maintained by.
  - The provision of a separate and private space for the purpose of preparation
  - Where a private space is not available, the member of staff will ensure conversations are quiet and away from others and take place with client consent.
  - Client papers will be returned to the office after a meeting should be scanned and destroyed or locked away. Client papers that are taken home should be kept safe and locked away until they can safely be returned to the office.

GDPR and Consent to store

Student Advice will store client information in accordance with the Cardiff University Students' Union Privacy Notice and Data Protection Statement and the Student Advice Confidentiality Policy. We will keep the information for 6 years following the last client contact with us, unless the client asks us to destroy the records earlier, or we are obliged to keep the file for longer to meet specific legislation.

All Student Advice clients are informed of their right to access the personal information we hold, and of their right to object to the processing of their personal information, to rectify, to erase, to restrict and to transmit their personal information. Any requests or objections are asked to be made in writing to the Data Protection Officer using the contact details provided in the Cardiff University Students' Union Privacy Notice and Data Protection Statement.

Clients are informed of their rights as follows:

1. The Cardiff University Students' Union Privacy Notice and Data Protection Statement and Confidentiality Policy, both of which are available on the Students' Union website.
2. All clients who email the Student Advice service receive an automatic response informing them of their rights under GDPR. This email also informs the client how to refuse consent for Student Advice to store their information, should they wish to do so.
3. For all telephone calls we ask all clients if they consent to Student Advice storing their information under the GDPR. The telephone call script used to do so is detailed below.

Confidentiality and Consent to Share

Student Advice are committed to providing a confidential service. The information we hold on a client will only be passed to another agency, or to other individuals outside of Student Advice, in the following circumstances:

- With express consent; and/or
- If Student Advice deem it necessary to breach confidentiality (please note, circumstances in which confidentiality would be breached are very limited and are detailed in our Confidentiality Policy; and/or
- If requested by an Advice Quality Standard assessors to complete a file audit during assessment, where there is consent to do so from the client.

How we are gaining consent

- Emails: Student Advice use an 'opt out' approach to gain consent if a client contact us by email. Every client who emails the Student Advice service will receive an automatic response, which says that we may share their information;

"If requested by Advice Quality Standard assessors to complete a file audit during assessment. AQS is the quality standard for providers of general advice services and further information is available here. If you do not consent to Student Advice sharing your information with AQS, please contact us to update your record."

- Live chat: we are expressly ask for consent to share with AQS before the client clicks to submit their chat. A consent tick-box must be checked before the client clicks on ‘send chat’ in our live chat function.
- For all telephone calls we ask clients if they consent to Student Advice sharing their data with AQS. The telephone call script used to do so is detailed below.
- Web-forms: where a client requests further information through the web-forms on the Student Advice webpages, they will receive an email informing them of their rights under GDPR. This email also informs the client how to refuse consent for Student Advice to store their information and/or to share it with AQS assessors, should they wish to do so.

Consent to store and share telephone script.

“Good morning/afternoon, welcome to Student Advice etc.

I have three very quick points I need to make you aware of before I take your details, is that okay?

First, I need to let you know that Student Advice will store your information in accordance with the Students’ Union Privacy Notice and Data Protection Statement and the Student Advice Confidentiality Policy, both of which are available on our website.

The second point is that you have a right to access your personal information at any time and to ask that it is edited or erased.

The third is that we would like to share your information with Advice Quality Standard assessors, if requested, to complete a file audit during assessment. AQS is the quality standard for providers of general advice services and the checks would be for quality purposes only. Is this okay?”

How we record consent

Student Advice records client consent to share information with AQS for all clients. Consent is recorded

- In the consent column on the case management spreadsheet, entitled ‘Consent refused’. If a client at any point refuses consent, the Student Advice and Wellbeing Assistant must note that on the spreadsheet; and
- in the client’s case file in the L Drive. The case file title will be updated as AQS CONSENT REFUSED for any client who has refused or withdrawn consent.

Closing Case Files

It is important, for both case and caseload management, that all cases are closed when they are complete.

Many cases will be deemed as complete when the client has had a response to their initial enquiry. This is because many queries can be comprehensively advised on in one email/phone call etc.

Other reasons a case may be deemed as complete are:

- The advice available under the Service Charter has been provided;
- The client no longer needs advice from Student Advice;
- The client has not made, or responded to, contact for more than a week;

Case files that are complete should be renamed from OPEN to CLOSED.

Review

The Case Management Procedure will be reviewed yearly by the Head of Student Advice and Wellbeing ((this work may be delegated to an Adviser) and after staff/volunteer discussion/input. During the course of day-to-day work if the Case Management Procedure requires amendment this will be discussed during staff team meetings. Any substantial change between annual reviews will be presented to the Head of Student Advice and Wellbeing for approval.