

WORKING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES



STUDENT SERVICES



2008-2009

Make it in the modern world.

Edinburgh's Telford College, 350 West Granton Road, Edinburgh EH5 1QE

☎ 0131 559 4000

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INTRODUCTION

At Edinburgh's Telford College, we aim to support the well-being of all our students. With one in four people affected by mental health difficulties at some time in their lives, we have a range of ways we can support you if you find yourself in this position whilst at college. The following information takes you through the ways in which you can tell us if you need support and the sort of support you can expect to receive.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

The transition to College poses new challenges for everyone. In addition to the pressures of course work, you are faced with a new environment, new situations, new people and a different way of life than you may have been used to. For many people there will be added pressures such as how to support yourself financially and a move to a more independent way of living. It can be difficult to adjust. For students with the added pressure of a mental health difficulty, you may find you need some extra support to help you adjust to these changes.

Please let the College know if you require this information in an alternative format.

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DISCLOSING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

I'm worried about what people will think

Because of the stigma attached to mental ill health, many people are reluctant to disclose their mental health difficulties for fear of discrimination. At Edinburgh's Telford College, we have policies to ensure that disclosing will not in any way affect your application or the way you are treated by any member of staff.

Student Services is there to be accessed for a wide range of services, not just for Learner Support. In fact, nearly every student in college will visit Student Services at some point. This means that there is no stigma attached to visiting us and no one will know why you are accessing the service.

What will happen if I disclose my mental health difficulties?

If you indicate an additional support need on your application form, this is what will happen:

- A Student Services Officer will contact you by telephone for an informal chat.
- They will ask you to tell them a bit about your difficulties, such as what they mean to you and how it affects you on a daily basis.

WORKING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

- They may ask you what support you have received in the past and what has worked in the management of your difficulties.
- Together we can discuss how we can best support you at college.

It is important to remember that you can disclose mental health difficulties at any point during your course.

We acknowledge that anyone can be affected by mental ill health at any point in your college career.

Throughout the course, if you feel that you would benefit from some support at College, please make contact with a member of the Student Services team. They will discuss the most appropriate support on offer and will carry out this discussion with you on a one-to-one basis.

Location: Student Services area, next to the Hub on the ground floor

Phone: Ask for Student Services (Learner Support) via
0131 559 4000

E-mail: **LearnerSupport@ed-coll.ac.uk**

If you would feel more comfortable speaking with your tutor or a member of teaching staff, then please do so. They can also help you access Student Services.

Who will be told about my mental health difficulties?

All information that you provide us with will be treated confidentially*.

Sometimes, in order to put support in place, it is useful if we share information with members of staff (such as your tutor) who would be involved in supporting you. We would ask you if you were comfortable with information being passed on before doing so. The focus of information that we share would always be on how best to support you in your learning.

* If you would like to see a copy of our confidentiality statement, please ask.

HOW WE CAN HELP

I'm worried about starting college, can you help?

Nearly everyone will have some anxieties about starting college, so you are not alone. If you are anxious about starting college, you can contact us in Student Services and a member of the Support team can arrange to meet with you before college starts.

This might help in familiarising you with the building, the support on offer and what to expect from College during your studies.

Upon starting College, you can expect to receive an induction (and an induction CD) from your teaching staff which will give you another opportunity to ask questions about the course.

In addition to the Induction CD, additional Student Services CDs are available (electronic versions providing information on all of the services on offer). This will be useful to those of you who prefer to receive information in alternative formats. Please ask at Student Services if this is required.

In addition to this there will be a Student Services induction for all students at the start of term where you can find out about the range of services we offer. For International students there are specific inductions tailored to help you adapt to learning in a new culture.

Remember - if you have forgotten to ask anything in the first few weeks, don't worry. Student Services staff will also be happy to help to point you in the right direction or to answer questions.

Learner Support and Personal Matters - Advice and Referral Drop-ins

There are learner support and Personal Matters - Advice and Referral drop-ins drop-ins on every day in Student Services, which is located on the ground floor, just off The Hub. This is a time when a member of staff who specialises in learner support will be available for you to speak to. You do not need to make an appointment, just turn up within the allocated times. For an up-to-date drop-in timetable please see the door of Student Services.

WORKING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

Learner Support	
Day	Drop-in times
Monday	11.30am-4pm
Tuesday	11.30am-4pm
Wednesday	9am-10.30am (Gyle)
Wednesday	11.30am-4pm
Thursday	11.30am-4pm
Friday	11.30am-4pm

Alternatively, if you would rather make an appointment we can arrange this for you.

If you would like to speak to a Student Services Officer, there are daily Learner Support drop-ins run on Mondays-Fridays 11.30-4.00pm. No appointments are necessary.

What will happen when I come to the drop-in?

When you enter Student Services you will be greeted by a receptionist who will discretely ask you which drop-in you are here for and will then inform a Student Services Officer. You will not have to give any other information until you are in the drop-in and no one will identify why you are accessing the service. You may be asked to take a seat if there is a queue.

What will happen during the drop-in?

Student Services has a relaxed, informal atmosphere, and all the staff are friendly and approachable. The drop-ins take place in private rooms within Student Services. Drop-ins are an opportunity for you to speak about any difficulties you are experiencing in college. The Student Services Officer will go through the options available to you.

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What sort of support can you offer me?

We understand that everyone's experience of mental health difficulties is unique. This is why every student who discloses mental health difficulties will have a personal learning and support plan drawn up which is tailored specifically to your individual needs. Your Student Services Officer will help you to think about your aims in college.

This may allow you to work out effective strategies that will enable you to cope and reach your full potential. We acknowledge that everyone's mental health changes and so we aim to change the level of support as appropriate.

Some of the ways your Student Services Officer can support you in your studying are:

- Loan of a laptop
- Use of enabling technology
- Arranging for support provision in the classroom such as note-taking (where possible and appropriate)
- Negotiating arrangements in the classroom, for example sitting near the door
- Help with organising and managing your work
- Help with structuring your time
- Help with accessing other facilities and resources in college, such as the Learning Resource Centre
- Where necessary and appropriate, requesting Exam concessions such as extra time, the option of a reader and scribe, or sitting the exam in a small, quiet room
- Advice on relaxation
- Refer you on to other internal/external services

Personal Matters: Advice and Referral

The college also offers a Personal Matters, Advice and Referral Drop-In service, which offers a safe holding environment to anyone who would like someone to talk to about any concerns they have.

If you are not sure, where to get the support you need, or in fact what support you need, this service will help you. Help, support and guidance will be provided to anyone wishing to contact external organisations offering counselling and other such support.

The drop-in times for this service are as follows:

Personal Matters: Advice and Referral	
Day	Drop-in times
Monday	11.30-13.00
Tuesday	13.00-14.30
Wednesday	11.30-13.00
Thursday	14.30-16.00
Friday	11.30-13.00

Alternatively you can contact Puja (Student Services Officer) on **0131 559 4098** or email **puja.mahindru@ed-coll.ac.uk** so she can arrange to meet you at a time out with the specified drop-in times.

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In addition, you may also wish to talk with a member of the Spiritual Care Team at one of their drop-ins. All students (of faith or of no faith) are welcome to use this service. Members of the Spiritual Care Team provide a drop-in service in the Faith Room, on the ground floor (you can ask for directions at reception).

The Spiritual Care Team aims to:

- Provide guidance, encouragement and support to students and staff attending Edinburgh's Telford College
- Provide a safe space for discussion on any issue
- Provide direction to other sources of support, where appropriate
- Consider and express the diversity existing within our college community
- Celebrate events in the multi-faith calendar, including "one world" events

OTHER SUPPORT ON OFFER

External Support

In Student Services we have information on and can provide signposting to a wide range of external organisations. For example, we have close contact with Edinburgh Nightline, which is a confidential and anonymous listening service run by students for students.

We have a notice board in Student Services where we display contact details of organisations which provide information and support to people with various types of mental health difficulties.

This notice board is regularly updated and will let you know of any events of new support groups in Edinburgh, particularly those aimed at students.

Other Support

We also have a range of other specialist services that can help you with the various challenges of student life:

- We can offer you advice on managing your **finances** and have hardship grants available where applicable.
- We have our own **JobZone** where you can receive advice and guidance on applying for part-time work as well as receiving information on current job opportunities in and around Edinburgh.
- We offer **course guidance** both before you have applied for a course and whilst you are currently enrolled. The Course Guidance Team can help you choose the right course for you as well as helping you overcome any difficulties you might experience along the way.
- Similarly, we also have a **Careers Advisor** who can help you during all stages of your college education, including preparing for leaving college, whether you plan to go on to further education or into the workplace.

- We accommodate drop-ins held by external agencies such as 'Sound Advice'. **Sound Advice** is an advice agency which can provide information on a wide range of issues such as benefits, housing and employment.
- We can help you with **childcare provision** if required
- We also have an **International drop - in service** for any International students studying at Telford.

Tell us what you think

Student Services are committed to providing a service that is driven by what our students need. There are many ways that you can let us know what you think of the services we provide. Fill out a postcard in Student Services or speak to a member of the team if there is anything you would like to see that we don't currently offer. We welcome all feedback that we receive.

And finally...

Mental health difficulties don't have to be an obstacle to your capacity to study and learn. In fact, many students with mental health difficulties find that college can have a really positive affect on their mental health and helps to develop their life skills, both on a social and a personal level. College can be an exciting and rewarding experience, whatever the nature or severity of your mental health difficulties. We hope you enjoy your time at Edinburgh's Telford College and we are here to help you all the way!

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Edinburgh's Telford College strives to be an inclusive College that welcomes and supports learners from all age and ethnic groups, genders, abilities, sexual orientations, cultural and religious backgrounds.

The College has developed policies to ensure that unfair discrimination does not occur and is ethically and legally committed to equal opportunity in all institutional areas of activity. Appropriate remedial and, if necessary, disciplinary action will be taken in order to eliminate discrimination wherever it occurs. Telford is founded on the principles of creating an inclusive College, one College for all.



Course Hotline:

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