

# Students' Union Support Service: Data Protection and Confidentiality

This document outlines the practices of the Students' Union Support Service in respect of record keeping and information held on service users. In addition, it details the service's policies on data protection and confidentiality of these records.

## Your confidentiality

Staff working within the Student Union Support Service will not disclose any personal information about clients (including information on attendance) to anyone outside the service, except in the following circumstances:

- Where the member of staff has the express consent of the service user to disclose the information
- Where the member of staff may be liable to civil or criminal proceedings if the information was not disclosed
- Where the member of staff believes that the service user or some other person is in serious and imminent danger of harm.

## Record keeping and data protection

Casework notes are stored on secure database. Data will also be recorded for statistical purposes and SU reports. This data is anonymous and does not include any individual's personal information.

All clients using the service will be asked to sign to indicate that they have read the information contained in this document and agree to data and notes being kept. If you do not want your identity recorded by the service then we will honour this request but it may limit the support we can give in taking forward issues.

## Communication

We contact service users via email, telephone, letter and text. We also provide leaflets and online information. If you are uncomfortable with any of the forms of communication used, please let us know.

Please also notify us of any changes in your contact details. In the case of phone calls we are able to call back if you are concerned about charges.

We have an answering machine in our office where you can leave a message. This is not confidential as it is in an office space and we would recommend you only leave contact details and not sensitive casework information. Such information should be emailed over or discussed in meetings with advisors.

## Liaison and correspondence

With your permission, it may be appropriate to contact a third party. The purpose and nature/content of any such correspondence will be discussed with you prior to any contact and where possible, a copy of such correspondence will be made available.

## Access to your notes

Under the Data Protection Act, service users have a right of access to all notes kept concerning them. (Notes containing references or information concerning other individuals may not be available to the client, as data protection is also granted to third parties).

Application to see any notes should be directed to the Students' Union Support Service Coordinator. [j.jensen2@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:j.jensen2@brighton.ac.uk)

If your file includes any letters or other information from external sources, e.g. a doctor or psychologist, then the consent of that practitioner is required before such correspondence is made available. Client information will be kept for approximately six years, after which time it will be destroyed.

## Supervision and training

In line with professional practice, staff members may discuss advice sessions with other staff within the SU Support Service and seek advice on casework from management within the Students' Union. The purpose of supervision is to help advice staff reflect on their work and to achieve the best outcome for students engaging with the service by sharing knowledge.

## Evaluation

As part of an ongoing commitment to professionalism and good practice, as well as to gather feedback on the effectiveness, you will be asked to fill in an evaluation form on your experience and are openly encouraged to submit feedback on your experience via email, mail or in person to a member of staff in Students' Union. The forms will be handled in accordance with these codes of practice. Any data relating to the evaluation will be anonymous and will omit any personal details.

For further details please contact:  
SU Support Service  
[bussupportservice@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:bussupportservice@brighton.ac.uk)

