

## Privacy Notice – Counselling Services

### The Data Controller of the information being collected is:

West College Scotland, Queens Quay, Clydebank. G81 1BF  
ICO Registration Number: ZA004894

**For any queries or concerns about how your personal data is being processed you can contact the Data Protection Officer at: [dpo@wcs.ac.uk](mailto:dpo@wcs.ac.uk)**

### This privacy statement relates to the following process:

Provision of an effective, person-centred, and ethical counselling service.

### Your information will be used for the following purposes:

We use the information you provide to deliver an effective, person-centred ethical counselling service. This information is collected when you enquire about our counselling service on the phone, via text/SMS, email or when you fill in our registration form. This information includes your name, contact details, your availability, your health and other relevant personal sensitive data to help us understand your needs and to provide the best support to you.

To help develop and enhance future support we use your information for data analysis and statistical reporting. All identifying information is removed and all data is anonymised in this process.

We use the information you provide from your experience through formal and informal feedback to improve the service. All feedback provided remains anonymous.

### Our lawful basis for using the data are:

There is more than one legal basis for the use of your data and the service will only use your data when the law allows us to do so. We will only process your personal information:

- To perform the contract we have entered into with you i.e. we will process your data to enable us to meet our commitments to you in providing a confidential therapeutic counselling service
- Where we need to protect your vital interests (or someone else's vital interests)
- Where you have given specific, explicit consent for the Counselling Service to process your personal information for a specific purpose.

We will only record counselling sessions where we have your explicit consent to do so.

**If you were to withhold the personal information we require for this process, we would be unable to offer a counselling service.**

### Your data will, or may, be shared with the following recipients or categories of recipient:

The service is committed to paying careful consideration to client confidentiality and consent. Counsellors respect the client's right to privacy and only in certain situations will any personal data be passed to anyone outside the Student Counselling Service.

These situations are:

- Where you have given your consent to disclose information to a specific person, or agency.

- There is a legal obligation to do so where the counsellor would be liable to civil or criminal proceedings if the information were not disclosed.
- You, the Counsellor, or someone else is in serious danger. If the risk is believed to be sufficiently severe, the Counsellor will pass on the information, irrespective of client consent.

In most cases, the Counsellor will normally encourage the client to personally pass on information to the relevant person, or agency. Consent to disclose information in most circumstances will be sought, if possible.

Clinical supervision is a fundamental requirement of practicing counselling. It also ensures that practitioners are practising safely and effectively. In line with the BACP/BABPC Ethical Frameworks, counsellors receive supervision from a supervisor who is independent of the College. Individual clients may therefore be discussed with clinical supervisors external to the College for reflection and advice. All identifying information is removed and the client remains anonymous in this process.

BACP Privacy Notice: <https://www.bacp.co.uk/privacy-notice/>

BABPC Privacy Notice: [BABCP | British Association for Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapies > About > Privacy Policy](#)

**This process does not involve your data being sent outside of the UK.**

**The processing of your data does not involve automated decision making.**

### **Retention and Security**

We will take all reasonable precautions to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of information you give us.

The information you provide will be entered into a filing system and will only be accessed by authorised staff of the service. This information will be retained by the College for six years after your last attendance, and then destroyed confidentially.

Any paper written case-notes, forms and letters are stored in locked cabinets. Electronic records, which may include case-notes, forms and letters are stored securely within the College network and are password protected. All records (paper and electronic) are only accessible to the staff of the service.

The College has robust Information Security and Data Handling policies in place to protect all the data it holds, including your personal data. You can read more about these policies and technical standards on the College website.

**The following rights are rights of data subjects:**

- The right to access your personal data
- The right to rectification if the personal data we hold about you is incorrect
- The right to restrict processing of your personal data

**The following rights apply only in certain circumstances:**

- The right to withdraw consent at any time if consent is our lawful basis for processing your data
- The right to object to our processing of your personal data
- The right to request erasure (deletion) of your personal data

- The right to data portability

**You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office about our handling of your data. Visit: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)**

Signed Off: Head of Student Services, DPO

Date: December 2022