

EDC14D003

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Issue

The Counselling Service provides the Committee with an overview of developments on an annual basis concerning the uptake of provision and key issues for students emerging from the Service.

Recommendation

The Equality and Diversity Committee are asked to consider the report and whether any action is appropriate including training/awareness raising of key issues.

Resource Implications

N/a

Risk Implications

The content of the report may help inform future University strategies with respect to the student body.

Equality and Diversity

The paper focusses on one particular aspect of the current range of protected characteristics

Timing of decisions

-

Further Information

There have been annual reports to the Committee from the Counselling Service.

Background

The content of the report links to the Student Profile Statistics produced annually by the Equality and Diversity Office.

University Counselling Service Annual Report 2012-13

Executive Summary – Student Counselling

1. General

- This was the final report of Dr Judy Moore as Director of Counselling after 28 years at the Counselling Service (16 years as Director of Counselling).
- The report outlines changes in the provision offered by the Counselling Service during Dr Moore's tenure as Director and changes in the relationship between the Counselling Service and the School of Education and Lifelong Learning.
- The report gives an overview of research carried out using data collected from the use of the CORE questionnaire (Clinical Outcome Routine Evaluation) with service clients since 2009.

2. Statistics

- Demand on the Service continues to increase year on year: 736 (694) clients were seen in 2012-13 with a total of 4135 (4263) sessions offered. (Previous year's figures in brackets).
- Average waiting times for ongoing sessions have increased reflecting increased demand on the service: 24.9 days (22.1 days).
- The average number of sessions per client has decreased: 5.6 (6.1) reflecting adherence to the 8 session model.
- Female clients continue to significantly outnumber male clients.
- Ethnicity and Disability data is largely consistent with previous years.
- Referral sources remain consistent.
- Predominant session themes at exploratory include: Anxiety - 22.6%; Depression – 20.7%; Relationships – 15.6% and Loss – 10.6%.

3. Groups

- The Counselling Service provided a variety of Mindfulness groups and a Bereavement Group.

4. Research

- Included in the report are summaries of two research papers:
 - Phase II of Teaching Fellowship Findings: The Experience of HUM students of Counselling and Faculty-Based Support at UEA.
 - The effectiveness of person –centred therapy for student clients who attend the University Counselling Service.

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Staff of the University Counselling Service

2012- 13

Director of Counselling	Dr Judy Moore
Deputy Director	Ruth Roberts
Staff Counsellor	Eamonn O'Mahony
Sessional Counsellors	Lucy Allison Jean Ashby Catherine Atkinson Miriam Crasnow Martin Langsdon Campbell Purton Sarah Robinson Joao Vilanova-Smith Sharon Wilkinson
Service Co-ordinator	Jane Ramsbottom
Secretary/Receptionists	Sue Hitchcock Ros Montague

Director's Report

This is my final Annual Report, after twenty-eight years at the University Counselling Service, the last sixteen of which have been as Director. My leaving coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Service, which first opened on 1 January 1974, and it is also twenty years since the Counselling Service took its first cohort of trainees from the EDU-based Postgraduate Diploma in Person-Centred Counselling, an intensive one-year full-time training, whose trainees have now supplemented our counselling provision for exactly half of the life of the Counselling Service. Approximately three hundred trainees have been on placement with us over this time, offering thousands of counselling sessions. For twenty years we have had a symbiotic relationship with the Centre for Counselling Studies, which has only recently come to an end. Our interaction with this Centre has not only supplemented our counselling provision but also enabled the development of counselling research.

In this Introduction I reflect on some of the changes that have taken place over the past sixteen years and also on something of what has been achieved.

Client Numbers

In 1997-8 the Counselling Service saw 567 student clients of whom 63 were seen by the designated Educational Counsellor. In 2012-13 736 student clients were seen by all counsellors. The role of the Educational Counsellor has now been largely taken over by the Learning Enhancement Team in DOS, though a small number of clients continue to request this counselling specialism each year. In addition, in 2012-13 111 staff clients were seen, whereas 79 were seen in 1997-8. Total client numbers have therefore increased from 646 to 847 over the past 16 years, with many individuals who would originally have sought counselling now seeking help from the variety of teams in the Dean of Students' Office, in particular the Wellbeing Team, the Learning Enhancement Team, the Disabilities and Specific Learning Disabilities Support Team and the International Students Advisory Team.

Student Client Profile

There is very little change in terms of the client profile for general counselling over the past 16 years. Humanities students, in particular those from Literature, Drama, Creative Writing (now LDC) and American Studies (now AMS) have, throughout this time, continued to make more use of counselling than students from other Schools of Study. In 1997-8 9.9% of English and American Studies (EAS) students came to the Counselling Service; in 2012-13 the figures are 13.2% for LDC and 9.5% for AMS. In both cases these combined totals are higher than those of any other Schools of Study, though closely rivalled in 1997-8 by DEV (9.7%) and AMS is slightly overtaken by Allied Health Professions (AHP, now RSC) (9.8%) in 2012-13.

While home students have always constituted the majority of clients throughout the past 16 years, the stats for 2012-13 show an interesting increase of 51 (8.6%) over the previous year, possibly reflecting the fact that this is the first year that student fees were increased to £9,000, leading both to increased anxiety in students and to a greater sense of entitlement to support. The overwhelming demand for counselling that we experienced in the autumn of 2012 has been repeated in the autumn of 2013 and suggests that increasing demand will be an ongoing trend.

Ethnicity and disability were not recorded in 1997-8, but 64 international students were seen, 17 of these by the Educational Counsellor. A more detailed analysis of the student stats for 2012-13 is given by Ruth Roberts, our Educational Counsellor and Deputy Director, on p. 6 of this report.

Groups and Workshops

In 2012-13 we ran several workshops on Mindfulness and a Bereavement group was also offered. Interestingly, in 1997-8 more groups were offered, reflecting the broader remit of the Counselling Service at that time: relaxation, assertiveness and a variety of study skills workshops, including a Dyslexia support group. Most of the study-related workshops were run by the Educational Counsellor, a function that has now been taken over by the Learning Enhancement Team.

Changing Relationship with the School of Education and Lifelong Learning

By 1997-8 a tradition of Counselling Service staff also being employed in a different capacity in EDU was already well established. Several members of staff held appointments in both areas, including the then Educational Counsellor and the Service Coordinator, who also served as Coordinator of the Centre for Counselling Studies, a dual role most recently held by Jane Ramsbottom for the past twelve years. Eamonn O'Mahony, the staff counsellor, was a core tutor on the Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling from 2003-2008. After several years as a core tutor on the Diploma training, in 2003 I became part-time Director of the Centre for Counselling Studies, a role that continued until 2011. This enabled the development not only of the professional training that would continue to provide counselling trainees for the Service but also of the potential for research into the person-centred counselling practice of the Service.

The years between 2003 and 2011 were ones of great creativity, including the involvement of Counselling Service staff in the organization of two major international conferences ('Spirituality in Counselling and the Helping Professions' in 2004 and in 2008 PCE2008: the 8th World Conference of the World Association for Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counselling). These major conferences, together with smaller events such as two 'Philosophy of Therapy' mini-conferences brought over 600 delegates from around the world to UEA. In 2010 Ruth Roberts and I co-edited *Counselling and Psychotherapy in Organisational Settings*, which included a co-authored chapter on counselling in Higher Education.¹ This was a very stimulating and exciting time, providing significant professional development opportunities for all our staff and impacting positively on our practice.

Although the Service still welcomes trainees from the Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling, there is no longer any significant relationship or overlap either in terms of personnel or function between the counselling operation in the School of Education and the Counselling Service.

The longstanding collaboration between the two operations has, nevertheless, been of undoubted benefit to the Service in terms of enabling more generous counselling provision over twenty years than we could otherwise have managed, creating rich opportunities for staff development in terms of conferences and workshops, as well as providing funding for us to set up research into our practice.

Research

Other than the gathering of routine service usage statistics no research into counselling outcome or process took place in 1997-8. More recently, thanks mainly to external support and funding generated by the 2008 conference and two recent Teaching Fellowships, research has been encouraged at the Service and both staff and postgraduate students continue to engage in specific projects. The following are some recent examples:

- A PhD student, Tony Weston, who worked on Counselling Service data as part of his PhD (completed in 2011) was awarded the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) 2011 Award for Outstanding Research Project.

¹ *Counselling and Psychotherapy in Organisational Settings* (2010). Exeter: Learning Matters

- A two-phase Teaching Fellowship project conducted by Kathleen Lane (EDU and RSC) and Judy Moore between 2011 and 2013 included both quantitative and qualitative data from student clients. The research demonstrates that counselling has a positive impact on individuals' confidence, sense of self and relationships that in turn leads to better academic performance and also impacts positively on the student experience and student retention. For the second phase of this research they were joined by Peter Handley (PSI), and focused specifically on the experience of HUM students. A summary of Phase II of the Teaching Fellowship research, which includes interview data from HUM staff as well as students, is given on p. 18 of this report.
- Stuart Williams, a former Diploma student, has analysed CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) data from 454 undergraduate student clients taken from between October 2009 and 2013. This is an expansion of a quantitative study that was presented in the Annual Report for 2011-12. The findings indicate significant improvement in a large majority of clients who completed CORE Outcome Measures at first and last session. A summary of Stuart William's analysis of the most recent data is presented on p. 20.

The Need for Change

A changing political and economic climate and structural reorganization within UEA has meant that change has become inevitable. The effective closure of the Centre for Counselling Studies and the gradual severance of individuals' links with the School of Education mean that an era has now come to an end. Meanwhile, the sheer volume of client demand means that most of our time is now spent simply trying to cope with the ever-increasing demand for counselling and long waiting lists have, sadly, become routine. Our predicament is reflected in other areas of Student Services as well as nationally and, in the light of very heavy cross-service usage in some students, particularly those with severe mental health conditions, we recognize the need for re-consideration and change in our function and level of provision.

Concluding Remarks

The research findings have confirmed what all of us at the Counselling Service have long realised:

- That person-centred counselling is very effective for those clients who are capable of self-directed living and are willing and able to take responsibility for their lives.
- That it is impossible to separate personal issues from academic issues in the student population: students need to have the space to address personal issues when they arise in order to focus effectively on their academic work.
- In an increasingly impersonal university environment students need to form a one-to-one relationship with a representative of the university (tutor, advisor, counsellor) in order to feel a sense of 'belonging' to the institution and to benefit fully from their student experience.

In recent years, with the development of more refined provision in other parts of Student Services, the remit of the Counselling Service has become more exclusively focused on the one-to-one counselling relationship. At the same time, students are now arriving at university with increasingly challenging mental health conditions. There is a danger at this time, reflected in the experience of other HE institutions, that the considerable 'middle layer' of students who are capable of using counselling to maximum effect might end up being neglected as a result of what can feel like the more urgent imperative of students with significant mental health needs. Students at the extreme end of the mental health spectrum are not the students who benefit most from counselling.

Whatever is intended for the future, my final recommendation is that the University remain mindful of the value of a Counselling Service which can provide a safe, confidential space where ordinary 'middle layer' students can take time to process what currently stops them from feeling empowered to take charge of their lives. Counselling gives rise to positive change that will not only help them to deal with whatever is currently troubling them but also enable them to move forward more creatively and effectively into the rest of their lives. I would like to thank all my Counselling Service colleagues whose absolute dedication to our work and commitment to clients is unwavering and inspiring. Colleagues' hard work, open-mindedness, supportive flexibility and generosity of spirit, as well as the support of colleagues in other parts of the

University, have enabled us to flourish over the past sixteen years, and, in so doing, to help the many thousands of student and staff clients who have passed through our doors.

Judy Moore
November 2013

Comments on Student Counselling Statistics 2012-13

Demand for Counselling

Once again, the statistics for 2012-13 show an increase in the number of students attending the University Counselling Service with 736 students registering for counselling in 2012-13 compared with 694 in 2011-12 (6.1% increase in clients). The continuing increase in demand is in line with national trends as reported in the Guardian, November 2013 (<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/nov/06/parent-students-unhappy>).

The Counselling Service saw 5.2 % of the general student population in 2012-13, maintaining the percentage of students seen by the Counselling Service at over 5% for the last two years.

Gender

The ratio of female to male clients increased again with more than two thirds of clients being female (72%). The percentage of male students decreased 0.7% to 28%, representing 3.2% of the overall male student population. By contrast, 6.9% of the overall female student population attended counselling in 2012-13.

Attendance

Attendance statistics were interesting for 2012-13, with large decreases in the number of recorded absences and cancellations. The total number of unattended sessions decreased from 778 in 2011-12 to 490 in 2012-13. There may be several reasons for the decrease, including an emphasis on the importance of not missing sessions at initial appointments and the limiting of sessions to 8 per client. However, it is more likely that reporting errors might account for the low numbers of cancellations and absences recorded and as such, the 'total sessions offered' (4135) is likely to be lower than the actual total offered by the Service.

The pattern of demand for sessions and initial appointments across the year was roughly consistent with previous years. However, the usual peak times were lower for 2012-13 but by contrast, demand was consistently higher between September to November and from December to March. There was an increase in demand for initial sessions between August and November, a fact borne out by anecdotal experience in the Service at the start of the academic year.

On average, students completed fewer sessions; 5.6 including the initial exploratory session compared with 6.1% in 2011-12. This may be consistent with the 8 session policy becoming more embedded in the way the service works.

Waiting Times

In contrast to recent years, the waiting time for initial appointments increased from 22.1 days in 2011-12 to 24.9 days in 2012-13 again possibly reflecting the increasing demand on the service at the beginning of the academic year.

Client Funding Sources

There was an increase of 51 (8.6%) in the number of 'Home' students attending for counselling and slight decreases in clients from other funding sources.

Client Age and Year of Study

There was an increase in the number of undergraduates (particularly 1st years) attending for counselling and a notable decrease in the number of post-graduate taught clients. This is in contrast to previous years and is reflected by a slight decrease from 25 to 24 years in the average age of clients.

Ethnicity and Disability

The pattern of reporting for ethnicity and disability remained largely consistent with previous years. There was an increase in the number of Chinese students attending counselling for the first time in several years and the biggest increase (37 clients) was in the number of White British students attending, representing 71% of clients.

There was another increase in the number of clients reporting a 'Specific Learning Disability' (from 36 to 46) and increases in the number of clients reporting 'Autistic Spectrum Disorder' and 'Blind or Partially Sighted'.

Schools

Once again, Humanities students are the biggest users of counselling (35% of clients) and LDC is again the largest user by school with 13.2% of LDC students in counselling (an increase of 3.8% on 2011-12).

Referral Routes

Reporting for referral routes followed a similar pattern to previous years. Once again there were increases in referrals from 'Self'; 'Dean of Students' Office'; and 'Friends and family'.

Session Themes

Information about session themes is generally consistent with previous years. 'Anxiety' and 'Depression / Mood Swings' are the predominant themes at initial sessions while 'Relationships' and 'Self and Identity' become more prevalent in ongoing sessions.

Groups and Workshops

In 2012-13 the Counselling Service offered the following groups:

- Bereavement Group
- Introduction to Mindfulness
- Mindfulness drop-in
- Mindfulness based compassion meditation

Figures for the Mindfulness Groups showed that 18 clients made use of these sessions with some attending all three group formats. Attendees at drop-in sessions were primarily students who had already attended a 6 week introductory group either in 2012-13 or 2011-12. The Mindfulness based compassion meditation group developed out of the drop-in group and took the format of 7 x 45 minute group meetings over 15 days. Unfortunately, the Bereavement Group did not recruit in 2012-13.

It was noted that group members who had previously been clients at the service appeared to have the best commitment to group attendance and it seems that psycho-educative groups can be an effective follow on for some clients who have completed their individual counselling but who require ongoing support of some kind.

Ruth Roberts
Deputy Director
November 2013

Student Counselling Statistics 2011-13

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% of UEA students	No	% of UEA students
Total No. of Clients	736	5.2	694	5.1
UEA Headcount	14,199		13,514	

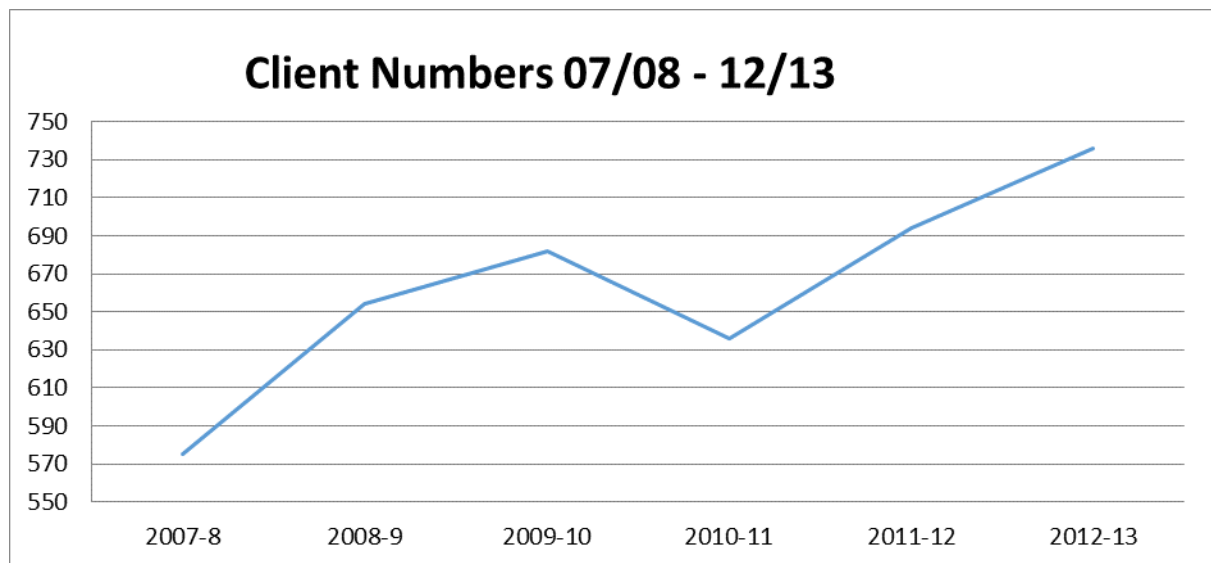
	2012-13			2011-12		
	No	% UEA by gender	% clients	No	% UEA by gender	% clients
Gender						
Female	530	6.9	72.0	495	6.4	71.3
Male	206	3.2	28.0	199	3.5	28.7

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% of UEA students	No	% UEA students
Funding				
Home	627	6.0	576	5.6
EU	33	5.4	36	6.3
International and exchange	76	2.6	80	3.2
Not stated			2	

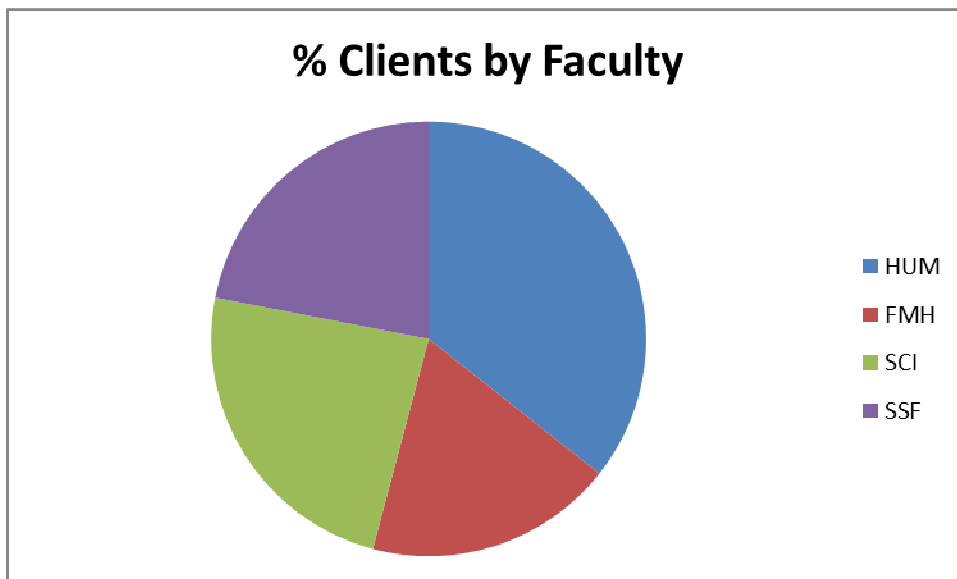
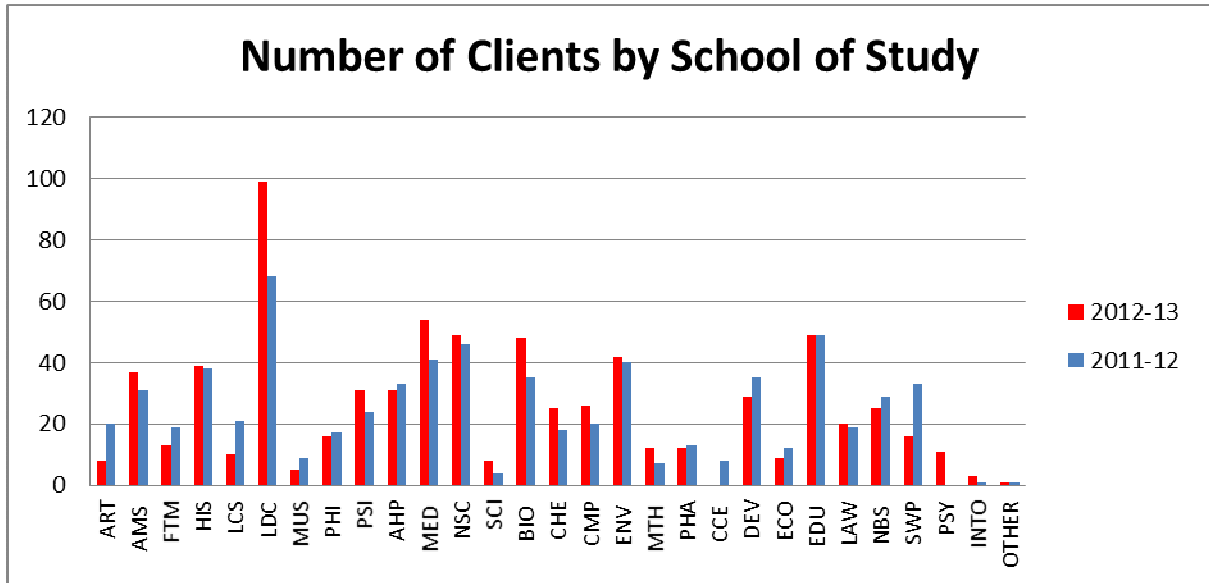
	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% Clients	No	% Clients
Year				
1	187	25.4	150	21.6
2	170	23.1	165	23.8
Years 3/4	168	22.8	152	21.9
Years 5/6	9	1.2	4	0.6
UG total	534	72.6	471	67.9
Visiting	0	0.0		0.0
Post-graduate	192	26.1	220	31.7
Other	0	0.0	3	0.4
	10	1.4		

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% PGR/T students	No	% PGR/T students
PGT	91	3.3	117	4.7
PGR	84	7.8	74	7.1
Not stated	17		29	

Ages	2012-13		2011-12	
	No.	% Clients	No.	% Clients
17	0	0	0	0.0
18	50	6.8	30	4.3
19	120	16.3	87	12.5
20	123	16.7	100	14.4
21	94	12.8	97	14.0
22	68	9.2	70	10.1
23	45	6.1	39	5.6
24	34	4.6	26	3.7
25-29	101	13.7	109	15.7
30-39	59	8.0	73	10.5
40-49	27	3.7	44	6.3
50-59	15	2.0	17	2.4
60+	0	0.0	2	0.3
Data missing	0		0	0.0
Av. Age at registration	24yrs		25yrs	



School/Unit of Study	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% students in School	No	% students in School
HUM				
ART	8	3.8	20	10.3
AMS	37	9.5	31	8.4
FTM	13	4.7	19	6.9
HIS	39	6.7	38	6.7
LCS	10	3.5	21	7.2
LDC	99	13.2	68	9.4
MUS	5	5.6	9	6.4
PHI	16	8.7	17	8.5
PSI	31	6.3	24	4.9
Total	258	7.9	247	7.6
FMH				
AHP	31	9.8	33	10.0
MED	54	5.3	41	4.3
NSC	49	5.3	46	8.4
Total	134	5.9	120	6.6
SCI				
BIO	8	9.6	4	5.1
BIO	48	6.6	35	4.8
CHE	25	4.5	18	3.5
CMP	26	4.7	20	3.6
ENV	42	6.5	40	5.9
MTH	12	3.4	7	2.0
PHA	12	2.1	13	2.4
Total	173	4.9	137	4.0
SSF				
CCE			8	4.9
DEV	29	7.4	35	8.9
ECO	9	1.1	12	1.7
EDU	49	5.1	49	5.2
LAW	20	3.3	19	2.8
NBS	25	1.9	29	2.5
SWK	16	4.4	33	4.8
PSY	11	3.2		
Total	159	3.1	185	3.7
INTO	3		1	
OTHER	1		1	



	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% sessions	No	% sessions
Number of Sessions Completed				
Total	4135		4263	
Full sessions completed	3501	84.7	3653	85.7
Exploratories	634	15.3	610	14.3

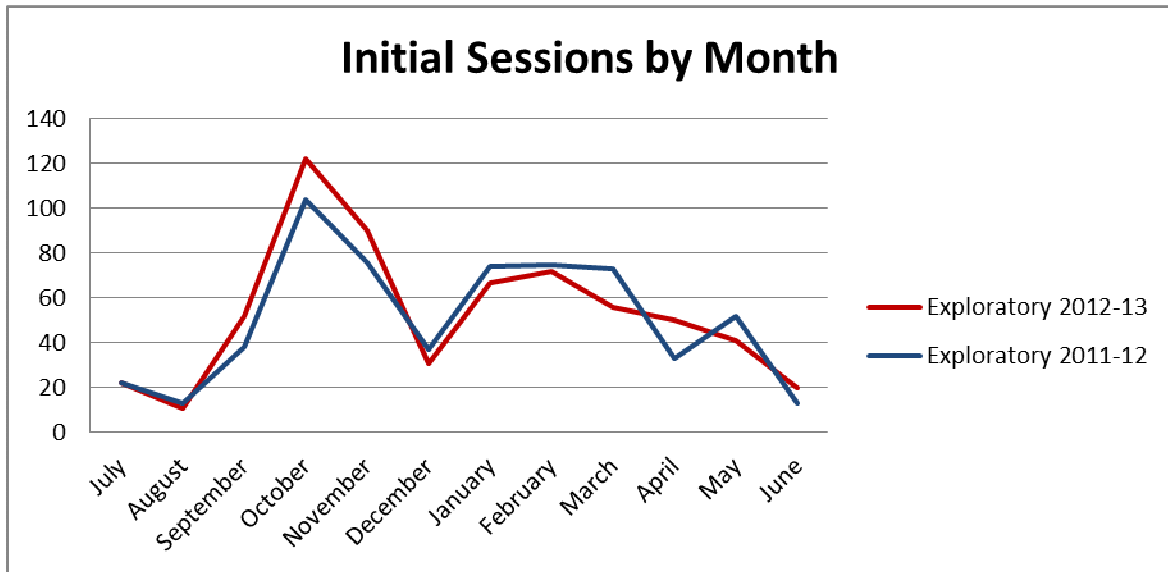
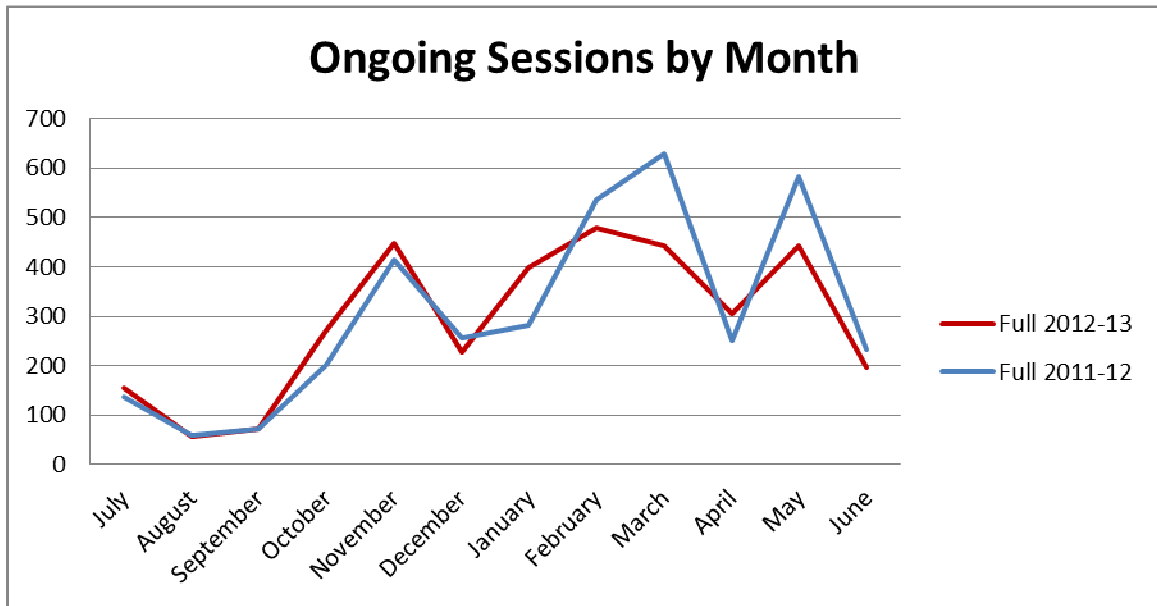
	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% clients	No	% clients
Time between Exploratory and First Session Offered				
Clients having exploratory only	89	12.1	89	12.8
No Waiting Time (returners or no ongoing sessions i.e. DNF /CX 1st session)	115	15.6	90	13.0
0-7 days	100	13.6	104	15.0
1-2 weeks	145	19.7	166	23.9
2-3 weeks	63	8.6	86	12.4
3-4 weeks	56	7.6	46	6.6
4-8 weeks	127	17.3	82	11.8
8-12 weeks	25	3.4	18	2.6
12+ weeks	16	2.2	13	1.9
			694	100.0
Average Interval	24.9		22.1	

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% total sessions offered	No	% sessions
Vacant/Reassigned Sessions*				
Cancellations	221	4.8	403	8.0
Did not appear	206	4.5	300	6.0
Did not appear for first session	63	1.4	75	1.5
Total sessions offered	4625		5041	
Vacant/reassigned sessions	490	10.6	778	15.4

*Cancelled sessions are offered to other clients where possible.

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% clients	No	% clients
Number of Full Sessions per Client				
1	67	9.1	83	12.0
2	67	9.1	58	8.4
3	69	9.4	61	8.8
4	51	6.9	48	6.9
5	47	6.4	46	6.6
6	45	6.1	38	5.5
7	40	5.4	29	4.2
8	106	14.4	56	8.1
9-12	86	11.7	81	11.7
13-16	12	1.6	32	4.6
17-20	8	1.1	15	2.2
21+	2	0.3	16	2.3
0	136	18.5	131	18.9
Average including exploratories	5.6		6.1	
Average excluding exploratories	4.8		5.3	

	Full		Exploratory		Totals	
	2012-13	2011-12	2012-13	2011-12	2012-13	2011-12
Sessions by month						
July	155	138	22	22	177	160
August	58	59	11	13	69	72
September	72	72	52	38	124	110
October	271	202	122	104	393	306
November	449	413	90	76	539	489
December	228	255	31	37	259	292
January	399	281	67	74	466	355
February	479	535	72	75	551	610
March	444	630	56	73	500	703
April	306	252	50	33	356	285
May	443	583	41	52	484	635
June	197	233	20	13	217	246
Total	3501	3653	634	610	4135	4263



	2012-13		2011-12	
	No	% Clients	No	% Clients
Referral Routes In				
Self	409	55.6	385	55.5
Advisor/academic staff	51	6.9	55	7.9
DOS office	51	6.9	43	6.2
Administrators	18	2.4	16	2.3
Chaplaincy	0	0.0	0	0.0
Health Centre/GP	54	7.3	61	8.8
Psychiatrist	0	0.0	0	0.0
Outside GP	24	3.3	24	3.5
Union of Students	4	0.5	9	1.3
Careers Centre	2	0.3	2	0.3
Friends/ Family	114	15.5	89	12.8
Outside Agencies	5	0.7	3	0.4
Other	4	0.5	7	1.0
Data missing	0	0	0	0.0

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No.	% Expls	No.	% Expls
Major Themes at Exploratory				
Abuse	29	4.6	20	3.3
Academic concerns	52	8.2	54	8.9
Anxiety	143	22.6	127	20.8
Addiction	3	0.5	4	0.7
Depression/mood swings	131	20.7	111	18.2
Loss	67	10.6	84	13.8
Other mental health problems	10	1.6	9	1.5
Physical health	11	1.7	17	2.8
Eating disorders	11	1.7	11	1.8
Relationships	99	15.6	91	14.9
Self and identity	45	7.1	50	8.2
Sexual issues	6	0.9	4	0.7
Transitions	10	1.6	19	3.1
Welfare / work related	4	0.6	1	0.2
Self-harm	7	1.1	8	1.3
Other	3	0.5	0	0.0
None recorded	3	0.5	0	0.0

Ongoing Session Themes	2012-13		2011-12	
	No.	% sessions	No.	% sessions
Abuse	134	3.8	125	3.4
Academic concerns	292	8.3	233	6.4
Anxiety	571	16.3	490	13.4
Addiction	7	0.2	24	0.7
Depression/mood swings	492	14.1	512	14.0
Loss	221	6.3	353	9.7
Other mental health problems	37	1.1	28	0.8
Physical health	59	1.7	91	2.5
Eating disorders	80	2.3	67	1.8
Relationships	931	26.6	809	22.1
Self and identity	529	15.1	719	19.7
Sexual issues	24	0.7	36	1.0
Transitions	58	1.7	91	2.5
Welfare / work concerns	33	0.9	17	0.5
Self-harm	30	0.9	42	1.1
Other	3	0.1	16	0.4

Ethnicity	2012-13		2011-12	
	No.	% Clients	No.	% Clients
White British	525	71.3	488	70.3
White Irish	20	2.7	12	1.7
Other White	72	9.8	84	12.1
Asian / Asian British (Indian)	11	1.5	14	2.0
Asian / Asian British (Bangladeshi)	2	0.3	2	0.3
Asian / Asian British (Pakistani)	11	1.5	3	0.4
Other Asian /Asian British	7	1.0	8	1.2
Black / Black British (Caribbean)	1	0.1	2	0.3
Black / Black British (African)	17	2.3	16	2.3
Other Black / Black British	1	0.1	2	0.3
Chinese	18	2.4	8	1.2
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	2	0.3	2	0.3
Mixed - White and Black African	3	0.4	4	0.6
Mixed - White and Asian	5	0.7	6	0.9
Other Mixed Background	17	2.3	14	2.0
Other	21	2.9	25	3.6
No data	3	0.4	4	0.6

	2012-13		2011-12	
	No.	% clients	No.	% clients
Disability				
Autistic Spectrum	9	1.2	1	0.1
Blind or partially sighted	4	0.5	1	0.1
Deaf or hard of hearing	7	1.0	7	1.0
Mental Health Difficulties	24	3.3	24	3.5
Multiple Disability	1	0.1	1	0.1
Personal Care Support	1	0.1		0.0
Specific Learning Disability	46	6.3	36	5.2
Wheelchair or mobility difficulties	2	0.3		0.0
Unseen Disability	17	2.3	21	3.0
No Known Disability	519	70.5	491	70.7
Other	11	1.5	4	0.6
None noted	102	13.9	108	15.6

Groups Offered by the Counselling Service 2012-13				
	Hours	Participants	Total attendee hours	Av attendee hours
Intro to Mindfulness 6 sessions	2x6hrs	16	71	4.4
Mindfulness Lunchtime Drop In	17x1 hr	12	29	2.4
Compassion Fortnight	7x1 hr	5	21	4.2
Total:	36	*18 individuals	121	6.7

*Drop-in sessions and 'compassion fortnight' were intended as follow up opportunities after the 6 week course. Some participants attended two out of three or all three groups. Two individuals attended drop –in sessions without attending the 6 week course.

Phase II of Teaching Fellowship Findings: The Experience of HUM Students of Counselling and Faculty-Based Support at UEA

The study summarised here built upon the first phase of a Teaching Fellowship (Kathleen Lane and Judy Moore, 2011-2012) which investigated UEA undergraduate students' experience of counselling. Findings from Phase I were presented in the Annual Report for 2011-12. Phase II of this Teaching Fellowship (Kathleen Lane, Judy Moore, Peter Handley, 2012-2013) continued the study with a focus on the Faculty of Humanities, as students from HUM are the biggest users of the University Counselling Service, while also exploring aspects of School-level support for students in HUM. As a result, both staff and students were approached during the second Phase of the study.

This mixed methods investigation was conducted between September 2012 and March 2013. Seven undergraduates from four Schools and nine members of academic, administrative and local support staff across the Faculty were interviewed. The full report can be obtained from Kathleen Lane (kathleen.lane@uea.ac.uk) or Judy Moore (judith.moore@uea.ac.uk).

Findings from Phase II, consistent with our earlier results, indicated that counselling has a positive impact on undergraduate student experience and student retention. The student participants were dealing with disabling personal and academic issues. Based on their interviews, however, counselling at UEA resulted in substantial improvement in their well-being. They cited:

- working more effectively owing to reduced stress
- feeling comfortable and more confident about approaching their tutors
- increasing the quality of their academic work

In terms of student experience, all undergraduate participants described the impact of counselling positively and constructively. One student who had called herself "desperately unhappy" was able to re-focus her energies and no longer felt on a student "conveyor belt" after her counselling. Others spoke of better relationships with their peers and an enhanced outlook about themselves. Most students also described a more positive attitude towards UEA as part of their improved student experience.

In terms of retention, counselling's impact was highly affirmative for four students who identified that their completion had been at risk. Although two other students reported that they were not at risk of quitting their courses, both attributed their improved academic output to their counselling.

When asked what they considered provided them with effective support in HUM, separate from counselling, the students emphasised constructive personal interactions: effective adviser-student relationships such as the proactive adviser who sent a monthly email to one undergraduate checking that "everything's ok"; academics and tutors who were approachable and helpful, contrary to those who seemed, in one student's words, "closed off". A few examples of these types of shortcomings in the adviser-student relationship were revealed among the undergraduate participants, which contributed to what they felt was less effective support within their Schools. We also suggest that these students' experience may reveal a lack of clarity on the parts of academics in fulfilling or understanding the adviser role, a point which was reflected in explicit terms among the staff participants.

According to the comments from the study participants, cascading current information to both students and staff is a critical element in providing effective support within Schools. Of particular

importance is keeping students aware of what facilities and services are available for them. Indications from some staff participants suggested that the impact of time pressures and reduced personal contact with undergraduates in the constrained HE environment might contribute to less effective student support. By contrast, the study findings demonstrated clearly that personal interactions are considerably more effective for student academic work, student experience and, for some, retention, than impersonal encounters with “anonymous structures” at the university.

Several staff cited a lack of or reduced personal contact afforded to students and an increasingly impersonal interface provided by the university as detrimental to undergraduates. Elsewhere we have suggested that counselling offers a personable “face” of the institution to students.² As the students made explicit in their interviews, the relationships they established with academic and other staff helped to create a positive atmosphere in which they could thrive as undergraduates.

Phase II of this study highlighted that counselling enables students to re-engage with their environment and to restore or enhance their confidence, sense of self and their relationships with friends, peers and academic staff. In turn, this leads to positive changes in academic work, student experience and student retention. These improvements are extended and reinforced when effective support – largely, but not exclusively, in the adviser-student and tutor-student relationship – exists at School level. An embedded counselling service at UEA seems to be highly valued by the undergraduates who have accessed it, resulting in students who are better equipped to engage with their studies and enjoy an enhanced student experience with a more positive outlook towards the university.

Kathleen Lane and Judy Moore
November 2013

² Giving ‘a face’ to the university: the value of an embedded counselling service (November 2012) *AUCC Journal*, pp. 19-23

The effectiveness of person-centred therapy for student clients who attend the University Counselling Service

The effectiveness of psychotherapy refers to its benefits in routine clinical practice and is often assessed using research designs that measure change in clients' psychological well-being over the course of therapy. This brief report demonstrates the effectiveness of person-centred therapy delivered to student clients at the University Counselling Service through an evaluation of data obtained using the Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure (CORE-OM). The CORE-OM is a reliable, valid and widely used self-report measure of general psychological distress that consists of 34 questions covering subjective well-being, problems/symptoms, life functioning, and risk (Barkham et al., 2006; Evans et al., 2002).

Following findings presented in last years' annual report, the current results originate from the analysis of a larger dataset comprising 454 undergraduate and postgraduate students who completed the CORE-OM at assessment, first and last counselling sessions between October 2009 and June 2013. The mean change in CORE-OM clinical score (mean question score multiplied by 10) was calculated for two periods (i) assessment to first counselling session and (ii) first to last counselling session. In addition, rates of statistically reliable and clinically significant change are presented as a commonly used index of effectiveness: reliable change is change in a client's score (± 5) that is not due to measurement error (Barkham et al., 2006), and clinical change occurs when a client's score crosses the cut-off score (10) that divides clinical and non-clinical populations (Connell et al., 2007).

The following tables show, in different ways, that clients typically improved over the duration of their counselling. From Table I, it is evident that the majority of clients were categorised within the clinical population at assessment (86%) and first session (82%), but only 35% were in the clinical population at the end of counselling. This is reflected in the mean CORE-OM score being noticeably above the clinical cut-off at both assessment and first session, but below cut-off at the last session.

Table I. Mean *CORE-OM* clinical score and percentage of clients categorised by non-clinical and clinical population using a cut-off score of 10.

Session	Mean	SD	95% CI	Non-clinical	Clinical
Assessment ($n = 396$)	16.50	5.80	15.93 – 17.07	56 (14.1%)	340 (85.9%)
First session ($n = 418$)	15.33	5.91	14.77 – 15.90	76 (18.2%)	342 (81.8%)
Last session ($n = 251$)	8.97	5.61	8.18 – 9.57	163 (64.9 %)	88 (35.1%)

Table II makes clear the extent of the mean change in CORE-OM score between sessions. It is noticeable that the change between first and last counselling sessions was five times greater than the change during the waiting period between assessment and first session.

Table II. Mean change in CORE-OM clinical score between sessions.

Session	Mean	SD	95% CI
Assessment to first session (<i>n</i> = 369)	1.12	3.95	0.71 – 1.52
First to last session (<i>n</i> = 230)	6.52	5.34	5.83 – 7.22

Note. Positive mean change in CORE-OM clinical score equates to improvement. Sample size reflects the number of clients for whom CORE-OM score was available from both assessment and first session or both first and last session.

Table III displays the rates of reliable and clinically significant change between assessment and first counselling session, and between first and last sessions for those clients whose CORE-OM scores at assessment or first counselling session were above the clinical cut-off score of 10. Of those clients who were above the clinical cut-off at assessment 77% experienced no reliable change in their psychological well-being while waiting for counselling to start. However, over the course of counselling 69% of clients achieved reliable and clinically significant improvement (RCSI) or reliable improvement.

Table III. Statistically reliable and clinically significant change between assessment and first counselling session/first and last counselling session for clients above the cut-off score of 10.

	Assessment to first session		First to last session	
	Clients above cut-off (<i>n</i> = 313)*		Clients above cut-off (<i>n</i> = 192)**	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
RCSI	21	6.7	101	52.6
Reliable improvement only	37	11.8	32	16.7
No reliable change	241	77.0	59	30.7
Reliable deterioration	14	4.5	0	0

Note. RCSI = reliable and clinically significant improvement. * at assessment, ** at first counselling session

The results presented here demonstrate that person-centred therapy routinely practised at the University Counselling Service is associated with meaningful improvements in the psychological well-being of a large majority of student clients who completed the CORE-OM at their first and last counselling sessions.

Stuart Williams
November 2013

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Associates – Public Lectures and Workshops

Public Lecture – 18th April 2013

Beth Freire from University of Aberdeen

‘Self Love: The Transcendent and Healing Power of Unconditional Positive Self-Regard’

Workshop – 19th April 2013

Beth Freire from University of Aberdeen

‘Trust, Safety and Control in Person-Centred Therapy’

Workshop – 11th July 2013

Professor Akira Ikemi of Kansai University School of Professional Clinical Psychology, Osaka,
Japan

‘Creating a Space for Reflection’

Counselling Service Website

www.uea.ac.uk/dos/couns

The University Counselling Service website provides the UEA community with information about the Counselling Service, together with links to other websites providing helpful information that may be of interest to clients, non-clients and counselling professionals. The current sections are:

- About us
- Enquiries and Appointments (including opening times)
- Helpful Resources
- Workshops/Lectures
- Training and Professional Issues

The Helpful Resources section includes a link to the ‘Student Counselling in UK Universities’ (<http://www.student.counselling.co.uk/index.htm>), a site set up by various heads of university counselling services to provide information and advice for students, families, parents and friends.

Any comments on the Service website can be sent to: **csr@uea.ac.uk**