

Information Assurance and Governance  
Office of the Principal

18 June, 2018

Dear Ms Wylie,

**Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002**  
**Our Ref: 184-18**

I refer to your following request for information dated 19 May, 2018 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 ("the FOISA"):

*a) In 2016-2017, how many students accessed mental welfare counselling services?*

In academic year 2016/17, 992 students were in contact with a Counsellor via any method i.e. phone, email, letter, text message or video call. Students may also see an adviser in our Student Life and Wellbeing team, Disability team or the Mental Health Co-ordinator.

*b) How long did it take for them to access these services after raising an issue?*

The University does not operate a waiting list. Students are assessed by one or our advisers in the Student Life and Wellbeing team who assess and prioritise appointments, providing support to students until their appointment with the relevant member of the Counselling and Wellbeing team.

As the University does not hold any recorded information relevant to this part of your enquiry notice is given to this effect under section 17(1) of the FOISA.

*c) Are there any reports or statistics that indicate how effective the counselling services have been for students struggling with their mental health?*

CORE Outcome Measure is a validated self-report questionnaire designed to be used before, during and after therapy. It is used routinely by Wellbeing Advisers, Counsellors and the Mental Health team (and therefore, this data relates not only to counselling, but to other teams as well) to make an initial assessment, and then to monitor response to therapy. Within this assessment, some students also participate in the Counselling Impact on Academic Outcomes questionnaire (CIAO). This consists of questions that asks the student to rate the impact of their problems, and the counselling they have attended on several different aspects of their lives. Not all students complete all aspects of these questionnaires.

Of the cases where two or more time points were recorded, 97% showed either stable, or reliable and/or clinical improvement in their scores. Of these, those indicating risk also fell (risk of suicide fell by 42%, risk of self-harm fell by 52% and risk to others fell by 67%).

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In addition, 135 students completed our internal survey for the counselling, mental health and wellbeing service, and 94% were satisfied with the support they received, and 93% found their adviser/Counsellor helpful and informative.

### Your right to seek a review of how your information request was managed

If you are not satisfied with the University's response and/or our reasoning set-out above, you have the right to request a review of our decision. The time lines in which this right is available are set out in section 20(5)(a) and (b) FOISA. In broad terms the right to seek a review must be exercised within 40 working days of receiving this response.

Any request for review should be put in writing or some other permanent form e.g. an e-mail and should be sent to the University of St Andrews, through the contact details provided below.

A request for a Review should:

- a) state your name and address;
- b) describe the nature of your original request; and
- c) explain the reasons why you are dissatisfied with our response.

Freedom of Information / Environmental Information

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If you remain dissatisfied with how your request for information has been dealt with following Review, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner (SIC) for a decision. In the event of an appeal to the SIC, the Commissioner will generally only be able to investigate the matters raised in the request for review.

Details on how to make an appeal online to the SIC can be found on their website: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>

Alternatively, you can contact the SIC by post, telephone or email at:

Scottish Information Commissioner

Kinburn Castle

Doubledykes Road

St Andrews

Fife KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610

E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

This concludes the University's response.

Yours sincerely

**JUNE WEIR**

Information Assurance and Governance Officer

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