



STUDENT HEALTH & WELLBEING: FACTS AND FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

In common with other Scottish Universities, Heriot-Watt University has experienced a significant increase in the number of requests for information for data relating to student mental ill-health, access to counselling services and health & wellbeing funding. We recognise that there is a high level of stakeholder interest but at the same time, we wish to maintain the same level service and support provided by our Counsellors and Wellbeing staff (who hold this data) to the students.

In order to continue providing a service to our students and meeting our transparency requirements, we have drafted this Factsheet, providing information in the format we record but taking into account what has been requested predominately by journalists, and some Mental Health Charities and other stakeholders.

We do not currently compile statistical information relating to the take-up of our counselling services by Undergraduate/Postgraduate study or gender (see section below) as we have had no business reason to do so. More detailed information may be contained in the individual patient files but resources would need to be diverted from providing the vital counselling function in order to create a new dataset and this could be very time consuming.

HOW MANY STUDENTS ATTEND COUNSELLING AT OUR SCOTTISH CAMPUSES?

We present these figures as they are recorded and span the last 6 academic years.

Academic year	Presenting with Anxiety or Depression	No. of students at our Scottish campuses	Students attending counselling as a % of students/ Scottish campuses
2012-2013	284	8,058	4%
2013-2014	316	8,600	4%
2014-2015	430	8,890	5%
2015-2016	526	8,887	6%
2016-2017	457	9,443	4%
2017-2018	462	10,935	4%

Academic year	Presenting with other issues*	No. of students at our Scottish campuses	Students attending counselling as a % of students/ Scottish campuses
2012-2013	128	8,058	2%
2013-2014	126	8,600	1%
2014-2015	85	8,890	1%
2015-2016	132	8,887	1%
2016-2017	306**	9,443	3%
2017-2018	394	10,935	4%

*This includes students seeking counselling for a range of other issues e.g. academic, financial.

** Our University introduced a new recording system in the 2016-17 Academic year. The 'other' category now also includes academic issues, relationships, self and identity, etc.

The number of students at our Scottish campuses has increased by 36% over the same period.

Our Wellbeing recording system was further enhanced in the 2017-18 academic year and we can now report on the gender numbers at a high level. Of the 856 making individual referrals to the Counselling Service, 46% were Male, and 54% Female. We do not break this information down by 'presenting problems' categories.

Local counselling arrangements are also in place to support our students at the Dubai and Malaysia campuses. For additional information, please email us at foi@hw.ac.uk

HEALTH AND WELLBEING: FUNDING AND STAFFING LEVELS

Our Counselling Service forms part of the larger Professional Services group: Academic Registry and at present the costs are not broken down to the functional level. The information is exempt from release under Section 17: information not held.

To reflect the increased demand, the staffing level has increased from 1.7 full-time equivalents (FTE) in 2012/13 to 4.1 FTEs in 2017/18.

WAITING TIMES AND ASSESSMENTS

We do not record waiting times but we aim to see the majority of our clients for formal counselling sessions within 10 working days. During periods of very high demand and where we anticipate that a patient may not be seen within the target date, we have a system whereby we prioritise the most vulnerable patients.

We also offer daily drop sessions for students to discuss issues with Wellbeing staff. In the 2017/18 academic year, a total of 274 students attended this service.

The University continues to provide counselling services for the students throughout their stay at the University including term breaks. This means that there will be people The Wellbeing services will cease being provided once the student graduates or leaves the University.

ADDITIONAL WE SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS

- Increased the number of group work sessions, to include developing skills in mindfulness and in dealing with social anxiety, with exam stress and in overcoming nerves when making presentations
- We launched our new Student Wellbeing Centre in the 2017/18 academic year which brought together counselling and support services, disability support services, specialist support services for mental health and support for students who may be struggling academically
- Any of our students going through a tough time can now access free online support with [Big White Wall](#): a service that provides 24/7 online peer and professional support
- We also have a [Student Mental health policy](#) as well as a [staff leaflet](#) on Student mental ill health.

ADDITIONAL READING

As additional contextual information, we thought you might find the following report from Universities UK useful:

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/student-mental-wellbeing-in-higher-education.aspx>

You may also find the [Royal College of Psychiatrists' Report on the Mental Health of Students in Higher Education in 2011](#) useful as additional background information.