

## Counselling and Mental Health Team

### To Applicants Managing a Mental Health Difficulty

Starting University can be stressful in itself, and if you also experience a mental health difficulty, it can be even harder. There are steps that you can take to ensure that you are well-supported at University. The advice below aims to enable you to be and feel prepared prior to starting your course and ease the stress of studying in Higher Education.

**Be prepared:** Be prepared and get the support you need in place. If you are receiving support for your mental health difficulties in your home town; for example, from a Mental Health Nurse, Social Worker, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Counsellor or support group we advise that you set-up similar support in Northampton prior to starting at the university. Speak to the professional you are gaining support from and ask for help in arranging similar support in Northampton ready for when you start your studies. We advise students to do this as soon as possible. You can contact the University of Northampton's Mental Health Advisers (details below) preferably the summer before you start at university. They will offer an opportunity to discuss -in confidence- any needs you may have relating to your mental health difficulties to support your transition.

**Register with a GP:** It is important to register with a local GP at the earliest opportunity as they are essential in helping you to maintain both your physical and mental health. They also offer the quickest route to accessing specialist NHS services should you need them. Visit <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4> for details of a practice closest to your planned accommodation.

**Accommodation:** If you are applying for Halls of Residence and have particular requirements related to your health you can request priority accommodation. Please contact the ASSIST office to request a form to apply for this by calling: 01604 893430 or by email: [ASSIST@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:ASSIST@northampton.ac.uk).

**Examinations:** If your mental health difficulty has caused you problems with exams in the past, you may have been awarded reasonable adjustments e.g. additional time to compensate for difficulties managing anxiety. You should discuss your needs regarding exams and assessments with your Personal Tutor and Mental Health Adviser or Mentor. Requests for adjustments must be made at the earliest opportunity, and at least four weeks prior to sitting your exams. If your course is based at a Further Education college, speak to your Course Leader or Personal Tutor.

**Course-work Assessments:** Some students find that they struggle to keep up with the work needed to complete assessments. Discuss any difficulties you are having with your Personal Tutor and/or Mental Health Adviser or Mentor. It is often possible to arrange an extension, or you may be advised to apply to defer work via the mitigating circumstances procedure. For most courses group-work and presentations to fellow students and tutors form part of the assessment process. You may want to consult the programme guide before choosing modules if these forms of assessment pose particular difficulties for you. It is important that any problems

you are experiencing are addressed at the earliest opportunity, to avoid these difficulties affecting your progression.

**Disabled Students' Allowance:** You may be eligible for this funding from Student Finance to pay for additional study-related costs arising because of your mental health difficulty. Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) can fund equipment such as a digital voice recorder to record lectures if you have problems concentrating, or partial funding for a computer to work from home if you experience 'bad' days and/or find it difficult to use communal facilities provided.

You may need this funding for individual study support, especially if you have taken a long break from studies before coming to university. DSA can also fund Specialist Mental Health Mentoring if regular ongoing support proves necessary. Student Finance will require medical evidence, usually from a GP. Please click on link for more information about Student Finance England <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>.

## **Support Services at the University:**

**Mental Health Advisers & Mentors:** Initial appointments are currently taking place by remote delivery – telephone or video call – but when the team are able to resume seeing students in person, the sessions take place at our Waterside Campus. You can discuss in confidence any worries, concerns or requirements relating to your mental health difficulty and how this may affect your learning and progression. These services complement NHS mental health services and do not replace them. If you have any queries, please contact us by emailing: [mha@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:mha@northampton.ac.uk)

**Counsellors:** Initial appointments are taking place by remote delivery – telephone or video call – but when the team are able to resume sessions in person, the appointments take place at our Waterside campus. They offer an initial intake appointment followed by 6 sessions. They do not give advice or offer solutions, but help students clarify thoughts and feelings and support them in making choices and decisions. This service can be contacted by email once you have enrolled: [counsellors@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:counsellors@northampton.ac.uk)

**Multi-Faith Centre:** Draws from a number of faith traditions and works for the benefit of all students regardless of faith, belief, sexuality or gender. You are welcome to drop by at any time to talk, meet with others, pray or simply enjoy some quiet time. For further information contact: 01604 892488 or Email: [chaplancy@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:chaplancy@northampton.ac.uk).

**Northampton Assessment Centre:** Following application for DSA funding an assessment appointment can be made by phone 01604 892668 or email [NAC@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:NAC@northampton.ac.uk)

**Other Student Services: Financial Guidance, Accommodation Services and ASSIST** are also available to students. For further information phone: 01604 892833 or email: [SID@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:SID@northampton.ac.uk)

**Personal Tutor:** Usually the first point of contact for problems or worries with academic work. Once you have enrolled make sure you get in touch with your Personal Tutor as soon as possible as they are an important source of support.

**For further information about all services please visit the [University of Northampton webpages](#).**

**Counselling & Mental Health Team**  
**Student Services**

**Email:** [mha@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:mha@northampton.ac.uk)

**Web:** <https://www.northampton.ac.uk/student-life/>