

Head of Counselling and Specialist Support

DIRECTORATE OF PEOPLE

Closing date: 09 August 2021

Interview date: 25 August 2021

Reference number: SUP146A



INTRODUCTION

The University Counselling Service successfully transitioned to a “One at a Time/Single Session Therapy” model from the summer of 2019 in order to provide counselling at the point of need rather than at the point of availability. The service assists around 1,400 students each year and since March 2020, the service has also been available for University staff. We are proud to have no waiting list and an average wait of 2 days for an appointment.

Based in the heart of our Old Aberdeen campus, the service offers counselling to a population of approximately 16,000 students, and 4,000 staff with personal or study/work-related issues which are causing them concern or emotional distress.

Looking forward, we are seeking a new Head of Service to lead the team in meeting the evolving demands of our student body including the diverse international community, online learning students and those studying in our global campuses, including in Doha, Qatar. The role will also take responsibility for oversight of our Specialist Mentor team, working with our Lead Mentor, to develop and enhance the service and will also be responsible, as appropriate, for additional service development relating to mental health for our students.

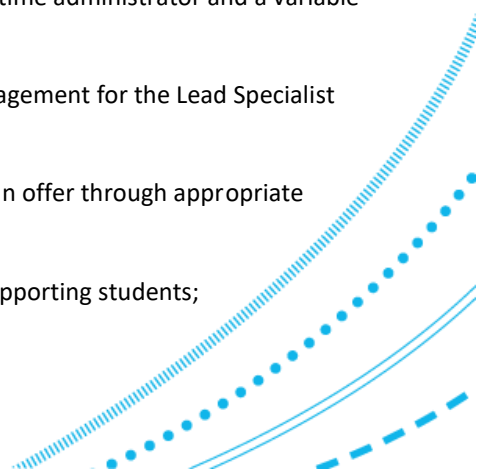
The postholder will play a crucial role in the development and operation of the University’s general policies on student support and act as a member of the Student Support Management team and, as required, take on delegated responsibilities from the Head of Student Support.

JOB DESCRIPTION

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

The postholder will be responsible for managing the University Counselling Service and its budget and line managing and supporting the team of counsellors, administration team and honorary staff. You will also oversee the strategic and operational delivery of Specialist Mentoring services in conjunction with the Lead Specialist Mentor, taking responsibility for the budget associated with the service. You will be required to liaise with a range of University staff and external professionals, prepare reports and training materials, provide workshops and presentations as required. The role will also look at supporting the development and management of the University crisis and trauma-support processes for students and have a wider input to the management of the Student Support department. Depending on the position of the successful applicant (and working hours agreed) you may also be required to take on a counselling case load to supplement the role.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Coordinate and manage the day-to-day running of the University Counselling Service and its budget and premises;
 - Provide line management and support for a team of full and part-time Counsellors, a full-time administrator and a variable number of part-time Associate Counsellors;
 - Provide operational and strategic oversight of our Specialist Mentor service and line management for the Lead Specialist Mentor;
 - Manage the budget associated with specialist mentoring and maximise the support we can offer through appropriate revenue generation and reclaim from appropriate funding sources;
 - Provide direct counselling for students and staff, and support and consultancy for staff supporting students;
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- Develop and implement policies and practices to maintain a high quality of professional service in accordance with the BACP Ethical Framework;
- Manage the Counselling Service and Specialist Mentoring budgets and produce formal reports about the Counselling Service as required for internal and external audiences;
- Support the development and management of crisis and trauma-support processes for the student body in conjunction with the Head of Student Support and Student Support Management Team;
- Design and facilitate workshops, short courses and presentations with the counselling team aimed at providing more proactive interventions for students and staff;
- Act as a member of the Student Support Management Team and undertake appropriate duties delegated by the Head of Student Support, acting as deputy on strategic and operational issues as required;
- Represent and promote the Counselling Service within the organisation and externally, at national meetings and sector conferences, as appropriate; and
- Participation as a member of the on-call welfare team for out of hour emergencies and crisis.

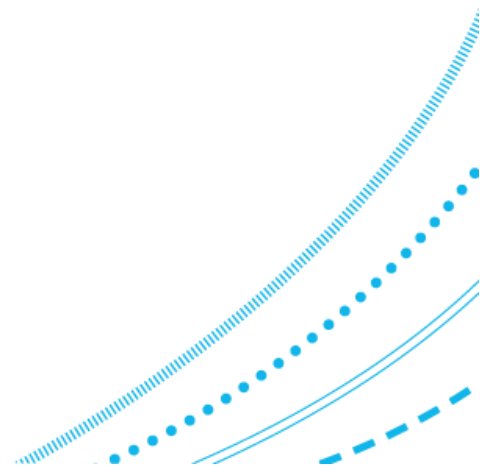
CANDIDATE BACKGROUND

Candidates must hold a recognised counselling qualification (Diploma or higher degree) and must be a registered member and accredited (or working towards accreditation) by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

They must have management experience and extended experience undertaking duties as a Counsellor since qualifying, preferably in a Higher Education setting. An understanding of the role of Counselling in Higher Education, especially the One-at-a-Time/Single Session Therapy model and the current issues affecting both home and international students will be important.

The candidate should have wider experience of working with mental health issues and be able to take a leading role in the policy and procedure relating to, and the direct support given to, student mental health.

In addition, excellent communication skills and experience working with a diverse population is required. Flexibility and the ability to respond to multiple demands and emergency situations is essential as well as experience working with people at all levels within a large organisation. The candidate should have experience of managing a team of counsellors and taking overall responsibility for clinical decisions. They candidate will also have experience of managing staffing and operational budgets.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Salary will be at the appropriate point on the Grade 7 salary scale (£41,526 - £49,552 per annum) with placement according to qualifications and experience.

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references, a commitment to apply for BACP accreditation within 12 months (if not already accredited) and a 12 month probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here

This post does not meet the minimum requirements for visa sponsorship under the Skilled Worker Route. We are therefore unable to consider applicants for this post that require sponsorship to work in the UK.

It is the policy of the University, in line with the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, to carry out Disclosure Scotland checks on all staff. Any offer of employment will be conditional on the completion of a satisfactory Disclosure Scotland check and employment will not commence until such a check has been satisfactorily completed.

AT A GLANCE

SALARY:

Grade 7

£41,526- £52,559 per annum

HOURS OF WORK:

Full Time – with Counselling Case Load.
Part time candidates also welcome

CONTRACT TYPE:

Substantive

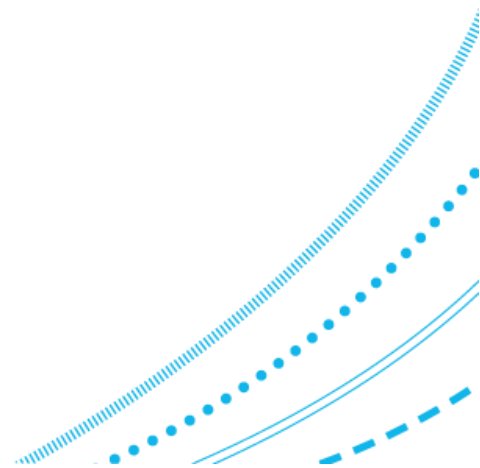
LOCATION:

Aberdeen



PERSON SPECIFICATION

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Education/Qualifications Academic, technical and professional education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised counselling qualification (Diploma or higher degree) • Registered and accredited (or intention and commitment to seek accreditation within 12 months) member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy • Working experience of the One-at-a-Time/Single Session Therapy model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in the One-at-a-Time/Single Session Therapy - model
Work and Other relevant experience (including training) e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of overseeing the operation of a counselling service and line-managing staff, preferably in HE • Significant post-qualification experience working as a Counsellor • Experience working with wider mental health issues and their support • Proficiency delivering training and presentations as well as producing formal reports relating to the service • Good IT skills including proficiency with standard MS Office software and an aptitude to learn new databases quickly • Experience of managing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in HE • Understanding of issues affecting home and international students of all ages
Personal qualities and abilities e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills • Capacity to be flexible and responsive to multiple demands and emergency situations • Ability to work with people at all levels within a large organisation as well as with external professionals • Ability to make sound and difficult clinical decisions in the moment • Ability to manage a varied and busy workload and to accept, often last minute, delegated responsibilities commensurate with the grade • Calm and able to work effectively under pressure 	
Other e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to travel to conferences, external meetings and training events, as required • Ability to participate as a member of the on-call welfare team for out-of-hour student emergencies 	



UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others

The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

<p>— 2019 —</p> <p>SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY</p> <p>— OF THE YEAR —</p>	<p>TOP 20 UK UNIVERSITY</p> <p>Guardian University Guide 2021</p>	<p>12th & 57th</p> <p>IN THE UK & GLOBALLY</p> <p><i>for positive impact on society*</i></p>
<p>1st</p> <p>IN SCOTLAND</p> <p><i>for Science Collaboration**</i></p>	<p>180</p> <p><i>World top ***</i></p>	<p>75%</p> <p><i>of research classified as</i></p> <p>WORLD LEADING****</p>

* THE Impact Rankings 2021 ** CWTS Leiden 2020 *** Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021 **** In-line with the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) results

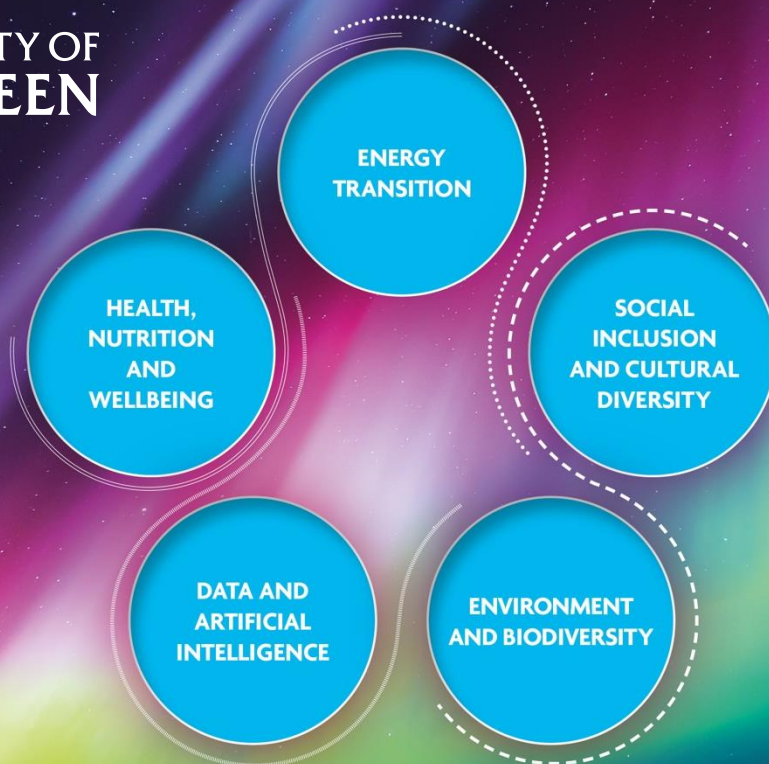
CURRENT CONTEXT

The University continues to build on its achievements. Underpinning our high performance and significant growth is a £100m investment in Aberdeen's estate which will include the completion of a new Science Teaching Hub, the regeneration of the historic King's Quarter and a new Business School building. The University has also invested in 50 new academic posts and in 2020 launched five interdisciplinary, cross-institution Research Centres that will catalyse world-leading research in our areas of strength. Our five Interdisciplinary Challenges are: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing.

ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched [Aberdeen 2040](#), our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**
We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.
- **Interdisciplinary**
We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.
- **International**
We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.
- **Sustainable**
We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances. We work responsibly.



OUR EDUCATION

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

OUR RESEARCH

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen's Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

INTERNATIONAL

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships in e.g. Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students¹ and have been named 32nd in the world for International Outlook². The University of Aberdeen is proud to be the first UK University to operate on a dedicated campus in Qatar. Phase 1 of this partnership with AFG College has successfully recruited over 600 students. Phase 2 will see the creation of a substantially larger campus, with capacity for at least 5,000 students and research activity. For further information on our Qatar campus visit www.abdn.ac.uk/qatar.

IMPACT

Our dedication to building a sustainable future is reflected in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2021 where we were ranked in the top 60 Universities worldwide for positive impact on society.

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2021 we were listed in the global Top 50 for 6 of these goals and in the UK Top 20 for all 17³.

¹ Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021

² QS World University Rankings 2021

³ Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2021

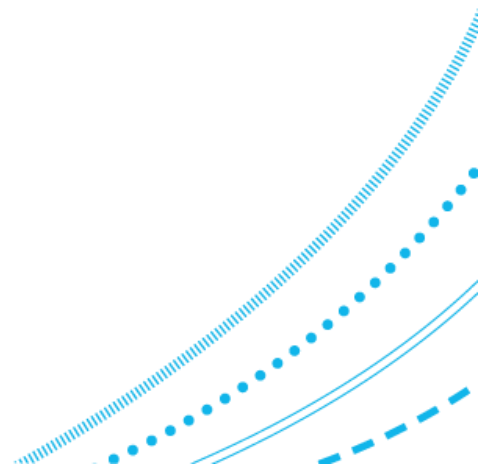


THE DIRECTORATE OF PEOPLE

The Directorate of People at the University of Aberdeen encompasses both student and staff experience and support departments. The areas included in the Directorate of People include Human Resources, Careers and Employability Service, Student Support, Student Experience, Multi-Faith Chaplaincy and Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

These teams work together to ensure that both staff and students have a rewarding and fulfilling experience at the University of Aberdeen and strive to create an inclusive culture that promotes equality and celebrate the diversity of our staff and students.

Our student facing teams aim to provide an outstanding University experience to every student, regardless of whether they are online, on campus or transnational. And our staff-facing teams will work with staff throughout employment to ensure successful role transitions, guide career development, and to promote health, safety and wellbeing.



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ABERDEEN AND ABERDEENSHIRE

Scotland's third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland's top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de-Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including [His Majesty's Theatre](#), [Music Hall](#), [Art Gallery](#), [the P&J Arena](#), [Museums](#), and [Beach Leisure Centre](#). The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland's most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit www.visitabdn.com



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University values a diverse working environment and recognises the benefits this can bring. The University is keen to receive applications from individuals from across all of the equality protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).

The University supports opportunities for flexible working for a range of reasons and has policies in place to facilitate this. The policies can be found at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php>.

The University's commitment to gender equality has been recognised through the achievement of an Athena SWAN Bronze award at an institutional level and across all its subject areas. The University is also a Stonewall Diversity Champion to further LGBT+ equality.

The University is signed up to Advance HE's Race Equality Charter, affirming the University's commitment to the charter's aim of improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.

Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using [contact SCOTLAND-BSL](#).

The University is delighted to be accredited as a [Disability Confident](#) employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment.

www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/equality-and-diversity-277

HOW TO APPLY

Online application forms are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs

The closing date for receipt of applications is **09 August 2021**

Interviews are to be held on **25 August 2021**

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Nicholas Edwards, Deputy Director of People/Head of Student Support
n.edwards@abdn.ac.uk

Please do **not** send application forms or CVs to Nicholas Edwards.

Please quote reference number SUP146A on all correspondence

