

Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service FAQs

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1. Introduction

Imperial College receives many Freedom of Information Act requests regarding the College’s provision of mental health support services. We have compiled the information below based on commonly received FOI requests, covering the available figures for the past seven complete academic years. The information will be updated annually. We hope this document and the information available on our website will provide all the information that you need.

2. Services and support available to students

Mental health support is available to students from various sources, detailed below:

The Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service

The Service aims to enable students to enhance their psychological health and wellbeing, thus empowering them to optimise both their academic accomplishments and their personal development. The experienced team of Counsellors, Mental Health Advisers, Mental Health Study Mentors and Mental Health Intervention Officers are dedicated to providing a safe and compassionate space to explore any emotional or mental health difficulties students may experience and to support them during their time at the university.

The Disability Advisory Service

The service provides support for a range of disabilities including long term mental health and developmental issues.

The Hall Wardens

Wardens provides pastoral support for students in Halls of Residence. Each Hall also has a welfare room to accommodate students with various short-term issues

Imperial College Health Centre

The Health Centre is an NHS GP surgery on the College campus. All of the services referred to above may refer students to the Health Centre or students can self-refer. The College funds a Life Coach, psychodynamic therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy based at the Health Centre

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Personal Tutors	Each undergraduate student has a Personal Tutor, co-ordinated by a departmental Senior Tutor. For Taught Postgraduate students, support is provided by either a Personal Tutor or, for small courses, the Course Director. Each Research Postgraduate student has a supervisor and a mentor or in some cases two supervisors. Postgraduate support in departments is co-ordinated by a Postgraduate Tutor
Departmental Disability Officers	Each academic department has a Disability Officer to provide support to students
Disability Liaison Officers	Each non-academic department (for example the Library and ICT), has a Disability Liaison Officer
Mental Health First Aiders	The College has approximately 400 trained Mental Health First Aiders across the College, who undertake this work alongside their main roles, and many student-facing staff have pastoral responsibilities which will include offering mental health support
Student Support Zone	Further information on the network of support available to students is available here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/

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3. Mental Health awareness

Several mental health awareness events have taken place focusing on engaging students in thinking about their own mental health and the mental health of others. These events include:

- Mental Health Awareness events to promote the work of Nightline
- National Stress Awareness day
- World Mental Health Day

Training is available to all staff to aid recognising mental health issues.

4. Counselling attendance figures

Please note that the Student Counselling Service helps students on a wide range of issues including mental health.

Academic Year	Number of students registered with the Student Counselling Service	Number of students who attended an appointment
2016/17	1013	874
2017/18	1106	971
2018/19	1233	1089
2019/20	1309	1196
2020/21	1445	1396
2021/22	1644	1334
2022/23	1432	1162

5. Counselling waiting time figures

Please note that in all cases the figures reflect student choice as well as service availability.

Student Counselling Service	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Mean average wait in working days for an initial appointment	12.6	13.6	23	15.6	5.8	17.4	18.4
Range of working days wait for an initial appointment	0 – 74	0 – 99	0 – 71	0 – 74	0 - 33	0-61	0-62
Modal average wait in working days for an initial appointment	11	5	25	20	5	20	3

6. Service budget figures

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It is not possible to provide financial figures for all mental health provision because, as outlined above, mental health support is provided widely across College and the costs of providing assistance specifically on mental health within all these services is not separately recorded.

The figures below show the spend or the budget allocated for the whole range of services offered by the College's Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service, and includes the psychotherapist based in the Imperial College Health Centre (the NHS GP surgery serving the College).

- College's financial year 2017/18: Amount spent £724,487
- College's financial year 2018/19: Amount spent £865,187
- College's financial year 2019/20*: Budget allocated £932,772
- College's financial year 2020/21: Amount spent £1,009,000
- College's financial year 2021/22: Budget allocated £1,168,551
- College's financial year 2022/23: Budget allocated £1,530,716.80

* Please note there were one-off restructuring costs incurred in the 2019/20 financial year and therefore the budget figure has been provided to better illustrate the overall trend.

7. Service staffing figures

The College has the following FTE figures for the job title of Student Counsellor:

2016/17: 5.6
2017/18: 5.1
2018/19: 6.5
2019/20: 6.6
2020/21: 8.4
2021/22: 7.4
2022/23: 9.4*+

*This figure includes 2.2 Senior Counsellors

+Note that counsellor staffing levels fluctuated between Oct – April as recruitment was under way to fill vacancies. This figure denotes the full permanent budgetary allocation of counsellors. Additional agency counsellors were also engaged during this period but are not reflected in the above figure as they were not permanent staff.

In addition to the above in the year 2022-23 the Service had the following staff supporting students experiencing mental health difficulties:

- 1 Senior Mental Health Adviser
- 2.6 Mental Health Advisers
- 3.4 Study Mentors – Mental Health

There is also a Head of Service role and a Clinical Lead role.

For a full overview of the staff currently in the Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service, please see here: www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling/how-to-contact-us/who-we-are/