

NORTHERN COLLEGE STUDENT SERVICES - STATEMENT OF SERVICE

Introduction

This statement of service is a comprehensive guide to what is on offer to students and staff. Northern College Student Services (NCSS) take a holistic approach to work with students and recognise that guidance and welfare issues are often closely entwined.

The services outlined below are available to all Northern College students (both full and part-time) and to staff. Careers and educational guidance is also available to potential and to ex-students. There is no cost for any of these services.

Aims

1. To ensure that students are guided and well supported during their time at Northern College
2. To provide a range of guidance, counselling, welfare, additional support and enrichment opportunities to enable students to reach their full potential
3. To liaise with other providers/networks to ensure that appropriate referrals can be made and that information on opportunities is up to date

What is on offer?

- Careers and Educational Guidance
- Counselling
- Welfare Advice
- Sports and Social Activities
- Additional Support

Careers and Educational Guidance

This is offered by professionally trained staff and can include the following:

- Pre-entry Guidance
- Help with choosing a University or Degree
- Help with career choice
- CV Preparation
- Jobsearch
- Choosing a part-time course
- Interview technique

There is a range of software and web-links available on the College's intranet that can help with your career planning. To access them you need to click on the 'Careers Guidance' icon on your desktop.

NCSS also holds a stock of careers reference books, occupational information, Northern College leaflets, higher education reference books, CV information and prospectuses. Information is available both in Student Services and in the Library and Learning Resources Centre.

Counselling

NCSS employs qualified counsellors who work with students on a range of personal and emotional issues. These can include bereavement, relationship breakdowns, sexual abuse, depression, alcohol and drug misuse etc.

The counselling is strictly confidential. Students can either drop in or book an appointment through the Student Services Centre. The counsellors receive supervision and work in accordance with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Code of Ethics.

Welfare Advice

NCSS offers advice and support on issues such as grants, finance, budgeting, benefits, accommodation and other general welfare issues. However, it is often appropriate for us to make referrals to more specialist agencies.

Sports and Social Activities

The Student Activities Organiser works with the Student Union Entertainment Officer to provide a range of activities including parties, discos, walks, theatre trips, quizzes, sporting events etc.

Additional Support

The Additional Support Co-ordinator works with students who have learning difficulties, disabilities or other health problems. He can organise support in the form of specialist equipment or from a Learning Support Worker.

Contact and Location Details

An appointment can be booked for any of the above services by:

- Calling into Student Services
- Telephoning (01226) 776000 Ext 6075
- E-mailing b.hutchinson@northern.ac.uk

The Student Services Centre is located in the Main House behind Reception.

Opening Times

Monday – Friday 9.00 am – 4.30 pm

Appointments can be made for other times. During academic holidays opening times are more restricted and it is best to ring beforehand.

If your first language is not English we can normally arrange for an interpreter for most community languages.

What you can Expect from Student Services

The aim of NCSS is to support you whilst you are at Northern College. This support and guidance will be impartial and free from bias. Any information given will be accurate and up to date.

The IAG in Northern College is underpinned by the following principles:

Accessible and Visible

IAG services should be recognised and trusted by students, have convenient entry points from which students may be signposted or referred to the services they need, and be open at times and in places which suit students' needs;

Professional and Knowledgeable

IAG frontline staff should have the skills and knowledge to identify quickly and effectively the students' needs. They should have the skills and knowledge either to address the student's needs or to signpost or to refer them to suitable alternative provision;

Effective Connections

Links between IAG services should be clear from the student's perspective. Where necessary, students should be supported in their transition between services;

Availability, Quality and Delivery

IAG Services should be targeted at the needs of students, and be informed by social and economic priorities at local, regional and national levels;

Diversity

The range of IAG services should reflect the diversity of students' needs

Impartial

IAG services should support students to make informed decisions about learning and work based on the student's needs and circumstances;

Responsive

IAG services should reflect students' present and future needs;

Friendly and Welcoming

IAG services should encourage students to engage successfully with the service;

Enabling

IAG services should encourage and support students to become lifelong learners by enabling them to access and use information to plan their careers, supporting students to explore the implications for both learning and work in their future career plans;

Awareness

Adults should be aware of the IAG services that are relevant to them, and have well informed expectations of those services

The service will be prompt and courteous. The following standards are in place:

1. Email and voicemail messages will be responded to within one working day
2. Callers to the Student Services Centre would usually be seen immediately by a member of staff during the same day
3. Details of non confidential help, advice and agreed actions will be recorded in the tutorial section of My Learning Space
4. It is usually possible to see a professionally qualified counsellor or careers adviser within 7 days
5. If an appointment has to be cancelled due to staff absence, the student will be notified as soon as possible and an alternative date offered
6. At the end of formal careers guidance interview the student will be offered an action plan. This will either be given immediately, or posted on within a week
7. Student records will be kept in secure locked filing cabinets in line with the Data Protection Act
8. Student records are destroyed after 5 years
9. Students are entitled to see any records that relate to them

What we would expect from you

It is important for you to let us know if you are unable to keep an appointment in order that we can offer it to someone else.

How NCSS can act on your behalf

NCSS has an advocacy role and can assist you in your dealings with external organisations eg the DSS, or your local council. If you felt that you may have been discriminated against a member of staff can talk to you in confidence about this.

Limitations of the Service

On a few occasions, due to other commitments, the Student Services Centre will be left unstaffed. On these occasions, it will be clearly indicated when a member of staff will return.

Your feedback

We need your views in order to improve our services. We carry out a range of surveys to check that we are meeting your needs and your responses are appreciated. The questionnaires are reviewed with the intention of building upon the strengths of the service and reducing the weaknesses.

If you wish to provide specific feedback on an area of our work then this should be directed to the Additional Support Co-ordinator.

If you have a complaint about NCSS, you can collect a complaint from the NCSS Centre. All complaints are responded to within 5 working days. In the first instance, the complaint will be dealt with by the Quality Manager. If you are not happy with the response then it will be forward to the Vice Principal, Residential & Administrative Services.

Positive feedback is always welcome in that it confirms for us where things are going right. This will be fed into team meetings in order that staff are aware of the good practice and so that they can see that their work is valued.

The Additional Support Co-ordinator has responsibility for ensuring that this statement of service is monitored and evaluated.

This statement is also available in large print or electronic formats on request.