



#BleedGreen

SPORTS UNION WELFARE OFFICER GUIDE

The Welfare Officer Role

The role of Welfare Officer is first and foremost to promote and champion good health in all areas. It involves open listening, being non-judgemental, and approachable should an individual need information about an aspect of their well-being. The role also requires you to remain up to date with ongoing health campaigns, events, engagement opportunities, and services at the university. Most significantly, the role involves actively and compassionately listening to anything that someone may wish to speak about and signposting to specialist resources or professional services whilst maintaining consistent and healthy boundaries. Welfare Officers are in the unique position that in many cases the people who contact may be friends and peers, therefore having clear boundaries to stop emotionally draining activities from encroaching onto personal life is key. Knowing when and how to kindly say no if the role becomes overwhelming is a crucial element.

What's expected of a Welfare Officer?	What's not expected of a Welfare Officer?	Basic Phrases for kindly and politely saying no.
Active listening	24/7 support for club members	"I'm sorry, I'm not in a position to help right now, but you could try this service/person..."
Empathy and compassion	Acting as a counsellor	"Thanks for trusting me and coming to me. I'm sorry, I can't speak with you/meet with you at the moment, but here is someone/a service who can..."
Knowledge of services and signposts	Being someone that people constantly emotionally offload to.	"Sorry, I don't know if I can help right now, but here is a service/person that may be able to"
Openness and approachability	Solving all personal problems that arise in the club.	"Thanks for speaking to me and trusting me. That sounds like a complex issue which I might not be equipped to help you with, can I suggest...?"

We want you to ensure you are looking after yourself first. This includes recognising when time away from the role is needed, if the role is getting too much or you require assistance in your role is of great importance. The Sports Union staff and Welfare Officer Training which takes place throughout the year can be of service in this respect. It is part of your role and in your best interest to attend these sessions and engage with related events within the Sports Union and wider Students Union in order to offer all opportunities to your club.

When communicating to individuals who get in contact, knowledge of specific services across local areas may help you perform the Welfare Officer role. This document is designed to offer information about services specific to the issues that a person may present with. Furthermore, the Union staff are available should you require to speak to someone during your role. The Welfare Officer position gives the opportunity to connect with others, learn immensely valuable life skills, and make a difference to others. It is very beneficial for the club, the Sports Union and your members who are able to speak to someone. The role can be challenging, but wholly rewarding.

NOTE: This booklet is primarily designed for signposting regarding mental health, since this area can be nuanced, and resources can be more tailored to needs. The aim and hope of this resource is to limit the amount of time required to research appropriate signposts for individual matters, therefore there is a broad variety of services and charities as what suits one person may not work for another. These services/apps do not necessarily replace professional treatment but may help those in need quickly and effectively.



Concerns with University, Mental Health, Anxiety and Mood-Related Services

University Support and Counselling

The university has a wide range of support services including financial support, mental health support and learning support services. The counselling service can help if students feel they need to speak to someone about an issue with mental health or problems with stress and operates a 'One at a Time' system where you can book session by session rather than be given a block of sessions. You can choose who you speak to if you prefer someone specific or a certain gender, and you can contact the student services hub at ask@stir.ac.uk for information. See <https://www.stir.ac.uk/student-life/support-wellbeing/> for more information.

University of Stirling Students' Union

The Students' Union is able to offer independent support and information on where to access further services, both in and independent of the university. They also offer advice, specialist assistance for academic appeals, misconduct, disciplinary hearings, fitness to practice and complaints. They can be accessed on campus at the Students' Union Office (atrium), or online for more information. For specialist advice, support, and representation, you can contact the team on advice.union@stir.ac.uk

Spectrum Life - Partnership with University of Stirling

This is an organisation dedicated to providing non-judgemental, 24/7 mental health support through online through a community where individuals may confide and express themselves. It also has a range of resources, information and self-help courses. You can access this resource by following this link:
<https://universityofstirling.spectrum.life/login>



NHS and GPs

The NHS and your GP can offer professional treatment and advice for any health issue (mental and physical) or query about services. It is a good first port of call should you or an individual be unsure of where to go first. If a person is accessing the service for mental health, they may be referred for therapy with a clinical psychologist or be referred for medication dependant on their choice. Common therapy administered by the NHS is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), a talking therapy which aims to identify and redirect negative thought patterns, unravel the reasoning behind negative emotions and ultimately replace these patterns with more positive mental activity or practical improvement. To get more immediate advice or if you are in a crisis you can call NHS 24 on 111.

Website: <https://www.nhs24.scot/>

Living Life - Managed by NHS 24

This service is a self-referral for support sessions with a self-help coach or therapist on the phone. They can offer CBT and other therapies, and once you call to put your name on a waiting list with your details you can be contacted to start your sessions. The phone line to refer yourself is open from 1-9pm Monday to Friday on 0800 328 9655.

Website: <https://www.nhs24.scot/how-we-can-help/living-life/>

Breathing Space

A confidential phone line that offers a listening ear or advice on where to go following a 'first stop' for mental health. They give reassurance and hope to those that call and can listen to whatever you need to say. You can ask for a man or a woman advisor. Their line 0800 83 85 87 is open Monday to Thursday, 6pm-2am and 24hrs on weekends (6pm Friday-6am Monday).

Website: <https://www.breathingspace.scot/>



Support in Mind Scotland

This service has an online community and centres across Scotland to provide a range of support for individuals with mental health issues. The nearest in person centres are Glasgow, Edinburgh and Perth, but they also provide a national information service to sign post to local services in your area. Their phone line 0131 662 4359 is open from 9-5pm, Monday to Friday for information on their services and enquiries for the national information service.

Website: <https://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/>

Shout

Shout is a charity which is dedicated to giving free mental health text support on a 24/7 basis. Their service is confidential, it won't appear on any phone bills, and they have coping resources on their website. The text service can be accessed on 85258, and their website is <https://giveusashout.org/>.

Scottish Association for Mental Health

This charity offers a range of services across Scotland including addiction support, housing support, assisted living, suicide prevention, outreach and more. They have a range of online resources directed for self-help and situational information and provide information about how to approach a GP about mental health. Their phone line is 0141 530 1000 for information on local services and more about what they can do.

Website: <https://www.samh.org.uk/>



Samaritans

This is a confidential phone service active 24/7 to offer immediate support to those feeling in a crisis situation or for people who need someone to talk to at all hours of the day and night. The line is free, and can be accessed on 116 123. There is also an online chat service, an email (jo@samaritans.org), and a self help app (Samaritans Self Help- a tracker for mental health, safety planner, and helpful activities tracker with techniques to try). They also accept letters to Chris, Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, PO Box 9090, STIRLING FK8 2SA.

Website: <https://www.samaritans.org/scotland/samaritans-in-scotland/>.

Trauma Support Services

Archway - Glasgow (gender-based violence)

This is a sexual assault and rape referral centre which offers support, counselling and signposting, but most notably it offers sensitive examination (and evidence collection) following sexual assault or rape within the last 7 days. This can be a more comfortable place to go than a GP as the workers are specialists, and the centre can hold evidence for any length of time should an individual wish to report later or not at all, and they may ask for other belongings that may contain evidence if you are examined.

Treatment and emergency contraception is given if required, and first aid is offered by the nurses. The counselling and support workers can offer guidance and emotional aid following an instance of sexual trauma. Their phone line is 0141 211 8175 and is open 24/7.

Website: <http://archway.sandyford.org/>

NOTE: For under 18s who are looked-after or accommodated, it is a legal requirement for the police to be involved when visiting the service.

Forth Valley Rape Crisis Centre (gender-based violence)

This is part of Scotland's Rape Crisis network and is specific for gender-based violence. They offer counselling, help with report procedures, support groups and can tailor services to specific genders should you prefer. They offer confidential counselling sessions for 15 weeks which may be extended if needed, and advocacy services to help with the criminal justice system reporting. Their phone number is 01786 439 244, open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. You can also email at support@forthvalleyrapecrisis.org.uk. They have an online form you can fill out also, if that's a more comfortable option; on <https://www.forthvalleyrapecrisis.org.uk/contact/>.

Website: <https://www.forthvalleyrapecrisis.org.uk/>

Trauma Counselling Line Scotland - Health in Mind (childhood abuse)

This is a confidential counselling service for individuals who have experienced childhood abuse and neglect. Their eligibility is for individuals who are from an ethnic minority, who have a disability (including mental health disorder) or who are from one of the rural areas of Scotland including Stirling, see their list here <https://health-in-mind.org.uk/how-we-can-help/support/#.>



They offer online call counselling sessions with the same counsellor each time, and are accessible through their phone line 08088 02 04 06 or by their email counselling@health-in-mind.org.uk.

Website: <https://www.health-in-mind.org.uk/>

Wellbeing Scotland

This is a service which supports a range of traumatic experiences with trauma-informed counselling, phone support, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), befriending, therapy groups and practical therapy groups (such as art and gardening). Their phone line is open from 9am-11am Monday to Friday on 0800 121 6027. Their main office email is info@wellbeingscotland.org and their Stirling office is Unit 7, Stirling Arcade, King Street, Stirling, FK8 1AX.

Website: <https://www.wellbeingscotland.org/>

NHS Trauma Services

Your GP can refer to a trauma service or therapy such as Trauma-Based CBT or EMDR. Talking therapies such as Trauma-Based CBT involve recounting events in a safe environment and talking about the after-effects safely with a professional to lessen their impact in the long term and replace negative coping with positive coping strategies. EMDR involves talking through a traumatic event whilst light is flashed, and specific eye movements are instructed in order to reprogram psychological responses. Alternatively, EMDR can be run using a therapist's hand movements and use just eye movements whilst speaking about events to reprocess memories.

For more information on talking therapies and specific therapy:
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/types-of-talking-therapies/>



Victim Support Scotland

This is a service that offers free support to victims of crime, witnesses and people who have been bereaved by crime. They offer support and advice through a phone line on 0800 160 1985 and can offer emotional support through the criminal justice process with practical advice. They offer specialist guidance for specific sets of crimes, and more information on this and their service can be found on their website:

Website: <https://victimsupport.scot/>

Stirling University Survivors Support Group

This is a non-judgemental peer support group based at the university offering group meetings to engage individuals who have been through gender-based violence and sexual trauma. It provides weekly group meetings where attendees may meet others to identify with, familiar faces to confide in and social support.

Information can be accessed via email at susurvivorssupport@stir.ac.uk or can be messaged on social media @stirlingunisurvivorssupport.

Other Services

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Apps for Managing Mental Health

Daylight - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy App

This is a digital therapy app designed to allow people to go through methods of cognitive behavioural therapy at their own pace and learn to effectively self-manage. The type of therapy focuses on thought patterns and patterns of unhelpful coping or behaviour. A unique username and password can be created to ensure the account is private. To freely download and access the app, visit <https://www.trydaylight.com/nhs>.

Calm Harm

Calm Harm provides a free resource to help manage the urges of individuals struggling with self-harm. It is based on a type of talking therapy called dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) which is often used to help with mood disorders. It offers prompts to divert urges to tasks, and encourages users to distract themselves in order to self-manage emotions in a healthy way. It is free to download, and the website for information is <https://calmharm.co.uk/>.

Catch It

This app can be used to record different moods and learn how to manage unhelpful thoughts. It uses methods from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to ask the user reflective questions about their mood and ways to manage it. The app aims to teach users how to think about problems differently. It is free to download and can be accessed on mobile stores or <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/csd/app-directory/>.

NOTE: These are three examples of therapy-based ideologies used for mobile applications. They are not a substitute for professional treatment. Extended lists of mental health apps can be found on <https://www.stir.ac.uk/student-life/support-wellbeing/student-support-services/your-mental-health-and-wellbeing/wellbeing-support/> and <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>. Please be advised some may contain in app purchases or may be paid apps, but the above listed services are entirely free.



Useful Contacts in the Union and University

The Sports Union team	<u>sports.union@stir.ac.uk</u>
Kenny Thompson (Advice Coordinator) & Jenni Glenn (Advice Caseworker)	<u>advice.union@stir.ac.uk</u>
Student Support Services	<u>ask@stir.ac.uk</u> - or Live Chat via portal