

Student Minds Confidentiality Policy

We believe that confidentiality is fundamental to our work. Group sessions strive to always offer a safe place. Group Facilitators respect the information that they are told within the group session and will not pass this information on to individuals outside of their Student Minds peer support network¹.

How can you support our confidentiality policy?

We ask all individuals at group sessions to respect other people's right to speak in the knowledge that their words will not leave the session. We are unable however to vouch for other individuals at the group session. As such, Student Minds cannot guarantee confidentiality at our group sessions.

Our Group Facilitators are supported within our confidentiality policy.

Group Facilitators have a support network within the Student Minds team. They are encouraged to use this network to discuss issues that arise in sessions. This enables them to be supported through their role and to help their development as Group Facilitators, so that the groups they run for you are always improving.

Are there situations when confidentiality will be broken?

There are a few circumstances under which Student Minds will be unable to maintain confidentiality.

In an immediate emergency, such as an individual being taken seriously ill during a group session, emergency services may be contacted.

If Group Facilitators are concerned that a student is in a situation where their own life may be at risk or is at risk of harming another person, they may break confidentiality. Wherever possible this will be done in consultation with the individual of concern. Group Facilitators will initially discuss concerns with the individuals privately in a breakout room or via a telephone call and inform the person that they intend to break confidentiality. The

¹ A group's Student Minds peer support network may include the Student Minds staff team, the group's designated supervisor and the co-facilitators. The designated supervisor may be part of the national Student Minds team or may be a member of your university's student support team. Your Group Facilitators can tell you who their supervisor is.

Group Facilitators will ask the individual about their preference regarding further support, this may include, for example, contacting emergency services, the individual's GP surgery or university provided support services such as wellbeing teams.

If Group Facilitators are made aware that a child is in immediate danger or harm, they will have to break confidentiality in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

Limits to the support Group Facilitators can provide

Please note that our Group Facilitators can only offer support within the group session. Our Group Facilitators are trained to facilitate a supportive, peer-led community space. They are not trained to identify acute mental health risk or respond in crisis situations.

Alternative and additional support options

If you are feeling like you want to die, please consider that many people who have attempted or come close to suicide look back with gratitude that they were not successful in acting on their intentions. If you are feeling actively suicidal now:

- Make a deal with yourself that you will not act just yet
- Tell someone else how you are feeling or find someone to be with you.
- If that is not possible right now, phone:
 - Samaritans: 116 123
 - NHS non-emergency: 111
 - HOPEline UK: 0800 068 41 41 / text: 07860 039967

Research into student mental health suggests that broad support networks can help recovery from and management of mental health difficulties. The Student Minds' support group might be part of this picture. Your wider support network might include:

- Friends and family
- Your GP
- University counselling and/or wellbeing services

Delivering groups in collaboration with University Student Services and Students' Unions.

Student Minds routinely shares anonymised information about the running of peer support groups with the University and/or Student Union. Group Facilitators, or Student Minds staff, may inform the university support services about events or incidents relating to the peer support group. This information does not include details that would identify the support group attendees.