

Student Advice Service Confidentiality Policy

Southampton Solent University's Student Advice Service is committed to providing a confidential professional advice service. All users of the service have the right to confidentiality in order to protect their interests.

Subject to what follows, no information regarding a Student Advice Service user (client) shall be given, directly or indirectly, to a third party who is not a member of the Student Advice Service staff, without that client's expressed consent to the disclosure of such information. No information will be given to any external agency without the client's express consent unless law requires the provision of such information.

Whilst students and staff at Southampton Solent University have a duty of confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998, this confidentiality is limited by the duty of care, which we have to our students and staff.

Therefore in exceptional circumstances the Student Advice Service may be required to disclose without consent. These circumstances are rare and would only arise:

- When there is an immediate and serious threat to personal safety
- When there is an immediate and serious threat to the safety of others
- When there is a legal requirement to disclose that information
- If there are serious concerns about a student's mental well being
- Or, where professional fitness to practice may be compromised

The Student Advice Service is committed to statistical recording of client usage, in order to enable it to monitor the demand for the service and identify any practical or policy issues. It is the responsibility of Student Advice Service staff to ensure that all statistical records given to third parties are produced anonymously in order that individuals may not be recognised.

It is the responsibility of service staff to ensure that all individual case records are locked securely at the end of each working day. This includes notebooks, copies of correspondence and any other sources of information. It is also their responsibility to ensure that all computer records are held secure and appropriately password protected.