

Mental Health First Aid support at St George's University

This document provides guidance to support both Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) and SGUL employees, ensuring that everyone involved in the use and delivery of this support is clear and comfortable with the expectations and boundaries. We aim to provide support that allows SGUL employees to access timely support at their point of need, while supporting Mental Health First Aiders to provide this support effectively.

If you need clarification about any of the points below or feel that there is anything missing, please contact henry-l@sgul.ac.uk Head of Learning and OD.

Guidance & Expectations

Individual Employees:

- You can access support from a MHFA by emailing or contacting them in MS Teams, directly with your request, at any time. Please ensure you put CONFIDENTIAL in the email heading or MS Teams communication.
- You should be contacted by a MHFA within 48 hours, Mon-Fri (9am-5pm) unless they have their OOO on.
- If you request support on weekends, bank holidays or after 5pm, your request will be dealt with on the next working day.
- During out of hours you can access support through the Employee Assistance Programme or other support providers listed on the [Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing page](#).
- You can view the list of Mental Health First Aiders on the [Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing page](#). When contacting or requesting a MHFA please also state your preferred method of communication such as Email, MS Teams, or mobile.
- You can also request to contact a MHFA via HRhelp@sgul.ac.uk or staffdev@sgul.ac.uk if you have a preference for someone. All requests will be handled with confidentiality.
- Mental Health First Aiders are accessed at your point of need, but the service does not provide ongoing counselling or support. Mental Health First Aiders will signpost where and how you can access continued support such as the University's Counselling Service that provides free sessions for staff.
- By sending a request for support you acknowledge and understand that Mental Health First Aiders are not trained counsellors or therapists and **are not liable or responsible for your decisions following the use of the service.**

Mental Health First Aiders:

- You have agreed to provide listening and signposting support to employees at their point of need when they access the Mental Health First Aid service by email.
- You will use the tools and strategies from the MHFA England Mental Health First Aid training to provide support to employees.

- Your communication with employees will be during working hours only – 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri.
- You agree to attend the monthly reflective space for Mental Health First Aiders facilitated by the Counselling Service to invest in peer support / discussion, with some flexibility for unforeseen circumstances.
- If request come via the Staff development inbox or HR Help, Staff Development Team will email support requests to you, using the subject MHFA CONFIDENTIAL
- You will follow up on requests and make initial email contact with employees within 48hrs. If you are unable to do this refer onto another MHFA or the EAP or the counselling service.
- You can opt out of the role at any time by emailing staffdev@sgul.ac.uk and do not need to provide a reason. You will be removed from the list on the website and will not receive any further support requests.
- You can opt out of the role for a limited time – ‘Time Out’ by emailing staffdev@sgul.ac.uk You do not need to provide a reason. You will be temporarily removed from the list on the website and will not receive any support requests until you email to inform us that you would like to continue.
- You will use staffdev@sgul.ac.uk to contact the Staff Development Team for matters related to the Mental Health First Aid service
- You will provide feedback to improve the service and experience for both Mental Health First Aiders and employees
- To maintain confidentiality; where there is an identified conflict of interest, you will disclose this to the Staff Development Team so that the request can be referred on to another Mental Health First Aider (e.g A Mental Health First Aider working in HR dealing with a case involving that person, or a mental health first aider regularly attending the same meetings as the person requesting help, will disclose it)

Staff Development Team:

- Will support the Mental Health First Aiders service
- Will forward contact information and details of employees who need support, to Mental Health First Aiders by email using the subject ‘MHFA CONFIDENTIAL’.
- Will manage the balanced distribution of requests to Mental Health First Aiders
- Will be the main point of contact for Mental Health First Aiders via staffdev@sgul.ac.uk and provide them with ongoing support and guidance.
- Will ensure the list of Mental Health First Aiders is kept up to date and will maintain the list of alternative support options on the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing page of the website.
- Will promote the service through internal communication channels and increase awareness among line managers to promote among their teams.
- Will ensure that all Mental Health First Aiders are adequately trained and receive refresher training as required.

Counselling Service:

- Will facilitate a monthly Reflective Space for Mental Health First Aiders.
- Will contract with Mental Health First Aiders about the use of the space.

- Will feedback to the Staff Development Team, the general themes from discussions to help us to continue to develop Mental Health support and initiatives at St George's

Confidentiality

Mental Health First Aiders are expected to act sensibly and with due respect for the confidentiality of individuals involved, treating as confidential any information communicated to them as part of the service.

Mental Health First Aiders will keep conversations confidential and will not share this with others unless they believe there is a serious risk to you or others. If this is the case, they may have to break confidentiality but would always try to talk to you about this first.

Please ensure confidentiality when using email, video platforms etc, and that you are in a safe and undisturbed place during conversations. Do not record the sessions under any circumstances.