

CANDIDATE PACK

Student Counsellor

Student and Academic Services (SAS)



OUR UNIVERSITY

Under the inspirational leadership of Professor Peter Bonfield OBE, the University of Westminster is a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. Serving more than 21,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, apprentice and executive students, our mission is to transform the lives of young people from all backgrounds. We seek to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

Since our founding in 1838 we have stood out as innovators, committed to tackling social inequalities. In 2021, our University ranked 2nd in England out of more than 100 higher education institutions for social mobility. The ranking - produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Sutton Trust - compares the number of students from low-income backgrounds at universities, and the extent to which their studies helped them to move up the income ladder. Westminster has the second highest performance among universities in England.

As we focus forward to 2029, we will continue to do so in a way that is true to our progressive, compassionate and responsible values. Our education offer will be more personalised and authentic, giving students from all backgrounds an opportunity of transformative learning, helping them succeed in their studies and professional lives. Our curriculum will be employability-linked, leading to stronger outcomes and helping prepare our graduates for the world of work and for life. Our research and knowledge exchange will enable us to maximise our positive impact on societies in the UK and around the world in an environment where everyone is inspired to succeed. Our priorities of wellbeing, inclusion and sustainable development will help us as we navigate through the challenges and opportunities towards 2029.



OUR PRIORITIES

The University's 2022-2029 strategy, *Being Westminster*, sets us apart and builds on our unique history and achievements. In our University, we value social justice, moral conscience, inclusivity and equality, acting positively together to make change for good.

The University of Westminster has three priorities.

WELLBEING

Working and studying together at Westminster as a community of students and colleagues is a big part of our lives - doing so in an environment that places our wellbeing front and centre helps us to be safe and feel safe. We care for the safety, health and wellbeing of those around us as well as ourselves.

INCLUSION

All Westminster, colleagues and students are in a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and is a place where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure and to champion equality. As a progressive institution, we take pride in our diversity. As a compassionate institution, we commit to an inclusive culture that allows students and colleagues to reach their full potential.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We take inspiration from the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in how we drive our actions and activities and governance across our University. As a community, we bring together our collective energies to play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and socially just world. We are one of the top 20 universities in the world in SDG 5 for providing equal access and supporting the academic progression of women. We are one of the top 25 universities in the world in SDG 10 tackling economic, health based and international inequalities. We are in the top 50 universities in SDG 12 for promoting resource and energy efficiency, having a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services for all.



OUR OBJECTIVES 2022-2029

Against a backdrop of a changing and challenging higher education environment, the University has recently completed a major review of its objectives and strategy, and has published its commitments for the period 2022-29.

EDUCATION

We will offer personalised and authentic education, underpinned by an inclusive curriculum, to enable all our students, from all backgrounds, to engage in transformative learning and to succeed in their studies and professional lives. We will address global, political, and social challenges through a relevant demand-led and forward-looking portfolio. We will do this by offering authentic teaching, learning and assessment modes which immerse students in the wider-world through live projects, work-based learning and global opportunities. We will invest in our people to enable all teaching colleagues to plan and deliver exceptional learning experiences and professional colleagues to offer exceptional support. Students will be empowered by working in partnership with colleagues and fellow students to shape the Westminster experience. We will develop an integrated physical and digital environment that supports excellent practical, active and collaborative learning for all our students.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Research and knowledge exchange are fundamental to our commitment to making a positive difference to the world and transforming lives. We are committed to research in four priority areas: Diversity and Inclusion; Health Innovation and Wellbeing; Sustainable Cities and the Urban Environment; Arts, Communication and Culture. Our excellence in research and knowledge exchange will infuse our education endeavour, inspiring and equipping our students as agents of change locally as well as globally. We will continue to grow our community of PhD researchers, ensuring that the Westminster postgraduate research experience remains sector leading and the foundation for great careers. In knowledge exchange we will focus on engagement with government, business and with the public and local community. We will achieve more when we identify shared interests and build partnerships with our communities and collaborate for the public good with a clear civic purpose.

EMPLOYABILITY

We will ensure that all our students benefit from employability-led learning and purposeful engagement with employers, business and industry, to give students from every background the best possible preparation for the world of work and enable the best possible employability outcomes. We will do this through the further extension and embedding of programmes such as work-based and placement learning; the Westminster Employability Award; Westminster Working Cultures; mentoring; and student enterprise. Employability-related learning will be a core and critical part of the courses and curriculum we offer, right across the University. It will be front and centre of life at the University for students and colleagues.



A key priority will be the development of a dedicated Centre for Employability and Enterprise at 29 Marylebone Road, intended to transform our student experience and our engagement with business, industry and employers. The Centre will provide a game-changing experience through which undergraduate and postgraduate students from across Westminster will come together and practise enterprise; develop an entrepreneurial mindset and skills; access training, work, projects, business advice and mentoring; and connect directly with employers. The future-focused environment of the Centre will scale up our employability provision, helping our students to be 'fit for the future' in the most challenging of post-pandemic labour markets and economic environments. It will strengthen links between our UK-based and international employer partners and our motivated, bright, work-ready students, affording employers access to a diverse mix of people right for the needs of the contemporary workforce.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

We will raise the international reputation and reach of the University, ensuring that 30% of our undergraduate community and 70% of our taught postgraduates come to us from overseas. Overseas partnerships will remain central to our global engagements. We will prioritise the outward mobility of our students to partner institutions, Contributing to students' development of employability skills and competences. We will extend and deepen our Trans-National Education relationships. These partnerships, particularly that with Westminster International University in Tashkent, will move beyond franchised or validated arrangements to embrace employability, alumni-related research, CPD and knowledge exchange connections.



OUR STRUCTURE

ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

Our structure is built to deliver an enhanced learning environment, stronger and broader industrial, international and professional connections and pioneering and impactful research. The University comprises three Colleges:

Westminster Business School

- School of Organisations, Economy and Society
- School of Finance and Accounting
- School of Applied Management
- School of Management and Marketing

College of Creative Arts and Technologies

- School of Architecture and Cities
- Westminster School of Arts
- School of Computer Science and Engineering
- Westminster School of Media and Communications

Liberal Arts and Sciences

- School of Social Sciences
- Westminster Law School
- School of Humanities
- School of Life Sciences

The University Executive Board comprises:

- Vice Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Employability and Global Engagement)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Three Heads of College

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Our Professional Services teams support the effective and professional delivery of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange and the management of student residences and sports facilities.

- Academic Registry
- Business Engagement and Graduate Futures Directorate
- Digital and Technology Services
- Estates
- Finance and Commercial Activities
- Global Engagement
- Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications
- Graduate School
- People, Culture and Wellbeing
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Strategy, Planning and Performance
- Student and Academic Services
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Student Counsellor

Reports to: Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager

Department: Student and Academic Services (SAS)

Grade: NG7

ROLE PURPOSE

To provide individual and group counselling to students with a wide range of personal difficulties in support of their learning progression. To undertake an area of specialism/service project within the counselling team to develop services for students.

The postholder will also contribute to the clinical governance of the service, ensuring safe, ethical, and effective practice, and support the evaluation of service impact in line with institutional priorities, equality legislation, and the *University Mental Health Charter*.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To provide consultation, assessment and short-term counselling to individuals and groups of students. To adapt and target interventions to fit into a busy student service where brief therapy is the norm.
2. To assess and manage risk, liaising with appropriate internal departments and external agencies. To offer crisis intervention at short notice and where necessary to make appropriate referrals inside or outside the university.
3. To present examples of counselling work for monitoring and supervision on a regular basis and participate in regular case discussion meetings to discuss crisis intervention, prevention and management of severe psychological disturbance.
4. To maintain appropriate electronic and written records on counselling cases, including session notes and records of contact with other relevant parties, both in the University and externally.
5. To be proactive in liaising with academic staff, to support them in their role as personal tutors, to be involved in staff training and to act as a source of expert knowledge. To liaise with staff and external services as appropriate to facilitate student well-being, within the bounds of client confidentiality.
6. To collaborate with members of the Counselling and Mental Health Service and other student support services in shared projects such as workshops, conferences, joint publicity, induction for new students, university wide staff training, representation on university committees and to initiate projects which will meet the changing needs of students and staff.



- 7 To maintain professional counselling accreditation as set out by BACP or equivalent professional bodies.
- 8 Where appropriate and in consultation with the Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager to promote the University and the Counselling and Mental Health Service, by giving talks outside the University and by being active in professional associations such as the British Association of counselling and Psychotherapy Universities and Colleges (BACP UC).
- 9 Take responsibility for managing and coordinating the development of specific specialisms as designated by the Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager. Specialisms in the Service may include: EMDR, CBT, Associate/Trainee Counsellors programme; Staff Training; Therapeutic Groups.
- 10 Other duties appropriate to the grade as required by the Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager.

CONTEXT

The post-holder will be part of the Student Support and Residential Life area within Student and Academic Services (SAS).

Student and Academic Services (SAS) provides professional, efficient, effective and consistent researcher and student-focused support and services across the University's main sites in the West End and at Harrow. It leads on professional support for a wide range of governance, research, learning and wellbeing interventions that enhance the experience of students, staff and alumni throughout their relationship with the University and in line with the University Mental Health Charter.

SAS is a large and complex department, organised into five clusters:

- Business Operations
- Employability and Graduate Success
- Library and Archive Services
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Student Support and Residential Life.

The University requires all staff to have an understanding of individual health and safety responsibilities and an awareness of the risks in the work environment together with their potential impact on both individual work and that of others.

DIMENSIONS

The post holder will be part of a service consisting of Counselling and Mental Health Service Manager, Counsellors and Administrators. Mental Health Team colleagues, including a Senior Mental Health Practitioner, Mental Health Practitioner and Specialist Mental Health Mentors.

The Counselling and Mental Health Service is a service that operates on two sites (Cavendish and Harrow) offering support through appointments, duty cover and group sessions.



Counselling is delivered face to face and online via Microsoft Teams. Student and Academic Services, including the Counselling and Mental Health Service, operate in a hybrid way, working on-site and remotely. Details will be discussed and agreed with the postholder.

This post has no specific line management or budgetary responsibilities.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- MSc/Post-Graduate Diploma or equivalent in counselling.
- An accredited practitioner with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy or equivalent professional body.
- Degree or equivalent relevant experience.

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Significant work experience (3+ years) as a counsellor in Higher or Further Education or relevant services such as NHS and 3rd sector agencies.
- Experience of personal therapy or analysis.
- Proven interest in the emotional aspects of learning and the needs of a diverse student body.
- Must be able to support students of all genders and backgrounds.
- A high level of competence in crisis intervention and managing severe emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Evidence of working independently to high professional standards and meeting tight deadlines.
- Demonstrate a track record of working with students, colleagues and managers at different levels on counselling activities.
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of current legislation in relation to counselling and student well-being.
- Confident and effective when communicating with people at all levels:
i.e. building effective relationships; facilitating discussions with individuals and groups; dealing sensitively, patiently and diplomatically with complex and emotionally charged situations.
- Competence in the use of computerised systems and applications such as Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint.

Desirable

- Experience of supervising trainee counsellors.
- Experience of running workshops and training to both students and staff.

APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- Ability to effectively deliver conflicting priorities and challenging workloads by maintaining focus on agreed objectives and deliverables whatever the circumstances and monitoring progress against targets.



- Ability to use own initiative and consider the wider context and implications when problem solving.
- Able to identify customer needs and expectations and keep them in mind when taking actions or making decisions. Proven ability to maintain a long-term perspective when tackling short-term issues and problems and ensuring that resources are directed towards strategic priorities.
- Ability to work flexibly by taking account of new information or changed circumstances and modifying understanding of a problem or situation accordingly.
- Flexibility and resilience to work well under pressure.
- Willing to meet the challenges of increasing demands within limited resources.
- Must share and exemplify the University's values.
- Professional and positive and flexible approach to work.
- Proactive, facilitates change and development and shows initiative.
- Drive and enthusiasm to make a real change, taking on personal responsibility for the role.
- Commitment to personal and professional development, identifying development strategies needed to achieve work and career goals.
- Comfortable with ambiguity and rapidly changing agendas.
- **Other**
Whilst it is not mandatory for holidays to be taken at a certain time, the particular nature of the work makes it desirable that the counsellors take holidays during the University vacations and not during term time.



HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this vacancy, please visit our [vacancies page](#) where you will be able to register as a candidate and complete your online application.

You will be requested to upload a CV which will be used to populate relevant sections of your application. You will also be requested to complete a concise statement in support (ideally no longer than 1000 words), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification and your motivation for applying.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 11.59pm on 01 November 2026.

Interviews will take place on w/c 16 November 2026.

An appointment will be made subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory references being obtained.

At the University of Westminster, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders.

We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

The University has adopted Smart Working principles to support and further our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims of being an inclusive, collaborative and flexible employer. Further details of Smart Working can be discussed at interview stage.



OUR BENEFITS

The University offers a range of wellbeing and work-life balance benefits to recognise and reward the essential contribution our colleagues make to success and growth. Our benefits are inclusive for colleagues of all backgrounds including LGBTQ+ colleagues, disabled colleagues, pregnant colleagues, parents and carers, as well as colleagues of all genders, age, ethnicities, nationalities, religion and beliefs, and marriage and civil partnership status.

- 35 days annual leave per year, plus bank/national holidays and University of Westminster closure days (pro-rata for part-time staff).
- A generous occupational pension scheme.
- Annual incremental progression and/or cost of living reviews.
- Generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave.
- Flexible working and smart working.
- Learning and development opportunities.
- Free membership rates for a wide range of sporting facilities, including gyms at Regent Street and Harrow campuses, as well as the Chiswick Sports Ground.
- Employee assistance programme.
- The opportunity to participate in other attractive employee benefit schemes such as Cycle to Work, Eye Care Vouchers, Season Ticket Loans, and Give As You Earn.





westminster.ac.uk

The University of Westminster is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Registration number: 977818. Registered office: 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW. 9860/08.23/JT

