

National Institute of Technology Hamirpur

Students Counselling Cell

1. Preface

In the highly competitive environment of today, it is not unusual for students to experience personal, social or academic problems in their day to day life. National Institute of Technology Hamirpur is committed to support the students and recognizes the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to his/her progression in the personal and academic life. To meet this end, Student Counselling Cell has been established to help the students in solving their problems related to personal, social, psychological or academics, etc., so that they are able to achieve academic excellence, develop an integrated personality during their stay in the campus.

The counselling services cover all bachelor, master and doctoral students, with particular emphasis on improving academic performance of academically deficient students. The Counselling Cell is headed by Associate Dean (Discipline & Counselling) under the directions of Dean (Student Welfare). With the approval of Director, a Counselling Committee is constituted to providing counselling service to the students. This Committee is assisted by Students Committee comprising one student representative from each department/centre. For general counselling, students can approach Dean (Student Welfare) and the team members. By maintaining the confidentiality of all types, the student will be counseled by internal team and if needed may be supported by external agencies.

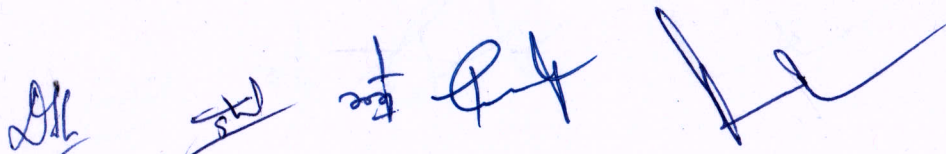
2. Common Issues Seeking Counselling

- i. Personal Concerns: Relationship issues, linguistic barriers, low self-esteem, parent/peer pressure, etc.
- ii. Behavioral Concerns: Dominance, complexes (superiority and inferiority), anxiety, anger, frustration, eating issues, depression, etc.
- iii. Academic Concerns: Examination failure, irregular attendance, extra semesters, placement, career anxiety, disciplinary issues/action, research stagnation, interview preparation, etc.
- iv. Socio-Cultural/Ethical Concerns: Social awkwardness, decision making, value and beliefs practices, etc.
- v. Addiction Concerns: Alcohol, substance use, smoking, excessive use of mobiles/media, etc.
- vi. Grief and Trauma Concerns: Loss of loved one, natural disaster, pandemic/endemic like COVID-19, etc.

3. Strategies to Address Counselling Issues

A. The Context and Role of the Counselling Service

- i. The Institute recognizes that a student's wellbeing and his/her progression in the personal and academic life is very important for the Institute and Nation. It is recognized that the pressures on young people can affect their mental health and wellbeing, and that young people in education can experience high levels of stress and change, and be extremely vulnerable.
- ii. Counselling is a form of psychological or talking therapy that offers people a chance to change how they feel and to live better.
- iii. The key task of the Institute is the education of its students, and implicit in this statement is the understanding that students work more effectively in a supportive environment which encourages personal development and autonomy. Students who feel in control of their personal lives are more likely to achieve educationally and contribute to the overall success of the Institute.



- iv. Students seek service from the Counselling Cell for many reasons. These services may be having an impact on their wellbeing, or they may have observed a distinct change in their conduct/behavior and emotion at home, Institute or in their social lives. Examples of presenting issues are bereavement, anxiety, stress, personal and family relationships, personal and sexual identity, eating problems, self-harm, bullying and anger management. Some students seek help due to unresolved issues since their childhood such as physical or sexual abuse, or neglect. Others seek help as they are having suicidal thoughts or have made a suicide attempt.
- v. The counselling services provide students with a support at a time when they are most vulnerable and aim to contain the distress of vulnerable students. However, the counselling service cannot take responsibility for all mental health issues arising in the Institute and will work together with other key staff to support students in distressing situations.
- vi. Counselling aims to help students, through individual or group work, to feel they are in control of their own lives, able to make choices and decisions, and to put them into action. It also allows the student to talk through past events and to come to a greater understanding of them. Counselling offers the opportunity for the student to talk and be heard in a safe, non-judgmental environment. NIT Hamirpur plays the role in this process to facilitate the student's personal development.
- vii. The counselor/counselling team will not usually give advice but will help the student find their own answers. Having said this, psycho-education is playing an increasingly bigger part in counselling, empowering students with knowledge around certain psychological theories and self-help interventions.
- viii. Counselors/counselling team may carry out other tasks including delivering workshops to students and staff on topics including anti-bullying, self-esteem, relaxation or anger management.
- ix. The counselling team also offers group mediation to students and staff to enable parties to find a resolution to a conflict.
- x. Counselors may also liaise with external agencies and maintain links with these to support the wellbeing of students.

B. Entitlement to Counselling

- i. The counselling service is available to all students of NIT Hamirpur. However, in order to maintain professional and ethical boundaries, students who also stay at UG, PG and PhD level can take the support of multiple programs related to counselling.
- ii. The students seeking counselling during the Institute vacations or while being away from the campus, may refer to appropriate external agencies.

C. Confidentiality

The ethical framework of NIT Hamirpur will expect that the counselling team offers the highest possible levels of confidentiality in order to respect the student's privacy and create the trust necessary for counselling.

Counselling sessions are confidential to the student. Unless they have the student's prior consent, the counselor will not pass on to a third party any information regarding a student's attendance, their presenting issues or their ongoing issues.

However, in exceptional circumstances the counselor may take the decision to break confidentiality, with or without the student's consent, if necessary wherein his/her professional judgment:

- there is a risk of the student seriously harming himself/herself
- there is a risk of another person being harmed
- there is a risk of a serious crime being committed



D. Counselling Service Delivery

The Counselling Service operates in consultation with Associate Dean (Student Discipline & Counselling) and shall offer the following:

- One-to-one counselling by appointment. For an appointment, a student is free to approach at any time during working hours.
- Institute may arrange mediation sessions for the students with the help of different spiritual and professional agencies.
- Workshops for students on various topics such as anger management, self-esteem, relaxation, fitness regime, educational exposures and methods to improve academic performance.
- Email and WhatsApp support to students for counselling.

E. Referring into the Service

- Students can self-refer or may be referred by teaching or support staff.
- Students can be referred directly or through the Student Services Help Desk.
- The counselling service will initially offer session to the seeker. If a student still requires further support, he/she may be referred to an external service.
- Students will arrange their sessions outside the class times.
- Institute counselors develop and maintain an effective network of internal and external referral agencies and refer students as appropriate and wherein their best interest.

F. Record Keeping

The Counselling Cell of Dean (Student Welfare) aims to prepare database of all the students studying at NIT Hamirpur and will keep record of the contact details of their parents/guardians. Each student studying at NIT Hamirpur may be contacted on regular basis by Counselling Cell through bulk messaging services.

Regarding counselling, a special care will be taken to maintain the record in a confidential manner.

- Confidentiality of all information about a student is of paramount importance. All counselling records and case notes are kept securely in the counselling room. Access to counselling information is restricted to counselors (internal and external), Associate Dean (Discipline & Counselling), Dean (Student Welfare) and the Director of Institute.
- Records will be destroyed after three academic years after the year in which their counselling commenced. Records will be disposed off safely and securely with the approval of Director, NIT Hamirpur.

G. Marketing Strategy

The counselling service is promoted to students via:

- Freshers' welcome interactions
- Messaging through email, mobile, WhatsApp, etc.
- Printed/electronic material

4. Counselling Team

The Counselling Committee of NIT Hamirpur will work under three tiers: Internal Committee, Student Committee and External Committee.



A. Internal Counselling Committee (First Tier)

The composition of the Committee is as under:

SNo	Constituent	Position
1.	Dean (Student Welfare) [Ex-officio]	Advisor
2.	Associate Dean (Student Discipline & Counselling) [Ex-officio]	Chairperson Cum Counsellor
3.	Associate Dean (Student Activities) [Ex-officio]	Counsellor
4.	Head of Concern Department/Centre	Counsellor
5.	Regular Doctor from Health Centre [Ex-officio]	Counsellor
6.	Coordinator/Faculty Incharge (will be appointed on annual basis)	Counsellor Cum Student Counselling Administrator
7.	Faculty Members [at least one from each Department/Centre]	Counsellor
8.	Ministerial Staff	Convener (for record keeping and communication with students)

The term of members, other than the ex-officio members will be one Academic Year.

B. Student Counselling Committee (Second Tier)

SNo	Position	Number of Posts
1.	Student Coordinator	01
2.	Student Member, UG	01 (from each UG Programme)
3.	Student Member, PG	02
4.	Student Member, PhD	02

The Coordinator and Members will be nominated by Dean (Student Welfare) for one Academic Year.

C. External Counselling Committee (Third Tier)

SNo	Constituent	Position
1.	A Psychiatrist (available in the nearby area, can be requested to visit Institute twice a week in the evening on payment basis)	Professional Counsellor
2.	The Counselling Cell shall invite Professional Medico-Counselors to deliver talks/workshops to students throughout the semester.	

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