



**Student Support & Development  
Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy**



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## Introduction

Within Student Support and Development (SS&D), there is a multi-disciplinary team of individuals with specialist knowledge and expertise in mental, spiritual and physical health, academic skills and structures, professional development, financial issues and models of student success in third level education. When combined, this expertise provides a unique platform through which students can be supported and developed through their time at Dublin City University (DCU).

### ***Common Purpose***

The common purpose of all staff of SS&D is to provide as many opportunities as possible to the students of DCU to help them develop to their full potential. The levels of support and intervention required by individual students will vary from student to student.

### ***Environment***

Our work is carried out within a supportive and open environment, which allows all student members of the DCU Community ease of access to support and developmental opportunities.

### ***Confidentiality***

The staff of SS&D have undergone Personal Data Protection Training and are bound by the rules of confidentiality, as outlined in this document.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff of SS&D, both full time and part-time. The policy also applies to any agents providing services to, or on behalf of, SS&D.

## Policy Statement

SS&D understands confidentiality to mean that no sensitive personal information regarding a student shall be shared with any other School or Unit of the University, or any external agency or person, without that student's prior, expressed consent, except where issues of safety or legality apply. Furthermore, in line with the [DCU's Contact with Third Parties Policy](#), staff will not discuss confidential details about any student with a third party<sup>1</sup>, including parents, guardians or next-of-kin, unless consent is expressly granted by the student or where issues of safety or legality apply.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this document, 'third party' relates to any individual outside of Student Support & Development. Student files (other than for confidential services) are held centrally and can be accessed by relevant members of SS&D. Staff will only access this information when required in order to carry out the duties of their role.



SS&D works collaboratively with entities across the university to support the progression and welfare of students and, from time to time, participates in research to continuously improve the quality of the service to students. In this context, we may share non-sensitive student engagement data with relevant units.

### ***Written Consent***

It is the responsibility of SS&D staff to obtain consent in writing, before sharing any confidential information with a third party, subject to the exceptions for safety or legal reasons referred to above. This written consent will be held on the student's file in SS&D. If a student chooses not to grant consent for information to be shared, this decision will be respected but the student should be aware that it may restrict the types of support available to them.<sup>2</sup>

## **Information sharing between SS&D and other DCU Schools and Units**

Where necessary, information may be shared between SS&D and other DCU Schools or Units in order to fulfil our statutory obligation to support the transfer, progression and welfare of students during their student journey. SS&D also participates in research relating to student progression and retention, and from time to time reports on engagement with our individual services. This is done in a confidential and safe manner, ensuring that personal data is protected at all times.

### **A student-centric approach to support**

Where a student is availing of the services of various units within SS&D, practitioners and professionals within these services will share relevant information about the student in order to provide an informed and coordinated approach to the support of the student. Details of such discussions will remain confidential to the staff members providing this support and will not be shared outside of this group to other members of staff within SS&D or elsewhere. The Director of SS&D will also have access to this information in order to carry out his/her duty of care to students, as Director of the Service.

### **Services with Enhanced Confidentiality**

Access, Disability & Learning Support, Counselling & Personal Development, Chaplaincy and the Student Health Centre provide an additional layer of confidentiality to the student, due to the sensitive nature of the discussions which may take place with these services. Members of staff within these services will not disclose details of conversations held in private with students with other members of staff in SS&D or third parties outside of the multi-disciplinary team that is working to support the student, as mentioned above, unless obliged to do so, as outlined in the DCU Contact with Third Party Policy.

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<sup>2</sup> Where a student's safety or the safety of others is at risk, and where it is not possible to obtain consent in writing, confidentiality may be breached.



## Contacts

If you have any query about the above policy, please direct your queries to the Director of Student Support & Development, email: [claire.bohan@dcu.ie](mailto:claire.bohan@dcu.ie).

## Related Documents

- 1) [DCU Contact with Third Parties Policy](#)
- 2) [DCU Privacy Policy](#)

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

## Version Control

Document Name	Student Support & Development (SS&D) Confidentiality & Disclosure Policy	The logo of Dublin City University (DCU) is located in the bottom right corner of the table. It features the letters 'DCU' in a stylized font with a blue and yellow swoosh above it. Below the letters, the text 'Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath' and 'Dublin City University' is written in smaller font.
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