

CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR STUDENT
COUNSELLORS

*Hanze University of Applied Sciences,
Groningen*



This Code of Conduct for Student Counsellors at Hanze UAS has the following aims:

1. The Code is a guide on how to act and behave professionally.
2. The Code is a source of information for all persons who come into contact with a student counsellor by virtue of the latter's position.
3. The Code is a benchmark against which the student counsellor's actions can be assessed in case of complaints or conflicts.

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Introduction:

Hanze UAS employs counsellors who provide advice and counselling to students.

Students who, for whatever reason, experience problems during their studies can contact the student counsellors to talk about them and see how their studies can be organised in the best possible way, taking into account the issues involved.

The student counsellors are aware of and knowledgeable about possible facilities, schemes and procedures that may benefit students. As such, they monitor students' rights and obligations. The relevant statutory regulations constitute the framework for this.

The student counsellors provide information, advice and support on studying and teaching, being a student, study facilities and other programme-transcending issues.

If necessary, the student counsellors can refer to the Hanze UAS student psychologists or other appropriate support providers.

The student counsellors are not attached to any degree programme, so they are independent and all conversations are confidential.

In principle, the student counsellors do not act as advocates for either the students or the degree programmes.

The position of student counsellor is incompatible with positions at Hanze UAS that involve a duty to evaluate the study progress of students. In case of doubt regarding possible compatibility, the Hanze Student Support team manager will decide.

The student counsellors have informational, advisory and support duties:

Informational:

Information given by a student counsellor by virtue of their position is up-to-date, factual and objective. Student counsellors are not guided by personal preferences.

Advisory (students):

The student counsellors are knowledgeable about schemes, procedures and facilities and use this knowledge to advise students regarding their personal situation/circumstances.

Support:

The student counsellors support students with certain procedures, such as applying for financial provisions. Support focuses on getting the process right.

Advisory (third parties):

Opinions issued by student counsellors about students to third parties, such as an examination board or Education Executive Agency (DUO) staff, are expertly argued and well-reasoned. In the case of written opinions, students will receive a copy of the opinion issued about them.



Alerting:

In addition, the student counsellors have a duty to alert third parties (schools, institutions, etc.) to concerns about student well-being and student rights and obligations.

Professional conduct:

The student counsellors perform their duties within the framework of the statutory regulations and the regulations applicable at Hanze UAS.

The student counsellors act in a neutral, knowledgeable and dedicated manner and do not show any bias towards students who are seeking support.

The services of the student counsellors are provided without preconditions and without obligation. The initiative for making an appointment, whether on the recommendation of third parties or not, lies with the students themselves.

The student counsellors respect students' privacy.

The student counsellors are aware of their personal limitations (expertise, personal beliefs) in the performance of their duties. Where necessary, they consult with colleagues.

The student counsellors ensure that they develop their expertise and keep it up to date.

Under no circumstances will the student counsellors abuse their position and expertise in relation to a student.

The student counsellors do not provide services to members of their own family or to students with whom they have an amicable relationship transcending the professional one. This also applies in case a student counsellor has an amicable relationship with a student's parents.

If a student counsellor is not (or no longer) able to assess a student's situation with an open mind, they will inform the student of this and hand the case over (if possible) to one of their student counsellor colleagues, in consultation with the student.

Confidentiality (see also our Privacy Statement for further details)

The student counsellors treat the information they receive from students confidentially. This means that, in principle, they do not share information with third parties, unless they have received the student's consent, this can be done in anonymised form or there is a legal obligation. The duty of confidentiality remains even after the contact ends.

In the absence of the student's consent to disclose information to third parties, the student counsellors may breach this duty of confidentiality in exceptional situations if at least the following conditions are met:

- a. Every effort has been made to obtain the student's consent.
- b. The student counsellor must be suffering from a crisis of conscience as a result of their duty of confidentiality, because it is likely that the non-disclosure of information will cause identifiable and serious harm and/or danger to the student involved or to third parties.
- c. The student counsellor considers it likely that breaching their duty of confidentiality will prevent or limit the harm to the other party



(or parties).

d. The student involved must be informed of the breach of the duty of confidentiality and the reasoning for this.

Students may withdraw their consent to the further disclosure of confidential information to third parties. However, in doing so, students should bear in mind that information already provided cannot be retracted. In the specific case of a BSA, this means that the student counsellor EITHER informs the examination board that, in the opinion of the student counsellor, no relationship can be established between circumstance and delay OR that the student counsellor informs the examination board that the student has not consented to providing information in the context of the BSA. If a student wishes to apply for a financial provision (DUO, Profiling Fund Committee grant), the student counsellor will explain, based on the confidential information provided, when the student is not eligible for this provision.

To conduct conversations in confidence, it is necessary for the student counsellors to have access to a private consulting room where students' privacy is fully guaranteed.

Secrecy

If a student wishes to make a confidential and/or highly personal disclosure to a student counsellor and asks the student counsellor to maintain secrecy about that disclosure, the student counsellor is obliged to point out to the student that such secrecy is limited under the Student Finance Act 2000 and in any case does not apply in the case of a criminal offence. In the latter case, the student counsellor will point out to the student that, as a rule, they have no right to refuse to give evidence.