



SD DOMBO UNIVERSITY OF
BUSINESS AND INTEGRATED
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

(SDD-UBIDS)

CENTRE FOR CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

POLICY

JULY, 2024

CONTENTS

	Preamble	v
1.	Background	1
2.	Policy Statement	3
3.	Vision and Mission of the Centre	5
3.1	Vision	5
3.2	Mission	5
4.	Policy Aims and Objectives	6
4.1	Aims	6
4.2	Objectives	6
5.	Definitions of Key Terms	8
6.	Policy Scope	10
7.	Policy Overseer	11
8.	Policy Evaluation	12
9.	Management of the Centre and Structure	13
9.1	Management	13
9.2	Structure	13
10.	Responsibilities of the Director	15
11.	Functions of the Centre	16
12.	Functions of Units	17
12.1	Counselling Unit	17
12.2	Career Guidance Unit	19
13.	Stakeholders	21
13.1	Internal	21
13.2	External	21
13.3	International	22
13.4	Forms of collaboration	22
14.	Principles Underpinning Guidance and Counselling	24

15.	Ethical Issues in Guidance and Counselling	27
15.1	Counselling relationship	27
15.2	Confidentiality	27
15.3	Professional responsibility	28
15.4	Training	28
15.5	Sexual and dual relationships	28
15.6	Countertransference	29
15.7	Rights of clients	29
16.	Funding	30
	References	31

PREAMBLE

Career guidance and counselling services for tertiary education students are critical in contemporary educational, political economy and student wellbeing discourse. Rising graduate unemployment and market uncertainties coupled with personal, family and academic challenges, cause widespread despair and distress among students. These issues, invariably, call for some form of tailored support, such as study skills training, academic advice and one-on-one personal-social counselling to enable students overcome academic challenges and mental health issues in order to succeed in their academic pursuit (Cerutti et al., 2020; Gallagher, 2009).

A third of Africa's population consists of young people and a quarter of jobs go to young people. For the youth, finding jobs is linked to a general employment challenge. The continent will have 18 million additional young people entering the working-age population each year by 2030, with about two-thirds of them (13 million) entering the labour market (Dirk, 2022). Data and labour market forecasts show disparity between skills demanded by employers/industry and competencies acquired by graduates of higher educational institutions, resulting in large-scale graduate unemployment. The African Centre for Economic Transformation (ACET, n.d.) reported that 50% of graduates in Africa do not find work each year, while the World Bank Report (WHO, 2020) put the unemployment rate among the youth in Ghana, for instance, at 12%, with more than 50% underemployed. The report noted that Ghana's youth unemployment rate surpasses the overall youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan African countries in 2020 at 7.8% and 5.8% worldwide.

Youth unemployment in Ghana, especially among graduates, is a serious national concern. As of 2023, the youth unemployment rate stood at 6.68% (O'Neill, 2024). For a decade (2013-2022), the rate of graduate unemployment was high, the reasons being graduates' choice

of qualifications and skills mismatch between what graduates have and what employers need.

In order to realise the mandate of Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies (SDD-UBIDS), Management, acknowledging the critical role of career guidance and counselling services, seeks to establish a Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling Services (hereinafter referred to as 'The Centre'), adding a Career Guidance Unit to the existing Counselling Unit. The Centre shall provide career guidance and counselling services to the University community (defined as encompassing primarily students, staff and people within the University's environs, hitherto referred to as 'clients') with career advisers and counsellors to assist clients address personal-social, psychological, academic and career problems, difficulties and challenges and equip them with requisite information and techniques for total self-development and wellbeing. The Centre shall provide all-inclusive support programmes and activities to the University community to ensure a conducive environment that supports work, social and personal life.

Career guidance and counselling services play an essential role in enabling clients understand themselves and exposing them to skills and knowledge about global market demands. In this regard, these services enable clients to focus not only on their wellbeing, but also on their immediate educational decisions and long-term career/occupational choices, providing essential skills and knowledge for fruitful transition from education and training to work. In this way, clients are better placed to appraise and estimate the potential labour demand for higher education graduates and adjust accordingly.

The Centre will assist clients to reflect on their interests, ambitions, abilities and qualifications, among others, facilitate understanding of the job market and education system and relate these to how they know themselves. Overall, career guidance provided by the Centre will enable clients plan and make decisions about work and learning. Further, the Centre, in collaboration with the Dean of Students and other stakeholders, shall plan, design, implement and evaluate guidance and counselling activities and programmes at the end of every academic

year. Overall, the Centre will assist the University community in three broad areas, namely:

- i. Learning to learn (academic): assisting clients to acquire knowledge, critical thinking and problem-solving skills to achieve academic success and lifelong learning.
- ii. Learning to live (personal-social): assisting clients to develop self-awareness, emotional regulation and social skills to navigate relationships and daily life effectively.
- iii. Learning to work (career): assisting clients to discover their strengths, interests and values to pursue a fulfilling career and develop skills to adapt and grow professionally in the ever-changing job market.

1. BACKGROUND

SDD-UBIDS) is a public university with its main campus located in Wa, regional capital of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Originally, it was one of three campuses of the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale. The Act of Parliament (Act 1001) that established it as an autonomous university was gazetted on August 23, 2019, with full operations starting in May 2020. The Act makes provision for other campuses to be created in other locations in the future.

The University's mission is "to be an internationally acclaimed centre of excellence in higher education" through quality teaching and learning, research and practically-oriented training programmes, with a mission "to provide high quality teaching, learning, development-oriented problem-solving research and innovative practical training to qualified and capable persons and institutions ..." (Strategic Plan, 2021-2025:16).

SDD-UBIDS is a public institution established in 2019 by Act 1001 to be an outstanding

The vision of Simon SDD-UBIDS is "to be an internationally acclaimed centre of excellence in higher education", and the mission is, "to provide quality teaching, learning, development-oriented problem-solving, research and innovative practical training to qualified and capable people and institutions..." (SDD-SDD-UBIDS Strategic Plan, 2021-2025:9). This policy document is in line with the efforts of the University to build all-inclusive personal and professional growth of staff and students, particularly in producing graduates who fit into the dynamic national and global workplace, staff and the university community as whole.

The University currently has eight faculties and schools namely; the Faculty of Integrated Development Studies (FIDS), Faculty of Planning and Land Management (FPLM), Faculty of Social Science and Arts (FSSA), Faculty of Public Policy and Governance (FPPG), Faculty of Information,

Communication and Technology (FICT), School of Business (SoB), School of Education and Life-long Learning (SoELL), and School of Law (SoL).

2. POLICY STATEMENT

SDD-UBIDS recognises the important complementary roles guidance and counselling play in the welfare, holistic, personal and professional development of students, particularly in producing graduates who fit into the dynamic national and global workplace, staff and the University community as whole. This necessitates establishment of the Centre. Undergraduate students lack critical careers information and clear understanding of multiple career paths available in their respective fields of study. Further, many have been under-prepared in the formative years of education. Consequently, their experience of a university environment tends to be characterised by frustration, stress and uncertainty. Postgraduate students, juggling studies and jobs, often travel a lonely journey without career guidance and counselling support. Similarly, academic and administrative staff, studying or not, as well as members of the University community, generally, encounter life situations that need guidance and counselling.

Career guidance provides careers information and develops clients' capacity in employable skills, including interviewing, personal and interpersonal skills, writing of effective curriculum vitae and covering letters, career development, and effective communication, among others, while counselling assists in developing appropriate skills and attitudes, and resolves problems in academic, psychological, emotional, and/or social contexts.

This policy makes career guidance and counselling services the backbone of support to the University community; outlines functions of the Director; the Centre itself and its various units, provides a management structure that shows how the Centre sits within the University system and identifies internal, external and international stakeholders with whom the Centre will establish working relationships. It also outlines various forms and modalities of collaboration. More importantly, the policy sets out principles for guidance and counselling, clarifies critical

ethical issues, and suggests sources of funding to make the Centre financially sustainable.

3. VISION AND MISSION OF THE CENTRE

3.1 VISION

The Centre has a vision to be a leading centre of career guidance and counselling services, committed to meeting the diverse needs of nurturing environment that fosters growth and success.

3.2 MISSION

The mission of the Centre is to provide tailored career guidance and counselling services in a nurturing environment that fosters personal growth and success in clients academic, career, and personal goals with confidence through innovative programmes and compassionate support.

4. POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 AIMS

The policy aims to:

- i. Enhance clients' well-being by fostering a supportive environment that promotes their holistic well-being in the areas of academic, emotional, and social needs.
- ii. Facilitate personal development by providing comprehensive guidance and counselling services aimed at nurturing clients' personal growth, resilience, and self-awareness among clients.
- iii. Promote academic success through provision of support for clients to achieve their academic goals by offering tailored guidance, study skills development, and academic counselling.
- iv. Foster career development by equipping clients with the necessary skills, resources, and guidance to make informed career decisions and successfully transition into the workforce or further education.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

The policy seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Provide comprehensive counselling services by developing and implementing counselling programmes that address the diverse needs of clients, including academic, career, personal, and crisis counselling.
- ii. Organise skills development workshops and seminars focused on enhancing clients' study skills, time management, stress management, and other essential skills for academic and personal success.

- iii. Offer career guidance and placement services through career counselling to assist clients explore career options, develop job search strategies, and connect with internship and employment opportunities.
- iv. Collaborate with the Dean of Students, Faculties/Schools, Academic Departments and student organisations to enhance the effectiveness of student support services and promote a culture of student success and engagement.
- v. Assess and continuously improve the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services through feedback mechanisms, surveys, and outcome evaluations, and utilise findings to continuously improve and refine service delivery.
- vi. Promote awareness and outreach to increase awareness of available guidance services through targeted marketing campaigns, orientation programmes, and outreach initiatives aimed at reaching all students, including those from marginalised or under-represented groups.

5. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

CAREER

This refers to an occupation with opportunities to progress undertaken by a person for a significant period of their life.

CAREER ADVISER

A person who assists people to make to make realistic choices about their education, training and work by giving the right advice, information and guidance regarding their future to enable them to reach their full potential.

CAREER EDUCATION

A learning process associated with developing students' career competencies that helps to develop skills needed to evaluate potential career paths. It is part of the educational curriculum in which attention is paid to helping groups of individuals to develop competencies for managing their career development.

CAREER GUIDANCE

A service aimed at assisting people begin, change or advance their careers, which may involve one-on-one or small group meetings between a counsellor (therapist) and a career seeker with assessments, activities and projects to assist the career seeker to maximise his/her strengths. Career counselling hinges on three pillars, namely: career information, career counselling and career education.

CAREER INFORMATION

This covers information on courses, occupations, career paths and the labour market. It may be provided in print form, but increasingly

it is web-based. It is information on general career guidance that is collected, organised and provided by a career resources centre to assist people in making informed education, training and occupational choices throughout their working lives.

CAREER PATH

A series of jobs, which may be linear in one field involving advancement into roles that have more responsibilities and improved salaries that lead a person closer to a career goal and vision of life.

CLIENTS

This refers to undergraduate and postgraduate students, academic and non-academic staff and people living within the university's environment, who collectively constitute the university community.

COUNSELLING

A private and confidential session where a counsellor meets with a client to discuss a problem they are having, any distress they may be feeling, life dissatisfaction, or a loss of direction and purpose.

COUNSELLOR (THERAPIST)

A trained person who offers guidance and counselling services to a client.

GUIDANCE

An approach that is developmental in character that helps a person recognise, accept, and make use of their skills, interests, aptitudes, and behavioural patterns in connection to their goals.

YOUTH

Any person between 15 and 35 years of age as defined by the National Youth Authority Act, 2016 (Act 939).

6. POLICY SCOPE

The policy applies to all current and future undergraduate and postgraduate students, irrespective of whether they are in full-time or part-time studies, and regardless of their being enrolled in open or distance learning programmes. It also covers all academic and non-academic staff, studying or not, employed on full- or part-time basis. Additionally, the policy covers people living within the university's environment.

7. POLICY OVERSEER

As the overall head of the university responsible for the well-being of all students, staff and members of the university, in general, the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of this policy.

8. POLICY EVALUATION

This policy shall be evaluated every five (5) years to assess its effectiveness.

9. MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE AND STRUCTURE

9.1 MANAGEMENT

The Centre shall have a Director, who is a trained counsellor or a person with relevant academic field or profession.

The Centre shall have Counselling and Career Guidance Units and shall be run by a management team headed by the Director, Dean of Students, Heads of the two units and the Administrator at the Centre. The Director shall work alongside and in harmony with the Dean of Students to ensure that guidance and counselling services are made available and accessible to the university community.

9.2 STRUCTURE

The management structure of the Centre is based on the dual organisational principles of hierarchy (vertical arrows) and relationships (horizontal arrows). At the apex of the structure is the Vice-Chancellor, to whom the Director ultimately reports. The Director liaises and works closely with the Dean of Students, internal stakeholders and various external and international stakeholders. Each of the four heads of units reports to the Director and, while focusing on their units, works towards the collective organisational good by maintaining healthy working relationships for the Centre to function holistically. Counsellors in each unit report to their respective heads. The structure is diagrammatically presented in Figure 1. (Organogram)

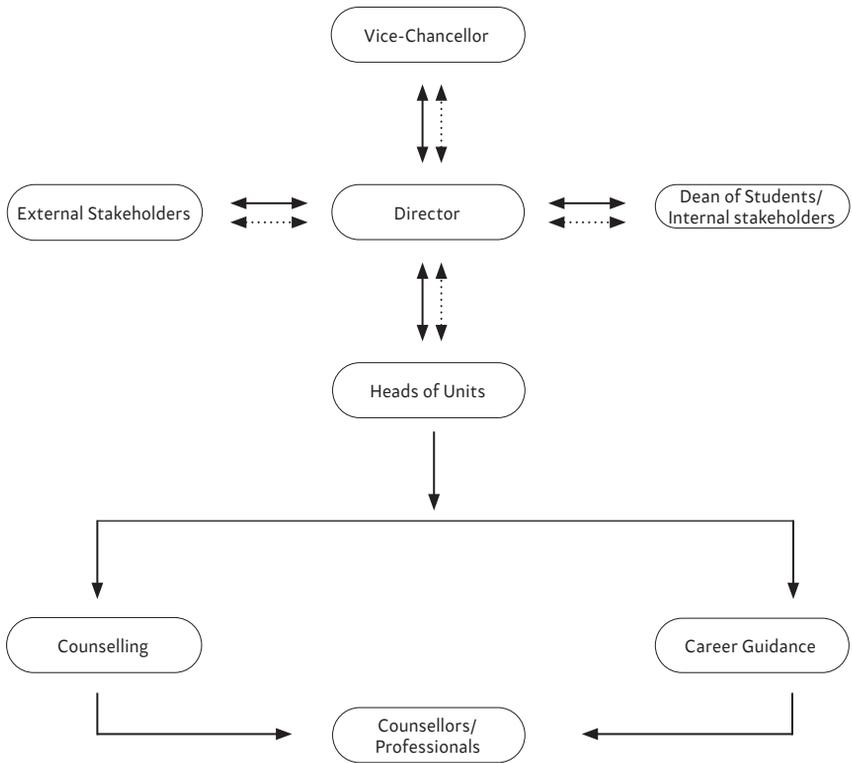


Figure 1: Organogram

10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR

The Director shall be responsible for:

- i. Running the Centre effectively and efficiently on a day-to-day basis.
- ii. Convening, at least, two management committee meetings within a teaching trimester.
- iii. Ensuring units are well-resourced and functioning properly.
- iv. Ensuring units present action plans accompanied by budgets for consideration and approval of the management committee
- v. Forwarding approved action plans and budgets to the University management for consideration and approval.
- vi. Employing professional and managerial skills/techniques and, with reference to the University's statutes, policy documents, laws of Ghana to ensure value for money, employees' compliance with workplace standards, professionalism and best practices.
- vii. Continuous professional development of staff.
- viii. Ensuring all relevant university policies and directives are implemented at the Centre.
- ix. Performing any other duties assigned by the Vice-Chancellor.

11. FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRE

Among others, the functions of the Centre shall include:

- i. Supervising and coordinating activities of units created under it, programmes and/or activities of Schools, Faculties, Directorates and other entities/units of the University with activities or services related to guidance and counselling.
- ii. Providing guidance to clients to make rational choices and solve their educational, personal and career problems by assisting individuals make adequate adjustments to life situations.
- iii. Providing services to help clients understand themselves, enabling them to know their needs, aptitudes, abilities, interests, perceptions, purposes and limitations.
- iv. Generating funds through providing guidance and counselling services to outside communities and institutions.
- v. Collaborating with stakeholders in providing guidance and counselling services.

12. FUNCTIONS OF UNITS

12.1 COUNSELLING UNIT

This unit, in collaboration with other stakeholders, shall plan, design, implement and evaluate the university's guidance and counselling programme at the end of every academic year. The unit shall provide the following counselling services:

i. Individual counselling

Provide confidential one-on-one counselling sessions to clients facing personal, academic, or emotional challenges and offer support and guidance for issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, relationships, and family concerns.

ii. Group counselling

- a) Organise group counselling sessions to address common issues affecting students, such as adjustment to university life, grief, or coping with academic pressure; and
- b) facilitate support groups for specific populations, such as international students and students with disabilities.

iii. Organise orientation services

These services are intended for new entrants at all levels of the University, which may include, but not limited to:

- a) General orientation for first-year/level 100 students.
- b) Orientation on examination for first-year/level 100 students.
- c) Orientation for first-year postgraduate students.
- d) Special orientation on University policies and, on the request by Schools/Faculties, Departments and Directorates.

- e) Orientation/seminars/symposia on perplexing social issues that have direct or indirect impact on the university community and people within its environs.

iv. Crisis intervention

- a) Provide immediate support and intervention for clients experiencing crises, including suicidal ideation, trauma, sexual harassment, abuse or severe mental health issues.
- b) Collaborate with campus security, health services, and external resources to ensure students' safety and well-being during emergencies.

v. Referral services

- a) Refer clients to specialised services within the University or external resources, including mental health professionals, medical professionals, or community organisations.
- b) Ensure seamless coordination and follow-up to guarantee clients receive appropriate care and support.

vi. Support for differently-abled persons

Apart from services available and accessible by all persons (including differently-abled persons) in the university community, the Counselling Unit shall set up a support system for persons of different abilities (disabilities) to provide services including, but not limited to:

- a) Disability counselling.
- b) Campus navigation and support services.
- c) Self-esteem guidance and counselling services.
- d) Mediation services (between a differently-abled students and Schools/Faculties. Departments, Lecturers, administrative and support staff, parents and colleagues.
- e) Self-care education and counselling.

vi. Other services

The Counselling Unit shall also render the following services to clients:

- a) Information services
- b) Personal-social guidance and counselling
- c) Marriage/relationship guidance and counselling
- d) Decision-making skills
- e) Family and work-related stress management
- f) conflict management and resolution
- g) Grief counselling
- h) Breaking bad news
- i) Managing/coping skills (stress, depression and anxiety)
- j) family counselling
- k) Research
- l) Training

12.2 CAREER GUIDANCE UNIT

The Unit shall be responsible for providing professional career guidance and counselling services to the university community. It shall also liaise with industry and various Schools/Faculties to inform policy; programme review and establishment, and identify job opportunities for graduate students.

The Unit shall perform the following functions:

i. Career Counselling

- a) Assist students to explore career options, identify their strengths and interests, and set career goals.
- b) Provide resources and guidance on the preparation of curriculum vitae, train in interview skills, job search strategies, and professional development.

ii. Internship and employment assistance

- a) Facilitate opportunities for internships, cooperative programmes, and experiential learning to enhance students' practical skills and industry exposure.
- b) Establish partnerships with employers, alumni networks, and industry professionals to connect students with job opportunities and networking events.

iii. Skills development workshops

- a) Organise workshops and seminars on topics such as leadership development, communication skills, entrepreneurship, and workplace etiquette.
- b) Offer personality assessments, career assessments, and skills assessments to help students identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

iv. Liaison

The Unit shall liaise with the Directorate of International Collaborations to create opportunities for further studies, especially abroad for students and staff.

v. Academic Advising

- a) Provide academic advisory services to help students navigate course selection, degree requirements, academic policies, and academic success strategies.
- b) Offer academic workshops on study skills, time management, goal setting, and examination preparation.

13. STAKEHOLDERS

Management of the Centre shall work with stakeholders to ensure clients are provided high-quality, professional guidance and counselling services. The Centre could form beneficial linkages and working relationships with the following to ensure its effectiveness in rendering seamless services and sustainability:

13.1 INTERNAL

- a) University Council
- b) Academic Board
- c) University Management
- d) Dean of Students
- e) Deans of Schools/Faculties
- f) Heads of Departments
- g) Hall Masters and Tutors
- h) Directorates and Units
- i) Private Student Hostels
- j) University Staff
- k) Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students
- l) University Hospital

13.2 EXTERNAL

- a) Parents/Guardians and Family Members of Staff and Students
- b) Ghana Health Service
- c) Chiefs and Opinion leaders
- d) Educational Institutions (schools and other universities)

- e) Government Agencies (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health)
- f) Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) focused on mental health and education
- g) Ghana Psychological Council
- h) Ghana Psychology Association
- i) Ghana Counsellors' Association
- j) Health Service Facilities

13.3 INTERNATIONAL

- a) World Health Organisation
- b) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- c) International Association of Counselling
- d) International Universities and Colleges
- e) Global Mental Health Organisations

13.4 FORMS OF COLLABORATION

Various forms of collaboration between the Centre and stakeholders are envisaged, such as:

- a) Establishing a Stakeholder Advisory Board to ensure regular input and feedback;
- b) Internal stakeholders assisting in raising funds;.
- c) Key internal stakeholders providing policy gap and evaluation guidelines.
- d) Participation of internal stakeholders in activities of the Centre such as orientation and referrals and also serving as advisers at halls of residence and departments, among others;
- e) Developing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to formalise partnerships.

- f) Organising and attending international conferences and workshops to stay updated on best practices and networking with global stakeholders.
- g) Offering training and workshops for academic staff and students on mental health and wellbeing.
- h) Developing a referral system with external stakeholders (such as NGOs and private practitioners) for specialised services.

By collaborating with stakeholders, the Centre could ensure comprehensive and beneficial services for clients, including:

- a) Increased awareness of mental health and wellbeing.
- b) Access to specialised services and expertise.
- c) Enhanced academic performance and student success.
- d) Improved University-community relations.
- e) Alignment with international best practices and standards.

14. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

I. CONFIDENTIALITY

All clients have a right to confidentiality in their dealings with counsellors, but it is not absolute. There are instances where, in a client's best interest, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, such as in the case of abuse, bullying, risk to the life of another person or an order from a court of competent jurisdiction, confidentiality may be broken.

Nevertheless:

- a) Clients will be accorded privacy during the counselling process.
- b) The counsellor will communicate clearly the extent of confidentiality offered to clients.
- c) Issues presented in the counselling session will be treated with confidentiality unless they pose a life threat to the client/ another person or a client if a client engages in any action that contravenes the law.
- d) Counselling records will be maintained in a confidential manner.
- e) Access to counselling records shall be bound by the rules of confidentiality.

II. AUTONOMY

Counselling empowers clients to make appropriate decisions, choose their direction, and take necessary actions in a therapeutic relationship. Thus, counselling enables clients to resolve their issues and cope with their situation.

III. BENEFICENCE

Counselling respects dignity and promotes the welfare of clients. Counsellors shall ensure that what takes place within the counselling session is entirely for the client's well-being.

IV. NON-MALEFICENCE

Counselling will not harm the client. Counsellors will refrain from actions that risk hurting clients, including physical or emotional harm, among others.

V. FIDELITY

Counsellors will honour their commitment to clients to enhance the trust placed in them.

VI. JUSTICE

Counsellors will be fair and impartial to all clients in providing counselling services.

VII. FEES

Counselling services provided will be free to all clients, except for referral cases from outside the university community.

VIII. DUAL/MULTIPLE RELATIONSHIPS

Counsellors will refrain from engaging in counselling clients with whom they have relationships that may interfere with their objectivity.

IX. INFORMED CONSENT

Clients have a right to be informed about the counselling procedure, goals and benefits of counselling to make an informed decision as to whether or not to seek therapy.

X. EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF CLIENTS' RESULTS

Counsellors will use assessment instruments as one component of the counselling process, taking into account clients' personal and socio-cultural contexts. They will only utilise those testing and assessment services for which they are competent and take reasonable measures to ensure their proper use.

XI. REFERRALS

Counsellors may refer clients to external, appropriately qualified professionals. Referral may occur after a counsellor has made an informed decision that the client's situation requires assistance beyond the counsellor's professional training. The referral shall be done in consultation with the Director of the Centre and the client. Clients are to be provided with referral details and to decide to proceed with an appointment with a specialist.

15. ETHICAL ISSUES IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Ethics are important in counselling as they are a means to protect the welfare of clients and counsellors by clearly outlining what is appropriate conduct to facilitate the realisation of the counselling objective. Ethics are standards of conduct based on a set of professional values and moral decision-making regarding professional behaviour. They are usually established by a discipline's professional body, such as Ghana Psychological Council, Ghana Psychology Association, American Counselling Association or American Psychological Association.

The ethical standards outlined shall serve as guidelines for professional counsellors at the Centre, as well as the basis on which to process complaints and ethical concerns against counsellors.

15.1 COUNSELLING RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between counsellors and clients must cause no harm to the client. Rather, it should encourage clients' growth and development, while keeping their welfare in mind. This is accomplished through maintaining appropriate records, formulating counselling plans, obtaining informed consent and avoiding dual relationships with clients. Romantic relationships are strictly forbidden. However, romantic relationships may be considered with former clients after five years. Counsellors must take care to observe this guideline as the relationship between counsellors and clients is unbalanced in that counsellors, by virtue of their expertise, are more powerful.

15.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

Communication between counsellors and clients is confidential. There are, however, exceptions to confidentiality. Counsellors may break confidentiality if they believe clients intend to self-harm or harm others.

Counsellors must report, as required by law, child or elder abuse if confirmed by the client. Other than these extenuating circumstances, counsellors cannot share information regarding clients without the client's consent, typically in the form of a written release. Release of confidential information can be devastating to clients, affecting their physical, psychological and social well-being. As the first tenet of counselling, ethics requires that no harm be done.

15.3 PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Counsellors have a professional responsibility to behave openly and honestly when interacting with clients and the public. Counsellors should serve as advocates for the promotion of change that improves the quality of life for not only their clients but the public. Counsellors must also take time to practise self-care. Without proper self-care, counsellors risk burnout, which leads to ineffective, even harmful, care for their clients.

15.4 TRAINING

To practice as a counsellor, one must be trained appropriately. Training is intended to keep counsellors abreast with new developments in the field and ensure that knowledge acquired in a training programme is refreshed. As counsellors directly apply this knowledge to the treatment of clients, continuing education must be obtained.

15.5 SEXUAL AND DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Counsellors should never engage in a sexual relationship with clients. This means it is always counsellors' responsibility to prevent these relationships. A counsellor who has sexual feelings for a client may need to refer the client.

Counsellors should be cautious in counselling individuals with whom they have other relationships, such as family members, friends, and co-workers. Other relationships with clients might impair the counsellors' judgment and objectivity and may affect the ability to provide services. They need to decide if the relationship can cause harm to their clients

and may decide to refer clients to other counsellors or see the clients, but establish guidelines to prevent ethical issues.

15.6 COUNTERTRANSFERENCE

Countertransference may result in counsellors being overprotective, treating clients too cautiously, seeing themselves in clients, developing romantic or sexual feelings for clients, giving advice instead of therapy, or developing social relationships with clients.

Countertransference is not altogether bad and may make counsellors feel more empathetic toward clients and more aware of their feelings. When it is problematic, though, counsellors should deal with feelings through consultation, supervision, or personal therapy.

15.7 RIGHTS OF CLIENTS

Counsellors need to demonstrate their respect for the rights of their clients to build good relationships with them. Some rights of clients are:

The right of informed consent demands that clients be given enough information to make informed choices about entering and continuing the client/therapist relationship.

An important issue is minors' right to treatment. Regarding whether minors may seek counselling without parental consent and limits of confidentiality, there are different standards for different countries. In most countries, minors have to obtain parental consent before entering counselling, with a few exceptions like substance abuse, child abuse, and other crisis matters.

On the right to a referral, when counsellors feel unqualified to handle cases or believe the type or duration of treatment required is too limited for what clients should receive, it is essential to refer. It is important to let clients know that counsellors/therapists have clients' interests at heart, but do not have the skills to give the required help. Therapists should not give the impression that they are trying to get rid of the client.

16. FUNDING

The Centre could generate funds from various sources to sustain itself, including:

- a) Students' contribution to counselling funds
- b) Grants
- c) A percentage of income from special consultancy services rendered by the Centre or its staff
- d) Appeals for funds
- e) Special levies

REFERENCES

- African Centre for Economic Transformation. (n.d.). https://acetforafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ACET-Brief-2021_3-page.pdf
- American Counselling Association. (2017). *Assessment in counselling: Procedures and practices* (6th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association Publications <https://www.collegecounseling.org/>)
- Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers. (2019). *CACEE standards and guidelines for career services in Canadian post-secondary institutions*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers.
- Cerutti R., Fontana A., Ghezzi V., Menozzi F., Spensieri V., Tambelli R. (2020). Exploring psychopathological distress in Italian university students seeking help: a picture from a university counselling service. *Curr. Psychol.* 41, 1382–1394. doi: 10.1007/s12144-020-00665-9 [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Dietsche, P., & Lees, J. (2017). *Insight into Canadian post-secondary career service models: Final report*. *Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling, Toronto*.
- Dirk, W., te Velde, 2022. *Supporting jobs for young women and men in Africa: a framework for country-level analysis*. Working Paper GYSE-001, Nairobi, Kenya: African Economic Research Consortium.
- Gallagher, S. 2009. Delusional realities. In L. Bortolotti and M. Broome (eds.), *Psychiatry as Cognitive Neuroscience* (245-66). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Government of Ghana, Act 2019 (Act 1001).
- Government of Ghana, National Youth Authority Act. Act 2016 (Act 939).

- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. (2015). NASPA standards of practice for student affairs. Washington, DC: NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.
- O'Neill, A. 2024. Youth unemployment rate in Ghana in 2023. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812039/youth-unemployment-rate-in-ghana/> [17 April 2024]
- Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies. Strategic Plan: 2021-2025.
- Stone, C. B., & Archer, J. (2017). Counselling in the college setting: A handbook for student affairs professionals and administrators. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation. 2000. Regional Training Seminar on Guidance and Counselling. UNESCO -<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000130428>
- World Bank Report (2020). Addressing Youth Unemployment in Ghana Needs Urgent Action. Available: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/09/29/addressing-youth-unemployment-in-ghana-needs-urgent-action>