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List of related documents

Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions and on amendments and additions to other acts
Code of Ethics of CTU
Directive of the Rector of CTU concerning the handling, protection and use of personal data

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Article 1 Legal framework and organisational structure of CTU counselling services

- 1.1 Higher education counselling is a process whereby a public higher education institution provides information and counselling services as support with admission to study, successful study, professional and everyday life.
- 1.2 The obligation to provide counselling and the basic legal framework for the provision of counselling are laid out in Sec. 21 of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions and on amendments and additions to other acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “the Higher Education Act”). More detailed rules for the provision of counselling, the status of the counselling centre, the rights and obligations of clients, the rights and obligations of counsellors and the principles of counselling services are set out in this methodological guideline.
- 1.3 Counselling and information services were established at CTU pursuant to Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions, as amended. The services are provided by the following counselling centres:
 - Centre for Information and Counselling Services and Career Centre (CIPS - KC)
 - Guidance and Support Centre for Students with Special Needs (ELSA).

The mission of these centres is to provide free professional counselling mainly in relation to study, psychological support, psychoterapeutical support, special education counselling, socio-legal counselling, career and spiritual counselling (hereinafter referred to as “Counselling”).

- 1.4 The counselling services are provided primarily to applicants for study at CTU, CTU students, CTU graduates and CTU employees (hereinafter referred to as “Clients”).
- 1.5 The rules and standards for the provision of counselling services at CTU serve to guarantee the quality of counselling services and to advise the counsellor and the client on their rights and obligations. Compliance with these rules is binding for all staff of CTU counselling centres, including their contractual partners.
- 1.6 Contractual partners are persons who provide counselling at CTU counselling centres based on an employment relationship other than an employment contract, a contract for work or an agreement on work activity. These persons provide counselling based on a cooperation agreement, a trade licence or a similar legal relationship.
- 1.7 All employees of the CTU counselling centres are bound to uphold the Code of Ethics of CTU, the Directive of the Rector of CTU concerning the handling, protection and use of personal data, the Code of Ethics for Employees of Higher Education Counselling Centres, and other codes or standards pertinent to their profession; e.g. the Code of Ethics of the Association of Clinical Psychologists of the Czech Republic, the Code of Ethics of the Czech Association for Psychotherapy, the Code of Ethics of the Association of Workers of Special Counselling Centres, and the Standards of Higher Education Counselling of the Academy of Higher Education Counsellors. This obligation also applies to contractual partners providing counselling services for CTU.

Article 2 Counselling conditions at CTU

CTU provides appropriate conditions for counselling, taking into account the scope of the counselling services provided and the number of Clients, consisting of:

- space suitable for counselling activities and provision of counselling services in a high-quality and discreet manner (separate consultation rooms, rooms for group therapy, discreet zones, etc.),
- technical equipment appropriate for counselling and corresponding to the counselling centre's capacity (equipment for remote service provision, an electronic filing system, etc.),
- staffing with qualified personnel and, where appropriate, administrative and technical support,
- funds to finance the counselling,
- the possibility for counselling staff to participate in sessions of the university's governing and advisory bodies,
- the possibility to propose changes to and adoption of measures required to deal with issues discussed and services provided,
- space for communication with target groups within the university's communication tools for purposes of offering counselling services and providing education and prevention.

Article 3 Types and forms of counselling services provided

The counselling is focused on providing help and assistance with solving difficulties related to studies and life situation as well as career development etc. All services are provided free of charge. Some types of counselling and services are also provided in English.

3.1 Types of counselling

Depending on their main area of focus, counselling centres can provide the following types of counselling:

- study counselling focusing mainly on providing help with selecting of suitable study programmes, solving complications, issues and obstacles related to study at CTU,
- special education counselling focusing on providing support and guidance to students with special needs related to their disability or other health-related disadvantage,
- career and personal counselling focusing on helping Clients discover and develop their talents, skills and interests; this type of counselling enables clients to steer their individual path through education and professional training while preparing for a professional career, at work and in other areas of activity and harness their abilities and skills to do so,
- psychological counselling based on the counsellor vs. Client model provides an opportunity to consult on and get help with solving personal issues, crisis situations, interpersonal conflicts at school and in private life in a discreet manner,
- psychotherapeutical counselling combining elements of psychotherapy and counselling with the aim of helping Clients overcome difficult life situations by understanding their thoughts, emotions and behaviour,
- legal counselling providing help with dealing with study-related situations and understanding legal and internal regulations related to study,
- socio-legal counselling in relation to students' financial situation (scholarships, etc.),
- spiritual counselling focusing on spiritual issues,
- communication counselling providing students with opportunities to develop their verbal and non-verbal communication skills and self-presentation,
- personal development supporting students in their search for a health self-image,
- coaching.

3.2 Forms of counselling

Counselling is available in the form of individual or group consultations, in person, by telephone, online or by e-mail:

- face-to-face consultations – individual consultations provided at the premises of the counselling centre,
- telephone consultations – individual consultations provided by telephone,
- e-mail consultations – individual consultations provided by e-mail,
- online consultations – individual consultations provided by online sessions on MS Teams

or similar applications.

Article 4 Other activities of CTU counselling centres

- 4.1 In addition to the above-mentioned types and forms of individual counselling, CTU counselling centres can also organise educational and development seminars, lectures and workshops for students and CTU employees.
- 4.2 In addition to counselling services, counselling centres also provide awareness-raising and prevention activities.
- 4.3 Counselling centres provide the academic community with information about the situation at CTU faculties and units obtained in the course of their work with clients and as part of the services provided.

Article 5 Counsellor and counselling policy

- 5.1 A counsellor is an employee assigned to a counselling centre under an employment contract, an agreement on work performed outside the employment relationship, or a contractual partner working under a cooperation agreement, a trade licence or a similar legal relationship (hereinafter also collectively referred to as "counselling centre staff" or "counsellor"). The role of the counsellor and contractual partner is to provide counselling in accordance with defined counselling rules, legal regulations and his/her professional competence.
- 5.2 CTU may also use contractual partners to provide counselling under the same terms and conditions, provided that the contractual partner meets the same requirements as the CTU employees who provide counselling.
- 5.3 Counsellors shall meet the qualification requirements for the counselling services provided at CTU and shall undertake continuing professional education.
- 5.4 If the work is under a deferred publication scheme, the period of deferred publication automatically applies to its appendices.
- 5.5 Counsellor shall maintain confidentiality and protect the personal information of clients.
- 5.6 Consultants shall remain neutral and unbiased in relation to the client and the consultancy offered. If a counsellor finds himself/herself in a conflict of interest, the counsellor shall stop providing counselling services and immediately report this fact to the Head of Department.

Article 6 Principles of counselling and other activities of counselling centres

All counselling centre staff members shall follow the following principles:

- 6.1 Staff members shall provide counselling and information to all clients regardless of their race, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, social status, etc.
- 6.2 In dealing with clients, staff members shall act to the best of their knowledge and conscience and in the best interests of the client.
- 6.3 In the event of a conflict of interests, the staff member shall alert the client to this possibility in a timely manner and shall refer the client to a colleague or another service where there is not risk of a conflict of interest.
- 6.4 Staff members shall respect clients' right to express their wishes, needs, opinions, attitudes and decisions.
- 6.5 Staff members shall respect clients' rights to refuse an offered service or to withdraw from counselling without giving a reason.
- 6.6 Staff members shall not degrade the human dignity of any client in any situation.
- 6.7 Staff members are bound by the duty of confidentiality concerning all personal facts of clients that they come to learn in the course of their work. Staff members are also bound by the duty of confidentiality concerning clients, which duty shall survive even after their cooperation with the counselling centre is terminated.
- 6.8 Staff members shall keep records of the clients and services provided and shall protect this documentation against any possible misuse. For this purpose, CTU shall establish organisational and technical measures to prevent accidental or unauthorised leaks of information. To this end, staff members shall in particular keep client files locked and use only secured communication devices such as computers and notebooks protected by passwords, access rights, etc.
- 6.9 Staff members must request clients' consent to the presence of another person during consultations for purposes such as observation.
- 6.10 Staff members shall have appropriate training for their respective positions and shall continuously improve and enhance their qualifications.
- 6.11 Staff members shall only provide those counselling services and conduct other activities that are consistent with their competences as defined in their job description and in line with their expertise and experience.
- 6.12 Staff members have the right to turn down a client if they realise they are not competent to deal with the client's issues or if they believe they would not provide impartial and unbiased services due to personal reasons.
- 6.13 Staff members may refuse to provide services to a client or terminate the provision of services if the client provides blatantly false information, fails to cooperate over a prolonged period of time (e.g. fails to keep appointments), fails to take action to resolve his/her problems, is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is aggressive or due to lack of a substantial case.

Article 7 Rights and obligations of CTU counselling centres

7.1 The head of a counselling centre has the right to:

- refuse to provide counselling services,
- terminate the provision of counselling services,
- refer a client to an external service provider in cases where the counselling centre does not provide the requested service or if the counselling centre does not have available capacity,
- put in place supervision of counselling centre staff or arrange for external supervision by an expert with the required qualifications for such supervisory work.

7.2 The counselling centre has the obligation to:

- upon the intake of a client, provide that client with information about the form of counselling and available counselling options,
- provide high-quality counselling to all potential clients who meet the required conditions in an equal and non-discriminatory manner,
- respect each client's requirements and personal choices,
- provide counselling in a discreet manner, ensure that counselling centre staff keep their confidentiality obligations and provide secure handling of information obtained from clients as well as their personal data.

Article 8 Rights and obligations of clients

Clients include applicants for study, CTU students and employees. CTU graduates can continue using the services of CTU counselling centres in the form of career and personal counselling for a maximum of two years after graduation.

8.1 Clients have the right to:

- receive information about counselling, the counselling conditions and form in which counselling is provided,
- decline an offered counselling service without giving a reason,
- ask the head of the counselling centre to assign him/her another counsellor (in writing or by e-mail),
- give feedback on or evaluation of the services provided by the counselling centre,
- submit a written complaint (on paper or electronically) to the head of the counselling centre.

8.2 Clients are obliged to follow the conditions and rules of each service provided as specified on the web site of the relevant counselling centre.

Article 9 Confidentiality and discretion

- 9.1 In order to ensure due professional care and taking into account situations where coordination with other CTU units is required, consultation with other professionals working in other CTU units may be possible with the client's prior consent.
- 9.2 The counsellor may also consult a case with colleagues outside of CTU, at an intervision or supervision meeting. This procedure is in line with the ethical rules of collegial collaboration and the counsellor may share only such information as is necessary for an efficient collaboration of the wider counselling care system.
- 9.3 An exception from the confidentiality obligation applies to information regarding circumstances that fall within the remit of the reporting obligation as defined by legal regulations concerning selected felonies of threat to public safety or the client's personal safety.
- 9.4 In his/her relationship with the client, the counsellor is bound by confidentiality. Only the client may release the counsellor from this confidentiality obligation. The counsellor's confidentiality may also be lifted pursuant to the requirements of applicable and effective legal regulations of the Czech Republic.

Article 10 Protection of clients' personal data

- 10.1 All counselling centre staff members are under the obligation to maintain the confidentiality of personal and sensitive data and information which they may obtain in connection with counselling services.
- 10.2 Handling of clients' personal data is an integral part of counselling services. Counselling centre staff members use such data in their work in accordance with generally binding legal regulations applicable to CTU in Prague, in particular in accordance with the EU Regulation 2016/679 on personal data protection, known as GDPR, as well as CTU's internal regulations concerning the processing and protection of personal data. Only the counselling centre staff is authorised to work with clients' personal data. Moreover, access to personal data is not granted to all staff members, but only to those who are directly involved in the client's case. The client's personal data may be shared only with those counselling centre staff members whose expertise is necessary for the client to receive comprehensive counselling care. The handling of clients' personal data is described in the Directive of the Rector of CTU concerning the handling, protection and use of personal data.

Article 11 Promotion of counselling

The counselling centre shall advertise its counselling services in an appropriate manner using available tools to ensure that information about its services are easily found and accessible.

The basic tools available for promotion of CTU counselling are:

- Counselling centre and CTU web sites
- CTU support portal
- Social networks
- LCD panels
- Printed materials
- Email communication