



PEER SUPPORT CENTRE AND PROGRAM POLICY

28 October 2015

USC Council

1. Objective

The University Students' Council operates the Peer Support Centre (PSC) on behalf of undergraduate students and in partnership with Western University's Student Experience portfolio. The PSC is the physical space that houses the USC's Peer Support program (PSP), which is intended to complement an individual's personal support system with confidential one-on-one and/or group interactions.

2. Scope

1. This policy applies to the PSP in its entirety, and the values listed herein should be embodied in the service's structure and design, the programming that is offered through the service, and the interactions of all volunteers supporting the service.
2. The PSP shall not implement any policies, procedures, conventions, or otherwise take any decisions that are flagrant contravention of its mandate, or encourage a volunteer to do so.

3. Mandate

The PSP shall:

1. Be a Western-centric program that conforms whenever and wherever possible to the Mental Health Commission of Canada's prescriptions for peer support programs;
2. Act as a provider of both formalized/intentional and workplace peer support, in both individual and group contexts;
3. Seek to foster an environment that is welcoming and safer for individuals of any identity and/or lived experience;
4. Strive to provide service in a manner that celebrates diversity in all its forms at Western University.

4. Operations

The PSP shall:

1. Maintain a consistent minimum standard of care, wherein all walk-ins can expect: to be listened to non-judgementally, to have their lived experience(s) affirmed, and if necessary, to be referred to a resource beyond the USC for further/continued support;
2. Maintain a cohort of volunteers, recruited annually, that will work to uphold the service's mandate by being trained providers of formalized/intentional and workplace peer support;
3. Maintain a resource library containing a diverse array of publications relating to topics including, but not limited to: mental and physical health and wellbeing, on- and off-campus services and supports, diversity issues, financial planning, nutritional information, and cultural competency.

5. Executive Authority

As director of the PSP, the Vice-President Internal shall:

1. Direct and oversee the day-to-day operations of the PSP, including but not limited to setting service hours;
2. Establish, on behalf of the program, collaborations with both internal and external partners;
3. Contract external providers to facilitate PSP programming;
4. Oversee the recruitment and training of program volunteers;
5. Maintain the program's resource library;



6. Set program goals, identifying benchmarks, and monitoring success and effectiveness; and,
7. Report monthly, by way of written brief or oral presentation, to the Local and Campus Affairs Standing Committee on the state of the PSP.

[CONTEXT AND ENACTMENT]

1.

Documents Repealed: Peer Support Centre Usage Policy

2.

Supporting/Related Documents: Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support (Mental Health Commission of Canada)

AVP Peer Support Terms of Reference

Peer Support Centre Coordinator Terms of Reference

3.

[Date Passed]

4.

[All previous Amendments]