

Counselling services for employees

Topics covered:

- Mental strain or stress, family-related problems, depression, anxiety or worries, difficulties caused by mental illness
- Disagreements or conflicts with colleagues and line managers, sexual discrimination or violence at work, problems with alcohol, drugs or other addictions.

Counselling centres:

- **Psycho-social counselling service for employees of the university**

Types of counselling:

- Individual counselling by appointment

For further information and point of contact:

E-mail: psb-mitarbeitende@uni-leipzig.de

Other counselling and support services

The **socio-psychiatric service provided by the City of Leipzig** offers counselling, care and the coordination of support during crisis and conflict situations at the relevant location (close to the individual's home). This is where psychologists, doctors and social workers provide swift counselling for individuals suffering from psychological or suicidal emergencies or if they are going through a rough time.

Locations, point of contact and other support services provided:

- **Psychosocial counselling telephone**

The Psychosocial counselling telephone is open to all residents of the greater Leipzig region suffering from psychosocial problems. The counselling service can be provided anonymously if desired.
Tel.: 0341 – 9999 0000

- **Medical On-Call Service:**

arranges urgent medical home visits,
Information on doctors' practices on call: Tel.: 116 117

What can be done in the event of a crisis?

A crisis is defined as a situation in which the individual concerned feels that their current circumstances are extremely stressful, their state of health is very fragile, they are no longer able to cope with everyday life, they pose a danger to themselves or others, and they urgently need help. In a crisis situation, those affected can attend any of the three psychiatric clinics around the clock without an appointment.

- HELIOS Park-Klinikum Leipzig
(Morawitzstraße 2, 04289 Leipzig)
Tel.: 0341– 86 41 110

- Klinik und Poliklinik für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie des Universitätsklinikums Leipzig
(Morawitzstraße 10, 04103 Leipzig)
Tel.: 034197 – 24 304

- Sächsisches Krankenhaus Altscherbitz
(Leipziger Straße 59, 04435 Schkeuditz)
Tel.: 034204 87 – 40 30
Out-of-hours:
Tel.: 034204 87 – 43 30 or the gate to building 6
Tel.: 034204 87 – 0

Possible steps:

- 1.) Take any warning signs seriously and listen to your own "gut feeling" if you have the impression that the student is struggling.
- 2.) Take your time and initiate contact in a personal and sympathetic way in quiet, safe and private surroundings.
- 3.) Be open and direct with the individual and tell them that you are concerned about certain patterns of behaviour and what you have observed.
- 4.) Ask questions in a friendly and approachable way in order to better understand the individual's personal circumstances. It is important that: You let them speak, don't make judgements ("Oh, it's not so bad"), don't give advice ("You just need to ...") and refrain from using platitudes ("time will tell").
- 5.) Ask the individual how they feel about their current situation and whether they have any support.
- 6.) Tell them about the professional support that is available (see flyer appendix) or about Studentenwerk Leipzig's psychosocial counselling service website and the psycho-social counselling service for employees of the university.
- 7.) Arrange another meeting with them to find out if they have sought professional help. Let them know that their situation is (still) important to you. But don't put any pressure on them. It often takes some time before people acknowledge their own problems and realise they need professional help.

Imprint:

Published by: Leipzig University
Ritterstraße 26
04109 Leipzig
Germany

Editorial board: Office for Equality, Diversity and Family Affairs

Produced by: Axel Schöpa, schoepamedien.de

Photo: Ponomariova Maria | iStock

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This initiative is partly funded by tax revenues in accordance with the budget adopted by the members of the State Parliament of the Free State of Saxony.



UNIVERSITÄT
LEIPZIG



**UNIVERSITY MEMBERS WITH
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES –
WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

Many university members often experience their everyday academic and working life as a challenge that is difficult to master. As a result, they may often develop a mental illness for the first time or the symptoms of stress they are already experiencing may get worse.

For this reason, it is very important that you treat any difficulties or irregularities you may observe seriously so that help can be provided.

But what are the warning signs that you need to be aware of? How seriously should you take feelings of depression or exam nerves? What kind of support is available? The following information should help you with these questions.

You can also contact the psycho-social counselling service for employees of the university at any time (psb-mitarbeitende@uni-leipzig.de) or Studentenwerk Leipzig's counselling service for students (studierendenberatung@studentenwerk-leipzig.de). The counselling services provided comply with the duty to maintain confidentiality.

What are the warning signs that someone may be suffering from mental health problems?

- **Increasing disengagement:** Social isolation, withdrawal, apathy, avoiding eye contact, mono syllabic answers, taciturnity, lack of facial expressions, as if "turned to stone" or "lost in their own world", inability to engage the student in conversation, student stops attending lectures, defensive behaviour.
- **Peculiar, inappropriate, aggressive behaviour:** Bizarre reactions to surroundings, aggressiveness/irritability, threatening behaviour, unusual posture, stereotypical physical movements, delayed or no reaction to being spoken to and attempts at contact, peculiar ideas/thoughts/perceptions, paranoia, erratic thoughts, unrestrained flow of speech, physical assault, damage to property, theft, verbal abuse
- **Poor physical shape:** Pale complexion, gaunt appearance, excessive weight gain, exhaustion, visible fatigue, neglect/lack of personal hygiene, injuries, consumption of drugs or alcohol.
- **Depression:** Feeling down, subdued and sad, slow to react, loss of interest, joylessness, lack of drive, speaks in a low voice, expresses feelings of hopelessness and futility, brooding, the student perceives themselves and/or life as a burden.
- **Mania:** Elation, hyperactivity, exaggerated feelings of self-worth, restlessness, overestimation of one's own abilities, several ideas and a desire for action, agitation and obsessiveness, also observed as alternating with depressive mood.
- **Pronounced exam anxiety/fear of failure:** Extreme physical and mental stress during exams or even in the run-up, visibly anxious, pronounced trembling, crying, blacking out during exams,

"nervous breakdowns", visible "blocks" when recalling exam material, avoidant behaviour (cancelling exams, repeated postponement), fails exams despite otherwise good performance, psychosomatic complaints (stomach problems, e.g. vomiting, nausea prior to or during an exam, sudden stammering/stuttering).

- **Strain:** Feeling stressed, tense, exhausted, tearful, distressed, makes excessive demands, difficulty concentrating, unable to switch off, lack of energy and stamina, unable to rest and relax, insomnia.

Danger to oneself or others

Do you believe that the individual concerned could harm or even kill themselves and/or others? For instance, because suicidal thoughts have been articulated or there are indications that the individual is planning to harm themselves (cuts, burns) or to take their own life? If in doubt, ask whether and to what extent they have definite plans to harm themselves or take their own life and to what extent they are preparing to follow through with those plans - what? when? how? where? If your suspicions that there is an acute danger are confirmed, call the police on 110 or the emergency co-ordination centre on 112. Assistance will be provided immediately.

Self-preservation comes first: Sometimes other people's distress can make you feel helpless, which is why you should be mindful of your own boundaries and only help as much as you can.

What can you do?

As a general rule:

Let them know that you are interested and willing to help them improve their well-being or circumstances. Do not be discouraged by a defensive attitude. Talking about mental health issues is difficult and usually associated with feelings of shame.

Where can university members suffering from mental health problems seek professional help?

All of the following services are provided free of charge and on a confidential basis for members of Leipzig University.

Counselling services for students and doctoral candidates

Topics covered:

- Doubts about choice of degree programme
- Difficulties studying and how this affects academic performance, such as problems with concentration, motivation, orientation and making decisions.
- Exam nerves, procrastination, problems finishing university, absenteeism
- Relationship and family difficulties, stress, self-doubt, difficulty making contact, feelings of depression, discrimination, fears and insecurities, violence or sexual assault incidents, problems with alcohol or drugs, emotional crises and other topics.
- Information on psychotherapeutic procedures as well as target-oriented search for psychotherapy

Counselling centres:

- **Studentenwerk Leipzig's psycho-social counselling service for students** in co-operation with Leipzig University's Faculty of Medicine, represented by the Klinik und Poliklinik für Psychosomatische Medizin und Psychotherapie (clinic and outpatient department for psychosomatic medicine and psychotherapy) Leipzig
Types of counselling:
 - Individual (20 minutes) during open consultation hours
 - Individual over the phone during phone service hours on Tuesday 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. and Thursday 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
 - Individual (50 minutes) subject to prior arrangement over the phone

– Group counselling and workshops

For further information and who to contact:
E-mail: studierendenberatung@studentenwerk-leipzig.de
Tel.: 0341 97 – 188 48

- **Counselling by the Central Student Advisory Service** in cooperation with the Zentrum für Lehrer:innen und Schulforschung (ZLS) (Teacher Training and School Research Centre)
Types of counselling:
 - Individual counselling by appointment

For further information and who to contact:
E-mail: annett.ammer-wies@uni-leipzig.de
Tel.: 0341 97 – 304 82

- **Psychological Counselling Centre at the Centre for Teachers and Scholl Research** at the University of Leipzig
Types of counselling:
 - Individual counselling by appointment (Tel.: 0341 97 – 304 82)

For further information and who to contact:
E-Mail: annett.ammer-wies@uni-leipzig.de

- **Counselling provided by the Student_innenRat (Student Council)**
Types of counselling:
 - Individual counselling by appointment
 - drop-in counselling

For further information and who to contact:
E-Mail: ps.b@stura.uni-leipzig.de

- **Nightline – telephone support and information line**
Telephone helpline offering a sympathetic ear on anything that may be bothering you. We are available Monday to Friday between 9 p.m. and midnight during the semester period.
Tel.: 034197 – 377 77
E-mail: leipzig@nightlines.eu