Information on Mental Health Conditions

Mental health condition is an umbrella term used for a range of illnesses affecting a person’s psychological wellbeing. They can cause severe disturbances in thinking, feeling, relating, functional behaviours, and substantially diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Examples of mental health conditions:
- Depression
- Anxiety Disorders
- Bipolar Affective Disorder (previously called Manic Depression)
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Schizophrenia

A mental health condition is an invisible disability; it is typically not apparent to others. However, students with mental health conditions may experience symptoms that interfere with their educational goals.

Examples of ways a mental health condition may affect a student:
- Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or remembering things
- Heightened anxieties, fears, or suspicions
- Marked mood (low and/or high)
- Difficulty managing assignments, prioritizing tasks, and meeting deadlines
- Difficulty in attending classes due to lack of stamina, social confidence and/or impact of medication
- Difficulty getting along, fitting in, contributing to group work, and reading social cues
- Lack of insight about obvious problems or a resistance to offers of help
- If severe, confused or disorganized thinking
- Thinking or talking about suicide

Ways staff can assist:
- Create an environment where students are encouraged to disclose their needs and seek appropriate support as required.
- Provide a clear structure for the course with explicit information about assessment, dates, and resources.
- Provide a safety net for students unable to attend or concentrate on lectures by making lecture material available on Cecil, Moodle or in the Department.
- Flexible assignments (provide students with a range of ways to show their understanding and grasp of material).

The University of Auckland encourages partnerships between Faculties, student services and students, to support students achieve their academic potential.
• Flexible deadlines or a system for extensions which reduces the amount of self-advocacy that the students need to undertake (with documentation of the impairment and possibly for the life of the subject).

• Know relevant support services on campus and in the community, and where appropriate, seek advice from them or encourage students to ask for help.

CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION OR SUPPORT

**Student Disability Services**
Room 036 Basement
ClockTower Building
22 Princes Street
Auckland
Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 82936
Fax: 09 308 2354
[www.eo.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.eo.auckland.ac.nz)
[www.disability.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.disability.auckland.ac.nz)
[disabilities@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:disabilities@auckland.ac.nz)

• Student Learning Services: Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 88850
  Email: sls@auckland.ac.nz

• Student Health & Counselling: Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 87681

• Useful Website: [www.flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/calm](http://www.flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/calm)