

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

www.disability.auckland.ac.nz

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

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