

Senior Counsellor

HEP 8

POSITION NUMBER	911471
ORGANISATIONAL UNIT	Student Equity, Safety and Wellbeing
POSITION REPORTS TO	Manager Student Counselling and Mental Health
OVERALL PURPOSE	The overall purpose of the Senior Counsellor role is to provide expert evidence-based confidential mental health assessment, risk management, advanced therapeutic interventions and referral services to support student wellbeing, safety and academic success. The role provides specialist advice and consultation to students and staff, manages complex and high-risk cases, and contributes to the development and evaluation of counselling services, programs and initiatives across the University.
ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND RELATIONSHIPS	Within the University the position: ◆ Works directly with the VU community ◆ Works closely with Safer Community, Student Integrity, the VU CASA House counsellor, VU Mental Health Support Line, Campus Security, People and Culture, and with Equality Inclusion and Belonging and other relevant stakeholders to manage and advise in regard to student mental health and wellbeing Outside the University the position liaises with: ◆ Works closely with Community health, support and advocacy organisations and with emergency services such as ambulance, triage, primary care, private care and the police.
LOCATION/ CAMPUS	◆ The position is currently located at different campuses or locations as needed, including work from home. The incumbent may be relocated to any other existing or future University work locations where it conducts its operations.

KEY CAPABILITIES

Victoria University is committed to building core capability across VU through investment in our staff, our systems and our processes. We will develop the capabilities of our staff to:

Deliver – Excellence Results-driven, accountability, problem solving focus.

Engage – Customer service mind-set internally, externally and particularly for students.

Collaborate and Partner – Build successful relationships, communicate effectively, influence and negotiate.

Innovate – Entrepreneurship, growth, continuous improvement, digital transformation.

Lead – Inspire direction, lead change, manage and develop people.

OUR ORGANISATION

Victoria University (VU) is a dual sector (higher education and TAFE) tertiary institution based in Melbourne, Australia. VU has academic colleges, each covering a broad discipline of study, and several research institutes and research centres. The University has campuses in Melbourne's CBD and western region, and a campus in Sydney. It also offers courses at partner institutions throughout Asia. Almost 43,000 students, including around 14,000 international students, study VU courses worldwide. In 2016, VU celebrated its 25th anniversary as a university, which also marked its 100 years as an educational institution.

Commitment to Protecting Country:

Victoria University honours its deep diversity as a foundation for collaboration and social progress. We will demonstrate sensitivity in respecting First Nation perspectives. We will ensure that we respect our Indigenous voices and commit to sustainable Protecting Country. We will take leadership responsibility, in all that we do, to improve the health and wellbeing of our local and global communities, and the planet that we share.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at VU:

Victoria University believes that diversity of the workforce adds value to the University and creates a stronger, richer working environment for everyone. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure that our employees have positive, barrier-free work environments that accommodate their access needs. Employees who require adjustments are encouraged to discuss their needs with their line manager.

ORGANISATIONAL UNIT

The **Counselling and Mental health team** provides subject matter expertise, advice and support to the Victoria University community regarding student mental health, wellbeing and risk assessment. The unit provides professional, evidence-based, trauma-informed therapeutic intervention and psychological safe spaces for members of the VU community.

The unit works with internal and external services to ensure that people seeking help receive confidential, ethical, safe and clear advice and support. The Counselling and Mental health team are committed to inclusivity and respect for First Nations Peoples, the LGBTQIA+ community, people with disability, people who are Deaf or neurodivergent, people of all faiths and of any cultural or language background.

MAJOR TASKS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- ◆ Provide advanced therapeutic intervention, case management and mental health support for students presenting with complex or high-risk needs in individual and group settings.
- ◆ Conduct comprehensive mental health assessments, risk assessments and mental state examinations, and develop appropriate intervention, safety and support plans.
- ◆ Deliver evidence-based counselling and short-term psychological interventions, including referral and follow-up support where required.
- ◆ Develop, implement and evaluate counselling, wellbeing and educational programs that support student wellbeing, retention and success
- ◆ Provide specialist consultation, advice and recommendations to academic, professional and external stakeholders regarding complex student mental health, wellbeing and risk matters.
- ◆ Assess eligibility of students and provide specialist consultation, advice and recommendations to support decisions regarding University support mechanisms, including Special Consideration, Leave of Absence and Accessibility requirements, where psychological issues impact academic participation and success.
- ◆ Act as a subject matter expert in student mental health and wellbeing, providing guidance during complex or critical incidents and contributing to effective risk management practices across the University
- ◆ Lead service improvement initiatives, projects and evaluation activities to enhance counselling services, programs and student wellbeing outcomes.
- ◆ Contribute specialist advice and recommendations to the development, implementation and review of counselling policies, procedures and service frameworks.
- ◆ Maintain clinical records and reports in accordance with professional, legislative and University requirements.
- ◆ Maintain professional registration with AHPRA/AASW, professional standards and continuing professional development requirements to ensure contemporary clinical practice, compliance with regulatory obligations and best-practice service delivery.
- ◆ Provide professional supervision, mentoring and assessment of student placements as required.
- ◆ Adhere to University OHS policies, professional standards and ethical obligations.

TYPICAL/MAJOR CHALLENGES

- ◆ Directly and professionally responsible for the psychological and, at times, physical welfare of students, including those presenting with complex or high-risk mental health concerns.
- ◆ Conduct professional duties in accordance with the parameters of the code of ethics of the relevant professional association (i.e. APS/AASW), Counselling Services Policies and Procedures, and relevant State and Federal legislation.
- ◆ Assess complex student presentations and apply advanced clinical judgement to determine appropriate interventions, risk management strategies, safety planning and referral pathways.
- ◆ Consult with academic, professional and external stakeholders on sensitive and complex mental health matters, balancing student wellbeing, safety, privacy and University obligations.
- ◆ Contribute to the development, evaluation and continuous improvement of counselling services, programs and initiatives while maintaining high-quality client service delivery.
- ◆ Exercise a high level of independent professional judgement while working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team environment.
- ◆

LEVEL OF SUPERVISION

- ◆ Operates under broad direction from the Senior Manager of Counselling and Mental Health and may be required to manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- ◆ Significant expertise in counselling, mental health assessment, risk management and therapeutic intervention
- ◆ High level knowledge of relevant legislation, professional standard, mandatory reporting and University policies relating to privacy, student wellbeing, mental health, misconduct, discrimination, harassment, equity and inclusion.
- ◆ Ability to plan, develop, implement and review programs/projects involving major change which may impact on other areas of the institutions operations.
- ◆ Knowledge and sound understanding of University operations, governance and decision making processes, including quality assurance policies and procedures and other relevant legislative requirements.
- ◆ Highly developed understanding of multi-sector perspective and understanding of key issues in TAFE and HE.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

1. A recognized qualification in Psychology or Social Work and experience meeting the requirements of Full registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency: Psychology Board of Australia (AHPRA); or membership of the Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) and Accredited Mental Health Social Worker.
2. 4 years subsequent supervised practice or Post Graduate qualification in Psychology or Social Work as per the registration requirements of AHPRA / AASW
3. Demonstrated high level expertise in case management, mental health assessment, risk assessment and safety planning..
4. Extensive experience in personal and educational counselling, including supporting clients with complex mental health presentations and applying a range of evidence-based therapeutic approaches.
5. Experience in developing and facilitating personal and vocational group counselling and educative programs, mental health promotions and workshops.
6. Ability to work independently, to prioritise work demands and to respond to urgent requests when required.
7. Demonstrated ability to critically reflect on professional practice and contribute to the evaluation and continuous improvement of counselling services and programs.
8. Established expertise in the maintenance of comprehensive case records with experience and knowledge of privacy legislation and due process.
9. Proven ability to exercise initiative, apply professional judgement, solve complex problems and make recommendations including knowing when to seek advice or escalate matters.
10. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with a proven ability to provide specialist consultation and work collaboratively across teams, manage sensitive issues, and draft precise case notes and reports for management
11. Proven high-level organisational skills, with a strong ability to set priorities, plan and organise unpredictable workloads to achieve specific objectives to meet tight deadlines.
12. Demonstrated ability to maintain professional registration with AHPRA or AASW and comply with relevant professional standards, ethical requirements and continuing professional development obligations.
13. A current E (Employee) Working with Children Check.
14. Demonstrated capacity to understand and comply with employer policy and practices in all aspects of work and conduct, including OH&S and Anti-Discrimination responsibilities and complete/attend relevant training.

Desirable

1. Knowledge of the personal, educational, and social concerns of students.
2. Demonstrated ability in working with people from a variety of cultural and social groups and an understanding of the particular needs of certain groups e.g. mature-age students, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and students from low social-economic backgrounds.