Overview
The Counselling Service offers:
- Confidential individual counselling
- Career counselling/guidance
- Appropriately tailored group therapy
- Specifically designed psycho-educational workshops
- Trauma debriefing sessions

Who are we?
We are a Student Counselling Service, offering predominantly short-term counselling. Our aim is to minimise the impact which any personal, emotional or psychological problems can have on students’ academic studies, thus providing students with the greatest chance for success.

Mission
To provide a professional counselling support service to the MANCOSA student community, in order to contribute towards the holistic development of students.

What is Counselling?
Counselling gives you the opportunity to talk to a professionally trained person about what is bothering you emotionally and/or problems you would like to solve. Together, you and the counsellor will work on solutions for your problems. This process may assist you in acquiring new skills, and/or may facilitate you reaching better understanding of your personal problems. We believe that everyone is capable of solving their own problems and the counsellor facilitates this process for the client.

What can you expect from your counsellor?
- During your first visit, the counsellor will ask about the reason(s) for your visit and will obtain all the required information from you. Based on that, your counsellor will propose the best treatment/approach for the problem and discuss it with you.
- Depending on the nature of the problem, your therapist will either plan further sessions with you or refer you to a more suitable person/group/workshop.

Confidentiality
All the information which students give to the student counsellor is treated with the strictest confidence. This means that no one will know that you are seeing a counsellor at MANCOSA, unless you tell him or her. This includes your parents, MANCOSA’s management, your friends or the faculty.
Our student counsellor is a registered Counselling Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and absolute confidentiality is required of her, with the following exceptions:
- When you provide written consent for information to be released;
- When you intend to harm yourself or anyone else;
- When disclosure of information is required by law or the counsellor is ordered by a court to do so; or
- When required for the purpose of case management within the Student Counselling Service.
Individual Counselling
In individual counselling, you regularly (e.g. weekly) meet the student counsellor to discuss your concerns or problems. During individual counselling, you and your therapist work together and try to find solutions to your concerns/problems. The duration of the therapy offered at MANCOSA is usually a maximum of 6 sessions (short-term therapy). It may be that longer term or specialised counselling would be beneficial for you, in which case you will be referred to the most appropriate service outside of MANCOSA’s Counselling Services.

Your responsibilities during therapy
- Attend scheduled sessions.
- Talk about what is bothering you. In this regard, try to be open and honest as far as possible, even if it is difficult at times.
- Complete homework assignments which the counsellor may give you.
- If you cannot keep an appointment, cancel it within 24 hours before the scheduled session.
- Be on time for appointments.
- Talk to your therapist should you have any problems with an aspect of the therapy process.

Problems that we can assist with
Some of the problems for which the Counselling Service can provide assistance with include:

- Adjusting to MANCOSA
- Career guidance
- Depression and suicidal feelings
- Anger management
- Eating disorders
- Loss and bereavement
- Trauma counselling
- Homesickness
- Loneliness
- Family problems
- Cultural concerns
- Relationship issues
- Cultural transition
- Exam stress
- Abuse issues
- Social skills
- Self-esteem issues
- Confidence building
- Stress and anxiety
- HIV/AIDS counselling
- Sexual identity issues
- Addictions
- Academic problems including motivation and concentration
Group Counselling
Some problems are handled better in a group setting where you can have the support of others and can offer support to others who are experiencing similar problems. Some therapeutic and support groups are hosted at MANCOSA. All of these group sessions are presented a student counsellor and usually have a specific focus. General support groups as well as various short-term groups (1 session per week, for up to 8 weeks) are presented.

Groups Offered:

Coping with Life
This group discusses self-esteem, relationship concerns, family issues, problem-solving, general stress as well as other challenges we face in coping with life. We approach these issues by considering strengths and supporting one another in experimenting with new behaviours.

Grief and Loss Support Group
Grieving is a process. Dealing with significant loss is hard to do alone, especially when it feels like the rest of the world is moving on around you. By sharing their experiences, individuals in this group will gain support and strength from their fellow members.

SMART (Students Managing Alcohol & other drugs Responsibly Together)
This group will help you develop strategies for active decision-making about your use of substances such as alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drugs. We will build on your own strengths and support your individual goals by identifying the role that substances play in your life; exploring your personal alternatives in areas such as recreation, stress management, and social interaction; and developing life skills that encourage personal effectiveness and autonomy.

Sexual Assault Survivors Support Group
Surviving a sexual assault begins a process of healing. Recovery is both physical and emotional. This group is intended to provide a safe, nurturing space that allows individuals the freedom to move towards recovery at a pace that feels safe and comfortable.

Developing Social Confidence
Do you struggle with discomfort in social situations? Has your social life suffered because of these fears? For many individuals, dread of social situations can take a huge toll on one’s happiness. This group is designed to help individuals who suffer with fears of public speaking, meeting new people, going to social gatherings, starting conversations, and being more assertive.
Student Counselling Services

Reaching Your Goals (A.K.A. Perfectionism Group)
Do you tend to worry continuously about failing? Do you experience failure with great intensity? Do you have a great deal of pressure to succeed? Is life sometimes overwhelming and you often feel like a failure? Does simply not feeling like a failure seem like a more important goal than achieving success? If you answered yes to 3 or more of these questions, this group is for you!

In this group we will look at how to set and achieve more realistic goals and be more satisfied with yourself. We will discuss what perfectionism is, how it affects you in your life, how to catch yourself in the act of being a perfectionist, and how to strive for success rather than continue self-defeating perfectionist patterns.

Kindly note that:
If you feel that a group experience could help you, review the descriptions of groups we offer currently. Not all groups will meet each semester. Some only form when enough students have expressed interest.

Student Support Workshops
Various supportive workshops are offered to all MANCOSA students to assist them on their journey to educational success. Workshops are typically conducted on a monthly basis and include the following:
- The transition from high school to tertiary studies
- Time management/procrastination
- Study skills
- Stress management
- Communication skills

What we cannot assist with:
The Counselling Service does not include any interventions required for court proceedings, legal matters or any other intervention that would require a report for any purpose other than that which is a college related matter (excluding the College Senate). Psychometric assessments are not conducted within the scope of the Counselling Service.
How do I arrange for counselling?
The MANCOSA Student Counselling Service sessions are at no cost. You may be seen for up to 6 sessions. (Due to a number of students seeking help, we offer short-term therapy). Depending on the problem, referrals may also be made to other health professionals or organisations. You can phone 031 300 7200 Ext. 7395 and ask to speak with Ms. Sma Vilakazi or email maxine@mancosa.co.za for an intake session. This is a short session with the student counsellor to identify your counselling needs. Appropriate referrals are then made for counselling.

Contact Details

Contact us
Address
Student Counselling Service
MANCOSA
21 Aliwal Street (Samora Machel Street)
Durban

Tel: 031 300 7200 Ext. 7395
Email: maxine@mancosa.co.za

Operating hours
Monday - Thursday: 08h30 to 13h00

Emergency Numbers
Life Line 031-312-2323
Open Door Crisis Centre (Rape) 084-409-2679
Advice desk (Domestic Violence) 031-262-5231
Suicide crisis line 0800-567-567
Alcoholics Anonymous 031-301-4959 or 0861-435-722
Alcohol and Drug abuse (SANCA) 031-303-2202
Family Problems (FAMSA) 031-202-8987