

Welfare Officer Handbook



**UCC
SOCIETIES**

What is a Welfare Officer?

The primary job of a Society Welfare Officer is to look out for the welfare of committee members. Different Welfare Officers have their own way of doing this, whether it's weekly or biweekly check-ins, committee socials, or anything in between.

What is your job?

- To look out for committee members
- Signposting to welfare resources
- Referring issues to the Societies Executive Welfare Officer
- To be a point of contact between committee members with welfare concerns and the Societies Executive Welfare Officer
- Taking concerns on board in conjunction with the Chair and occasionally your Rep or the Societies Executive Welfare Officer

What is *not* your job?

- To act as a resident therapist for
- Taking the issues of committee members on as your own
- To be a 'fixer' i.e. to try and fix all issues yourself

Welfare Resources

- Societies Executive Welfare Officer (Ciara): welfare@uccsocieties.ie
- Student Counselling: counselling@ucc.ie
- Crisis Text Line: Text UCC to 50808
- Samaritans: 01 671 0071
- Niteline: 1800 793 793
- Aware Depression Helpline: 1890 303 302
- Body Whys: www.bodywhys.ie

Welfare Officer is a tough job. Remember the oxygen mask principle, you can't help anyone until you've helped yourself.

Looking after yourself as Welfare Officer

It is possible to struggle with this role, or to experience burnout. Remember that it is not your job to take people's problems on as your own, and that there is no shame in taking a step back for a bit. This especially applies to periods of stress in your own life. As a Welfare Officer, it's so important to have your own 'Welfare Officer', or someone that you can go to if it starts to get a bit too much.

What is burnout?

A state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress.

Recognising Burnout: Emotional Symptoms

- Loss of motivation
- Negative outlook
- Sense of failure
- Loneliness

Recognising Burnout: Physical Symptoms

- Feeling tired and drained
- Lowered immunity
- Change in appetite and/or sleep habits

Recognising Burnout: Behavioural Symptoms

- Procrastinating
- Isolating
- Withdrawing from responsibilities

If you recognise any of these symptoms in yourself, it's incredibly important to take a step back and take time to look after yourself. There are always things that can be put in place to allow this and alleviate some of the pressure. If you want to take a step back and put some processes in place that still look out for the welfare of your committee, contact the Societies Executive Welfare Officer for help with this.