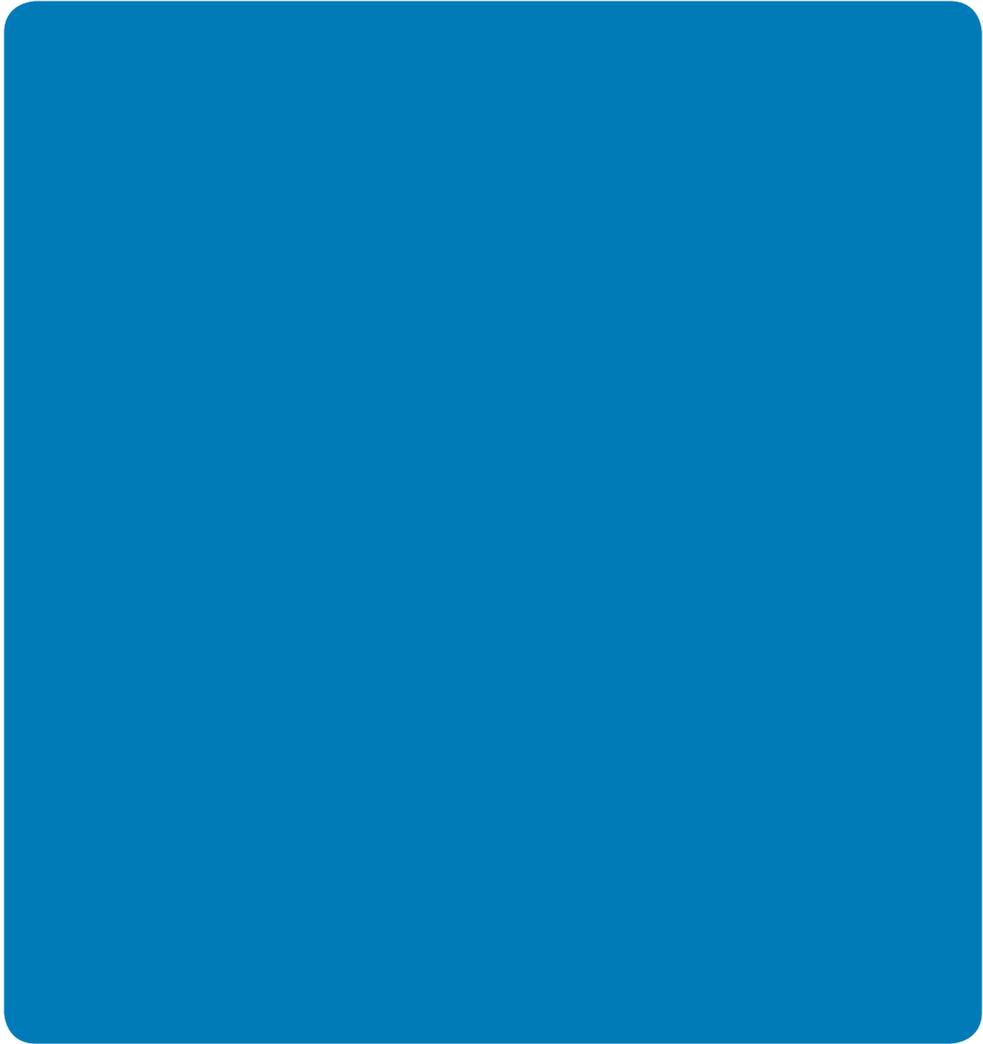


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**Bournemouth
University**

Student Health and Wellbeing: A Practical Guide for Staff





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The images displayed, in this guide, contain people acting as models and are for illustrative purposes only.

Purpose of this guide



This guide is designed to provide information about the support that is available for students, both within BU and externally, and offers practical advice for non-specialist support staff. Most issues will be minor and will be resolved quickly and easily but increasingly students are turning to university staff for advice and guidance on a number of more complex areas, particularly around the areas of health & wellbeing and how their personal situation may affect their studies.

It is important that all staff understand the boundaries of their own role/expertise and refer students to the appropriate service at the earliest opportunity.

This publication supplements existing formal procedures including:

- Fitness to Study Procedures
- Fitness to Practise Procedures
- Student Disciplinary Procedures
- Code of Practice on Harassment
- Academic Appeals Procedures for Taught and Research Awards
- Student Complaints Procedures.

All student procedures are available on the Staff Intranet at <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/rules-regulations/index.html>

The prime responsibilities of students are...

All Academic Schools have a charter that lays out what students can expect from their teaching staff and what the university expects from them. Although the charters vary from School to School to allow for the specifics of the subject disciplines of each, some general principles apply to all students including:

- Accepting responsibility for undertaking their own independent learning
- Meeting with a member of staff when asked to do so
- Attending timetabled sessions, handing in assignments by deadlines and turning up for exams
- Keeping their contact details up to date
- Keeping staff informed as early as possible of any relevant circumstances that may affect their studies
- Regularly checking their university e-mail account and myBU
- Knowing how to contact the university in the event of an emergency.

The prime responsibilities of staff are...

The remit of staff varies in each School. Some have level tutors, others year tutors or academic advisors and in some it will be study or student support staff that students will have most contact with. However, there are core responsibilities for all staff to:

- Assist students in their academic, personal and social development while at university, taking account of the varied and changing needs of a heterogeneous student body and encouraging an independent approach to life and learning
- Ensure students know how to contact the university in an emergency
- Offer information, advice and assistance within personal competence (and understand the boundaries of their own expertise)
- Facilitate student advocacy when appropriate
- Refer to the appropriate department at the earliest opportunity when specialist input is required
- Follow up any student whose work or behaviour is a cause for concern
- Show sensitivity to diversity issues (e.g. religion, culture, gender, etc.) and individual circumstances
- Keep matters discussed confidential, (and this includes from parents) unless the student gives explicit permission for the information to be disseminated. However, in exceptional circumstances if the member of staff judges the student is deemed likely to harm themselves or another person appropriate action should be taken
- Aid with acclimatisation to HE
- Provide references where possible for employment or postgraduate study
- Signal availability to meet with students, set clear boundaries for method and times of contact and respond promptly to student communications within those boundaries
- Participate in appropriate staff development opportunities.

Identifying an issue



You may have concerns about a student even if nothing 'critical' has happened to make it clear what the issue is. Certain types of behaviour potentially give cause for concern and may alert you to a student's difficulty:

- Extreme eating behaviour and/or weight fluctuation
- Use of drugs or abuse of alcohol
- Withdrawal from others, loneliness
- Gambling or debt problems
- Sudden odd or uncharacteristic behaviour
- Deterioration in academic performance particularly if this is untypical of the student
- Sudden mood changes and/or changed demeanour
- Persistent absence or persistent lateness
- Failure to meet deadlines on more than one or two occasions
- Paranoid or delusional thinking
- Suicidal ideation

Certain life events can also give rise to concern, in particular

- The recent loss of a close relationship
- An experience of failure
- Bereavement
- A history of mental illness in the family
- A history of violence in the family
- A history of sexual abuse
- Being the victim of a crime

The flow chart of questions on the following page is a useful guide in establishing if a student may be in difficulty. You should also refer to the sections on Mental health, the Practical guidelines for supporting students with mental health issues and Advice on handling crisis situations.

This flow chart of questions is a useful guide in establishing if a student is in difficulty:

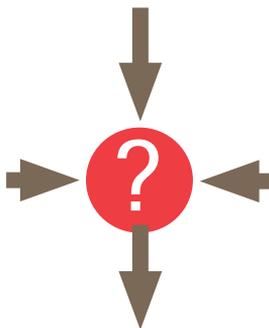
Do you have concerns about a student or has someone else raised concerns about the student?

How does the student sound?

- Very quiet
- Very loud
- Flat
- Agitated/anxious

What is the student doing?

- Not completing work
- Being absent or late without good known reason
- Acting oddly or out of character
- Seeking attention by unusual behaviour



How does the student seem?

- Withdrawn
- Tense or anxious
- Uncharacteristically sad (or overly happy)
- Unkempt
- Showing signs of major weight change
- Smelling of alcohol or cannabis

Is this different from your previous experience of this person?

- Is there a change in appearance (significant weight change)
- Is there an uncharacteristic behaviour change (class attendance, submission of work)

Do you need more information from the student?

- Arrange to meet to find out:
- How they are feeling
 - If something is wrong
 - If there has been an issue in the past

Do you need more information from other staff?

- How is the student performing academically
- Has anyone else noticed anything wrong or unusual

Consider getting advice from another source

If you are not sure how to proceed contact a senior colleague within your School or Service, or the Head of Student Support Services for advice in confidence. If you are certain that the student would benefit from a referral to another service then follow the referral chart.

Referral guidelines



The circumstances listed below are just some examples of when it would be ethical and appropriate to make a referral.

- You feel that the issue is beyond the boundaries of your professional knowledge and expertise. Even if you think you could guess at a solution, it is always better to refer on to ensure that the student gets the correct support at the earliest opportunity
- The student requires general support and/or information from more than one department
- There are specialist services that are far more appropriate for the student to make use of e.g. the Counselling Service
- The student needs information/support which can only be provided by staff with expert knowledge - e.g. the Student Financial Support team, Additional Learning Support (ALS), SUBU Advice (Students' Union)
- The student wishes to be referred to a specialist agency (see Sources of Advice and Information at the end of this booklet)
- The student needs medical attention
- The student may be experiencing mental health problems and need care and support
- You perceive the student to be at real risk of harm to themselves or others
- The student persistently fails to respond constructively to your interventions and may be helped more effectively by someone else.

How to refer

It is important that referrals are made in a sensitive way so that students don't feel as though they are being passed from office to office but that they are being directed to the most appropriate help. Some students may be emotionally fragile and so may need particular support when being referred. It is always helpful to provide the name of the person they are being referred to, and if possible, to have an appointment made for them in advance.

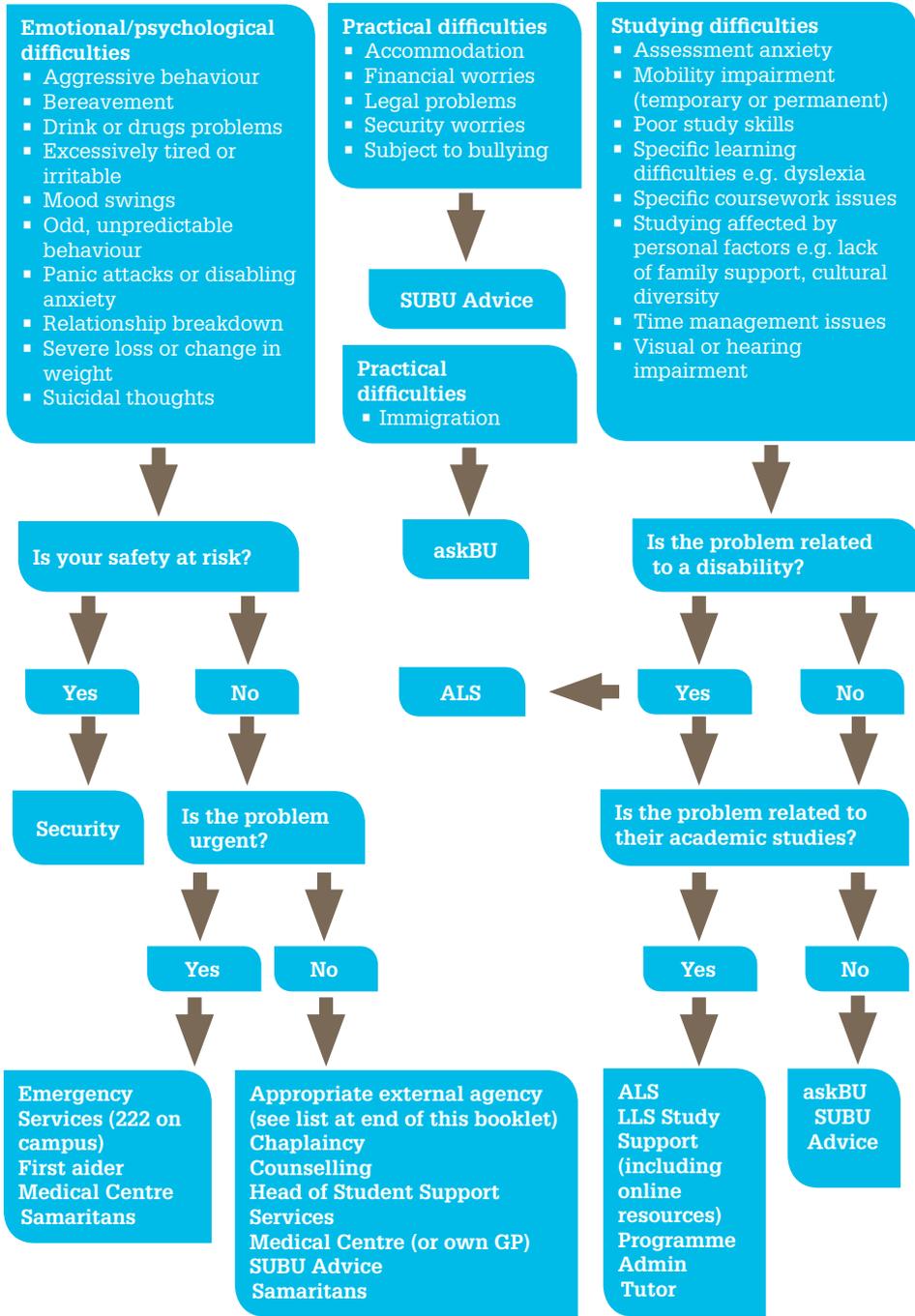
Some points to bear in mind when referring

- Referrals work best when the student engages with the decision. Sometimes this may take a little time
- It helps to be specific about where you are sending students. Many students get lost, literally and figuratively. If you don't know where to send a student you can direct them to askBU in the first instance. For more serious or urgent matters you can seek advice from your Dean, Director of Operations, Head of Professional Service or the Head of Student Support Services
- When referring be specific about when and where the student has to go. Ensure that they have fully understood by asking them to repeat the arrangements back to you
- Be clear about why you are sending the student to a particular place/person. Many students arrive at the intended destination but are unsure why they have been sent there. This is especially so when the student is upset. Staff then have to try to go through the student's situation to work out what it is the tutor may have had in mind. Consider whether it would be best to write the information down for the student and to suggest that they may wish to show this to staff at the other end
- If a student needs information on a number of different general topics/ departments, askBU may be a useful referral point.

Be mindful when dealing with students who are distressed. Whilst it can be very difficult and upsetting to be faced with a student who is crying, angry or who appears to have significant mental health problems, it may be important not to immediately send the student away to someone else before you have had the opportunity to assess the situation. However, you should listen to the emotions being expressed and acknowledge them, rather than trying to solve their problem. Some upset students need only five minutes of a sympathetic ear and they will be fine; others will need some longer term support, e.g. from a counsellor or chaplain. In extreme cases, urgent NHS support may be needed in which case take the student to the Medical Centre or call an ambulance.

If you feel that you are unable to assist a student with their problems even at the early stage, or you feel you are uncomfortable doing so, please refer the student to the appropriate service as soon as possible. Where there are behavioural problems or you suspect that there may be mental health issues you should only offer the level of support that you feel comfortable with and that you are qualified to provide. In all cases, be helpful but do not encourage dependency. The Head of Student Support Services can offer you information about the available facilities for students, whilst the Wellbeing Team (part of HR&OD) are able to provide support and guidance to you personally if you have been affected by an issue.

Referral flowchart



Mental health



The term “mental health” is often used to mean different things; sometimes it has been used to mean mental illness, while it can equally refer to a desirable state of healthy mental functioning, wellness or wellbeing.

In this guide we use the term “mental health” to cover the whole spectrum of mental functioning ranging from good health through mild emotional distress to serious mental illness with a formal psychiatric diagnosis. Good mental health would include emotional wellbeing, competence, autonomy, aspiration and integration. A “mental health issue” as used in this guide refers to any state where good mental health is absent. Mild to moderate mental health issues could include unease, tension, low energy, apathy, low self-esteem and low mood. The extent of a mental health issue will depend on many factors such as severity, duration and impact on functioning.

BU feels it is as important to promote positive mental health amongst its members as it is to ensure that the University does what it can to prevent mental illness.

BU recognises that issues of mental health relate to social, organisational and institutional structuring of power, support, inclusion, equality and justice. The university, as a community of learners, is committed to addressing these issues in order to minimise the likelihood of mental health problems and emergencies.

Awareness of mental health issues

A number of factors can affect a person's personal, social and academic life. Problems can be transient or long-lasting. People may conceal difficulties so well that they cannot be detected. However, there may be indirect indications of a problem, either through deterioration in a person's academic work or through their appearance or behaviour.

However, these and other indications of difficulties are common to nearly everyone

at some stage in their lives. Every person has different needs and varies in their experience of mental health issues. Two people with the same diagnosis may present in very different ways and have different needs. It is therefore as important not to conclude too readily that someone has a mental health problem as it is not to ignore signs that they may be in need of help.

How do you know there is a problem?

People experiencing mental health problems do not always directly ask for help. Sometimes they feel embarrassed or are concerned about the consequences of telling someone or they hope the problem will go away, or they may be unaware that they have a problem.

Asking oneself the following questions may help to determine whether a person is in need of support:

- Have there been any dramatic changes in the person's appearance (e.g. deterioration in their standard of personal hygiene)?
- Are there physical effects (such as weight loss or gain) which are not explained by a medical condition?
- How does the person sound (perhaps unusually flat and dull, or agitated, very loud or very quiet)?
- Has the mood of the person recently changed significantly from your previous experiences with them (e.g. very miserable, tired or hyperactive)?
- Is the person expressing ideas or feelings of hopelessness?
- Have others (friends, colleagues, relatives, fellow residents, tutors) expressed concern about this person?
- Have there been recent changes in the person's behaviour, work or sociability (e.g. doing too much work, not socialising as much as usual, becoming withdrawn, not attending lectures or meeting deadlines)?
- Are there signs of substance abuse?
- How long has the person been feeling or behaving like this (everyone can have bad days, but it is when days turn into weeks and months that there may be a problem)?

Some dos and don'ts in supporting students with mental health issues



If you come into contact with a student with a mental health issue, it might be useful to remember these following points:

- It is important to recognise personal and professional limitations when offering support and to know when to refer on to the appropriate services. Not everyone will be confident to offer support in this area, but listening to someone or informing him or her about where they can obtain help is extremely valuable.
- Ensuring the confidentiality of anyone who is experiencing mental health issues is vital
- Rather than offer direct advice, try to work with the person who has a problem to define what their needs are, empower them to seek the relevant help, information and advice, and build on their strengths. Treat everyone as an individual with individual needs
- Do not take responsibility for resolving another's mental health issues, but recognise that there are other people and support agencies available. Although there may not be an immediate resolution, place your trust in mental health professionals and be aware that it requires time and teamwork to resolve complex problems
- Work together with others within the University to provide a supportive, non-stigmatising and well-informed environment which promotes dignity and respect for everyone
- Everyone is responsible for informing their departments when they are unable to fulfil any commitments they may have (e.g. attending a class). However, with their consent, someone else can inform the necessary people on their behalf.

If the person wants to talk about the problem

It is essential to express concern and to be supportive, but it is equally important not to assume the role of a therapist or a counsellor. The following suggestions may help in striking this balance:

- Do not avoid the situation or pretend nothing is wrong, as this could make the problem worse and persist for longer
- Do not feel that inability to solve the problem or to suggest the way forward at the present time is a sign of failure. Consult with a member of staff from a support service for advice on what to do
- Talk to the person in a sympathetic and understanding way. Remember to be sensitive to issues relating to sexuality, race, religion, culture and gender. Try not to ask insensitive or intrusive questions and respect their privacy if they do not want to discuss their problems
- The situation may only require sympathetic listening. To ask in a general way how a person is may be sufficient to provide them with an opportunity to discuss their concerns with you. (e.g. "I notice that you are...")
- Be prepared to listen and spare some time. If there are constraints that make this impossible, make sure the person knows this from the start of your conversation
- Avoid using unhelpful comments like "pull yourself together"
- Being open and honest with the person from the start will help to develop trust. Very often help is not sought because the person may be concerned about the consequences of telling someone
- If it is necessary to tell someone else about the situation in detail, always first try to obtain the person's consent. It is in fact often possible to discuss a situation and to seek advice from a third party without revealing the identity of the person involved
- Be clear about the limits of the support role and its boundaries. Everyone has something to offer, but it is vital to be aware of what can realistically be done. It is especially important to avoid assuming the role of a professional counsellor
- Listen to the person and decide whether there might be a more appropriate person to deal with the situation. If so, encourage them to seek the appropriate help (see 'Sources of advice and information' at the end of this booklet). It is important in the first instance to refer the student somewhere that is acceptable to them. A further referral can always be made later
- However, there may be exceptional circumstances, where there is a need to act without the person's consent, e.g. if their mental health has deteriorated to the extent of threatening their personal safety or that of others
- It can be extremely emotional and time-consuming to offer help, which is why it is important always to seek appropriate support and help from others.

If the person does not want to talk about the problem

It may be extremely difficult to help someone with a problem unless they are ready to admit they have one. If they are not ready to accept help or to talk about their problems, do not ask insensitive or intrusive questions. Always respect the right of the person if they do not wish to discuss things. It is extremely rare for someone to lose the capacity to make decisions about their own welfare. Offer an open invitation to them to come back and talk in the future.

Speak to someone in a specialist support service. If the person has not given consent to talk to anyone, there is no need to mention their name when asking for advice; this preserves confidentiality.

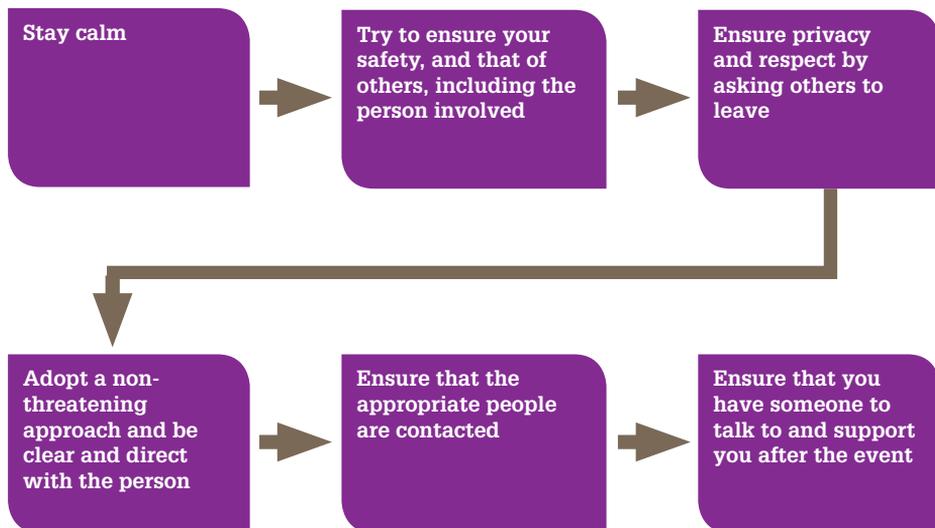
Advice on handling crisis situations

Most of the time the steps listed previously are sufficient. Occasionally, however, individuals may reach a point of crisis.



However, it is important to emphasise two points:

- People experiencing mental health issues are very rarely violent towards others
- Crisis situations are extremely rare.



If at any time you feel that your own personal safety is in danger call BU Security immediately (Emergency number 222 or 01202 965448).

Practical guidelines for staff supporting students with mental health issues

How do you know there is a problem?

- The student told you
- You've smelt alcohol or cannabis on the student on a regular basis
- You've noticed recent changes in the student's behaviour – withdrawn, miserable, hyperactive, sad
- How long has the student been experiencing these problems? Short term? Long term?
- The student's academic performance has changed dramatically
- You've noticed significant changes in a student's appearance. Has there been weight loss/gain or a decline in personal hygiene
- Other students have voiced their concerns

If yes to any of the above do not avoid the situation - be proactive, do not wait for the situation to get worse

If you do not feel confident enough about approaching the student do not worry. Speak to your line manager and /or the Head of Student Support Services

Try to talk to the student. Be prepared to listen. The situation may only require listening (also remember time constraints – be honest with the student and yourself about how much time you have)

After approaching the student you feel there is a problem

The student will not accept help

Respect the right of the student if they do not want to discuss their problems or seek help. However if you are still concerned ...

Offer an open invitation to come back and talk to you

The student does want to talk about their problems.

Speak to your line manager or a colleague in the relevant specialist support service.

Try not to give the student advice that isn't part of your role/job. You do not need to solve the problem. Try not to take responsibility for a student's problem.)

Listen and try to help the student identify what sort of help they need e.g. study, medical or counselling.

Sometimes it is difficult to identify a source of help. In such cases refer the student to someone that is acceptable to them.

Frequently asked questions

The following are a number of scenarios that students might raise, with some possible answers.

Academic issues

I need extra help because I have a disability

Has the student been to see the Additional Learning Support team? The student may be able to access learning support and be entitled to some adjustments with their studies, however they need to have completed an ALS screening and provided evidence of their disability before this can be formally agreed. If they haven't already done so, they should make an appointment with ALS as soon as possible. If they are already receiving support, but feel that it isn't helping, refer them back to the ALS team for a review of the support they are receiving.

- If a student thinks they may have a learning need, but hasn't been formally diagnosed, ALS can carry out an initial screening to see if this is likely. If the screening shows a likelihood that a learning need is present the student will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a formal assessment. Once that assessment has been completed, the ALS team will discuss appropriate support with the student. If the assessment shows that a learning need is unlikely, it could be that the student would benefit from some general study skills (see <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/learning/study-support>)

I am worried about missing too many classes because of my job

Many students need to work to support themselves. However it is important that university work takes priority. Missing the odd lecture may not impact on their results

(unless there is a requirement for 100% attendance which some courses have), however failing to engage with seminars and tutorials and missing a number of sessions of any nature is likely to lead to poor results. Unsurprisingly, research shows that students who engage most get the higher grades.

Is there an underlying difficulty with debt and financial worries or with problematic employment or is there an issue with the student's priorities? If the student is in real financial hardship they may be eligible for Access to Learning Funds – askBU can advise. SUBU Advice can offer advice on general financial matters, budgeting skills and on employment rights.

International students on a visa are limited to the number of hours that they work during term time. AskBU can advise.

I don't think I am going to meet my deadline for my assignment

Find out why:

- Does the student have personal problems? If these are significant enough and outside the student's control, it may be possible to offer an extension, provided that the student can provide evidence. Is this problem likely to impact on assessment for other units too? If so, with the student's permission, you could discuss with other staff to save the student repeating themselves
- Is there an underlying medical problem? The student should seek advice for their

GP or consultant as soon as possible. Again an extension may be possible if evidence can be provided in support of their condition

- Does the student need some study skills support – for example with study, revision or time management techniques or suffering from exam nerves? Unfortunately, no allowance can be made for this – most students will go through this at some point. However, developing the skills to deal with these issues will make it easier the next time
- If the delay is because of poor time management (e.g. leaving submission to the last minute and then getting caught in traffic or pc not working) again there is no additional consideration that can be given. It is wise to always expect the unexpected and allow for a day or two's contingency. Be mindful that in some cases poor time management could be a symptom of a specific learning difference or mental health issue. If this is a recurring scenario the student may benefit from an ALS or GP review
- Is the problem the fault of the university, e.g. if the entire IT system crashes? Is so, then it is appropriate to extend the deadline for the whole cohort by a reasonable time period.

Direct the student to any appropriate support services.

SUBU Advice can offer advice and guidance on the operation of the procedures and assist students in submitting the appropriate paperwork.

Note: extensions are only given to students where there is evidence to support that the student has an issue that is likely to impact upon their studies and assessment

and is outside the student's control. See the Mitigating Circumstances Policy & Procedures for further information <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/rules-regulations>

I'm really worried about the exams

Assess the seriousness of the situation. If the student is not thinking rationally and seems unable to take corrective action, they may benefit from talking to someone to clarify what the problems are. In the short term, Chaplaincy, the Samaritans or the student's GP are all good first points of contact (NB Samaritans are not just for immediate crisis issues). If there is an underlying psychological problem, counselling or psychotherapy may be a longer term solution but is not a 'quick fix'. The university Counselling Service, self-referral through Gateway or accessing a private counsellor are all options (see section at the end of the booklet for contact details).

If the problem is less serious, it could be that the student needs to work on their study skills. Have they looked at past papers, attended any revision sessions, been to the exam revision study support workshop? Direct them to the study support pages on the website (www.bournemouth.ac.uk/study_support) for practical information. It is important to get the student to take some action and not drift into passive inactivity.

My personal circumstances have affected my work

If the student cannot meet their submission date because of personal circumstances they must apply for an extension before the deadline, in accordance with the Mitigating Circumstances Procedures. Provide the student with the appropriate extension form (or direct them to their Programme

Administrator). There is no right to an extension but each case will be based on its own merit.

If the student believes that work that they have already submitted, or an exam that they have already sat, has been affected by their circumstances they can submit a Mitigating Circumstances Form to the Board of Examiners. The form must be submitted to the appropriate Programme Administrator at least five working days prior to the Board. The Board will then reach a decision based on the student's performance and in the knowledge of their circumstances.

SUBU Advice can offer advice and guidance on the operation of the procedures and assist students in submitting the appropriate paperwork.

Depending on the situation, as well as advising the student about the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure, you may feel it is appropriate to suggest the student seeks appropriate support from SUBU Advice or a relevant BU service or external agency.

I disagree with my marks

If it is after the Assessment Board has met, the student can submit an appeal in accordance with the appropriate Academic Appeals Policy. All students have the right to appeal although their appeal will only be considered if they can demonstrate that it falls under one of the categories outlined in the appeals procedure. Just disagreeing with the marks is not in itself grounds for appeal.

If the Assessment Board has yet to meet the student can lodge a complaint about their concerns. The complaint will be investigated and the outcome will be taken into consideration by the Assessment Board when they meet. If a complaint has reviewed the issue, and the outcome considered by the

Assessment Board, the same matter will not then be reopened under an appeal.

askBU staff can offer advice on the appeals procedures whilst SUBU Advice can support students wishing to lodge an appeal or make a complaint.

I want to take a year off/suspend my studies

Taking time out is not an automatic right and needs to be agreed by BU. Find out why the student wants to suspend. Would a suspension of studies actually help to address the issues? Ask the student to look at some of the academic, economic and social problems that can arise as a result of taking time off from studying. Consider the length of time away – does it create any academic issues i.e. are there likely to be changes in the programme? Taking time off will affect the student loan and may involve additional fees – askBU can advise. There may also be other implications such as accommodation contracts. The student will also be resuming with a different cohort and so will not be in the same class as their current classmates.

It is not normally possible to suspend mid-unit, so if the student has completed all the taught sessions for a unit they will be expected to complete the assessment. If it is agreed that a student can suspend, and they fail to complete the assessment, they will normally be required to retake the full unit again the following year (and pay the unit fee).

If after appropriate consideration it is agreed that this is the correct course of action, the student will need to see their admin team.

SUBU Advice are a good source of independent and impartial information and guidance on all the issues relating to suspension and can provide support for the suspension application process.

Personal Issues

I want to leave

Find out why:

- Are there any misunderstandings or difficulties that can be resolved fairly easily?
- Are they struggling with their studies? If so the student could benefit from study skills or may have an additional learning need. Refer them to ALS and/or Study Skills webpages (<http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/learning/study-support>)
- Are they not enjoying the course? If they have a clear alternative that they would like refer them to the course leader to discuss whether that's a possibility. If they are not sure what they want to do refer them to the Careers Service (<http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/career/ges>) who can offer impartial guidance
- Are they homesick? This is very common particularly in the first term and returning after a vacation (five to six weeks after the start of the course is a crisis point for many). Most students manage to struggle through this period and settle into an enjoyable university life. Encourage the student to try out new activities and make new friends. SUBU offer a number of clubs and societies or they could become a Student Rep, take up a musical instrument or take part in social or team sports. The Students' Union is a great place to find out more as is sportBU
- International students may be struggling to understand the language or culture. They may find the English Conversation Club helpful and the Chaplaincy is also

great source of support and friendship for international students (NB Chaplaincy is for students of all faiths and none). How about speaking to the Student Experience Co-ordinator in their School? askBU can provide further information and contact details for all of these. It may help to put the student in contact with others from their home country for support; SUBU has a list of societies (e.g. Chinese Students and Scholars' Association, Thai Society, Bulgarian Society, etc.) which may be able to help with this.

Inform the student that any change of course may impact on course fees and eligibility for student loans/bursaries, (and entitlement to remain in the UK if they hold a student visa) and refer them to askBU for further information.

If, after discussing the above, the student is still sure that they want to leave, then practicalities of withdrawal need to be addressed. The student should see their Programme Administrator to arrange an exit interview and return their student smartcard. International students will need to leave the country shortly after withdrawing unless they are going to another university immediately after leaving BU. International students must seek advice about the implications of withdrawal on their visa from askBU.

SUBU Advice are a good source of independent and impartial information and guidance on all the issues relating to withdrawal and can provide support for the withdrawal application process.

A close relative/friend is seriously ill/has died

First the practical stuff. If the student has assessment deadlines/exams coming

up they may need an extension or postponement. They may need to miss some academic sessions to attend the funeral or support other family members with immediate arrangements.

If the student has already submitted work or sat exams which they think has been affected by these circumstances they need to complete a Mitigating Circumstances Form and submit to the Assessment Board in accordance with the published procedures.

In both of these scenarios, requests for their circumstances to be taken into consideration must be made in accordance with the normal School procedure and the Mitigating Circumstances policy and procedure (<http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/rules-regulations>). If there has been a death the student will need to produce the death certificate for mitigating circumstances to be considered. This may seem unsympathetic, however, although the overwhelming majority of students are honest, it is not unknown for a false claim of the death of a relative to be made as it is believed that this will not be given the same level of scrutiny as some other reasons. askBU and SUBU Advice can both advise on this.

If the student is international, there may be financial concerns about the cost of travelling home for the funeral and pressures/expectations from family about how long they should stay at home for. In some cases, students may be eligible to apply to the International Emergency Fund for help with travel costs, contact askBU for advice.

The student may also be very distressed and/or in shock. This is part of the natural grieving process and they may need time to come to terms with the situation. If they would like to talk about the situation,

Chaplaincy and the Samaritans can both help (the current Chaplain is a qualified bereavement counsellor). In the longer term counselling or therapy may be appropriate and this can be sought from the BU's counselling service, through the local Gateway service or from a private counsellor/psychotherapist. More information about each of these is given at the end of this handbook.

I feel unwell

If the student doesn't appear to be facing a medical emergency they can be directed to the medical centre webpages to find advice on how to deal with the most common ailments (<http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/health/medical-centre>). The NHS Direct website is a useful source of information for most common ailments and has a useful symptom checker (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk). For non-urgent advice students can call NHS Direct on 111.

Students can register with any GP near where they live, and all students are able to register with the University Medical Centre. The University Medical Centre will also see students in an emergency even if they are not registered.

Reception keep a list of first aiders – call 222 if one is required.

To call an ambulance on university premises call 222 or 01202 965448 from a landline. The switchboard will call the emergency services and be able to direct them swiftly to the patient.

I have been sexually assaulted/raped

Reassure the student that you will keep the matter confidential to only those who need to know. The student is not obliged to

inform the police, but the matter can only be investigated once it has been formally reported. It is important that the student understands that time is of the essence and if they don't report a sexual assault soon after it happens, it is more difficult, and sometimes impossible, to find the perpetrator. Students should be reassured that being the victim of sexual assault or rape is nothing to be ashamed of.

The Dorset Sexual Assault Referral Centre has a walk in service offering practical support and counselling and will not involve the police without the student's permission (contact information and opening hours are provided at the end of this booklet). Alternatively, the student can see their own GP or contact SUBU Advice who can help the student to access any necessary specialist support.

I have been mugged/my flat has been burgled/I have been a victim of crime

Assess the seriousness of the situation. Is the student distressed, take time to listen and then consider the practical concerns? Does the student need medical attention and have the police been contacted? Ascertain the potential impact on studies and discuss any appropriate action (extensions etc). If required, refer the student to SUBU Advice for support and practical advice.

I have accommodation problems

What is the problem related to?

- Private landlord/halls operators

If the problem is related to property rented through a private landlord or halls, the student should contact SUBU Advice who are experienced in dealing with accommodation problems.

- BU Managed/allocated accommodation

The BU Residential Services manage and allocate university owned accommodation as well as that belonging to a number of other halls operators in the area (e.g. UNITE). If the university allocates accommodation on behalf of another operator, the student's contract is normally with the accommodation operator rather than BU. Each operator has different contract terms and students should be advised to contact the Residential Services team in the first instance if they are unsure of their contract terms (email: accommodation@bournemouth.ac.uk).

It may be possible to move into BU managed accommodation partway through the academic year, or to transfer to different halls. However, this is dependent upon availability and no transfers are permitted before November.

There is a Facebook page for students who would like to swop their accommodation (BU Accommodation StudentSwaps).

I have money problems

- Student loan delay (normally only applies at the start of the academic year)

The student loan is normally paid 3-5 working days after the student enrolls but sometimes there can be a delay for a number of reasons. If a student hasn't received their loan more than a week after they have enrolled they should contact askBU who will check that the student has completed everything to allow them to be fully enrolled and that Student Finance England have been notified.

In some circumstances the student may be able to obtain an Emergency Loan (repayable once their student loan comes

through). Direct the student to askBU to find out if they are eligible and what information would need to be provided.

BU will not chase students for their rent if their loan is delayed, but private landlords and other halls operators will. The student can obtain a late payment form from the Residential Services team to verify that they are a student waiting for their loan to come through.

In cases of real hardship, SUBU Advice may be able to offer a £15 ASDA voucher for food.

If the student is in real financial hardship, after accessing their Student Loans, they may be eligible for Access to Learning Funds – or for international students, the International Emergency Fund - askBU can advise. SUBU Advice can offer advice on general financial matters, general budgeting skills and on employment rights. Students with a disability may also be eligible for Disabled Students Allowances to cover any specialist software or one to one tuition they may need. The ALS team can advise.

I think that I may be pregnant

Is the student looking for welfare, medical or academic advice re studying? If the student is looking for practical support, refer her to SUBU Advice; if medical advice is required suggest that she makes an appointment with the Medical Centre or her GP. If the student is concerned about the effect of pregnancy on her studies discuss the implications. The student could also ring the action line of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service – 08457 304030. Students in receipt of an NHS Bursary should contact the NHS Student Grants Unit or askBU.

I can't cope

Try to ascertain the degree of lack of coping – ask for examples. If the issue is connected to workload then discuss with the student his/her priorities for coursework submission and time management. If the issues are beyond your expertise refer the student to SUBU Advice, the various resources suggested at the end of this brochure or consider contacting the counselling or Gateway teams. If it relates to study skills, direct them to the study skills pages. The Samaritans are always a good source of support.

I'm being picked on/bullied

Talk through the concerns. Are there any misunderstandings that can be resolved? Does the student have an issue or grievance with a member of staff or other students? Be sensitive but wary of any explicit or implied support for the student that could be interpreted as being 'for' or 'against' another student or member of staff. Refer to the Code of Practice on Harassment. Your Dean, Deputy Dean, Director of Operations or the Head of Student Support Services can offer further advice.

SUBU Advice can offer independent guidance through all BU's Procedures to both students and staff.





Other issues

My visa is running out – can you write me a letter for immigration?

No. The UK Visas and Immigration Service (previously known as the UK Border Agency) has very strict guidelines covering immigration and student visas. Always refer the student immediately to askBU for specialist advice.

I'm not a UK resident but need to need to open a bank account in the UK

The university can issue students with a letter confirming that they are registered at BU. Complete the form on the student portal at <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/replacement-documents>.

I have lost my student card or Council Tax Exemption Certificate?

A replacement can be provided. Complete the form on the student portal at <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/letter-requests>.

I want to complain about staff, facilities, other students

Talk through the issues. Listen to what the student is saying and check that you have

understood the issues. Check whether there are any misunderstandings that can be informally resolved but do not be drawn into an immediate response. Advise the student to speak to their student representative if their complaint is programme related. If the problem cannot be resolved the student may choose to submit a complaint in accordance with the Student Complaints Policy & Procedure at www.bournemouth.ac.uk/student/complaints. SUBU Advice can offer advice/guidance to students wishing to make a formal complaint.

Will you give information about me to a third party?

No - keep confidential, matters discussed (and this includes to parents) unless the student gives explicit permission (written preferable) for the information to be disseminated. However, in exceptional circumstances if the member of staff judges the student is deemed likely to harm themselves or another person, appropriate action should be taken.

With acknowledgements to Dr Heather Hartwell who compiled the first version of this guide.

Sources of advice and information within the university

The Head of Student Support Services has overall responsibility for student wellbeing. There are a number of specialist and generalist staff within the University who can offer advice and information to both staff and students. The contacts listed below are for non-urgent situations.

If faced with an urgent situation where student or staff health or safety is in imminent danger, the emergency services should always be involved by calling 222 from a University extension or 01202 965448 from a mobile. For any emergency off campus, the normal 999 number should be used.

Additional Learning Support askBU

Additional Learning Support (ALS) staff can provide practical advice for students who require study support to help them cope with a long term disability (such as dyslexia) or short term additional learning support (such as a broken arm). The ALS team can also provide advice and guidance on the Disabled Students Allowances as well as offering 1:1 tuition for students with a diagnosed condition.

Location: The Sir Michael Cobham Library and Dorset House on Talbot Campus, and Studland House on Lansdowne Campus.

Opening hours:

Talbot - Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays. 9-4pm, Wednesdays 9-12pm
Lansdowne - Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 10.00am - 4.00pm.

Tel: +44 (0)1202 965663

Email: als@bournemouth.ac.uk

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/learning/als>

The askBU service for current students provides information and advice on student finance, visa and immigration and cultural adaptation and University regulatory issues such as appeals, complaints, and mitigating circumstances. They also provide student status confirmation letters and replacement Smartcards and council tax certificates. The team can signpost to a range of internal and external services and are the first point of contact for general enquiries.

Location: The Base, Poole House, Talbot Campus and Bournemouth House Library, Lansdowne Campus

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am -5pm (Vacation) 6pm (Term Time), Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.
Closed Wednesdays 2.00 – 3.30pm

Tel: +44 (0)1202 969696

Email: askBU@bournemouth.ac.uk

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/help/askbu>

BU Residential Services Letting Service

Based at Melbury House this service assists students finding 2nd – 4th year accommodation in the private sector ensuring that fees are kept to a minimum.

There are Facebook pages for students looking for either housemates or rooms within a shared house – BU accommodation find a housemate (UG)/BU accommodation find a housemate (PG)/BU accommodation find a housemate (HSC)

Location: Melbury House, Lansdowne Campus and at the Base, Poole House, Talbot Campus (alongside askBU)

Tel: +44 (0)1202 961678

Web: www.bullettings.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BUAccommodation

Twitter: @BULettings

Careers Team (Placement & Careers)

The university has a team of qualified careers advisors. The team can offer independent guidance to students who are considering leaving because they don't like their course, or those thinking about future study or employment once they graduate. They also advertise job opportunities via MyCareerHub.

Location: The Edge, The Sir Michael Cobham Library

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5pm (9am - 5pm during vacations)

Tel: +44 (0)1202 961663

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/career/ges>

Twitter: @BUcareersweb

MyCareerHub - <https://mycareerhub.bournemouth.ac.uk/>

Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy can offer support to students of all faiths and no faith. As well as advice and support, Chaplaincy offers friendship and opportunities to meet other students through social events

Location: Room &135, Talbot House, Talbot Campus

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday 8.30am to 7pm

Tel: +44 (0)1202 965383 or 07894 598915

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/health/chaplaincy>

Counselling Service

Counselling is a type of talking therapy that allows a person to talk about their problems and feelings in a confidential and dependable environment. In most cases, it takes a number of sessions before the counselling starts to make a difference, and a regular commitment is required to make the best use of the therapy. As it is a long term therapy, counselling is not normally the solution for a student in crisis although the Head of Counselling can offer advice on dealing with mental health issues.

All students are eligible to use the local NHS counselling services which can be accessed through the Bournemouth & Poole Gateway Services (see page 28).

Location: Talbot House, Talbot Campus

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 9am -5pm
(Term time only, although some sessions are offered during the vacation)

Tel: +44 (0)1202 965020

Email: scounsel@bournemouth.ac.uk

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/health/counselling/index.html>

Duty Call Out Officer

The Duty Officer is first point of contact if there is an emergency. The Duty Call out officer will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken as the result of an incident affecting BU staff, students or estate. They can also call on the Major Incident Co-ordinator, Serious Incident Officer and other key members of staff as appropriate.

The Duty Call Out Officer can be contacted via the main BU switchboard 24 hours a day on +44 (0)1202 524111

Occupational Health & Wellbeing team

It can be challenging supporting a student who has difficult personal circumstances. As well as the practical advice offered in this booklet, any member of staff who feels that their own health and wellbeing is being affected can seek advice and support from the Occupational Health & Wellbeing team.

Tel: +44 (0)1202 961131

Web: <https://staffintranet.bournemouth.ac.uk/workingatbu/healthsafetywellbeing/wellbeing>

Medical Centre

All students are able to register with the Medical Centre based in Talbot House during term time (the service operates from the Talbot Medical Centre during vacations). The Medical Centre offers a full range of medical services, health and sexual advice including an on-campus sexual health clinic.

Term time

Location: Talbot House, Talbot Campus

Opening hours: Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Sexual Health Clinic: Tuesdays
10.15am - 2.30pm

Tel: +44 (0)1202 965378
(Out of hours: +44 (0)845-600-1013)

Web: <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/health/medical-centre>

Vacations

Location: Talbot Medical Centre, 63 Kinson Road, Wallisdown, Bournemouth, BH10 4BX

Opening hours: Monday - Friday
8am - 6.30pm

Tel: +44 (0)844-477-2416
(Out of hours: +44 (0)845-600-1013)

Web: www.talbotmedicalcentre.co.uk

Residential Services Welfare Officers

Every BU operated Halls of Residence has a live-in Residential Services Welfare Officer. They are the first point of contact for any pastoral issues arising in the accommodation.



SUBU Advice

SUBU Advice is run by the Students' Union and is a free, confidential and independent source of advice, support and representation for students. In addition to advisory services, the staff can also offer advocacy for students in pursuing complaints and appeals within the university or other welfare issues externally.

The advice team are based in P255, Poole House and BG07, Bournemouth House

Opening hours:

Talbot – Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm
Lansdowne – 9.30am - 2.00pm (Mon, Tues, Thurs term time. By appointment only Weds, Fri and during vacations)

Tel: +44 (0)1202 965779/965778/965764
(Lansdowne +44 (0)1202 967369)

Email: subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk

Web: www.subu.org.uk/advice

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SUBUAdvice

Twitter: @SUBUAdvice

Student Portal

The definitive location for accessing all student policies and procedures as well as sources of information and advice available in BU. <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk>

Sources of advice and information outside the university

There are a number of sources of advice and information that are available to all regardless of whether or not they are BU students or staff. Agencies can be contacted direct by students or staff – there is no need for a formal university referral.

Anxiety UK

Anxiety UK provides information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy. They can provide support and help for those who have been diagnosed with, or suspect they may have an anxiety condition. They can also help with specific phobias such as fear of spiders, blushing, vomiting, being alone, public speaking, heights – in fact, any fear that's stopped you from getting on with your life. They have a useful app on stress tips.

Tel: 08444 775 774

Opening hours: Monday to Friday
9.30am - 5.30pm

Web: <http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk>

Befrienders (suicide, students in crisis)

Providing emotional support to prevent suicide worldwide. Befrienders does not offer telephone support in the UK but their website has some useful resources.

Email: info@befrienders.org

Web: www.befrienders.org

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Social Services (Out of hours)

The service provides emergency cover and access to essential services outside of the

main local office working hours and covers Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset. It covers the full range of services, including Adult services, Children's services, Childcare, Mental health, Older people, Learning and physical disability

Tel: +44 (0)1202 657279

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 5pm - 8.40am, 4pm Friday - 8.40am Monday

Web: www.dorsetforyou.com/385032

Bournemouth Drugs and Alcohol Action Team

Information about the activity of the DAAT and commissioned services in Bournemouth and support for those affected by drug or alcohol misuse, including family members. Useful information about possible warning signs of drugs or alcohol abuse.

Bournemouth Open Access Service, 43 Oxford Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8EY

Tel: +44 (0)1202 209463 (assessments team)

Opening hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 4pm

Web: www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Microsites/DAAT

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (Private Counselling)

Directory of private counsellors and psychotherapists. Searchable by location/type/issue

Web: www.bacp.co.uk/

Dorset Police (non-emergency)

Bournemouth Central Police Station, 5 Madeira Road, Bournemouth, BH1 1QQ

Opening hours: Monday - Thursday 7am - midnight, Friday - Sunday 24 hours

Tel: 101 or +44 (0)1202 22 22 22 outside Dorset

Web: www.dorset.police.uk

Dorset Sexual Assault Referral Centre (sexual assault and rape)

The Centre provides an all embracing, sympathetic, caring and worthwhile service to all victims of rape, sexual abuse and trauma. Services include Crisis support, Counselling referrals, Health and welfare, Information, Police (only if victims wish to report). Self referrals are accepted between 10am and 3pm Monday to Friday, police referrals accepted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Tel: 0845 519 8638

Email: contact@arcdorset.org.uk

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm for self referrals

Web: www.dorsetforyou.com/arc-dorset

Gateway (mental health issues)

The Gateway Team provide access to a number of therapeutic services provided by the NHS, including counselling.

Gateway Team, Civic Centre Annexe, Park Road, Poole, BH15 2RT

Tel: +44(0)1202 633583

Web: www.ourhealth.southwest.nhs.uk/services/bournemouth-poole-gateway-team-2

Inform (religion)

Inform is an independent charity providing accurate and balanced information about what many call cults, sects, new religious movements (NRMs), non-conventional religions, alternative religions, spiritual or esoteric movements and/or self-religions.

Inform, Houghton Street, London. WC2A 2AE

Tel: +44 (0)20 7955 7654

Email: inform@lse.ac.uk

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 10am – 4.30pm

Web: www.inform.ac

MIND

MIND is for anyone with a mental health problem and can offer advice and support. Their website has lots of useful information for both those with problems and those who are concerned about others.

Tel: 0300 123 3393

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday
9am – 6pm

Web: www.mind.org.uk

No Panic

No Panic is a voluntary charity which helps people who suffer from panic attacks, phobias, obsessive compulsive disorders and other related anxiety disorders. No Panic specialises in self-help through recovery groups and one-to-one mentoring all done over the telephone because most people do not have or are unable to access face to face support.

Tel: 0800 138 8889

Opening Hours: 10am – 10pm
7 days per week

Web: nopanic.org.uk

The Roofie Foundation (Drug-related rape and sexual abuse, drink spiking)

Research into drug related rape and drink spiking and support for victims. There is no telephone support but the website contains a lot of useful information.

1 Prime Parkway, Prime Enterprise Park,
Derby, DE1 3QB

Web: www.roofie.com

Samaritans (Suicide, Students in Crisis, General Issues)

The national Samaritans are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, including Christmas and Bank Holidays and are a support service for any problem. They are an excellent resource for students who are in crisis or suicidal, although they offer support for all issues regardless of their severity. They can be contacted in person (walk-in), by email or telephone.

There is also a local branch in Bournemouth, although their opening hours are shorter.

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Opening hours: 24 hours per day,
365/6 days per year

Web: www.samaritans.org

Local Branch: 1 Durrant Road Bournemouth
BH2 6LE

Opening hours: 9am to 9pm

Tel: +44 (0)1202 551999

Web: www.bournemouthsamaritans.org.uk



**Somerset and Wessex Eating
Disorders Association
(Eating Disorders)**

Tel: +44 (0) 1749 671318

Email: support@swedauk.org

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday
10am - 3.00pm

Web: www.swedauk.org