**Owner:** Director of Student Services

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**PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF A MISSING STUDENT**

# SCOPE AND PURPOSE

To explain how the University ascertains whether a student is missing and if so, what action should be taken. Examples when this policy may apply include:

* + - Students who have had a good attendance history to date and who then miss a number of lessons without explanation or informing friends/classmates/flatmates and whose friends/classmates express concern about their whereabouts
		- Where concerns have previously been raised about a student’s health or wellbeing and the student’s friends/classmates/flatmates are unable to contact them
		- Where the university is contacted by the student’s family concerned as they have been unable to contact them
		- Where a student fails to turn up for a work placement as expected. This includes clinical placements for professionally accredited courses, placements in the workplace as part of an apprenticeship and sandwich or short placements.

This policy applies to all Undergraduate and Postgraduate students at Bournemouth University as well as all students registered on an apprenticeship course at BU.

This policy applies only when there are serious concerns about a student’s wellbeing to the extent that it is believed that they may be at risk of harm. General non-attendance and not engagement issues should be dealt with in accordance with 3k: Attendance and Withdrawal Procedures

# KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

* 1. The Director of Student Services is responsible for the oversight of this policy and procedures and its operation. On a daily basis the operation of this policy will fall to the member of the Student Services Executive team who is on call at the time that concerns are raised, and they will act as the Director of Student Services nominee.
	2. All students are expected to be engaging with their programme of study, including attending taught elements and participating in assessment.
	3. Welfare Advisors, Personal Tutors, Programmes Support Teams, Supervisors and in the case of Apprenticeship students - employers, should play an active role in monitoring the attendance and wellbeing of students allocated to their care, and should report any concerns to their line-manager and/or Student Services without delay.
	4. The Director of Student Services has lead responsibility for student health & wellbeing
	5. The Head of Student Support and Wellbeing is the University’s Lead Safeguarding Officer

# LINKS TO OTHER UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS

* 3K Attendance Monitoring and Withdrawal Procedure
* 11J Fitness to Study Procedure
* 11K Fitness to Practise Procedure
* Guidance Note on Disclosure of Student Personal Data to Third Parties
* Apprentices Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

# Procedure

# INVESTIGATE ABSENCE

* 1. Any unplanned absences that are of concern should be immediately investigated (without raising undue alarm) at the local level within the student's Faculty and the University hall of residence or private sector accommodation. This may include emailing, telephoning and writing to the student, as well as contacting the student's friends, housemates, fellow students, reviewing social media activity etc. At no point should staff go to the student’s accommodation or place themselves in any similar vulnerable position.
	2. At this stage, this should not include contacting parents, emergency contacts or other third parties external to the University.

# CONTACT DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

* 1. If these local enquiries fail to locate the student, the Faculty (or employer in the case of a student on placement) should contact the Director of Student Services (or their nominee) who will coordinate the University's response to the situation. The Director of Student Services (or their nominee) will make further attempts to locate the student and assess the possible level of risk involved. This may include:
* checking with Student Services departments (eg ALS, sportBU), Estates, IT Services, the Library and SUBU to establish if the student has been engaging in person or if there is any electronic evidence of the student's whereabouts
* requesting a search of the student's university or partner providers’ accommodation, for clues to their whereabouts
* contacting the student’s landlord (if known)
* establishing last known contacts and whether the student evidenced any unusual patterns of behaviour
	1. If the Director of Student Services or their nominee considers there to be grounds for concern about the student's wellbeing s/he will use the student's emergency contact number to contact family/friends.
	2. If the Director of Student Services (or their nominee) believe their may be a Safeguarding concern related to the disappearance of the student this will also be notified to the Head of Student Support and Welbeing.

# REPORT THE STUDENT AS A MISSING PERSON

* 1. If, as a result of these enquiries, the location and wellbeing of the student cannot be confirmed, the Director of Student Services (or their nominee) will then report the student as missing to the Police and/or their Embassy, and become the main University point of contact for the Police. The exception is where the concerns have been raised by the student’s family. In this instance it will normally be for the family to contact the police rather than the Director of Student Services.
	2. If there are concerns that the absence may be related to radicalisation the University’s Prevent Co-Ordinator will be notified.
	3. The Director of Student Services (or their nominee) will inform the Chief Operating Officer, the relevant Executive Dean of Faculty, the Head of Corporate Communications, the WDO Co-ordinator and the General Manager of the Students’ Union to ensure any subsequent incoming enquiries can be dealt with appropriately.

# SUPPORT THE FOUND STUDENT

* 1. Once the student has been located and their safety and general wellbeing ensured, support to help address any underlying difficulties will be offered.
	2. The Faculty will remind them of the expectation that they will be in attendance, and that any planned absences should be notified in advance to their Faculty.