

Owner:	Director of Student Services
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Student Welfare Policy

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Bournemouth University takes the welfare of its students seriously. Our Strategic Plan – BU2025 – commits to “*Our students and staff thriving through Fusion*” This aligns closely to the principles of the UUK’s #stepchange whole university ([fused] approach. Action 14 of the Implementation plan commits to “*Develop BU as a healthy environment by monitoring and prioritising activities guided by best practice,... providing flexible support, incorporating research and practice into our plans for our own environment through our Health & Wellbeing Fusion Theme*. This policy lays out BU’s planned approach to supporting students’ welfare, including mental health support.
- 1.2 Any significant and urgent concerns about a student’s welfare should be notified to the Student Services Executive on call (within normal working hours) or the Welfare Duty Officer via 222 (off campus via 01202 962222) (outside normal working hours)
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Bournemouth University Safeguarding policy, which details further information in what to do if there are concerns about a student being at risk to themselves, others or from others.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Although some key roles in the university have responsibility for developing and leading the implementation of student welfare strategies, the responsibility for student welfare lies with every member of the university community.
- 2.2 The Director of Student Services is the strategic lead for developing and delivering appropriate welfare policies, procedures, and services and for dealing with individual issues of student welfare.
- 2.3 The Head of Student Support and Wellbeing is the operational lead for student welfare and the development and delivery of services to support this in accordance with the Universities policies and procedures.
- 2.4 All academic and professional services staff have a responsibility to act on any concerns raised about a student’s welfare. These staff are not expected to be experts in student welfare support but to know where to signpost students for appropriate support and to escalate their concerns.
- 2.5 Specialist welfare support, is provided by staff in Student Services acting in accordance with dedicated job roles and any relevant professional body requirements.
- 2.6 Achieve are the first point of contact for staff and students who may have concerns for their own, or other students’ welfare.
- 2.7 ResLifeBU Officers are not healthcare professionals nor are they on call, however they are the first point of contact for non-urgent welfare matters arising in halls.
- 2.8 Students have responsibility for being proactive in managing their own welfare wherever possible and in seeking support as and when appropriate. In particular students must provide information about any situation or condition that will impact on welfare and for which they would like support from BU or which may impact upon their time at university.

3. LINKS TO OTHER BU DOCUMENTS

[11J: Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures](#) [11H: Fitness to Practise Procedures](#)
[3U: Interruption of Studies Procedure](#) [11K: Student Disciplinary Procedures](#) [Safeguarding Policy](#)
[Universities Suicide Prevention Strategy for Students and Staff.](#)
[Information sharing Protocol](#)
[Student Privacy Notice](#)

4. POLICY

- 4.1 BU is committed to fair and equitable treatment for all members of the BU community and the disclosure of any health and wellbeing issue, whether physical or mental, will be treated confidentially and will not put the student at a disadvantage.
- 4.2 BU will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the provision of welfare support is appropriately resourced based on the needs of students. The amount of support to be provided will be determined using demographic and referral data, needs analysis and service demand, and will focus on early intervention and prevention as far as possible. We are committed to further developing our partnership with external specialist services within the local community in order to develop the best referral pathways, rather than replicating services.
- 4.3 The university will encourage collaborative research into areas that impact on student welfare. Any such project should ensure that those who are responsible for delivering a key service of the area being researched are a core part of the project/research team. This will ensure that any outcomes from research can be used to enhance practice across the university for the benefit of our students.

5. UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE TEAM

- 5.1 The University Executive Team will ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to support student welfare. All policies and procedures, including those relating to academic matters, should take into account any impact on student welfare.

6. FACULTY/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES LEVEL

- 6.1 For students a focus will be placed on ensuring a smooth transition to university with information and activities designed to help students settle in with as little disruption as possible. The university will design courses and activities that will offer students the very best opportunity to make the most of their time at BU with space to allow them to engage in extracurricular activities that will supplement and enhance the academic delivery.
- 6.2 Faculties will ensure that student welfare and Mental Health Needs are considered in curriculum design to avoid unnecessary pressure on learning and assessment. Heads of Department will monitor student feedback, and performance data as provided through the AMER, and ensure that steps are taking to deal with any areas of concern promptly. Staff, including Personal Tutors, will be available for academic and pastoral advice within a reasonable time and learning opportunities and methods will aim to be as inclusive as possible.
- 6.3 All Professional Services are required to consider any welfare implications arising from their activities, policies and procedures. Professional Services will monitor student feedback to ensure that any areas needing improvement can be quickly identified and addressed.
- 6.4 Student Services will facilitate debriefs following any serious student welfare incident to ensure that the support process and pathways are reviewed and are fit for purpose.
- 6.5 Faculties and Services will encourage their staff to engage in welfare training and all staff who have a student facing role should be given time to engage in key training events such as the Mental Health First Aid programme, the Zero Suicide Alliance online package and the Supporting Students workshops delivered by Student Services. This is just as important for the welfare of staff who need to be given the tools and resources to enable them to deal with student welfare concerns

- 6.6 Where concerns emerge about a student's welfare they will be confidentially shared with the relevant staff in other faculties/services in order that cohesive support, monitoring and review options can be explored. Concerns about a student being at risk to themselves, others or from others will also be shared with the faculty Education Services Managers.
- 6.7 Student welfare activities and support will be coordinated by Student Services whose Director has strategic responsibility for student welfare, although much of the activity will be delivered in partnership with faculties, other services and external specialist services

7. STUDENTS

- 7.1 Students have a responsibility for looking after their own health, wellbeing, and welfare and for raising any welfare and support needs in a timely manner. We understand that some students with disabilities may find it difficult to engage with support and we encourage other students and staff to raise issues of concern on these student's behalf.
- 7.2 As an educational establishment the university will provide information on how best to look after one's own health and wellbeing and offer access to Health and Wellbeing information and support services as well as the Student Assistance Programme. Where a student is experiencing issues that may need support, and that support is offered to them through BU, they will be expected to engage with the support services that are available. However ultimately it is the individual's responsibility if they choose to do so.

8. THIRD PARTY CONTACT

- 8.1 We do not usually share your personal information with your parents, guardians or other family members unless we see appropriate evidence that you have expressly agreed to this (this would normally mean a signed written statement of your consent). Under the data protection laws, only the relevant individual has legal rights to access and control the use of their personal data (identifiable information relating to them). Parents/ guardians do not have automatic rights to access their children's personal data at any stage, and they have no specific status or rights in relation to information about their children who are over the age of 18. Information can be shared with family members only where we can identify a clear legal basis for the sharing under data protection laws.
- 8.2 We will share information about you with your parents/ guardians or other family members only where:
- We are satisfied that you have given your clear consent to the sharing;
 - You are under 18 and the sharing is in line with our policies in relation to Under 18 students: you will have been given details of these policies and information-sharing arrangements in our Under 18 Information Pack; or
 - We consider the sharing to be necessary in your vital interests or to safeguard your welfare as a vulnerable person.
- 8.3 We will share personal data with emergency services or other health professionals and/or the person you have identified to us as being your next of kin or emergency contact, where this is necessary to safeguard your welfare or that of other individuals.