

Owner:	Head 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 Head of Student Services or nominee (within normal working hours) or the Serious Incident Officer via 222 (off campus via 01202 962222) (outside normal working hours)

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. In particular the University adopts the whole university approach outlined in the UUK #stepchange programme. Although this programme is primarily aimed at supporting student mental health, we believe the recommendations fit well with all areas of student welfare.
- 2.2 The Head 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 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.
- 2.4 Student Services staff are responsible for delivering specialist welfare support, at all times acting in accordance with any relevant professional body requirements.
- 2.5 The Student Support and Engagement Team are the first point of contact for Faculty staff and students who may have concerns for their own, or other students’ welfare.
- 2.6 Welfare Coordinators are based within student accommodation. They 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.
- 2.7 Students have responsibility for being proactive in managing their own welfare 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](#)
[Dignity and Respect \(Harassment\) Policy and Procedures](#)
[Third Party Involvement: Procedure](#)

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 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 appropriate welfare support is appropriately resourced based on the needs of students. The amount of support to be provided will be determined using demographic and demand needs and will focus on resilience and prevention as far as possible. Where there are external specialist services which are well placed to support our community, we will form links with them as far as possible 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.

4.4 UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP TEAM

4.4.1 The University Leadership 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.

4.5 FACULTY/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES LEVEL

4.5.1 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.

4.5.2 Faculties will ensure that student welfare is 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 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.

4.5.3 All Professional Services will be required to consider any welfare implications arising from their activities. It is important to understand the impact that poor processes and response times can have on welfare and these should constantly be kept under review. Professional services will monitor student feedback to ensure that any areas needing improvement can be quickly identified and addressed.

4.5.4 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 Charlie Waller Memorial Trust 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.

4.5.5 Where concerns emerge about a student's welfare they will be shared with the relevant staff in other faculties/services in order that cohesive support options can be explored.

4.5.6 Student welfare activities and support will be coordinated by Student Services whose Head has strategic responsibility for student welfare, although much of the activity will be delivered in partnership with faculties, other services and external specialist services.

4.6 **INDIVIDUALS**

4.6.1 All members of the university community have responsibility for looking after their own health, wellbeing, and welfare. Where a student is experiencing issues that may need support, they will be expected to engage with the support services that are available. As an educational establishment the university will provide information on how best to look after one's own health and wellbeing and offer opportunities to engage in the 5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing. However ultimately it is the individual's responsibility if they choose to do so.

4.7 **THIRD PARTY CONTACT**

4.7.1 Universities do not act 'in loco parentis' and with the exception of a very small number, BU students are over the age of 18 and considered adults in the eyes of the law. BU collects next of kin details on enrolment; however we will only contact the next of kin in exceptional circumstances and normally only with the student's permission. As we cannot be sure of the relationship that a student has with their family/next of kin, escalating welfare matters without a student's consent may make the situation worse. Our approach is to encourage the student to discuss any health & wellbeing issues with their family; Student Services staff are happy to facilitate that discussion if the student would like. However, where we have serious and immediate concerns about a student's safety because of welfare issues we would always involve the relevant specialist/emergency service who are qualified to make an assessment and involve family if they believe it appropriate. To that end we will always cooperate with the police, NHS and other emergency services on the sharing of information if the situation is deemed to merit it.

General

5. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

[UUK #stepchange Programme](#)
[Five Steps to Mental Wellbeing](#)