

SUBU

Students' Union
Bournemouth University



SUBU

Buddy Scheme

HANDBOOK

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Welcome to the



What is the 'Buddy Scheme'?

The 'Buddy Scheme' is a non-academic, peer-to-peer support scheme, organised by Full-Time Student Officers and coordinated by Students' Union at Bournemouth University SUBU.

Coming to University can be quite daunting, particularly when you have moved to an entirely new country! We understand that it can be difficult to strike up new friendships and settle in. Often, it can help to speak to someone who has done it all before. That is why we have set up this student initiative, the "Buddy Scheme".

The 5 week scheme aims to provide a fun, dynamic, and supportive environment in which new BU students can connect with experienced peers (Buddy Leads), form friendships, and learn helpful tips for navigating and enjoying university life. You will explore a different theme each week relating to your experience at BU and of the Bournemouth area.



NEW STUDENTS



What can I expect?

- The scheme covers themes spread across 5 weeks that cover different aspects of university life. The schedule for each theme is on page 7
- You will meet at least once a week with your buddy lead
- Your buddy lead will signpost you to key support services within BU and SUBU, along with some general local suggestions or recommendations, while living in the Bournemouth area
- An opportunity to attend a midway check-in with SUBU for you and your buddy lead



Benefits of the scheme

- Make the transition into university life smoother and less stressful as a new student, helping you blend into the community
- Help you make the most from your university experience by signposting you to available support and opportunities
- You get to take part in enjoyable social and creative activities
- You will develop and demonstrate relevant skills that enrich your CV or LinkedIn profile
- Help you build a community of friends and develop meaningful relationships
- You get to discover Bournemouth's hidden gems



⚠ Please note: Your buddy lead is not qualified to give mental wellbeing, healthcare, housing, or immigration related help but they can provide details on who can give you advice within BU and SUBU.

BUDDY LEADS



Responsibilities of Buddy Leads

- Introduce yourself as a buddy to new students and meet at least once a week.
- Signpost new students to essential BU and SUBU services. There will be a theme each week and the links in this handbook will help!
- You can socialize to create a friendly atmosphere whilst speaking on the BU norms, culture and procedures to access certain opportunities
- Attend a midway face to face check-in with SUBU for you and your student(s)
- You must check-in with the SUBU team at least once a week by **sububuddy@bournemouth.ac.uk**



Top tips for Buddy Leads

- Maintain a positive, mentor-like frame of mind
- Adapt your communication styles based on your student(s) personalities. Ensure inclusivity during your interaction process
- Stay positive! Remember, relationships take time to develop
- You are not expected to be perfect or know everything, do your best to support the new students assigned to you (reach out to the SUBU team if you need help)
- Don't attempt to cover everything right away. Remember, your buddy is new to BU and Bournemouth and more than likely feels overwhelmed during the first couple of weeks in a new area



⚠ **Please note:** You are not obligated to provide any mental wellbeing, healthcare, housing, or immigration related support. Please signpost buddies that approach you topics of this nature to the right teams in SUBU and BU as they will be able to provide the best advice.

Still have questions?

If a buddy is unsure how to answer a question, ASKBU and SUBU Advice are a one-stop-shop for student enquiries

Ask BU are based at both Talbot and Lansdowne campuses; drop-in to see them at The Base in Poole House or at the Help zone in the Bournemouth Gateway Building (BGB)

Phone: 01202 969696

SUBU Advice are based at both Talbot and Lansdowne campuses; drop-in to see them on the 2nd floor of the Student Centre

Email: SUBUadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk

Phone: 01202 965779



Weekly reference guide

The scheme will explore key themes of life at university every week. During your weekly meeting, you may choose to visit some of the available support services, explore the various student opportunities, or browse the online resources.

5-7 PM
Ground Floor,
Student Centre
(Talbot Campus)



5-7 PM
5th Floor,
Student Centre
(Talbot Campus)



5-7 PM
5th Floor,
Student Centre
(Talbot Campus)



5-7 PM
3rd Floor (BG302),
BGB
(Lansdowne Campus)



5-7 PM
1st Floor (BG110),
BGB
(Lansdowne Campus)



More information and external links can be found at
<http://www.subu.org.uk/volunteering/buddyscheme>



Week 1: Get to know

Welcome to the BU community! We know that settling into university life comes with lots of questions, and we're here to help you find your way. This page is your essential guide to navigating campus and discovering the wealth of support available to you.

This session will provide a comprehensive overview of essential campus services, covering everything from the academic resources at the BU Libraries to the support offered by Ask BU and SUBU Advice, as well as the facilities at SportBU.

ASK BU: This is a one-stop shop for all student enquiries. Ask BU is your Google for any questions you have about the university, including finding places on campus and information about your course. They can also assist by signposting you to other BU and SUBU services. You can contact the team via phone 01202 969696 or visit them on either campus.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	9.00am–5.00pm Mon–Thur The Hub, Poole House 9.00am–4.30pm Fri The Hub, Poole House
Lansdowne Campus:	9.00am–5.00pm Mon–Thur The Helpzone, BGB 9.00am–4.30pm Fri The Helpzone, BGB

SUBU Advice: provides free, independent, qualified and confidential advice. You can book an appointment via a form on the SUBU Advice page, email subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk or call reception on 01202 965779. Drop-in sessions are also available Monday to Friday, 11 am–12 pm in the Student Centre on Talbot Campus.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	10.00am–4.00pm Mon–Fri 2nd Floor, Student Centre
Lansdowne Campus:	9.00am–5.00pm Mon–Fri 3rd Floor 301c, BGB

BU Academic Support: For every course, you are assigned a Personal Tutor. Your Personal Tutor is an academic staff member who is your first point of contact for discussions around your academic experience. If you are not sure who your Personal Tutor is, contact AskBU.



Each programme has a Programme Leader and Programme Support Officers. Larger programmes will also have Level Coordinators.

BU Library: Students who require help using the BU Library services should visit the library area in Brightspace (contact details for the library team and appointment bookings, for one-to-one support from a librarian or academic specialist are also available on this portal). Students can book an appointment to receive academic support with areas like research and referencing. BU libraries include the Sir Michael Cobham Library (Talbot Campus) and the Weston Library (Lansdowne Campus), both open 24hrs.



Academic Skills Hub: Those wanting to improve their study skills on their own may wish to visit the Academic Skills Hub on Brightspace. This offers a whole host of activities, as well as workshops for areas such as academic writing, critical thinking or even research strategies.



If students need language support, the library also offers a Language Learning Support Hub.

Additional Learning Support (ALS): If you think you will need additional academic support, it is important that you contact the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team as soon as possible. They can put reasonable adjustments and one-to-one support tailored to your individual needs in place to support you throughout your program. You can contact the ALS team via phone 1202 965663, email als@bournemouth.ac.uk, or visit the team in person.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	9.00am-1.00pm, 2.00pm-4.00pm Mon-Fri DLG17, The Sir Michael Cobham Library
Lansdowne Campus:	9.00am-1.00pm, 2.00pm-4.00pm Mon-Thur 5th Floor, Executive Business Centre



Week 2: Build your future

It's easy to get caught up in your studies but remember that developing your employability and career readiness starts now. Getting involved in student programs, like becoming a Student Rep or joining various societies, is a brilliant way to gain practical skills and valuable experience beyond your degree. BU and SUBU are committed to supporting you every step of the way with resources designed to help you plan your future and stand out.

This session will cover the key steps to kickstart your career journey, directing you to services which can help you to actively plan your career, and explore how student involvement can boost your prospects.

CareersBU: Careers BU is a free service for all BU students and graduates offering 1:1 appointments, workshops and webinars. MyCareerHub is an online portal run by Careers BU, and it has lots of useful information for job-seeking and career-planning. You use it for booking appointments with BU careers specialists or even registering for any upcoming events (including careers fairs and conferences).



Contact Hours: Talbot Campus:	11.00am-3.00pm Mon-Fri The Hub, Poole House
Lansdowne Campus:	2.00pm-4.00pm Tues, Thur The Careers Zone, BGB

Please note: Service operates during term-time only

Graduate Skills Programme: This is a Career BU employer-endorsed program that gives you a structured way to develop the employability skills you will need in the workplace. Students who complete the required number of activities through the program receive a Graduate Skills+ certificate awarded usually towards the end of the academic year.



Volunteering Opportunities: Volunteering is brilliant! It's fun, rewarding and makes you and other people feel fantastic. It allows you to have an enjoyable break from your studies and make a real difference to those you help. Volunteering is a great opportunity to learn new skills, enhance your CV and make new friends – any volunteering that you do also gets credited towards your Graduate Skills+ Award.



Student Reps: You can become a Student Rep and represent the students in your course. Reps are fully trained by SUBU each year to provide insights into the Student Experience, and make sure that the student experience at BU is the best that it can be. They collect feedback, present it to their programme team, and then report back to their peers.



SUBU Campaigns: SUBU has six Liberation Networks that are run by students, for students. Through their campaigns, these groups cultivate inclusive and empowering spaces where diverse communities can connect and build strong networks. These campaigns occur throughout the year, promoting change at SUBU, BU and beyond. Networks are led by a Liberation Officer/Part-Time Officer within the Students' Union and are free to join. All students who self-identify are forwarded to their relevant communities. You can self-identify online by visiting your relevant groups page on subu.org.uk



Week 3: Social life

One of SUBU's biggest priorities is to ensure all students can get involved and feel included. We are dedicated to building a welcoming environment where every student feels a sense of belonging within the BU community.

This session covers the different ways you can get more involved at BU, SUBU, and the local community

Clubs & Societies: Led by five elected student committee members, clubs and societies bring together like-minded individuals with shared interests in various areas, such as hobbies, sports, or cultural pursuits. Students typically pay a fee to join, offering a fantastic opportunity to build friendships, participate in activities, and even compete. It's all about having fun and connecting with others! Choose a club or society, or start one yourself.



Amongst SUBU's many clubs and societies are our academic societies. These are linked to specific programmes or departments and provide students from similar academic backgrounds the chance to come together, discuss ideas and socialise. If your programme or department does not have an academic society, you can set one up yourself.

SUBU Venues: SUBU provides a variety of spaces for students to hang out and enjoy themselves. You can enjoy a night out at The Old Fire Station, our very own nightclub in Lansdowne. You may want to chat and relax with your friends at the Ground Up Café on the Ground Floor of the Student Centre, or you may want to enjoy a drink and some great food at Dylan's Kitchen & Bar in Poole House.



Global Café: Global Café is a regular social gathering with free coffee, cookies and a chance to meet other students to chat. It is run by the Faith and Reflection Team, without context with faith.



ResLife: If you live in halls of residence, they provide activities that ensure every student living in BU accommodation feels welcome, comfortable and safe; yet most importantly, they have fun whilst living in their home away from home. They deliver a social scheme called the ResLife programme that is based around three core principles: Social, Wellbeing and Skills.



Week 4: Body and mind

Balancing your studies and life can bring its own pressures. Remember, taking care of your mental and physical well-being is crucial, and we encourage you to prioritise them throughout your time here. We have resources available to support you in maintaining your well-being.

This session will explore practical ways to maintain your overall well-being, covering various strategies to help sustain your mental and physical health, as you navigate university life.

BU Medical Centre: Whatever your medical needs, the Student Medical Centre is open to all students at BU and offers a full range of medical services where you can book daily appointments. All registered patients have a named GP, access to online prescriptions, and medical records.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	8.45am-5.00pm Mon-Fri Talbot House
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Please note: Service operates during term-time only

ACHIEVE@BU: Run by Student Support and Engagement Coordinators from each BU faculty, Achieve@BU offers a wide variety of support, providing advice to students on the best way forward to resolve difficulties. Whether you just want a quick chat about something that's been getting you down or you're struggling with a bigger issue, contact Achieve@bournemouth.ac.uk to make an appointment.



BU Retreat: If you are struggling to cope and feel you are reaching a crisis point, the University Retreat provides a confidential, safe and welcoming space where you can speak to experienced support workers, volunteers and specialists.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	2.00pm-9.00pm Mon-Sat Tolpuddle Annexe 2
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Please note: Service operates during term-time only

Faith & Reflection: The Faith and Reflection Team are available to listen to students, offer spiritual support, and answer questions that help you grow as an individual. They have an open-door policy and are happy to welcome students, whether they have faith or not. They can help put students in touch with local faith communities and signpost students to the nearest location of a mosque, church, temple, etc.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	11.00am-3.00pm Mon-Fri The Hub, Poole House
Lansdowne Campus:	2.00pm-4.00pm Tues, Thur The Careers Zone, BGB

Please note: Service operates during term-time only

Week 5: Money made simple

We understand that keeping track of your finances can be a challenge, especially with increasing living costs and social activities. At BU and SUBU, we're here to support you in managing your finances throughout your studies. Our financial support services are available to help you stay on top of things.

This session will cover various ways to manage your personal finances, offering money-saving advice and guidance on utilising the perks of being a student at BU.

Financial Support: Any financial concerns students may have can be resolved by SUBU Advice, whom offer a range of support and advice to students needing financial assistance. This includes guidance on budgeting, saving money, and managing finances, as well as advice on financial hardship and alternative funding options. The team is available to assist with most financial issues, helping students with most means of difficulties, even concerning their funding provider (Student Finance England, NHS, etc.) and general money management.



There are also various BU-specific funds available, including the BU Laptop Support Fund and the Small Emergency Grant. Check to see what support might be available for you.

Community Kitchen: Primarily located on the second floor of the Student Centre (Talbot Campus) but also on the 3rd floor, 301, of the Bournemouth Gateway Building (Lansdowne Campus), the Community Kitchen is available year-round for all BU students and staff. It provides essential support during the cost-of-living crisis, offering free surplus food, hot drinks, and a place to eat, along with Pantry Packs, hygiene kits, supermarket vouchers, and free daily breakfasts.



Campus Discounts: Discover great ways to save on food at BU! The Union Shop offers the cheapest meal deal, while Dylan's Bar has a dedicated Student Saver menu with diverse hot and cold options. For end-of-day bargains, use the Too Good To Go app, or grab value meals under £4 at Fusion and Bournemouth Gateway Buildings. Download the Bournemouth Uni Food app for exclusive discounts and loyalty rewards.



Other Information

Student Housing

Finding accommodation in the UK and in Bournemouth is very challenging, particularly for students who are looking for affordable options. Your Buddy Leads would not be expected to solve these issues for you but may share their experience and overview of the available options. Here is information about some BU services that can help you:

BU Accommodation: BU has a limited amount of university accommodation available, which is usually fully booked by September and January. You can check availability or look for any cancellations on the Accommodation Portal. You can contact Residential Services when you have secured a BU accommodation and have a question related to the room via phone 01202 969696, email accommodation@bournemouth.ac.uk, or visit the team in person.



Contact Hours:

Lansdowne Campus:	10.00am–4.00pm Mon–Fri 5th Floor, EBC
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Lettings BU: provides students with access to BU-approved student houses in Bournemouth and the surrounding areas. You can contact Lettings BU via email lettingsBU@bournemouth.ac.uk, phone 01202 961678, or visit the team in person.



Contact Hours:

Talbot Campus:	9.00am–5.00pm Mon–Thur Poole House 9.00am–4.30pm Fri Poole House
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References/Guarantors: Usually, your landlord will ask for UK references or guarantors. If you are struggling to find a suitable referee, then there are providers who you can approach that might be able to help. [ukguarantor](#) and [housinghand](#) come as highly recommended organisations that offer help to students in need of a referee or guarantor. Note: BU or SUBU are not affiliated with these external companies and therefore are unable to formally recommend them



Finance: Upon the completion of your enrolment, you will be able to request a student bank letter from AskBU Letter Requests and follow their step to opening a bank account in the UK.

Immigration and Visas: The Immigration and Visas page has key information on student visas and biometric residence permits (BRPs). The immigration advice team are available Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm (4.30pm Fridays) via telephone 01202 969696 or email immigration@bournemouth.ac.uk.



Travel and transport

Getting around Bournemouth University and the local area is straightforward for new students, with excellent transport links designed to make your journey easy and sustainable. Here is information about all our local travel and transport services:

Public Transport: UNIBUS is the official bus service operated on behalf of BU and AUB for students, staff, and everyone. This is an accessible way to travel between our Talbot and Lansdowne campuses, as well as student halls of residence. You can access all the latest information on the UNIBUSES, including live services and their prices, via their app.



More information

- If you opted for a halls-inclusive bus pass when booking accommodation, Residential Services will email you instructions on downloading the Unibus app and registering for your pass
- If you are living in private accommodation, you can purchase a discounted annual pass or 10-trip passes using the Unibus website. Be ready to present your student ID card when requested
- The annual bus pass gives you access to all Zone A bus routes

BU Bike Scheme: Thinking of cycling to uni or just exploring locally, but don't have wheels? The BU Bike Scheme lets you borrow a bike for a term or even the whole year. It's only £50 (plus a £25 refundable deposit), and it's a brilliant way to save on travel, help the planet, and get some exercise. There are cycle facilities available on the Talbot and Lansdowne Campuses.



Beryl Bikes: BU has teamed up with Beryl Bikes to help make travel healthier and more fun. These distinctive green bikes and e-scooters are simple to ride and can be hired by anyone aged 16+ via the Beryl app. There are Beryl hire bays for bikes and e-scooters around the Talbot and Lansdowne campuses.



Useful Links



MyCareerHub



Careers
Events



Beryl App



UNIBUS App



BU Foods
App



MoreBus
Network
Map



SUBU Buddy Scheme Webpage
<http://www.subu.org.uk/buddyscheme>

SUBU

Buddy Scheme

Got a question? Need more help? Get in touch with SUBU at:

sububuddy@bournemouth.ac.uk