



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT



WHAT CAN WE HELP WITH

Every year, we see many students who have a range of wellbeing concerns or mental health support needs, so you are not alone in what you are experiencing, and our team does not have a certain 'criteria'. We are on hand to offer help, support and advice to all students at BCU.

Our experienced, professional advisers can help with a range of issues, including:

- Concerns about your wellbeing – anything that is getting in the way of your studying and enjoying life at university, including concerns about relationships, sexuality and gender, accommodation difficulties, healthy lifestyle and homesickness.
- Diagnosed mental health difficulties or illness.
- Emerging mental health issues – sleeping problems, feeling anxious or isolated, experiencing low mood, thinking about harming yourself.
- Implementing reasonable adjustments.
- Offering counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy.



HOW WE WILL SUPPORT YOU

The BCU Mental Health and Wellbeing Team consists of mental health advisers, wellbeing advisers, counsellors and cognitive behavioural therapists. We offer a free and confidential service to students. We are available 9am - 5pm weekdays (excluding bank holidays) for 51 weeks per year.

On registering with our service, students will have an initial assessment appointment to discuss any concerns and support needs. Our team can support with a very wide range of concerns ranging from adjusting to university life, relationships, sexuality, anxiety, grief, stress, implementing reasonable adjustments on your course and accessing support from specialist services.

We also provide an information and guidance service for young people leaving local authority care who are thinking about coming to university, applying or currently studying here.

Our service is BACP accredited.



PRE-ENTRY APPOINTMENTS

Our mental health advisers offer pre-entry appointments for applicants who are yet to start their course. If you have declared you have a disability through your UCAS form, you will receive contact from either the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, or the Disability Team, dependant on the nature of your disability with further information on our services and with the option of booking a pre-entry appointment. Don't worry if you did not declare your disability through UCAS, you can still contact us and request an appointment!

A pre-entry appointment is an opportunity for us to talk you through the support available from the university during your studies and get to know more about you. These appointments usually last around 45 minutes and include:

- Assessment of any practical support requirements you may need and liaise with your school to ensure that they are met. This could include reasonable adjustments such as extra time in exams or assignments, for example.
- Advice about your eligibility for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and how to apply for it.
- Discussing the wider support available from other teams in the University.
- Finding out more about you and any support needs, and any community support you may already receive from other agencies.
- Arranging follow up support from a mental health adviser once you start your course. This can include acting as a link between NHS (or other specialist agency) treatment teams and the University.



EVIDENCE ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The Equality Act 2010 states that a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term (likely to last for 12 months or longer) negative effect on a person's ability to do normal day-to-day activities.

We will usually ask for medical evidence with details of your condition, such as:

- A letter from a GP, community mental health team or consultant or other qualified medical professional that gives details of your condition, the effects it has on you and how it might impact on your study.

We can give you guidance to show to the person who will be writing the letter, but the main purpose is so that we can understand what reasonable adjustments you might need.



Using your medical evidence, we can arrange for reasonable adjustments by creating a Disability Support Summary (DSS). This is an 'in-house' document that outlines your adjustments and will last for the duration of your course. You may need reasonable adjustments on your course to enable you to participate fully. This is not about giving you an advantage but removing barriers to enable you to engage in the teaching, demonstrate your learning and graduate with the best result possible.

Where students may also have another health condition or a specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia), we can work with the Disability Team to ensure your DSS also covers these conditions. The Disability Team offer specialist support for students with disabilities, long term health condition and specific learning difficulties. You can find the contact information at the end of this leaflet.

You will be able to use the same medical evidence for your Disabled Students' Allowances application.

If you're not sure what you need or how to obtain this, please contact us and we can send you some guidance information.



DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE (DSA)

DSAs are government grants that could help pay for extra costs you may incur while studying as a direct result of your disability or health condition. They are not means-tested and you do not have to pay them back.

DSA can help pay for specialist equipment (such as a computer and assistive software) and non-medical helpers (e.g. study skills tutor or mentor). You can apply for DSA from early spring in the year you will go to university. You do not have to know which university you are going to. Find out more here: [Disabled Student Allowance website](#).

To apply, you must provide evidence of your disability or health condition.



DISCLOSURE AND DATA PROTECTION

Information about your disability will be held securely and confidentially on databases within the Disability Team and/or Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. This information is deemed to be sensitive personal data and is only used to advise you about the support that may be available. Exceptions may arise where the service has a legal obligation to share information, for example, if there is serious concern about risk to your health and wellbeing or that of a third party.

The University ensures that all personal data is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. If you have any queries regarding Data Protection Act issues, please contact the Information Management Team at informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk or on +44 (0)121 202 2900. You can also read our privacy notices here www.bcu.ac.uk/privacy-notice.



WHAT TO DO NEXT

If you receive an offer from BCU, here's what to do next:

1. If you told us about a disability on your UCAS form, you will be contacted by a member of the team to be invited to a pre-entry appointment.
2. If you haven't already told us about a disability and would like to, you can contact us at wellbeing@bcu.ac.uk or call 0121 331 5188 to ask to set up an appointment.
3. If you have medical evidence, you may wish to send this to wellbeing@bcu.ac.uk, and use it to apply for [Disabled Students' Allowance](#).
4. If you haven't got a diagnosed condition but are currently a student at BCU and would like some support from our service, search "Mental health and wellbeing team" on iCity, and complete our registration form to be offered an appointment. You can also contact us via email or phone.





CONTACT US

Mental Health and Wellbeing Team

Email: wellbeing@bcu.ac.uk

Telephone: **0121 331 5188**

Student Inclusion Team

Email: disability@bcu.ac.uk

Telephone: **0121 331 6495**

