



# INTERNATIONAL BUDDY SCHEME

## HANDBOOK



# Welcome to the



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

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's why we've set up the International Buddy Scheme.

The scheme will last for four (4) weeks and you will work through a different theme each week. You and your buddy can choose any theme which you want to discuss each week, or you can follow the Scheme's schedule below.

● **WEEK 1: Welfare and Wellbeing**

● **WEEK 2: Careers and Employability**

● **WEEK 3: Education**

● **WEEK 4: Extracurricular Activities**

## ★ What are the aims and benefits of the Scheme?

The scheme matches up new international students with continuing students (buddy volunteers) who can share hints and tips for settling into life at university.

The scheme aims to:

- Make the transition to university smoother and less stressful for new international students.
- Foster a sense of community and support amongst new international students
- Create an opportunity for new international students and buddy volunteers to develop and demonstrate intercultural competence & communication skills to enrich your CV
- Help make friends, tackle social anxiety, imposter syndrome, social isolation, homesickness and loneliness

## ★ Who are the buddy volunteers?

Buddy volunteers are Bournemouth University students who have settled into Bournemouth University and enter the scheme for the purpose of guiding a new international student under the scheme by signposting them to relevant BU and SUBU services.





## What are the responsibilities of a buddy?

- You will be paired with at least 1 international student. You may be paired with more than 1 international student.
- You are not required to meet as a group but aim to introduce yourself to your paired international student(s) immediately after you receive their information and meet them at least once a week.
- Signpost new international student(s) to essential BU and SUBU services which you will be briefed on during an induction and training day. There will be a theme each week and the links in this handbook will help you too!
- The scheme will last for 4 weeks, and you will cover a different theme each week. You and your buddy can choose any theme which you want to discuss each week, or you can follow the Scheme's schedule.
- You can socialise to create a friendly atmosphere whilst speaking on the BU norms, culture and procedures to access certain opportunities.
- You can aid your paired new international student(s) with cultural adjustment and support.
- You may choose to involve your new international student(s) with your own network through informal activities such as club/ society activities, coffee or lunch but this is not mandatory as you are not responsible for socialising.
- You must ensure inclusivity during your interaction process. SUBU will also provide cultural awareness training for all participants of the scheme during an induction and training day.

## 👍 Top Tips for Buddies

- Maintain a positive, teaching frame of mind.
- Adapt your communication styles based on your student(s) personalities.
- You are not expected to be perfect or know everything, reach out to the SUBU team if you need help.
- Stay positive and support the new students assigned to you.
- Don't try to cover everything right away. Remember, your buddy is new to the BU community and more than likely feels overwhelmed during the first couple of weeks in a new country.



**⚠️ Please note :** You are not qualified or responsible for giving mental wellbeing, healthcare, housing, or immigration related help, remember to signpost to the right teams in SUBU and BU.



## ★ New international students

As a new international student, your buddy is here to help you settle into Bournemouth University and the local community.

### Who are the new international students?

New international students are newly arrived Bournemouth University international students who enter the International Buddy Scheme for the purpose of receiving guidance from a buddy volunteer.






## What can a New international student expect?

- You will be paired with at least 1 buddy volunteer.
- You will meet at least once a week with at least one of your paired Buddies.
- You are not required to meet as a group but aim to introduce yourself to your paired buddy immediately you receive their information.
- The scheme will last for 4 weeks and you will cover a different theme each week. You and your buddy can choose any theme to discuss each week, or you can follow the Scheme's schedule.
- Your buddy will provide you with advice on how to contact key support services within BU and SUBU.
- A buddy may introduce you to extra-curricular activities in and around the university for you to meet new people and settle into the BU community.
- A buddy may aid you with cultural adjustment and support.
- You may choose to get involved in informal activities such as club/ society activities, coffee or lunch with your buddy but this is not a mandatory part of the scheme.
- You must ensure inclusivity during your interaction process. SUBU will also provide cultural awareness training for all participants of the scheme during an induction and training day.



 **Please note : A buddy 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.**

## 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).

- Email: [askBU@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:askBU@bournemouth.ac.uk)
- 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](mailto:SUBUadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk)
- Phone: 01202 965779



## ★ Your Weekly Reference Guide

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

- **WEEK 1: Welfare and Wellbeing**
- **WEEK 2: Careers and Employability**
- **WEEK 3: Education**
- **WEEK 4: Extracurricular Activity**

Information and links are available online at [subu.org.uk/buddyscheme/supportservices](https://subu.org.uk/buddyscheme/supportservices)





**International Buddy Scheme website**  
[subu.org.uk/buddyscheme](http://subu.org.uk/buddyscheme)



**International Buddy Scheme support services**  
[subu.org.uk/buddyscheme/supportservices](http://subu.org.uk/buddyscheme/supportservices)



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

**InternationalBuddies@bournemouth.ac.uk**