

A Guide to Student Services at Bedford College



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Because we know that coming to College can be a big step, we have a range of advice services to support you every step of the way. Our team of qualified and experienced Student Services staff is on hand to advise you on all aspects of College life, ranging from financial matters and career choices to health and wellbeing.

In addition, all full-time students have a Personal Tutor. Your tutor will work with you to make sure you attend regularly and make good progress, and will support you with any academic or personal difficulties you may have.

In our last inspection Ofsted recognised the effectiveness of our student support, and we are proud to have earned the Matrix standard, which means that the professional guidance and support we offer is of the highest quality.

This leaflet outlines the support we offer and explains how to make the best of our services during your time as a student at Bedford College.

THE SERVICES WE OFFER

CAREERS GUIDANCE

Our Careers Advisers provide impartial, confidential advice and guidance to help you:

- find out more about your options in education, training and work, both at College and beyond
- decide what you are going to do next
- put your plans into practice, including help with applications and interviews.

If you are looking for information or have a quick query, an adviser may be able to help you immediately – we have a careers library with lots of up-to-date information and online career development packages.

Alternatively, careers guidance interviews can be arranged by appointment. Just ask at the help desk.

THINKING ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION?

We will give you all the help and guidance you need to make choices. When it is time to apply to the universities and colleges you have chosen, we will support you every step of the way through the process, including the UCAS online application system and applying for student finance.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Our careers advisers work in the College's Job Shop to support students in applying for jobs and apprenticeships. We can help you find part-time work to support your studies or work with you to look for full-time employment at the end of your course.



COUNSELLING

The Counsellors are here for any students who are experiencing problems in their day-to-day life which are getting in the way of their studies, such as alcohol and drug problems, bullying, depression, panic and anxiety, domestic violence, eating disorders, relationship problems, self-harm or stress. There is a confidential number for the Counsellors on 01234 291911.

Alternatively, you can email counselling@bedford.ac.uk or call into Student Services to book an appointment.

STUDENT FINANCE

Drop in and see the Student Finance team in Student Services – they can give you impartial information, advice and guidance about all the financial aspects of being a student, including fees, benefits, bursaries and support funds, homelessness and higher education finance. They will give you impartial information, advice and guidance – and if they don't know the answer, they will find someone who does!

PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

All full-time students are allocated a Personal Tutor at the start of their course. Your Personal Tutor will work with you to monitor your attendance, progress and well-being, and will set targets to help you attend regularly, keep on track and meet deadlines for assignments.

LEARNING RESOURCES

The Learning Resources Centre is the main place to study, and houses IT facilities, quiet and group study areas and a comprehensive library. We offer a range of resources to support you on your course including books, DVDs, journals and specialist publications as well as e-books and online information. Staff are on hand to advise you and help you find the materials you need for your course. The centre is open throughout the year.

ENHANCEMENT

College is not just about studying – you also have the chance to get involved in lots of enhancement activities, events and clubs that will broaden your horizons. They can be delivered as part of your study programme, such as trips, specialist speakers and lecturers or by the student services team who deliver the cross college sports and clubs.

It gives you the opportunity to meet students from other areas of the College as well as to learn new skills. You could also get involved in the Student Voice group and have a say in the running of your College – which looks good on your CV – or just relax with your fellow students in Yourspace, our student common room.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Every year we have a Health and Wellbeing month which is packed full of events, information and competitions to promote healthy lifestyles. We also offer regular sexual health advice, and work with a number of local health and related services to enable you to access their support, for example if you want to stop smoking or have a concern about drugs.

STAYING SAFE

Our students have the right to feel safe from any form of harm or abuse, including physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, bullying, discrimination, extremism or sexual exploitation.

We take the wellbeing and safety of all our students very seriously. We strive to ensure a safe and welcoming environment in College, and also have safeguarding procedures detailing the actions we will take if a student discloses, or is suspected to be suffering from, harm or abuse. If any students have concerns in this regard they should contact a member of the Student Services team immediately.

Tel: 01234 291888

Email: safe@bedford.ac.uk

YOUR VOICE COUNTS

It is important to us that all students have the opportunity to express their views and opinions about the College. In Student Services we regularly obtain feedback from our students to help us improve the service we offer, and you may be asked to complete a brief questionnaire or online opinion poll, respond to a telephone survey or attend a focus group.

The College also has a complaints procedure. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the service we have provided, please contact the Student Services help desk. If we are unable to resolve the problem informally, we will advise you how to register a formal complaint.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

We will:

- provide a friendly, courteous and professional service
- give information, advice and guidance that is impartial and in your best interest
- seek to ensure that you are provided with equality of opportunity, treatment and respect
- operate in accordance with our confidentiality policy.

Please note that our confidentiality policy means that we will not pass on any information about you to a third party without your consent, unless there is a risk of harm to you or another person. If you are aged under 19 at the start of your course we may pass on information about your progress to your parents/carers. If you wish to discuss this please speak to your Personal Tutor.

Bedford College is committed to the promotion and development of equality and diversity. We aim to provide a working

and learning environment which values individuals equally regardless of disability, age, race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity.

Your enquiry will be dealt with in accordance with our equality and diversity policy, and any information, advice or guidance we provide will not be influenced by your background or situation. The service is accessible for wheelchair users; please let us know if you have any other special requirements which will help you benefit from our services (such as a BSL signer) – we will make every effort to meet them.

Copies of our policies are available on our website at: www.bedford.ac.uk

ACCESSING OUR SERVICES

WHERE?

Student Services are located on the mezzanine floor of the Tower Block at the Cauldwell Street campus. We also operate services at our other campuses.

WHEN?

The help desk is open at the following times during term time:

Monday to Friday: 10.00am-3.30pm

Quick enquiries can be dealt with on the spot, and we have private interview rooms if your enquiry is of a personal nature. If you require more in depth guidance or counselling, we will make an appointment with one of our specialist advisers so that you can discuss your needs in more detail.

HOW?

You can call into the help desk any time during opening hours. Alternatively you can contact us on the details below:

Student Finance and Wellbeing:

Tel: 01234 291934

Email: studentservices@bedford.ac.uk

Careers: Tel: 01234 291770

Email: careers@bedford.ac.uk



THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

