



STUDENT SUPPORT POLICY

Scope and Purpose	This document outlines the student support policy, applying to all students of UoC validated courses at Belfast School of Theology.
Policy Owner	Head of Education (with coordination from Head of Operations)
Policy approval and review	This Policy is approved by the Board and will be reviewed at the end of each academic year or more often as required.
Date last reviewed	June 2026
Date next review	June 2027

Introduction

The purpose of Belfast School of Theology (BST) is to equip 21st-century followers of Jesus through theological education that fosters the ability to communicate the Christian faith intelligently and with conviction in word and action. Central to our purpose is the desire to be a welcoming community. As such, we welcome people of all ages and backgrounds, of all nationalities and Christian denominations and of all abilities and levels of spiritual maturity as they come together to learn. One of our objectives is 'to support every student to reach their individual potential'. An important part of this support is to make pastoral care available to students in a number of ways.

Scope

All students enrolled on any validated course at BST are covered by this policy. BST takes seriously its duty and responsibility to handle any pastoral care concerns with care and confidentiality. Being mindful of the sensitivity inherent in pastoral care concerns, we are diligent in our obligation to comply with relevant Data Protection legislation.

Please note, however, that the Pastoral Care BST can offer is necessarily limited. It is normally only available during semesters, within normal working hours; it then concludes on the completion of studies at BST.

The Pastoral Community

The support BST offers is secondary to a student's own primary support sources of family, friends and church (home church and/or adopted church if the student is an international student). Support for undergraduate students at BST is through weekly chapel services, community life events and through a student choosing to be an active member of the BST community. Many of the needs of students are addressed by a combination of these sources of support, both internal and external to BST.

Personal Tutor

Normal enquiries/ concerns regarding a student's studies go to academicregistrar@bst.ac.uk in the first instance. However, if a student is facing pressure related to their studies, they are encouraged to speak with their Personal Tutor to whom they have been assigned at the beginning of the academic year. He/she may be able to help the student plan their workload or deal with issues arising out of their studies and assignments, or to refer the student to other sources of support. One important role in supporting students is the Programme Lead who can assist with any issues involving BST's validating University.

Disability Support Officer

A student who has a medical or health condition which impacts their studies is expected to be accessing supports in the local community such as GP/hospital services/mental health teams. However, the student can also be referred to the Disability Support Officer to explore reasonable adjustments to assist in managing studies within the context of the student's health needs.

Counselling

Christian Guidelines are partnering with BST to provide a free Counselling Service and confidential advice on any personal problems affecting a student's studies or well-being. Referral details: contact the Pastoral Care Worker via kmorgan@bst.ac.uk or the Operations Manager via jthorpe@bst.ac.uk.

Christian Guidelines also hold a list of individual counsellors and therapists, of which students may avail if they wish to seek help from this source. This list can be obtained directly from Christian Guidelines, or from the BST Pastoral Care Worker kmorgan@bst.ac.uk.

Students can also contact <http://nightline.ac.uk/> a listening and information telephone service run by students for students, providing a reassuring point of contact throughout the night.

Contact information

For academic matters, contact the Personal Tutor.

For pastoral matters, contact the Pastoral Care Worker kmorgan@bst.ac.uk

For all other queries, contact the Academic Office academicregistrar@bst.ac.uk