**SHU Support for BAME Students during COVID-19**

**Covid-19 has had a major disruptive impact on our daily lives. It has a disproportionate effect on BAME communities, and the virus has reinforced structural inequalities.**

*"When the COVID-19 crisis began to unfold, we were told that the virus does not discriminate, but what we have discovered in the current recent government data is that “people of Chinese Indian, Pakistani other Asian, Caribbean and other black backgrounds facing much higher risk of death, or between 10 to 50% compared with whites."* ***Dr. Gurnam Singh, Coventry University***

**Below is a summary of the sources of information, help and support that BAME students can access within Sheffield Hallam University and elsewhere.**

**Looking after your health and wellbeing**

**General health**

Health inequalities for BAME communities can be linked to unequal access to healthcare. Some health variations are linked to poverty and wider social inequalities, although there is a range of interlinked and overlapping factors.

There is a lot of information, help and advice on the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/) for people who may be at higher risk of contracting Covid-19.

It is even more important at this time that you ensure that you are registered with a GP, especially if you have an underlying condition.

All Sheffield Hallam students, wherever you live, can register with [Student Health at SHU](https://studenthealthatshu.co.uk/), our local GP practice. Student Health at SHU also offers online consultation and phone appointments. See their Covid-19 pages for advice, to keep you and your family safe.

**Emotional and Mental health support for BAME students**

As a BAME student, being more impacted by Covid-19 may have created or compounded worries and pressure around finance, employment, being able to get on with your studies, or caring for a relative. You may also have been affected by the loss of friends/family or simply being away from them, worrying about them and being detached from reliable sources of support, comfort, friendship and love.

**Support available at Sheffield Hallam University**

**Student Wellbeing Service**

If you need someone to talk to, the Student Wellbeing Service offers confidential phone and video calls. You can discuss any concerns you might have and the best support available to you. You can find out more about the service and register for support [here](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing).

The Student Wellbeing Service can provide advice and support for any personal, emotional and mental health difficulties you may encounter. They can also refer you on to our other SHU Support Services (such as the ones described below) or other services external to the university.

The Student Wellbeing team is still available over the summer and throughout the year. The team is [diverse](https://students.shu.ac.uk/shuspacecontent/wellbeing/meet-team) and has members of staff who are of BAME background. All Wellbeing Practitioners are experienced in conducting culturally sensitive practice, particularly where this may apply to understanding different cultural responses to stresses that you may face.

Our range of Practitioners from Counselling and Mental Health support backgrounds can:

* Offer a confidential one to one space to discuss issues, provide emotional support, and formulate plans in order to help you fulfil your potential.
* Assess your mental health needs and provide guidance and support and formulate care plans to facilitate management of your mental health.
* Offer short-term counselling support to students.
* Work with a wide range of conditions such as anxiety, depression, psychosis, self-harm and sleep issues.
* Facilitate links with GPs and other NHS Specialist Mental Health Services.
* Provide specialist group-based activities which bring groups of students together for the betterment of their mental health and wellbeing.

The Student Wellbeing Service [Inclusive Support Team](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing/support/inclusive-support-team) can also help students to adjust to university life. This service is available to those who:

* Have a mental health difficulty.
* Have AD(H)D.
* Have an autism spectrum condition.
* Are a carer.
* Are leaving local authority care.
* Are estranged from family.

The Student Wellbeing Service has created a series of [videos that address a range of wellbeing & inclusive support issues](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing/self-help/wellbeing-videos) that will be of interest to all students.

New videos are periodically added so make sure that you check regularly for updates.

**Bereavement Support**

Some of you may have lost a loved one or support somebody who has lost a loved one to Covid-19. You may find the Sheffield Hallam University advice on [bereavement](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing/self-help/help-for-a-specific-issue/grief-and-bereavement-during-covid-19) helpful to navigate these difficult times.

The student Wellbeing Service and the Multi-faith Chaplaincy work collaboratively to hold regular grief, bereavement and loss [group sessions](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing/counselling/group-sessions/wellbeing) throughout the year.

**SHU’s Multi-Faith Chaplaincy**

Our [multi-faith chaplaincy team](https://students.shu.ac.uk/shuspacecontent/wellbeing/chaplains-faith-advisors) is comprised of a Multi-faith Chaplain and an experienced cohort of faith advisors. The team are here for the pastoral care of ***everyone***, whatever your faith/belief practices may be.

The multi-faith chaplaincy seeks to listen attentively to the specific cultural/religious needs you may require as a BAME student. They welcome everyone and remain supportive and non-judgmental to individuals, whilst being aware of how faith, community and culture play an important role in your life at SHU.

The multi-faith chaplaincy aims to ask you about the important things you would like us to know about your culture, faith and spirituality. They also seek to be mindful of our own cultural influences and unconscious bias.

Throughout the year, the multi-faith chaplaincy organises weekly and annual events which offer hospitality and seek to bring people together in community. In our community life, we hope all students feel valued, strengthened and inspired by the richness of our cultural diversity and the global community at SHU.

**Feeling alone**

We all feel lonely from time to time and experiencing feelings of loneliness is a natural reaction during the current covid-19 pandemic. Having feelings of loneliness is personal and our experiences of loneliness vary.

BAME community members may also feel lonely due to additional triggers of loneliness such as being unable to access community activities and support, racism, xenophobia and religious discrimination.

Many BAME community members are also dependent on cultural and religious community networks which give them further religious and cultural support. The Covid-19 pandemic has limited this crucial support network for the BAME community.

Below are some links with practical tips and advice to help with loneliness:

[letstalkloneliness.co.uk](https://letstalkloneliness.co.uk/advice/)

[mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/about-loneliness/)

[mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/coping-with-loneliness)

You may also want to look out for communal virtual events organised by the diverse [SHU Student Union](https://www.hallamstudentsunion.com/), as well as events co-ordinated by the multi-faith chaplaincy, and [the International Experience Team](https://www.shu.ac.uk/international/international-experience-team) and [Student Support Services](https://www.shu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support).

**Safety**

**Racial harassment and hate crime**

Acts of racism, hate crime and xenophobia have sadly, increased since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sheffield Hallam is a safe and tolerant community. We do not stand for harassment or abuse. If you have experienced sexual violence, harassment, abuse or hate crime report it either anonymously or get support from an adviser.

You can report any incidents of sexual violence, racial harassment or hate crime to SHU via the [Report & Support Team](https://reportandsupport.shu.ac.uk/support/category/hate-crime) who are embedded within the Student Wellbeing Service:

**Financial support**

We recognise that BAME students are more likely to encounter [financial difficulties during Covid-19](https://crmportal.shu.ac.uk/knowledgebase/article/KA-01616/en-us). Money issues can have a negative impact on your education and wellbeing; there is a range of support available through the [Student Funding Team](https://students.shu.ac.uk/shuspacecontent/finance/student-financial-support-centre) and the [Student’s Union Advice Centre](https://www.hallamstudentsunion.com/advice_help/).

We encourage you to be prepared for the financial reality of university life. This means ensuring that funding is in place for Tuition Fees and Maintenance (if applicable) as well as living costs.

**Useful tools that can help:**

We have a partnership with [Blackbullion](https://www.blackbullion.com/); you can register with your SHU email address. Blackbullion is a money management tool intended to provide you with useful skills to manage money.

**Resources and sources of support**

[Race Equality Foundation's Covid-19 information](https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/health-care/coronavirus-information-and-resources/)

[Equality Hub Network Sheffield](https://equalityhubnetwork.org/bamer-hub/)