Bristol Voices Student Information Pack

Thank you for your interest in the new Bristol Voices programme. If you have any questions about the Bristol Voices project, please contact:

ann.omalley@bristol.ac.uk  (Bristol Voices Project Manager)
carly.roberts@bristol.ac.uk  (Student Inclusion Officer)

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1. What is Bristol Voices?

This new programme is designed to connect students with dedicated alumni volunteers, for social connections and support during the challenging times of COVID-19.

Your alumni contact(s) will be available once or twice a week for a friendly chat, to check in and see how you are getting along. They are not here to provide academic support, careers advice or specific advice. All the University services which provide support of that nature are open and operating remotely. See section 3 for more information.

2. How it works:

- A student completes the online sign-up form and ‘signs’ the online agreement document (a copy of this can be found in the appendix of this document).
- Staff will match volunteer alumni and students as long as there is capacity.
- The volunteer will start the communication and be in touch with you via email or text.
- It is a good idea to agree with your contact how many times you are going to be in touch. The expectation is one to two phone calls per week and roughly a half an hour call. It is ideal to arrange the next
communication at the end of the current one. Calls should be made at mutually convenient times for volunteers and the students.

- If you no longer wish to be in contact with the volunteer or if you have had any issue, you should contact ann.omalley@bristol.ac.uk

3. **The support available to students:**

Students can access support services whether they are in the UK or not. Specific information for international students can be found at [www.bristol.ac.uk/students/international](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/international)

**Coronavirus Updates**

We are providing up to date information and advice relating to coronavirus, including student FAQs via our [coronavirus advice pages](http://coronavirus.advice-pages). This should be your first point of call if you have any questions about coronavirus, or how the University is responding and what support is available. If you cannot find the answers to your questions about coronavirus, via the [coronavirus advice pages](http://coronavirus.advice-pages) you can email: coronavirus-student@bristol.ac.uk

**University Services:**

Most services are currently operating remotely via email, telephone and Skype. Here are some helpful webpages for different services across the University. Click on the weblinks for information about how to contact each service. This includes [Resi-life](http://resi-life) for students in University residences (open 24 hours), [Student mental health and wellbeing services](http://student-mental-health); [Student Funding Office](http://student-funding-office), [Disability Services](http://disability-services) and the [Careers Service](http://careers-service).

**Libraries and other University buildings:**

[Library services](http://library-services) remain accessible online to all students. However, our library buildings (including Arts and Social Sciences Library), Senate House and sports facilities including the pool and gym are now closed until further notice. Check the [coronavirus advice pages for updates as the situation changes](http://coronavirus-advice-pages).

**Bristol Students’ Union:**

Bristol Students’ Union has a [coronavirus updates page](http://coronavirus-updates) which you should also check regularly. There are also online community groups including the [SU living room facebook group](http://suliving-room-facebook-group) and [micro-communities](http://micro-communities) which are pop-up virtual communities, bringing people together around a common interest. You can also continue to Use the [JustAsk service](http://justask-service) for free, confidential and independent advice on teaching, assessment and university processes, including [extenuating circumstances](http://extenuating-circumstances) if your studies have been impacted by coronavirus or anything else.
4. **Confidentiality**

Data will be stored in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Policy.

Conversations between programme participants are confidential; unless there is reason to believe that either participant is at risk to themselves or others. In this case, information may be shared with appropriate University of Bristol staff and/or external agencies.

5. **If issues arise:**

If at any point you wish to withdrawn from the programme for any reason please let Ann know (ann.omalley@bristol.ac.uk). You do not need to tell us the reason unless you want to.

**My alumni contact is not behaving appropriately:** Bristol Voices is an extra resource for students which we are piloting in unprecedented circumstances for the University. We want you to feel safe and supported throughout this programme, if at any point you feel your contact is not behaving appropriately or you feel uncomfortable working with them, you should block their number and let Ann know as soon as possible. She will arrange to speak to you to help resolve any such difficulties and agree a course of action. If appropriate, and you would like to do this, we can match you with a different volunteer.

If we receive news from anyone involved in the programme that they are no longer happy to be in touch with their match, we will advise that they block their contact and the University will investigate the ongoing suitability of those involved for the programme - this applies to both alumni and students. Both volunteers and students have agreed to follow the Bristol Voices Agreement so we expect this to be followed on both sides.

**If any other issues arise:** If issues arise which are not addressed above please contact Carly (carly.roberts@bristol.ac.uk) so she can work with you to resolve the issues.

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**Thank you** for being involved in Bristol Voices. We hope you enjoy connecting with our alumni volunteer(s) and we look forward to staying in touch over the coming weeks.

ann.omalley@bristol.ac.uk (Bristol Voices Project Manager)
carly.roberts@bristol.ac.uk (Student Inclusion Officer)
6. APPENDIX 1: Bristol Voices Agreement

Bristol Voices matches those in need during COVID-19 with volunteers for social and supportive chats within the University of Bristol community.

As a participant in the University of Bristol Bristol Voices programme, I understand and agree to observe the following principles:

1. I am involved freely and voluntarily and will respect the contribution and time of all participants.

2. I will treat conversations with programme participants confidentially and will treat personal details shared with me confidentially; unless there is reason to believe that a participant is at risk to themselves or others. I understand that in this case, information may be shared with appropriate University of Bristol staff and/or external agencies. I agree to contact University of Bristol staff if I have concerns of this nature.

3. I understand that once I am matched, I will work with my new contact(s) to establish an appropriate level of contact for the duration of the programme.

4. Whilst the purpose of the programme is social, it is expected that the relationships between contacts made in the programme are platonic.

5. I will respect the views and opinions of others and will not discriminate against any other participant. I agree to contribute to a community free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying.

6. As a member of the University community, I will maintain the highest standard of behaviour and conduct.

7. I can cease contact with my match(es) at any time, without giving a reason. In this case, I will inform a member of staff as soon as possible. If I choose to stay in touch with my new contacts beyond the duration of the programme, this will be considered a personal choice and will not be under the arrangement of the University.

8. I will refer to University of Bristol staff should any problems arise.

9. I understand that no expenses can be provided for participation in the programme and that I should use free platforms such as Skype or WhatsApp or calls that are included in an existing package.

10. I will observe and follow up-to-date advice from the UK Government and from Public Health England regarding the COVID-19 emergency.