Student Success Framework

Academic Adviser Handbook 2022-23

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL
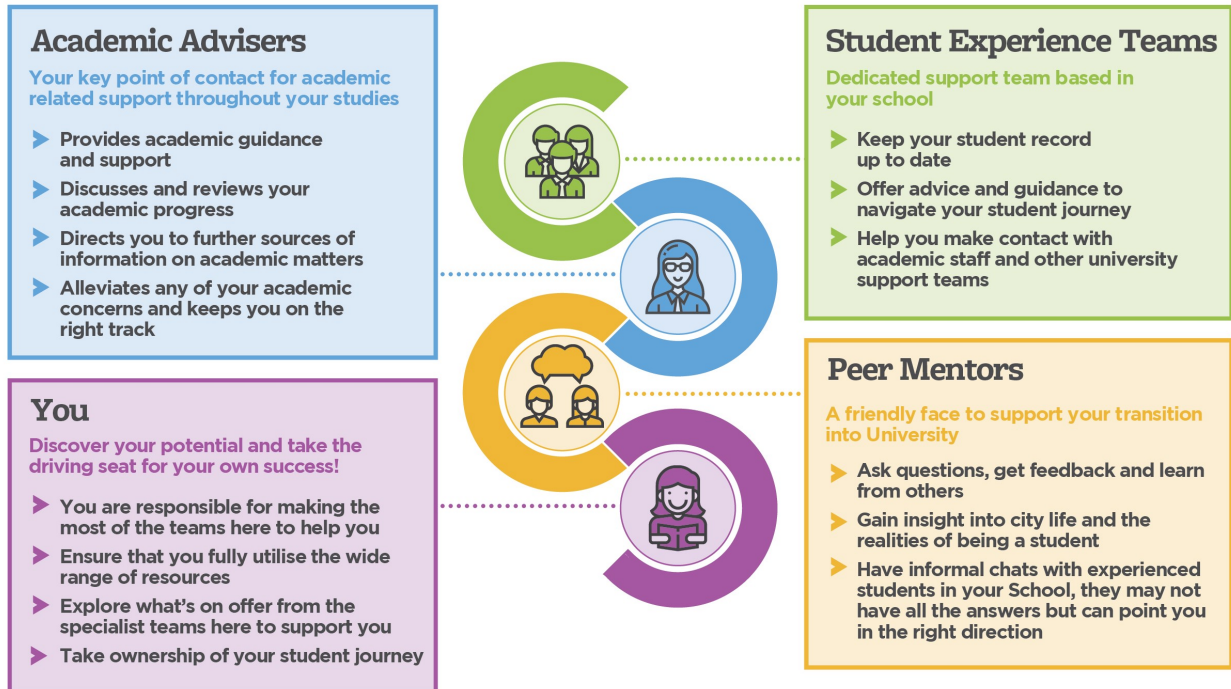
THE ACADEMY
Developing Liverpool

Student Success Framework: A Team Approach

Effective support for students during their time with us at the University of Liverpool can be critical for their success. The Student Success Framework focusses on ensuring that students are aware of the support available, where to go to seek guidance and also their role in their own success.

This approach focusses on four key support roles:

1. The Academic Adviser

2. Student Experience Teams

3. Peer Mentors

4. The Student

Academic Advisers
Your key point of contact for academic related support throughout your studies

➤ Provides academic guidance and support

➤ Discusses and reviews your academic progress

➤ Directs you to further sources of information on academic matters

➤ Alleviates any of your academic concerns and keeps you on the right track

Student Experience Teams
Dedicated support team based in your school

➤ Keep your student record up to date

➤ Offer advice and guidance to navigate your student journey

➤ Help you make contact with academic staff and other university support teams

You
Discover your potential and take the driving seat for your own success!

➤ You are responsible for making the most of the teams here to help you

➤ Ensure that you fully utilise the wide range of resources

➤ Explore what's on offer from the specialist teams here to support you

➤ Take ownership of your student journey

Peer Mentors
A friendly face to support your transition into University

➤ Ask questions, get feedback and learn from others

➤ Gain insight into city life and the realities of being a student

➤ Have informal chats with experienced students in your School, they may not have all the answers but can point you in the right direction

Academic Adviser

This role focusses on supporting a student's academic journey by offering academic guidance and support as they progress throughout their programme of study.

Student Experience Teams

The student experience teams will support students with administrative queries and other non-academic support requests.

Peer Mentors

This role will provide experiential guidance and support through a peer to peer network. The mentors will be particularly available during the induction period as new students start at the University and be available to help students to settle in, by sharing their own experiences.

The Student

The role of the individual student is integral to their own success and the student success framework highlights to the student their role in this wider team approach. In order to get the most out of the support available to them they will need to be active participants within it.

Academic Adviser Principles

The Academic Adviser is integral to the academic success of students during their time with us and this handbook is intended to help academic advisers in that role by setting out some guiding principles with examples of good practice. These principles were developed as part of the Student Success Framework sub-group specifically looking at the Academic Adviser role. This sub-group membership was made up of academic and professional service colleagues and the main purpose of these are to establish a set of principles which all academic advisers can work towards.

Throughout the process of developing these eight principles we came across many examples of colleagues demonstrating excellence in their role as Academic Adviser, and we have captured some of these in the 'Best Practice' boxes. Whilst we recognise that not all departments will be able to implement all best practice examples, we anticipate that most should be able to implement good practice for all principles.

Principle 1—Programme familiarity

The Academic Adviser should be familiar with the programme structure so that they have an overarching understanding of the student's academic journey through the programme. This understanding can help when supporting students in progressing through the programme, particularly where students might need support around selecting option modules.

Good Practice: The Academic Adviser should be from within the same discipline area and be familiar with the programme.

Best Practice: The Academic Adviser teaches on the programme and has been closely involved in the design, approval and/or revalidation of it

Principle 2—Meetings

Meeting with academic advisees is an important part of the role. These meetings may be as a whole group (when possible), smaller groups (when possible) or one-to-one. Meetings should primarily take place face-to-face, however Academic Advisers need to consider student needs when scheduling meetings and can hold occasional meetings online if necessary.

Good Practice: The Academic Adviser should offer a group meeting to Year 1 students as part of foundation/induction week and a one-to-one meeting with their adviser once per semester in addition to any drop in times made available.

Best Practice: A face-to-face group meeting at the start of each year of study and formally arranged face-to-face one-to-one meetings (with personalised invitations) are completed twice per semester (at the beginning of the semester for planning and support, and at the end for reflection).

Principle 3—Relationship building

Creating an effective adviser/advisee relationship is key to supporting students effectively and understanding their longer term goals and ambitions. Getting to know students is an important part of their sense of belonging both within the programme and wider university.

Good Practice: The Academic Adviser should be the same person throughout a student's year of study to aid effective planning and reflection and to support a student's progress throughout that year.

Best Practice: Students are notified of their academic adviser prior to starting university and this named person remains their academic adviser throughout the programme.

Principle 4—Academic progress

One of the most important roles of the academic adviser is to meet with the students to discuss their academic progress. The purpose of this is to help students to reach their full potential whilst studying with us.

Good Practice: During the one-to-one meetings the adviser reviews the grades and feedback (formative and/or summative) that a student has received so far during their studies. This can then be used to identify any additional academic support needs (e.g. KnowHow) and to set out an agreed action plan.

Best Practice: Meetings are formally recorded and an action plan developed which is revisited during subsequent meetings. This can help with identifying any persistent issues and also support student progress through reflection.

Principle 5—Careers, employability & further study

Students will have a range of motivations for studying at the University of Liverpool. During group meetings it can be an opportunity for students to share with each other what their motivations are and longer term goals. In one-to-one meetings those ambitions can help with forward planning and option module selection.

Good Practice: Engage students in discussions around their future career aspirations with signposting to careers support that can be accessed via the [Career Studio](#) or the [Handshake](#) platform.

Best Practice: Integrated as part of the academic advising meetings (one-to-one or group) discipline-specific activities and outputs focused on career development which can be supported by your Faculty Employability Business Partner (contact details found on page 9).

Principle 6—Signposting

Whilst a lot of signposting will be undertaken by the Student Experience Teams, there will be occasions where, within your role as academic adviser, you may not be able to directly help the student. Effective signposting is therefore an important aspect of the role, as is following up with the student support team once the student has been referred.

Good Practice: Academic adviser is familiar with the wider student support framework and is able to advise students who to contact to help them.

Best Practice: The academic adviser is familiar with the 'When to Refer' guidance document produced by Student Services, in addition to having a good working relationship with the local Student Experience Team for effective signposting.

Principle 7—Student voice

Academic advisers are often a conduit for student comments and reflections on their experiences on the programme. There is an opportunity through the academic advising role to identify and share student comments as part of a student feedback process.

Good Practice: Students are invited to share with their academic advisers issues or comments they have about their academic experience.

Best Practice: Organising group and/or one-to-one academic advising sessions with opportunities for student feedback. These are then recorded, themed and collated to identify key issues to feed into review processes, and where possible responded to.

Principle 8—Record keeping

Student engagement and participation is key to their experience and success on the programme. Academic advisers can often play an important role in being able to identify a student who may be struggling on the programme or in need of support and so having a record of communication and meeting attendance can be a key part of this.

Good Practice: Record student attendance at group and one-to-one meetings as well as keeping a local record of other communications (e.g. email).

Best Practice: A record of attendance at meetings and communication is kept alongside a record of any agreed action points from the meetings which can be used as part of a proactive approach to supporting student progression.

Further resources and support

If you need support in your role as an academic adviser please do not hesitate to contact The Academy: theacademy@liverpool.ac.uk. Further Academy resources can be found on Canvas.

If you want to explore how to effectively embed Academic Advising as part of wider curriculum design then please do not hesitate to contact The Centre for Innovation in Education: cie@liverpool.ac.uk.

If you require support from the Careers and Employability Team please do not hesitate to contact:

- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences - Darren Siggers (dsiggers@liverpool.ac.uk))

- Faculty of Science and Engineering - Charlotte Ford (charlotte.ford@liverpool.ac.uk)

- Faculty of Health & Life Sciences - Iwan Williams (iwan.williams@liverpool.ac.uk