Enhancing the Student Academic Experience

Academic Advisers Handbook
Academic Advisers at Kent

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Academic Advisers at Kent

Introduction

Following a review of Personal Academic Development and support for the First Year Experience (FYE) from 2012\(^1\), the Learning and Teaching Board agreed that students should have a personal academic contact to act as a trusted adviser and maintain an overview of their performance and development throughout their degree, to support two key aims of the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy\(^2\):

1. **Challenge and support students to realise their ambitions through active engagement with their studies and full participation in the academic community**
2. **Enhance students’ employment prospects and promote lifelong learning through the provision of flexible and diverse learning opportunities**

and related objectives in the Employability Strategy\(^3\). Based on successful models of at other HEIs, Academic Advisers will focus on the academic development of students, by providing timely academic advice that will support induction of first year undergraduates into the academic community and enhance their overall student experience, in a way that will complement the wider support available to students through the Personal Academic Support System (PASS)\(^4\).

Objectives

This handbook has the following aims and objectives and will be used to support briefing sessions:

- To promote awareness of Academic Advisers and their role in providing holistic academic and personal development of students that will enhance their overall student academic experience
- To support staff becoming Academic Advisers, by explaining the aims, principles and responsibilities of the role
- To explore the Academic Adviser role and related responsibilities, including discussions about the boundaries of the role and the links with the Personal Academic Support System (PASS)
- To familiarise participants with the range of student support services that are available at the University and the process of referral

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2. Education & Student Experience Strategy
3. Employability Strategy
   http://www.kent.ac.uk/about/plan/studentexperience/employability/employabilitystrategy.pdf
• To encourage advisers to promote the opportunities offered at Kent to help their students get the most out of their time at University

• To enable Academic Advisers to support students in the development of a personal action plan using MyFolio.

Aims

• To support the academic and professional development of undergraduate students
• To support students in developing their independent learning and personal planning skills
• To raise awareness of the opportunities available to students for developing graduate attributes and skills at the University of Kent.

Principles

The principles are:

1. All students will be allocated an Academic Adviser at the beginning of their period of study, who will be an academic member of staff;
2. The Academic Adviser will play a proactive role in supporting the student’s general academic development;
3. The Academic Adviser will hold meetings with students at specified times in the academic year.

Roles

It is envisaged that all students will be assigned an Academic Adviser for the duration of their period of study to:

(a) provide developmental and holistic academic advice and guidance
(b) provide proactive and structured support at key stages in each year to establish an ongoing relationship
(c) provide advice on module choices and registration, if required
(d) review overall academic progress and reflect on development of skills and attributes
(e) advise on opportunities for development within and outside the curriculum
(f) refer the student, as appropriate, to other specialist sources of academic advice (e.g. module/programme convenor) and personal support (e.g. others involved in the delivery of PASS)
(g) write references for students, on request.

5 eg supported by SDS and MyFolio
6 eg http://www.kent.ac.uk/employability/ with links to the new Faculty Employability Advisers
7 e.g. [Student Support Adviser or Senior Tutor in Schools] or central support services [e.g. Student Learning Advisory Service, Library, skills training sessions or KU student welfare and advice centre]
INDICATIVE APPROACH

The principles of the proposal above set out a unified model for Academic Advisers for the University as a whole. But beyond establishing *minimum requirements*, it is important that Schools determine their preferred mode of delivery to suit their own academic and support structures, in order to respond effectively to the diverse needs of their students and related subject disciplines. The agendas and timetables below offer an appropriate way to set regular and consistent meeting with students, in which the requirements of the model may be met. (These can be adapted to fit programmes running on different annual patterns and of differing lengths).

The model seeks to clarify the distinctive role of the Academic Adviser, especially in contexts where student support is delivered through a variety of means (e.g. using specialist administrative and support staff or tutoring through a blend of group and individual meetings as part of PASS).

Specifically, the role of the Academic Adviser seeks to augment, and not replace, existing arrangements for PASS within Schools. For example, in Schools that already operate a Personal Tutor system that meets the requirements of the role above, a change in name may be all that is required to adapt local School arrangements. In other Schools, the introduction of Academic Advisers will be new, but should be developed to work effectively with other support staff and systems associated with PASS in order to take advantage of local expertise and to build on existing good practice.

How does this relate to your School’s current arrangements for student support?

How does the Academic Adviser role map onto your existing Personal Tutor role (where relevant)?
Meetings

Academic advisers will meet individually with each student at least, once each year and twice in the First Year (at induction and in Term 2) as proposed below. In addition, Academic Advisers should offer regular office hours during term time and may engage with student groups through Moodle, SDS or email.

For example, it may be appropriate to meet students in small groups for their first meeting at induction to explain the Academic Adviser system, the support offered in terms of academic development, to set expectations (availability, contact details) and boundaries of engagement (confidentiality) – see further guidance below. This would help establish student groups linked to each adviser and could then be followed up by 1:1 meetings to assess how well individual students are progressing –

‘How are you settling in’?
‘What do you expect from your experience at University’?
‘What kind of extra-curricular activities do you hope to engage in’?
‘Have you considered module choices in terms of programme/career you might like to follow’?

In exceptional cases, students may request or be assigned a different Academic Adviser, but for continuity of engagement and relationship building, it is proposed that this should be after a minimum of one academic year (see xx below).

How can these minimum requirements of the Academic Adviser system be achieved?

What steps need to be taken to implement the Academic Adviser system in your School?
Role of the Academic Adviser

What role(s) do you consider to be most important for the Academic Adviser? Take into consideration the needs of both the student and the wider strategic objectives for the University:

eg to provide academic advice to students about their choice of modules

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Given the student support system already operating in your School, how should the Academic Adviser ensure that these roles can be carried out effectively, either directly or by referral to appropriate staff (eg module choice, references)? This may be different for each School, but should be transparent to staff and students.
**Key Attributes of a Academic Adviser – the student perspective**

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<th>Attribute</th>
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<td>Approachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good listener</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of humour / fun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
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<td>Clear guidance (students expressed it as &quot;advice&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genuinely interested</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genuinely cares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides careers guidance and ideas about relevant extra-curricular activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence building – helping individuals be proud of their achievements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspirational</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quick/speedy resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Going the extra mile&quot;, “Beyond the call of duty”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
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<td>Enthusiastic</td>
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<td>Easy to talk to</td>
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<td>Provide alternative perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breaks down issues into small steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides continuity of support – throughout undergraduate years and beyond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addressed challenges to do with:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Dyslexia</td>
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<td>- Being an international student</td>
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<td>- Being a part-time student</td>
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<td>- Illness</td>
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<td>- Administration</td>
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<td>- Course decisions</td>
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*as identified through “I Love my Personal Tutor” award campaign - Leeds (2007/8)*
**Essential Responsibilities of Academic Adviser**

To execute your responsibilities as an Academic Adviser effectively, you will need to have the following types of information at your disposal:

- A clear understanding of how Academic Advisers will integrate into your School (using the guidance notes and role descriptors/responsibilities above)…
- A list of key contacts within the School for staff allocated particular roles such as:
  - Year tutors, senior tutor, student support officer or adviser, diversity or disability officer, placements officer….
- University’s student support agencies that are available with the key services offered (plus telephone numbers, opening hours, locations, etc)…
  - This is produced below and can be copied to give out to students
- Familiarity with the University’s academic rules and regulations and any University-wide or School-based policy relevant to students.

**Scheduling Meetings**

The Academic Advisers will build upon the existing **Code of Practice (Annex G)** to augment the academic development of students, as well as articulate with the pastoral support of students through PASS. The Code of Practice sets out a series of one-to-one meetings to be scheduled at regular points in the academic year, which for a 3 year UG degree programme will typically be:

1. Year 1, meeting 1 (within first two weeks of Autumn Term )
2. Year 1, meeting 2 (Spring term following an assessment period)
3. **Year 1, meeting 3 (end of Spring term) - optional**
4. Year 2, meeting 1 (end of Autumn term)
5. **Year 2, meeting 2 (end of Spring term) - optional**
6. Year 3, meeting 1 (end of Autumn term)
7. **Year 3, meeting 2 (end of Spring term) – optional**

Meetings 3,5,7 are **optional only** – although it is expected that students will review their progress and achievements regarding the agreed action plan with their Academic Adviser at meetings 2,4 & 6 – and send an update/report to their Academic Adviser from MyFolio at the end of each Spring term. If there are areas for concern regarding attendance or lack of progress, the Academic Adviser may wish to either schedule a meeting with the student or alert relevant staff in the School to take action.

Students will be encouraged to use MyFolio to record and reflect on their progress, achievements, skills acquisition, extracurricular activities and experience as they progress through their programme, and will be encouraged to create a page specifically for their Academic Advisers to provide regular updates, **at least twice** in any year. These reports will provide important material for evaluating academic and professional development as well as writing references.
**Academic Adviser meetings with Undergraduate Students**

**YEAR 1 – Getting Started at Kent**

**Year 1, meeting 1** (within first two weeks of the Autumn term)

- Discuss and confirm module choice/registration and advise, if necessary;
- Explain the role of the Academic Adviser — how it supports students to maximise their academic and professional development; how referral works to help support student through particular difficulties;
- Explain expectations & boundaries of the role and that to be effective, Academic Advisers need to work in partnership with students, who must also fulfil their responsibilities;
- Reflect on induction process and its benefits;
- Introduce range of student support and development opportunities at Kent:
  - See **Student Support Services** and **Resources** below.

**Year 1, meeting 2** (in Spring term following at least 1 assessment period)

- Review overall experience and progress to date and discuss students’ academic and extra-curricular plans;
- Discuss marks and feedback on modules/assessments taken (SDS);
- Review academic progress in light of feedback given previously — students ‘at risk’ of failure can be referred to the VALUE retention programme;
- Discuss future module choices appropriate to further academic development;
- Reflect on the acquisition of graduate skills and attributes, and seek to address any gaps;
- Remind students of range of support and development opportunities available at Kent (through the Careers & Employability Service).

**Year 1, meeting 3** (Summer term) - optional

- Review academic progress to date including feedback and marks (SDS);
- Reflect on development of graduate skills and attributes;
- Signpost students to revision lectures and sessions on exam preparation, if required.

**YEAR 2 – Developing as an Independent Learner**

**Year 2, meeting 1** (Autumn term)

- Check module choice/registration and advise or refer to local specialist, as necessary;
- Review academic progress on programme overall to date, including discussion of feedback and marks for all assessments from the end of previous session;
- Academic planning (including balancing of students’ extra-curricular work and commitments);
- Reflect on development of graduate skills and attributes;
- Remind student of range of support and development opportunities at Kent.
Year 2, meeting 2 (Spring term) - optional
- Review academic progress to date including feedback and marks (SDS)
- Reflect on development of graduate skills and attributes
- Recommend students update MyFolio to record and reflect on any actions taken and copy page to Academic Adviser regarding progress.

YEAR 3 – Preparing for Employment

Year 3, meeting 1 (Autumn term)
- Review academic progress on programme overall to date, including discussion of feedback and marks for all assessments from the end of previous session
- Academic planning (including balancing of students’ extra-curricular work and commitments)
- Recommend that students engage with the Careers & Employability service and start to develop their CV in MyFolio.
- Encourage students to attend Reflect on development of graduate skills and attributes
- Remind student of range of support and development opportunities at Kent

Year 3, meeting 2 (Spring term) - optional
- Review academic progress to date including feedback and marks (SDS)
- Reflect on development of graduate skills and attributes
- Recommend students update MyFolio to record and reflect on any actions taken and develop/copy their CV to Academic Advisers for review and writing references.

Structuring Meetings

Scheduled meetings will provide an opportunity to discuss progress with students – marks, feedback, module choices – and to identify small or potential problems before they grow or multiply. You should obtain your students marks from across the programme through the Student Data System (SDS) prior to the meeting.

To ensure that the students come prepared for meetings and the time is well utilized, meetings should be structured around an agenda or a simple proforma (e.g. that the student should complete prior to their attendance at the meeting). To aid this process, the agendas for meetings are built around considering their Progress Profile in MyFolio, in which students will be encouraged to record reflect on their progress as well as their skills acquisition (Skills Audit) plus any additional extracurricular activity outside study hours, including their Employability Points. They should also be encouraged to evaluate their feedback from across the programme to identify common themes and arrive at their strengths / development areas – see Annex 1 for an example.

Specific questions and prompts have been added to support student engagement and reflection on their academic development that can be used to accompany the 4 compulsory meetings outlined above. These are available in the progress report in the PDP Planner section of MyFolio at:

https://myfolio.kent.ac.uk/myfolio/view/view.php?id=104?????
Questioning Skills

Good questioning not only enables the Academic Adviser to check a student’s progress and understanding, but will encourage student engagement and the development of thinking and dialogue skills. In each meeting, the aim will be to a) review student progress b) help them identify areas for development and c) agree an action plan.

Some additional alternatives to questioning that can be effective to support these outcomes:

Ask students to elaborate… ’Tell me more about’/’I am not sure what you mean’

Make a suggestion …. ‘You could try’

Reinforce suggestions and/or clarify ideas…’I liked that idea’

Echo comments to help summarise the discussion…’So you think’

Reflect on the discussion….’ I think we have agreed to….’

Other
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Question Prompts

We have developed a set of agendas to provide advisers and students with prompts for discussion for each meeting. They cover aspects such as student progress, skills audit and development areas, as well as career plans. They require students to prepare in advance for scheduled meetings with their Academic Adviser, by providing a page from MyFolio that addresses the prompt questions and allow students to raise any other specific points to the adviser.

Inevitably, some students may blurt out problems they are having and this may make both you and the student feel uncomfortable. Strategies to help both of you handle this type of situation are to:

♦ be supportive and sensitive

but - if in doubt

♦ be clear about the limits of your role as an Academic Adviser

♦ refer the students to appropriate staff or services
**Guidance versus Advice**

It is important that you do not advise students about issues that fall outside the remit of your role or expertise. It is important to stress that no matter how helpful you think you can be, you should not stray into counselling or therapy. It may be difficult not to get embroiled in students' personal problems, but you should not attempt to try and solve students' personal problems yourself. Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions and make contact with professional support services themselves. In cases where students are unable or unwilling to contact professional support services, the Academic Adviser should encourage the students to agree to referral for specialist advice and support.

The key role of the Academic Adviser is to provide academic advice and encourage academic development, and to be effective in doing this you need to give clear and accurate information about University and School procedures in a language that students can understand – for example, you should be familiar with the following:

- Programme – overall structure and content, module choices, consequences of module choices for study at subsequent levels
- Rules for progression and award – accumulation of credit, failing and trailing modules, resubmissions, resits etc. [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html)
- Mitigating circumstances and how these are dealt with by the School [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html)

**OR**

- be able to give them the name of someone else who is qualified to give such information – e.g. their programme convenor, DoLT or senior tutor.

It is better to give no advice than vague or incorrect information. If you are unsure, let the student know you will find out and get back to them. The Kent Union Student Advice and Information Service run by Kent Union provides free, confidential and impartial advice for students on University regulations: resits, appeals, mitigating circumstances and plagiarism etc. and a web site which gives guidance on problems including finance, housing, health matters: [http://www.kentunion.co.uk/advice/](http://www.kentunion.co.uk/advice/)

**Managing the Academic Adviser Role**

In order to manage your own workload, you need to make it clear to your students how they can contact you, what your response time will be (e.g. you will respond to e-mail enquiries within 24 hours or 2 working days etc) and when you will be available outside any formal contact time that you have with them, for example:

- **open door policy** – only if you are willing to see students at any time when you are in your office!
- **office hours** – times during the week when you will be available to see students without an appointment (posted up on your door or on a web site)
- **appointment system** – let students know how quickly they will be able to arrange an appointment with you (or you could publicise time slots on your door so that students can fill in their name against a particular slot to book an appointment with you)
- **timetabled contact** – skills development modules or other timetabled contact time (this is useful when advisers wish to meet students in groups – eg at induction)

- **online support** – whether you will be regularly checking online discussion groups or be available in a chat room. For example, some Schools use Moodle or MyFolio to engage with students.

### Setting Ground Rules

These should be introduced and agreed right at the start with any new student or student group. Academic Advisers should meet with their first year students ideally within the first two weeks of the start of the Autumn term. This is an ideal opportunity to familiarise students with the role of the Academic Adviser and what they can expect in terms of academic support during their studies.

You may wish to send your new students an e-mail introducing yourself and setting out clearly the nature of the Academic Adviser role, what you can and cannot help them with, plus how they can contact and arrange to see you, based on the principles and roles outlined above (p2). Your School may already do this via the Student Handbook, but you should reinforce this during or prior to the initial meeting.

### Data Protection

The Academic Adviser role raises a number of issues in relation to data protection – for example, the storage of personal (and even sensitive) data / information about your students. The following sections provide guidance about what you are permitted to do with information about individual students, confidentiality, providing information to third parties, and writing references.

The general guidelines for staff and students regarding data protection can be found at: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/data-protection/](http://www.kent.ac.uk/data-protection/) and/or queries addressed to: Datapro@kent.ac.uk

### Record keeping

It is important that you keep records of all encounters with your advisees – eg e-mail correspondence or written notes of meetings. In all cases, you should briefly record the nature of the discussion, together with the agreed actions to be taken and any follow-up required. A copy of these agreed actions should be made accessible to the student through SDS using the existing 'Tutor Notes' option – which is visible to the student. You should discuss / consider whether there are confidentiality issues and where relevant, ensure that you follow any School and University policies about where these records should be stored. Specifically, you must ensure that:

- personal data is kept securely or in a locked filing cabinet
- personal information is not disclosed either orally or in writing, or in any other way, intentionally or otherwise to any unauthorised third party.

This means that student information should be kept, for example, in a **locked filing cabinet or drawer, a password protected computer, or on the VLE.**
**Data Subject Access Requests**

Be aware that an individual student can place a 'Data Subject Access Request' with which the University has to comply within 40 days. This gives the student access to personal data held by the University plus potentially anything that is recorded that expresses opinions about them - e-mails, computer and manual files plus, additionally, audio recordings. Once the request has been formally made, it is illegal to get rid of such information.

The implications of this are that you should not write anything about a student that you would not wish them to see themselves.

Any comments written about a student need to be *fair, accurate and justifiable* and you should convince yourself of this before writing anything down about a student and this includes notes, feedback and references.

**Confidentiality**

Whilst in the majority of cases the aspects of students’ lives that they choose to disclose or discuss with you may be kept confidential, you **cannot and should not guarantee absolute confidentiality**. There are certain specific circumstances in which you have legitimate grounds for breaking a student’s confidence – a key one would be on issues of health and safety, for example:

- if the student is in danger of harming themselves or others
- if the student is injured and unconscious, but in need of urgent medical attention

Equally, you may be required to break a confidence on legal grounds: such as safeguarding national security, the prevention or detection of a crime or the prosecution of offenders. In these circumstances you should seek the advice of the University’s Legal Adviser before acting on this information:

**Provision of personal information to third parties**

There are an increasing range of third parties that may try to contact students whilst they are at University – landlords, debt collection agencies, employers … not least students’ parents, relatives or friends – and they may try to do so via contact with the Academic Adviser.

The University guidelines on Data Protection state that:

*“Except as otherwise provided for under 'Use of Student Personal Data' statement and its preamble …, or unless written authorisation has been provided by the student concerned’, the University does not release information that could constitute personal data to any third party.”*
This means that you **cannot confirm or deny** to a third party that an individual is a student at the University, nor can you pass on an individual’s contact details (address, email address, phone number) to a third party, however legitimate they seem - and this includes the student’s own family.

Whilst this may seem harsh and, particularly if you are a parent yourself of university age children, you may well have a lot of sympathy with parents who are sometimes desperately worried. Nevertheless the regulations are very clear in this regard – you should **NOT SAY ANYTHING**.

For a cautionary tale see:  

**Mitigating Circumstances**

Mitigating circumstances are significantly disruptive or unexpected events which are beyond a student's control but which might affect their academic performance.

In such circumstances students may wish to claim mitigation in respect of **‘absence from an examination’** or **‘adverse circumstances affecting their performance in an examination or coursework’**.

Students may allude to circumstances that have affected their studies in meetings with Academic Advisers but this is not sufficient to enable these circumstances to be taken into consideration. **There is a formal procedure to follow, a deadline to meet and evidence required to support such claims.**

If one of your students does mention adverse circumstances that appear to have affected their studies, performance or attainment, then this should act as **a trigger** for you to encourage the student to follow the formal process to ensure that any such circumstances are considered by the relevant School Concessions Committee and taken into consideration at Exam Boards. The onus is then on the student to make and evidence the claim for mitigation. Your role as a Academic Adviser is advise the student about the process but not to pre-empt or pre-judge the outcomes of such a. Further information is available in the Academic Regulations and Credit Framework: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/ga/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/ga/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html)

Check your local School policy and process for dealing with mitigating circumstances in the first instance.  
**Remember** - you can advise the student about the process but you should not pre-empt or pre-judge the outcomes of any case.

**Writing References**

The Academic Adviser may be asked to write a reference for a student, on request. Again, in relation to the Data Protection Act, the information provided in references for students should:

- confirm the accuracy of, or provide factual, information
• differentiate between statements of fact and opinion
• express only **justifiable** opinions, based on first-hand experience
• be **fair** and **accurate**
• avoid ambiguous or coded language.

An example of the types of information you could put in a reference for a student is given in **Annex 2**.

Your School may have a specific policy for writing references for students.

**Be aware** – there is **no guarantee of confidentiality** in respect of references either received, or sent, by the University to a third party.

**Action Planning**

**Possible action points:**

➢ Ensure your School holds documentation to support staff in their role as Academic Adviser, including:
  o Academic Adviser Handbook
  o Any School or subject-specific guidance to support this role
  o Agreed procedures for scheduling meetings and recording progress
  o Agreed referral routes for disciplinary or pastoral support

➢ Work out whether/where the Progress Profile /PDP process is already integrated in the School and promote engagement through the Academic Advisers

➢ Clarify how and where student records should be kept (e.g. whether centrally in student office or in a locked filing cabinet in your room)

➢ Agree a policy for writing references for students

➢ ……………………………………………………………………………………………

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University Support for Students and Advisers

University Services

There is a range of professional support services for students at the University to meet a diversity of needs:

http://www.kent.ac.uk/learning/resources/index.html
http://www.kent.ac.uk/learning/resources/other-help.html (see listed below)

To ensure that staff with responsibility for the academic and pastoral support of students are aware of these services and to support referral, a directory of key services, contact details and opening hours are listed below. These services include:

- The Accommodation Office
- Information Services (including the Computing Service & Library)
- Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (including Student Learning and Advisory Service)
- Centre for English and World Languages (CEWL)
- Faculties Support Office
- Registry offices such as International Development, the Financial Aid and the Student Records' & Examinations, Enrolment and Management Services
- Kent Union Student Advice Centre
- Student Services, including:
  - Careers and Employability Service
  - Student Support Services
  - Counselling
  - College Masters' Offices
  - The University Medical Centre
  - Chaplaincy
- Equality and Diversity
- The Graduate School

The list of services they provide can be accessed through their individual websites or the Student Guide:

http://www.kent.ac.uk/student/studying/index.html
http://www.kent.ac.uk/student/support-and-wellbeing/index.html
### Annex 1 - Example form for students to action plan based on feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How I feel about the feedback</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other feedback on this work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source 1:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The single most important thing for me to do in future on the basis of this feedback

The single most important thing for me to avoid in future on the basis of this feedback

Notes about any recurring trends regarding the feedback I am receiving

(Phil Race: draft table to go into ‘How to get a good degree: 2nd edition’ Open University).
Annex 2 - Example reference letter

Date

Dear Y

Reference for …

X has been a student on the BA in Z at Kent since September ?. She is currently in the third year of a ? year programme and is expected to graduate this summer. I have known X since ?. I am her Academic Adviser / have taught her on a number of modules.

Her credit grade average in her second year was x , placing her first in her cohort of ? students on her programme. This equates to a ? classification. Thus, on the basis of her performance to date I would expect x to graduate with ? honours this summer.

Possible additional comments (to include as appropriate):

• X’s attendance at lectures and classes has been excellent/ generally excellent/very good/ the cause of some concern/ excellent from the beginning of her second year onwards.
• There are no problems noted with failure to hand in work on time.
• From my conversations with X she appears to be a very pleasant and mature individual/genuinely interested in her chosen academic subject/to have thought carefully about her chosen career.
• In the meetings/seminars taken by me, X appeared to be well prepared and ready to making contributions to discussion.
• Some modules taken by X include group work and so she has some experience of working in a team (modules with group work include KE1880, KE1960, KE2370 and KE3070).
• X has shown particular strengths in quantitative modules, achieving a grade of ? in ?
• I am unable to comment in detail on X’s written English as we operate a system of anonymous marking but I would point to her success in her academic studies to date as evidence of her abilities. Her standard of spoken English, based on my own conversations with her, is ?
• I have no reason to doubt x’s honesty or integrity based on my knowledge of her as a student and the information she has disclosed to me. X has not disclosed any health problems to the University that would be likely to affect her ability to work.
• I cannot comment on x’s suitability to work with children as I only know her in my capacity as a university lecturer and do not consider this an appropriate basis for giving such an opinion.
• I think that x would be highly suited to study at post-graduate level/ a career in ? and I wish her every success in her application.

Yours sincerely,