Empowering Student Success

School of Psychology

Academic Advising Case Study 2024-2025

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At a Glance

Overview of the academic advising pilot

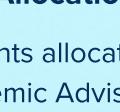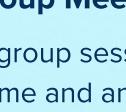| **96**	**22**	**4:1**
Stage 1 Students	**Academic Advisors**	**Student-to-Academic Advisor Ratio**

The Academic Advising Model

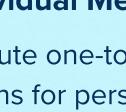A structured, yet flexible approach to first year students' transition to university

Week 1: Allocation

Students allocated to Academic Advisors via InfoHub

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Week 2: Group Meeting

Initial group sessions to welcome and answer general queries

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Week 7: Individual Meeting

10-minute one-to-one sessions for personalised check-ins

Beyond these formal meetings, the Undergraduate Administrator sends reminders in Trimester 2, encouraging students to check in with Advisors for ongoing support.

Key Meeting Focuses

Academic Advising is tailored to support students' transition and academic journey

Meeting 1: Group Guidance

- **Warm Welcome:** Introduction to the School of Psychology and foster belonging
- **Role Clarification:** Explain the Academic Advisor role (academic guidance, general queries, point of contact)
- **Open Q&A:** Invite questions about studying psychology or university life
- **Support Signposting:** Direct students to comprehensive university support resources

Meeting 2: Individual Guidance

- **Personalised Check-in:** Discuss adjustment, challenges, and module experiences
- **Academic Progress:** Enquire about lecture/tutorial attendance and study habits
- **Engagement:** Ask about societies, clubs and social integration
- **Resource Direction:** Guide students to appropriate supports for any identified issues

Academic Advisors were provided with a detailed "Decision Tree" document to guide students to the appropriate person for specific queries, accessible via the School of Psychology website.

Connecting with Students

While the e2s Academic Advising was available, many staff members opted for direct engagement with students

- Primary communication via email
- Scheduling facilitated through Google Calendar invitations
- Academic Advisors proactively reached out to their students to announce meeting times to allow students to select a slot that suited them

Advisor Workload and Participation

Academic staff participation was high, with a transparent allocation model

- All full-time academic staff were assigned 6 advisees
- Pro-rata reduction for part-time staff
- Staff on sabbatical/research leave in Trimester 1 were exempt
- Concerns were raised regarding the potential for multiplying workload if additional cohorts are added in future years

Lessons Learned

Key insights and takeaways from the implementation of the Academic Advising approach

Strengths of the Approach

- **Clear Academic Advisor Role:** Well defined responsibilities for academic advisors
- **Structured Touchpoints:** Formal group and individual meetings provided by key interaction points that adapted to the needs of first-year students
- **Accessible Resources:** Signposting of students for queries outside academic advising
- **Supported Transition to University:** Prioritising direct support and early intervention, established a foundational advising approach aimed at fostering student well-being and academic integration from the outset of their university journey

Areas for Consideration

- **Workload Stability:** Concerns about increasing advisor workload for future cohorts
- **Ongoing Engagement:** Need to formalise or better encourage communication between the two core meetings
- **System Evaluation:** consider whether the e2s system meets the needs of the school
- **Mandatory Meetings:** Making meetings mandatory to encourage student attendance