**Guidance document for academic advising online June 2020**

1. **How to do academic advice online.** <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/teaching_and_learning_remotely/academic-advising-remotely/>

**What should I do as an academic advisor?**

Thank you for your continued hard work in supporting our students. Building effective online relationships and maintaining regular communication will be vital as we start the next academic year. You should make regular contact with your students using an appropriate means of communication (See [Interacting with students remotely](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/teaching_and_learning_remotely/interacting-remotely/)) and aim to have an individual online or when it is safe, face to face meetings with every student (as per the University’s [Policy and Guidance on Advising Taught Students](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/student-support-development/advising/)). Demonstrating that you care about an individual student’s circumstance will be reassuring and motivating. You are not expected to have all of the answers so please use the A-Z of answers in the  [Academic Advising toolkit](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/toolkits/academicadvising/). Our University’s objectives for academic advising (embedded in the [Academic Advising model](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/toolkits/academicadvising/modelanddevelopment/model/) & Academic Advisor training) should remain in place for this period of remote learning. Our aim is that by engaging with their advisor, students:

* will know that their advisor cares about their progression, academic success and future plans
* will feel that they belong and are valued regardless of their background, personal strengths and weaknesses and circumstances
* will know who to contact if they experience difficulties either personally or academically
* will work to enhance their academic and personal self-efficacy as a result of setting & reviewing goals and reflecting on their experiences
* will gain and grow in confidence and skills in developing professional relationship

**What if I am not able to work for a period of time?**

* Tell somebody in your unit of organisation (Programme team, Department, School) that you will be unable to contact or respond to your students so that arrangements can be made to cover until you can take back the responsibility.
* Use an automatic message on your email so that students do not think you are ignoring them - find out who else they can contact (with their permission). We cannot overwhelm single individuals (e.g. Programme Directors), so please consider an arrangement with a colleague to cover each other's students in difficult times.

**How do I approach advising remotely?** The basic principles of good face to face advising apply online:

* Outline some points for discussion in advance via email or in the invitation to join an online meeting, that way you will be both be prepared and your students will know what to expect.
* Consider having access to a shared document where you can make some notes – again this provides a framework for your meeting and a record to take away. SEED academic advisor working party has developed a word document to be emailed between advisers and advisees whilst sourcing an appropriate digital tool over the next academic year.
* If you can share your screen, you can prepare some links to refer your students to: For example; the Careers Service Website or My Learning Essentials. See extensive list of links at the bottom of this document.
* Try to use video where possible so that you can have non-verbal cues that aid effective communication.

**What should I be mindful of when arranging virtual meetings**

* Not all students have Wifi or sufficient data on their phone to respond to an invite from an online platform - so if they are not responding and you are concerned please contact them by phone.
* Some students for whom English is an additional language, may prefer to have asynchronous communications with you, such as email so they do not miss fast spoken language, or for a ‘group chat’ with multiple speakers, and to mitigate against possible poor sound quality.
* Your students are in different time zones so consider arrangements such as recording any online synchronous interaction for them to view later. See [Interacting with students remotely](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/teaching_and_learning_remotely/interacting-remotely/).
* International students may have particular concerns around their accommodation, visas and travel so please signpost students to [the University's Student Support site](http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/). This group of students may be feeling particularly vulnerable at this time and need extra reassurance.

**What should I do if I have concerns about an advisee?**

* Follow your ‘local’ procedures for escalating and if you have good reason to be concerned follow the advice in the [Academic Advising Toolkit](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/toolkits/academicadvising/).
* Remember what we need most is to show our students that we care about their situation given the significant change to their education: You are not expected to have all of the answers so do not be afraid to listen, reach out and direct students to information and/or colleagues who can offer tailored support.

**Resources for academic advising**

* <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/toolkits/academicadvising/>
* A Yammer Group – the [Academic Advisors’ Support Network](https://www.yammer.com/live.manchester.ac.uk/#/threads/inGroup?type=in_group&feedId=27230838784&view=all)
* My learning essentials – <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/using-the-library/students/training-and-skills-support/my-learning-essentials/online-resources/>
* Free online academic skills sessions Alex.Baratta@manchester.ac.uk
* The single point of truth for all support for students is the Student support website <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
* Finding academic support **-** <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
* Solving common worries **-** <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
* Fees, funding and managing your money **-** <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
* Getting help with UK visas and immigration **-** <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
* Online training for staff in supportingstudents  <http://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/trainingforstaff/onlineresources/>
* Online resources for student and staff mental health <http://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/buildyourmentalhealthexpertise/>
* The Big white wall  <http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/taking-care/big-white-wall/>
* Counselling services <http://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/a>
* UoM Careers service   <http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/>