# **Academic Advising Briefing**

## **10th & 13th September 2021**

### Recording

Here’s the [Zoom recording](https://shu.zoom.us/rec/share/kCFtM1O78A1we4uAvv3BHEV_eYs8Po4u9_TREoXL1wWzDKJl9nw7W7CGF0YIM1-C.hL3fmB0cx5JVwA13) from the session held on 10th September 2021. Please use the passcode 8=P@ANv@.

## **Covered in the Briefing Session**

### Equality Diversity and Inclusion Handbook

Ifrah Salih from Academic Development & Diversity (ADD) presented the new [EDI Handbook](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/:w:/t/T000006/EXCLLh3NBvhNu2T2gt2uMyYBRA607bKD1SFOYnBq50CA-g?e=2Qggeq&CID=41AEA825-4617-4B1E-90A7-BEE582CEECAB&wdLOR=c6FF00043-4CF3-4161-A549-5F3812068D62), as one of the 2021 Academic Advising Principles is that ‘**Inclusivity** is at the heart of the Academic Advising offer for ALL students’.

We will continue exploring how this can be integrated into our offer in the Community of Practice session specifically focused on EDI. **For Awareness.**

### First Group Session

As agreed in the Summer AA Lead Briefing Sarah Churchill from Student Experience, Teaching and Learning (SETL) has created a [first group session](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/hwbmj3_hallam_shu_ac_uk/Eu8HJwx86GtMkDVZsa9Ua50BUZ88ptDjwXRoTPycv--SoA?e=tboYPI) for Academic Advisers, to support the 2021 Academic Advising Principle that ‘**Group meetings** should be used at the start of the year to facilitate consistent messaging and icebreaking’.

This session is supported by a [**screencast**](https://shu.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=fc4a8b8a-28db-494e-8f00-ad9f00a8944e) to aid understanding for Academic Advisers and can be tailored to best suit the needs of the cohort/adviser.

**Action:** Academic Advising Leads are asked to disseminate to Subject Groups for utilisation in first group meetings.

### Hallam-Help and Student Support Advisers

Helen Tompkin, Hallam-Help Manager, provided an overview of the changes to the Hallam-Help service including the introduction of a Queue Manager to help manage and prioritise communication with Hallam-Help. Sarah Smart also gave an update on the Student Support Advisers offer. Full details are in the recording. When Sarah forwards the link to the SSA session used in Welcome Week I will share it in Teams.

### Learning Analytics (Including Note Taking)

[Learning Analytics](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/4105) (via Data Explorer) will be formally launched this year, in line with the Future Strategy Plan, which identified that Learning Analytics and Academic Advisers deployed consistently.

The Project Team are/have arranged to present to Departments to provide details of the Learning Analytics tool and details of training etc. Melissa and Sarah are developing an overview for Academic Advisers to complement the [‘How To (…access aspects of Data Explorer)’ guides](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/4105/SitePages/User-Guides.aspx) which will help Academic Advisers understand how Data Explorer can support their conversations with students.

As an institution we will use Data Explorer for Academic Advisers to **record notes of meetings** from Sept 2021. Documentation to support this has been created and will be added to the Student Support Triangle (SST) SharePoint page once signed off by Hallam’s Data Protection Officer.

**Action:** Academic Advising Leads are asked to promote the use of the Notes function for recording AA meetings and to promote Departmental briefing sessions when arranged.

### ‘Reasons to Engage with your Academic Adviser’

A recent graduate of Fine Art has worked as a Summer Intern to create some [**promotional resources**](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/hwbmj3_hallam_shu_ac_uk/Etc1i1XtBKlItWTYRSprj6gBFDRPVvifkgj3JOiCHlIipg?e=Jdgzvr)to support positive messaging around Academic Advising in support of the 2021 Academic Advising principle that ‘Academic Advising is for **all** students; it is **not a deficit model** offer’.

The resources include a postcard that physical copies will be available for Departments to disseminate to students. To order copies please send the number of postcards required to the [! Academic Advising](mailto:steer-academicadvising-mb@exchange.shu.ac.uk) email box along with the location (on campus) they should be sent to, and we will arrange for them to be distributed to you.

### Academic Adviser Allocations

An [Academic Advising Allocations (AAA) guidance document](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/hwbmj3_hallam_shu_ac_uk/Ee04_n1_KOxMh0Yr92hW-WoBzy8l3936XzzeRPCDIr6avw?e=ayqdS4) (for AA Leads) and [Allocations Process document](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/academicadvising/files/2021/09/Academic-Adviser-Allocations-Process-and-Guidance-Sept-21.docx) (for any member of staff) have been created to support the updating of Academic Adviser allocations in SITS.

**Action:** Where possible Departments are asked to coordinate the updating of returning students before Welcome Week to allow the focus to be on new students in early September. See AAA Guidance Document above, and email updates to [! Academic Advising](mailto:steer-academicadvising-mb@exchange.shu.ac.uk).

## **Support for AA Leads**

### Drop-In Sessions before Welcome Week

I am going to put a few slots in the diary for drop-in sessions with myself and/or Sarah where AA Leads can bring queries or questions. No agenda, and no expectation of attendance, just options of times that we’ll be available to respond to queries.

### Teams Channel for AA Leads

This year I’m going to pilot a Team Channel for AA Leads. **Primarily this will be a repository for documents and resources** such as this briefing doc, so you know where to find information that only relates to AA Leads rather than AA’s generally (resources that are relevant to all Academic Advisers will be on the SST SharePoint Page).

We will also be able to use the Chat function of Teams to ask quick questions and hopefully support each other during the year. Personally, I have real challenges with meetings on Teams (my laptop really doesn’t like it) so we will continue to hold meetings in Zoom.

## **Additional Updates – Not fully covered in the briefing session.**

### Visibility of Academic Advising and Infographics

To support the 2021 Academic Advising Principle that ‘The Academic Advising offer is clearly **visible to students** in every course’, I’d like to ensure that all Depts have got infographics in place, and that where AA is outside the curriculum that courses identify a core module or similar that will have responsibility for communicating to students when they should be contacted about meetings.

**Action:** Academic Advising leads are asked to ensure that the Infographics for their area are up to date – any changes or requests for new infographics should be sent to [! Academic Advising](mailto:steer-academicadvising-mb@exchange.shu.ac.uk).

### PebblePad Project

Sarah and Tamsin (from the Digital Learning Team) have liaised with Dept leads planning to utilise PebblePad to support Academic Advising this year and developed a comprehensive Workbook, they are now planning the implementation with relevant Dept leads to ensure this is in place for the start of teaching. We will be evaluating the Project in conjunction with a similar project (Grow+) devised by Lizzie Freeman from PSP, to identify the most appropriate tool to underpin future Academic Advising delivery.

### UKAT Membership and Hallam/UKAT Community of Practice

Hallam has **Enhanced Institutional Membership of UKAT** (United Kingdom Advising and Tutoring) again for academic year 2021/22. We will shortly be sending round expressions of interest for memberships and Professional Recognition award submissions. More details to follow.

**Hallam/UKAT Community of Practice (CoP)** – We have 3 planned CoP’s for 2021/22 proposed schedule below:

* **November:** EDI focus, including EDI resources linked to AA and Disabled Student Support session.
* **February:** Academic Advising in PG courses, including dissemination from the PG Working Group.
* **May:** Student Engagement, drawing on examples of best practice across the institution.

### Training

Training has been updated on the [Academic Advising website training & development](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/academicadvising/training-and-development-for-staff-acting-as-academic-advisers/?doing_wp_cron=1631693424.8185389041900634765625) page. AA Leads should also have access to the completion data of the Mandatory Training (Being an Academic Adviser Blackboard site).

**Action:** AA leads to ensure that all AA’s are available of the mandatory and optional training offer. Optional Training now including:

* Introduction to Academic Advising (1hr, ideal for new starters and Associate Lecturers)
* Fundamentals of Academic Advising (2.5hrs, scenario-based training).
* Supporting Distressed Students (2 x 1.5hr practical sessions).
* Academic Advising International Students (1.5hr session delivered by Krassie Teneva Head of International Student Experience).

### Academic Adviser and Departmental Lead Checklists

We have created two checklists to support AA Leads and Academic Advisers. The AA Lead Checklist will be on the Teams site, and the Academic Adviser checklist will be on the SST SharePoint page to aid understanding of expectations and requirements of the role.

### Welcome Week Information

[Slides](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hwbmj3_hallam_shu_ac_uk/Documents/Academic%20Director/Sarah%20&%20Melissa/AA%20Briefings%20Sept%202021/SOE%20presentation.pptx) presented recently by Sarah Smart (Student Transition and Welfare Manager) in a central meeting may have some interesting information for Depts, specifically the timeline of comms to students on Slide 4.

### SHU Progress

[SHU Progress](https://www.shu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/care-leavers/shu-progress) provides support for applicants whose personal circumstances might mean there are additional barriers related to going to university. The SHU Progress Team have contacted students due to enrol this year to see if they have any specific information they want to pass onto their Academic Advisers, answers will be collated and provided to Dept Leads along with the student’s name, number, and course details. This information should be provided around the 17th September.

**Action:**If you have students in your Dept enrolling from SHU Progress I will provide details and the ask is that we try to ensure that they are allocated an appropriate Academic Adviser.

### Updated & New Documents on the Academic Adviser SharePoint Page

A range of materials will be available on the SST Intranet Page over the coming weeks, including the Academic Adviser checklist, ‘What to do If’ scenarios from the summer briefing and updated Students in Distress/Emergency infographics.

### Student Connect

Information from Nick Russell from the Skills Centre about Student Connect:

**Student Connect** is an online mentoring platform by [Studiosity](https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/skills/feedback" \o "https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/skills/feedback) which is coordinated by the [Skills Centre](https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/skills/home) in Library Services. Level 6 (or higher who completed their undergrad at Hallam) students provide “help not answers” to level 4 students through voice or text chat. When a level 4 student signs into system they request whether they want module specific or general study skills support, and the system then connects them to the mentor who most closely matches their needs. The service is currently unlimited and available 12 noon – 10pm seven days a week.

You can help us by:

* [Adding Student Connect to your modules as a support resource.](https://telhelp.shu.ac.uk/student-connect)
* [Promoting Student Connect to level 4 students.](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3007/skills/SitePages/Student-Connect.aspx)
* [Directing level 4 students to information about Student Connect.](https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/skills/connect)
* [Encouraging level 6 students to sign up to become paid mentors.](https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/blog/become-an-online-student-peer-mentor)

If you have any questions about Student Connect please don’t hesitate to email [skillscentre@shu.ac.uk](mailto:skillscentre@shu.ac.uk).

**September 2021**

Melissa Jacobi, Head of Academic Advising

Sarah Churchill, Senior Lecturer on secondment supporting Academic Advising.