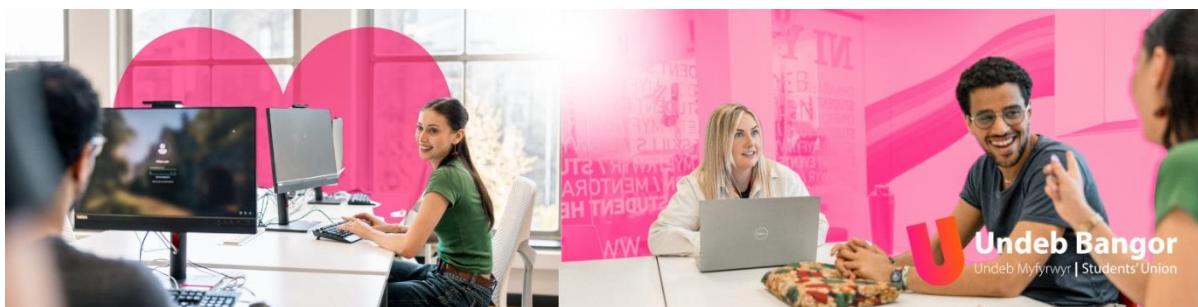




Undeb Bangor Academic Advice Service Framework

Introduction & Purpose

The purpose of this framework is to set out a clear understanding of Undeb Bangor's Academic Advice Service and how it supports students at Bangor University. The service exists to provide free, independent, impartial, and confidential advice on academic matters.

Our goal is to empower students to make informed decisions, navigate University processes, and ensure fairness and transparency. This framework explains what students can expect from the service, what is expected of them, and the boundaries of support we provide.

Scope of Service

The Academic Advice Service is available to all current Bangor University students. In some circumstances, former students may also be able to access the service, but this will be decided on a case-by-case basis following an initial conversation to determine how we can best support you.

The Academic Advice Service provides advice, guidance and support on academic matters. This includes, but not limited to, issues such as academic appeals, complaints, extenuating circumstances, student discipline matters, academic misconduct, progression or withdrawal decisions, and fitness to practice concerns.

We aim to acknowledge all new enquiries within five working days. Where possible, advisers will then arrange a meeting or provide an initial response to begin supporting you with your case.

Our advisers work alongside you, providing guidance to help you understand University processes, explore your options, and consider

potential outcomes. They can accompany you to meetings and offer practical support and feedback to help you engage effectively. However, students remain the owners of their complaint or case. Advisers do not submit, or take a stance on any complaint, and they do not act as legal representatives, they will also not operate in an adversarial way toward the University. Our role is to empower and support you, ensuring you have the knowledge and confidence to navigate the process while maintaining a fair and constructive relationship with the University.

Where possible, we aim to help students resolve issues informally at an early stage. Many of the University's procedures include opportunities to address concerns before they escalate, and our advisers will support you in exploring these routes first. Seeking informal resolution can often lead to quicker, less stressful outcomes while still protecting your rights and ensuring your concerns are taken seriously.

The support we offer includes:

Clarification of procedures: Advisers will explain University policies and processes, ensuring you understand what to expect at each stage.

Meeting support: Advisers can accompany you to university meetings, both informal and formal, providing support and helping ensure your points are communicated clearly. Advisers do not mediate meetings; mediation should be provided by someone within the relevant University department.

Guidance on written statements: Advisers can provide advice on what to include, read drafts, and give constructive feedback, but will not write statements on your behalf.

Ensuring fairness and procedural integrity: Advisers help check that University processes are being followed correctly and fairly, so that your case is considered properly.

Signposting: When issues go beyond academic advice, we will try to signpost you to the relevant support services that are available.

While students are encouraged to raise and address their concerns directly, with the guidance and support of our advisers, we also recognise the power imbalance that can sometimes exist between students and the University. Where appropriate, and in consultation with you, advisers may

contact or approach the relevant University department, on your behalf, to ensure that your concerns are heard and that University procedures are followed fairly.

While we will always provide professional, impartial advice, you are not obliged to accept or follow the advice given. Our role is to help you explore your options and make informed decisions, but the choices you make remain entirely your own.

If you provide documents at very short notice, we may not always be able to review them or provide detailed feedback in time. To ensure you receive the best support, we encourage you to share relevant documents with your adviser as early as possible.

It is important to understand that we cannot guarantee or promise any particular outcome to your case. While we will guide you through processes and help you present your case as strongly as possible, we cannot predict decisions made by the University or external bodies.

The service does not provide legal advice, personal counselling, financial or housing guidance, academic tutoring, or representation in formal legal proceedings.

If, after completing all relevant University procedures, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, our advisers can advise you on escalating your case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), an independent body that reviews student complaints. Please note that the OIA can only investigate cases once the University's internal processes have been fully completed, and a Completion of Procedures letter has been issued.

Student Responsibilities

To get the most from the Academic Advice Service, students are expected to engage actively, honestly, and respectfully throughout the process. This includes:

- **Providing accurate and complete information:** Be honest and thorough when sharing details about your case so advisers can give the best possible guidance.

- **Engaging proactively:** Attend scheduled appointments, respond to communications promptly, and follow up on agreed actions.
- **Preparing documentation:** Share relevant documents, evidence, and drafts as soon as possible, in advance of meetings, so advisers can provide constructive feedback and guidance.
- **Maintaining professionalism:** Treat advisers and other staff with respect, even when dealing with stressful or challenging situations.
- **Owning your case:** Understand that you are responsible for making decisions, submitting statements, and managing your case. Advisers provide support, guidance, and empowerment, but the final actions remain your responsibility.
- **Following University processes:** While advisers help clarify procedures and ensure fairness, you are expected to adhere to University deadlines, protocols, and instructions.
- **Being open to guidance:** Listen to advice carefully, consider potential outcomes, and make informed decisions based on the guidance provided.

By meeting these responsibilities, students help ensure that the service can provide effective, timely, and fair support, enabling advisers to empower you in navigating your academic matters confidently.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

All information shared with advisers is treated confidentially. All case records are kept securely on a computer-based system for up to six years from your last engagement with the service.

We will not share your personal information or case details with anyone outside the service without your permission, except in exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances include situations where you or others are at risk of harm, or where we are required by law to disclose information, such as disclosures related to terrorism or proceeds of crime. Wherever possible, we will discuss options with you and seek your consent before sharing information. If consent is not possible, we will act under the guidance of the University's Safeguarding/Data Protection lead or their nominee.

In the unlikely event of a data breach, we are committed to being transparent, open, and honest, and will clearly communicate what has occurred and the actions taken to resolve the issue.

Our approach to privacy, confidentiality, and data handling is governed by the Undeb Bangor Advice Service Privacy and Confidentiality Statement. This statement sets out in full how we collect, store, use, and protect personal information shared with the Academic Advice Service. Students are encouraged to review the statement to understand their rights and how their data is managed.

Right to Withdraw Service

Purpose & Principles

We aim to provide a fair, accessible service for all students while safeguarding staff wellbeing. We will only restrict or withdraw access where it is reasonable and proportionate, and after taking steps to manage concerns. Decisions will be made by the Membership Development Manager (or nominee).

While our advisers are committed to supporting students, there are circumstances where the Academic Advice Service may need to withdraw support. These include:

- **Loss of confidence / breakdown of trust** including situations such as persistent disregard of procedural advice, where a student chooses to act against the advice provided and is not willing to accept the limitations or guidance of the service.
- **Failure to engage with the service** Where a student shows persistent non-engagement, such as repeatedly missing appointments or failing to provide essential information, making it impossible for advisers to provide effective support.
- **Abusive, threatening behaviour** where advisers are subject to unacceptable, abusive, or threatening behaviour from a student.
- **Dual representation** where a student seeks or engages legal representation. In such cases, we will withdraw to avoid providing conflicting advice, as we are not able to act as legal representatives.

- **Conflict of interest** where there is a conflict of interest, for example if supporting a case could compromise impartiality.
- **Unreasonable levels of contact or unreasonable demands** where a student makes unreasonable demands that disproportionately impacts our capacity (e.g., numerous repeated emails or calls, repeatedly changing the substance of issues, re-submitting the same points without new evidence), or repeatedly requests actions outside the scope of the service.
- **Excessive long-term support needs** if a student requires ongoing, long-term support that would significantly impact the advice service's capacity to serve other students, after reasonable adjustments and signposting have been explored.
- **Matters fall outside the remit of the Academic Advice Service** where the issue falls outside the remit of academic advice (such as requiring legal, financial, or counselling support), in which case we will withdraw and signpost to alternative services.

If all possible avenues have been explored and the SU Academic Advice Service determines it cannot provide further assistance, the student will be informed, and the case will be closed. However, the student is welcome to seek advice on a different matter in the future.

Withdrawal will always be considered carefully and if it is decided to withdraw services from a student it will be communicated clearly, the student will be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for withdrawal. Where appropriate, students will be signposted to other sources of support.

Challenging A Decision to Terminate Advice

If a student disagrees with the decision to withdraw, suspend, or limit their access to advice services, they can submit a complaint by following the [Students' Union's Complaints Procedure](#).

Agreement Statement

By accessing Undeb Bangor's Academic Advice Service, students acknowledge and agree to the terms this framework. Advisers commit to

upholding these standards and supporting students in line with this framework.

By accessing Undeb Bangor's Academic Advice Service, students are deemed to have acknowledged and accepted the Terms of Service, which apply from the point of engagement with the service.