

QUEEN'S STUDENTS' UNION

Academic Advice
Expectations Guide



Queen's Students' Union Advice Centre offers students of Queen's University, Belfast free, confidential and independent advice. We aim to support students to interpret the University's regulations and to then make their own informed choices, and to do this in a friendly and professional environment.

This guide is to assist you to understand our role and to get the best from your Adviser's time.

What you can expect from us

- Free, confidential, impartial advice
- A non-judgemental approach
- Politeness and respect from all staff
- Fairness and equal treatment for all students
- To help you as much as we can - but there will be times when your problem does not have a solution.

What we can't do

- Make decisions for you
- Tell you what you should do
- Give you legal advice
- Continue to work with you if you are aggressive, abusive, display inappropriate behaviour or appear to be under influence of drugs or alcohol.

What we expect from you

- To be ready for us to call you for any telephone appointments during the time period arranged
- To arrive on time for your face to face appointment and to inform us in advance if you are unable to attend
- Keep us informed and up-to-date with what is happening and if there are any changes in circumstances
- To be honest when you are telling us about your circumstances and make sure to tell us everything that is relevant
- To treat our staff with respect and politeness
- To take full ownership and responsibility for meeting any deadlines
- To forward in advance, where possible, all relevant documentation
- To make sure you read any relevant procedures and guidelines or other information before your appointment
- To regularly check your Queen's email account and respond promptly to all emails from Academic Affairs, your School and the Students' Union Advice Centre

Response time

We aim to respond to emails within 2 working days. We will give you an appointment as soon as possible; this will normally be within 3 working days. It may take us longer to respond to you or to book you an appointment within peak times. Please do not send repeat emails as this slows down the response times. (Note - appointments may be by telephone, face to face or both, as deemed appropriate by your Adviser)

Academic Appeals advice

If a face to face appointment is necessary, the Adviser will aim to provide each student with 2 x 30 minute appointments. Any further phone or email enquiries to the Adviser are requested to be kept to a minimum, bearing in mind the number of students seeking advice from across the University.

Confidentiality

The Students' Union Advice Centre service is confidential. Your Adviser may discuss your case with their Manager, where appropriate, but we will not discuss your case outside of the service unless we have your permission, or unless we judge your circumstances are exceptional, i.e. you are at risk or are a risk of harm to others or yourself. We will hold relevant information electronically in a secure database which is only accessible to the Advisers in the Students' Union Advice Centre.

Welfare advice and support

Students' Union Advice Centre staff are experienced in supporting students with a wide range of welfare issues, often very sensitive and confidential in nature. We recognise that these issues can be difficult to cope with and you will be guided to access the most appropriate service(s) that could support your needs, e.g. your own G.P., Occupational Health, counselling services or Head of Student Welfare at Queen's.

Withdrawal of service/change of Adviser

Occasionally, we may feel it is necessary to change the Adviser you are seeing or to withdraw access to the Students' Union Advice Centre. The decision will only be made after careful consideration and we will explain the reason to you.

This could include the following:

- If you threaten or use violence, or are otherwise aggressive to staff. We will not work with you if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- If we identify a conflict of interest
- If you knowingly provide misleading or incorrect information
- If you consistently miss your appointments
- If you are making inappropriate or excessive use of Students' Union Advice Centre resources. We have limited resources and aim to allow as many students as possible to have an appointment with an Adviser

Further reading

For further information please refer to:

<http://www.qubsu.org/AdviceCentre/>

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicAffairs/>

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicAffairs/StudentGuidance/ExceptionalCircumstances-AStudentGuide/>