

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Department of Building and Real Estate
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Academic Advisors at BRE

1. What are the main objectives of Academic Advising at PolyU?

Academic advising is considered as a developmental process through which students are assisted, guided, supported and empowered to identify their academic and personal goals, develop plans and strategies to achieve them, and evaluate the outcomes of their own planning. It helps students connect to the university community and utilize the expertise and resources available for academic, professional and personal success.

More information is available here: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ous/undergraduate-studies-support/staff/academic-advising-at-polyu/>. The policy and guideline on Academic Advising at PolyU are stipulated in [LTC 42/A4](#).

2. Checking Student Advisees' Information

Academic Advisors are encouraged to check their student advisees' background before the advising meeting via eAcademic and/or [Student Lifecycle Management Platform \(SLMAP\)](#) so as to give appropriate advice. In particular, the SLMAP provides comprehensive information which can facilitate the advising process.

3. How frequent should Academic Advisors have meetings with students?

- Academic advisors are expected to keep in contact with students regularly (e.g., via emails or other means), and to have at least one meeting during Semester 1 and Semester 2 respectively. The meetings can be conducted in person, face-to-face via social media, over the phone or through email.
- BRE students must meet Academic Advisors (AAs) according to the **following milestones**:
 - Students in **the first year of studies** must meet with AAs before making online applications for **programme selection** via eStudent.
 - Students are required to meet AAs after taking **Work-Integrated Education (WIE)**. Students normally take WIE in the summer of year 2 or 3 studies.
- The important dates when students may need advising include: the subject registration period, the Add/Drop period, around or after exam time, before the selection of programme (Scheme)/stream (SUV), etc.
- If a student has a GPA lower than 1.7, he/ she will be put on Academic Probation in the following semester. Academic Advisors need to access to "My Advisee" in e-Academic to search the latest Academic Probation cases for advising after the finalization of Overall Result of each semester. Academic advisors/Programme leaders are necessary to discuss the study plan of next semester for those students on academic probation within a week

upon announcement of assessment results. Academic advisors should complete Form AR150 and then submit the completed form back to BRE General Office for record.

4. What are the formalities for Academic Advising?

Two forms should be completed during normal meeting:

- Meeting Notes for group meeting, or Meeting Notes for individual meeting after each meeting
- Consent form for students at Departmental level (completed after the first meeting)

In the case of Academic Probation, Academic Advisors will complete and send Form AR150 and Meeting Notes for individual meetings to the BRE General Office for the record after discussion with student.

5. How will the completed the Meeting Notes for Academic Advising Meeting be handled at BRE?

- Academic Advisors should complete the Meeting Notes during the meeting with students. At the end of the Meeting, both Academic Advisors and students should sign up to acknowledge the record of the Meeting. Electronic acknowledgment is also accepted.
- Academic Advisor is suggested to return this Meeting Notes within 1 week to the Undergraduate Secretary of Department (Ms Janice Lau) for central filing. Follow-up Action(s) if any, should be taken by Academic Advisors and/or students before central filing.
- The Meeting Notes will be uploaded in Drive Q (Q:_Janice\Completed Meeting Notes_Academic Advising (Restricted)) for future retrieval in BRE and Student Record System (SRS).
- Academic Advisors should be aware that the documents uploaded to SRS will be accessible by all parties (i.e. administrative staff, academic advisors, Undergraduate Studies Support Officer and students). Email notifications will be sent by SRS to students via student email account upon uploading of related documents.
- Academic Advisor is suggested to write the advice in the Meeting Notes in an objective and neutral way.

6. What are the incentives provided by BRE on Academic Advising?

As an incentive to students to make themselves available for the meeting with Academic Advisors, each Advisor and student is entitled a budget of meal allowance at **HK\$50**, for the first meeting with non-first-year students during the year. Advisors can arrange own meeting with students. The sponsorship from the University is \$150 per meal for each first-year student in Semester 1 and Semester 2 and a budget for Advisors. For details please refer to the separate email on the topic.

To comply with the requirement of Reimbursement Policy set out by the Finance Office and Academic Advising System at PolyU, the following 6 items of documents are required to be provided to the Undergraduate Secretary after the Meetings with students.

- Agenda to be set (The email confirmation of the Meeting from Advisor to students suffices)
- Registration list preferred to be available (Written registration confirmed by students to be provided by Advisor), no matter it is a group or an individual meeting.

- Attendance list to be signed by students must be available (Signed attendance to be recorded by Advisor), no matter it is a group or an individual meeting.
- Receipt/Bill of the payment for the meal.
- Completed Meeting Notes required by Academic Advising to be provided by Advisor.
- Consent Forms on Personal Data for BRE signed by students to be provided by Advisor after the Meeting.

If the cost of meal is over **HK\$50** per person, the shortfall will be borne by Advisor.

Should the number of students in the actual attendance list be less than the number of students in the planned registration list (maybe due to students absent from the Meeting), the shortfall of cost of meal will be borne by BRE.

7. What are the frequently asked topics or areas from students?

- Understanding of University policies/procedures
- Scheme/Major/Minor/Secondary Major
- Subject registration and progress of study
- General University Requirements
- Choice or change of study stream
- Academic performance and study skill
- WIE / Career-related matters / further education
- Exchange/International learning experience
- Scholarship / financial concerns
- Adjustment to university and/or lifestyle issues
- Stress or mental health issues
- Time Management
- Interpersonal relationship
- Goal setting
- Other

8. What are the main Roles and Responsibilities of Academic Advisors in Academic Advising?

The main responsibilities of the Academic Advisor/Counsellor include:

- building rapport with the students;
- being accessible, available and responsive;
- helping students to clarify their intellectual, professional and personal goals;
- helping students to develop an appropriate study plan;
- alerting students to academic regulations and requirements, particularly those relating to one's Major; and
- providing early identification of students with special learning needs or signs of learning problems and making necessary referrals;
- contacting with students regularly and have at least one face-to-face meeting (individually or in small groups) during the academic year. Students are expected to consult the advisors before subject registration.

Academic Advisors should

- have a clear understanding of:
 - study pathways;
 - discipline-specific requirements;
 - University policies on undergraduate studies; and
 - opportunities and resources within the University.
- communicate effectively, listen to the students and respect their views and choices.
- uphold the core values of Academic Advising (e.g. respect, empathy) within PolyU.
- assist students to identify their academic difficulties, career prospects, and personal goals and help them to develop plans for achieving these goals.
- assist students to understand their academic performance and areas of strength.
- assist students to understand the graduation requirements and auditing process.
- keep accurate records about sessions of Academic Advising
- be available to answer the questions of students through different means.
- make appropriate referrals when necessary.
- strive for excellence in Academic Advising+

9. What are the main Roles and Responsibilities of students in Academic Advising? (Extract from: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ous/undergraduate-studies-support/student/academic-advising/>)

Students are ultimately responsible for educational choices and decisions, and thus are expected to:

- Clarify personal abilities, interests, and goals for academics and life.
- Prepare for the advising meeting. Think of some questions to discuss with the Academic Advisors for e.g. study plan, career opportunities, final-year project ideas, internship or other learning experiences.
- Understand and review the academic progress before meeting the Academic Advisor. Study the Programme Requirements Document.
- Become knowledgeable and adhere to institutional policies, procedures, and requirements.
- Be punctual and notify the Academic Advisor in advance if students cannot attend the scheduled meeting or need to reschedule the meeting.
- Have an open mind and be ready to consider the advice given by the Academic Advisor and other staff.
- Read PolyU e-mails and other important communications from the University (particularly from BRE and Academic Advisors)
- Access and use eStudent for academic updates, updated information, registration, and other purposes.
- Accept the final responsibility for all decisions made and the graduation requirements.

10. The operational manual designed by OUS:

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ous/-/media/department/ous/pdf-doc/aa-operation-manual-aug-2022.pdf?la=en&hash=F3368803AA900A78BCACF06C9E8AEAC7>

11. Academic Advisor training and eLearning course provided by OUS:

- There will be regular training workshops/briefing sessions for Academic Advisors to facilitate the implementation of academic advising at PolyU.
- The e-learning course, “Theory and Practice of Academic Advising”, contains informative content including the concepts, values, goals and importance of academic advising and the necessary knowledge and skills for conducting academic advising for students. Academic Advisors can access the course on Blackboard.

Under LTC42/A4, all new Academic Advisors should attend the “Introduction of Academic Advising Training Workshop” and at least 50% of Academic Advisors within each School/ Department should complete the e-learning course “Theory and Practice of Academic Advising” on Blackboard in an academic year

12. What are the central offices which you can refer to students for more assistance?

Further enquiries can be referred to BRE General Office and Central Offices, if applicable. The following are the contact methods of some central offices for reference:

- Office of Undergraduate Studies: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ous/>
- Academic Registry: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ar/>
- English Learning Centre: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/elc/>
- Global Engagement Office: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/geo/about-geo/>
- Library: <https://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk/>
- Mathematics Learning Support Centre: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ama/study/mathematics-learning-support-centre/>
- Non-local Student Services: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/nlss/>
- Special Need Supports: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/sao/student-resources-and-support-section/special-needs-support/welcome-pack/>
- Student Affairs Office (for student development, counselling, career, sponsorship, etc): <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/sao/>