

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Handbook on the Implementation of the Academic Advisory System

Introduction

After a review of the academic advisory system for students, a proposal on an enhanced advisory system for undergraduate and postgraduate students was approved by the Senate in December 2011. This handbook seeks to provide the essential information for the reference of the advisors and other relevant parties.

An Enhanced Academic Advisory System

It is affirmed that the University's philosophy and mission are to develop all-rounded students with a solid disciplinary understanding and whole-person development in order to meet their long-term needs and prepare them for future challenges. The Programme/Department-level advisory system, which primarily focuses on academic advising, is essential in supporting students' academic development and in overcoming academic problems. At the same time, the support has become part of the whole student support and pastoral care system. Advisors, apart from giving advice on academic matters, have become resource persons and provide information on other whole-person development opportunities to the students.

The student support services and available resources are outlined in [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#). The general implementation schedules for undergraduate students and postgraduate students are outlined in [Annex 3](#) and [Annex 4](#) respectively.

Inputs in the Academic Advisory System

Under the implementation plan approved by Senate, every student (both undergraduate and postgraduate) is assigned an academic advisor (Level I Advisor) by the Major department. Departments are requested to nominate designated academic advisors (Level II Advisor) for students who need further support. Departments/ Programmes have the flexibility to decide on the details of the appointment of Levels I and II Advisors, such as whether Levels I and II Advisors are the same person for a particular student, and the number of academic advisors for the Department, etc. so as to suit the different needs of Departments/ Programmes.

The roles and responsibilities of the Advisors and other relevant parties are summarized in [Annex 5](#), and the operational procedures for meeting with students are summarized in [Annex 6](#).

Moreover, faculty-based Committees on Academic Advising are set up in faculties, chaired by the Associate/ Assistant Deans concerned, for monitoring the implementation of the advisory system in the faculties. The Terms of Reference of the Faculty Committee on Academic Advising is in [Annex 7](#).

Administering the Academic Advisory System

The implementation details of the academic advisory system are as follows:

A. Providing General Support to Students – Level I Advisors

- i. Every student is assigned an academic advisor (Level I Advisor), who meets with the students at least once a year for purposes of general supervision such as course selection, guided study, adaptation to University learning modes and disciplinary fundamentals, etc.
- ii. A list of potential questions for Advisors' meetings with students are suggested at Annex 8.

B. Helping Students with Academic Problems – Level II Advisors

- i. Departments/ Programmes are requested to nominate designated academic advisors (Level II Advisors) for students with academic problems. For these students who are placed on academic probation and extended probation, Level II Advisors have to pay greater attention to and meet with them more regularly to track their progress, which may include helping the students to:
 - better understand their academic strengths and weaknesses;
 - plan course schedules;
 - set goals; and
 - use resources and support services at the University, etc.
- ii. A warning system is implemented whereby marginal students with GPA below a certain threshold are assigned a Level II Advisor. Faculties have the flexibility in determining the minimum GPA threshold within the range of 1.5 and 2.0. Marginal students have to meet with the designated Level II Advisor at least more than once during that particular year. This serves to:
 - alert the Department/ Programme about those students who need special attention before they are placed on academic probation; and
 - provide additional academic support to the students concerned and hopefully to help avert potential academic problems.
- iii. During a specified period, students on probation or extended probation are required to obtain the endorsement of the designated academic advisors in order to enroll in appropriate courses in the next term.
- iv. Depending on individual needs and circumstances, Level II Advisors may refer problem cases to Colleges, counselling service or the health service on a case-by-case basis. A Level II Advisor may decide whether he/ she will continue to meet with the student or transfer the case to a Level I Advisor after the

student's probation has been lifted/ improvement is seen in the student's GPA.

- v. For students who present very serious problems, the Associate/ Assistant Dean concerned plays the role of a case manager responsible for coordinating all appropriate efforts within the University in helping the student.

C. Record Keeping

- i. Departments/ Programmes are required to keep the meeting dates of students (or scheduled meeting dates if the students default appointment) with Level I Advisors.
- ii. For marginal students who are put on the warning system (Term GPA between 1.5 and 2.0) and for students on academic probation or extended probation, the Level II Advisor concerned is required to fill out a meeting report (a sample is shown in Annex 9 for reference). A record has to be kept even if the student defaults appointment.
- iii. Advisors can record the details of their meetings with students in the reports, which must be kept strictly confidential.
- iv. If necessary, such meeting records may be used as background documents in support of waiver cases to the Senate Academic Planning Committee (Senate APC).

D. CUSIS

- i. The existing CUSIS functionalities enable students to access the information of their pre-assigned Level I Advisor, and the advisors can view the particulars of their advisees with links to contact information, GPA, outstanding graduation requirements, and course enrolment, etc.
- ii. A notification box is provided on CUSIS, which allows advisors to contact and communicate with students via the platform.

E. Faculty Committee on Academic Advising

- i. A Committee on Academic Advising is established in each Faculty, and chaired by the Associate/ Assistant Dean concerned, who can be the Associate/ Assistant Dean (Student Affairs) or Associate/ Assistant Dean (Education), as deemed appropriate by individual Faculty. The membership of the Faculty Committee may include all Level II Advisors and other existing advisors as assigned by Departments/ Programmes for students with special needs, e.g. non-JUPAS local, second year entry, mainland, international, etc.

- ii. The Committee should meet at least twice in each academic year to give advice on all aspects of academic advising, including recommendations on student waiver cases before they are put to the respective Faculty Board and subsequently the Senate APC for approval.
- iii. Level II Advisors can refer academic problem cases to and seek assistance from the Associate/ Assistant Dean concerned.
- iv. It is also important for Faculties to provide adequate incentives and support to their teaching staff in implementing the academic advisory system, such as provision of resources.

F. Other Whole-person Development Issues

Apart from providing academic advice, student advisors can become resource persons in their department/ programme/ division and provide information on other whole-person development opportunities to students. Under this whole-person student support approach, advisors may also refer students to suitable units (Annex 1 and 2), if necessary, e.g.

- Offices of College Deans of Students
- Graduate School Office
- Office of Student Affairs
- Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
- Office of Academic Links
- University Health Service

G. Support for Advisors

- i. Briefing/ sharing sessions are organized by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), and Level II Advisors, especially new recruits, are strongly encouraged to attend.
- ii. General information in academic/ personal counselling is disseminated via pamphlet/ booklet for Level I Advisors.
- iii. Information given to Advisors includes other whole-person development opportunities to students, including:
 - student activities
 - local students' learning enhancement support
 - non-local students' support
 - career advisory and guidance services
 - student finance matters
 - student exchange matters

H. Advisors for Postgraduate Students

- i. A similar academic advisory system is adopted for postgraduate (Pg) students. In principle, every full-time Pg student is assigned a Level I Advisor, who can be the thesis supervisor in the case of Research Postgraduate (RPg) students, and the Programme Director in the case of Taught Postgraduate (TPg) students. For each Division, a Level II Advisor should be appointed by the Division Head to handle problem cases.
- ii. Departments/ Programmes/ Divisions may decide whether the same pool of Level II Advisors should be shared by both undergraduate and postgraduate students or additional Level II Advisors should be nominated for Pg students as appropriate.
- iii. Owing to the diversified nature of TPg programmes, it may be more desirable for Programme Directors of individual programmes to design their own advisory systems. In such cases, the Programme Directors concerned may propose the adoption of an alternative scheme and submit their plans to the Faculty Committee for endorsement. For RPg programmes, a research student who has been placed on probation should be assigned a Level II Advisor.
- iv. Unlike undergraduate students, there is no requirement on the frequency of meetings between the advisor and Pg student. As a more mature community, Pg students are expected to take an active role in seeking advice from their advisors whenever they feel the need.
- v. In order to ensure that the Faculty Committee is able to give advice on matters concerning Pg students, Faculties are encouraged to nominate at least one member with experience in handling Pg student matters to serve in the Faculty Committee.
- vi. The same meeting report (Annex 9) can be used by advisors to record details of their meetings with Pg students.

I. Further Enhancement of the Academic Advisory System

- i. The feasibility of implementing an early detection mechanism of identifying student(s) with potential problem was discussed at the Sharing Session on the Implementation of Academic Advisory System held in the first term of 2018-19.
- ii. Two possible indicators are identified for potential problem cases: (i) constant/ continued absence from several classes across several courses; and (ii) a substantial drop in GPA compared with the previous term.

- iii. For early identification of students who may have problems, course teachers need to fill out a proforma for reporting to the course offering units if students are found continuously absent from classes or repeatedly failing to submit assignments etc. A sample of the proforma designed for course teachers (including University Core Courses) is shown in Annex 10. The course offering unit(s) will then report the case to the student's affiliated Programme/ Faculty.
- iv. For students with substantial drop in GPA, the Registration and Examinations Section will send a report to faculties on a term basis for students whose GPA has dropped by more than 1.0 when compared with the previous academic term for appropriate follow up action by Programmes/ Departments concerned.
- v. These enhanced measures will assist Academic Advisors to detect potential academic and/ or non-academic problems of their advisees at an early stage so that appropriate support and help can be provided.

August 2020

Resources and Information Available to Academic Advisors

College Social Fund/ Teachers and Postgraduate Students Interaction Scheme

Some Colleges/ Faculties provide funding for their teachers on educational and social gatherings between teachers and students in each academic year. Details can be checked with the College/ Faculty concerned.

Teaching and Learning

Academic and Quality Section

Website: <https://www.aqs.cuhk.edu.hk/>

Undergraduate Student Handbook

Website: http://rgsntl.rgs.cuhk.edu.hk/aqs_prd_aplx

Honesty in Academic Work

Website: www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty

Registration and Examinations Section

Website: www.res.cuhk.edu.hk/en-gb

Email: ugadmin@cuhk.edu.hk

Graduate School

Postgraduate Student Handbook

Website: www.gs.cuhk.edu.hk/page/PostgraduateStudentHandbook

Code of Practice

Website:

www.gs.cuhk.edu.hk/page/CodeofPracticeTPg (Taught Postgraduate Studies)

www.gs.cuhk.edu.hk/page/CodeofPracticeRPg (Research Postgraduate Studies)

Online Enquiry: www.gradsch.cuhk.edu.hk/helpdesk/enquiry_form.aspx

Pastoral Care and Whole Personal Education

Chung Chi College

Tel: 3943 6451 Website: www.ccc.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: ccc@cuhk.edu.hk

New Asia College

Tel: 3943 7609 Website: www.na.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: nac@cuhk.edu.hk

United College

Tel: 3943 7575 Website: www.uc.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: unitedcollege@cuhk.edu.hk

Shaw College

Tel: 3943 7363 Website: www.shaw.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: shaw-college@cuhk.edu.hk

Morningside College

Tel: 3943 1406 Website: www.morningside.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: morningside@cuhk.edu.hk

S.H. Ho College

Tel: 3943 1441 Website: www.shho.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: shho-college@cuhk.edu.hk

C.W. Chu College

Tel: 3943 1801 Website: www.cwchu.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: info.cwchu@cuhk.edu.hk

Wu Yee Sun College

Tel: 3943 3941 Website: www.wys.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: info.wys@cuhk.edu.hk

Lee Woo Sing College

Tel: 3943 1504 Website: www.ws.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: wscollege@cuhk.edu.hk

Non-formal Educational Experience

Student Exchange Programmes

Office of Academic Links

Tel: 3943 7597

Website: www.oal.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: iasp@cuhk.edu.hk

Career Advisory and Guidance Services

Career Planning and Development Centre, Office of Student Affairs

Tel: 3943 7202

Website: <http://cpdc.osa.cuhk.edu.hk>

Email: cpdc@cuhk.edu.hk

Learning and Cultural Enhancement

Learning and Cultural Enhancement Section, Office of Student Affairs

General Enquiry: 3943 7945

Website: <http://lces.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/>

Learning Enhancement Officers: 3943 1533

Email: lces@cuhk.edu.hk

Wellness and Counselling Service

Wellness and Counselling Centre, Office of Student Affairs

Tel: 3943 7208 / 3943 3493

Website: www.cuhk.edu.hk/osa/wacc

Email: wacc@cuhk.edu.hk

Student Activities & Amenities

Student Development and Resources Section, Office of Student Affairs

Tel: 3943 7323 / 3943 3733

Website: <http://sdrs.osa.cuhk.edu.hk>

Email: sdrs@cuhk.edu.hk

Support Services for Students with Disabilities

Student Disability Support Services, Office of Student Affairs

Tel: 3943 5441

Website: www.cuhk.edu.hk/osa/disability

Email: sdss@cuhk.edu.hk

Other Student Care Services

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Office of Admissions and Financial Aid

Tel: 3943 1737 / 3943 7204 (scholarships) / 3943 1898 (financial aid)

Website: www.oafa.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: sfas@cuhk.edu.hk

Physical Health Service

University Health Service

Tel: 3943 6422 (enquiries) / 3943 6439 (appointments)

Website: www.cuhk.edu.hk/uhs

Email: uhs@cuhk.edu.hk

Chinese Medicine Specialty Clinic cum
Clinical Teaching and Research Centre

Tel: 3943 9933 (clinic enquiries and booking)

Website: <https://clinic.scm.cuhk.edu.hk/>

Email: scmclinic@cuhk.edu.hk

Academic Support Units

University Library System

Website: www.lib.cuhk.edu.hk

University Library	Tel: 3943 7306
Chung Chi College Elisabeth Luce Moore Library	Tel: 3943 6969
New Asia College Ch'ien Mu Library	Tel: 3943 7655
United College Wu Chung Library	Tel: 3943 7564
Architecture Library	Tel: 3943 6599
Li Ping Medical Library	Tel: 3505 2459
Lee Quo Wei Law Library	Tel: 3943 8641 (LAW) 3943 0927 (LRC)

Independent Learning Centre

Tel: 3943 8733 / 3943 8764 Website: www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk

Email: ilc-counsel@cuhk.edu.hk

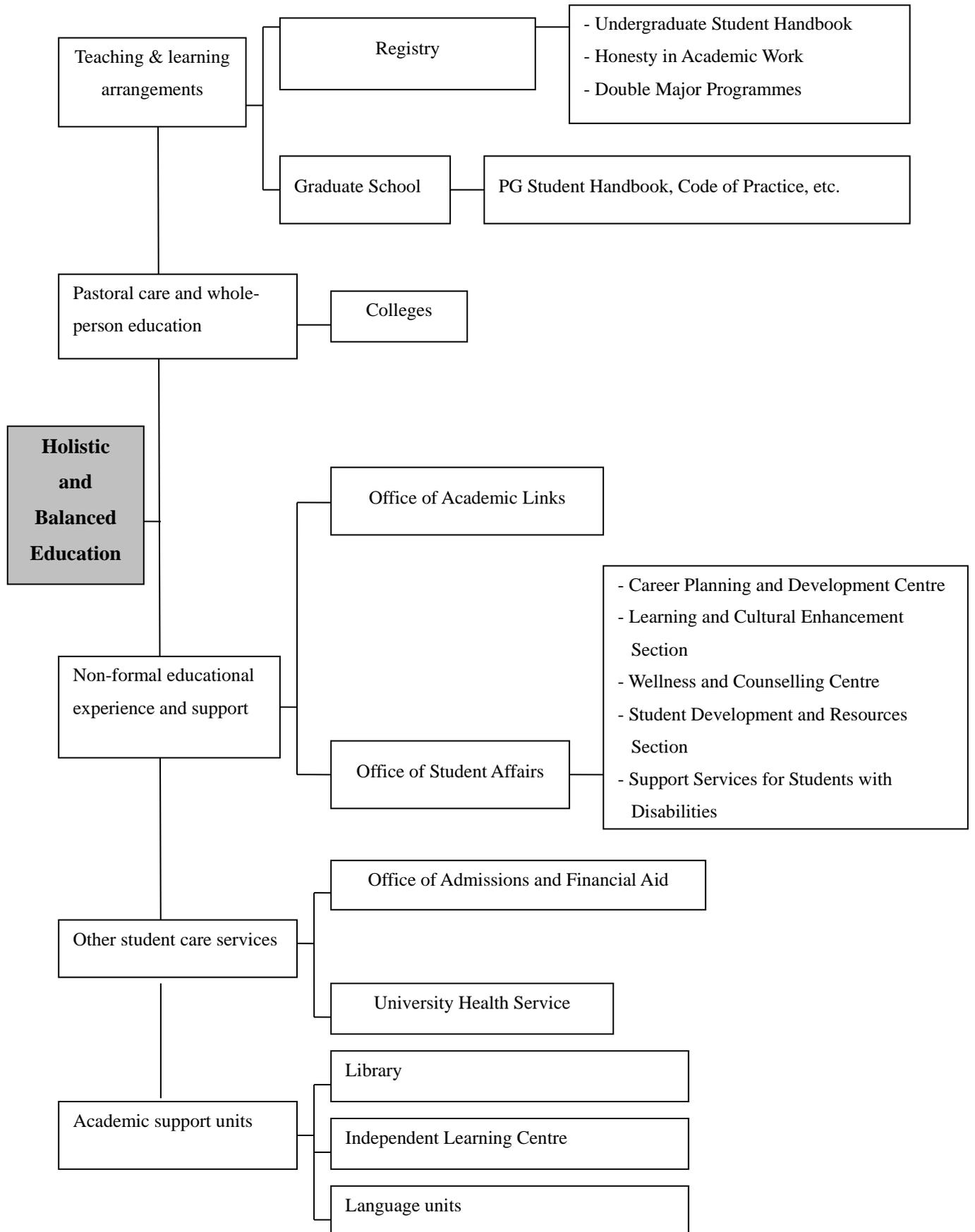
Language Unit

Yale-China Chinese Language Centre

Tel: 3943 6727 Website: www.cuhk.edu.hk/clc

Email: clc@cuhk.edu.hk

A System of Support for Students



Implementation Schedule of Academic Advisory System in an Academic Year
(Undergraduate Students)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To appoint Level I and Level II Advisors 	Programmes/ Departments
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform students of the Academic Advisory System and their advisors 	Orientation units
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To disseminate general information on academic/ personal counselling for Level I and Level II Advisors 	OSA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To organize optional briefing sessions and training workshops for Advisors (particularly Level II Advisors) 	OSA and other relevant units
Recurrent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisors to meet with advisees and/ or students with potential problems 	Programmes/ Departments
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To generate lists of students with academic problems and with Term GPA below a certain threshold for Programmes/ Departments 	Registration and Examinations Section
Mid-January onward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level II Advisors to meet with marginal students and students on academic probation or extended probation 	Programmes/ Departments
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To generate lists of students with academic problems and with Term GPA below a certain threshold for Programmes/ Departments 	Registration and Examinations Section
Mid-June onward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level II Advisors to meet with marginal students and students on academic probation or extended probation 	Programmes/ Departments

Remark: The Faculty Committee on Academic Advising meets at least twice at appropriate times during an academic year.

Implementation Schedule of Academic Advisory System in an Academic Year
(Postgraduate Students)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Directors of TPg Programmes to submit a brief plan of their proposed Academic Advisory System to the Faculty Committee on Academic Advising, if any • To appoint Level II Advisors • To inform students of the Academic Advisory System and their Advisors 	Programmes/ Departments Orientation units
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To disseminate general information on academic/ personal counselling for Level I and Level II Advisors 	OSA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To organize optional briefing sessions and training workshops for Advisors (particularly Level II Advisors) 	OSA and other relevant units
Recurrent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors to meet with advisees 	Programmes/ Departments

Remark: The Faculty Committee on Academic Advising meets at least twice at appropriate times during an academic year

Roles and Responsibilities

Level I Advisor

- To meet with students at least once a year for purpose of providing general advice on issues such as course selection, guided study, adaptation to University learning modes.
- To become a resource person in his/ her department/ programme/ division and provide information on other whole-person development opportunities to students or refer students to suitable units, if necessary.
- To advise on students' application for suspension of studies, if necessary.

Level II Advisor

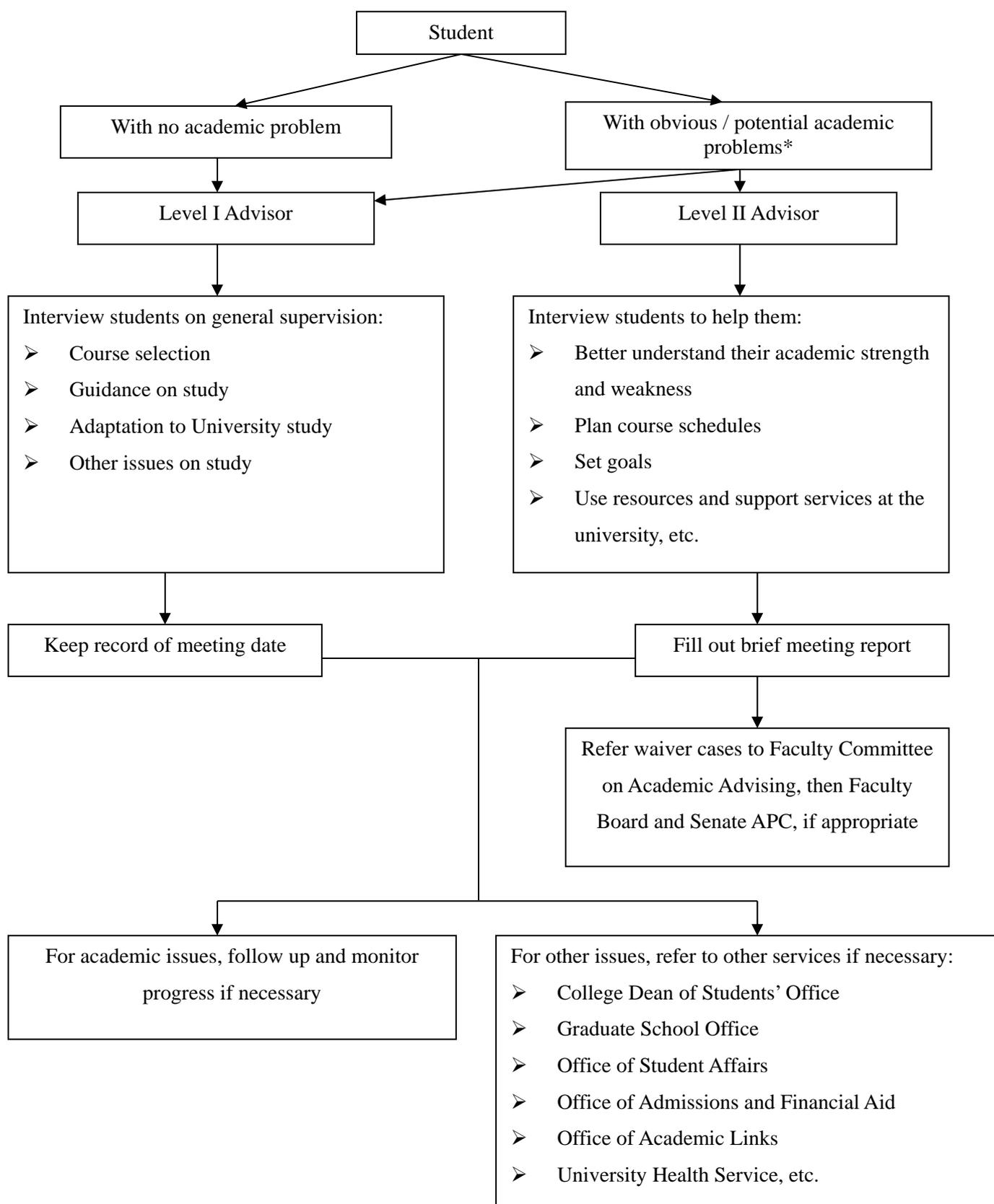
- To meet with marginal students with GPA below a certain threshold at least more than once during a particular year, so as to provide additional academic support to the students concerned and hopefully to help avert potential academic problems.
- To meet with students with academic problems (especially those placed on academic probation or extended probation) more regularly to provide advice and guidance.
- To endorse students on probation or extended probation for enrollment into appropriate courses in the next term.
- To refer problem cases to the appropriate units for other suitable assistance, e.g. Colleges, counselling service, health service. If necessary, the case should be referred to the Associate/ Assistant Dean concerned.
- After improvement is seen in the student's studies, to decide whether he/ she will continue to meet with the student or transfer the case to a Level I Advisor.
- To advise on students' application for suspension of studies, if necessary.

Associate/ Assistant Dean

- To give advice to Advisors for the effective implementation of academic advising in the faculty.
- To play the role of case manager for students who present very serious problems and coordinate all appropriate efforts within the University in helping the students.
- To chair a Faculty-based Committee on Academic Advising which meets at least twice in each academic year and monitor the implementation of academic advising, including recommendations on student waiver cases before they are put to the respective Faculty Board for consideration.

Faculty Secretary

- To assist in monitoring the implementation of academic advising at the Department/ Programme/ Division level.
- To remind Departments/ Programmes/ Divisions to assign Advisors for their students and input the records in the Academic Advisement System under CUSIS.
- To coordinate with Departments/ Programmes/ Divisions in disseminating information for Advisors, e.g. details of sharing/ training sessions, handbook for Advisors, etc.
- To serve as the Secretary of the Faculty Committee on Academic Advising.

Operational Procedures

* (i) constant / continued absence from several classes across several courses; (ii) a substantial drop in GPA compared with the previous term; (iii) students being placed on academic probation, or extended probation, or with GPA below a certain threshold. Faculties have the flexibility to determine the minimum GPA threshold within the range of 1.5 and 2.0.

**Faculty Committee on Academic Advising
Terms of Reference**

Composition

Chairperson: An Associate/ Assistant Dean of Faculty designated by the Faculty Dean

Members: All Level II Advisors of Departments/ Programmes/ Divisions in the faculty
Advisors for students with special needs, e.g. non-JUPAS, second year entry, mainland, international, etc. as deemed necessary
One or more representative(s) from among the Graduate Divisions in the faculty, if considered necessary

Secretary: Faculty Secretary or his/ her representative

Responsibilities

1. To meet at least twice in each academic year to give advice on all aspects of academic advising.
2. To monitor the implementation of academic advising in the faculty.
3. To make recommendations on student waiver cases before they are put to the Faculty Board/ Senate APC for approval, if deemed appropriate.
4. To undertake other related duties as may be referred by the Faculty Dean from time to time.

Potential Questions to ask an Advisee

Applicable to all Advisors

1. Why did you choose to come to CUHK?
2. Why did you choose to study in HK? (mainly for non-local/ non-JUPAS students)
3. Place of birth? (mainly for non-local/ non-JUPAS students)
4. Place lived/ studied? (mainly for non-local/ non-JUPAS students)
5. Present residence (on or off-campus)?
6. Intended major? Why? (for broad based admitted/ mainland students)
7. Intended minor? Why?
8. Intended career? Why?
9. What academic disciplines (apart from major) seem to interest you the most?
10. What questions do you have about CUHK, your major, graduation requirement?
11. What would you say have been your most enjoyable learning experiences?
12. What would you say have been your least enjoyable learning experiences?
13. Do you have concerns about adjusting to the University?
14. What are you most excited about now?
15. Are you aware of the university resources/ student services available to you?
16. What are your hobbies? What do you do for fun/ leisure?
17. What kinds of student societies/ associations/ activities have you joined?
18. When you hear the word “advising”, what is the first thing that comes to mind?
19. How can I as your advisor help you most?
20. Is there anything else about yourself that you’d like to share or that you think I should be aware of, which might help me get to know you better or enable me to be a more effective advisor to you?

Specifically for Level II Advisors

1. In general, what are the ways CUHK is meeting or not meeting your expectations?
2. What experiences at CUHK have been most rewarding?
3. What experiences at CUHK have been most frustrating?
4. Which study strategies have you found to be most useful?
5. Which study strategies have you found to be least effective?
6. How do you anticipate approaching the rest of the academic year? (Plan and goal?)
7. Which university resources do you plan to use?
8. How confident do you feel about being successful here?

Source:

1. National Academic Advising Association
2. The Pennsylvania State University, USA
3. Marymount College, USA
4. Lawrence University, USA

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Department/ Programme/ Division of _____

Report on Meeting with Student

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Student*: Undergraduate/ Postgraduate

Type*: Local/ Mainland (Homeland: _____)

International (Origin: _____ / Place of Study: _____)

Others: _____

Year of study: _____

Appointment Date & Time: _____ Appointment Venue: _____

1. Issue(s) Discussed:

- Study Financial Family Physical
 Interpersonal Emotional Others (please specify): _____

2. Actions and Recommendations:

- Refer to psychological counselling
 Refer to Learning Enhancement Officers
 Seek emergency grant/ loan from college or university
 Others (please specify): _____

3. Necessity for Follow-up Appointment:

No Yes. Suggested date/ month: _____

Student has been informed of the referral/ follow-up action Yes No

4. Other comments: _____

* Please circle as appropriate

Name of Advisor: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

Remarks: 1. *This form should be seen by designated personnel only.*
2. *A copy of this form should be given to the student upon request.*

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Proforma on Early Detection of Student with Potential Problem

For early identification of students in need, course teachers are encouraged to report to the course offering units if students are found continuously absent from classes or repeatedly failing to submit assignments etc.

To: Associate / Assistant Dean / Chairperson of the Faculty Committee on Academic Advising*,
 Faculty of _____
 Head / Director*, Department / School / Programme* of _____

From: Department of Chinese Language & Literature
 English Learning Teaching Unit
 Office of University / College General Education
 Office of the IT Foundation Course
 Physical Education Unit
 Department / School / Programme* of _____

To be completed by the course teacher

Course Information:

Academic Term: 20__ - 20__ Term 1/2* Course Code: _____

Student Information:

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Nature of Problem:

- Absence in lectures / tutorials* with formal / non-formal* record: approximately _____ out of _____ lectures / tutorials* in total (_____ % of course assessment)
 Absence in quizzes / mid-term test: _____ % of course assessment
 Failure in submitting assignments / completing project* work: _____ out of _____ assignments / projects* in total (_____ % of course assessment)
 Others (please specify): _____

Referred by the course teacher to the course offering unit:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

* Please circle as appropriate

Please tick (✓) as appropriate

Reported by the course offering unit for forwarding to the student's affiliated programme or Faculty:

Name: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____