



# CARE SUPPORT LEAD

*a guide  
for student  
advisers*



## About AAO

The mission of the Academic Advising Office (AAO) is to provide quality and accessible advisory services to support and enhance the academic success and development of undergraduate students. AAO is staffed with seasoned academic advisers and experienced administrators who are committed to helping students, especially in the first year, to make a smooth transition and develop appropriate study plans.

AAO works closely with Faculties, CEDARS and halls of residence to co-ordinate and implement university-wide academic advising initiatives, adviser professional development, and sharing of best practices. In addition, it provides administrative support to the University's Academic Advising and First Year Experience Committee, which oversees matters pertaining to academic advising for undergraduate students and their first year experience.

## About this Guide

This guide is designed to provide a foundation for your role as a student adviser and offer quick references on university-wide academic issues. It supplements resources and training provided by your Faculty, Hall or Residential College.



*Student Adviser  
Guide*

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# The Role of a Student Adviser



# THE ROLE OF A STUDENT ADVISER

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This section of the guide explains the concept of peer advising and outlines general advising responsibilities. In addition, you will be provided guidance on how ethical principles are applied to advising.

## 1. What is academic advising?

Academic advising is a developmental process in which students are provided with support in clarifying their academic, career and life goals, developing plans to achieve these goals, and evaluating their own progress. Academic advising is also a process in which students are empowered to think critically, explore available options, and take personal responsibility for decision-making with the guidance of their teachers and academic advisers.

## 2. What is peer advising?

Peer advising is centered on the notion of “students helping students” (Ender & Newton, 2000). Most students already turn to fellow students for advice in informal ways. However, a formal peer advising structure can help ensure that accurate academic information is being delivered in a way that students understand and channel appropriate referrals. Peer advising programmes are also notably different from student helper roles. Student advisers at HKU are required to undergo training to offer academic advising services to their peers.

## 3. What are the basic responsibilities of a student adviser at HKU?

This list outlines the general responsibilities of student advisers. Your specific duties will be determined by your Hall Warden, Master of Residential College or Faculty supervisor.

- To have a basic understanding of the curriculum structure and academic resources at HKU.
- To care about the academic success of fellow students and model this caring attitude when helping others.
- To provide support to first-year students on their academic transition to the University and share successful study strategies.
- To collaborate with your Faculty or Hall to offer student activities of academic interest and assist in centrally organized academic activities.
- To maintain a high level of sensitivity to students of different cultures, needs and academic backgrounds.
- To make effective referrals and direct advisees to other available campus resources and support services as necessary.

#### 4. What are the advantages of being a student adviser?

Serving as a student adviser positively impact on your university experience. Through taking up the role, you build recognition around campus, enhance your credibility with your advisees, form relationships with other peer advisers, develop personal leadership skills, enhance communication and interpersonal skills, and obtain additional access to mentors and supervisors. The role further demonstrates your competence and commitment to other members of the campus community. All these are qualities beneficial to your future career development.

Furthermore, some Faculties award student advisers certificates, and / or study credits under the Credit Award Scheme for out-of-classroom learning. For details, please check with your Faculty.



## 5. What ethical principles I need to observe when I advise my peers?

The following points help guide ethical decisions related to academic advising (Lowenstein, 2008):

- **Enhance learning whenever possible**  
Help your fellow students overcome obstacles and maximize the overall learning experience.
- **Treat students equitably**  
Do not play favourites among your fellow students, nor exert more effort to those you like better or whose values are more compatible with your own.
- **Allow for autonomous decisions**  
This principle is derived from the ideal of respect for persons. Treat your fellow students as rational, autonomous decision-makers.
- **Respect confidentiality**  
Respect your fellow student's confidentiality when advising and do not share issues discussed with other students. If concerns arise during advising, contact your supervisor or an AAO staff member.
- **Support the institution's policies and staff**  
By accepting the role as a student adviser, you undertake a commitment to abide by and to respect the regulations of HKU.
- **Maintain the credibility of the advising programme**  
Any behaviour that undercuts credibility runs a risk of harming a student's educational experience and loss of credibility of the entire student advising programme. You will be trained to impart accurate information and make appropriate referrals, however if you are unsure how to handle a situation, please ask.



# Advising Strategies, Resources and Referrals



# ADVISING STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND REFERRALS

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This section of the guide outlines different advising methods and resources, provides tips on effective communication, and highlights making referrals to other campus units.

## 6. How and where should I meet my advisees?

The most common advising methods are individual, group and virtual. The method you use to conduct advising will depend on the goals of your Hall / Residential College or Faculty and needs of your advisees.

- **Individual Advising**

Individual advising is a one-on-one meeting between the adviser and advisee. Individual advising is ideal for discussing specific academic issues and personalized goals of the advisee.

- **Group Advising**

Most group advising sessions include a brief presentation and discussion. It is an efficient method for offering general advice, collecting group feedback, and delivering key information to students in similar situations.

- **Virtual Advising**

Virtual advising allows flexibility to accommodate a variety of situations and in a communication method you and your fellow students are already comfortable in using with one another. Email, instant messaging and other forms of social media (such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) can be utilized to support advising.

## 7. How can I form supportive relationships with my advisees?

Creating and sustaining open and deep relationships with your advisees is a key component of effective peer advising. Here are some specific strategies for starting this important relationship-building process.

- If you're helping out in the orientation programme, arrive early to strike up conversations with new students and stick around afterwards to interact with them. The positive first impression will promote future interactions.
- At your first meeting, learn about their backgrounds, interests, experiences and goals.
- Keep track of what you learned in this initial meeting and build on it to guide your conversations in future meetings.
- Check their preferred mode(s) of communication so as to stay in contact. Use of multiple channels may be useful to reach out to advisees.
- Continue the connection by regularly sending them greetings or new information of interest or relevance to them.

## 8. How can I communicate effectively with my advisees?

Communication is perhaps your most critical skill as a student adviser. When it comes to effective communication, being a good listener and asking questions are key aspects.

### ➤ ***Being a Good Listener***

- **Listen with your undivided attention and empathy (rather than focusing on what you want to say next)**

If a student comes to seek your advice, stop what you're doing and turn your attention to the advisee. Seek to understand your advisee's experience without making judgement.

- **Don't interrupt**

Take the time to fully listen. When you interrupt, you give the impression that you are not interested in what is being said. Even if you think you have heard this type of academic issue before and know how to handle it, allow your fellow students to finish their explanation and ensure you comprehend their specific situations.

- **Respond verbally and non-verbally**

When you respond verbally, you might summarize and ask related follow-up questions. Non-verbal gestures include nodding your head, smiling, eye contact, and mirroring the body language of the other person. All these indicate that you are interested in what is being said and in many cases make the person feel more comfortable.

➤ **Asking Questions**

- **Ask open-ended questions**

Asking open-ended questions can allow time for your fellow students to reflect on their specific situation and help identify possible options.

- **“Advising” is not “giving advice”**

You are encouraged to adopt a developmental approach to advising. When your fellow student approaches you for help, avoid quickly prescribing a solution. Support them to find a solution to their problems.



## 9. How can I help my advisees adjust to the mode of university learning?

There are numerous common challenges that new students might face in their transition to university learning. Prepare to share with them your study experience and help them master important learning skills:

- How to set goals, manage time and form good study habits.
- How to use SIS and Moodle.
- How to handle readings and assignments.
- How to acquire university-level study skills, for example, academic reading and writing, collaborative learning, information and digital literacy.
- How to become comfortable to interact and seek feedback from teachers.
- How to use latest library resources in their studies.
- How to avoid committing plagiarism and self-plagiarism.

## 10. How can I help my advisees plan their studies?

AAO has recently developed a new web-based “Academic Roadmap” (<http://aao.hku.hk/roadmap>) to help students navigate their studies year by year. You can refer your advisees to it. This “Roadmap” provides specific information, advice and /or resources on key study matters which are displayed as bus stops along students’ learning journey.



## 11. How can my advisees find study requirements if they choose/change a particular major/minor?

You can suggest them to use the academic planning tool, “Degree Audit”, in particular its “What-If” function.

- “Degree Audit” system matches student’s course enrollment and grades against his/her degree and major(s)/minor(s) requirements and provides a useful reference for monitoring academic progress.
- The “What-If” function of the system allows your advisees to set hypothetical major(s)/minor(s) or even change their study programmes and look at the impacts on their study plans and / or progress.
- Navigation: HKU Portal → My Page → SIS Menu → Academic Records → My Degree Audit.

## 12. What should I do when advisees have very specific academic questions?

If your fellow students encounter some specific study issues which you find hard to address, don’t panic. There are multiple campus services and resources that you can refer them to:

- **Faculty Academic Advisers**

Every new student has a Faculty Academic Adviser, either through self-sign up in August or assignment by Faculty. If your fellow students have any concerns regarding their studies, encourage them to contact their Faculty Academic Advisers. They can view the name of their advisers in SIS under Self Service>Student Centre>Adviser Section or find the contacts of their Faculty Academic Adviser at:

<http://aao.hku.hk/sy3/academic-advising/find-your-academic-adviser/>



Find FAA



's Student Center

Academics

Plan  
Enroll  
My Academics  
Search

other academic... (X)

SEARCH FOR CLASSES

URL Gradebook

**This Week's Schedule**

Class	Schedule
BUSI 3-2A LEC (1502)	We 14:00 - 16:00 Room: TBA
BUSI 9-2D LEC (1510)	TBA
MATH 1111-2B LEC (4668)	We 09:00 - 11:00 Room: TBA
POLI 46-FA LEC (2106)	Room: TBA

**Student Enrollment**

Enrollment Records for this Year 2011

Term	Class	Schedule	Action
1 2011-12 Sem 1	BUSI 1002-1C LEC (1078)	TBA	Pending
2 2011-12 Sem 1	YEDU 3-1A LEC (3198)	TBA	Pending
3 2011-12 Sem 1	BUSI 4-1A LEC (1036)	Mo 14:00 - 16:00 TT404 Mo 14:00 - 16:00 TT404 Fr 15:00 - 16:00 TT404	Approved
4 2011-12 Sem 1	CBSA 1-1A LEC (1760)	Room: TBA	Approved
5 2011-12 Sem 1	ELEC 2802-1A LEC (1874)	TBA	Approved
6 2011-12 Sem 1	ECON 1001-1T LEC (3827)	Room: TBA	Not Approved
7 2011-12 Sem 2	POLI 46-FA LEC (2106)	Room: TBA	Pending
8 2011-12 Sem 2	MATH 1111-2B LEC (4668)	We 09:00 - 11:00 Room: TBA	Approved

weekly schedule ▶

**Holds**  
No Holds.

**Adviser**  
Program Adviser  
Yan Ping Huo  
details ▶  
Request Temporary Adviser

**Other Links**  
Guidelines and Forms

**Holds**  
No Holds.

**Adviser**  
Program Adviser  
Yan Ping Huo  
details ▶  
Request Temporary Adviser

**Other Links**  
Guidelines and Forms

- **Temporary Academic Advisers**

If your fellow students need advice on deciding a major / minor, please encourage them to request Temporary Academic Advisers, who are current teachers specializing in helping students explore specific discipline options, through the System. Check out this video to find out more: <http://aao.hku.hk/video/video-03>.



Find TAA



Major / Minor

- **Faculty Offices**

If your fellow students have questions on policies, regulations or procedures, you can suggest them to contact their Faculty Offices. The contact information can be found at <http://aao.hku.hk/faculty-staff/contacts>.



**Useful Contacts**

- **Academic Advising Office**

AAO Academic Advisers can advise students on overall University regulations, general academic requirements, development of an academic plan, and academic progress. Encourage your fellow students to meet with an AAO adviser by making an appointment at <http://booking.aao.hku.hk> or contact AAO at 3917 0128 / [aaoffice@hku.hk](mailto:aaoffice@hku.hk).



### 13. What should I do when making referrals?

Effective advising relies on a partnership between the adviser, the advisee, and supporting units across the campus community. Make use of the trust between you and your advisee to encourage proactive help-seeking behaviour and avoid over-dependency on any single adviser.

#### ➤ ***Before Referral***

- Listen closely to the advisee's problem.
- Explain why you are referring him / her rather than trying to help the advisee yourself.
- Provide a description of the resource and its purpose.










#### ➤ ***When Making the Referral***

- Refer the advisee to a person of a particular office if possible.
- Deal with his / her worries about the referral.
- If needed, make an appointment and walk him / her to the referred person's office.
- If the advisee resists and you are worried, call your Faculty / AAO to get their advice.









#### ➤ ***After the Referral***









- Follow up with the referred student if needed.
- When you next meet with the advisee, chat with him / her if the issue has been resolved and what he / she has learned.
















## 14. What supporting units on campus are available for referrals?

Units that might provide support	If your peers have issues with --	Contact Information
<p>Academic Advising Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic planning and trajectory of studies</li> <li>• General advice on academic performance</li> <li>• University requirements</li> </ul>	<p>  <a href="http://aao.hku.hk">http://aao.hku.hk</a>   <a href="mailto:aaoffice@hku.hk">aaoffice@hku.hk</a>   3917 0128   5413 6321   Room 212, 2/F, Knowles Building         </p>
<p>Academic Services Office</p> <p>(under Academic Support and Examinations [ASE] Section, Registry)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of exit documents (such as transcripts, testimonials, certificates of graduation)</li> <li>• Internal transfer of studies</li> <li>• Admission of halls and residential colleges</li> <li>• Matters on discontinuation of studies on University level</li> <li>• Academic-related services: dates of semesters, tuition fee, student handbook, student registration (including student cards and student records)</li> </ul>	<p>  <a href="http://www.ase.hku.hk">http://www.ase.hku.hk</a>   <a href="mailto:asoffice@hku.hk">asoffice@hku.hk</a>   2859 2433   Go4, G/F, Run Run Shaw Building         </p>

## Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS)

<p>CEDARS, Campus Life Section</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial assistance and fee deferment</li> <li>• Personal finances and budgeting</li> <li>• Accommodation needs</li> <li>• Support to student bodies</li> <li>• Support for non-local students (integration and visa formalities)</li> <li>• Campus facilities (amenities centres, cultural centre, baby care rooms, canteens)</li> </ul> <p>* Mainland undergraduate students may contact China Affairs Office (Tel: 2241 5886 / <a href="http://www.aal.hku.hk/cao">http://www.aal.hku.hk/cao</a>) for further assistance on visa matters.</p>	<p> <a href="http://cedars.hku.hk">http://cedars.hku.hk</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:cedars@hku.hk">cedars@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 3917 2305</p> <p> 3/F, Meng Wah Complex</p>
<p>CEDARS, Careers and Placement Section</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career planning resources</li> <li>• Career preparation, advice and workshops</li> <li>• One-on-one career advising</li> <li>• Job opportunities, recruitment talks and career fairs</li> <li>• Local, Mainland China and overseas internships</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship support</li> <li>• Graduate employment statistics</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://cedars.hku.hk">http://cedars.hku.hk</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:careers@hku.hk">careers@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 3917 2317</p> <p> 3/F, Meng Wah Complex</p>

<p>CEDARS, Counselling and Person Enrichment (CoPE) Section</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling and psychological services for students with personal, relationship or emotional issues, and mental health concerns</li> <li>• SEN support for students with disabilities or special educational needs</li> <li>• Enrichment workshops on confidence &amp; communication, resilience, stress management and generic study skills</li> <li>• Peer English Tutoring and Survival Cantonese</li> <li>• Peer support programmes</li> <li>• First-in-the-family and inclusion funds</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://cedars.hku.hk/cope">http://cedars.hku.hk/cope</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:cedars-cope@hku.hk">cedars-cope@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 3917 8388</p> <p> Rm 301-323, 3/F, Main Building</p>
<p>CEDARS, Student Development Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational funds and programmes</li> <li>• Service opportunities</li> <li>• Leaders' resources</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://cedars.hku.hk">http://cedars.hku.hk</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:cedars-programmes@hku.hk">cedars-programmes@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 3917 8387</p> <p> 3/F, Meng Wah Complex</p>

Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written assessments e.g. essays, reports, projects</li> <li>• Spoken assessments e.g. oral presentations</li> <li>• Assessments that involve digital technology e.g. video</li> <li>• Developing English language use in general</li> </ul>	<p>Communication Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="https://www5.caes.hku.hk/caescss">https://www5.caes.hku.hk/caescss</a></li> <li> <a href="mailto:caescss@hku.hk">caescss@hku.hk</a></li> <li> Advisory Zone, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Learning Commons, Centennial Campus</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compulsory credit-bearing English courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="https://caes.hku.hk">https://caes.hku.hk</a></li> <li> <a href="mailto:caes@hku.hk">caes@hku.hk</a></li> <li> 3917 2004</li> <li> Room 6.60, Run Run Shaw Tower, Centennial Campus</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer English language support courses</li> </ul>	
Common Core Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common Core Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="https://commoncore.hku.hk">https://commoncore.hku.hk</a></li> <li> <a href="mailto:commoncore@hku.hk">commoncore@hku.hk</a></li> <li> 2219 4957</li> <li> Room 136, 1/F, Main Building</li> </ul>
Examinations Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination regulations</li> <li>• Examination timetable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="http://www.exam.hku.hk">http://www.exam.hku.hk</a></li> <li> <a href="mailto:exam@hku.hk">exam@hku.hk</a></li> <li> 2859 2439 / 2859 2434</li> <li> Room 1026, 10/F, Knowles Building</li> </ul>


























Finance and Enterprises Office	<p><u>Student Unit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Settlement of fees / charges</li> <li>• Student account enquiry</li> <li>• Payment of scholarships, prizes, bursaries and loan funds</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://www.hku.hk/finance">http://www.hku.hk/finance</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:feo_student@hku.hk">feo_student@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 2859 2337</p> <p> 1/F, Knowles Building</p>
	<p><u>Insurance Unit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel insurance</li> <li>• Group personal accident insurance</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://www.hku.hk/finance">http://www.hku.hk/finance</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:feo_insurance@hku.hk">feo_insurance@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 2859 8085</p> <p> 1/F, Knowles Building</p>
Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPhil and PhD programmes</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="https://www.gradsch.hku.hk">https://www.gradsch.hku.hk</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:gradsch@hku.hk">gradsch@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 2857 3470</p> <p> Room P403, Graduate House</p>
Horizons Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information of a vast range of Mainland and international (ML/INT) learning opportunities for students</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://tl.hku.hk/horizons">http://tl.hku.hk/horizons</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:horizons@hku.hk">horizons@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 2857 8539</p> <p> Rm 136, 1/F, Main Building</p>
International Affairs Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange Programmes</li> <li>• Worldwide Plus Visiting Programmes</li> <li>• Short-term Programmes</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="http://www.aal.hku.hk/studyabroad">http://www.aal.hku.hk/studyabroad</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:goabroad@hku.hk">goabroad@hku.hk</a></p> <p> 2219 4549</p> <p> Global Lounge, G/F, Fong Shu Chuen Amenities Centre</p>



Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library collections, resources and databases</li> <li>• Learning and research support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌐 <a href="https://lib.hku.hk">https://lib.hku.hk</a></li> <li>✉ <a href="mailto:libis@hku.hk">libis@hku.hk</a></li> <li>☎ 3917 2203</li> <li>📞 5441 5441</li> <li>🏠 See <a href="https://lib.hku.hk/general/location/index.html">https://lib.hku.hk/general/location/index.html</a></li> </ul>
Scholarships Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarship openings, eligibility and application deadlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌐 <a href="http://www.scholarships.hku.hk">http://www.scholarships.hku.hk</a></li> <li>✉ <a href="mailto:scholarships@hku.hk">scholarships@hku.hk</a></li> <li>☎ 2219 4422</li> <li>🏠 9/F, Knowles Building</li> </ul>
School of Chinese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese language courses</li> <li>• Chinese language enhancement programmes</li> <li>• Chinese language courses (Cantonese and Putonghua) for international undergraduate students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌐 <a href="http://www.hku.hk/chinese">http://www.hku.hk/chinese</a></li> <li>✉ <a href="mailto:Chinese@hku.hk">Chinese@hku.hk</a></li> <li>☎ 3917 1199 (General)</li> <li>☎ 3917 2048 (Chinese Language Centre)</li> <li>☎ 3917 8476 (Chinese Language Enhancement Programme)</li> <li>🏠 Room 801, Run Run Shaw Tower</li> </ul>
ITS Service Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical issues regarding the SIS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌐 <a href="http://www.its.hku.hk/service-desk">http://www.its.hku.hk/service-desk</a></li> <li>✉ <a href="mailto:ithelp@hku.hk">ithelp@hku.hk</a></li> <li>☎ 3917 0123</li> </ul>

## Faculty Offices

(For general administrative support regarding student study matters)

Architecture	 faculty@arch.hku.hk  3917 2149  4/F, Knowles Building
Arts	 arts@hku.hk  3917 8977  Room 4.05. 4/F, Run Run Shaw Tower, Centennial Campus
Business and Economics	 fbe.undergrad@hku.hk  3917 5343  Room 401, 4/F, K. K. Leung Building
Dentistry	 dental@hku.hk  2859 0390  Prince Philip Dental Hospital, 34 Hospital Road, Sai Ying Pun
Education	 edfac@hku.hk  3917 6044  Room 420, 4/F, Meng Wah Complex
Engineering	 enggfac@hku.hk  3917 2803  Room 501, Haking Wong Building
Law	 lawfac@hku.hk  3917 2951  10/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower, Centennial Campus
Medicine	 medfac@hku.hk  3917 9346  2/F, Faculty Office, William MW Mong Block, 21 Sassoon Road
Science	 science@hku.hk  3917 2683  G/F, Chong Yuet Ming Physics Building
Social Sciences	 socscug@hku.hk  3917 1234  11/F, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus

# Key Information about the Curriculum at HKU



# KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THE CURRICULUM AT HKU

This section of the guide provides the details of the undergraduate curriculum structure.

## 15. What is the structure of the undergraduate curriculum?

The HKU curriculum adopts an enabling structure. The main components and credits requirement of a typical undergraduate curriculum are summarized in the following tables:

### 4-Year Curriculum

Component	Course	Number of Credits
Compulsory Courses	Common Core <sup>2</sup>	36 credits
	Chinese <sup>3</sup>	6-12 credits
	English <sup>4</sup>	6 credits
Specialization	Major	72-144 credits
	Minor	36-48 credits
Electives	Electives for all students	Remainder to complete 240 credits
Total Number of Required Credits <sup>1</sup>		240 credits

You should advise your advisee to check the undergraduate handbook provided by Faculty, or check the curriculum webpage <http://aao.hku.hk/sy3/plan-of-study/reg-and-syl> for the exact requirements of each component.

1. Students are allowed to take additional credits up to 6 credits per semester, or 12 credits per academic year, including the summer semester.
2. Students registered for double degree studies or BA Sc degree studies are required to successfully complete 24 credits of courses in the Common Core Curriculum within the curriculum of the first degree, as appropriate. However if the former students opt out of the double degree to focus on one degree only, they will need to make up the 12 credits of Common Core courses.
3. Putonghua-speaking students of the 4-year curriculum should take CUND9002 "Practical Chinese and Hong Kong Society" or CUND9003 "Cantonese for Non-Cantonese Speaking Students". Students who have not studied Chinese language during their secondary education / who have not attained the requisite level of competence in the Chinese language to take the curriculum-specific Chinese language enhancement course can apply (i) to take credit-bearing Cantonese or Putonghua language courses offered by the School of Chinese especially for international and exchange students (as listed at <http://www.chinese.hku.hk/main/undergraduate/chinese-courses-for-international-undergraduate-students>); OR (ii) to be exempted from the Chinese language requirement and take an elective course in lieu.
4. For Core University English, students with level 5 or above in HKDSE English, or non-JUPAS students with equivalent qualification, can

choose whether or not to take CAES1000. If they wish to take it, just enroll on it in the System, no prior application is needed; if they do not wish to take it, a free elective course in lieu is needed. The University will, by around Aug 30, automatically assign a CAES1000 class to those who need to take it but have not enrolled on it yet and those who have attempted to enroll on it but have not been successful yet. For the English in the Discipline (ED) requirement, (i) students who have passed the ED courses for a major but subsequently change that major are required to pass the ED course for the new Major, or either of the double Majors finally declared upon graduation irrespective of whether the second is offered within or outside of the candidates' home Faculty; (ii) students declaring double Majors can, if they fail in the ED course for one of the Majors, either (a) re-take and successfully complete that failed ED course, or (b) successfully complete the ED course for the other Major, irrespective of whether the major is offered within or outside of the students' home Faculty; (iii) students who undertake studies in double Majors or double degrees are not required to take a second ED course but may be advised by the Faculty to do so.



## 16. What are the common learning experiences of the curriculum?

### ➤ **Common Core**

- Designed to provide key common learning experience for all HKU students and to broaden their horizons beyond their chosen disciplinary fields of study.
- Includes four Areas of Inquiry (AoIs) in which the majority of students are required to take 36 credits of Common Core courses with at least one course from each of the four AoIs. These AoIs are: *Scientific and Technological Literacy, the Humanities, Global Issues* and *China: Culture, State and Society*. For some programmes, their students only need to take four Common Core courses.
- Offers two thematic clusters, 'Sustaining Cities, Cultures, and the Earth' and 'The Universe and the Question of Meaning'. Four Common Core courses form a Cluster and six Common Core courses form a Transdisciplinary Minor, all drawn from the same thematic cluster. ( available to students of the 2017-18 intake and thereafter ).
- While the Common Core requirements are mandatory for all undergraduate students to fulfill before graduation, both the Clusters and Transdisciplinary Minors are optional.
- For further information and course formats, please see <https://commoncore.hku.hk>.

### ➤ **Capstone Experience and URFP**

As an integration of knowledge in senior years of study, Capstone may take the forms of undergraduate research, field work projects, internship and so on, and is an integral part of the major programme or the "professional core" for professional curricula. It carries a minimum of 6 credits and is a graduation requirement.

Students with strong interest in research may enroll in Undergraduate Research Fellowship Programme in their final year or earlier if high potential is demonstrated. Those performed well may gain early admission to Research PG programmes at the University. For further information, please look at: <http://tl.hku.hk/staff/capstone-experience-and-urfp>.

### ➤ **Experiential Learning**

- At HKU, Faculties have been incorporating various forms of experiential learning into their curricula (either credit-bearing or non-credit bearing), such as internship, practicum and service learning. Students are required to tackle real-life issues by drawing on theoretical knowledge that they have learnt in the formal curriculum.
- The Gallant Ho Experimental Learning Centre (<http://ghelc.hku.hk>) is responsible for facilitating and promoting experiential learning at the University.
- For further information and experiential/ learning at ten Faculties, please look at: <http://tl.hku.hk/reform/experiential-learning>.

### ➤ **Overseas Experience**

The University commits to provide opportunities and support for students to undertake one international and one Mainland learning activity during their studies. These activities are broadly categorized as

- Exchange / Visiting
- Short-term Study / Study Trip
- Practical Experience
- Service Experience
- Research Internship
- Student-initiated ML / INT Learning Activities

Your advisees may refer to the HKU Horizons website (<http://tl.hku.hk/horizons>) for more information.



## 17. Can students take courses that are not offered by their home Faculties?

One important aim of the enabling curriculum is to “open up” the non-home Faculty curricula to all students. To facilitate students taking non-home Faculty courses, the following principles have been adopted:

- Except for courses belonging to the “professional core” of professional curricula, all compulsory and elective courses in major programmes of curricula that are offered as a second major or minor should be made available to all students to enable them to declare a major/minor, if they so choose.
- Some courses in the “professional core” may also be open to students of all Faculties.
- Students enrolled in “professional curricula” can also take courses offered by other Faculties as electives, a minor or even a major, within the credit limits specified by the University.

Note: Students are expected to meet pre-requisite requirements of courses, and no timetable clashes for courses are permitted.

## 18. What are the study load requirements?

The study load of a typical undergraduate programme is as follows:

4-Year Curriculum		
	Normative Period of Study	Maximum Period of Registration*
	4 years	6 years
<b>Normative Study Load</b>	240 credits (60x 4)	360 credits (60x 6)
<b>Maximum Study Load (credits x years)</b>	288 credits (72 x 4)	432 credits (72 x 6)

\* Maximum period of registration for individual degrees is specified in the curriculum regulations.

## 19. How can a student learn more about a study programme and its courses and assessment?

Every undergraduate curriculum or major/minor programme has provided a Credit Unit Statement for First Degree Curricula (see the QR Code below) defining the requirements (in terms of learning modes, study hours, contact hours, output requirements, etc.) of its standard 6-credit courses, the types of courses offered and the modes of assessment which students will find useful during programme/course selection. Information of specific courses can be found in Faculty / Department websites or the programme guides prepared by ITS.



Credit Unit  
Statement

## 20. How is GPA calculated?

'Grade Point Average' is a numerical measure of a candidate's academic achievement over a specified period of time, and is calculated by the total of grade points earned for each course attempted (including failed courses) and its credit value being divided by the total number of credits attempted. For the exact GPA calculation formula, please see <http://aao.hku.hk/glossary> under the term "Grade Point Average". Although official GPA calculations are displayed in a student's portal account, advisees can plan ahead with the GPA calculator at <http://aao.hku.hk/sy3/plan-of-study/cgpa-calculator>.



Grading System	
Grade	GP Scale
A+	4.3
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0

## 21. How is honours classification determined?

Honours classification shall be awarded in five divisions: First Class Honours, Second Class Honours Division One, Second Class Honours Division Two, Third Class Honours, and Pass. The classification of honours of students are determined by the Board of Examiners for the degree in accordance with the following Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) scores, with all courses taken (including failed courses) carrying equal weighting.

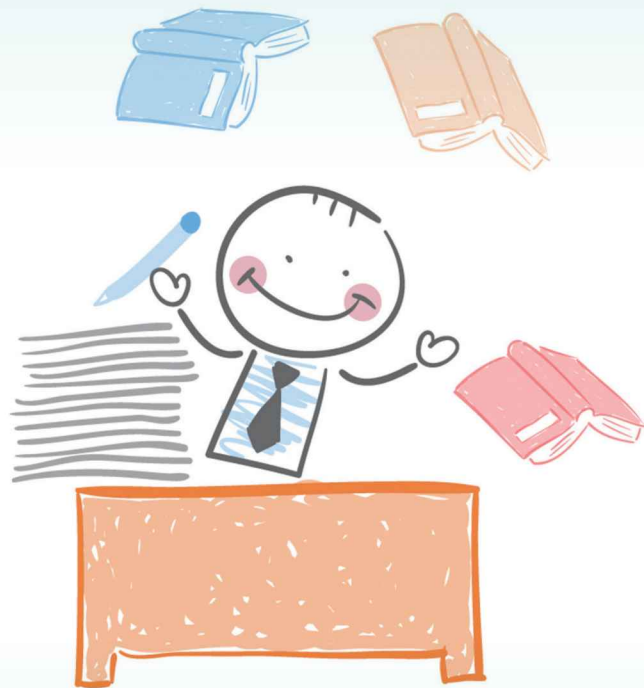
Class of Honours	CGPA Range
First Class Honours	3.60–4.30
Second Class Honours Division One	(2.40–3.59) 3.00–3.59
Division Two	2.40–2.99
Third Class Honours	1.70–2.39
Pass	1.00–1.69

## 22. Where can I find more information about academic policies and the curriculum structure?

- General Regulations, and Regulations for First Degree Curricula, Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Syllabuses:  
<http://aao.hku.hk/faculty-staff/cur-reg-date/syllabus>



# Appendix: The Structure of the Academic Advising System at HKU



# APPENDIX: THE STRUCTURE OF THE ACADEMIC ADVISING SYSTEM AT HKU

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## **(i) How is the HKU academic advising system structured?**

At HKU, advising service is made available to undergraduate students via four channels: AAO, Faculty, Halls and Residential Colleges and website. CEDARS also plays a part in the system through advising students on non-academic aspects which impact on studies. Inter-referrals among the units are common to form a comprehensive University advising network.

## (ii) What are the different roles of academic advisers in the University?

Position	Overview of Academic Advising Role
Faculty Academic Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current professors and teachers in Faculty</li> <li>• Principal academic adviser of students</li> <li>• Advise on Faculty and all study-related matters</li> <li>• Focus attention on academic planning for first-year students</li> <li>• Make appropriate referrals as necessary</li> </ul>
Faculty Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional administrative staff</li> <li>• Explain policies, regulations and procedures of Faculty</li> </ul>
Faculty Temporary Academic Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current teachers in Faculty</li> <li>• Specialized advisers to help home and non-home students explore major / minor and questions for a particular subject area</li> </ul>
AAO Academic Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional administrative staff</li> <li>• Advise on overall University regulations, general academic requirements, development of study plan, and academic progress</li> <li>• Advise on issues that involve more than one Faculty / unit and liaise between different units</li> </ul>
Faculty Student Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in second year or above with good academic standing selected / nominated by Faculty</li> <li>• Sharing study experience and provide general support to peers</li> <li>• Direct peers to appropriate units on campus</li> </ul>
Residential Student Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in second year or above with good academic standing and active performance in hall life selected by Hall Wardens / College Masters</li> <li>• Advice on academic matters and hall life, support academic activities in halls</li> <li>• Direct peers to appropriate units on campus</li> </ul>



## USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

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Some common questions your fellow students might ask about their studies are listed at <http://aao.hku.hk/faq>. There are also videos on academic success at <http://wp.cedars.hku.hk/web/faqvideos>. For other questions, please consult Faculty, Warden or Master.

### Other Materials

*Quick Smart Guide on Studies*



List of Available Majors/ Minors

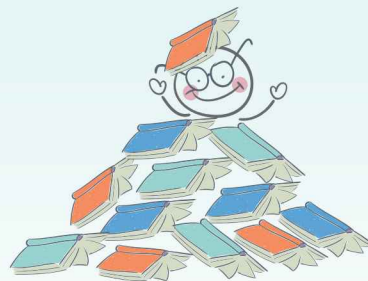


Academic Planning Sheet





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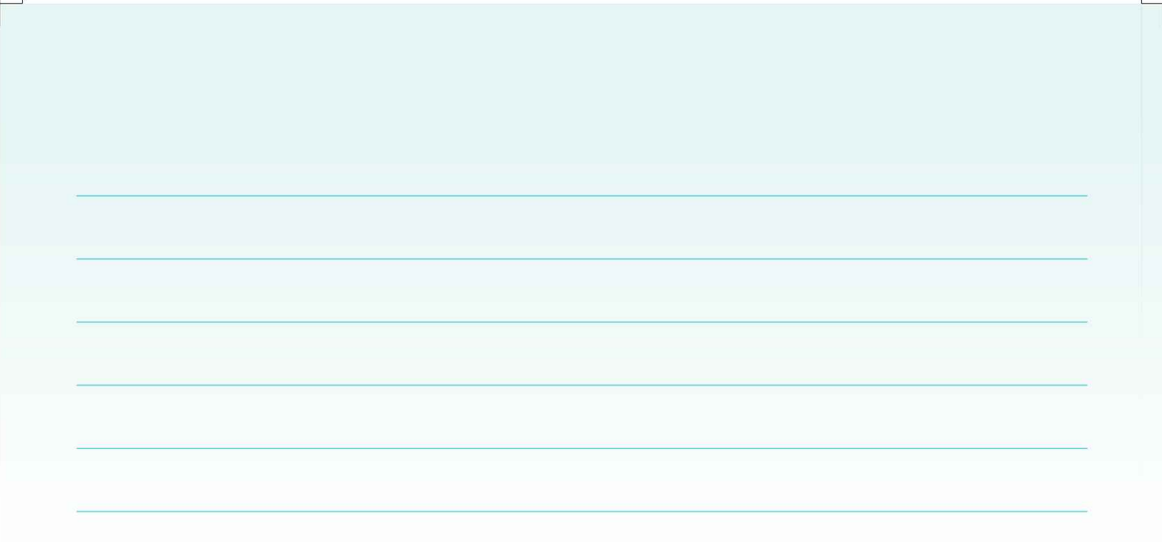
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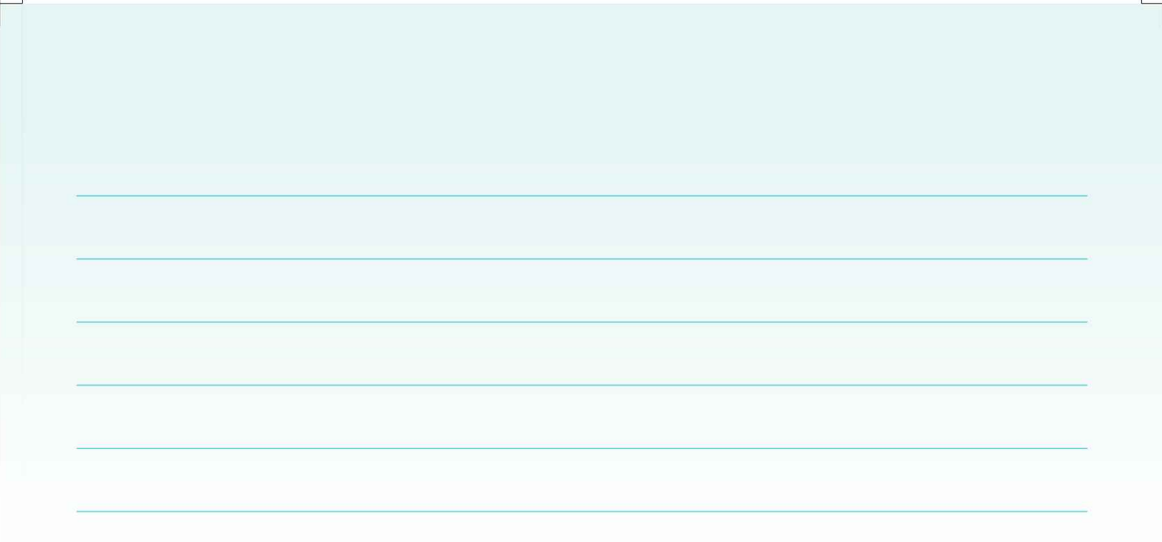
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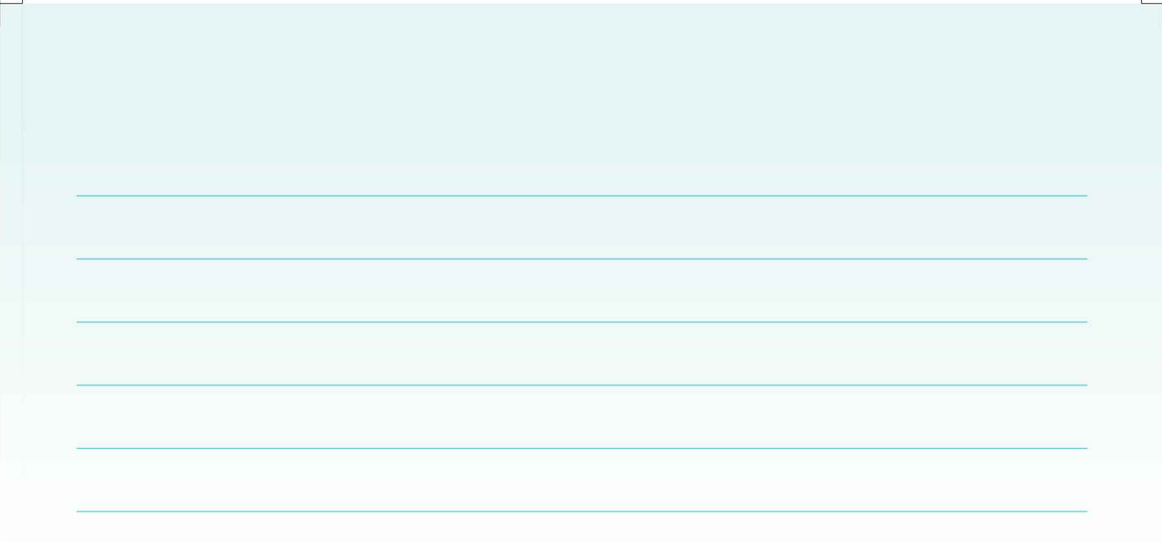
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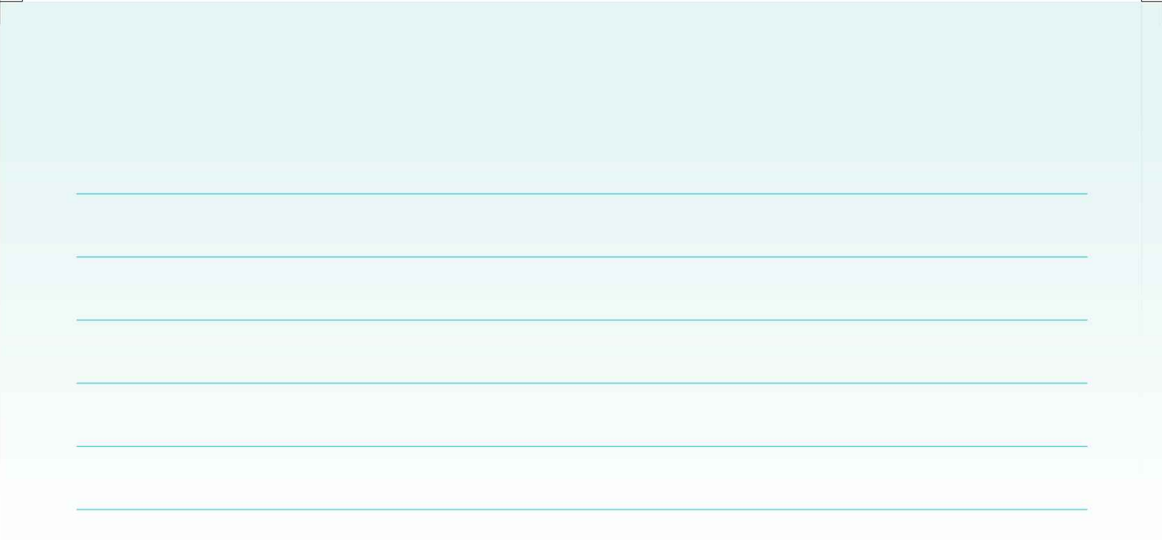
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### *Feedback*

If you have any suggestions about this guide or comments on your experience as a student adviser, please email AAO at [aaoffice@hku.hk](mailto:aaoffice@hku.hk)

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