



## Accessing Help & Support Remotely – The Advice Centre

As with most services, the Advice Centre is working remotely during the coronavirus lockdown, and we will mainly advise you initially via e-mail.

While you will still have contact with an adviser, we have suggestions and scenarios below which will be of assistance:

- Make best use of the time before accessing direct advice
- Bring focus to your key issue – so you get the most from adviser contact
- Use (and build on) the skills you already have

### Top Tip

In order to help us better advise you – make sure that **you include any related e-mails or other communication** that relates to your question.

Below are 4 common scenarios/problems students may raise, some suggested steps and how they may help.

Scenario 1 – It's Urgent	Suggested Option 1	Suggested Option 2
<i>My question is urgent, and I need a quick response.</i>	Be explicit in communication with our team if you have a deadline and any other key dates.	Keep a record of all the steps you are taking – so if responses are delayed you can demonstrate you did all you reasonably could.
<b>How the options may help</b>	Not only have you now told us it is urgent, you have more clearly told us why. We will do our best.	There are some things you and we cannot directly control. Taking all the steps you are able (and being able to show them) may help down the line.

Scenario 2 – Help me decide	Suggested Option 1	Suggested Option 2
Getting help with a decision: E.g. <i>should I go ahead with my student complaint.</i>	Draft a quick 'cost benefit analysis' – as simple as starting to write down the	Ask yourself ' <i>If a friend came to me – what might I advise them to consider?</i> '.



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	pros and cons of an option open to you.	
<b>How the options may help</b>	You'll have thought through the pros and cons before direct contact with an adviser and be able to make better use of the service.	All of us improve decision making when we take a step back. Listen to the advice you would give to others is one way of doing this

<b>Scenario 3 – It's complex</b>	<b>Suggested Option 1</b>	<b>Suggested Option 2</b>
<i>My issue is complicated so I must speak with an adviser soon.</i>	Any big challenge is likely to affect more than one aspect of your life – so think broadly about available support.	You got to university through hard work and academic ability. If responses are delayed use your excellent skills of research to inform your other options.
<b>How the options may help</b>	Adviser support will focus on practical matters while trusted friends may listen to how it has felt for you. Specialist services are there if your well-being is impacted.	It uses your research skills to inform you of wider information /support on offer. You may even develop your skills for the future.

<b>Scenario 4 – Outcomes</b>	<b>Suggested Option 1</b>	<b>Suggested Option 2</b>
<i>Have I got a strong case for an Academic Appeal or have my Special Considerations granted?</i>	Look through our advice information and put yourself in the position of a reviewer or panel. Ask yourself: <i>what are the strengths of my case and what may need work or explanation.</i>	Accept that no one can give you absolute certainty.
<b>How the options may help</b>	The strengths of a case are often clear, while you may be asked about your points where the positives are less obvious. Acknowledge likely questions or concerns - and consider your response.	It's helpful to focus your energy on what you can directly control. You cannot dictate the outcome, but you can ensure that you provided all the clearest information in the best way.

## Conclusion

The benefit of this approach is that you will communicate in a way which will help you get the advice that you need, identify wider sources of information available and think about strategies that help when an immediate response is not possible.