



SAILS Peer Mentoring Award

Top tips for helping mentees

Students can face many challenges when first arriving at University. For students to settle quickly it is essential that they receive the right help and support to overcome these.

Below are some of the issues new students may face and some suggestions as to how you as a mentor may be able to help:

No friendships or support groups

Some people find it harder than others to make friends and it can leave people feeling lonely and isolated. It can take time to build support networks and some new students may not know where to begin.

How can I help?

You could suggest ways of meeting people with similar interests; getting involved in a subject, sport or cultural society, attending social events organised by the department or joining relevant Facebook groups.

Finding the way around the University and City

Moving to a new area can be really overwhelming. You don't know where anything is and it can be difficult to find what you need.

How can I help?

It may be fun to do a campus tour; show the mentees key locations such as MyUniHub, the Library, Students' Union building, bus stops, food outlets and student support services. Ask your mentees if there is somewhere specific they need to find.

A map of Singleton Campus is [here](#).

A map of the Bay Campus is [here](#).

You may also want to give some advice about life in the City; how to get around, interesting places to visit, cheap venues and good shopping places. Use your knowledge and share your hints and tips!

Financial worries

Some mentees may be struggling financially; others may just need some help on how to budget and manage their money better.

How can I help?

If the mentee needs some guidance on money related issues such as budgeting or dealing with debt they could complete the Money@CampusLife [online modules](#). If they need further help they should make an appointment with [Money@CampusLife](#) through [MyUniHub](#). The team are there to help all Swansea University students with all student money related issues and will be able to give advice and support.

The mentee may also want to make an appointment with the Swansea Employability Academy ([SEA](#)) who can help in getting some part time work.

Being away from home

It is a real possibility that this is the first time that the mentee has lived away from home. Some might be missing home and their family and friends; others may be struggling to manage on their own.

How can I help?

Welfare@CampusLife provides online resources available to help students who are struggling. They can be found [here](#). You could also signpost the mentee to the College Information Office where there are trained staff who can help with these sorts of issues. If the mentee prefers they can contact [MyUniHub](#) where they will be directed to appropriate support.

The mentee might be struggling as they have no idea how to manage on their own; how to cook a meal or use the washing machine. You may be able to give some practical tips on these issues! If not, perhaps suggest they ask their housemates or warden to show them how the washing machine works. Maybe they could cook together or share recipes. The Money@CampusLife Instagram page has healthy, easy and cheap meal ideas and recipes.

Academic Concerns

New students may be faced with a number of academic challenges including:

- The wrong choice of course / HE altogether
- Struggling with the course requirements
- Difficulties with independent study
- Poor note taking skills, writing skills or time management skills
- Weak basic skills such as maths
- Concerns about assessments
- Study-life balance

How can I help?

There is a lot of support available for students who are struggling academically or who are worried they have chosen the wrong course. It is fine for you to give general information about particular courses, the nature of the coursework and support services available e.g. the Centre for Academic Success ([CAS](#)), but you should always direct the mentee to their Academic Mentor who can give specialist advice and support.

Low self-esteem and confidence issues

All these issues and difficulties could lead to a student having low self-esteem and confidence issues.

How can I help?

The student should be signposted to the College Information Office or MyUniHub so they can access the appropriate help and support.