



UNIVERSITY OF  
LIVERPOOL

Widening  
Participation  
& Outreach



STUDENT  
ADVOCATE

HANDBOOK



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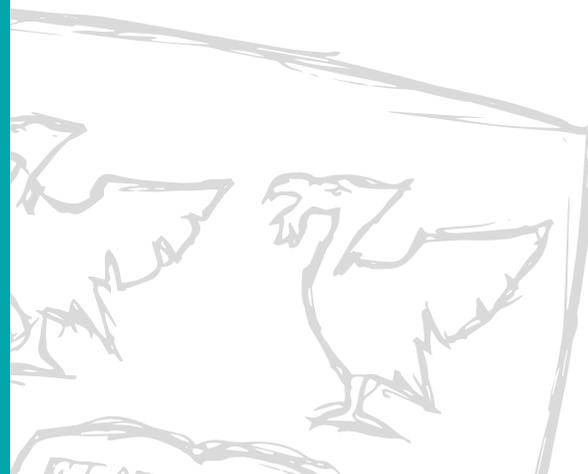
Est. 1881  
For advancement  
of learning and  
ennoblement  
of life.

# WELCOME TO THE TEAM

The University of Liverpool is proud of its position as one of the most successful Russell Group universities for widening participation in high-quality, degree-level education. We have a strong commitment to widening access to our programmes and building long term relationships in schools and the community. We work in partnership with academic and professional services staff across the University and others committed to this area of work in the UK.

The University’s Widening Participation and Outreach (WPO) team works to inspire, engage and enable those who would not traditionally consider higher education to fulfil their potential by raising their awareness, challenging barriers and providing opportunities. Our work over the past 15 years has been highly effective across a wide range of activities and initiatives targeted from primary school age to post-16 students.

Student Advocates at the University of Liverpool are vital for all our work – they influence and guide us as well as energise and enliven the schemes we run. Student Advocates provide the bridge between school and university and play key roles such as attainment mentors, session facilitators, e-mentors, events assistants and summer school support. We hope this guide will encourage you and support current and future Student Advocates in their work with the Widening Participation and Outreach team.



# YOUR ROLE AS A STUDENT ADVOCATE

The Widening Participation and Outreach team's aim is to raise awareness of higher education and what it can offer, as well as raising the confidence and aspirations of young people in education, and supporting them on their learning journey, with both their choices and attainment.



We work with a wide range of young people from local primaries, secondary schools, colleges and community groups, delivering aspiration raising activities such as visits to the University, talks in schools, residentials and a variety of mentoring programmes. We also work with learners from targeted cohorts including students from BME backgrounds, Looked After Children, Young Adult Carers and disabled students. Through this outreach work we are able to dispel some of the myths about university and explain what it is really like to be a student.

Student Advocates are an essential part of this work, acting as positive role models by sharing their own experiences, insights and subject knowledge. The Student Advocate role is extremely diverse and can include facilitating activity sessions, delivering talks, supervising young people on visits to the University and mentoring at GCSE and A level. The work is demanding, but fun and extremely rewarding!

Some of the activities you might work on as a Student Advocate include:

- In-school mentoring
- Campus visits
- In-school talks
- Evening mentoring sessions
- Summer Schools
- Workshop facilitation
- Offsite trips to partner organisations and universities
- Higher Education and Careers Fairs.

*Being an SA makes me feel more included within the University. I absolutely love the job and only wish I had found out about it earlier. It's the best job ever, we are looked after so well and it is so rewarding.*

# SAMPLE CAMPUS BASED MENTORING EVENING - YEAR 11

Remember, this is just an example, programmes can vary from project to project.

## Timetable Item



**4.00pm – Young people arrive at the University of Liverpool**

## Advocates



You will wait outside with a Project Officer for pupils to arrive from schools or home. Pupils often arrive by taxi, but might be on foot if they choose to make their own way. You should escort arriving pupils to the designated mentoring rooms and settle them in, then wait on further instructions from the Project Officer.

**4.15pm – Welcome, mentee matching and mentoring**

The Project Officer will welcome the mentees and match them with mentors according to the subject requirements of the mentee.

Once matched, find a suitable space to sit with your mentee and start to work with them; this might be homework, coursework or revision. If they haven't brought work with them, we can provide past papers and revision materials.

**5.30pm – Evening meal**

Hot food is provided for mentors and mentees.

**6.00pm – Mentoring continued**

After everyone has finished eating, please ask your mentees to return plates and cutlery to the food service area, then return to mentoring.

**7.00pm – Depart**

When mentoring finishes, you should support the Project Officer in getting mentees into their taxis home, then help to tidy the room and put mentoring resources away.



# SAMPLE VISIT DAY FOR PRE-16 STUDENTS

This is an example of a visit day that you could work on as an advocate – remember as it is an example, times and programmes can vary greatly!

## Timetable Item



### 9.00am – Student Advocate briefing

## Summary



The Project Officer running the day will hold a briefing about the day, providing information on the school attending, and reminders about health, safety and safeguarding. You will be given a programme, much like this one, with information on times and rooms.

### 9.50am – Young people arrive at the University of Liverpool

You will wait outside with the Project Officer for the young people to arrive, you would then walk them to the allocated room for the welcome talk. You are responsible for moving safely around campus, for example using crossings.

You will then sit the young people down and wait for instructions from the Project Officer.

### 10.00am – Welcome and group allocation

During the welcome talk you will be asked to introduce yourself, your subject and an interesting fact about your studies at the University – for example a year abroad.

### 10.15am – Carousel of activities x2 We have a range of activities which we deliver, some of which are curriculum themed, some of which are general HE themed.

You should encourage the young people to engage with the activities, and support staff delivering the sessions if needed.

If there are any issues during the session you would report these to the Project Officer.

### 10.55am – Refreshment break

Young people will be given refreshments, and you should do a toilet trip here. Ensure that the toilets are empty first, and count young people in and out.

### 11.15am – Carousel of activities x2

As above.



## Timetable Item



### 12.00pm – Lunch



## Summary



During the break you will sit with the young people, who will probably have lots of questions about student life.

You need to make sure that rubbish goes in the bin and the room is left tidy. You might also need to do another toilet trip.

### Lunch is provided for Student Advocates.

### 12.30pm – 'Interview your student' and graduation photographs

'Interview your student' is one of our core activities, which might be in a booklet, or distributed as a hand out. It prompts students to find out more about student life from you.

### 1.00pm – Campus tour

You will take your group around the campus, showing them the highlights and giving interesting facts. You'll see a campus tour beforehand, and won't be on your own while you are a new advocate – you can even be partnered up with a more experienced Student Advocate at first.

### 1.50pm – Evaluations

Young people will be given an evaluation form about their day, you should help them to complete it and encourage them to write as much as they can. You might need to provide vocabulary or spelling help.

### 2.15pm – Certificate ceremony

When your group is called by the Project Officer, bring the children to the front of the room and help them collect their certificates and prizes.

### 2.30pm – Depart

You will walk your group to the coach, moving across the campus safely. The Project Officer will do a final headcount before the group depart.

# THE BASICS

## Training

Student Advocates will receive induction training, covering areas such as safeguarding, health and safety, our programmes and most importantly your role as an advocate. For some programmes, such as mentoring or summer schools, you might need to attend extra training to prepare you for the role.

Additional training may also be offered to support your development, in areas such as first aid and mental health awareness.

## DBS Check

To successfully work as a Student Advocate, you must submit an application for, and receive back a satisfactory DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check, which the WPO team will both support you in applying for, and meet the cost of. The DBS certificate will go to your home address, and you must bring it in as soon as you receive it – you cannot work until then.

## Offers of work

We offer work through an online system. You should make sure that you access the system regularly to manage your profile, accept work and manage the job offers you have accepted.

## What to wear?

You will be given a Student Advocate t-shirt and sweatshirt, these should be worn when working on campus. Otherwise, make sure you are dressed appropriately!

# CODE OF CONDUCT

- All Student Advocates must remember that they are representing the University of Liverpool at all times, and must therefore act responsibly and respectfully toward others while on duty
- Student Advocates must not involve themselves in any unauthorised activity that may cause injury to students, staff or themselves
- Student Advocates must disclose any accident or incident to the lead member of staff on the event – usually the Project Officer
- Student Advocates must attend all compulsory training sessions, as well as training sessions or briefings relevant to particular projects or events they are working on. You must adhere to the rules and regulations outlined in these sessions
- Student Advocates must not purchase or consume alcohol or take any illegal substances while on duty
- Student Advocates will receive full safeguarding training, and must follow the rules, suggested behaviours and procedures outlined in this training at all times
- Mobile phones must be switched to silent mode during all formal sessions, unless stated otherwise by the Project Officer
- Student Advocates must follow all emergency procedures; for example, in the event of an accident, fire drill or safeguarding incident. These will be outlined in full during training
- Project Officers may from time to time inform Student Advocates of confidential information about pupils, such as medical needs or home life circumstances, in order for these to be given consideration or sensitivity during activities. Student Advocates must respect that this is confidential information and must not share it unnecessarily.

# HINTS AND TIPS

Here are a few things to remember...

- Keep us informed of any changes to your contact numbers or preferred email address
- Regularly check your email account for communication from the WPO team, such as training opportunities
- Take responsibility for your studies – make sure you manage your time well and any work for us doesn't negatively impact your studies
- Have a positive and professional approach to WPO staff, other Student Advocates and young people
- Act as a positive role model for the young people and be a representative of the University
- Be friendly and approachable at all times
- Use appropriate language and conversation topics for the age group you are working with
- Try to involve all young people in activities and be inclusive at all times
- Treat everyone with equal respect – Student Advocates, WPO staff, school staff and young people
- Always ensure everyone in your group is safe
- Take responsibility for your own learning and reflect on your development as a Student Advocate – take as many of the training opportunities as you can
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Widening Participation and Outreach team.



*If you have any concerns,  
no matter how small,  
tell us!*



## IF PROBLEMS OCCUR...

### Attending Work: Absences and Punctuality

It is important in your role as a Student Advocate that you keep a record of the shifts you have agreed to work, and attend all shifts. If you are unable to work after accepting a shift, it's important to contact the Project Officer with at least 24 hours' notice, except in the event of emergency which prevents you from working.

You should also make sure that you are on time for any work you agree to undertake. If you are going to be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, please call either the Project Officer or the WPO office to let them know you will be late, and what time to expect you.

### Serious Misbehaviour

In the event of a Student Advocate taking part in a serious incident of anti-social behaviour, such as fighting, bullying, the use of homophobic, sexist or racist language, the consumption of alcohol or illegal substances while on duty, or other behaviours which put staff or young people at risk, the Student Advocate would risk being excluded from all future employment with WPO.

### Support While Working as a Student Advocate

The WPO team is happy to support you, both in your role with us, and in your general University experience. We will keep in regular touch, through email, newsletters and social media, to provide useful information, offer support and guidance and gather feedback.

### Who Should I Contact Within Widening Participation?

If you have any queries about a shift you are working, please contact the Project Officer running the event. Project Officers contact details can be found on our webpage [www.liverpool.ac.uk/widening-participation/about-us](http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/widening-participation/about-us)

Alternatively you can contact the office directly at T: +44 (0) 151 794 4413 or E: [widpart@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:widpart@liverpool.ac.uk)



## STUDENT ADVOCATE TESTIMONIALS

Towards the end of each academic year we will send out a survey to learn more about your experience of the Student Advocate role. This survey gives you the opportunity to feedback to us, telling us what you have enjoyed about the role and what you would like to see the role include in the future. We really value your feedback, so please fill it in! Here is some of our most recent feedback:

*I've enjoyed interacting with young people, informing them of their options and all the opportunities open to them and making a difference in some of their lives, by showing them what's possible.*

*I'm a lot more confident in myself, and have found working as an SA had a positive effect on my final years as there are a lot of public speaking components that I handled better with the experience and interpersonal skills gained as an advocate. It's allowed me to meet a lot of brilliant people that I wouldn't have otherwise.*

*I loved mentoring the most because I saw a clear difference in the individual I was working with over the weeks and it was incredibly rewarding for us both.*

*I loved the way children reacted when we talked about uni. They seemed to be so interested!*

University of Liverpool  
Widening Participation and Outreach

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