

Student guide to getting the most out of undergraduate and masters supervision

By connecting with your supervisor you will have someone to talk to about your academic progress and all other aspects of your life at the University. Your supervisor knows the University well and can assist you with any problems or issues you may have, they can offer valuable advice and support and can help you get the most out of your time at York.

The role of the supervisor

1 Hold sessions

Hold supervisor meetings regularly within each term to check how well you are doing and provide encouragement and support.

2 Discuss progress

Talk through your progress, discuss your feedback and assessment scores and help identify opportunities to develop your personal skills.

3 Help with problems

Be your first point of contact for academic and personal problems which may impact your studies.

4 Signpost

Signpost you to other sources of help, advice and support for any issues or problems which go beyond your supervisory session.

5 Promote activities

Talk to you about your life at University and encourage you to take part in non-academic activities.

6 Plan for employability

Encourage you to start planning your career and to build skills and experience to help with your future employability.

What undergraduate students at York have said:

Supervisors provide valuable support – just knowing that there is someone who cares about your grades. It is good when you have a friendly relationship rather than just lecturer/ student. They're interested in your daily life and how you do in your exams.

In your first year it really helps you to feel part of your department and lets you know what's going on in the department. They help you understand the marking system and deal with questions that other lecturers don't answer.

My supervisor is the only one who encourages me to do things outside academic work to reduce the pressure.

Students should

1 Attend sessions

You should meet with your supervisor as arranged within each term. Meet early and make more appointments as you need to. Don't feel you are bothering them – they are here to support you.

2 Prepare for sessions

Know what you want to talk about when you meet with your supervisor. Make notes on what's happening in your studies, your university life and any issues or worries you might have.

3 Ask for advice

Your supervisor is your first point of contact. It's important you tell them early of anything that might affect your studies. Also ask for support and advice for any opportunities you want to explore.

4 Help yourself

Tell them what's happening in your life. Only then can they help you identify the support you need. Then it's up to you to act on any advice.

5 Feedback and marks

Ask your course tutors to explain specific feedback on your marks. Talk to your supervisor about your general progress, how you think you are doing and if you have any issues with the teaching on your course.

6 Talk about the good stuff

Keep your supervisor updated with the good things you are doing or trying to achieve, and your career aspirations. One day they will write you a reference – so make sure they know all about you.