

## **Student Guide to Learning Analytics**

### **Introduction**

This guide sits alongside the University's [Student Engagement Policy](#) and the [Learning Analytics Code of Practice](#). A key principle of the Code of Practice is to be completely transparent about all aspects of our use of learning analytics. The University wants you to understand exactly what data is being collected, how it is being processed and what we will be doing with the information. This document provides these details and will be updated as our use of learning analytics develops.

### **What is learning analytics and what is it used for?**

The “digital footprints” you leave when you use Blackboard and other University systems combined with grades, attendance, and your past academic history provides additional information to you and staff to support your learning. The University collects and uses data in order to improve student experience and learning.

The resulting picture can give you a better idea of how you are engaging with your learning experience. It can also help the University to understand how it can best support you to meet your goals and achieve your full potential at Sheffield Hallam University. This support may be initiated by your Academic Adviser, Student Support Adviser, a member of the UK Visa and Immigration Compliance team (if you are an international student), or a member of the Student Success and Engagement team. This may include:

- Staff contacting you based on the analytics if it is considered that you may benefit from additional support.
- Prompts or suggestions sent to you via email.

### **Learning analytics will not be used for:**

***This data will not be used to predict outcomes and it will not be used for any academic assessment purposes and will not contribute in any way to grades. It is simply a tool to improve engagement and learning experience.***

### **What data is being collected for learning analytics?**

The following data is being used for learning analytics, in compliance with the Data Protection laws, and more specifically in accordance with the Data Protection Principles, the University's [Information Governance Policy](#) and [Student Privacy Notice](#).

- Background Information: your name, identifiers used by the University, date of birth, declared disabilities, contact details, whether you are an overseas student, and contact details.
- Details about your course, the modules you are taking and your tutors.
- Details of your assessments, marks and grades obtained.
- Details of your digital footprint, such as activity in Blackboard: logins, resources viewed, assessments submitted and graded; and Library access and use of resources.

## **Attendance monitoring**

When you become a student at Sheffield Hallam you are expected to commit to actively attending and participating in all learning activities on your timetable and participating in the group or independent learning activities associated with your module learning experience. This includes learning activities taking place online and on campus. Attending regularly and engaging with everything your course has to offer gives you the best chance to succeed and get value.

It is also worth considering your fellow students and tutors, as low attendance can impact on their experience and morale too.

We have introduced a new way to register your attendance at lectures, seminars, and other timetabled events. Your tutor will now provide a 4 or 5-digit code at the start of the session which you can use to 'check-in' via the [Study Goal progressive web app](#).

## **Data security**

Your data is subject to strict security procedures in compliance with the Data Protection laws. Only those members of staff who have a professional requirement to support you are permitted to view the analytics about you individually. In particular, your Academic Adviser and Student Support Adviser will be able to view data about your engagement and attainment.

## **How do I engage with learning analytics?**

Many students, particularly when starting university, do not have an accurate perception of how their learning is progressing. Sheffield Hallam's use of learning analytics and student access to Study Goal, will give you access to information on your engagement in:

- Blackboard
- Attendance

Relevant staff will also have access to your overall engagement based upon the above listed data sources.

Study Goal is a web-based application accessed via: <https://shu.studygoal.jisc.ac.uk>.



## How can learning analytics help me?

You can also use Study Goal to record your own study data, set goals and work on your own time management if you wish to. You can read about Study Goal on MyHallam: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/myhallam/study/study-goal>.

Learning Analytics also helps you by giving your Academic Adviser richer information on your progress, which they may use to discuss your progress in regular meetings, or contact you to check you are on track, or to arrange a meeting to review your progress. Your Academic Adviser will also take notes about your meetings for accurate record keeping.

If you have any concerns about the University using your data for the purposes of Learning Analytics, do discuss these with your Academic Adviser.

## Legal bases used for including data in Learning Analytics

Universities are designated as 'public authorities' for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the bill extends the definition to all bodies subject to the Freedom of Information Act).

[Guidance on the GDPR from the Information Commissioner Office](#) indicates that the public task basis is likely to apply to the data processing as learning analytics relates to the University's core learning and teaching functions plus how we support student retention, progression and attainment.

***Student Experience, Teaching and Learning  
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Contact us: [setl@shu.ac.uk](mailto:setl@shu.ac.uk)***