

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PERSONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS ON TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

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Quality Assurance Version Control Log			
Version	Author/reviewer	Date	Highlighted updates/changes
0	Quality Office	July 2018	Quality assurance document and version controls added.
1	Quality Office	August 2019	Minor text amendments to reflect new governance naming structures. Formatting updates
2	Dean of Personal Tutoring	February 2021	Minor updates to reflect change of role names and reporting structures.
3	Dean of Personal Tutoring	June 2021	Updates to Role Descriptor for Personal tutoring

### Purpose

- 1 This Code of Practice sets out the University's policy on Personal Support for Students. The Code applies to all students on taught programmes. This includes all Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students on full-time campus based, part-time or distance learning programmes. Students on a Year Abroad, a Year in Industry or who are re-sitting without residence should continue to have access to personal support. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that students have appropriate personal support, recognizing that each student is an individual and therefore Personal Tutoring is the primary form of support.

The Code is reviewed and re-issued annually with any significant amendments being approved by the Education Committee (formerly the Learning and Teaching Committee). The Framework for monitoring the operation of the system is set out in Appendix 1.

### 1. Principles

- 1.1 Each school must have in place systems for supporting all students which provide:
  - a) regular academic support;

- b) crisis support and signposting to relevant university services;
  - c) reflection on each student's progress and development of their academic and transferable skills, using (but not limited to) feedback from assessed work;
  - d) access to careers information.
- 1.2 The responsibility for initiating contact in respect of regular personal support lies with the school.
- 1.3 The responsibility for initiating contact in respect of crisis support or additional requests for guidance lies with the student, but on the understanding that clear arrangements are in place to facilitate that contact. This information should be readily available in programme handbooks, online, and communicated to students during induction to each year of study.
- 1.4 Students and staff have equal responsibility for developing and maintaining the relationship.
- 1.5 Staff providing personal support for students must receive training. Training will include information regarding University services, and how to appropriately direct students to the relevant support service when the matter is outside the tutor's area of expertise (e.g. careers advice or well-being). It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that training that is developed by our university in these areas is delivered to those responsible for personal tutoring with a school.
- 1.6 In-person training is strongly recommended; it is an essential component of new staff induction, and is mandatory for all Senior Tutors. In addition to centrally provided training and development, there must also be briefings by the School in relation to the content of this Code of Practice.

## **2 Operation of the Personal Tutor System**

- 2.1. Each student must be allocated a Personal Tutor at the start of their programme.
- 2.2 The school must notify the student and the University Registry of this allocation, and of any subsequent changes to this allocation. The school must also publish in the school handbook the procedures whereby students can apply to change their Personal Tutor.
- 2.3 Joint degree students must be allocated a Personal Tutor from their Lead school, but must also have access to academic support in both disciplines. Students studying a Year in Industry/Year Abroad programme must be allocated a key contact in their school, and partner institution/company, in addition to their Personal Tutor. Re-sit without residence students should maintain contact with their Personal Tutor throughout the year.
- 2.4 The allocation of staff to the role of Personal Tutor can be undertaken in number of ways, appropriate to the size and mode of the programme, for example, Campus Based or Distance Learning.
- 2.5 Tutors must have knowledge and understanding of the student's programme of study. Schools should ensure that the number of tutees allocated to Tutors is at an appropriate level to ensure that they can have meaningful contact with each of their personal tutees.
- 2.6 Students should be allocated a Personal Tutor within the first week of their programme.
- 2.7 Senior tutors must provide a personal tutoring handbook to those responsible for personal tutoring. This handbook is based on a centrally provided, and annual updated template which is then updated to reflect the needs of tutoring within that school or its programmes.

### **3 Roles and responsibilities**

- 3.1 The role and responsibilities of Personal Tutoring are in Appendix 3.
- 3.2 Schools or programmes may choose to incorporate additional responsibilities into personal tutoring, such as personal development planning. If so, this must be communicated to tutors and students.
- 3.3 To fulfil these responsibilities, those involved in tutoring must try to develop and maintain an understanding of relevant university regulations and procedures, the courses that tutees undertake and student obligations. They should also engage enthusiastically in relevant training and development activities.

## **2. Role, responsibilities and appointment of the Senior Tutor**

### **Appointment:**

- a) Each Department or School appoints a Senior Tutor to fulfil the responsibilities set out in this Code. Depending on the size and make-up of the Department, this role can be split between individuals.
- b) Nominations for the role should be confirmed and approved at a College Education Committee. The Education Committee should be notified of each appointment.
- c) The length of term for a Senior Tutor is 3 years. This term is renewable.

### **It is the role of the Senior Tutor to:**

- a) Monitor the implementation of the Personal Tutor system in accordance with this Code of Practice including, but not limited to, ensuring all students are allocated a Personal Tutor, that meetings are taking place at the requisite frequency, that records of meetings are being kept, and that tutors receive support and guidance required to fulfil their role.
- b) Help the College Education Committee and Dean of Personal Tutoring to identify general trends, such as good practice and commonly reported matters, from Personal Tutors and Tutees. To aid this process, they must offer the opportunity for both Tutors and tutees to offer feedback at least once per year.

Senior Tutors will be the first point of contact for Personal Tutors. Reasons for contact include:

- a) if the Personal Tutor feels ill equipped or needs further guidance in supporting a student;
- b) A Personal Tutee wishes to escalate issues relating to process.

Senior Tutors will be the point of contact for Personal Tutees if:

- a) a change of Personal Tutor is requested;
- b) a Personal Tutee wishes to escalate issues relating to process

Senior Tutors will liaise with key staff contact responsible for supporting Joint Honours and Major- Minor students.

- 3.4 It is a student's responsibility to:

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- a) Respond to contact from their Personal Tutor (contact here includes invitations to face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and e-mail).
- b) Take the initiative in instigating meetings or contact if the need arises, seeking timely advice from their Tutor when faced with academic, course assessment, personal or other issues which require support.
- c) Behave in accordance with the school personal tutoring provision, including but not limited to: providing examples of work with feedback to discuss; attending group tutorials; be willing to discuss their own academic development.

### 3.5 It is a School's responsibility to:

- a) draw the attention of staff and students to this Code of Practice annually and circulate any additional school guidelines via school meetings;
- b) ensure that relevant information concerning tutees is passed on to tutors in a timely manner;
- c) implement a programme of scheduled meetings between Tutors and tutees across the academic year, including recommendations regarding the main focus for each of these meetings, see Appendix 2 for an example.
- d) Have an agreed and published arrangement for dealing with students requiring immediate advice or assistance; this means that, when a Tutor is not available, there should be a clear alternative contact. Such arrangements for crisis support should be clearly publicized to students, academic and administrative staff.
- e) Ensure that, if a Personal Tutor becomes unavailable for any reason for a significant period of time, a new Tutor is allocated and that this is advised to the student and to Registry. This includes students who are re-sitting without residence.
- f) Report the allocation of personal tutoring and advise on the workload requirements for personal tutoring within a school, to ensure that tutees are able to have meaningful contact with staff.

### 3.6 It is a College's responsibility to:

- a) in the case of joint or Major/Minor degree students, ensure that liaison takes place across the schools to ensure students have access to appropriate support;

### 3.7 It is the Institution's responsibility to:

- a) provide training to all members of staff who are Personal Tutors, or staff who have regular contact with students;
- b) appoint a Dean of Personal Tutoring to uphold the Code and intervene on matters of personal support for students

## 4. Monitoring

- 4.1 Operation of the Personal Tutor system should be a standing item for student-staff committees and school staff meetings.
- 4.2 Senior Tutors should report annually to College Education committees regarding the operation of the Personal Tutor system within their area of responsibility. This report should

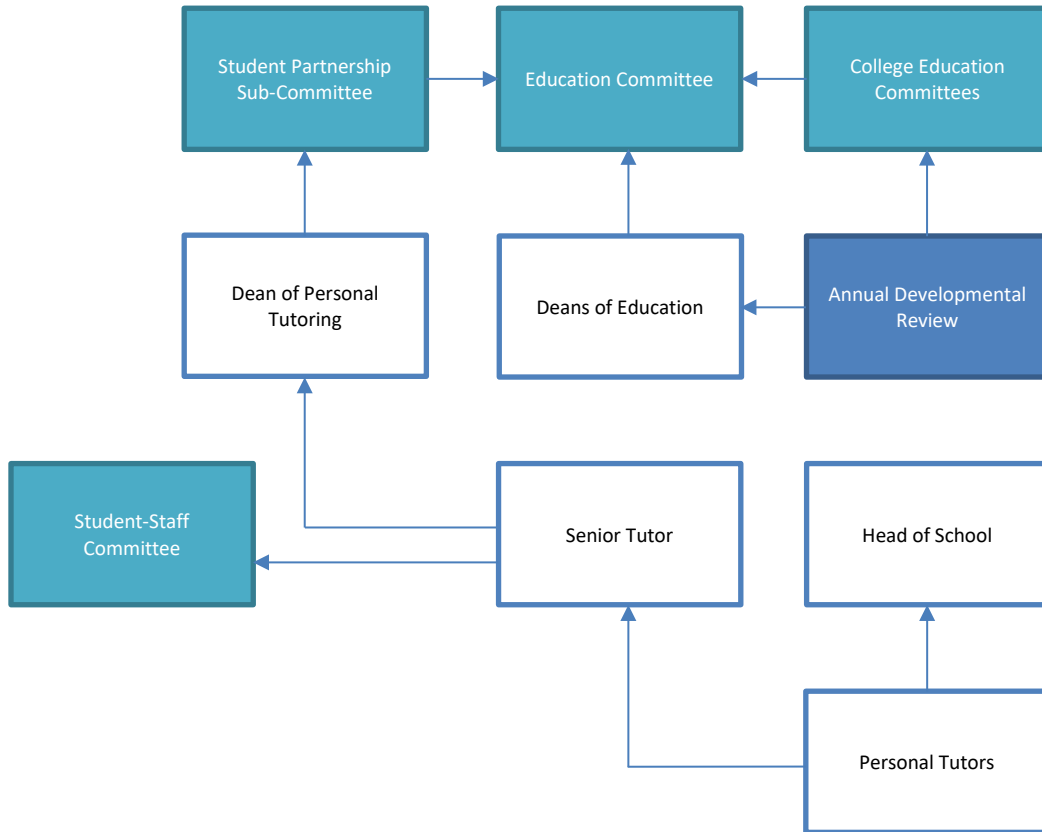
include:

- a) the maximum number of Personal tutees allocated to any one tutor;
- b) any training or induction activities offered to tutors and the perceived effectiveness of that training;
- c) how the school has monitored personal support for students;
- d) the chosen model used for Personal Tutoring, providing evidence that the model is effective.

4.3 College Education committees and Dean of Personal Tutoring should include information on personal support for students annually to the Student Partnership Sub-Committee so that good practice and any issues can be disseminated across the University.

**5. Appendix 1:**

**Personal Tutoring Reporting and Monitoring Framework**



## 6. Appendix 2:

### Example programme (3 year, campus-based)

The following is offered as one example way in which meetings between a personal tutor and their tutees could be constructed. It is intended to offer inspiration for discipline and context specific development rather than as an “off the shelf” template. Senior Tutors are able to supply other models and guidance.

#### Year 1

Meeting	Term/timing	Format	Content
1	Autumn Week 1	Group	<b>Main focus:</b> Introductions: Who’s who? Role of the tutor. Checking contact details accurate and complete. Student and PT responsibilities within the scheme. Expectations, difference school v university. <b>Note:</b> Opportunity to request personal meetings if want to discuss confidential information.
2	Autumn Week 6 (approx.)	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> student sends/brings feedback on first coursework assignment for discussion. Tutor provides guidance on what the feedback means and explore with the student ways in which they can improve. PT should not have to read through the work but should simply offer an interpretation of the feedback that has been provided. This advice and guidance will help in preparation of next work. <b>Other activities:</b> check on how student is settling into University and if there are any specific problems.
3	Spring Late Feb	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Discuss first semester exam results. <b>Other activities:</b> Promote importance of using summer vacation to develop skills and experience. Suggest drafting of CV.
4	Summer First week	Group	<b>Main focus:</b> Advice on module selection for subsequent year(s) <b>Other activities:</b> Additional exam advice.

#### Year 2

Meeting	Timing	Format	Content
1	Autumn Week 1-2	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Welcome back, different expectations in year 2
2	Autumn e.g. Week 8-9	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Feedback on two pieces of coursework. <b>Other activities:</b> Preparation advice for Jan exams, Advice about securing summer vacation work.
3	Spring e.g. Week 19-20	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Project and module selection advice. Exam feedback <b>Other activities:</b> Student to bring a copy of their current CV. Advice from tutor. Filed by tutor, student encouraged to send a revised version whenever they have one.
4	Post-exams	Group	<b>Main focus:</b> General catch-up, advice about dissertation.

**Year 3**

Meeting	Timing	Format	Content
1	Autumn Week 2-3	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Review exam performance. Encouragement and advice about getting going with dissertation. <b>Other activities:</b> Planning for life after university. Applying for PhDs? Findaphd.com
2	Autumn	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> dissertation progress <b>Other activities:</b> Catch up re application for jobs/further study
3	Spring e.g. Weeks 12-13	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> Discuss project write-up, CV update, early intervention on Final exams
4	Post exams	1-2-1	<b>Main focus:</b> General catch-up. Post exam discussion. Careers advice, CV update. Advice about asking for references. [updated CV to be logged with tutor AND dissertationsupervisor for future reference writing]

**7. Appendix 3: Role of Personal Tutoring****To know your tutees**

*Each student should have someone that knows them, their academic progress, and issues they have faced. When others wish to discuss a student, the tutor should be able to help.*

- Arrange meetings according to their school's schedule and in response to tutee requests.
- Try to develop a positive, trusting, respectful relationship.
- Keep notes that will help with future interactions and tutee support.
- Write references.

**Advising and problem solving**

*Students benefit from help to solve problems related to their academic life and from the knowledge of those more familiar with our university.*

- Respond positively as a point of contact within the timeframe specified by their school.
- Provide advice and practical support related to university and programme processes and structures.
- Provide guidance to support tutees' decision-making and problem-solving in relation to education issues.
- Engage with others to benefit from specialist knowledge or skills when supporting a tutee. Refer tutees when appropriate.

**Personal Support**

Personal tutoring is part of a tutee's support network. Tutors provide a reliable, personal link with their university. A tutor should be available for tutees to discuss issues and proactively respond to concerns or disclosures.

- Be available to discuss a tutee's concerns or successes.
- Contribute, as required, to engagement and progression monitoring processes.
- Look for signs of concern regarding tutees' wellbeing.
- Signpost or refer tutees to appropriate services for health and wellbeing concerns.
- Maintain personal and academic support following a referral.