

GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL TUTORING

University Commitment

The University is committed to supporting its personal tutor system, which makes a very important contribution towards the academic and personal growth of the individual student.

A. GUIDANCE TO SCHOOLS

1. All Schools should establish and maintain an effective personal tutor scheme which encompasses the good practice set out in the University leaflet "Notes of Guidance for Personal Tutors and their Tutees".
2. As a minimum the scheme should aim to ensure that confidential help and support is made available to students so that reasons for academic difficulties can be identified, and support offered, at an early stage. In addition, Schools should expect tutors to take a wider pastoral interest in their tutees.
3. Each School should provide personal tutors and students with a clear statement on the personal tutor system in operation, including the arrangements for consulting personal tutors, and arrangements for changing tutor.
4. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that all students are allocated and notified of a personal tutor at the beginning of their programme.
5. Schools should arrange an induction process for all new students at the beginning of the academic session so that they can meet School staff, including their tutor.
6. In joint honours programmes involving units provided by two or more Schools, students shall be allocated a personal tutor from each School/subject area.
7. Schools should normally:
 - Allocate students to a personal tutor for the whole of their time at the University
 - Nominate a member of staff other than the Head of School as Senior Tutor responsible for co-ordinating the personal tutor system within the School.
8. If a personal tutor leaves or is absent for a prolonged period the head of School or Senior Tutor must ensure that alternative tutorial arrangements are made for his/her students.
9. The Head of School or his/her nominee will ensure that new members of staff:
 - Are aware of their own responsibilities as personal tutors
 - Are informed of alternative sources of pastoral support etc (training etc available)
10. Personal Tutors should always be invited to attend, in an advisory capacity, any meetings of Academic progress Committees which are discussing their tutee.

B. GUIDANCE FOR PERSONAL TUTORS AND THEIR TUTEES (UNDERGRADUATES AND TAUGHT POSTGRADUATES)

1. The Role of Personal Tutors

The overall role of the Personal Tutor is to act as a first point of contact within the University from whom the individual tutee can obtain academic and pastoral support. This may take the form of giving personal or academic advice, or helping students to access the appropriate specialist support services. It is normally the responsibility of the Personal Tutor, in consultation with other academic staff as appropriate, to ensure that students receive adequate academic guidance. This is particularly important when students choose optional units or units in other schools.

Personal tutors will encounter a wide range of issues, including problems with study skills, anxiety about exams or finances, the need for guidance on progress and achievement, advice on changing programmes, career issues, and key personal issues which impact on learning. Sometimes the Tutor will deal with these issues directly; on other occasions it will be advisable to refer students to specialist advice.

Key Elements

All undergraduate and taught postgraduate students should be allocated a personal tutor. Tutors effectively support student learning by:

- Helping the tutee to develop effective study skills and habits
- Reviewing overall academic progress and providing feedback and advice
- Helping the tutee to understand relevant University rules and regulations
- Providing appropriate information, support and guidance
- Where appropriate helping and advising the tutee in University processes affecting him/her.

Additional guidance for Personal Tutors

If you are new to the role or unsure of its demands, guidance is available from your School's Senior Tutor or equivalent. You should obtain a copy of the Notes of Guidance to Schools on the Personal Tutor system and discuss them with the Senior Tutor or your Head of School if necessary. You should also ask your Head of Schools about training for the role of Personal Tutor.

Most of the actions you need to take as a personal tutor are referred to in the preceding paragraphs, but in addition you might wish to consider:

- Informing your students of timetabled slots when you are normally available to see them.
- Making short notes after each meeting to record the interview rather than relying on memory. This is particularly important where the student is having problems or where the circumstances may form the basis of a request for mitigation. (Be aware Data Protection legislation considerably extends the individual's right of access to written information: this applies to these notes as well as to references).
- Making your email address or telephone number available to tutees to keep in touch outside tutorials.
- Where appropriate, attending any formal School or Faculty meetings where the progress of your tutees is discussed.

Additional Guidance for Students

1. Your Tutor's overall role is to ensure that you receive adequate guidance. He or she acts as a first point of contact and responsible person within the University from whom you can obtain general academic and pastoral support. Sometimes this support will take the form of direct personal support or advice; sometimes it may involve helping you to access appropriate services.
2. Your personal Tutor will normally make arrangements to see you either individually or in groups once per teaching block. If you are a first year student, the Tutor will normally see you more frequently than this. You can also arrange to see your Personal Tutor at other times if the need arises.
3. It is your responsibility to attend meetings arranged with your Tutor. If for any reason you cannot attend, you should let your Tutor know in advance so that alternative arrangements can be made.
4. It is also your responsibility to inform your Tutor of any special circumstances which may be affecting your academic performance.
5. You may wish to ask your Personal Tutor to act as one of your referees for jobs. As a matter of courtesy you should let your Tutor know about the applications you are making, and make sure that he or she has an up-to-date copy of your c.v.
6. You may ask to change your Personal Tutor if you feel that the process is not working for you. You do not need to state a reason. To do this you should contact the Senior Tutor in your School or your Head of School.

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