



## **PERSONAL TUTORING Code of Practice**

### **Aim**

To enhance the learning experience, well-being and achievement of Teesside University Students, helping to ensure that each student is known, valued and their respective needs recognised and supported.

This Code of Practice covers all undergraduate and postgraduate taught degree courses at Teesside University except certain professional programmes which have their own code of practice for Personal Tutoring.

### **Rationale**

Personal Tutoring is a key component of the student journey and has the potential to significantly influence the student learning experience and improve retention and achievement.

An effective Institutional wide Personal Tutoring system and approach can improve University Key Performance Indicators including: Student Completion Rates, Student Satisfaction Levels, Proportion of Students with Good Honours Degree (firsts and 2.1s), Leavers in Work/Study (within 6 months of graduation) and Leavers in Professional Level Jobs (within 6 months of graduation). It can also help to contribute to International Student Performance, International Student Satisfaction (International Student Barometer) and help to improve League Table Position in Times / Sunday Times / Good University Guide.

### **Objective**

The overall objective of Personal Tutoring at Teesside University is provide a consistent, equitable and structured approach for all students to pastoral, general academic and professional support.

The Personal Tutor is a member of academic staff assigned to an individual student as a source of pastoral, general academic and professional support. The Personal Tutor, a key point of contact, will assist students with their transition into, and progression through, their Higher Education studies drawing on learner analytics as appropriate.

## Principles

1. The recommended staff resource allocation for Personal Tutoring is one hour per student per year.
2. The Personal Tutor is an Academic role.
3. Where possible students will be allocated a Personal Tutor from their general discipline area.
4. All Academics do not need to take on the role of a Personal Tutor (see principle 5).
5. The allocation of Personal Tutors will be determined by the School Executive Team on an annual basis but where possible adhering to principle 6 below. Consideration will be given to the preferences of academics in terms of whether or not they would like to be a Personal Tutor.
6. Where possible students are allocated a Personal Tutor for the duration of their Course.
7. Students will be informed of alternative support contacts should their Personal Tutor be unavailable for a length of time due to unforeseen circumstances.
8. Under exceptional circumstances, students may request a change of Personal Tutor and a member of staff could request that a student have a different Personal Tutor.
9. Where appropriate, for example where students are studying off-campus, Personal Tutoring can be arranged electronically.
10. Staff Development will be provided to support Personal Tutors in their role.
11. A recognised role with oversight of Personal Tutoring within each School would be beneficial e.g. PL Learning and Teaching.
12. All undergraduate and postgraduate students (full time and part time) will normally be informed of their Personal Tutor during the first week of their Course.
13. Some Personal Tutor meetings may be group-based, but all students should have the opportunity for individual meetings with their Personal Tutor.

## **Key Responsibilities of Personal Tutors**

1. Personal Tutors should develop and maintain a safe, open and honest relationship with the Personal Tutee promoting effective communication.
2. Personal Tutors should draw on the Learner Analytics available and as appropriate, to inform and shape conversations with their Personal Tutees.
3. Support students with the transition into Higher Education; build course identity as appropriate recognising the diversity of the student body.
4. Where appropriate discuss personal management skills (for example: time management, assertiveness and confidence) and the University's key graduate attributes (3Cs and 3As: confident, critical, creative, adaptable, articulate and aspiring).
5. Personal Tutors should be proactive in their role; they should plan and schedule a structured programme of meetings some of which will take the form of group meetings with opportunities for individual meetings.
6. Encourage students to engage in Personal Development Planning (PDP) and where relevant discuss those PDP processes particularly pertinent to Schools/Courses.
7. Provide pastoral support and guidance to students around settling into University life and encourage engagement in the wider University experience for example extracurricular activities and volunteering.
8. Provide guidance on, and signposting to, the support available, within the School, around both academic and administrative issues outlining key academic and administrative positions as appropriate. Signpost to relevant School and University handbooks.
9. Encourage and facilitate each student to reach their full academic potential discussing, as appropriate, progression reports and attainment levels.
10. Encourage academic reflection particularly through stressing the value of feedback and the different forms this may take. Where appropriate discuss feedback received, provide general feedback and appropriate guidance discussing future action required.
11. Where appropriate discuss work related learning and experiences including placement opportunities.
12. Assist students in career/professional planning with preparation for employment and/or further study signposting to the University's Careers Service including work related and volunteering opportunities.
13. Personal Tutors will attend staff development sessions, as appropriate, to fulfil their role effectively including related continuing profession development (CPD) sessions around the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and safeguarding and terrorism/radicalism (PREVENT).
14. Personal Tutors are not required to provide specialist academic guidance nor feedback on specific work not set by the Personal Tutor. They should not act as a trained counsellor, disability or careers advisor.

## **Personal Tutor Meetings with Students**

1. All students should have the opportunity for individual meetings with their Personal Tutor but as identified within the principles, some Personal Tutor meetings may be group-based. For some courses, which are delivered off-site, alternative methods of contact may be acceptable, providing the objectives and principles of the policy are not compromised.
2. The Personal Tutor should meet all new students, during the first few weeks of their course of study, for 'introductions' and to explain how Personal Tutoring works at Teesside University. This is a crucial time where the Personal Tutor can respond to any queries and discuss any initial concerns and/or anxieties students may have.
3. Personal Tutors should meet all returning students during the first few weeks of the stage with part of the meeting focussing on records of progress and achieving their potential.
4. Personal Tutors should meet with their students prior to the key assessment weeks within their Course to reflect on formative and summative feedback.
5. Personal Tutors will adopt a proactive approach to Personal Tutoring and provide structured opportunities to meet with Personal Tutees (both group and individual opportunities).
6. Personal Tutors should maintain a record of student attendance at personal tutor sessions with a brief outline of discussions. Records should be accessible and Schools will determine the most appropriate process ensuring compliance with requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).