Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Personal Tutor Policy

Contents

Ownership	Pro Warden Academic
Policy Contact	Dean of Students
Approval	Academic Board
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1   Introduction

Personal tutoring is a key academic support and progression structure that can positively impact on the student academic experience, promote equality in students experiences and outcomes, and support student retention, attainment, and employability. Personal tutoring at Goldsmiths provides routine pro-active academic support for all students.

The policy and procedures set out in this document underpin the delivery of personal tutoring at Goldsmiths. The policy aims to provide clarity to staff and students about how personal tutoring supports students, and what is expected from Personal Tutors and students.

1.1   Scope

1.1.1   The Personal Tutor policies and procedures set out in this document apply to all foundation year and undergraduate students. There are separate local department arrangements for personal tutoring for postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students.

1.1.2   The purpose of this policy is to set out expected practices in the delivery of personal tutoring to maintain quality, standards, and consistency of student experience.

1.1.3   Some aspects of personal tutoring will vary between departments dependant on discipline and departmental pedagogic culture, and the size and shape of the staff and student body.

1.2   Key Contacts

1.2.1   Advice on this policy can be directed to the Dean of Students and raised through the Senior Tutor Network.

1.2.2   Suggestions for revisions should be directed to the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

1.2.3   The Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre (TaLIC) can provide advice on pedagogic practice and training.

1.2.4   Information about Supporting Staff to Support Students and services offered to students is on Goldmine.

2 Personal Tutoring at Goldsmiths

2.1   Personal tutoring at Goldsmiths aims to enable students to achieve successful learning outcomes by supporting their academic progression and helping them navigate their individual learning journey from induction to graduation.

2.2   All foundation and undergraduate students will be assigned a Personal Tutor during their period of study at Goldsmiths.

2.3   Personal tutoring is delivered by appropriate academic members of staff in departments.

3 Departmental Personal Tutor Responsibilities

3.1 General

3.1.1   Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring students are assigned a Personal Tutor.

3.1.2   Heads of Department are responsible for the effective management and academic quality of personal tutoring in their department, including to ensure student satisfaction, positive student outcomes, and equality, diversity, and inclusion.

3.1.3   Heads of Department, Programme Convenors, and Senior Tutor(s) are together responsible for ensuring that personal tutoring is delivered in line with Goldsmiths' Personal Tutor Policy.

3.1.4   Personal Tutors for joint-degree students will be assigned by the 'home' department to which they are registered, with a secondary 'contact' tutor being assigned in their 'joint' department(s).

3.1.5   Departments should annually consider the personal tutoring system and its impact on student satisfaction and outcomes at their Departmental Teaching and Learning Committee and/or Departmental Board. Issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion should also be considered.

3.1.6   Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that all Senior and Personal Tutors carry out their duties as required.

3.2 Students

3.2.1   Students should normally be informed by their department who their Personal Tutor is before the first day of Welcome week in any academic year.

3.2.2   Wherever possible, and where pedagogically and pastorally appropriate, Personal Tutors should be assigned to students throughout the entirety of their degree programme.

3.2.3   Departments should ensure that they provide students with up-to-date essential information about personal tutoring (e.g. what personal tutoring is, meeting arrangements, and relevant points of contact).

3.2.4   Departments should invite students to feedback on their experiences of personal tutoring, or any proposed changes to personal tutoring, via Student Representatives, Staff-Student Forums, and other local feedback mechanisms.

3.2.5   Departments should assign Personal Tutors to students on year abroad, placement, who are due to take exams without attendance, or on leave for a specific reason (e.g. maternity or paternity leave).

3.3 Academic Staff

3.3.1   Personal tutoring should be factored into workload for all staff with senior tutoring and personal tutoring responsibilities. It may be factored into standard module teaching workload models where personal tutoring forms part of the delivery of credit-bearing modules.

3.3.2   Departments should ensure that students are informed if a staff member is absent (e.g. due to sick leave or annual leave) for more than 10 days and that students are offered support from the department Senior Tutor or Programme Convenor in the interim. This does not include periods of formal College closure (e.g. the Christmas Closure).

3.3.3   Where a Personal Tutor is unable to fulfil their duties for more than 6 weeks, Personal Tutees should be notified and provided with an alternative Personal Tutor. This could be the Senior Tutor, or another member of staff identified by the Head of department or Programme Convenor as appropriate. This does not include periods of formal College closure (e.g. the Christmas Closure).

3.3.4   Departments should provide their staff with relevant training, support, and continuous professional development opportunities that relate to the local delivery of personal tutoring within their department.

4   Personal Tutor Responsibilities

4.1   Personal Tutors will arrange meetings and meet with students at least once per term to discuss their academic progression. This may form part of credit bearing module delivery.

4.2   Personal Tutors will support student's induction, academic progression, personal development, and employability and career planning.

4.3   Personal Tutors will support students when making study choices (e.g. module selection or when considering year abroad).

4.4   Personal Tutors should make themselves available to students seeking advice with routine academic concerns, who wish to discuss the mitigation of pastoral issues on their studies, and require information about departmental and university regulations, policies, and processes. They should signpost students to relevant role holders or teams who can provide specialist support as appropriate.

4.5   Personal Tutors should make themselves available to students via email, one-to-one virtual and/or in-person meetings.

4.6   Personal Tutors will undertake the delivery of personal tutoring in line with this policy and as required and directed by their department.

4.7   Personal Tutors will supply students with relevant information and materials (e.g. dates of meetings and Personal Development and Progress Forms) to enable them to effectively engage with personal tutoring.

4.8   Personal Tutors will make themselves available to meet with tutees who express a desire to interrupt or withdraw from their studies.

4.9   Personal Tutors will ensure that they are available to students in advertised weekly office hours and clearly communicate times when they are not available (e.g. due to annual leave or sickness), usually via email or email signature.

4.10   Where required, Personal Tutors will signpost students to relevant university services and support, information about university regulations, policies and processes, and additional local community services (e.g. Amersham Vale GP service).

4.11   Personal Tutors will notify their department Senior Tutor of any instances where they believe that a tutee's wellbeing is of significant concern and/or they are at risk to either themselves or others. In such cases, Personal Tutors should refer to the College's Safeguarding Policy.

4.12   Personal Tutors will provide students with references and feedback on application materials (e.g. for employment or further study) if requested.

4.13   Personal Tutors will undertake relevant training as required by the College and/or Head of Department and Department Senior Tutor.

5   Senior Tutor Responsibilities

5.1   Senior Tutors are responsible for supporting Personal Tutors and ensuring that they are supplied with the correct information and support to enable them to undertake their Personal Tutor role effectively.

5.2   Senior Tutors are responsible for considering and implementing any student and staff Personal Tutor change requests.

5.3   Senior Tutors should act in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy.

5.4   Senior Tutors are responsible for reporting on personal tutoring at relevant committees and meetings as requested by the Head of Department.

5.5   Senior Tutors should liaise with relevant individuals and teams where there are concerns about fitness to study and/or where information about the student may be required to be released to third parties for their safety. In such cases, Senior Tutors should act in accordance with the College's Fitness to Study Policy.

5.6   Senior Tutors should deliver departmental Personal Tutor inductions sessions, training, and continuous professional development opportunities to departmental colleagues.

6   Expectations of Students

6.1   Students are expected to attend all scheduled Personal Tutor meetings.

6.2   Students are expected to complete any paperwork or learning exercises set by the Personal Tutor in advance of meetings.

6.3   If students are unable to attend scheduled Personal Tutor meetings, they should notify their Personal Tutor in advance to help make alternative arrangements.

6.4   Students are expected to inform their Personal Tutor of any difficulties they are having that effect their attendance or engagement with their studies in a timely manner and in accordance with the College's Attendance Policy.

6.5   Students should meet with their Personal Tutor or the department Senior Tutor if they are considering interrupting or withdrawing from their studies.

6.6   Students' attendance at personal tutor meetings will be monitored by Personal Tutors. Personal Tutors will follow-up with students who have failed to attend Personal Tutor meetings.

7   Staff Training and Development

7.1   The Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre, and other relevant central teams, will facilitate personal tutor training and continuous professional development opportunities for staff, including through signposting to externally delivered scholarly activities.

7.2   The Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre, and other relevant central teams, will support department Senior Tutors in the delivery of local inductions sessions, training, and continuous professional development opportunities to departmental colleagues.

8   Appendix 1. Personal Tutor Role Description

Reports to: Senior Tutor > Head of Department (NOTE: This is an informal practical management arrangement relating to the Personal Tutor role, rather than part of formal line management).

Summary

The role of Personal Tutor provides individualised and structured academic support for students to help them achieve successful learning outcomes and navigate their individual learning journey from induction to graduation. Personal Tutors are the first point of contact for students who are facing issues effecting their academic study and questions about navigating university. Personal Tutors provide important support by listening to students talk about their experiences, supporting them academically and in their career development, and by signposting them to relevant support services. The position will ordinarily be undertaken by a permanent member of

academic staff and will form part of that member of staff's teaching and learning work duties.

Overview

Personal Tutors will ordinarily support between 15 and 25 tutees, although this may be dependent on department management arrangements and student numbers. Personal Tutoring should be calculated within members of staff overall workload allocation. All academic staff on teaching-related contracts are eligible for the role of Personal Tutor.

Personal Tutors should be assigned for the duration of a student's programme except where there are unavoidable staffing changes or there is a clear pedagogic rationale for changing allocations. Personal Tutors should be assigned tutees who are registered as 'home' students to their department. They do not necessarily have to teach on the programme on which the tutee is registered.

A number of Personal Tutors may be asked to act as a 'touch point' tutors for students who are enrolled on a joint-programme registered with the department. These tutors should provide advice and guidance on department policies and processes, study choices, and marks and feedback. They should make themselves available for one-to-one meetings at students' request. Touch point tutors are not required to organise and delivery regular termly meetings. This will be the responsibility for the tutor in the students' home department.

Main Duties

Outlined below are the typical duties expected of a Personal Tutor. Due to the nature of the role, the Personal Tutor may occasionally be required to undertake other duties which are broadly in line with the listed duties and responsibilities.

1.   To make time available and invite students to meet at least once per term to discuss their academic progression, identify goals, and discuss marks, assessment feedback and study choices.

2.   To deliver personal tutoring induction sessions with tutees as part of academic induction within the first three weeks of term.

3.   To signpost students to relevant student support services and/or the Senior Tutor for guidance on issues concerning departmental and College regulations, policies, and processes.

4.   To provide a first point of contact where students have pastoral issues that are impacting their studies and to be available to meet with students to discuss mitigating strategies where required.

5.   Make themselves available to meet with tutees who express a desire to interrupt or withdraw from their studies.

6.   To notify the Senior Tutor of any instances where a student's health and safety is of significant concern and/or they are at risk to either themselves or others.

7.   To provide students with learning materials and information necessary for them to make the most out of personal tutoring (e.g. Personal Progress and Development Forms).

8.   To follow-up with tutees where learning engagement and attendance is a cause for concern.

9.   To be available to students during office hours and via email to answer enquiries and to organise additional meetings (virtual or in-person) with students where required.

10.   To provide students with references and feedback on application materials (e.g. for further study or employment) where required.

11.   To undertake personal tutor training as required by the College and requested by the Senior Tutor and Head of Department.

12.   To undertake additional duties as required by Senior Tutors and Heads of Department.

13.   Ensure they are aware of and informed of relevant Goldsmiths' regulations, strategies and process, including as related to the advancement of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

9   Appendix 2. Senior Tutor Role Description

Reports to the Head of Department

Summary

The Senior Tutor is responsible for manging the personal tutoring system in their department in collaboration with the Chair of Teaching and Learning and Head of Department. They ensure the effectiveness of the system and take steps to resolve any issues, including in response to student feedback, and compliance with College regulations, policies, and processes. They also lead on providing local departmental training to Personal Tutors to support them in their role. Senior Tutors support students and their tutors in complex cases. The position will ordinarily be undertaken by a permanent full-time member of academic staff with at least one year's experience as a Personal Tutor at Goldsmiths and will form part of that member of staff's teaching and learning work duties.

Overview

There will ordinarily be one lead Senior Tutor in an academic department. The Senior Tutor, depending on the department arrangements and student numbers, may be supported in their role by Deputy-Senior Tutors who will support offer support to different student cohorts or programmes, and the Personal Tutors who support them. The Deputy Senior Tutor role will likely share similarities to the Senior Tutor role.

Main duties

1.   Work alongside the Head of Department and Chair of Teaching and Learning to strategically plan and support high quality delivery of personal tutoring system within their department.

2.   Work alongside the Head of Department and Chair of Teaching and Learning to ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable students to feedback on their experiences of Personal Tutoring and effective response to students' feedback on their academic support and personal tutoring experiences.

3.   To consider student and staff Personal Tutor change requests and approve as considered appropriate.

4.   To maintain and update information for staff and students about the departments Personal Tutor system (e.g. departmental VLE page and department handbooks) and signposting to central services.

5.   To deliver Personal Tutor training and development opportunities within the department.

6.   To deliver induction sessions for new personal tutors or Personal Tutors returning after a period of leave and ensure that all new Personal Tutors have received relevant training.

7.   To effectively communicate relevant information, resources, and opportunities pertinent to Personal Tutors and students in a timely manner.

8.   To be a member of relevant committees and working groups in the department and at College-level as relevant and requested by the HoD.

9.   To contribute to planning, quality assurance and strategy development activity (eg. DDP) as requested by the HoD.

10.   To represent the department at the Senior Tutor Network.

11.   To prepare an annual update on the effectiveness of the department's personal tutor system at the Departmental Teaching and Learning Committee or Department Board.

Deputy-Senior Tutor

Reporting to Senior Tutor > Head of Departments

*Large departments or departments that operate integrated curriculum models of personal tutoring may wish to appoint Deputy-Senior Tutors to support the Senior Tutor in the management of personal tutor system and support Personal Tutors in dealing with complex student issues.

Deputy-Senior tutors may be assigned specific responsibilities, including in supporting the delivery of personal tutoring for specific programmes.