

## Purpose

1. The core purpose of the personal tutoring system is to support taught students' personal and general academic development through an ongoing personalised point of contact with the University.
2. A personal tutor is an appropriately trained or senior member of academic or academic-related staff. It is expected that a personal tutor will normally be an academic. She/he will be a student's first port of call for advice or direction to further support on academic and pastoral matters.
3. Within the academic unit, students may also receive additional academic and pastoral advice from a range of other student-facing staff including module leaders, degree programme directors, dissertation/project supervisors, and administrative support staff. The University also offers a wide range of institutional services and support upon which students can call, such as the Writing Development Centre, Careers Service and Student Health Wellbeing Service.
4. Where an academic unit feels there is a strong case for adopting a different approach to personal tutoring than the one set out in this Framework, but which nevertheless meets the aims of the Framework, they may make a case to the chair of the relevant Faculty Education Committee to be permitted to use the different approach. The decision of the chair is final.

## Scope

5. Each taught student (undergraduate and postgraduate) will be assigned a personal tutor by their academic unit.

### *Special types of provision*

6. In the case of stand-alone modules, the module leader should provide academic and pastoral support for participants.
7. Arrangements for the support and provision of advice and guidance for students on placements should be established in line with the University's policy on [Work-based and Placement Learning](#);
8. For educational partnerships, personal tutoring arrangements may be varied under the terms of a Memorandum of Agreement where a programme of study is delivered as a collaborative arrangement with a partner institution. Arrangements for personal tutoring must be clearly communicated to students.

## Personal Tutor Meetings

9. In Stage 1: Semester 1, the personal tutor will hold the first meeting with their tutee no later than four weeks after the student's arrival at the University. This applies to all taught students. For undergraduate students, attendance at this first meeting is compulsory. These meetings will be arranged by the academic unit.
  10. For undergraduate students, the personal tutor will offer a second meeting in Semester 1 which should also be arranged by the academic unit. Attendance at the second meeting in Semester 1 is not compulsory.
  11. In Semester 2, and in each Semester of following stages, the personal tutor will offer the tutee a meeting, attendance at which will not be compulsory, this relates to all taught students
  12. All meetings should be structured with a clear and agreed agenda. Some meetings may be held in group tutorials where this is appropriate to the purpose. A tutor may initiate a tutorial where there are reports of unsatisfactory attendance or progress from module leaders or in the event of any other
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cause for concern. Both parties may also request a further meeting in addition to the minimum requirements outlined above.

13. It is a University requirement for tutors to offer and record the first meeting with undergraduate students in ePortfolio. For taught postgraduate students, the University only requires that the offer of meetings is recorded in ePortfolio.
14. If tutorial meetings do not take place, reasons why not should also be recorded. If a tutor offers a meeting within ePortfolio using meeting slots, but a student chooses not to pick a time to meet with the tutor, this should be regarded as sufficient reason why the meeting has not taken place. Only if a meeting slot is not created by the tutor within ePortfolio should a reason be recorded elsewhere why a meeting has not taken place.
15. Meeting requirements at a glance

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Undergraduate -Stage 1	1 <sup>st</sup> Offer made by academic unit for meeting within first four weeks. Student attendance compulsory. Eportfolio used for offer and record of meeting.  2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting offered. Student attendance not compulsory	Offer of meeting made
Undergraduate – all following stages	Offer of meeting made	Offer of meeting made
Undergraduate - placement years	<a href="https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-workplacement-pol.pdf">https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-workplacement-pol.pdf</a>	
Postgraduate Taught	1 <sup>st</sup> Offer made by academic unit for meeting within first four weeks, using ePortfolio. Student attendance not compulsory	Offer of meeting made using ePortfolio
Postgraduate Taught – following stages (for p/t)	Offer of meeting made using ePortfolio	Offer of meeting made using ePortfolio

## Change of Tutor

16. Students are permitted to change their tutor.\*They are not required to give a reason for their request. The Head of Academic Unit (or nominee) should arrange the necessary transfer. The main office within the academic unit or Graduate School must be advised of any changes so that records can be kept up to date. \*This may not always be possible for taught postgraduate students where the degree programme director is often also the personal tutor.
17. If a tutor feels that their role as tutor to an individual student is compromised, perhaps due to a conflict of interest, they should ask the Head of School to provide an alternative tutor to the student. Academic units should provide clear, transparent information to students on how to change their tutor.

## Roles

### *Personal tutee*

18. The role of personal tutee is to:
  - a. Attend and prepare for all arranged meetings with your tutor and respond promptly to any communication from him/her.
  - b. Make appropriate use of all the support and guidance offered at Newcastle University.

- c. Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties (academic or personal) at the earliest possible opportunity.
  - d. Report promptly to your school when you are ill or have other good reason for non-attendance or your tutor if you are failing to meet deadlines.
  - e. Keep records of actions agreed with your personal tutor, including personal development planning. It is recommended that these be recorded within ePortfolio.
19. You are able to change your tutor or request a tutor of the same sex (subject to staff availability) should you so wish. You are not required to give a reason for your request.
20. See also the [Student Charter](#) which sets out the standards of provision that students on taught programmes can expect from staff and the expectations that the University has of students.

### *Personal tutor*

21. The role of personal tutor is to:
- a. Assist students with the process of induction and orientation into academic life and the University community, and respond promptly to any communication from him/her.
  - b. Retain an interest in their tutees' personal and general academic development throughout their academic careers.
  - c. Offer general academic advice to personal tutees on their general progress and development and to signpost relevant careers and skills development provision.
  - d. Listen and offer students confidential help and advice about pastoral/non-academic matters and to signpost students to other student services for further assistance if necessary.
  - e. Liaise with academic and administrative colleagues to offer a multi-layered approach to support students' positive development and progress. These staff should provide feedback on any contact with the student to the relevant personal tutor to assist with the monitoring of development and progress.
  - f. Provide references for students on request (references should be written by a member of staff who has access to a student's full record).
  - g. Provide guidance or advice to students on University processes, e.g. disciplinary procedures, extenuating circumstances.
  - h. Keep a record of the fact that tutorial meetings are offered, that they have taken place and/or the reasons why meetings do not take place.
  - i. Ensure that a note is kept of discussions at each tutorial meeting and any follow-up actions agreed with the student. It is recommended that this be recorded within ePortfolio.
  - j. Provide structured support for students' personal development planning and charting of students' progress.

### *Senior Tutor*

22. The role of Senior Tutor is to:
- a. Support the Head of Academic Unit in ensuring the delivery of a high quality system of personal tutoring – in accordance with the Framework for Personal Tutoring – across the academic unit.
  - b. Act as an additional point of contact for a student in the event of the allocated personal tutor's absence from the University and/or in the event of complicated issues.
  - c. Act as a primary point of contact for personal tutors and other staff within the academic unit; providing advice on tutoring-related matters and signposting colleagues to further sources of information and advice when needed.

- d. Act as a coordinating point for general communication between the academic unit and central student support services, and to disseminate information about institutional support and services to colleagues within the academic unit.
- e. Monitor the effectiveness of the personal tutorial system; utilising student feedback on their experiences of personal tutoring from student surveys, Student-Staff Committee meetings etc. and, if required by Faculty, submission of an annual report about this to the Faculty Education Committee.
- f. Represent the academic unit at the Senior Tutors' Discussion Forum; taking an active role in discussions, supporting the institution in the continued implementation of the Framework for Personal Tutoring, and sharing best practice from across the institution.
- g. Attend appropriate training and development events – particularly the Role of the Senior Tutor training workshop.
- h. Encourage personal tutors within the academic unit to attend appropriate training events and workshops and to make use of relevant personal tutoring resources in order to provide the highest level of support to students.
- i. Take an active role in succession arrangements, including the induction of and handover of responsibilities to the new Senior Tutor after completion of term of office.

### *Academic Unit*

23. The role of the Academic Unit is to:

- a. Ensure that all students on taught programmes are assigned appropriately trained tutors prior to or on arrival, and that this is reflected in work allocation models and job descriptions.
- b. Ensure that accurate information about the purpose and operation of the personal tutorial system is pro-actively drawn to the attention of students via degree programme handbooks and other sources and during the first meeting with the tutor.
- c. Ensure that all staff undertaking personal tutoring have been given appropriate information on the expectations of the role and the supporting resources available and offered training if required.
- d. Evaluate annually the operation of the personal tutor system within the academic unit, collating student feedback through Student-Staff Committee and Boards of Studies where general feedback on the operation of the personal tutoring system should be reviewed annually, and through stage questionnaires (where these are used), indicating the ways in which University expectations are met, and to report on this, via the Senior Tutor, to Faculty Education Committee (if requested).
- e. Ensure the personal tutoring system is well communicated to students and all staff.
- f. Co-ordinate personal tutoring provision within the academic unit, offering support or advice to personal and senior tutors.
- g. Ensure continuity of personal tutor throughout a student's degree programme as far as is possible. Where the role is re-assigned, due to research leave, for example, the tutee should be informed immediately.

### *Head of Academic Unit*

24. The role of Head of Academic Unit is to:

- a. Allocate personal tutees to tutors in line with institutional principles and in accordance with the academic unit's workload model. The norm and cases that exceed it should be reported to Faculty Education Committee. The normal expectation for the minimum time commitment per student per year is one hour (although this can be adjusted at Faculty level);
- b. Appoint a Senior Tutor(s) for the unit in accordance with the academic unit workload model;

- c. Monitor the effectiveness of the personal tutoring arrangements within the academic unit through review of sources of student feedback;
- d. Address any performance issues as appropriate.

*Faculty*

25. The role of Faculty is to:

- a. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the University’s expectations of the personal tutorial system, via reports from Annual Monitoring and Review, Learning and Teaching Review, through the outcomes of student surveys, and annual reports from Senior Tutors to Faculty Education Committee on the implementation of personal tutoring (if requested).

*The University*

26. The role of the University, including central services is to:

- a. Maintain an overview of the implementation and effectiveness of the University’s personal tutorial provision, through Annual Monitoring and Review, Learning and Teaching Review, through the outcomes of student surveys, and via an institutional network of Senior Tutors.
- b. Support personal tutors and senior tutors, the University will provide easily accessible information regarding relevant student support services as well as training and guidance on the areas expected to be covered by the personal tutorial system.
- c. Ensure that sufficient capacity is available within support services to ensure that referrals to these services by tutors are dealt within in an appropriate timescale.
- d. Ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to recognise high quality performance in personal tutoring via recognition within the academic promotions criteria, and an institutional award scheme for personal tutors.

27. The Director of Academic Services will be the officer responsible institutionally for overseeing the framework for personal tutoring, particularly in relation to matters of policy and linkage with other student services.

<p>Last updated Sep 2018.                  Framework approved by University Learning, Teaching, and Student Experience Committee, May 2010. Revised July 2017.</p>	
<p>This document is primarily intended for:</p>	<p>Students                  Personal Tutors                  Senior Tutors                  Degree Programme Directors                  Heads of School                  L&amp;T Managers in academic units and Faculty</p>
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