Senior Tutor Role Description

Context

Newcastle University is committed to supporting the personal and academic development of all taught students and to fulfilling its pledges to deliver education for life and to have a positive impact on the student experience through providing a highly supportive environment that promotes positive wellbeing. The implementation of a robust and effective personal tutoring system is critical in meeting these objectives and effective personal tutoring is one layer of the University's wider pastoral and academic support network. The Framework for Personal Tutoring sets out the University's approach to personal tutoring and the minimum expected standard for personal tutoring arrangements across the institution. Senior Tutors are an integral part of this personal tutoring system – offering leadership and guidance on matters relating to student welfare, providing support to students and acting as a point of communication between academic units and central support services.

The University recognises that there is no single model of personal tutoring that fits all academic units and acknowledges that, in the context of the minimum standard set out in the Framework for Personal Tutoring, there will be variations in the operational delivery of personal tutoring across the institution. This role descriptor is therefore intended as a top-level overview of the role that allows for flexibility and variation in the responsibilities of Senior Tutors in order to meet the needs of individual academic units and their students.

Parameters of appointment

1. Senior Tutors are appointed by the head of academic unit and will usually serve an initial term of three years – subject to review by the appropriate head of academic unit. If appropriate, Senior Tutors may be reappointed to the role.
2. Senior Tutors are accountable to the head of academic unit but, if agreed by the head of academic unit, may act with the authority of the head of academic unit on matters relating to pastoral support of students.
3. Senior Tutors will typically be members of academic staff although, where appropriate, they may also be senior administrative staff members.
4. The role of the Senior Tutor should be undertaken by an experienced member of staff who has substantial knowledge of the University including, its support services, regulations, policies and procedures.
5. The duties undertaken by Senior Tutors may vary across faculties and academic units, but the core responsibilities of the role are as follows:

Main responsibilities and duties

6. To 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.
7. To 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.
8. To 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.
9. To 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.
10. To 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 Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.
11. To 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.
12. Attendance at appropriate training and development events – particularly the Role of the Senior Tutor training workshop.
13. 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.
14. To 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.

Recommended workload allocation

The average workload allocation for a Senior Tutor will vary depending on the size of the academic unit and the model of personal tutoring adopted by the unit. The workload allocation is therefore subject to discussion with the head of academic unit. Given the nature of the role, it is not easy to predict the exact workload involved and it is likely to fluctuate throughout the year, increasing significantly at particular times of the academic year. This should be taken into account by the academic unit.

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This document is primarily intended for:	Senior Tutors Degree Programme Directors Heads of School
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