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From: Steve Stanbury, Director of Internal Audit

**Subject: Internal Audit - Personal Tutoring**

Status: Final – to note

Author(s): Steve Stanbury, Director of Internal Audit

Sponsor: Audit and Risk Committee

**Executive summary**

Senate is asked to review a paper from the Director of Internal audit. Under the Terms of Reference for the EQC, Internal Audit has a role to play in providing assurance to Senate on the adequacy and effectiveness of controls established to provide oversight over specific aspects of the framework and operation of academic regulation, policy and practices concerning the quality and standards of City, University of London. EQC reviewed the paper on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

Recommendation(s)

- a) Board of Studies oversight (P2)
- b) Oversight of allocation of personal tutors to tutees (P2)
- c) Personal tutors' knowledge of their tutees' programmes (P2)
- d) Personal tutors with large numbers of tutees (P2)
- e) Personal tutoring training participation (P2)
- f) Reports of meetings on e-Vision (P2)

**Action(s) required from the Committee:**

- A. Noting
- B. Noting
- C. Noting
- D. Noting
- E. Noting
- F. Noting

The table below outlines which committees/groups have already seen the report and the resulting outcome/action from discussions.

Committee date	Committee title	Outcome/action	Action date	Paper version number
28/09/2020	Audit and Risk Committee	Approved	28/09/2020	1.0
29/10/2020	EQC	Noted	29/10/2020	1.0



## FINAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20

### PERSONAL TUTORING AUDIT

#### Opinion and Recommendation Classification

An **acceptable level** of assurance can be given to the adequacy and effectiveness of systems of internal control for Personal Tutoring at the time of our audit and limited to the scope. Acceptable assurance is defined as, "There is a sound system of control designed to achieve system objectives, and overall, the controls are being consistently applied. However, there are some weaknesses in control and/or evidence of non-compliance, which are placing some system objectives at risk, and which, in the context of this audit, could have some impact on the institution's strategic aims and objectives.

As a result of our audit, the following recommendations have been raised.

Recommendation Type	Number
Priority One	-
Priority Two	6
Priority Three	5
VFM	-

**Audit Sponsor: Professor David Bolton**

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Personal tutoring can be described as a multifaceted service role whereby academic members of staff provide their tutees with academic and professional support and advice, pastoral care and take an interest in their University experience.
- 1.2 One of the aims of effective personal tutoring is to assist and support students' success and progression throughout their course.
- 1.3 The University has a Personal Tutoring policy dated March 2018, which describes the purpose of the personal tutoring system, the format in which it should operate, how the system will be monitored and reviewed and the roles of responsibilities of the students and the personal tutors. The policy is aimed at students and there is a version of it specifically for them and another for staff.
- 1.4 The policy stipulates that all undergraduate and taught postgraduates across the Schools will be allocated a named member of academic staff as their personal tutor and that wherever possible, students will be paired with a tutor from their specific programme for the duration of their studies.
- 1.5 Personal tutoring includes individual and group tutoring delivered at key points during the student's journey and records of these meetings should be retained. For undergraduate students, a City-wide electronic records system (e-Vision) is used to record all meetings (it is also available for postgraduates but Schools can use their own electronic systems).
- 1.6. Senior personal tutors provide support, training and help to other (including new) personal tutors and can oversee the effective functioning of personal tutoring in the Schools. LEaD also provide sessions when schools request these.
- 1.7. School Boards of Studies are responsible for overseeing the quality and effectiveness of personal tutoring.
- 1.8. Effective personal tutoring can be described using some of the reasons provided by students who nominated their personal tutors for the recent Students' Union's Personal Tutor Award. Students nominated their tutors for being:
  - Helpful and giving practical advice, solutions to problems and guidance
  - Continually supportive and caring
  - Invested in students' successes
  - Available to help and following up on students with issues
  - Understanding of students' pressures and situations
  - Willing to go the extra mile
  - Encouraging, cheerful and motivating
  - Prompt at responding to emails or questions
  - Good listeners and patient
  - Effective at contacting students to remind them of the help the tutor can provide and the meetings they can book
  - Non-judgemental and genuine
  - Friendly and easily approachable
- 1.9 As part of the audit, a questionnaire was sent out to 58 personal tutors across various programmes in each of the Schools to review how personal tutoring is operating and how the policy is being applied and embedded (16 responses were received). In addition, meetings were held with several personal tutors across the Schools, some Associate Deans of Education and representatives from the Students' Union to gain more of an insight into the process and how it is functioning. A summary of the responses from the personal tutoring questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

## AUDIT SCOPE AND APPROACH

2.1 The audit approach was an assessment of risks and key management controls operating within each area of the scope.

2.2 The audit scope included the following areas:

- Allocation;
- Meetings and record keeping;
- Monitoring and review; and
- Recognition.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 3.1 Key Controls Identified

- **Online information and resources for tutors** – The LEaD webpages contain key information on personal tutoring for tutors, the personal tutoring policy is accessible on the intranet, there are links to the various support services available for students that tutors can use for referrals and guides, videos and a list of FAQs to assist staff to use the electronic records keeping system (e-Vision).
- **Personal tutoring policy** - This is available for staff and for students (who are provided with an adapted version) and is accessible online. It clearly illustrates the roles and responsibilities of the tutor and the tutee and the purpose of the process with expectations for monitoring, review and meetings. However, the questionnaire sent out to tutors confirmed that three out of 15 who responded to the question had not read and understood the policy.
- **Personal tutor award** – The Students' Union's Academic Impact Awards have a category for Personal Tutor of the Year, enabling students to nominate their tutor if they believe they have gone above and beyond their duties and been particularly supportive. For this year's awards, 27 nominations were received for 22 personal tutors. Ten of the nominations were for tutors from the School of Health Sciences.

### 3.2 Key Issues Identified

- **Boards of Studies oversight** – Although the personal tutoring policy states that the boards of studies are responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of personal tutoring, the terms of reference for the boards of studies do not directly specify this (they do not mention personal tutoring). From the minutes reviewed, it was identified that only the SHS board of studies include personal tutoring as a specific item to note/discuss. Details on the meetings that have taken place were noted in the minutes. Other Schools' minutes have mentioned personal tutoring (for example Cass recently included a subsection on it as part of the NSS results summary) but not as a standalone regular, specific item, which also means that Senate does not receive an update.
- **Oversight of allocation of personal tutors to tutees** – Schools allocate personal tutors to their students themselves but there is no oversight of this carried out centrally. There is no centrally allocated department to verify and be reassured that every student is allocated a tutor.
- **Personal tutors' knowledge of their tutees' programmes** – Personal tutors should have sufficient knowledge of their tutees' programme and level of study. However, the questionnaire sent out to tutors highlighted that seven out of 16 tutors' tutees were not studying a programme that they teach and that four of those tutors had 21 or more tutees studying a different programme.
- **Personal tutors with large numbers of tutees** – From the list of personal tutors provided, nine tutors were identified as having 60 or more tutees with five of them having 65 – 68 tutees each. This makes it time consuming to manage, difficult to meet with the tutees as often as is recommended and difficult to maintain an effective tutoring relationship with every student.

- **Personal tutoring training participation** – The questionnaire sent out to tutors indicated that 12 out of 16 had not completed the University's personal tutoring training. The Learning Enhancement and Development team run training sessions (167 tutors attended sessions run over a year a half) but Schools also run their own which LEaD are sometimes involved in, contributing to varying training content. There is also a Student Support and Personal Tutoring Module which forms part of the MA in Academic Practice, covering the key areas required for effective personal tutoring. However, 14 tutors are completing this this academic year (and there are 14 over the past two years too). SHS had the highest number of tutors on the module (17 in total over the last three years and Cass had the lowest number (two).
- **Reports of meetings on e-Vision** – Currently, formal reports showing the number of meetings recorded on the system broken down into School/level/year are not routinely produced by Student and Academic Services or requested by ExCo, leading to a lack of central oversight.
- **Meeting records system** – The electronic records system does not clarify if meetings took place, but were not recorded or if they did not take place at all. Furthermore, the personal tutoring policy states that only undergraduate meetings should be recorded on there, so the system does not capture every meeting that occurred. The system does not send out meeting reminders or notifications to students that they have missed their meetings.
- **E-Vision ease of use** – A video and manual are available to assist staff in using the electronic records system. The questionnaire highlighted that 13 out of 16 tutors who responded do use the system to record meetings with the other three using email and diary notes instead. Four of the 13 tutors however, stated that they do not find it easy to use for reasons including that it requires several inputs, drafts cannot be saved, the interface is complex and the reports show absences rather than attendance.
- **Feedback on personal tutoring** – The policy informs students that they can provide feedback directly to their tutors but does not specify how. The questionnaire asked tutors if they seek feedback from their students and eight out of 16 tutors stated that they do not. The lack of feedback prevents potential improvements from being made.
- **Incomplete centrally held list of personal tutors** – Student and Academic Services have a list of all the personal tutors but this only includes tutors who use the e-Vision reporting tool to record meetings. This tool is mostly used for undergraduates so many postgraduate tutors and those who do not use it are not on the list, making in inaccurate and incomplete.
- **Student attendance** – Tutors highlighted that despite communicating with students and sending out meeting invitations, some students do not attend meetings (individual and/or group). Although students' roles and responsibilities in the personal tutoring process are highlighted in their handbooks, it has been reported that many do not read them. It was also emphasised that some students do not understand the purpose or benefits of the personal tutoring meetings. There are no repercussions for non-attendance.

## Detailed Recommendations

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Boards of Studies oversight</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states that the School Boards of Studies is responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of personal tutoring within the Schools. This includes ensuring personal tutoring is operating in line with the personal tutoring policy, monitoring and reviewing engagement with personal tutoring and undertaking an annual review of the quality of personal tutoring via the Annual Programme Evaluation process.</p> <p>It was identified that from the Schools' Boards of Studies meeting minutes reviewed (covering the last three meetings), only the School of Health Sciences' Board of Studies include personal tutoring as a specific item to note/discuss. Details on the meetings that have taken place were noted in the minutes. Other Schools' minutes have mentioned personal tutoring (for example Cass recently included a subsection on it as part of the NSS results summary) but not as a standalone, regular, specific item, which also means that Senate does not receive an update. The terms of reference for the Boards of Studies do not directly specify that their duties include overseeing personal tutoring (they do not mention personal tutoring).</p> <p>There is an increased risk that a lack of senior oversight of the functioning of personal tutoring can lead to various issues arising, continuing or escalating and no body to ensure that the policy is being complied with and students are receiving effective personal tutoring, enabling its benefits to be realised.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>Every School's Board of Studies meetings should include an item in their agenda on personal tutoring whereby updates on its effectiveness are provided.</p> <p>The terms of reference for the Boards of Studies should be amended to comprise of its responsibility to review the effectiveness of personal tutoring.</p>		<b>Two</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Noted</i></p> <p>LEAD will consider adding this to the monitoring report actions, so that at least once a year schools do report on this. Quad, working with LEaD and Schools, will coordinate annual report on Personal Tutoring to Senate.</p> <p>Law - This seems sensible and we will implement. We need to look at timely guidance on what will be reported, including APE. CLS will be happy to speak to colleagues in Health to see how I can take this forward. CLS have already flagged with BOS.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>Nov 2020</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>Associate Director, LeAD</i>

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Oversight of allocation of personal tutors to tutees</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>There should be central oversight and review from Student and Academic Services to ensure the effective allocation of personal tutors to tutees within each of the Schools. This would ensure that every student is allocated a personal tutor.</p> <p>It was identified that Schools allocate personal tutors to their students themselves but there is no oversight of this carried out centrally. There is no centrally allocated department to verify and be reassured that every student is allocated a tutor.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that a lack of oversight of the Schools' allocation process could lead to students being missed and so not allocated a personal tutor throughout their studies. This can result in students left unsupported which can then lead to unresolved issues and poor progression and student satisfaction. Reputational damage can also arise if Schools are not fairly providing personal tutors to every student.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>			<b>Priority</b>
<p>Senior management teams should allocate responsibility for oversight of the allocation of personal tutors to a Department, which should devise a way in which they can verify and ensure that every student has an allocated personal tutor in every School.</p>			<b>Two</b>
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Working with LEaD, Student and Academic Services will investigate and consult on a proposal to allocate responsibility for oversight of the allocation of personal tutors to a Department. The proposal will be made available to Senior management teams.</i></p> <p><i>LEAD - This could be tied into the report for BOS for each school.</i></p> <p><i>CLS - Whilst we can see the need for oversight, I guess the question is use of resources. Would it not be best to introduce a self-certification form to submit? It does need something central though I accept.</i></p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	Mar 2021	<b>Responsibility</b>	Yewande Akindele, Head of Quality and Academic Development and Associate Director, LeAD

<b>4.3</b>	<b>Personal tutors' knowledge of their tutees' programmes</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states that “personal tutors are members of academic staff who have been prepared for their role and have sufficient knowledge of your programme and level of study to support your journey and wherever possible we will ensure you are paired with a tutor from your specific programme for the duration of your studies.” Therefore, tutors’ tutees should ideally be studying the programmes they teach.</p> <p>It was identified through the personal tutoring questionnaire sent out to tutors that seven out of 16 tutors’ tutees were not studying a programme that they teach and that four of those tutors had 21 or more tutees studying a different programme.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that if personal tutors’ students are studying courses that they do not teach and so are not entirely familiar with, they are unable to provide their tutees with the academic programme specific advice, support and understanding that their role requires. Students may avoid discussing issues relating to their course with their tutor if their tutor was unfamiliar with it, leading to unresolved issues and students left unsupported and potentially struggling and dissatisfied. In addition, students may approach their programme academics instead, which could increase their workload and reduce the time they have to spend on their other duties.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>The allocation process should ensure that students are allocated personal tutors who teach their programme. Where this is not possible, tutors should acquire sufficient knowledge of their tutees programme and have regular contact with the academic who teaches their programme so that any questions can be answered and updates or information can be given.</p>		<b>Two</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Noted.</i> Working with LEAD, Student and Academic Services will consult with Schools on the allocation process and approach to ensuring tutors acquire sufficient knowledge of their tutees programme and have regular contact with the academic who teaches their programme. The proposal will be made available to Senior management teams.</p> <p><i>CLS - It would be lovely if tutors' tutees study the programme they teach but it is a resourcing issue. One we are mindful of. In law generally the UG tutor/academics teach on the LLB and have a knowledge of the programme overall. We offer specific module support through academic support and feedback sessions. We will be pushing this year for programme briefs to be provided for all tutors that way if it is not their programme there is support. We are also happy to support the idea of regular contact between academics. I would also like to introduce reflective practice groups for tutors so they can discuss any issues (case review meeting I guess). For me staff wellbeing and self-care in this role is equally important in helping to create a self-care culture within the Law School.</i></p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	March 2021	<b>Responsibility</b>	Yewande Akindele, Head of Quality and Academic Development and Associate Director, LeAD (Education and Student Committee)

<b>4.4</b>	<b>Personal tutors with large numbers of tutees</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>Personal tutors are expected to provide support, advice, guidance, contact their tutees and to meet with them individually and in group sessions. They should have an adequate number of tutees each for this to be possible and effective.</p> <p>It was identified from the list of personal tutors provided, that nine tutors had 60 or more tutees with five of the nine having 65 to 68 students each.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that having a large number of tutees to manage and support, leads to a heavier workload, less time to complete all duties and more pressure on staff contributing to staff dissatisfaction. Furthermore, it is difficult for tutors to meet with all of the tutees as often as is recommended and to maintain an effective and 'personal' tutoring relationship with every student. If students are unable to receive the time and support, they require from their tutors, they may be dissatisfied and ultimately unsuccessful in their studies.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>The allocation process of personal tutors should ensure that tutors have an adequate and manageable number of tutees each, enabling them to carry out their personal tutoring duties effectively. A limit on the maximum number of tutees each tutor is allocated should be determined and applied.</p> <p>All academics should be personal tutors and this should be specified in their job description from the outset. Where this is not possible, workload allocation should be considered so that tutors have the necessary time to spend on supporting each of their students where required.</p>		<b>Two</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p>SHS - I would suggest a maximum of 30 students per FTE. This is more or less what we do in SHS, but I am aware of the greater loads elsewhere as per the report.</p> <p>SMCSE - I am a little concerned with the recommendation 'All academics should be personal tutors and this should be specified in their job description from the outset. Where this is not possible, workload allocation should be considered so that tutors have the necessary time to spend on supporting each of their students where required.' I understand fully the aim; however, I don't think we should insist that all academics are personal tutors as I can envisage situations where this may not be best. However, I definitely think it should be factored into workload allocation in a way that captures the full time-commitment for the role.</p> <p>CLS - We cannot ignore lack of student engagement. Gathering clearer and earlier feedback from students could help with this and more monitoring if possible, of actual tutor/tutee encounters - through E-Vision. Otherwise we agree with the recommendations.</p> <p>Business School - The Business School uses workload allocation to ensure sufficient time to personal tutoring tasks; considerable support and monitoring of the personal tutoring system also comes from staff in the UG course office.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	September 2021	<b>Responsibility</b>	Professor David Bolton, Deputy President and Provost / Education and Student Committee.

<b>4.5</b>	<b>Personal tutoring training participation</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states that personal tutors “are members of academic staff who have been prepared for their role” and who are able to guide students in the direction of other relevant services and resources that are available to them”. Tutors should therefore have been appropriately trained and have sufficient knowledge of the services available for students. Staff can attend the University’s Learning Enhancement and Development team’s training sessions and there is an MA in Academic Practice that tutors can select, as well as accessing information available online.</p> <p>It was identified from the personal tutoring questionnaire sent out to tutors that 12 out of 16 had not completed the University’s personal tutoring training. The Learning Enhancement and Development team’s training sessions that took place between May 2016 and December 2017 were attended by 167 tutors, despite the fact that every academic is a personal tutor. There has been no demand for these sessions since. Some of the Schools have run their own training sessions which LEaD are sometimes involved in. After the policy was introduced, some departments/Schools including psychology, SHS, Law and radiography ran workshops in late 2018 but not every School. The Student Support and Personal Tutoring Module which forms part of the MA in Academic Practice (covering the key areas required for effective personal tutoring) is being studied by 14 tutors this academic year (there 14 over the past two years too). SHS had the highest number of tutors on the module (17 in total over the last three years and Cass had the lowest number (two tutors in total over the last three years).</p> <p>There is an increased risk that if personal tutors are not attending the training on offer, they may not be fully aware of their role, responsibilities and resources available to support them and their students. Subsequently, students will not receive the expected standard of support resulting in student dissatisfaction and potential issues remaining unresolved, preventing them from successfully continuing with their studies. Additionally, the existence of unconnected, centralised and localised training sessions contributes to varying, potentially dissimilar and unmonitored training content that may not meet expected standards.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>All personal tutors should be contacted to remind them of the training available to them and to encourage them to participate in a session if they have not done so already.</p> <p>Schools should verify their own training content with LEaD to ensure it covers the key information and that all tutors are provided with the same, correct information so that all students receive the same, fair service.</p>		<b>Two</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p>In light of the University’s response to the Covid-19 crisis and the requirement to move towards blended learning for the 20-21 academic year, the University is committed to reviewing and relaunching PT guidance and training ahead of and through the start of the academic year.</p> <p>SHS - We rarely do this at City, but I would like to see mandatory refresher training every three years for staff. This could be online, or a blended approach whereby experienced staff reread the policy and guidance before attending a discussion group where they raise questions, or look at case-studies.</p> <p>CLS - We remember the workshop following the introduction of the policy. It really only covered the various support services and referrals. The availability of training is not obvious. The limited personal tutoring pages are buried in the Develop@City section of the Staff Hub. CLS would love to develop a bespoke training package for CLS, training is key and we acknowledge how important this is. There is clearly a link to a tutor’s personal development plan and ultimately performance management. The toolkit we would like to introduce will go some way to improve training and participation but it must go further than merely listing the support services on offer.</p> <p>Business School - with dedicated student support officers in the School, we will develop support for personal tutors and will liaise with LEaD in this work.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>September 2020</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	James Birkett, Director, Registry & Student Services <i>and Associate Director, LeAD</i>

<b>4.6</b>	<b>Reports of meetings on e-Vision</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>Student and Academic Services should regularly review and analyse personal tutoring meeting records on e-Vision and produce reports for senior management/committees to determine how well the personal tutoring process is being implemented.</p> <p>It was identified that currently, formal reports showing the number of meetings recorded on the system broken down into School/level/year are not routinely produced by Student and Academic Services or requested by ExCo, although they used to be previously.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that if reports are not being produced, analysed, reviewed and shared with senior management, there is no centralised monitoring, oversight and awareness of the effectiveness of personal tutoring and highlighting of where any weaknesses lie so that improvements can be made.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>Student and Academic Services should continue to produce reports of the meetings that have been recorded on e-Vision and to complete meaningful analysis of the data. Findings and data should be communicated with senior management/committee.</p>		<b>Two</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Agree</i> - Further scrutiny over 20-21 academic year (given circumstances) and data to be reviewed periodically in context of student support by Education &amp; Student Committee.</p> <p><i>CLS - Agree</i></p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>July 2021</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	James Birkett, Director, Registry & Student Services

<b>4.7</b>	<b>Meeting records system</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states that “a record of every individual and group personal tutorial meeting is kept to support your tutoring relationship. For undergraduate students, a City-wide electronic records system is currently in use for all personal tutorial sessions. Whilst this system is available for postgraduate taught students, your School may also opt to maintain electronic records in another format.” Therefore, tutors should be retaining records of all the meetings they have and these should be on e-Vision for undergraduates.</p> <p>The electronic records system (e-Vision) does not clarify if meetings took place but were not recorded or if they did not take place at all, therefore not providing a clear answer as to whether tutors are meeting their tutees. Furthermore, only undergraduate meetings should be recorded on the system, so it does not capture every meeting that occurred for all tutors/students. The system does not send out meeting reminders or notifications to students that they have missed their meetings.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that although the electronic records system is being used to analyse, record and monitor meeting attendance, it will not provide an accurate and reliable representation of attendance. Also, if it is not used for postgraduates, there is no centralised and standardised format and way of monitoring and reviewing meetings. If Schools are recording meetings in their own way and storing data in various locations, meaningful analysis will not be easily achieved and key information relating to the meetings may not be recorded. If the system does not send out meeting reminders to students, students may miss their meetings leading to missed opportunities for support and an ineffective use of tutors’ time spent organising these meetings.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>The way in which meeting attendance is classified on e-Vision should be amended so that tutors can select whether students attended the meetings or not and there should be a separate section for a record of the meeting discussion.</p> <p>Tutors should be encouraged to use the e-Vision tool for postgraduate students so that all meeting records for all students are on the same central system.</p> <p>An automated tool on the system should be reviewed for development which sends out notifications and reminders to students of their personal tutoring meetings to increase attendance.</p>		<p><b>Three</b></p>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p>There is a need for clarity on support to PG students who are not making use of the PT system. In the context of COVID-19, amendments this academic year is not likely, nor a move to PGT. Quad will work with Schools to clarify the required support for PGT.</p> <p>SHS - SHS use e-vision for PGT students and would support this across City. I would also support a system of reminders and notifications for staff and students. However, I'm not sure about the reporting issue. I can't see how the system could ever know that a meeting has taken place but not been recorded. Perhaps I've misunderstood....</p> <p>SMCSE - You say ‘The way in which meeting attendance is classified on e-Vision should be amended so that tutors can select whether students attended the meetings or not..’ I believe this is important and it is also important that the system enables simple reporting of the ‘no attendance’ data for each programme when required.</p> <p>CLS - Agree. We are happy to introduce E-Vision for postgraduate students and would welcome the introduction of an automated tool which sends out reminders etc of meetings.</p> <p>Business School - we support the recommendation.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>July 2021</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>Helen Fitch - Assistant Registrar (Quality)</i>

<b>4.8</b>	<b>E Vision – Ease of Use</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy explains that records of all personal tutor meetings should be retained and that for undergraduate students, this should be through the e-Vision records system. The system should therefore be user friendly to ensure all tutors are using it effectively and correctly.</p> <p>It was identified that there is a video and manual available online to assist staff in using the electronic records system at any time wherever they are. The personal tutoring questionnaire highlighted that 13 out of 16 tutors who responded do use the system to record meetings with the other three using email and diary notes instead. Four of the 13 however, stated that they do not find the system easy to use for reasons including that it requires several inputs, drafts cannot be saved, the interface is complex and the reports show absences rather than attendance.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that if tutors struggle to use the e-Vision system or find it is not particularly user friendly, they may stop using it entirely or use it ineffectively and incorrectly, potentially not including all the necessary information required. Meeting records will therefore not be correctly or entirely retained and any key referrals or issues will not be noted.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>A review should be carried out on the effectiveness and ease of use of the system for tutors and students and any suggestions for improvements implemented. For example, introduce an option to save drafts and reports to show attendance as well as reducing the number of inputs required.</p>		<b>Three</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p>Agreed - Review of how to make E-vision easier to use for, Personal Tutoring, is required. S&amp;AS will investigate the possibility of the review.</p> <p>SHS - 4.8 Personally I find evision perfectly easy to use, but have heard similar comments to those in your report from staff. For me, of more use would be to bring in other information, such as interactions with other staff, information about which services students have accessed (with consent) to give a fuller picture for each student.</p> <p>CLS - Agree. Are students given training on how to use E-Vision and respond to the report's tutors make?</p> <p>Business School - We support the recommendation; some tutors have described the system as 'clunky', making it more intuitive would help to encourage its use by tutors.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>July 2021</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	El Cornfield, MAfS Programme Manager

<b>4.9</b>	<b>Feedback on personal tutoring</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states under the 'recognition' section that "as a student there are opportunities for you to provide feedback directly to your personal tutor and in student experience surveys."</p> <p>It was identified that although the policy informs students that they can provide feedback directly to their tutors, it does not specify how exactly. The personal tutoring questionnaire asked tutors if they seek feedback from their students and eight out of 16 tutors stated that they do not.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that if students are not reminded and encouraged to provide feedback to their tutors, weaknesses will not be identified, improvements will not be made and tutors who have earned praise through their good tutoring work will not be recognised and acknowledged.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>Student and Academic Services should devise a short questionnaire for students requesting constructive feedback on the personal tutoring they receive. The questionnaire should be the same for every School and contain free text options for comments. Personal tutors should disseminate the questionnaire to their tutees at an agreed point in the academic year such as the end of the first term.</p>		<b>Three</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Student and Academic Services will investigate the possibility of proposing a short questionnaire to School for students to request constructive feedback on the personal tutoring they receive.</i></p> <p><i>CLS - This could be something the SPT could administer. Happy to be involved.</i></p> <p><i>SHS - agree entirely with the survey, and it being centralised. I would not however have it distributed by PTs as students might think they will see individual responses. Could it go from the SPT or someone senior in the School?</i></p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>Jan 2021</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>Helen Fitch - Assistant Registrar (Quality)</i>

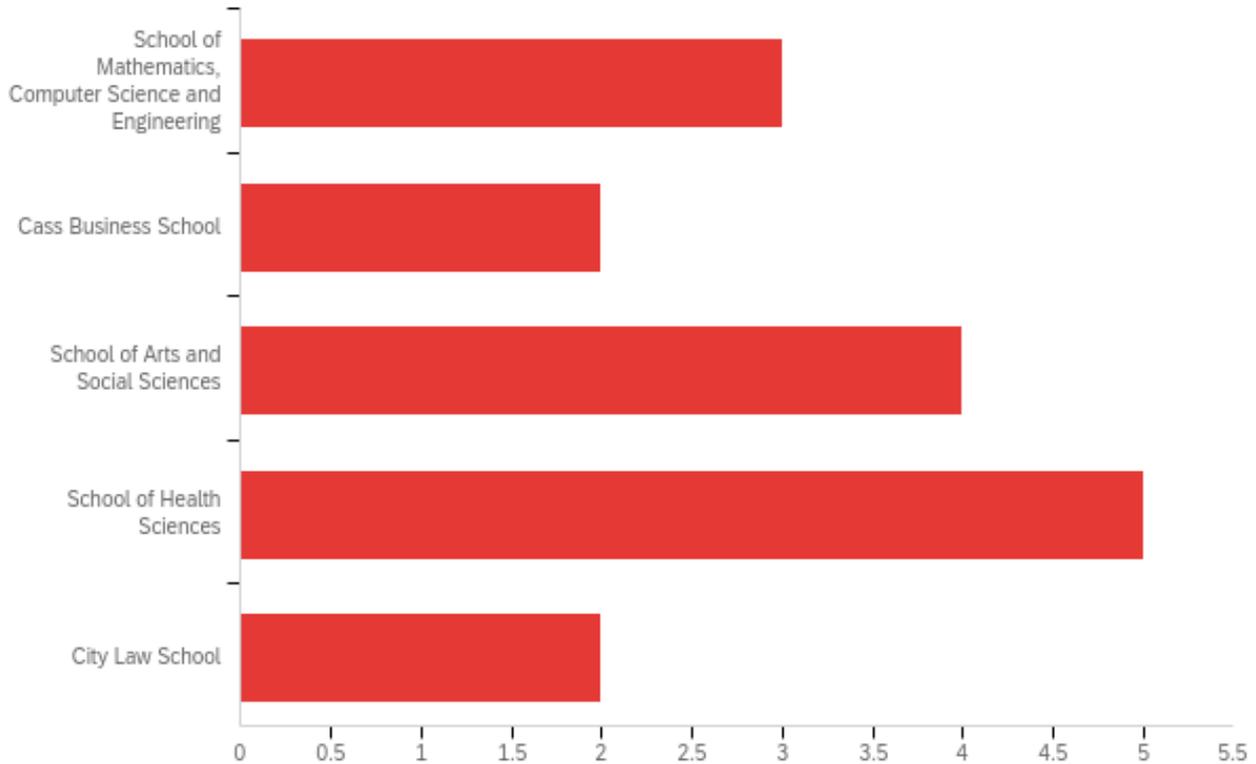
<b>4.10</b>	<b>Incomplete centrally held list of personal tutors</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>Student and Academic Services can produce a list of all the personal tutors including the School and department they are in, the year of study and the number of tutees each tutor has for every programme.</p> <p>It was identified however, that the list produced contains only those tutors who use the e-Vision reporting tool to record meetings. This tool is mostly used for undergraduates so many postgraduate tutors and those who do not use it are not appearing on the list.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that using an incomplete and inaccurate list of personal tutors for any analysis will lead to false and inaccurate conclusions that do not reflect the reality. Furthermore, using the list for potential communications will not reach every personal tutor, leading to some not receiving important information.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>Student and Academic Services should regularly review and update their list of personal tutors and ensure that all tutors (undergraduate and postgraduate) are included and that the information relating to their tutees is amended when necessary.</p>		<p><b>Three</b></p>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p>Student and Academic Services will explore the visibility of regularly reviewing the list of personal tutors but focusing on UG to start with. A review of central PG Personal Tutor register will be conducted in 2021/22 when the PG system has been further developed.</p> <p>If possible, Student and Academic Services will work with Schools to ensure that all tutors (undergraduate and postgraduate) are included in the list of personal tutors and that the information relating to their tutees is amended when necessary.</p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>Jan 2021</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>Yewande Akindele, Head of Quality and Academic Development</i>

<b>4.11</b>	<b>Student attendance</b>		
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p>The personal tutoring policy states that “to ensure the success of your personal tutoring relationship you should: attend all individual and group meetings, and contribute fully to these sessions. In any instance that you are unable to attend you should let your tutor know in advance”.</p> <p>Tutors highlighted that despite communicating with students and sending out meeting invitations, some students do not attend meetings (individual and/or group). Although students’ roles and responsibilities in the personal tutoring process are highlighted in their handbooks, it has been reported that many do not read them. It was also emphasised that some students do not understand the purpose or benefits of the personal tutoring meetings. There are no repercussions for non-attendance.</p> <p>There is an increased risk that students will not benefit from the support, guidance and help the personal tutors can offer if they do not attend meetings, leading to issues remaining unresolved and potential satisfaction and progression issues. The lack of repercussions for students if they do not attend lessens the importance of the meetings, causing many to not prioritise them and not attend.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Priority</b>	
<p>Students should be regularly reminded to attend their personal tutoring meetings through communications sent by senior School staff.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to requiring students to have attended personal tutoring sessions when considering requests for extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>The personal tutoring policy should be included on Moodle or the Student Hub where students are more likely to read it.</p>		<b>Three</b>	
<b>Management Response</b>			
<p><i>Response 1: Student and Academic Services will ensure that the personal tutoring policy is included on Moodle or the Student Hub where students are more likely to read it. However, other actions identified in the report would need to take place to make such communication/access worthwhile for students. Students won’t engage with provision that they do not see as helpful eg a PT who no connection to their programme or not personable.</i></p> <p><i>SHS - Attendance at tutorials is a real issue that we have picked up in SHS too. However, I think tying tutorials to ECs could be disadvantageous to the most vulnerable students, and would not support the idea of 'repercussions' for students who do not attend. I think we need to make this meaningful and accessible to students through our interactions with them and practical arrangements such as timetabling and remote tutorials.</i></p> <p><i>CLS - in CLS we regularly remind students to attend their meetings. Such reminders are sent by Amanda and Course Directors. I will also be stressing the importance of attendance in our conversation cafes etc. The policy is on our CLS Support Pages on Moodle. When seeking feedback maybe a question should be about why they don't attend or engage with the policy.</i></p>			
<b>Target Date</b>	<i>Target Date for Response 1: Sept 2020</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>Responsible for Response 1: Helen Fitch - Assistant Registrar (Quality).</i>

## Appendix A

### Summary of the personal tutoring questionnaire responses

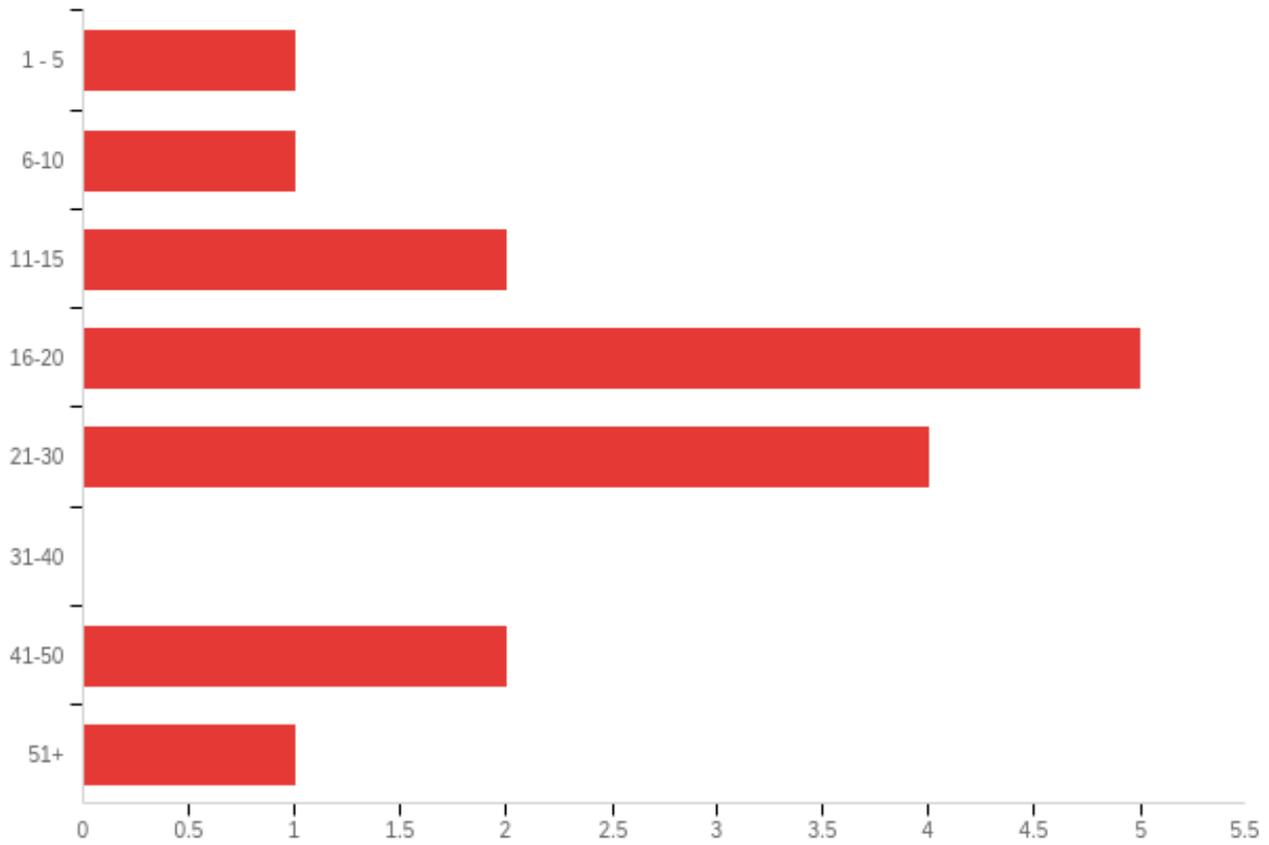
#### Q1 - Which School are you based in?



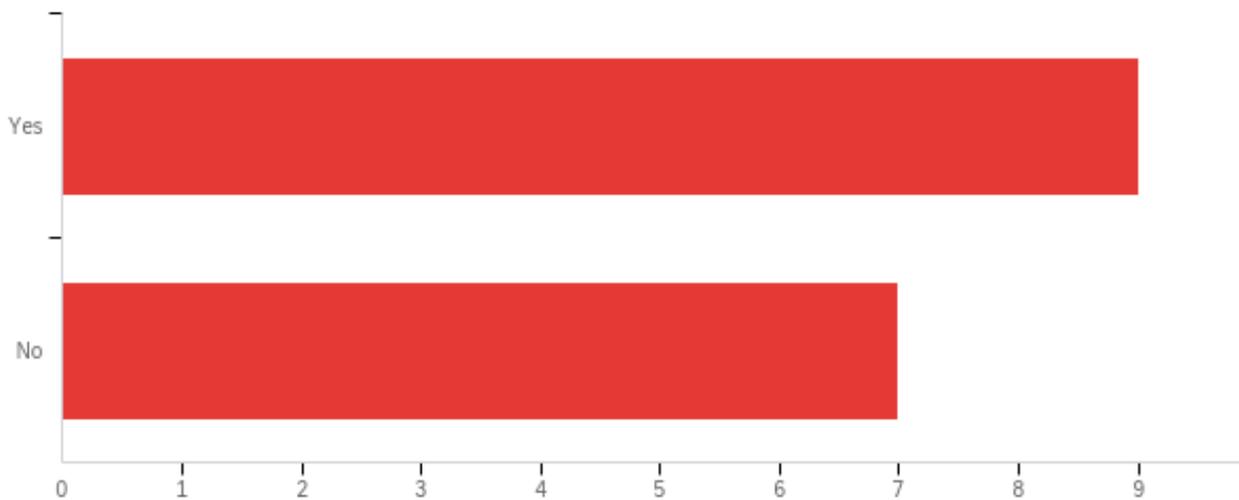
#### Q2 - For which course programme are you a personal tutor?

The responses will not be included in this summary to ensure anonymity.

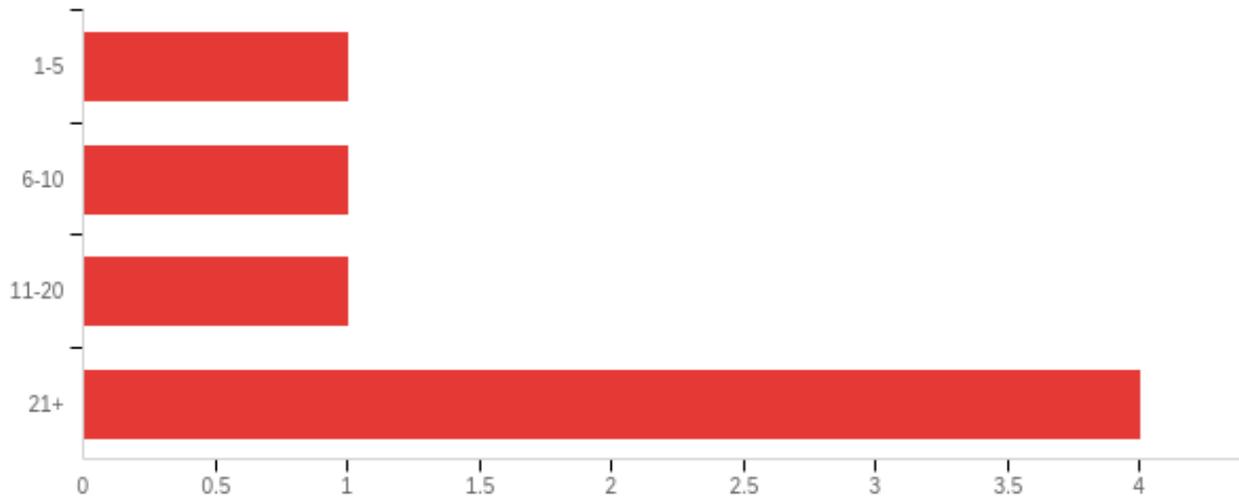
**Q3 - Approximately how many students are you a personal tutor for?**



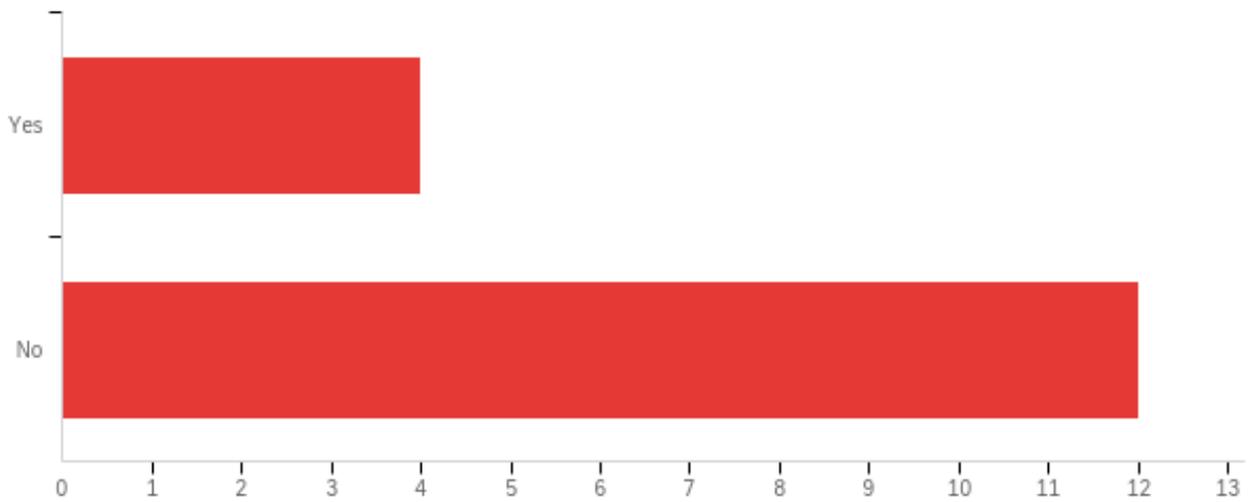
**Q4 - Are all of your personal tutees studying on programmes which you teach?**



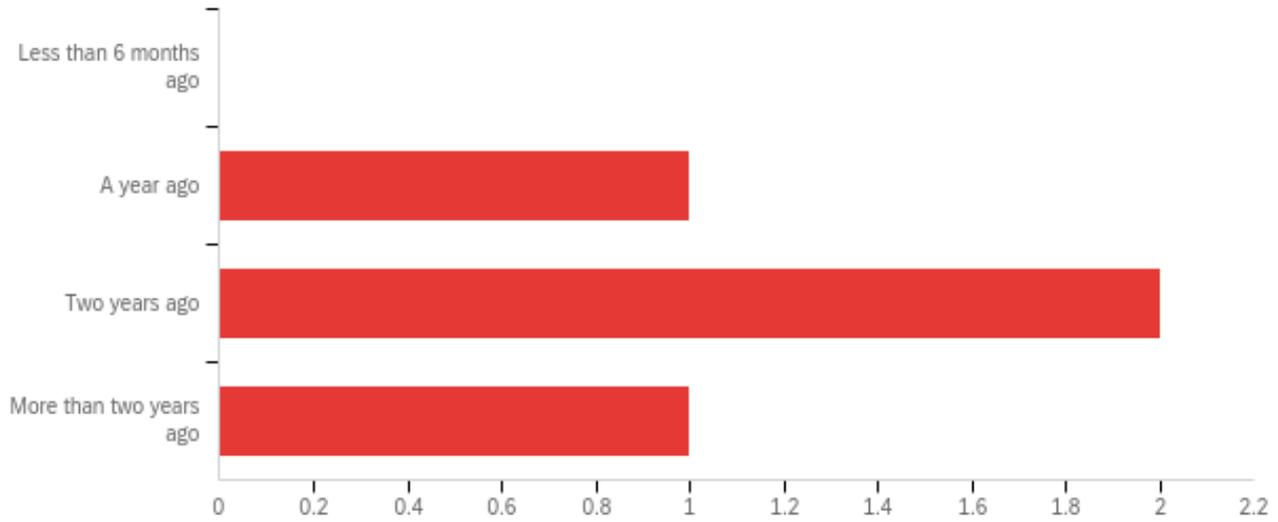
**Q5 - Please state approximately how many tutees are not studying the programmes you teach**



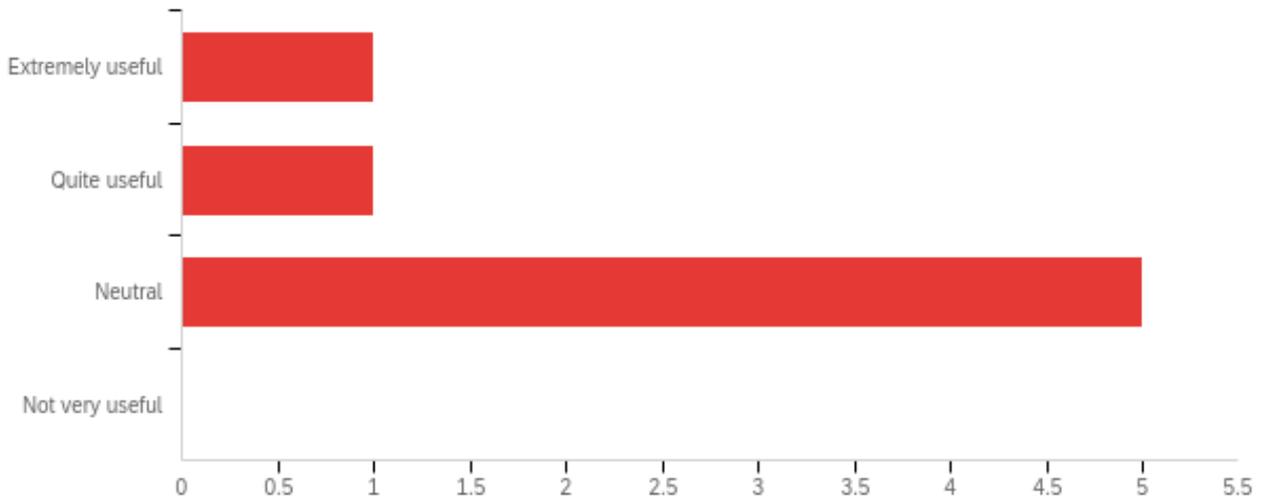
**Q6 - Have you completed the personal tutoring training?**



### Q7 - How long ago did you complete the training?



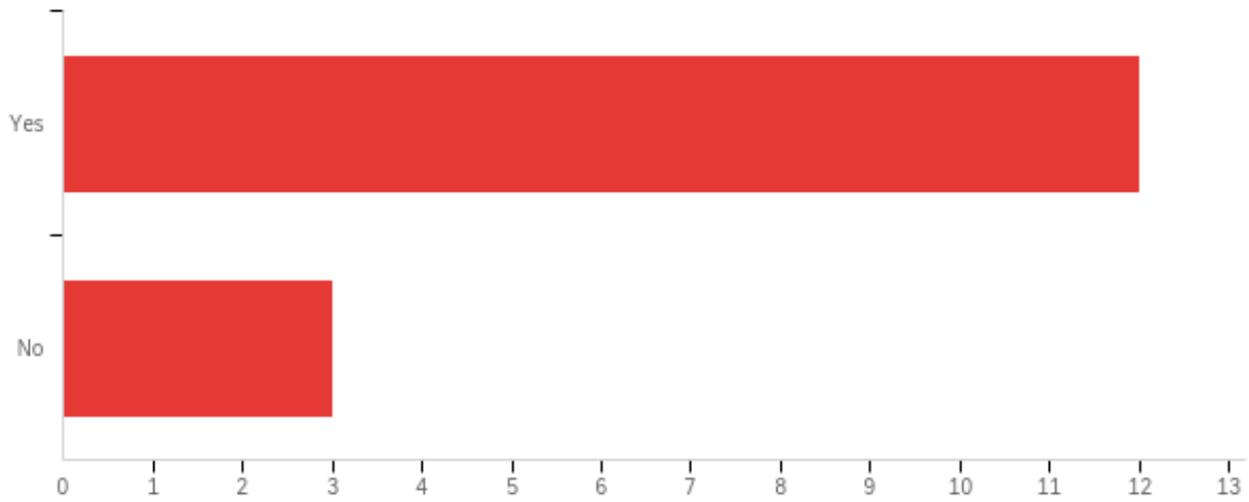
### Q8 - How useful did you find your training in preparation for the role?



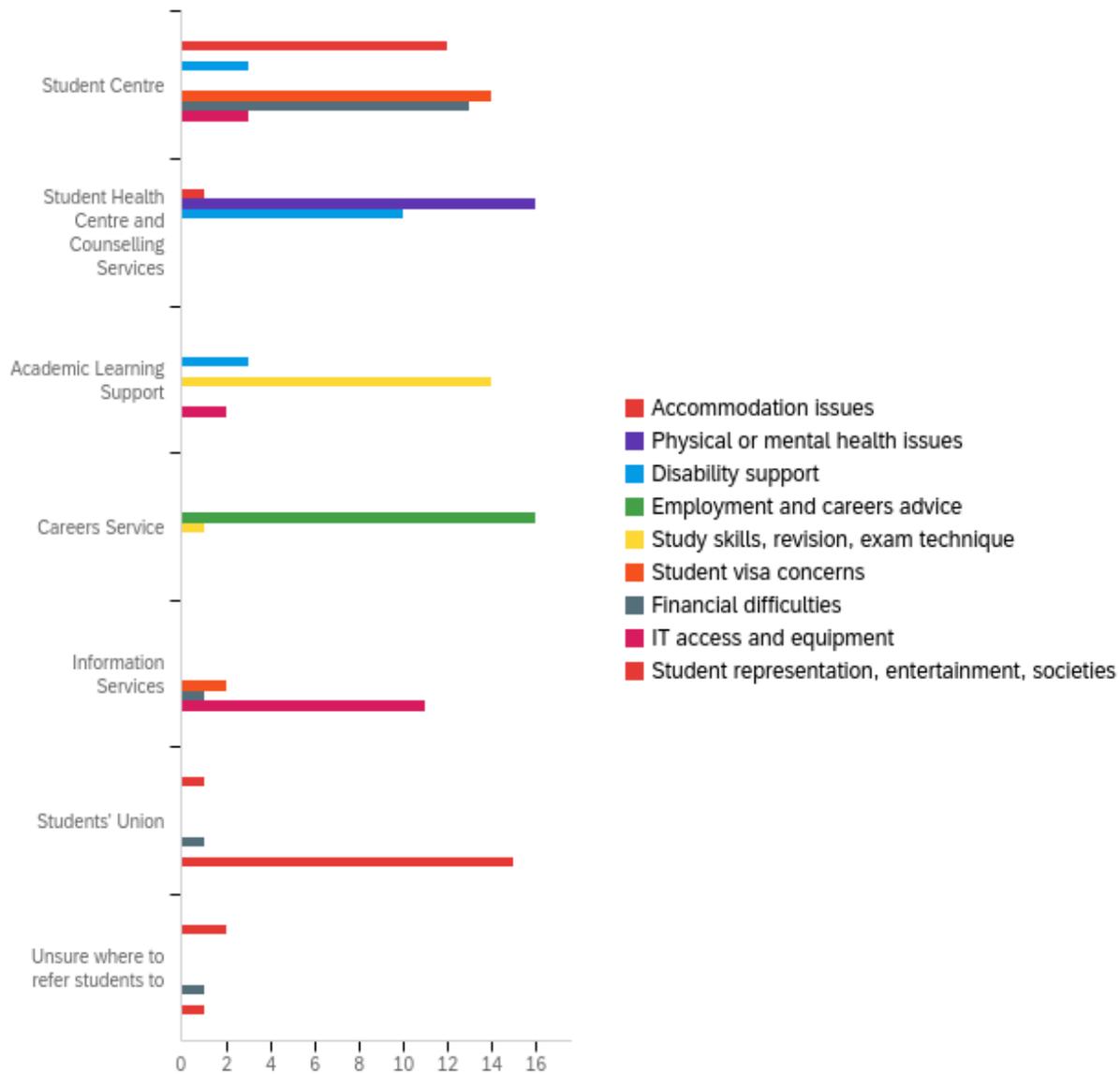
**Q9 - What help/information would you like to have received instead?**

No responses were received for this question.

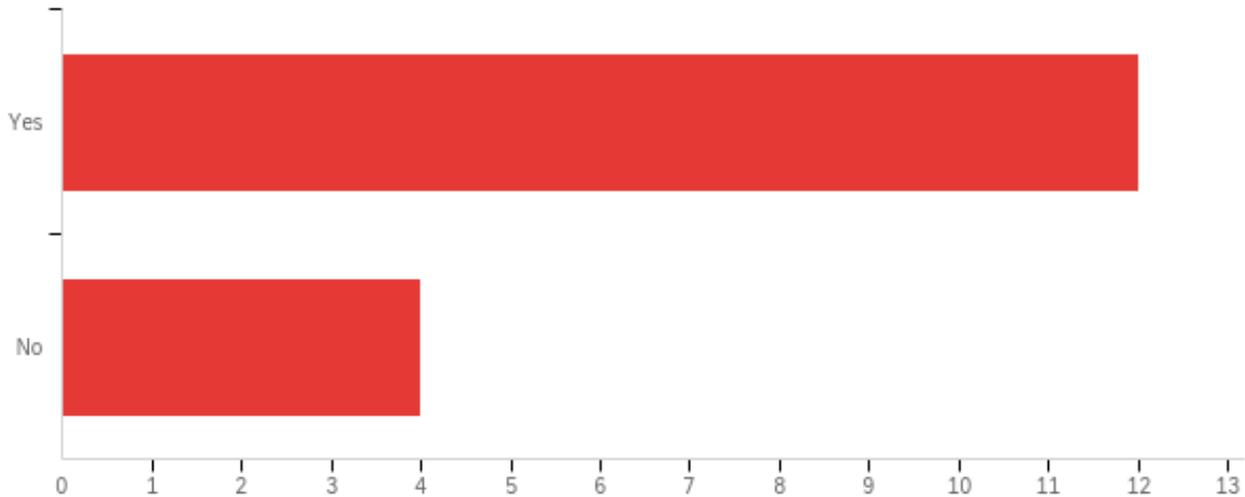
**Q10 - Have you read and understood the personal tutoring policy?**



**Q11 - Please indicate which support service you would expect to refer students to if they face/raise any of the issues listed on the left?**



**Q12 - Have you faced any challenges in your role as a personal tutor?**



**Q13 - Please explain the challenges you have faced?**

student struggling to settle, student with social and depression issues

Sometimes students have encountered personal tragedy

Dealing with non-attending students/students who do not communicate. Dealing with students with more significant personal circumstances

Stress related

when a student's mental health became a serious cause for concern

Getting students to attend. I offer them to book in via a scheduler in Moodle. Not all book that way, some book and then cancel on the day, some book and then don't attend. Particular difficulties with the pilot scheme of Count Me In, students stating they do not like being monitored and that they feel the supportive role of a personal tutor is removed when they are also linked to their system.

students have been victims of abuse and needed to move accommodation; students stuck in part time jobs and pressured by managers to discontinue their studies

Not having an office where tutees can meet with me. Getting personal tutors to come and see me. Excessive numbers ie over 60 means that it is difficult to form the kind of pastoral relationship envisaged.

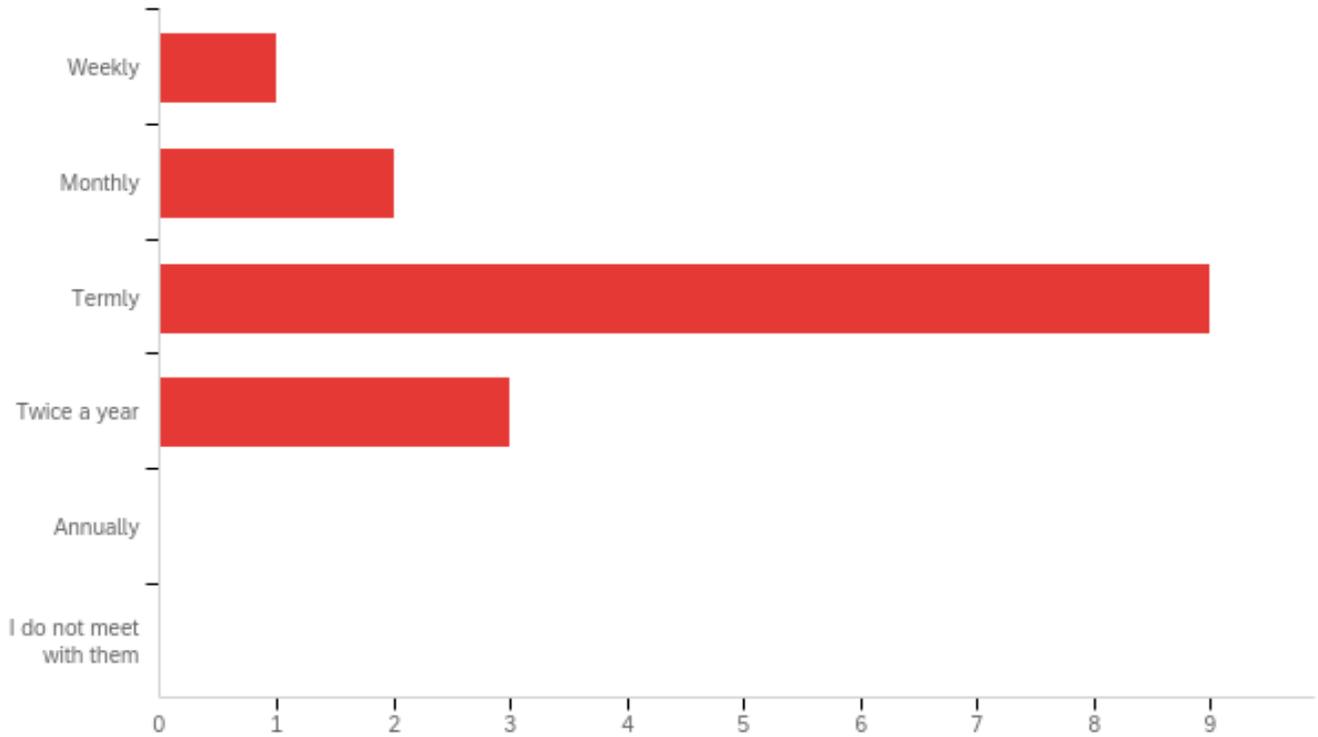
severe personal issues and students failing their exams and ultimately their course are the largest challenges

The severity of the challenges that some of the students' face can be hard to manage. I feel like some training in mental health first aid would be helpful

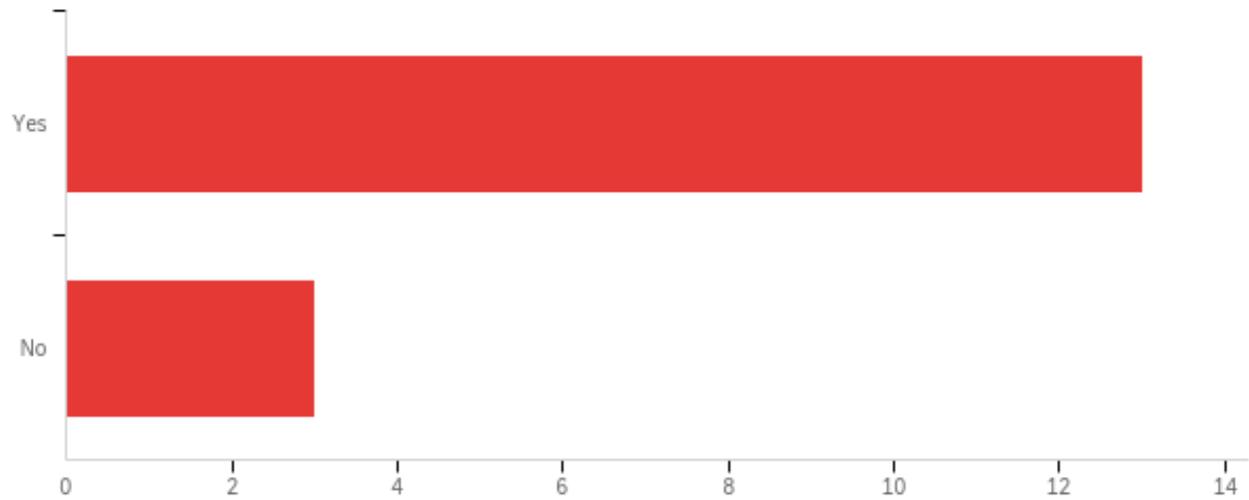
students with complex sets of health and personal circumstances, referring students to counselling knowing that they don't have capacity to actually offer much counselling but likely the student will end up referred on and on long waiting lists

Complex personal issues

**Q14 - How often do you meet with your personal tutees?**



**Q15 - Do you use the electronic records system to record group and individual personal tutoring meetings?**



**Q16 - What do you use instead to record the meetings and discussions?**

Diary note

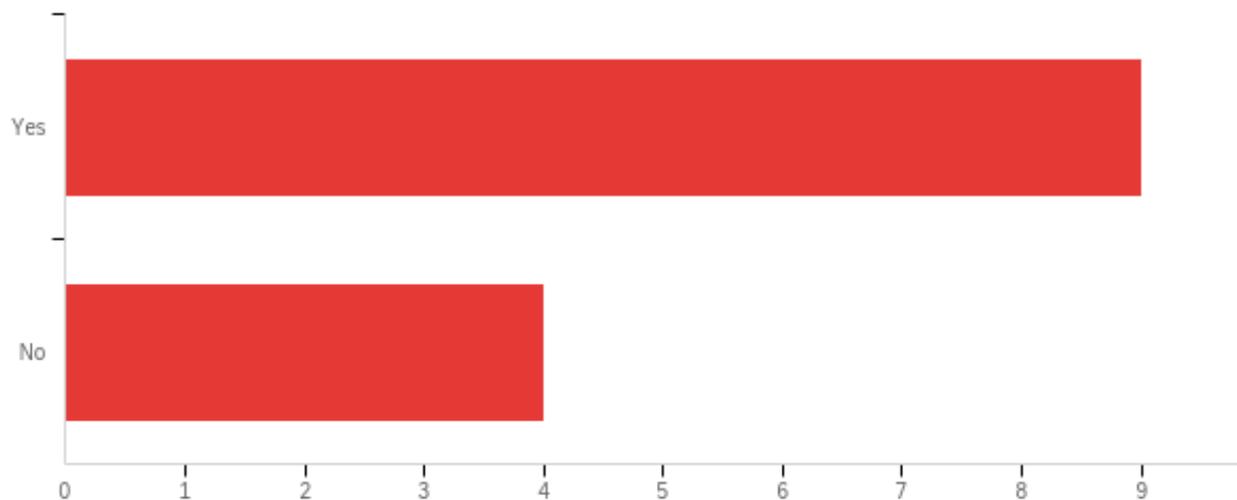
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Email/notes

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e-mail records and my memory

**Q17 - Do you find the electronic records system easy to use to record meetings?**



**Q18 - Please explain why you selected 'no' and any improvements that you would like to see made**

eVision has poor interface. Most tutorial meetings (every two weeks) requires three inputs (attending students; non-attending with apologies for absence; no-shows). Reports show absences rather than more useful attendance figures. As personal tutor coordinator for my department I have repeatedly requested access to eVision access for all tutors, but this has never been granted despite IS Service Now claims that it has.

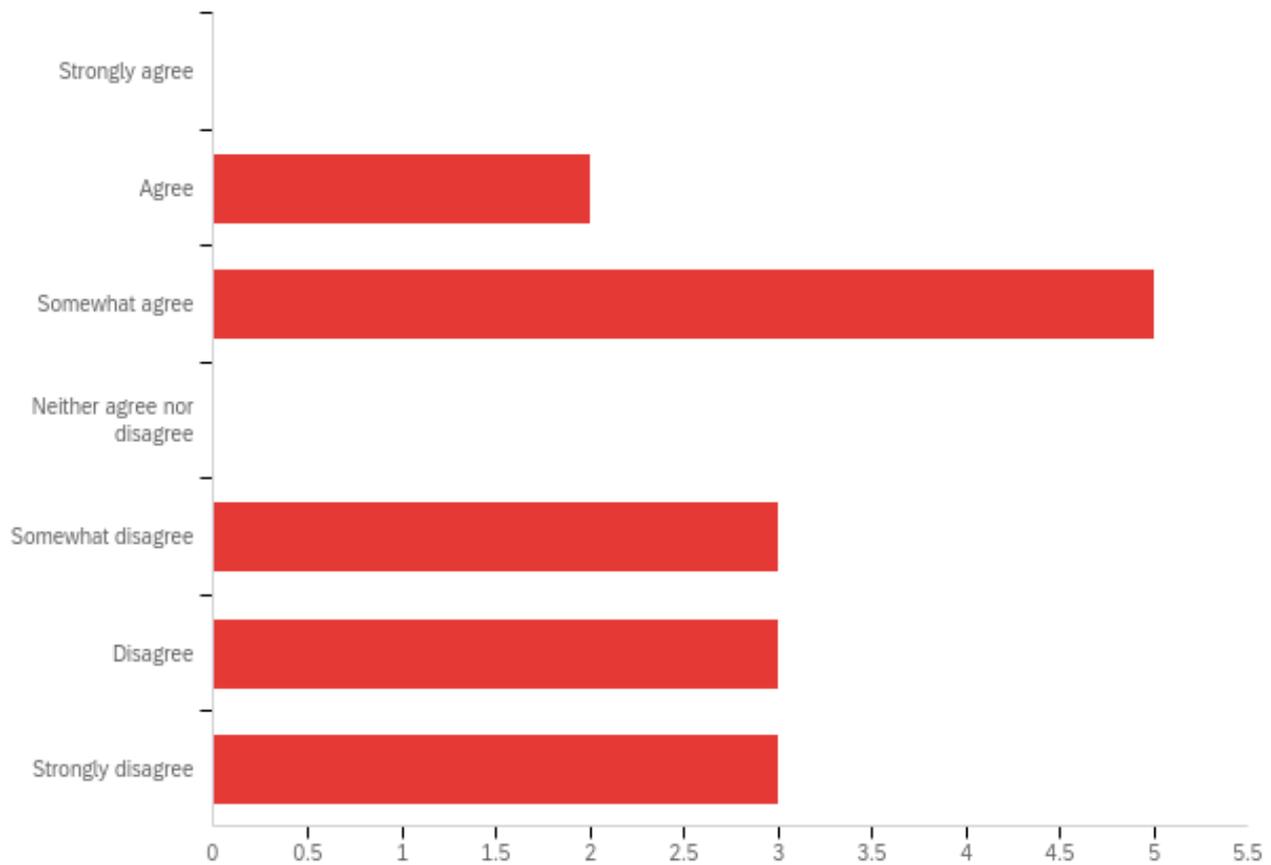
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cannot save a draft

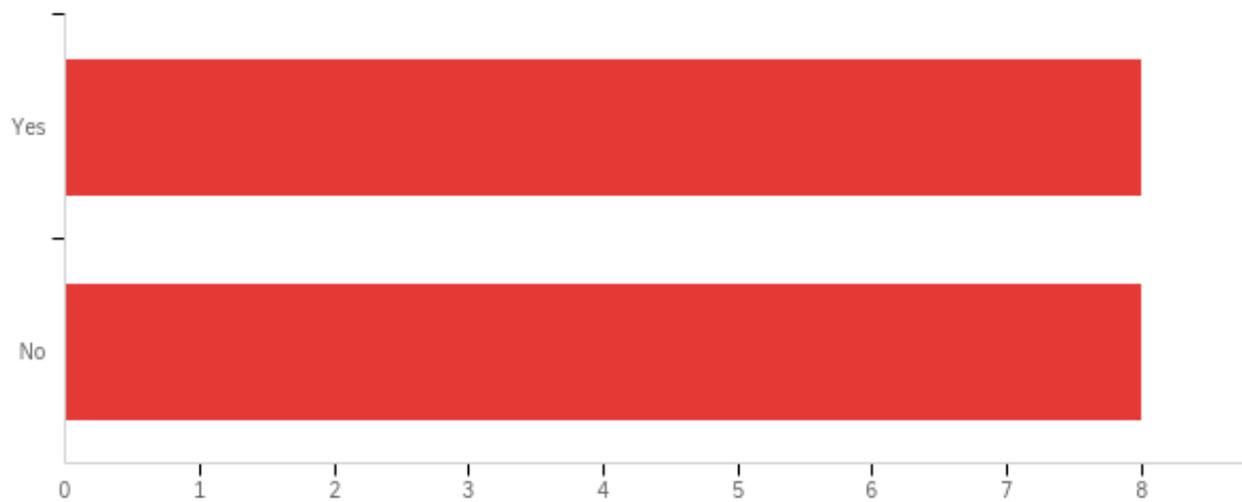
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For UGs, eVision is a horribly complex interface.

**Q19 - To what extent do you agree that most students actively participate in the personal tutoring process, ie attending meetings and completing any agreed action points?**



**Q20 - Do you encourage students to provide feedback on their experiences of personal tutoring?**



**Q21 - Please explain how you encourage students to provide feedback**

I talk to them

Ask them how they would like to use our scheduled meetings. At end of year ask them which tutorials they found most useful and which least so (we run a series of 12 scheduled group tutorials with activities)

Have asked them face to face. Have suggested they give feedback via their staff student liaison committee.

in face to face meetings, via email

visit on office hours, send emails

Via SSLC

Email

I ask them to give it

**Q22 - What can be done (if anything) to support you in your role as a personal tutor?**

Time allowance is not enough: meetings can take significant time, often have to fill in reports after

Nothing

Improvements to eVision (see above)

I find there is a lack of clarity in the process. Who initiates contact student/tutor?

until completing this form, I was unaware that there was training. I will look this up, it would be good to know the extent of the support available through the university

Timetabling personal tutorial meetings may help them all attend, a careful review of whether Count Me In is a suitable approach, more signposting for emotional support for staff on the difficult information they often hear.

Better online infrastructure, easier to navigate, clearer pathways to recommend students to different available services

provide us with offices where they can come and see us without having to book two hour slots in another part of the building.

I am not sure. I believe the key for successful personal tutoring comes down to winning the students trust. This has largely to do with the tutors personality, rather than academic quality, and the ability to give students the feeling that you are on their side. I am not sure that these qualities can be acquired by means of training.

Training would be helpful and some kind of personal tutor support line where I could access advice on how to advise students. I also wanted to say that I work part time 0.6WTE, it might be useful when considering how many personal tutees a member of staff has.

Fewer and better students.

Make sure the students attend the meetings - only 2 out of 21 attended last week.

## Assurance Definitions and Priority Levels

We categorise our **opinions** according to our assessment of the controls in place and the level of compliance with these controls. We categorise our **recommendations** according to their level of priority.

Levels of Assurance	
<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	<p>There is a strong system of control designed to achieve system objectives, and the controls are being consistently applied. There are no significant weaknesses in internal control that, in the context of this audit, are likely to impact on the institution's ability to achieve its strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p><i>Few recommendations made falling mainly within low priority areas.</i></p>
<b>Acceptable Assurance</b>	<p>There is a sound system of control designed to achieve system objectives, and overall, the controls are being consistently applied. However, there are some weaknesses in control and/or evidence of non-compliance, which are placing some system objectives at risk, and which, in the context of this audit, could have some impact on the institution's strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p><i>All recommendations are likely to fall in the lower priority areas.</i></p>
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	<p>Whilst there are some areas of good control design and operation, there are a number of significant weaknesses in control design, and/or their consistent operation and compliance that, within the areas subject to review, are placing the institution at risk of failing to meet its strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p><i>A significant number of recommendations made, some in higher priority areas.</i></p>

<b>No Assurance</b>	<p>The system of control is weak, and/or there is evidence of significant non-compliance, which exposes the institution to significant risk of significant error or unauthorised activity, or we were unable to obtain sufficient audit evidence to enable us to provide any assurance.</p> <p><i>A significant number of high priority recommendations. Urgent action required and this is likely to involve direct attention from members of UEB and PSB.</i></p>	
<b>Advisory</b>	<p>The review has been undertaken as an advisory engagement and no assurance level has been allocated. This report is for information only.</p> <p><i>Advisory review is to ascertain the progress/status of an audit area that is under development.</i></p>	
	<b>Rating Methodology and Assessment of Risk</b>	<b>Potential Impact Examples</b>
<b>Priority 1 ET level risks predominantly</b>	<p>A significant weakness in the system or process, or control failure, which is putting the institution at serious risk of not achieving its strategic aims and objectives, there is a risk of significant operational failure, or there is insufficient audit evidence available.</p> <p>We advise that recommendations in this category require <b>immediate</b> attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverse impact on institutional reputation;</li> <li>• Key strategic risks occur;</li> <li>• Failure to comply with legislative or regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• Significant financial loss;</li> <li>• High risk of fraud;</li> <li>• Failure of governance processes.</li> </ul>

<p>Priority 2</p> <p>School / PSD level risks predominantly</p>	<p>A potentially significant weakness in the system or process which could put the institution at risk of not achieving its strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p>Improved system design and/or more effective operation of controls would minimise the risk of process or system failure in this area.</p> <p>We advise that this category of recommendation requires timely and appropriate attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some risk of financial loss occurring;</li> <li>• Some adverse impact on the institution's reputation;</li> <li>• Greater chance of strategic risks occurring;</li> <li>• System objectives may not be achieved or there are inefficiencies.</li> </ul>
<p>Priority 3</p> <p>School / Department level risks predominantly</p>	<p>Findings that, if corrected, would improve internal control in general and engender good practice, are not vital to the overall system of internal control, and do not therefore impact on the achievement of strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p>Although there is a low risk to the institution, these findings should be addressed in due course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General housekeeping;</li> <li>• Minor control improvement;</li> <li>• Some impact on efficiency.</li> </ul>
<p>Value for Money</p>	<p>This is <b>added to a recommendation</b>, which if implemented, will improve the economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the activity concerned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost savings;</li> <li>• Some impact on effectiveness;</li> <li>• Some impact on efficiency.</li> </ul>