

## Personal Tutoring Policy

### Summary

The Personal Tutoring policy has been amended to align with the student-focused style of the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.

This paper sets out the revised Personal Tutoring Policy taking account of ExCo feedback. No elements of the policy as approved have been altered. The core content, operation and monitoring processes remain the same. The updated policy has been considered and endorsed by ExCo in its amended form.

Senate is asked to approve the policy.

One action required.

### Recommended Action

Senate is asked to **approve** the policy.

**Publication: Open**

## **Personal Tutoring Policy**

### **Scope**

All taught programmes leading to an award of City, University London

### **Date approved/re-approved**

Amendment December 2017

Amendment July 2016

Previously approved September 2015

### **Date for review**

To be reviewed on a periodic basis, with allowance for minor annual updates of roles and responsibilities by Education and Student Committee, as required

**To be read in conjunction** with Section 4 of the Quality Manual including:

Personal Development Planning

Student Contact with Teaching Staff

Student Engagement & Attendance Policy

## **Personal Tutoring Policy**

### **Purpose and aims**

City, University of London is committed to supporting your success and progression on your programme. The aim of this policy is to ensure there is a mutual understanding about the purpose of the personal tutoring system and the responsibilities of staff and students. This policy applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students at City.

You will be allocated a named member of academic staff as your personal tutor. It is the role of the personal tutor to guide you through your programme and support your academic, personal and professional development. By accessing the support on offer, you will be more likely to succeed in your studies and achieve your potential. We are committed to ensuring that contact with your personal tutor is meaningful and adds value to your educational experience.

They work in collaboration with specialist services to support you through each step of your student journey. Alongside these other services, personal tutors can provide essential support in helping you to prepare for life after university.

### **Principles**

The following features ensure that the personal tutoring system is of high quality and effective in providing you with the support that will help you to be successful in your studies:

- 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.
- The primary role of the personal tutor is to support student success by providing programme-specific and educational advice and to guide you in the direction of other relevant services and resources that are available to you.
- Wherever possible we will ensure you are paired with a tutor from your specific programme for the duration of your studies.
- Personal tutoring is a collaborative process requiring both you and your tutor to meet the expectations set within this policy. You are expected to take advantage of the support and advice provided by your personal tutor.
- Personal tutoring includes individual and group tutoring delivered at key points during your student journey.
- School Boards of Studies oversee the quality of personal tutoring.

Appendix 1 of this policy provides specific guidance on expectations for the frequency and conduct of personal tutorial meetings. Detailed information about personal tutoring arrangements for your programme, including how to access your personal tutor, are included in your programme handbook.

If you have concerns about arrangements for personal tutoring please talk to your Programme Director or Senior Personal Tutor. Occasionally it may be necessary to change your personal tutor.

## **Responsibilities of your Personal Tutor**

Your personal tutor will:

- Provide general support with your studies and assist you with your academic development.
- Contact you if you have not attended timetabled activities to understand why and direct you to appropriate support.
- Provide support for your personal development planning, alongside other activities that are available in your programme and with the Careers Service.
- Provide advice about your studies, including where these are directed to a particular profession.
- Act as a first port of call for pastoral, professional or academic concerns or advice and direct you to other forms of support offered by City when needed.
- Be available to meet with you through group and individual tutorials.

Areas which fall outside the remit of the Personal Tutor are:

- Providing specialised or specific medical/health advice to you. This is available through the university's student support services.
- Providing specialised academic advice, for example on a particular piece of work you are doing. This is available from your module tutor.
- Marking your work in their capacity as a personal tutor, unless that work was specifically set for a personal tutorial (for example a tutorial essay). Marking will be undertaken by the module tutor or staff supporting that module.

## **Your responsibilities**

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.
- Keep in touch with your personal tutor so they are aware of your progress through the programme. This might be face to face, by phone or email as agreed with your tutor.
- Provide your personal tutor with relevant information when you are asking for help or a reference.
- Discuss with your personal tutor any difficulties you may be experiencing with your studies so they can help you to find the most appropriate support.
- Agree with your personal tutor how the outcomes of your discussions will be taken forward.
- Act on the advice and guidance provided by your personal tutor, including accessing other support that they recommend may be of benefit to you.
- Always respond to a request for a discussion about any absence from your modules or overall programme so that your situation can be understood.

## **Record Keeping**

A record of every individual and group personal tutorial meeting is kept to support your tutoring relationship. You and your tutor will agree which of you will take the record and you will agree the content of the record together. The record should normally contain the following:

- A record of what was discussed.

- Your pattern of attendance particularly if you do not attend scheduled timetabled activities, miss a personal tutorial session or are not meeting specific expectations for your programme (e.g. as required by a professional body).
- Any agreed action points arising from the sessions and who is responsible for these.
- Any recommendations made for you to seek further support.

The level of personal detail included in each record will be agreed between you and your personal tutor.

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. These records will be stored in a central and secure repository.

Records will only be accessed by those whose role requires this and confidentiality of the information will be maintained. However, there may be occasions when it is necessary for someone other than your personal tutor to access personal records in order to help you if your allocated personal tutor is absent for a period of time.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The School Board of Studies is responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of personal tutoring within your School and will:

- Ensure that personal tutoring is operating in line with this policy, and that any additional local arrangements for personal tutoring are outlined in your programme handbook.
- Monitor and review engagement with personal tutoring and undertake an annual review of the quality of personal tutoring via the Annual Programme Evaluation process.
- Refer information on both good practice and issues you have raised via the School Learning and Teaching Committee who will submit an annual report to the Education and Student Committee (all activities contributing to the Education and Student Strategy) and the Educational Quality Committee (oversight of Senate's Quality Assurance Framework).
- Ensure there is a personal tutoring system in place for all programmes involving partner institutions. Specific arrangements for personal tutoring for partnership programmes will be set out in your student handbook and in the Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership.

### **Recognition**

Personal tutoring is recognised as a valuable part of an academic's role. As a student there are opportunities for you to provide feedback directly to your personal tutor and in student experience surveys. In addition City has a range of annual award schemes where you can nominate your personal tutor for recognition.

## Appendix 1

### Expectations for Personal Tutorial Meetings

Personal tutoring is most effective when delivered via a blend of individual and focused group tutorials delivered at key points during your student journey. Schools will deliver individual and group tutorials with reference to the expectations set out below. There will be some variances (e.g. in frequency) taking into account your needs and the structure and requirements of your programme. Exact arrangements will be made clear in your programme handbook.

#### ***Undergraduate Students***

##### Individual Meetings with your Personal Tutor

Your personal tutor will arrange an individual meeting with you at least once a term. This will normally be at the beginning of each term.

Where you would like further support, please contact your tutor to arrange to meet up. Your personal tutor also has scheduled office hours each week when they are available. These times are advertised and provide further opportunity for you to make arrangements to see them.

As well as individual face-to-face meetings, you are encouraged to maintain regular contact with your tutor (in particular during the middle and the end of each term). This could be through skype, a telephone call, or other electronic means such as email.

Individual meetings with your personal tutor are an opportunity to discuss your progress, your programme and any issues you encounter. The range of issues discussed will be unique to you but may include some or all of the following:

- How you feel you are progressing
- How you are managing your study time
- Your results across each module
- Any additional support you have sought and received or may need
- Your record of attendance
- Where you can seek further support if you have any financial, housing or other issues that are affecting you during your time at City.

##### Group meetings with your Personal Tutor

The following provides one example of what you might expect from a 3-year programme delivering group tutorials with between 5 and 10 tutees in each group. Your personal tutor may adapt the format of group meetings to suit your programme.

#### **Year one**

##### Meeting 1

This will take place in your first term. Your personal tutor will introduce themselves and explain their role and how they will support you. You will also discuss the best way of keeping in touch throughout the term. Additional topics at this first meeting might include:

- Accommodation
- Student Finance

- Why you chose City, University London for your studies
- Learning Success
- Career Aspirations
- Part Time work
- Interest in extra-curricular activities

The primary role of your personal tutor is to support you on your programme. If you need specific information about an issue that they cannot directly assist with, your tutor will refer you to the most appropriate source of support.

#### Meeting 2

This is normally scheduled after you have received your first assessment results. Topics that might be addressed include:

- Academic Success and your progress
- Managing your time
- Module choices for year two
- Summer internship plans

#### Meeting 3

This will be scheduled in the summer before you complete the first year. It provides an opportunity for the group to reflect on the first year including experiences, progress, and plans for year two.

### **Year two**

#### Meeting 1

Scheduled in the first term this provides an opportunity for the group to recap on progress and look forward to what is expected in year two.

#### Meeting 2

This will be timed to support a discussion of electives and/ or progress towards year three.

### **Year three**

The group meetings in this year should reflect on your progress during year two and start to explore your aspirations after graduation. There will also be discussions around applying for jobs and writing CVs, references or options for further study.

### ***Postgraduate Taught Students***

There will be one group meeting in the first term where your personal tutor will introduce themselves and explain their role as well the best way of getting in touch with them.

As a postgraduate student you will have had different life experiences prior to starting your course. Some of you will be joining straight from an undergraduate degree, some undertaking your degree alongside work commitments and some of you returning to study after some time away. This means that you will have unique needs. To ensure that these are effectively supported, all future meetings will usually be arranged on an individual basis with your personal tutor. In the first group meeting your tutor will discuss the most appropriate way to book these. You are encouraged to keep in contact with your tutor so that you are able to make the most of the opportunities available to you.

### ***Distance Learning Students***

If you are studying as a distance learning student you will still be assigned a named personal tutor. Meetings will usually take place through an electronic medium such as Skype. Details will be contained in your programme handbook.