Personal Tutoring

Summary

The Personal Tutoring Stakeholder Group met during 2014/15 to review the Personal Tutoring Policy and collect University-wide data on this process.

Education and Student Committee received a revised Policy for consideration at the May meeting; feedback was incorporated and the revised Policy was received by Senate in July 2015. Senate approved the Policy subject to some minor clarifications which were addressed by the Personal Tutoring Stakeholder Group. Members of Education and Student Committee were invited to provide further feedback by circulation. All revisions have now been incorporated.

Recommended action

Education and Student Committee is asked to:

(i) **note** the final version of the Personal Tutoring Policy

Personal Tutoring Policy

Purpose and aims

City University London has outlined in its Education and Student Strategy for 2015-20 a number of aspirations for those engaged in studying and teaching at City.

In particular, this includes the University's commitment to 'encouraging all applicants with excellent academic potential to access and successfully progress on our programmes'. The personal tutoring system operates to support undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at City. We aim to ensure that you are supported through this system; contact with your personal tutor is meaningful and adds value to your personal journey and development.

As a City University student, you will be allocated a named personal tutor. This is a member of the academic staff who will guide you through your programme and support your personal and professional development, to enable you to achieve your potential and succeed in your studies and your preparedness for life after University. Our personal tutors ensure they are accessible to you, as outlined in programme handbooks, and provide support reflecting your individual needs and aspirations. They work in collaboration with specialist services available to support you through each step of your student journey.

A personal tutor is usually allocated to each of you for the duration of your programme and will work within the guidance in this policy. Students on different programmes might find differences in the way the personal tutoring system operates, and specific information relevant to the programme can be found in the programme handbook.

The aims of the personal tutoring policy are to:

- Ensure that you have a named person you can go to for support
- You have someone who will support your progression and identify any problems
- You have someone who provides general advice and can point you in the direction of other resources in place to support you

Role of the Personal Tutor

The role of a Personal Tutor is a rounded one that incorporates professional and pastoral elements.

The role of the personal tutor is to:

- provide general support and assist you with your academic development
- provide support for your personal development planning (PDP), in addition to other activities that are available in your programme and School
- provide professional 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 then direct you to other forms of support offered by the University
- be available to meet with you through group and individual tutorials
- ask you to contact them and explain any attendance issues particularly those where there is a professional body requirement.

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

- providing specialised or specific medical / health advice to you
- providing specialised academic advice, for example on a particular piece of work you are doing
- 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)

In such instances your Personal Tutor will be able to point you to the relevant staff member/ service able to support you with your concerns.

Role of the Student

You have a role in this process to:

- attend all individual and group meetings, (or send apologies) where appropriate and contribute fully
- maintain contact 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). The level of contact will be agreed at the first group meeting.
- discuss with your personal tutor any difficulties you have with your studies so they can advise you about finding appropriate support
- provide your personal tutor with any information required when you are asking for help or a reference (e.g. coursework marks, attendance record)
- ensure your personal tutor is aware of your current contact details
- always respond to a request for a discussion about absence or this will be referred to the programme director.

Meetings

Undergraduate Students

Personal tutoring will take place both through focused group tutorials and individual tutorials as required. The outline below is a guide and there may be some variation in frequency around group and individual tutorials.

**Individual meetings with your Personal Tutor**

Programme handbooks will outline how often individual meetings will take place. Your personal tutor should ensure you know the preferred method of contact, and where it is not feasible to meet in person, you and your tutor should agree on an alternative arrangement (e.g. skype, telephone).

For individual meetings it is likely your personal tutor will wish to discuss a range of issues with you, which will include:

- 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;
- your record of attendance;

- where you can seek help if you have any financial or housing issues.

Group meetings with your Personal Tutor

The following outlines how the group meetings might run but your personal tutor may adapt these to suit the individuality of your programme/School.

<u>Year one</u>

One group meeting in the first term, which your personal tutor will arrange to introduce themselves and to explain their role and how they will support you.

There are also some additional topics that tutors might raise to discuss which may 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.

However personal tutors will in most of these cases advise you where to go for further support as their primary role is around your programme and progression.

The second meeting should take place at a time when it is appropriate to discuss electives modules or progress. Topics that might be addressed in this meeting include:

- Academic Success and your progress;
- Managing your time;
- Module choices for year 2;
- Summer internship plans.

There should also be a third meeting in the summer prior to you completing the first year which may be a group or individual.

<u>Year two</u>

The first group meeting should reflect on the first year and progress and look forward to what is expected in this year. The second meeting should take place at a time appropriate to discussing electives and / or progress.

<u>Year three</u>

The group meeting in this year should reflect on the second year and progress and start to explore aspirations for 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. All further meetings will be arranged through either group or individual meetings as required.

Your personal tutor will advise you of the preferred method of contact.

Selection

The role of the personal tutor requires commitment and a clear understanding of the various elements within it. Schools allocate personal tutors. Those acting as personal tutors should:

- be able to empathise with their students;
- have an overview of the programme, understand the subject area and the level of study;
- be familiar with all aspects of the role of a personal tutor;
- have undergone training and induction as required.

Record Keeping

You will be required to complete a record of your personal tutorial meetings after each meeting and send this to your personal tutors electronically.

Records should detail attendance at personal tutorials and any actions agreed in the meeting, including a note of any referrals. The level of personal detail included in the records will be agreed between you and your personal tutor. There will be specific programme requirements around attendance and any record keeping that refers to attendance will relate to this.

These 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

School Board of Studies should:

- ensure that they have an established system for personal tutoring and any specific arrangements for this process in Schools should be outlined in programme handbooks;

- monitor and review this process annually through Annual Programme Evaluations and provide a report to the School Learning and Teaching Committee who will submit an annual report to the Education and Student Committee updating on all activities contributing to the Education and Student Strategy;

- 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 the student handbook and the Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership;

- annually review any feedback received on personal tutoring (specifically through NSS and Your Voice surveys). Where improvement is deemed to be necessary an action plan should be put in place to ensure necessary enhancements to the process.

Staff Development and Support

All personal tutors will have access to development and support for their role. Details of this will be provided for personal tutors through a personal tutoring webpage on the City University Website.

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 the University has a range of annual award schemes where you can nominate your personal tutor for recognition.