

UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA

PERSONAL TUTORING POLICY (TAUGHT PROGRAMMES)

Academic Quality & Development

NB. This policy is available on the University of Cumbria website and it should be noted that any printed copies are uncontrolled and cannot be guaranteed to constitute the current version of the policy.

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy title	Personal Tutoring Policy
Policy owner	Director of AQD
Policy lead contact	Jess Robinson
Approving body	Academic Board
Date of approval	22 June 2016
Date of implementation	Sep 2007
Version no.	4
Related Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Practice etc.	Retention and Student Success Strategy Student References Policy (LiSS) QAA UK Quality Code Chapter B5 and B6
Review interval	Two yearly

University of Cumbria
Personal Tutoring Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University's Mission, Vision and Values and all related strategies emphasise the provision of robust student support and guidance systems as an integral part of University provision. Establishing supportive, rewarding relationships with academic staff from an early point in a student's programme is strongly linked to student engagement and improving achievement and engagement and retention of students, particularly non-traditional entrants to Higher Education. Personal tutoring is seen as a key element in realising these objectives.
- 1.2 This policy regards personal tutoring as a pro-active academic role designed to raise achievement and maximise student potential. It should be a mainstream activity for all students to engage with, not a marginal activity for students with problems.
- 1.3 Building on current good practice and expertise, this policy sets out the minimum standards that students on University of Cumbria programmes can expect in terms of personal tutoring, plus suggestions for further enhancement. Academic Departments must design, operate and review Personal Tutoring systems that meet the minimum standard whilst being appropriate to their programmes.
- 1.4 The University has developed a set of indicative responsibilities for the Personal Tutor role. This is available on staffnet at <http://staff.cumbria.ac.uk/Internal/AQD/Documents/Procedures/PersonalTutorrole.pdf> (Staff Only).

2. Personal Tutor Role

- 2.1 The Personal Tutor role will normally encompass:
- academic monitoring and advice
 - support for student retention and student success (student outcomes)
 - support for personal development planning and Student Progress Review
 - directing students to sources of academic related and non-academic guidance and personal support
 - formalised systems of communication with other programme staff concerning the student's progress
 - creating a student reference using a developmental approach
- 2.2 All programmes will have defined procedures for assuring the Personal Tutor role and these will be published in the programme handbook.
- 2.3 All students on taught programmes will be allocated a named Personal Tutor at the beginning of their programme. A student will normally remain with the same personal tutor for at least one year or one academic level of their programme and, where possible, for the full duration of the programme. The Personal Tutor will construct an interim reference at the end of each academic year.
- 2.4 Personal Tutors should be accessible to students on a reasonable basis. All individual students are entitled to contact time with their personal tutor as follows:

Levels 3 & 4 2 hours per year (normally across 4 meetings)

Levels 5, 6 & 7 1 hour per year (normally across 2 meetings)

- 2.5 Personal tutor contact may take place individually or in groups, providing students are able to request individual contact when needed. Contact can be by a variety of means such as telephone, face-to-face, e-mail, and Skype-type methods. The ratio of Personal Tutor to students should enable the minimum standards to be achieved.
- 2.6 Personal Tutors will be required to make initial contact with their Personal Tutees within the first week of commencement of their studies. It is good practice for initial tutorials to be formally built in to programme level induction processes. Where possible, Personal Tutors are encouraged to make contact with their tutees prior to admission.
- 2.6 Personal Tutors should normally be part of the teaching team and must have a good working knowledge of the programme on which their students are studying.
- 2.7 Students are entitled to request a change of Personal Tutor; however, the final decision regarding a change will rest with the Programme leader.
- 2.8 Personal Tutors will be aware of the boundaries of their role (see section 3 below), work within these limits and know how to refer students to other appropriate services within the University.
- 2.9 Should Personal Tutors become unavailable for more than two weeks (e.g. illness, sabbatical or annual leave), an alternative contact must be identified by the academic department and students informed of the temporary measures. The programme handbook should outline this process.

3. Confidentiality, Record Keeping, Boundaries and Referral

3.1 Confidentiality

- 3.1.1 The Personal Tutor must make clear that there are limits to the confidentiality that s/he can offer, in line with the Confidentiality Policy. If a student discloses information regarding behaviour that contradicts the professional code of practice of the occupation that the student is training for, the tutor is obliged to pass on that information to their Programme Leader. Additionally, if they believe a student is likely to cause serious physical harm to others or to themselves, they should immediately refer the student to the appropriate support service. In these circumstances the Personal Tutor will explain to the student that they have a responsibility to pass on the information and should attempt to seek permission from the student for this. Any sharing of personal information will be restricted to what is pertinent to the immediate situation and to those who can provide the help the student needs.
- 3.1.2 Where a student discloses a disability to their Personal Tutor but requests that its existence and/or nature is not disclosed to third parties, this must be subject to the conditions set out in 3.1.1. The Personal Tutor should record this request in writing, hold it in a secure place, and make it available for the student on request.

3.2 Record Keeping

Students are normally expected to keep the records of meetings as part of their academic development. The tutor should also keep records of the meeting: these records must be available to the student on request and must be held in a secure place in line with data protection requirements. Records held by staff must be destroyed as soon as possible following the student leaving the University, and within a maximum of one year, unless Professional Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) state a longer period is required. The operation of the Personal Tutoring Policy is monitored via programme and departmental annual evaluatory reports (AERs) and personal tutors will need to be able to provide confirmation regarding frequency of meetings to inform these reports.

3.3 Boundaries to the Personal Tutor role and Referral:

Personal Tutors must be aware of the limits of their role and should convey these limits clearly to the student. Outside academic development and programme-related matters (outlined in 2.1), students should be directed to the appropriate University service or other external agencies.

(<http://www.cumbria.ac.uk/FutureStudents/StudentLife/Lifestyle.aspx>)

3.4 Creating Student References

- 3.4.1 The responsibility for creating a student reference normally lies with the Personal Tutor assigned to the student.
- 3.4.2 To embed employability criteria, student references are considered a developmental process, and constructed jointly with the student throughout the student's programme and confirmed at an appropriate point during the final year.
- 3.4.3 References should be stored centrally via SAAS.
- 3.4.4 The reference templates provided by SAAS should be used; some professional programmes will provide specific templates (please see [Student References Policy](#) and [guidance](#) for details).

June 2016

**UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA
POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL SCHEDULE**

All University of Cumbria Policies must include a completed Policy Document Control Schedule consisting of the Policy Schedule (see front cover), Review Schedule and Drafting Schedule (see below) which should be completed as appropriate.

REVIEW SCHEDULE				
Review no.	Due date	Reviewed by	Approved by	Completion date
2		C Marcangelo	Academic Bd	Jul 2013
3	Sep 2014	C Marcangelo	Academic Bd	Sep 2014
4	June 2016	J Robinson	Academic Board	June 2016

DRAFTING SCHEDULE	
Draft no.	Date
<i>Eg. 0.1</i>	
<i>0.2</i>	
<i>0.3</i>	
Final Version	
<i>1.0</i>	