Guidelines for how Personal Tutors might organise meetings

It is suggested that scheduled group meetings may last 30-60 mins. Individual meeting timings will depend on student's circumstances, but may be considerably shorter. It may be that individual one-to-one meetings are scheduled as drop-in sessions during a Personal Tutor's office hours which are specifically set aside for student contact. Much will depend on a Personal Tutor's individual availability as to the “when” and “how” to meet.

It is recommended that you use Blackboard Collaborate as a 'virtual meeting room' (especially if you are off campus) and if your entire tutor group have access to a webcam or mobile device. In the short term, general guidance on how to use Blackboard Collaborate is included in the above link and you can contact the eLearning team directly if you require further assistance. Over the coming year, a Personal Tutor template organisation for this facility will be developed and rolled out across the University. Blackboard can be useful for holding "drop-in" sessions in a particular advertised period which suits your office hours, specific slots for tutees to log in to "meet" you, or for a virtual meeting with multiple students in real time video, audio or text chat. There are tips and tools which the eLearning team can share with you, but basic tools include whiteboard facility, ability to add notes to meetings and document sharing. You could "meet" using Skype or Facetime, although there may be technical problems using such software on university computers, and you may not wish to share your personal number with students.

A tutor may wish to task their tutees with organising meetings using useful tools such as Doodle.com.

You are free to schedule meetings at any other point in the academic year as you require them.

For those personal tutors who feel they need assistance, use these guidelines for organising meetings. For advice on using MyAberdeen contact the eLearning team. You can browse resources to assist you in preparing for these scheduled meetings by year group level, or by month.

You may find the Frequently Asked Questions pages on www.abdn.ac.uk/personaltutors useful too for information such as what to record.

Obviously how you organise your meetings will mostly be at your own discretion, but there are some tools and support which you might wish to make use of.

Why: students themselves have asked for more personal guidance and support during their studies, so this Personal Tutor System is a direct response to that. Whilst it is not mandatory for students to attend, it will be very important for tutors who will be supplying academic references for their tutees.

What: for what you might wish to discuss, review the meeting schedule on http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/preparing-for-your-meeting-1898.php

How: decide whether the meeting will be with an individual or as a year group or as a combination of year groups. If you are off campus, it may be you wish to use Facetime or Skype to discuss non-sensitive issues. There is an expectation that as an initial introduction to themselves, all tutors will contact their tutees explaining a bit about themselves, how they will be in touch and how meetings will be arranged (by students or otherwise).

When: suggest suitable times to your tutees which will suit you as a tutor. Either ask them to reply to you individually, or to use www.doodle.com to organise themselves as a
group and confirm to you what a suitable time will be. They may also wish to suggest a venue to meet at.

Where: you may wish to meet informally in a coffee lounge within your building.
On Old Aberdeen Campus you could make use of The Hub, MacRobert Foyer, Butchart, the Library (or outside on campus or in the Botanics on those balmy Aberdeen days) if the content of your meeting will not be confidential/sensitive. At Foresterhill, you could meet in the IMS atrium, the Suttie Centre coffee shop and first floor break out space. There is also some space on the mezzanine floor in the Polwarth Building.
One-to-one meetings might be held in your office. You can use virtual meeting rooms as above on Blackboard Collaborate.
For larger group meetings you can make use of the centrally timetabled rooms – see Roombookings – or school-owned meetings rooms - your school administrative staff will be able to tell you the local procedure for booking these latter rooms.

Useful links:
eLearning: www.abdn.ac.uk/elearning
Roombookings centrally: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/room-booking-708.php or see admin staff in school for local procedure. Contact your designated Personal Tutoring support staff member in InfoHub if you need additional assistance.
www.doodle.com
www.skype.com