

## School of Law Personal Tutor Statement 2019-2020

### Overview

Delivering an effective and supportive Personal Tutor service for students is a key priority of the School of Law at the University of Aberdeen. Personal Tutors support students through their academic journey to their degree and in their full student experience. The tutor should be the first point of contact for students, however other members of staff will also be willing to assist.

The Senior Personal Tutor in 2019 is Professor Zeray Yihdego. Administrative support is provided by the School Administrative Officer. The Senior Personal Tutor should be the first point of contact on all PT related queries.

### Delivery of Personal Tutoring

The Law School prioritises that all LLB students have Personal Tutors from within the law staff. Where possible, and subject to research leave etc., students will be **allocated the same tutor** throughout their studies. Personal Tutor allocation and re-allocation will be subject to consultation with the Senior Personal Tutor.

Personal Tutors meet with students on an individual basis in the tutor's office in the first few weeks of each half session. Personal tutors also meet with first year students in November before their first set of summative assessments, and will meet with all students in March or April. All meetings will be arranged by tutors. The format of the meeting is at the discretion of the tutor. New students will be made aware of their tutor and the timing of their first meeting as early as possible prior to the start of the semester.

**Suggested topics** which might be discussed at these meetings reflect the key issues which a student might wish to discuss (or be reminded of): approaches to learning, exam preparation and feedback, co-curriculum, career planning and employability and graduate attributes. The focus on these will vary from student to student and the stage of study. More details of possible topics, together with resources, are available on the University Personal Tutor website

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support/personal-tutors.php>).

In many cases, tutors meet with tutees on an individual basis; on some issues, however, such as exam preparation and career planning, it might be useful for students to meet as a group (Personal Tutors in the School of Law will each have a spread of students from years 1-4). Where appropriate meetings might take place

across years to enable informal peer mentoring, and for the student be part of a wider group which can also provide support.

At all meetings, students should also feel free to raise **any other issue** which they would like to discuss. The main aim of the meetings is to **build a link** between the tutor and the tutee so that if any problem, of whatever nature, should arise, the student is aware of who they can contact in the first instance and has developed a relationship with their tutor. Tutors are normally expected to provide academic and personal references for students, though this does not preclude students from contacting other staff members.

### **Other support**

Tutors are briefed at the start of every academic year on **academic issues** and processes by the Law School the Student Progress Convenor, to be able to provide support to complement that provided by MyCurriculum. and MyTimetable. Further, each year group in the Law School has a co-ordinator. They hold an induction meeting for student year groups at the start of the academic year, when they discuss the structure of the year, any particular academic issues or choices which need to be made in that year and the impact of these choices on students' degrees and future careers, and assessment deadlines. Further sessions and support are provided for first year students. The year co-ordinator also reviews course handouts and assessments for all courses relevant to the year to ensure consistency and to avoid clashes. In induction week Law School hoodies, and relevant information, are available in an open drop in basis in the School Office. The School Office is also a very useful source of support and should be able to direct you to others, to complement the information available on MyCurriculum and MyTimetable.

The tutor is informed if a student has an extension of time for a piece of assessment, is issued with a C6/C7 (for example, from missing tutorials), or has failed several courses, and may contact students to offer support and establish if there is a wider issue. Special attempts will be made to contact students who may be perceived to be particularly at risk of deciding to withdraw from the University or who it might appear would benefit from additional assistance to enhance their student experience (including referral to other University services such as counselling). Other Law School activities which aim to provide **timely intervention, a supportive environment and a sense of belonging**, for all students, are the active student body with its activities throughout the year, the Taylor Law library and the First Year Matriculation dinner which is supported by members of the legal profession.

Tutors are briefed regularly on wider opportunities to enhance **employability** and will encourage students to pursue them: the careers service, the Law mentoring system and events organised by the Law School Employers' Liaison Committee.

The Senior Personal Tutor holds an annual briefing at the start of each academic year for all personal tutors, and personal tutoring is a standing agenda item at Law School meetings (which student reps attend) and Law School Staff meetings. This aims to ensure consistency and quality delivery and **ongoing discussion** between staff and students on this important issue. The Senior Personal Tutor personally meets with all new academic staff in the school to introduce them to the personal tutoring system.