

School of Natural & Computing Sciences

Personal Tutor statements

Welcome

Welcome to the School of Natural and Computing Sciences.

It is important that you enjoy your time here, and it is essential that you make the most of this time as preparation for employment, further study or whatever else your future holds. You will be assigned a Personal Tutor to help support you in your transition into University and throughout your studies.

You can find out more about the role of the Personal Tutor at University of Aberdeen's Personal Tutoring website via the following link <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support/personal-tutors.php>.

Overview

The role of the Personal Tutor is to allow students the opportunity to review their personal, academic and career development at regular intervals. The Tutor's role in this will be to help students develop personally and professionally, help students understand the skills necessary to improve their performance and achieve their goals both within and outside of their programme of study as well as provide encouragement and support as appropriate.

Operation of Personal Tutoring system

The Tutor and Tutee will as far as reasonably possible be within the same discipline for their major component of their degree (for example a Physics or Physics with Geology student, the Tutor would be a physicist). Where a degree contains equal components (for example Physics and Maths), the assignment of a Tutor will be either in Physics or Maths at the discretion of the Head of School /SPT and most probably to on the basis of evenness of Tutee load. Where a Tutee's degree is divided equally between different schools we propose that the assignment should be according to which school bears the least Tutee load.

Retention and academic success

- The Tutor will be able to offer advice on course selection to the student ensuring that their choice is sensible and so maximizing their chances of success and degree flexibility.
- The student will gain a feeling of their discipline being their "home" where they come regularly to meet with their Tutor and lecturers and will have done this for from their first week of University.
- The Tutor will be able to identify and offer help on academic issues that are blocking the progress of the student.
- The Tutor (being a lecturer of the student and in constant contact with other lecturers of the student) will be in a better position to identify students with poor attendance or other issues and so take appropriate remedial action.

Engendering a sense of belonging has been identified by accrediting bodies such as the Institute of Physics as being of high importance in terms of retention, academic performance and general wellbeing.

In terms of [employability](#), the Tutor will:

- have a greater knowledge of the job market available to the student and be able to offer the student real and substantive information on how increase and enhance their employability.
- the ability to offer the student ways of increasing their employability through extracurricular employability enhancement activities, enhance their personal development within the context of likely future employment and be familiar with how graduate attributes are already developed within the programme of study.
- be in a better position to write references requiring detailed academic achievement information.

You can find out more about Graduate Attributes at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/graduateattributes/>.

Purpose and timing of meetings

There will continue to be three scheduled meetings offered to students each year for years 2, 3 and 4 with one extra meeting offered to 1st year students before their first set of exams in December (to offer advice on revision and exam technique). The three main meetings will occur at the beginning of the first term, the beginning of the second term and in March. The purpose of the meetings will continue to be those outlined on the PT web page “Preparing for your Meetings”. However, in line with the statement above, they may contain a higher academic content. This would mean for example that the Tutor would be more likely to discuss with the student their particular choice of courses in the September meeting, or discuss in more detail any particular problems the student was facing in exam preparation in the December meeting. These meetings will for the most part be one to one meetings, unless the Tutor decides to organize a group meeting.

It is important that students respond to emails about meetings, and attend the scheduled meetings. You can of course contact your Personal Tutor at any time should you have an issue you need to discuss.

Key Contacts within the School

Every student will have a Personal Tutor assigned to them who they should contact in the first instance. For all queries regarding your Personal Tutor you should contact the School’s Senior Personal Tutor, Dr Peter Henderson. Other points of contact are the Head of School Professor, Pete Edwards, and the Director of Teaching, Professor Bill Harrison.

The SPT will liaise with heads of discipline and staff seeking information on the success of the PT system by means of informal feedback from Tutors in terms of Tutor appointment attendance rates, from formal channels such as the staff student liaison committees. Annually, the SPT, heads of discipline and Head of school will identify strengths and weaknesses in the system in meeting the University expectations and develop ways in which it might evolve to meet any shortcomings or implement other good practice identified from other schools. The SPT will report on these various issues to the Student Experience Committee.