

Personal Tutoring

When you join the University, you will be assigned a Personal Tutor who will help you to get the best out of your university experience. Your Personal Tutor will:

- support you in your academic progress and personal development
- discuss with you programme choices, placement opportunities and future career plans
- provide you with a reference for your placement or career
- guide you to sources of expert help with any personal/welfare issues.

Your Personal Tutor should arrange to meet with you on at least three occasions in your first semester and at least once per semester thereafter. This enables you both to get to know each other, such that you can raise any issues with your tutor and your tutor can support you fully through your programme. It is important that you attend scheduled meetings with your Personal Tutor and let them know in advance if you cannot attend. Many of these meetings may be in small groups but you can also request a one-to-one meeting.

If you should have reason to wish to change your Personal Tutor, please contact your Director of Studies to discuss the matter.

Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Tutors

The Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology operates a system in which academic staff act both as academic and personal tutors to a number of individual students. Your timetable will include approximately three tutorial sessions with your tutor in each semester. The purpose of these tutorials varies as the programmes progress, but the sessions are intended primarily to improve a range of key skills that are important for your studies. In Year 1, the emphasis is on professional formation and scientific writing (Semester 1) and on team working through considering simple clinical cases (Semester 2). The latter provides an introduction to problem-based learning, which continues in Years 2 and 3, and helps develop the integrative skills required for Advanced Pharmaceutical Studies in Year 4. More specific information on the problem-based learning approach to education will be discussed in greater detail early in Semester 2. You can request a personal, one-to-one meeting at any time.

Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology Personal Tutorial System 2019-20

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the University Quality Assurance Code of Practice Statement 33 Personal Tutoring: www.bath.ac.uk/quality/documents/QA33.pdf The Senior Tutor in the Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology is Dr Julie Letchford.

1. Overview

In the Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology, the personal tutor is the key point of personal contact between the undergraduate student and the University. Our personal tutors provide both pastoral and academic support, particularly in the development of key skills in Year 1. Tutorials are normally linked to unit-related assignments to provide an initial structure for meetings. Our approach has been developed over a number of years, is working well as reported by students in the UK Engagement Survey (UKES).

New students are assigned a personal tutor in the week before Welcome Week. Where possible, personal tutors are allocated by the Senior Tutor on the basis of tutees' A-level subjects to support

those students arriving in the Department without either A-level biology or mathematics. Likewise, consideration will be given to the needs of International Baccalaureate students without A-level chemistry. All full-time academic staff will normally have a cohort of five or six personal tutees in each year group, with part-time colleagues having a pro-rata cohort. This may vary over time, depending on staff-student ratio.

Personal tutors meet their tutees, as a group, during Welcome Week, and at least three times a semester thereafter throughout the degree programme, unless a tutee is on overseas placement when the student is regularly contacted by email. Personal tutors also provide the opportunity to meet tutees individually, for example, to provide end-of-semester assessment feedback.

Personal tutors play an important role in the pastoral care of students, and are an initial point of contact should personal problems arise. If appropriate the tutor or the student may also raise matters of concern directly with the Director of Studies or a Unit Convenor. All non-academic matters shared between a student and the personal tutor will normally remain confidential, unless the student is considered at-risk or consents for the matter to be disclosed. In many cases, disclosure to the Director of Studies is encouraged, especially if these matters have an impact on academic performance. Academic problems will be communicated to the Director of Studies by individual members of Staff or Unit Convenors.

Students normally retain the same individual personal tutor during the entire course of their degree programme, although staff changes mean that this is not always possible. If a tutee/tutor relationship breaks down, either party should consult the Director of Studies who will mediate and/or allocate a new personal tutor as appropriate.

2. Record-keeping

Personal tutors are encouraged to record and lodge in students' files details of sporting, artistic and social achievements, and any other contribution to the life of the Department or the

University, as well academic and relevant professional practice achievements. Copies of references written for students applying for jobs or research studentships are also kept on file.

3. Role of the Senior Tutor

The Senior Tutor role is not intended to be student-facing but is intended to support personal tutors in providing the personal tutorial system for students in Pharmacy & Pharmacology, for example in mentoring new academic staff in their tutor role; and to ensure that the system is delivered equitably for all students and academic staff. The Senior Tutor is responsible for monitoring that scheduled personal tutorials take place. The Senior Tutor and Head of Department will provide appropriate feedback and support should a personal tutor fail to perform the duties of the role.

4. Monitoring

The effectiveness of the personal tutorial system for undergraduates in Pharmacy & Pharmacology will be assessed by the Senior Tutor with a report made available to the Departmental Courses Committee and Staff Student Liaison Committee each year. Student feedback will be engaged through the SAMIS online unit feedback process with questions being used to assess the effectiveness of each unit's tutorial sessions; and via open discussion in SSLC.

5. Information Provided to Personal Tutors

Moodle is used to provide information to students and personal tutors about the personal tutorial system operated in Pharmacy & Pharmacology. Academic staff are provided with information about

the Department's personal tutor system, its link with Unit-specific tutorials and the central support available through Student Services.

Departmental guidelines for tutors are provided via Moodle and cover the following key points:

- Responsibility to ensure they meet their tutees at least three times per semester.
- To be available for an individual meeting where appropriate.
- Responsibility to offer pastoral and academic support – i.e. by being aware of and signposting students to both departmental and Student Services resources for welfare and study.
- The importance of confidentiality.
- Responsibility for providing references.
- Responsibility for providing feedback on assignment drafts linked to the personal tutorial system.
- A new tutor training session is held prior to the start of each Academic Year, compulsory for new tutors, in which the above responsibilities are made clear.

6. Information Provided to Students

Information about the personal tutorial system is provided to students by the Director of Studies during Welcome Week then subsequently reinforced in a number of different ways, including the Departmental Undergraduate Student Handbook and a Moodle page for undergraduates highlighting the following information and resources for support:

- How academic induction is supported.
- Frequency of meetings with personal tutors and how the meetings link to programme
- Units.
- Support for academic study (signposting to key skills development, provision of feedback on drafts assignment submission etc).
- Pastoral/ welfare guidance and support.
- Placement/ option/ career advice and references.
- Guidelines for requesting a change of tutor.
- Confidentiality and disclosure policies.
- Attendance expectations.

A departmental undergraduate peer mentoring system is in place to support students during their induction to University life. Student mentors will be supported in their role in enabling Freshers to get the greatest benefit from the personal tutorial system.