Personal Academic Tutoring   (PAT) Policy

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Policy control

Approved by

	Head of Academic and Learning Development
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UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

Personal Academic Tutoring   (PAT) Policy

1. Purpose

1. This policy provides overview guidance for academic staff who undertake the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) role and for Faculties and Professional Service teams who support students and staff with Personal Academic Tutoring.

2. A key principle of the University of Bedfordshire PAT policy is that students are respected, listened to, responded to, and given clear guidance and support.

2. Scope

3. The provision of personal academic and pastoral support is central to providing a transformational learning experience to a diverse student population. It provides support to our students to begin, thrive and succeed: it is an important part of our Student Success Framework.

4. The ethos and operation of our personal academic tutoring system is one that aims to improve student support and achievement based on a positive sustained engagement with academic staff. The role of the PAT is distinct from that of academic tutoring role at unit level (i.e. through seminars etc.) and from the personal support provided to a student by specialists within the central student support services.

5. Personal academic tutor time is focused on developing and sustaining a valuable professional relationship with students. We recognise that our students constitute a diverse population of learners, who may at certain times need support in managing their student experience effectively, and whose requirements for support vary significantly.

6. Personal Academic tutoring is part of a package of support that is offered to students. Faculties will inform students of the range of support available to them, including any course specific enhanced support
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11. Students who are registered on a course of less than 60 academic credits in a year, do not have a personal academic tutor other than their unit coordinator(s) or course co-ordinator.

12. The PAT will be from the subject discipline of the course of study.

13. The PAT may not be the same person for the duration of a student's course. A student may have different PATs throughout their period of study, however typically they would have the same PAT in one academic year.

14. Students on a Higher/Degree apprenticeship do not have a named PAT. These students have regular meetings with their apprenticeship co-ordinator and therefore support for apprenticeship students is through the apprenticeship-scheduled programme of meetings.

15. Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs) may undertake this role where a) they are allocated a specified number of paid hours for undertaking it, b) their employment by the University is substantive (i.e. teaching at least 6 hours per week across an academic year) and c) there is a Faculty record of their having attended PAT induction in the academic year in which they work as a PAT.

16. Partner institutions will be responsible for providing personal academic tutors, unless otherwise indicated in the partnership agreement.

17. If a student has concerns about their pre-allocated PAT, they should contact their Course Coordinator to discuss the possibility of changing PAT.

3.2) Personal Academic Tutoring guidelines

18. At induction, students receive information on the University's PAT Policy, and the name of their PAT, wherever possible.

19. For all courses, regardless of level, there are a minimum of three meetings in an academic year.

20. For new entrants to the University, the first PAT meeting would typically take place within the first three weeks of the student starting on a course. Personal academic tutors are asked to contact their personal tutees to introduce themselves, welcome them to the course, and explain that they will be inviting them soon to a group meeting. Usually the first meeting is a group tutorial, as part of the welcome to the University.

21. For returning students to the University, the first PAT meeting would typically take place within the first six weeks of the student returning to study.

22. For repeat year students, the first PAT meeting would typically take place within the first three weeks of the student returning to study.

23. PAT meetings can be either online or face-to-face, depending on the type of course and the needs of the student.

25. The University will provide students with a PAT guide, identifying how the PAT system works and the purposes of PAT meetings. This will be provided to students within the first two weeks of the start of the course.

3.3) The role of the Personal Academic Tutor

26. The PAT will support students with their studies, and conversations/meetings will cover a range of different things, depending on the needs of the student. Wherever possible PAT meetings are student-led. The following provides a guide to the range of things discussed in PAT support meetings:

- addressing general questions and concerns
- providing advice on University policies and processes
- signposting students to the support services of the University
- supporting students with academic/study concerns and questions
- providing pastoral support and promoting well-being
- providing guidance to support retention, progression and achievement
- as required, acting as an advocate for the student
- discussing with students any significant absences and supporting students to applyTj-0.002 7ʄ4 st12h

34. All academic staff who are a personal academic tutor should undertake training each year.

3.5) Overview of PAT record keeping system

35. An online PAT recording system will be used to record details of PAT meetings.

36. To allow Faculties to monitor the engagement of students with personal academic tutoring, and the operation of the system, all PATs should record all PAT meetings on the University's PAT recording system.

37. All relevant sections of the PAT record should be completed after each PAT meeting.

38. The PAT recording system will provide information on student's assessment information, so that this can be discussed at PAT meetings.

3.6) Personal academic tutoring at London and Birmingham Study Centres

39. During the teach out at Study Centres in London and Birmingham, there will be flexibility around PAT delivery. The availability of immediate academic advice will be prioritised ahead of a single PAT for contact. Accordingly, there will be a team of PATs available to support students. Typically, students will be seen as a group, but provision would be made to see students individually when requested.

4. Forms/Instructions

N/A

5. Links/Dependencies

This policy should be read and its use considered with reference to:

- [Personal Academic Tutor Handbook (staff handbook)](#)

- [An introduction to Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) at the University of Bedfordshire (student guide)](#)

- The academic workload planning framework

6. App endices

N/A