Briefing for Continuing Personal Tutors

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Purpose of this meeting

- Recap on a few key aspects of Personal Tutoring in Informatics
- Highlight changes this year
- Review important resources

Please interrupt with questions and discussion at any point!
1-to-1 Meetings: Activities

- Review past performance and engagement
- If student is carrying courses, or even re-taking, discuss how they’re going to manage.
- Give advice on obtaining additional support
  - relating directly to study skills
  - relating to other factors impacting studies
- Discuss direction of studies
  - Is student happy?
  - Is student wanting to explore alternative programmes?
- Consider career plans (e.g. in Year 2 meeting)
- Choose optional courses (Years 1 & 2) - you enrol them!
- Advise on Honours courses (Years 3, 4, 5, MSc) and enrol them.
- Discuss project (Years 4 & 5 and MSc)
- Confirm attendance (Semester 1 only)
1-to-1 Meetings: Prompt forms

- Students asked to fill in prompt form before first meeting of year.
- For continuing students, questions are:
  - How satisfied are you with your recent progress?
  - What study skills do you feel you need to work on?
  - Are there any issues that have impacted your studies that you would like to discuss?
  - Are you happy with the direction of your studies?
  - If you have course choices to make, what do you have in mind? Why?
  - Is there anything else you wish to discuss?
- Questions slightly different for Year 1 and MSc students.
- Even when not filled in beforehand, prompts are very useful for structuring meeting discussion.
- Forms available from *Student Supplement* to School’s *Personal Tutoring Statement*.

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1-to-1 Meetings: During meetings

- Check if there is a *Pre-Arrival Questionnaire* on their record
  - If so, please acknowledge you’ve seen it at the meeting start and give it a quick scan
  - The questionnaire is mainly intended to encourage self-reflection; There’s no need to discuss its contents in any detail
  - Topics covered are generally broader than on the prompt forms
What happens when a course is failed?

Years 1 and 2 (Level 8)
- In each Academic Year, 2 attempts, main in Dec/May and resit in Aug
- Tier 4 students normally allowed only 3 attempts. 4th only in exceptional circumstances approved by College (UKVI)
- Others allowed max of 4 attempts

Years 3–5 and MSc (Level 9-11)
- Normally only one attempt
- Second attempt allowed in special circumstances in Year 3
- *Pass on aggregate*. If 80 credits passed and overall average above 40, failed courses are also awarded credits.

A *null sit* for an attempt is when an attempt has been disregarded because of special circumstances. However UKVI does not recognise null sits.
Handling Progression Issues (1)

- Students who have not fully satisfied the requirement for their degree and year are considered by a Progression Board.
- Problematic cases are interviewed by the Senior Tutor or the Progression Officer (Colin Stirling)
- Some major cases require permission from College. You might be asked to help prepare the case
Handling Progression Issues (2)

You must not confirm a student’s attendance on Euclid until continuation is approved. If their latest progression decision is:

- ‘Progress’ or ‘Conditional Progression’: you may confirm;
- ‘Progression deferred’: you may not confirm, unless I or Colin explicitly tell you you may;
- ‘No Progression: Repeat Year Needed’: you may confirm, and should implement the change of Year of Study (see PT web pages).
- ‘No Progression: Transfer to another Degree’: you shouldn’t see this any more – if you do, contact me.
- anything else: don’t confirm. The student is almost certainly leaving. If they don’t think they are, await instructions.

Progression decisions can be found in the Progression section in Euclid. If progression is deferred, the interview outcome will be added as a PT Note.
Student Support Team

- Katey Lee (0131 650 3148)
- Karen Davidson (0131 650 3151)

inf-sst@inf.ed.ac.uk Level 6, Appleton Tower

The SST can:

- act as main point of contact for students if they are experiencing any difficulties and for any non-academic queries
- meet with students during office hours
- act as a main point of contact for staff, providing accurate and consistent advice on student matters
- help with regulations and processes such as special circumstances, extensions, progression and degree transfers
Requirements on use of Euclid PT Notes system

Use of the student record is not optional.

▶ You **must** record each of the mandatory scheduled meetings.

▶ **Please** record a brief note, confidential if appropriate, about anything that may affect assessment or progression decisions.

▶ For Tier 4 students, you may be **required** also to record an engagement point for one meeting. ITO will advise.
Topics for electronic record entries

Minimalist approach: PT and other staff record

▶ Notes on each meeting, including agreed actions, course choices etc.
▶ Problems and special circumstances (confidentially)
▶ Progression decisions, SCC outcomes, etc.

Maximalist approach: PT also writes advice, praise, warnings.

Student notes, e.g.,

▶ Satisfaction with recent progress
▶ subjects or skills that need attention
▶ Career areas of interest
▶ Experiences in summer jobs and internships

resulting in a detailed portfolio record of the student’s career here.

Personal Tutors and students are encouraged to experiment.
Informatics PT Resource Page

http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/ito/staff/pt

Page lists resources both for you and your tutees

Bookmark it!

If you notice anything that needs adding or fixing, please let me know.

Important examples of resources follow.
The Informatics Personal Tutoring Statement

http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/ito/admin/personal-tutoring-statement

This includes

▶ An overview of the Informatics Personal Tutoring system
▶ A *Supplement* for the students that expands on many topics touched upon earlier in this presentation
▶ A *Staff supplement* with additional information directed specifically at PTs

You are strongly encouraged to scan over all three parts to see what is there.
Further Important Sources of Information (1)

- IAD (Institute for Academic Development)
  - Personal Tutoring Guidance
  - Study skills advice
Sources relevant to mental health

- The Student Counselling Service
  - Short term 1–1 counselling
  - Lots of online self-help resources for depression, anxiety, perfectionism, etc.
- Helping Distressed Students guide for University staff
  - Provides flowcharts to help you quickly decide what to do and who to contact
  - Well worth having a copy at hand
- The Student Disability Service (see next slide)

Personal Tutors are *not* expected to have any expertise on handling mental health issues.

But, if approached, they must listen and try to ensure, as needed, that appropriate support is sought.
The Student Disability Service

- Supports students with a wide range of impairments and difficulties.
  - E.g. dyslexia, autism, sensory and mobility impairments, mental health problems, diabetes, asthma
- Assesses students and ensures appropriate support is in place.
  - E.g. schedules of adjustments, note takers, mental health mentors, assistive technology
- Vital that students needing their support make contact early
  - Can be need to apply for government funding
  - One prompt question for incoming students is to check if there are any mental or physical issues that might impact studying and if so, whether contact has been made with SDS
The Advice Place

Run by EUSA = Edinburgh University Student Association

▶ Money
  ▶ budgeting, emergency loans, opening a bank account, benefits

▶ Housing
  ▶ finding accommodation, repair issues, checking leases, deposits, infestations

▶ Health
  ▶ Special circumstances policy, signposting to mental health and wellbeing support in uni and beyond, registering with GP or dentists

▶ Academic
  ▶ Progression, appeals, academic misconduct, interruptions of studies, complaints.

▶ Further
  ▶ crime and hate crime reporting, sexual assault reporting, domestic violence, harassment, discrimination.
People

- Other Personal Tutors
- The Senior Tutor – Paul Jackson
- The Student Support Team – Katey Lee, Karen Davidson
- The Student Progression Officer – Colin Stirling
- The SCAO (*School Curriculum Approval Officer*) – Stephen Gilmore

If you need urgent advice, please feel free to ring me (50-5131) or contact the Student Support Team.