

Your Personal Tutor and You

Julian Bradfield
Senior Personal Tutor

inf-st@inf.ed.ac.uk

IF-4.07

More info: click the 'Personal Tutor' link mentioned in the intro text to the MSc Handbook.

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

What is a Personal Tutor?

A Personal Tutor is

- ▶ a member of academic staff in Informatics
- ▶ who oversees your progress through the degree, and
- ▶ helps you find your way to your next stage, whether PhD or industry, and
- ▶ helps you find support in other areas of University life.

A Personal Tutor is not

- ▶ an academic tutor for your courses;
- ▶ a counsellor;
- ▶ a financial or fees adviser.

When will you see them?

- ▶ At the start of each semester, and early in the project period (one-to-one)
- ▶ **AND** any time you want to discuss something!

What do you do in the first meeting?

- ▶ introduce yourselves to each other
- ▶ Discuss course choices and possible study paths

and later...

- ▶ discuss progress
- ▶ consider career plans
- ▶ discuss project choice/progress

MyEd Personal Tutor channel

known as 'Euclid' to staff.

- ▶ Where you and your tutor can record (usually brief) notes of meetings, discussions, etc.
- ▶ You're encouraged to add reflective comments to these notes afterwards

How do you contact your Personal Tutor?

Two main methods:

- ▶ via the MyEd Personal Tutor channel - you can write a note, or 'request a meeting'
 - ▶ advantage: everything is on your record (for ever...)
- ▶ by email (please send email from your University account where possible)
 - ▶ advantage: convenient, better for conversations, is how most faculty run their working lives!

Some tutors strongly prefer email. Some strongly prefer to use MyEd. If they don't tell you, use whichever you prefer.

Your Personal Tutor's responsibilities to you

- ▶ To arrange the mandatory meetings (as above)
- ▶ To respond timeously to queries and requests for other meetings – within three working days
- ▶ To provide effective advice and support where they can, and pointers to other advisers where they can't
- ▶ To provide references

Your responsibilities to your Personal Tutor

- ▶ To read email regularly (and check MyEd – it sends notifications by email)
- ▶ To respond promptly to queries and invitations
- ▶ To keep them informed of any problems affecting your studies

When things go wrong for you

Most of you will sail happily and hard-workingly through your degree. Some of you won't be so lucky. When things go wrong,

Tell your Personal Tutor a.s.a.p.

Many things can happen:

- ▶ You can have a significant mental or physical illness (anything more than a week is probably significant).
- ▶ A friend, flatmate or close relative may be seriously ill, injured, or even die.
- ▶ You may have a bad relationship break-up.
- ▶ You may suddenly have serious money problems.
- ▶ You may get burgled, or called for jury duty.
- ▶ You may find you can't cope, and drop into a cycle of blue funk.

Don't be shy (we've seen it all before, and many of us have been there ourselves). Don't feel you have to deal with it yourself.

'Special Circumstances'

are anything outside your control that has a significant (bad!) effect on your ability to study or do assessments.

- ▶ The University has well-oiled procedures for making allowances for these.
- ▶ This does *not* mean lowering standards, except marginally;
- ▶ but it can mean discounting certain badly affected marks,
- ▶ and in extreme cases allowing a repeat later.
- ▶ We can only give these allowances if 'SCs' are reported to us at the time. No retrospective consideration (without very good reason).
- ▶ So, when things go wrong,

Tell your Personal Tutor a.s.a.p.

If things go wrong with your Personal Tutor

Personal Tutors are human too, and some are inevitably not as good as others, or just have character clashes with some tutees. If you have any dissatisfaction with the help and advice from your Personal Tutor:

- ▶ Contact me!
- ▶ preferably by email, so we can arrange to talk in person

You can also contact me if your Personal Tutor is away or on holiday (they should have an auto-reply in their email to tell you this).

Finally...

The MSc is *very* intense – but try to find some time for having fun!