

Briefing for Continuing Personal Tutors

Paul Jackson
inf-st@inf.ed.ac.uk

School of Informatics

6th September 2019

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*

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

PATH System

Programme builder for Informatics Programmes at:
<https://path.is.ed.ac.uk/degrees/INF>

Course selections for your tutees can be found at:
<https://path.is.ed.ac.uk/supervisor>
Hover over a course to find its code

Iain Murray has methods for accessing lists of course codes if using Firefox or Chrome. Visit:
<https://homepages.inf.ed.ac.uk/imurray2/pt/path.html>

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.

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 in Weeks 0 & 1 by the Senior Tutor or the Progression Officer (Stephen Gilmore)
- ▶ Check the latest *Progression history* entry in the *Progression* section on EUCLID.
 - ▶ Click on *Programme Session* date for details

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. Wait for a progression update
- ▶ 'No Progression: Repeat Year Needed': you may confirm, and should implement the change of Year of Study (see PT web pages).
- ▶ anything else: don't confirm. The student is almost certainly leaving. If they don't think they are, await instructions.

Student Support Team

- ▶ UG1&2: Karen Davidson (0131 650 3151)
- ▶ UG3,4&5: Iain Dornan (0131 650 2959)
- ▶ MSc: Katey Lee (0131 650 3148)

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 are **required** also to record each 1-1 meeting as an *engagement point*.

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

UG1 changes for 2019-20

- ▶ Inf1-OP (OO Programming) changing from 10 to 20 credits.
 - ▶ No programming exam
 - ▶ Assessment all by coursework
 - ▶ All Informatics students needing to make up Inf1-OP must take the new course
- ▶ Inf1-DA (Data & Analysis) discontinued
 - ▶ Exam-only option available
 - ▶ Most important material is being pushed to Year 2 starting 2020-21

If either or both failed in 18-19, see progression notes for advice.

UG2 changes for 2019-20

- ▶ Inf2A (processing formal and natural languages) discontinued
 - ▶ Exam-only option available
 - ▶ Some material shifting to Inf2-IADS, most shifting to UG3 (FNLP, ITCS) in 20-21.
- ▶ Inf2B (algorithms, data structures, learning) changing from 20 to 10 credits and losing algorithms and data-structures
- ▶ Inf2C-CS (computer systems) changing from 10 to 20 credits
 - ▶ Virtually same content; 20 credits better recognises amount of content
- ▶ New Inf2 - Introduction to Algorithms and Data Structures (20 credits, full year)

Progression notes will detail enrolment advice when Inf2A, Inf2B or Inf2C-CS failed in 18-19.

Further changes for 2019-20

- ▶ MSc students can take at most 30 credits of Level 10 courses; they no longer can take any Level 9 courses.
- ▶ The number of courses with distance learning versions is increasing. Avoid selecting as options by mistake (all have INFD* course codes)
- ▶ In UG3,4,5 and MSc years, students cannot withdraw from a course after Week 6.
 - ▶ However, if a Sem 1 course is null sitted, they can take alternative Sem 2 course.
- ▶ Null sits do not now count as attempts for Tier 4 students
- ▶ Extensions can now take financial circumstances into consideration

Informatics PT Resource Page

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

Bookmark this!

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

Important examples of resources follow.

Informatics PT Quick Guide

<https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/inf-ptguide/>

Linked to on *Resources for Personal Tutors* information page

Many topics listed. E.g.

- ▶ Additional courses/credits
- ▶ Concessions
- ▶ Careers
- ▶ Interruptions
- ▶ Mental Health
- ▶ Progression
- ▶ Repeat Years
- ▶ Study skills
- ▶ Tier 4 Visa Engagement Monitoring
- ▶ Year Abroad

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

- ▶ The Student Support Team – Karen Davidson (UG1,2), Iain Dornan (UG3,4,5), Katey Lee (MSc)
- ▶ The Senior Tutor – Paul Jackson
- ▶ The SCAO (*School Curriculum Approval Officer*) – Stephen Gilmore
 - ▶ Handles deviations from DPTs and programme changes
 - ▶ Contact via SST for routine programme changes

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