

LONDON PT COLLEGE



Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

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Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

1. Introduction

The College operates a framework of academic and pastoral support for students which constitutes a blend of localised provision within College, the Personal Tutor System and student support services.

2. Accountability and Provision of Support

The way in which academic and pastoral support for students is provided may vary. Overall responsibility rests with Head of college to ensure that an appropriate framework of support is in place and working well.

Academic and pastoral support within the College must provide for all its students. College must inform the students taking its courses and programmes about the academic and pastoral support available to them and how to access it. College are also expected to identify when and where the need for targeted support may be at its most acute and to concentrate provision accordingly.

Within the college, there must be a readily accessible, student-facing office as the primary point of contact for students seeking advice and information. This office must ensure that students' enquiries or requests are dealt with promptly and courteously and, that where necessary, students are directed to the appropriate member of staff or source of information.

3. The Personal Tutor System

3.1 Summary

The Personal Tutoring (PT) system is a key element of academic and pastoral support to students. The Personal Tutor (PT) is a key role and every student must have a PT. This is a member of teaching staff who provides a readily accessible, primary point of contact for academic guidance and pastoral support (signposting to student support services), to help tutees reflect on their academic progress and get the most out of their studies. He/she will help their Tutees to take an active partnership approach to learning.

College has a Senior Tutor (ST) to ensure that PTs are adequately supported and to ensure that the PT system is operating effectively and consistently across the College.

College has a Dean of Students with responsibility for oversight of student support in the College.

Within College, support for students, PTs and STs is provided via a Student Support Team (SST), consisting of Student Support Officers (SSOs) or equivalents. The SST provides students with a further first point of contact. SSTs will also provide advice on the wider network of student support services at the College to help students have the best possible experience during their studies.

3.2 Meeting Requirements

The minimum requirement for meetings scheduled by the PT/School is four meetings (at least two of which must be individual meetings between the PT and tutee)

Purpose of Scheduled Meetings

- Students should be actively encouraged to request additional meetings with their Personal Tutor as required throughout their time at the College.
- The minimum meeting requirements should be adjusted pro rata for part time students and accordingly for non-standard programmes.

3.3 Monitoring and Review

College must have in place effective mechanisms for the monitoring and review of academic and pastoral support to ensure the adequacy of support arrangements and that appropriate action is taken to address issues raised.

3.4 Briefing, Training and Development

An effective framework of support depends on the knowledge and skills of all staff who have responsibility for providing information and guidance. For briefing and training this is a shared responsibility, College must therefore ensure that adequate opportunities are in place for briefing, training and development, and that these opportunities are taken.

4. Limits of Pastoral Support Responsibilities

While PTs and other academic and administrative staff have a responsibility for supporting students, they are not expected to provide specialist pastoral care and should not attempt to do so

Consequently, in cases where a student appears to be experiencing severe distress (e.g. serious physical or mental health problems), he or she should be encouraged to seek appropriate professional help. It may occasionally be necessary for staff to establish explicit boundaries, especially if the student is reluctant to seek professional support or if their behaviour is having a disruptive effect on others.

Confidentiality

Where a member of staff is concerned about the wellbeing of a student, s/he may want to share personal information about the student with relevant staff whose role is to provide support in such circumstances. Similarly, staff may wish to share personal information about a student with a third party, because of significant concerns regarding the person's wellbeing. Any such actions should be made in accordance with the College's Data Protection policies.

5. Student Support Services

A wide range of student support, in academic, pastoral, administrative and domestic areas, is made available to students through student support services, which complement provision. The effectiveness of these services, and the cohesion between them and the wider academic community, are fundamental to a high quality student experience.

Expectations and Standards

Providers of support services to students are expected to make clear, through a range of appropriate channels:

- the services and support they offer

- who can access these services
- an initial point of contact and advice on the best method of communication

Services must:

- Deal with requests and enquiries accurately, promptly and efficiently.
- Ensure that all staff delivering the service are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their roles.
- Seek regular feedback from users, and make clear who students must contact with a complaint, compliment or suggestion.
- Monitor, review and seek to enhance their performance regularly, taking on board and acting upon feedback from students and Colleges and other relevant sources.

Services are expected to participate in appropriate quality assurance and enhancement processes within the College

Appendix 1 – Personal Tutor (PT) System Roles and Responsibilities

The roles are set out in terms of the Core Purpose (which will be carried out by everyone in this role) and Main Responsibilities (with flexibility to accommodate local contexts and/or pedagogical requirements).

Personal Tutor
 Student Support Team
 Student as a Tutee
 Senior Tutor (School)
 Dean of Students (College)
 Assistant Principal Academic Support

Personal Tutor (PT)

Core Purpose

- assist students in regularly reviewing their academic progress and performance ;
- encourage students to reflect on their learning, both within and beyond the formal curriculum, and how it contributes to their future development and career;
- help students to feel part of a community of learners;

Main Responsibilities

- welcoming tutees;
- guiding tutees in course choice, confirming course choice and where appropriate enrolling students on courses;
- advising and supporting tutees in their studies including, for example, special circumstances, disciplinary or appeal matters;
- following the progress of tutees;
- to liaise with Student Support Teams and Teaching Organisations;
- to meet with tutees as specified in the School Personal Tutoring Statement;
- to respond promptly to a request for contact or support from a tutee and to provide an alternative point of contact when unavailable;
- to contribute to the appropriate keeping of records;
- to provide references for tutees;
- to undertake training and continuing professional development for the PT role.

Student Support Team (Student Support Officer or equivalent)

Core Purpose

- to provide a point of contact for students;
- to maintain appropriate records and ensure that these are made available to staff;
- to provide administrative student support.

Main Responsibilities:

- to assist with and record the allocation of students to PTs;
- to provide information to staff and students;
- to ensure the PT and/or Teaching Organisation is made aware of any student who may be in need of support;
- sharing with other staff in Schools the process of providing pastoral support for students and referring students to support services as appropriate.

Student as a Tutee

Core Purpose

- to reflect on their academic progress;
- to record their reflections on how their learning contributes to their longer-term aspirations;
- to engage as a member of a community of learners.

Main responsibilities

- to attend and participate actively in meetings with their Personal Tutor.
- to inform their Personal Tutor and/or Student Support Team promptly of any relevant change in their circumstances and of any problems affecting their studies to enable effective support to be offered;
- to keep a record of activities and reflections on their progress, performance and longer-term aspirations associated with these activities;
- to take due account of advice or information given.

Senior Tutor

Core Purpose

- to have oversight of personal tutoring arrangements within the School;
- to ensure that new PTs are well-briefed about the role and complete the required training;
- to help all PTs in the School to keep up-to-date with developments in provision;
- to advise PTs regarding unusual or complex issues;
- to liaise between PTs and the Dean of Students;
- to liaise between the School and student support services;
- to ensure that the effectiveness of personal tutoring within the School is regularly and systematically monitored.

Main Responsibilities:

- to report directly to the Head of School or Director of Teaching (as appropriate)
- to assist the Head of School in interpreting student feedback in order to guide enhancement of the PT system and inform annual review and management processes for individual PTs.
- to advise PTs, SSTs and the Teaching Organisation seeking advice on local student-support issues;
- to deal promptly and effectively with concerns raised by PTs and tutees;
- to seek regular interactions with student representatives;
- to contribute to the School's annual and periodic quality assurance and enhancement processes;