

# Code of Practice for Pastoral Support

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1 January 2018.	2016 Version.	General update.

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Bangor Students' Union and Student Services.	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	30 August 2019.	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

# Code of Practice for Pastoral Support



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UNIVERSITY

This Code outlines the pastoral support available for students.

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## Basic Principles

1. Pastoral Support is a shared responsibility between students, personal tutors, central service departments, the Students' Union, and schools/colleges.
2. Each student must be allocated a personal tutor. This includes undergraduate students, taught postgraduate students and postgraduate research students. Personal tutors must also be allocated to part-time and 'off-campus' students.
3. A personal tutor is a member of the academic staff who is given pastoral responsibility for named students. A personal tutor is an adviser and should try to ensure that each student receives appropriate and timely help with issues that affect academic performance. A personal tutor should provide a continuous, confidential and secure environment where concerns can be explored.
4. Each school will have a named senior tutor to oversee and co-ordinate pastoral support arrangements within the school as outlined in the 'Guidelines for Senior Tutors' and the senior tutor job description.
5. Each college Director of Teaching & Learning will monitor the delivery and effectiveness of their pastoral care on an annual basis, through receipt of the senior tutor annual evaluations.
6. The arrangements for pastoral support must be consistent with the University's Welsh Language Scheme, particularly to support the language choice of students.
7. All academic staff are normally expected to become personal tutors except where:
  - i. A college/school names a sub-set of its staff who will share this responsibility.
  - ii. Other school /college/university duties create continuous role-conflicts (e.g. acting as Head of School).
  - iii. There is a necessity for temporary withdrawal (e.g. sabbatical, secondment).
8. All staff with pastoral support responsibilities should undergo mandatory equality-related training.
9. Students and tutors can request a change of tutor/tutee on a 'no blame' basis and such a change will be actioned by the relevant school/college.

## Minimum Standards

10. Each full-time undergraduate student will be invited to a minimum of three meetings in each academic year. Part-time students studying 60 credits or more will meet their tutor at least twice in each academic year. Each meeting must be recorded, as required by the University's Attendance Monitoring Policy.
11. Joint Honours students will be allocated a personal tutor by the college in which they are studying. They will be allocated a personal tutor from one school and a

named contact in the second school. The student and the personal tutor must be informed of the identity of the named contact. Where a student's programme is across rather than within a college, the lead school and college shall be agreed and named in Validation. The defined lead college will assume responsibility for allocating a personal tutor.

12. Colleges shall devise a 'fall-back' or cover system to deal with periods when personal tutors are unavailable. For example, when a personal tutor is on sabbatical. Such a system may utilize, for example, senior tutors, alternative tutors, and/or a rotational 'tutor on call' approach.
13. For postgraduate research students, the personal tutor must be in addition to the supervisor(s). If a school assigns one person to be the personal tutor for all postgraduate research students, that person cannot be both the supervisor(s) and personal tutor for any students.

### **Responsibilities of the University**

14. The University will:

- Specify an agreed personal tutor scheme as outlined in this Code of Practice and other relevant University publications.
- Review and enhance the scheme periodically.
- Monitor the overall effectiveness of the scheme on an annual basis, including the ratio of tutees to tutors, numbers of referrals, and receive an evaluation report from each college via the Senior Tutor Group.
- Support the scheme by ensuring new staff undertaking a personal tutor role access appropriate training and existing staff to have the opportunity to enhance their skills.
- Ensure that each named personal tutor is formally recorded on the student records system.
- Ensure that support systems are accessible to personal tutors.

### **Responsibilities of Students**

15. It is expected that students will:

- Attend all scheduled meetings with their personal tutor and take responsibility for rearranging meetings where necessary.
- Inform their personal tutor of any special circumstances which may affect their studies at the earliest possible occasion.
- Engage with the Bangor Employability Award (BEA) scheme in order to enhance their personal and professional development, and to keep a record of their relevant extra- and co-curricular activities for their HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) transcript.
- Discuss their participation in the BEA with their personal tutor.
- Be responsible for following up on advice provided by their personal tutor.
- Ensure that the University has correct, up-to-date home and term-time contact information, including all e-mail and postal addresses, mobile and home telephone numbers.
- Agree and complete an end-of-year statement with their tutor.

## **Responsibilities of Personal Tutors**

16. Personal tutors will:

- Attend initial training following appointment, and undertake training to enable them to fulfil their duties including mandatory equality-related training.
- Ensure that allocated students are aware of term-time availability.
- Familiarise themselves with the structure and processes of the BEA, encourage their tutees' participation in extra- and co-curricular activities and events, and discuss with their tutees any employability-enhancing progress in the scheme.
- Acknowledge receipt of a query normally within three working days during term-time.
- Respond to queries where possible within five working days during term-time.
- Arrange to meet tutees at designated times during the year ensuring that the minimum standards as defined in paragraphs 10-13 are met.
- Record meetings on My Bangor and, if necessary, details of special circumstances to Examination Boards.
- Make referrals, as appropriate, to a senior tutor and support services.
- Familiarise themselves with the format of the HEAR, and ensure their tutees are aware of the University's recommendation to participate in activity eligible for inclusion in 'Section 6.1: Additional Information', including how this is facilitated via the BEA scheme.

## **Responsibilities of Senior Tutors**

17. Senior tutors will:

- Coordinate the allocation of tutees to tutors and allocate replacement tutors on a temporary or permanent basis if required.
- Ensure that personal tutors have undertaken the mandatory equality-related training.
- Ensure Joint Honours students are allocated an appropriate tutor.
- Provide (or assist the school employability contact in providing) guidance and advice to personal tutors regarding the BEA and the HEAR, and encourage engagement from all students via appropriate school publicity media.
- Monitor that tutors are provided with relevant documentation and details of the support services available to students.
- Ensure that details of the Personal Tutor Scheme are published in school/course Handbooks.
- Monitor the ratio of tutees to tutors within a school/college.
- Develop and monitor systems to ensure that students' personal circumstances, where relevant and with the student's consent, are made known to examination boards including those responsible for joint degrees.
- Liaise with Student Services as appropriate.
- Monitor staff training and development in relation to student support and welfare.
- Complete the end of year evaluation.

## **Responsibilities of Schools and Colleges**

18. Schools and colleges will:

- Specify a maximum number of tutees per tutor, and allocate tutees to tutors.
- Ensure that the purpose of, and arrangements for, the provision of personal tutoring support to students within a school are communicated in Welcome Week.
- Encourage, through the heads of both schools and colleges, continued professional development of the pastoral function.
- Integrate the Personal Tutor Scheme within the administrative system of a school and college, including the Peer Guide Scheme and the Students' Union Course Representatives Scheme.
- Appoint a senior tutor with appropriate skills and experience to oversee/co-ordinate provision of pastoral support within a school.
- Ensure that there are appropriate alternative arrangements if a personal tutor is absent for more than three working days during term-time.
- Ensure that students have the service of a personal tutor in their preferred language in accordance with the University's Welsh Language Scheme.
- Where possible, provide a helpdesk in the college (or school), and/or ensure that one member of staff is on-call in each college during office hours in term-time.
- Ensure that course directors/supervisor(s)/supervisory committees take on the role of personal tutor for postgraduate students unless alternative arrangements are made by a school/college.
- Allocate Joint Honours students to a personal tutor and ensure provision in a partner school.
- Ensure that part-time students studying 60 credits or more during an academic year are allocated a named personal tutor.
- Determine whether students studying fewer than 60 credits are to be allocated a personal tutor.
- Ensure that students studying off-campus are provided with appropriate contact details to allow them to access the school's pastoral support systems.

## **Responsibilities of Central Services**

19. The University's central services will provide support to personal and senior tutors by:

- Distributing information including relevant contact details at the beginning of each academic year on the range of Support Services provided by Student Services and the Students' Union; and by Halls support teams and other relevant agencies.
- Maintaining up-to-date information on service provision and contact details on the University website.
- Notifying senior tutors and personal tutors in a timely manner of any service changes or developments.
- Providing advice and consultancy via telephone and email.
- Ensuring timely and appropriate sharing of information between Student Services and tutors with regard to pastoral care.

## **Student Services**

20. The University's Student Services will:

- Make available University welfare policies, and protocols and procedures on the Student Services webpages, advising staff accordingly, and supporting staff during critical incidents.
- Provide a range of staff development opportunities.
- Advise on appropriate referrals and referral mechanisms.
- Organise emergency case meetings where staff have serious concerns over a student's mental health and wellbeing.

## **Responsibilities of the Students' Union**

21. The Students' Union will:

- Provide colleges/schools with copies of the Students' Union handbook and access to the Students' Union website, both of which supply contact details and information on a variety of support services, from Student Voice and academic representation, through to societies, volunteering, UMCB - Bangor Welsh Students' Union, and sports clubs.
- Organise and support the Course Representatives Scheme and the Students' Union.
- Support the Course Representative Council.
- Offer the provision of representation to all students (across a wide variety of areas) through a number of officers, in specified roles, covering areas that include undergraduate and postgraduate students, part-time and mature students, home and international students, access, sexuality, gender, and Welsh-medium students.