

## FIRST PERSONAL TUTOR INDIVIDUAL MEETING/CONVERSATION

These resources have been written to be used with new undergraduate or postgraduate taught students. The content has been informed by feedback from undergraduate students (from across all year groups) representing at least 12 departments.

It might also be useful to have the guide to personal tutoring and support services to hand during the meeting. The current Colchester and Southend versions are held [here](#). (The students will have received their own paper copy via their department. How it is distributed will vary by department.)

Discussion topics	Resources / Referral
<p><b>General introduction</b> Clarify your name and role within the department. (The student may need reminding about what a Personal Tutor does.)</p>	
<p><b>Accessing key information about their course</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Check the student is familiar with the main <b>electronic platforms</b> used for their course - to access or submit work as well as reserve library resources, and confident in using those resources (e.g. Moodle, ORB, FASER).</li> </ol> <p>Refer students to their Peer Mentor or the eLearning Support Desk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Check the student is aware of their <b>Student Handbook</b> and if not, how to locate a copy (online or paper).</li> </ol>	<p><a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/handbooks/default.aspx">http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/handbooks/default.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>Making the transition to a new way of learning</b> To familiarise the student with the types of coursework to expect and the way the material will be taught. Students have said they would like the teaching staff to know them better, so that they can be made aware of the people and other resources available to achieve their goals.</p> <p>These are suggested questions to cover during the first individual discussion. Students have said the questions can help the Personal Tutor become aware of the diverse and different academic backgrounds of their students. They feel the questions could help ensure the Personal Tutor is aware of the kind of effort and support that would be helpful for the students.</p> <p><b>Some questions to discuss:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What type of course did you study before starting this course? E.g. A-levels, BTEC, (A-levels + BTEC), Access Course</li> <li>2. What subjects did you study?</li> <li>3. How was your work assessed (e.g. coursework, in-class tests, exams)?</li> <li>4. Did you have the opportunity to have your work reassessed, and if so, were your marks capped?</li> <li>5. Do you know where your classes will be held next week and when they have been scheduled?</li> <li>6. Do you know when your first assignment is and how to find out the relevant information? Do you know about the support available?</li> </ol>	<p>Talent Development Centre</p> <p>Lectures and classes where assignment preparation is discussed.</p> <p>Module Outlines</p> <p>Department Handbook</p> <p>Past papers</p>

Discussion topics	Resources / Referral
<p><b>Goals and aspirations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you hope to achieve while at university?</li> <li>2. What do you think you need to do to achieve it?</li> <li>3. Do you know about the extra-curricular opportunities available and how to get involved e.g. Students' Union clubs and societies?</li> </ol> <p>If they don't want to go directly to these services, they can find out more from their Peer Mentor.</p>	<p>Student Services</p> <p>Employability and Careers Centre</p> <p>Students' Union Clubs and Societies</p> <p>Talent Development Centre</p> <p>Peer Mentors to encourage referral</p>
<p><b>Close</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clarify availability and contact details</li> <li>2. Clarify how regular meetings should be and that meeting lengths may vary, depending on the topic</li> <li>3. Explain the process of making appointments if the tutee wishes to schedule a meeting</li> <li>4. Explain the process of rescheduling appointments</li> <li>5. Ask students what other sessions they plan to attend in Welcome Week. Discuss the programme and suggest ways for them to arrange to attend it along with other students in the department.</li> <li>6. Suggest they: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. arrange another time to meet as a group later in the week or in Week 2.</li> <li>b. ask their peer mentors to show them where their classes and lectures for Week 2 so that they don't get lost.</li> <li>c. ask their peer mentors to show them how to find their readings for Week 2 and how to use the relevant online resources (e.g. Moodle and FASER).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

**Additional topics that might be relevant for PGT students**

- What are the arrangements for project supervision within the department? What will the relationship be between the personal tutor and each student's supervisor? How might personal tutors help students with their dissertation?
- Are there any key dates or events for PGT students during the year, such as conferences or training opportunities? How can PGT students prepare and get involved?
- Are there any bursaries or scholarship deadlines that PGT students need to be aware of for PGR applications?
- What is the availability of personal tutors and supervisors over the summer?