	Owner: Pro-Vice Chancellor for Student Experience **Version number:** 3.0 **Effective date:** June 2023 **Date of last review:** June 2022 *This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.*

5D – Personal Tutor Policy

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1.1. All students on taught programmes at BU will be allocated to a named Personal Tutor throughout their programme of study. The purpose of the Personal Tutor role is to provide individual support for each student as part of BU's aim to deliver an authentic, supportive, personalised learning experience. This policy does not apply to research students, as separate support arrangements for research students are set out in *8A Code of Practice for Research Degrees*.

2. POLICY

2.1. Personal tutors act as a nominated first point of contact and support for students regarding their learning experience at BU.

2.2. In line with BU Vision and Values, our personal tutors:

- support students as independent learners
- contribute to a personalised, supportive and authentic learning experience based on the tutee's programme of study and future aspirations
- encourage students to engage in the breadth of university life
- respect cultural and personal values and boundaries.

2.3. In this capacity, Personal Tutors undertake the following activities with tutees who engage with them:

- discuss and provide guidance on academic progress and study choices, taking into consideration the fusion of education, research and professional practice that BU provides
- support tutees to identify obstacles or blocks to learning and discuss potential responses
- support students through transitions in their learning: into, through and out of university, including to provide references upon request in line with relevant BU policies
- provide pastoral support, while maintaining appropriate boundaries, and signpost tutees to relevant University and external services as appropriate, including specialist welfare services
- refer students to an appropriate academic, programme support, or professional services staff for specific enquiries related to exceptional circumstance, unit-specific matters, or other matters as appropriate.

2.4. Personal tutor contact points are any occasion where a personal tutor initiates a dialogue with a tutee or group of tutees and can take a variety of forms, including:

- in-person or online meetings
- email exchange
- phone conversation.

2.5. Personal tutors should communicate regularly with their tutees to offer opportunities for contact points at appropriate times and intervals, and with a view to maintaining regular contact with their tutees throughout the academic year. Personal tutors can determine the appropriate mode (e.g., email check-in or meeting) for regular contact points, but at a minimum must offer students three meetings per academic year in line with university guidance and faculty implementation frameworks.

2.6. It is recognised that Personal Tutors will only be able to undertake the activities if and to the extent that the tutee engages. Students may choose not to respond to communications or accept offers of contact points and may choose to seek support and advice from other sources.

3. PROCEDURE

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES Education Committee**:** to approve revisions to the policy and monitor and evaluate faculty-level implementation of personal tutoring through annual reporting. Faculties**:** provide a framework for implementation of this policy within the Faculty, appropriately reflecting the content and delivery of programmes in the Faculty including

3.1. PSRB requirements:

- consider the impact of the implementation framework on staff time and workloads
- facilitate training and guidance materials for personal tutors in the Faculty which is consistent with, and linked appropriately to, training and guidance provided by the University
- monitor and evaluate the Faculty's implementation of personal tutoring, including student engagement with personal tutoring through Faculty Education Committee at regular intervals through the year, reporting to Education Committee as required and at least annually.

3.2. Departments:

- action the Faculty's implementation framework and University and Faculty guidance, including assigning all students to personal tutors each academic year and ensuring communication of personal tutoring aims and arrangements
- ensure compliance with this policy and procedure within the department's programmes
- work collaboratively with the Faculty to ensure appropriate support for personal tutors by identifying training and guidance needs for staff engaged in personal tutoring
- report on personal tutoring engagement as required to Faculty Education Committee
- work collaboratively with programme leaders to identify emergent themes arising from personal tutoring that relate to supporting student experience and achievement, escalating to faculty level as appropriate.

3.3. Programme Leaders or equivalent:

- ensure that information provided to students on the programme about personal tutoring is consistent with this policy and relevant Faculty guidance
- provide to personal tutors information about the content of and activities for the programme each year to ensure tutors have an appropriate understanding of programme coherence
- encourage students to engage with their personal tutor throughout the year and signpost to personal tutors as appropriate
- maintain dialogue with personal tutors to explore emergent themes arising from personal tutoring, including informal student feedback, and signposting to department leadership as appropriate.

3.4. Staff nominated as Personal Tutors:

- Undertake the role of personal tutor as set out in Sections 1.1 to 1.7 of this policy and in accordance with frameworks and guidance provided by their Faculty or BU, for all students allocated to them as tutees
- advise tutees of their availability for meetings and process for booking meetings (e.g., through MS Bookings)
- maintain regular contact with tutees throughout the year as set out in the implementation of personal tutoring in the Faculty and in line with the principles of the policy, respecting that some tutees may wish to gain support and advice elsewhere
- engage with information and data available to the personal tutor about their individual tutees and their programmes of study to provide appropriate advice, guidance, and support as set out in this policy
- share emergent themes and student feedback arising from contact points with relevant members of the programme team (e.g., Programme Leader), as appropriate

5D - Personal Tutor Policy

- engage with training provided by the Faculty, department and/or the university to ensure awareness of good practice in personal tutoring and resources available to personal tutors
- maintain records of student engagement with personal tutoring in accordance with Faculty and University guidance
- manage information and data made available for or generated through personal tutor activities in accordance with the BU Data Protection Policy and relevant University guidance, showing due regard for student welfare. Personal tutors should recognise that information used and generated through personal tutor activities will include information which is personal data and may be regarded by tutees as confidential or sensitive in nature. Onward use or sharing of such data should usually be discussed and agreed with the tutee, subject to any exceptional action in response to immediate significant concerns about individual safety and welfare
- provide tutees with clear, accurate information regarding the way in which their personal information is managed by the personal tutor, including information about the sharing of their information by the personal tutor with others, in accordance with University guidance.

3.5. Students:

- engage with their personal tutor to discuss their academic progress and achievement, including barriers to engagement and obstacles to their learning
- understand the academic nature of the personal tutor role and that appropriate support may require the tutor to refer a tutee to other staff or support services where individual circumstances require
- understand that personal tutors will not normally share personal data and information without prior permission from the tutee, except where there is an immediate significant concern about individual safety and welfare

General

4. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1. This policy was reviewed according to the University's *Equality Analysis Procedure* in May 2018.

4.2. Other relevant Policies and Documents:
Data Protection Policy
BU2025 Strategic Plan
Student Reference Policy