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Personal tutorials: Guidance for personal tutors 2019-2020

Student Support and Development

This guide contains information on your responsibilities as a personal tutor. You can also find further information about your duties in the Quality Manual, on the Personal Tutorial Toolkit Moodle page and in your School, or Faculty Tutoring Statements. You may also contact the Senior Tutor for your School or Faculty regarding your role or any issues you may have when responding to students' concerns.

Aims of personal tutorials

As a personal tutor you are interested in helping your tutees and guiding them to become part of The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) community. For them, you are a point of stability and reference in a new, culturally challenging environment.

Tutorials should be student-led, and to help facilitate this, students have been provided with a guide listing their responsibilities as tutees. However, you should be able to encourage **your tutees to talk** about their **plans and options**, to reflect and to **ask for any support or guidance** they may need.

More specifically, personal tutorials aim to:

- help tutees' maintain their wellbeing
- support their academic and personal development
- help them understand University practices and standards
- enhance their employability
- help them build a sense of community
- refer them to appropriate support services
- support students making submis-

sions related to the Policy on Circumstances affecting students' ability to study and complete assessments (known as Extenuating Circumstances Policy or EC Policy).

What is expected from you?

- Scheduling at least three personal tutorial meetings with your tutees in the year;
- ensuring your tutees know how to get in touch with you and **feel welcome** to;
- Encouraging their reflection on how to maintain a **balanced lifestyle**;
- discussing the ways in which your tutees are **developing their academic and study skills**;
- promoting the importance of career planning and **employability**;
- acting as a gateway to the range of student support and development services offered, and referring tutees to appropriate services;
- providing your personal tutees with any references required for employment or study
- helping your tutees **make the most of their experience** while studying – you can facilitate this process by en-

couraging their reflection and answering their potential questions.

Role of the personal tutor

While the University accepts that the role of a personal tutor may vary between schools and departments, you are expected to engage with **all of your tutees** to help them **develop and maximise** their potential. Nonetheless, a significant part of your role is to help those students who are facing particular academic or personal difficulties.

Detailed advice for personal tutors is available on the UNNC Personal Tutorial Toolkit Moodle page at: <https://moodle.nottingham.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=40269>

If you have any queries concerning your role as a personal tutor, please contact the Senior Tutor in your school/division/department.

Confidentiality

Students need to know that personal tutorials are confidential. However, safety is always a priority and confidentiality may have to be broken in the following cases:

- When the safety of the student or a third party is a concern
- When disclosure is required for the purpose of any legal proceedings.

Where you make notes about what is discussed at tutorial meetings, these would normally be recorded only in **general terms, unless the student agrees** to any further details being noted. Please note that your tutee may ask you to delete part of your notes.

Personal issues affecting academic achievement

If a student discloses a personal problem to you, or there are other indications that the student is experiencing difficulties, you should encourage the student to make an appointment with the University Counselling Service.

This is a free, confidential and professional service which is offered to all employed staff and registered students. Students may talk in confidence about any problem of concern to them in English or Mandarin

Immediate concern for student wellbeing

If you feel a student is at immediate risk, please call one of the following 24-hour on-campus services:

Department of Campus Life
Emergency Line: 158-5740-0157
(English and Chinese)

Campus Security: 0574-8814-9110

Please also inform the senior tutor of your school and the senior tutor of your faculty.

Extenuating Circumstances

If a student was unable to attend an examination or did not submit a piece of coursework or other assessment, or wishes to claim that there were extenuating circumstances that affected their performance, they are required to complete an Extenuating Circumstances form (EC Form), which is available at **The Hub** (PB120) or on the Moodle page of Academic Services. They should submit it along with **supporting evidence** to The Hub (PB120). Students should be informed that extensions for coursework submission can only be granted by **Senior Tutors** and **Faculty EC Panels**.

Personal tutors who have been informed in advance of the circumstances affecting students' performance, may be asked by students to write a **letter of support**. You are advised to obtain guidance from your school/department/division Senior Tutor and check the Procedure and Guidance in the section Assessment and Awards in the Quality Manual.

Reference letters

Each faculty, school/department has a publicised practice regarding referee allocation and documentation that students should provide. Please ask your line manager for specific information.

Module choice and changing course

If students wish to discuss these matters with you, you may want to ask them to provide a general description of their proposed module or course to discuss the possible outcomes of those choices. However, for students to gain detailed information, you should direct them to Director of Teaching, Module Conveners and in the case of a different major, the respective Faculty Office.

Issues with modules or lecturers/tutors

During personal tutorials, tutees may disclose specific issues regarding modules or their lecturers or tutors. As a general suggestion, if you are not sure what to do, you may want to talk to your school or Faculty Senior Tutor. Where the senior tutor is the point of concern, you should speak with your line manager.

Possible issues include:

Dissatisfaction with the module or the lecturer or tutor

Students may feel dissatisfied with a module or a lecturer/tutor for a wide range of reasons. You can help in making these reasons clear by asking for explanations and clarification, but you should encourage the students to express their concerns directly to the lecturer/tutor in a spirit of mutual trust.

Please note that you do not **have to** do this on the student's behalf, though, under certain circumstances, you may choose to do so.

Lack of response to students' requests (email, appointments, extra help...)

It is possible that a student does not receive an answer from a colleague to an email he or she has sent. Students sometimes have very different expectations of how quickly someone should respond, or presume that tutors will respond out-of-hours. In this case, you might wish to make sure that the original message the student sent was **polite and clear enough**, and encourage the student to contact the tutor in question again, but indicating that you are copied into the email, and why. If your school/division/faculty has an email policy, please make sure your tutee is aware of it.

Unprofessional behaviour

It may happen that a tutee feels aggrieved or hurt by a lecturer or tutor's behaviour and considers the tutor to have behaved unprofessionally. There may be many reasons for this, including different cultural expectations.

If a student raises such an issue, you may choose to help the **student articulate** the reasons for their discomfort and encourage them to explain this directly to

the lecturer in a spirit of mutual trust. You may suggest to the student that you be copied into any email exchange with the tutor in question, and if necessary, talk to the colleague directly. Please bear in mind that you may not have been informed of all of the facts, so it is **best to assume** that there may have been **some misunderstanding**.

Under certain circumstances, you might choose to talk to a colleague directly. Please make every effort to keep the identity of the student private. You might choose to discuss the most appropriate course of action with your Senior Tutor.

Inappropriate behaviour

If a student indicates that he or she has been the target of inappropriate behaviour (sexual harassment, personal abuse), please try to maintain a degree of detachment and remember that an allegation is by no means the same as a statement of truth.

This is an extremely delicate situation and you might wish to ask for advice and help from the School Senior Tutor or the Faculty Senior Tutor at the earliest possible opportunity.

Possibly the best approach is to take **detailed notes**, make sure that they accurately reflect what the student

has said by **careful checking**, and ask what the student **would like to happen**. You should encourage the student to **talk to a professional**. Please do not make promises to the student that you may not be able to keep. The University has a **Diversity and Equality Committee** which has a designated Sexual Harassment Investigating Officer who is responsible for all investigations of sexual harassment cases.

EDC@nottingham.edu.cn

Privacy and confidentiality are essential in any sensitive cases. Please do **not use the student's name in any e-mail subject line**, and do not copy (or bcc) the email to anyone who does not need to know about the issue. It may be better to ask for a private meeting 'on a delicate matter' with the Senior Tutor or the Faculty Senior Tutor rather than communicating digitally.

Professional Services

There are many Professional Service offices in the University who may also have information that is needed by the students. The following list is only meant as an introduction and is not exhaustive.

Please note that at the time of writing this leaflet, the University was updating its website. We apologise that some links might not be available anymore.

Please note that at the time of preparing this Guidance, **the university website** was changing.

Some links may not be available anymore. For the most up-to-date information, please contact the Services directly

Academic Literacy Development Centre and The Learning Hub.

The ALDC is staffed by CELE academic English language tutors who provide targeted advice on students' academic English language use. The Learning Hub contains a large collection of books, audio, video and self-study materials and is located in the Library (Trent Building 105). It has the same opening hours.

Further details can be found at:

www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/cele/aldc

Campus Clinic

For any health-related matters students are advised to seek medical advice and medical care at the 24-hour campus clinic located in PB 113.

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/health-and-wellbeing/clinic.aspx>

For emergencies:

T: +0574 8818 0000-8120 (Ext. 8120) or 15168185997

For appointments:

UNNC.Clinic@nottingham.edu.cn or at the reception desk in the Campus Clinic, open from 8:00am to 8:00pm daily

Careers

The Career Development Office is committed to the career development and employability of students and graduates of our University. Through a range of career-focused services and programmes, Careers provides students with comprehensive job market information and insightful advice to help accomplish their aspirations. More details:

www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/careers

Counselling Service

The University Counselling Service (UCS) is a free, confidential service available to all registered students and employed staff of the University. It is available in both English and Chinese (Mandarin). UCS provides professional and confidential help for any personal, emotional or mental health problems encountered while working or studying here. Details and appointments:

www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/counselling-services

Department of Campus Life (DCL)

The Department of Campus Life (DCL) provides a range of administrative and support activities to domestic and interna-

tional students in the areas of wellbeing, extracurricular engagement and initiatives for diversity and social inclusion. DCL organises a parallel student support system with Student Advisors, Mental Health Advisors and the Hall Warden System. Details here:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/dcl/department-of-campus-life.aspx>

Dignity Policy

UNNC is committed to the promotion of an inclusive, respectful and considerate community. There is no place for harassment or bullying. Students should be suggested to:

- email Equity, Diversity and Inclusion EDCSH@nottingham.edu.cn to report any case of sexual misconduct;
- email UNNC Human Resources at hr@nottingham.edu.cn to report a case of bullying involving a member of staff as a perpetrator;
- email Campus Disciplinary Committee at cdc@nottingham.edu.cn to report a case of bullying involving a student as a perpetrator.

All cases will be dealt with in **full confidentiality** by senior members of staff.

More information about the policy can be found at:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/hr/guidesandsupport/complaintsgrievanceanddignity/dignity-at-nottingham.aspx>

Disability Support

Students with a disability such as dyslexia or a long-term medical condition should disclose this on registration. The University can provide support including adjustments to timetabling and examination arrangements. If a student approaches you about a possible disability, please contact your School or Faculty Disability Liaison Officer, bearing in mind issues of disclosure and confidentiality. More details here:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/health-and-wellbeing/wellbeing-service/disability-support.aspx>

Exchange and Study Abroad

Organized by UNNC Global. Details at: www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/global/exchange-and-study-abroad/exchange-and-study-abroad

Financial Support

The University offers a growing portfolio of financial support mechanisms for all students. For further information, please visit the financial support pages: www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/admissions/support-services/financial-support.aspx

HealthyU

Healthy body, healthy mind is a well-used saying, but it is most relevant to students while at University. HealthyU provides information and advice on a

range of health issues important to students. More details here:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/health-and-wellbeing/wellbeing-service/healthyu/index.aspx>

The Hub

Located at Portland Building (PB120), The Hub is a one-stop service venue where students can access the university services ranging from general enquiries, card service, stamp service, document collection and submissions, and official documentation as well as other specialised services. More details here: www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/the-hub

IT Services

IT Services provides IT support for learning, teaching, research and administration across the University. More details at: www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/its

Library, Research and Learning Resources

Library, Research and Learning Resources provides library, learning technologies and special collection services to students, staff and entitled members. Further information can be found at: www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/library

Learning Community Forum (LCF)

The Learning Community Forum (LCF) is a platform for students and teachers to communicate and discuss any issues or suggestions related to their course of

studies and, more in general, their university experience.

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/admissions/personal-tutorials/lcf.aspx>

Scholarships

The University offers a number of scholarships for outstanding students. Details here:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/study/money-matters>

Student Charter

The Student Charter outlines what students can expect from the University, what students can expect from the Students' Union, and what the University can expect from the students. More details here:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/student-charter.aspx>

Student Engagement Office (SEO)

The Student Engagement Office (SEO) organizes a variety of programs, activities and services, particularly with regards to extracurricular activities where students achieve success through their cumulated knowledge, teamwork and leadership skills. It has overall responsibility for student Societies and Organizations including the Students Union. More details:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/life/student-activity/seo-introduction/>

Student Feedback

There are various feedback mechanisms used in the University:

Learning Community Forum (LCF); Mid-term student feedback on modules; Student Evaluation of Modules (SEM); Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) and two email addresses that have been created to elicit and respond to student concerns, complaints and compliments:

Your.Voice@Nottingham.edu.cn for non-academic matters;

YourStudy@Nottingham.edu.cn for academic concerns.

Please also note that students will be asked for their reflections on the personal tutorial system.

Please read the **Personal Tutorial Arrangements . Schedule and Procedures for personal tutors** for more practical information on personal tutorials .

You may also access the **UNNC Personal Tutor Toolkit** available on Moodle for advice on how to organise and conduct your personal tutorials. Please ask your school/division Senior Tutor for the password.



Personal tutorials on the university website: <https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/study/personal-tutorials/index.aspx>

UNNC Personal Tutor Toolkit on Moodle: <https://moodle.nottingham.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=40269>

To access the page, please ask your Senior Tutor for the password