



UCL Academic Manual 2025-26

Chapter 14: Teaching and Learning

UCL Personal Academic Tutoring Policy

1. About Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT)

- 1.1. The purpose of Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) is to provide academic and personal development guidance and support to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students as they study their course.
- 1.2. Personal Academic Tutoring aims to help students 'study well' to achieve success and make the most out of their time at UCL.
- 1.3. A Personal Academic Tutor should be a student's 'go-to person' for checking-in on academic progress and guidance on where to go for more specific help and support available at UCL.
- 1.4. While it is impossible to list every query that each individual student might have, in general terms, Personal Academic Tutors should be able to provide guidance and support in the following areas:
 - a. identifying academic, personal, and career goals;
 - b. reflecting on academic progress and engagement;
 - c. module selection and study choices;
 - d. exploring engagement with university life in and beyond their department, including extracurricular opportunities supported by Students' Union UCL;
 - e. signposting and explaining policies and procedures that can support studies, such as extenuating circumstances and interruptions;

- f. personal support as appropriate, and signposting to professional mental health and wellbeing support provided by Student Support and Wellbeing Services (SSWS) and department-based Student Advisors as required;
- g. signposting to specialist careers support provided by UCL Careers and academic literacy support provided by the Academic Communication Centre (ACC);
- h. Providing references in accordance with UCL's [Student Reference Policy](#) (Chapter 14, Academic Manual).

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1. This policy is the baseline requirement for the delivery of Personal Academic Tutoring for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students. It outlines the minimum expectations for Personal Academic Tutoring at UCL and is likely to be realized and/or extended in different ways by individual Departments/ Divisions.
- 2.2. Effective Personal Academic Tutoring relies on meaningful engagement with and from students. It is expected that students will attend Personal Academic Tutor meetings to take advantage of the support available. Note: for some courses, attendance at some meetings might be compulsory as part of the credit-bearing curriculum and course requirements.
- 2.3. Academic support arrangements for Foundation, Study Abroad, Online and/or Distance, Modular Flexible, and PGR students are not covered by this policy, although support provided for them may include Personal Academic Tutoring. Any additional support offered to these students will be detailed in course handbooks and other supporting course information.

3. Requirements of Departments/Divisions

- 3.1. Responsibility for delivering Personal Academic Tutoring in line with this policy, sits with the Department Tutor (or equivalent) and ultimately the Head of Department.
- 3.2. All Departments/Divisions must have an appointed Department Tutor or equivalent.
- 3.3. Departments/Divisions must appoint Personal Academic Tutors from within their Department or Division or, for interdisciplinary courses, from Departments that contribute teaching to the course.
- 3.4. Personal Academic Tutors should normally be assigned to students before teaching on their course begins for the duration of their course of study. Where changes are unavoidable, due to staff changes, personal leave and/or study leave, a robust system must be in place to ensure students are allocated a new tutor and are kept informed.

- 3.5. Departments/Divisions are responsible for keeping Student Operations (Student Registry Services) up-to-date with any changes to Department Tutors or equivalent, and changes to the assignment of students to Personal Academic Tutors.
- 3.6. Departments/Divisions are responsible for ensuring that staff within Personal Academic Tutor roles are sufficiently supported whilst they carry out their duties.

4. Requirements of Staff in the Role of Personal Academic Tutor

- 4.1. All academic staff (research and teaching) who are eligible to act as Personal Academic Tutors must complete UCL Personal Academic Tutoring mandatory online training every 2 years. This training is supported by Organisational Development (OD).
- 4.2. Personal Academic Tutors must offer at least 3 meetings per academic year for each student they support (i.e., 1 per term). The meetings can be individual or in small groups, but at least one should be offered as a 1-2-1.
- 4.3. Personal Academic Tutor meetings can be held in-person or online. If meetings are held online, these must be delivered using university supported systems (e.g. MS Teams).
- 4.4. Personal Academic Tutor meetings should not be audio or video recorded, although it is strongly recommended that the Tutor securely keeps a set of written notes and a record of Personal Academic Tutor meeting attendance.