



UCL

Personal Tutoring & Academic Mentoring at UCL

www.ucl.ac.uk/personaltutors

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Every student in a taught programme at UCL has a personal tutor or academic mentor who will support and advise on academic progress and on ways to access the full range of academic and wellbeing services available at UCL. In the past UCL had a university-wide approach to personal tutoring but this has changed in 2016. The detailed arrangements will now be different in faculties and departments and will be clearly communicated early in the academic year to students and tutors alike.

In March 2016, the Education Committee approved a revised policy that can be found on the Personal Tutoring Page of the Teaching and Learning Portal. The key principles agreed are:

- Personal tutoring provision needs to sit within a clear, extremely well explained and well signposted wider infrastructure for student support.
- As part of the wider support infrastructure provided by a programme, every student on a taught programme, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, should be assigned a member of staff who can and will provide constructive academic and personal development guidance and support.
- Students need to understand fully the role of their personal tutor - its limitations as well as its features - and should be regularly and explicitly informed about the support they can access from their personal tutor, from their programme/department and beyond.

“A refreshed approach to personal tutoring/academic mentoring is central to our plans for the Connected Curriculum and enhancing the student experience at UCL. I want all students to know there is a member of staff they can turn to discuss their progress and get advice on their module choices along with signposting to careers advice and other support services. The new Moodle dashboard is just one of a range of resources to help tutors” Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student affairs)



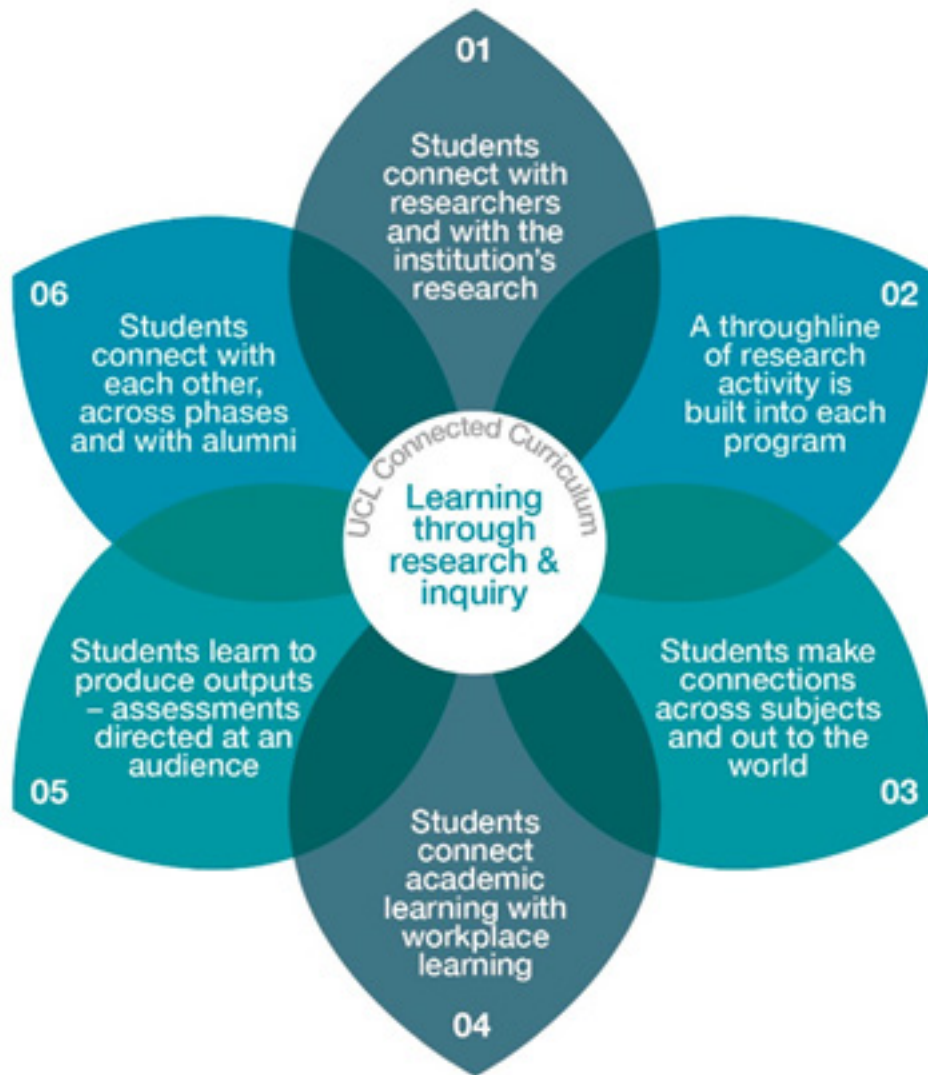
Connected
Curriculum

Principles of Personal Tutoring

1. Availability – it can be helpful to both students and tutors to establish when are good times and how to arrange meetings.
2. Listening – the tutor can't be expected to solve all problems, but sometimes students need a listening ear and to make someone aware of issues they are dealing with.
3. Understanding – tutors need to be able to form a judgement as to the seriousness and extent of issues and may need to inquire carefully to be confident they've understood as well as possible.
4. Empowering the student – students may need some help in articulating their issues and exploring the options open to them but it is ultimately their own responsibility to decide on a course of action.
5. Knowing when to refer – personal tutors are not, usually, experts in providing specialist support for matters that are not directly related to study. However, they should be able to help a tutee find and access the wide range of services offered by UCL.

What can you expect?

Students can expect...	Tutors can expect...
Support to review their own feedback and overall progress and agree actions to take in response to feedback	Students to reflect on their performance, as shown in feedback on their work, and come to tutorials ready to discuss this as well as any concerns they may have
Support to understand how the dimensions of the Connected Curriculum framework (see p.4) are applied	Students to engage with the dimensions of the Connected Curriculum and to take opportunities to make connections for learning through research and enquiry
Tutors to be able to direct them to resources and support across UCL	Students to seek advice and support if they feel they are getting into difficulties, whether academic or personal
Encouragement in becoming a member of their discipline's academic community	Students to consult and use the tutor as an academic 'sounding board'
Help with academic decisions at key points such as choosing modules, research projects and future plans	Students to be proactive in exploring options and planning ahead
Sharing expectations	
It's really important that you both agree how the relationship is likely to work best – there are resources available to help you come to a shared understanding of such matters as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to meet • How to get in touch • What the main purpose of each planned tutorial will be 	



It is important to UCL that students benefit from the university's research-rich environment. This is reflected in the Connected Curriculum framework above. Personal tutors can take a role in encouraging students to make the most of the opportunities provided within and beyond the department to connect with one another and with researchers. Personal tutors also have an important part to play in helping students identify opportunities for making personal and intellectual connections.

Guided Conversations

A series of 'Guided Conversations' is being developed which outlines the topics you might want to cover in your personal tutorials or academic mentoring sessions at various points on the student journey. It will be up to students and staff to agree whether they wish to use these guided conversations as a framework and adapt them according to need and circumstance. The guided conversations start with the types of issues commonly discussed when students first start studying at UCL and move through conversations focused on understanding feedback and progress, making good decisions at key points, making the most of the academic opportunities and thinking through the next steps as graduation approaches. The guided conversations contain a number of tools to use in preparing for tutorials so it's important to agree which of these are likely to be useful so that both student and tutor come prepared to the tutorials. For further information, please email arena@ucl.ac.uk

Resources

There are links to a wide range of services and resources available on the UCL website but do remember that there are lots of people ready to help who are experts in their area – do use their services!



For further information about the other services which support students and their wellbeing across UCL on the [The Teaching & Learning Portal](#)

You are welcome to come to a UCL Arena session – we run a wide variety of talks and workshops covering topics of direct relevance to [personal tutoring](#)