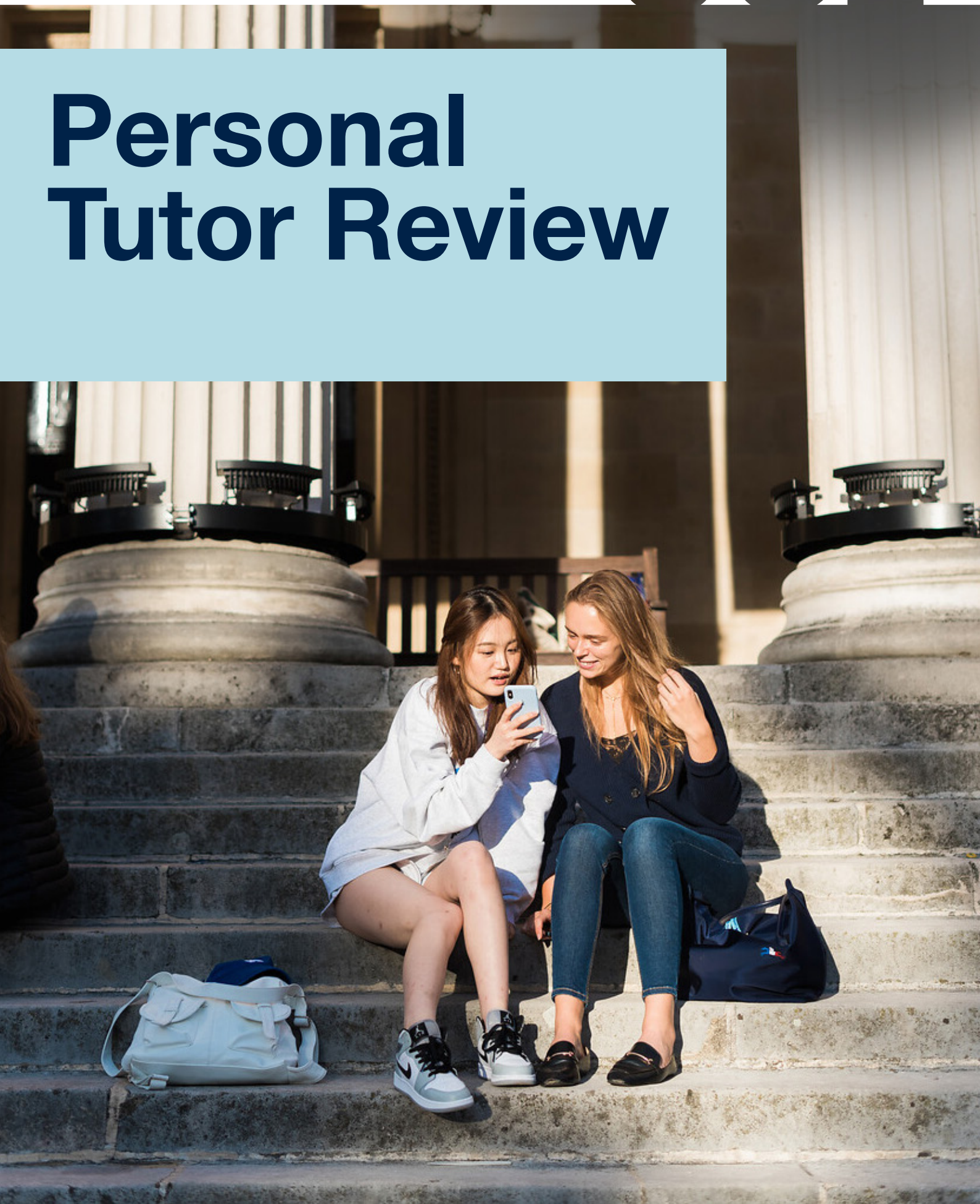London's Global University

UCL

Personal Tutor Review

UCL's Personal Tutoring Review Report

Introduction

Personal tutoring is the primary mechanism of student academic support at UCL. It is a longstanding feature of UCL education that aims to help to UG and PGT students to engage with and succeed in their academic studies.

For some time, there have been signs that personal tutoring at UCL is not working as well as it could for students, academics, and professional staff who support its delivery. Clear evidence comes from our student survey data. In the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), our Academic Support score was Bronze: 72.6% satisfaction (-3.4 below benchmark and –3.7 in comparison to the sector average). This places us in the bottom quartile in the sector for Academic Support.

In February 2023, approval was granted by UCL's Education Committee (EdCom) to undertake a university-wide Personal Tutoring Review. EdCom agreed that this review should be overseen by a Steering Group with academic representation from all UCL Faculties and colleagues in Education and Student Experience (ESE), Student Registry Services (SRS), Student Support and Wellbeing (SSW), and the Information Services Division (ISD). David Grey, CEO of the UK Advising and Tutoring Association (UKAT), kindly agreed to be part of the Steering Group to provide useful sector-wide context. The original Personal Tutor Review proposal paper considered by EdCom is reproduced in Appendix 1.

The Personal Tutor Review Steering Group - co-chaired by Dr Kathryn Woods and Dr Peter Fitch - has since met regularly across 2023 to guide the Review. Alongside supporting the development of this Report, the Steering Group has already successfully identified the benefits of establishing a university-wide Department Tutor Network, which met for the first time in September 2023. It also pin-pointed the need for - and supported initial scoping work towards - the development of a student learner/personal tutor dashboard. An initial version of the dashboard is due to be released for the 2024/5 academic year.

The Personal Tutor Review Steering Review members are thanked for the work that they have undertaken so far to enhance staff and student experiences of personal tutoring at UCL on behalf of the whole UCL community.

About this Report

This Report is long and incredibly detailed. It aims to give staff and students as much information about personal tutoring at UCL as possible. Detail is required because there is much variation in how personal tutoring is conceptualised, delivered, and experienced departments and divisions.

We want you – the UCL community – to see all the information we have gathered to help you clarify what parts of personal tutoring at UCL could be improved to enhance student and staff experiences. In the next phase of the Review, we want to engage with you to help us identify recommendations to put forward to EdCom for approval in Spring 2024.

We need your help because while pointing out problems and issues is easy(ish), identifying appropriate solutions that will work for students and staff across the university is hard. Ideas on the best approaches will also differ. Whatever recommendations we do put forward to EdCom, it is important that they fairly reflect views of the UCL community.

In the coming months we hope you will discuss the report at your Faculty and Department Education Committee meetings. We are going to be speaking to Department Tutors, student representatives, and relevant professional service teams, including SSW and SRS. There has already been some early consultation on a draft of this report with the Senior Education Team, Faculty Vice-Deans Education and Faculty Tutors.

Thanks are due to Sally Mackenzie and Pete Fitch who have supported the writing of this report. We also thank Sarah Grossman and Adil Chaudhry in helping us with our surveys, Lizzie Vinton for the TEF analysis, and Sarah West for the information on the B Conditions of Registration. Julie Evans is also thanked for her work examining the PGT student experience. We have already mentioned the sterling contributions of the Steering Group.

We also extend our thanks to all of you - particularly those of you who kindly filled out our surveys - for your ongoing support for the Personal Tutoring Review.

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1. Overview

1.1 Executive Summary

Reading this report, you will discover examples of exceptional personal tutoring and how it has positively enhanced students' learning experiences.

As one UG student commented in the 2022 NSS survey: *'I had a few teachers, and my personal tutor, who have been incredible to me. They have made my learning worthwhile and have meant I have been able to achieve good grades and motivate myself to enjoy my time at UCL'.*

Yet, the review has uncovered evidence that the personal tutoring system at UCL is not working well for most students and staff. Only 48.5% of students and 40.9% of staff who responded to our surveys reported that personal tutoring at UCL was 'working well for them'.

A core issue is the lack of clear definition and consistent understanding of what personal tutoring is for, and how it supports students and the delivery of education. One of our students seemingly hit the nail on the head in their response to the 2022 NSS: 'I think the personal tutoring system is inadequate … and while I think it could potentially be very helpful for students, I don't think it is so in the current format'.

Evidence gathered for the review does suggest that we could be putting our extensive personal tutoring support function to better use as an academic teaching and learning structure, to create greater value for students and staff. We also probably need to further professionalise some of our local pastoral support to support students with their personal issues, mental health and wellbeing, the implementation of SoRAs, and the provision of programme and module choice information and advice.

When reading this report, I encourage you to keep in mind the following questions. These will be the focus of our next stage consultation.

- What do we see as the purpose of personal tutoring as a delivery mechanism for academic support moving forward?

- How can personal tutoring be enhanced to positively impact students' education and experiences?

- How can personal tutoring be enhanced to positively support academic and professional staff to deliver consistently high-quality education and student experiences (what problems might it help us solve)?

- What are the quick wins? What are longer term goals we want to work towards?

I am confident that by continuing to work in close collaboration with you - our UCL community - the future for personal tutoring at UCL looks bright for us all.

Dr Kathryn Woods
Pro-Vice Provost (Student Academic Engagement). October 2023.

1.2 About the Personal Tutoring Review

Review Aims

1. Improvement of UG and PGT experience of academic support (NSS and PTES);

2. A better understanding of the differences needed between UG and PGT personal tutoring;

3. Improvement of staff experiences of personal tutoring and academic support;

   - Clarity on the purpose and aims of personal tutoring at UCL;

   - Development of model for personal tutoring at UCL that enables it to support and measure students' educational gain in the following 5 areas:

     o Personal development

     o Academic success

     o Employability and career progression

     o Innovation and enterprise

     o Social and community engagement

4. Identify a simple and coherent model for personal tutoring - supported by appropriate management arrangements, policies, and digital technologies - that:

   - Supports its effective management and administration;

   - Enables students and personal tutors to track students' progress and learning engagement;

   - Supports students when making study choices;

   - Ensures students can easily access professional service support where required.

1.3. Sources of evidence

- NSS and APS/PGS

- UCL Teaching Excellence Framework submission and response (2023)

- Staff and student Personal Tutor Surveys (Spring 2023)

- Delivery mapping exercise (circulated to Faculty Tutors, Summer 2023)

- Students' Union Report: What do students value most? (Student Choice Awards 2022)

- Students Union Report: Priorities for Education (2023)

- Excellence in Education and Student Experience consultation (2023)

- Arts & Humanities Personal Tutoring report (2022) (internal to Faculty)

- UCL Mental Health Charter Mark recommendations

- Arena led PGT experience of personal tutoring project (2023) (draft)

- Conversations via the Personal Tutor Review Steering Group

- Academic and sector literature on personal tutoring

- PGT infrastructure report by Julie Evans (Faculty Tutor, Brain Science). Work-in-progress.

1.4 Summary of Key Findings

General

1. Personal tutoring is a longstanding academic support structure at UCL that is strongly culturally embedded in almost every department. There is evidence that many staff and students value personal tutoring and of some excellent practice by individuals across UCL.

2. There has been significant work undertaken to improve personal tutoring at UCL in the last 3 years, both centrally (especially led from Arena and SSW) but also locally, notably in FoMS, Joint Faculties (A&H and SHS), and Laws. This has supported improvements in UCL's overall NSS scores for academic support between 2019 and 2022 (we have moved from -5.8% below benchmark to -1.1%). There is strong forward momentum for further organisation-wide improvement based on good practice emerging from these areas.

3. There is no consensus, at present, on the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL and the objectives it aims to achieve either for students or staff, in terms of supporting the delivery of education and the curriculum. This is reflected in lack of clarity about its 'function' and variance in its form across and within departments.

4. Despite the significant academic time spent delivering personal tutoring, evidence suggests that personal tutoring is not understood as an academic teaching and learning structure by staff, who chiefly understand it as a wellbeing structure. This is despite colleagues noting their discomfort with this aspect of the role and students reporting that they chiefly want their personal tutor to help them with academic progression and to be a 'friendly face' for them in their department who is interested in them as an individual. As one student put it, when describing their positive personal tutoring experience: *'I did not expect my tutor to help me with mental health problems, but she made it clear that this would not mean I couldn't talk to her about issues I was having in order to find the right support'.*

5. It is often overlooked that for many students at UCL, personal tutoring is the only regular 1-2-1 time they can expect to receive with an academic across their degree programme. This is valuable time for students that could be better used to enhance the student experience.

6. Lack of clarity on the purpose of personal tutoring contributes to poor engagement by staff and students in some areas and a mismatch between expectations and experiences.

7. The Personal Tutor Review survey data shows that personal tutoring is not working well for most staff and students (less than 50%). This, when considered next to TEF data, which identifies us as Bronze for Academic Support at -3.7 in comparison to the sector, indicates the clear need for strategic change.

8. Student Academic Support satisfaction scores in the NSS, used for the most recent TEF (2023), show that we are only Gold in 5 subject areas. In most subject areas we were Bronze (16 out of a total of 28). Scores in some areas were as low as -11.2% below benchmark. This suggests that the differentiated model of personal tutoring, as devolved to departments, is leading towards a tendency towards poor student experience across the organisation.

9. Student satisfaction scores for academic support are better for PGT than UG, although as with UG there is variation across different areas.

10. Only 36.1% of students who responded to the personal tutoring survey reported that their personal tutor was their preferred source of support with personal concerns relating to their wellbeing.

11. There is no regulation or policy specifying requirements for the delivery of personal tutoring at UCL (as set out in the academic manual or elsewhere), although some regulations within the academic manual refer to personal tutoring (e.g. the Student Support Framework). This contributes to organisational variation in approaches to personal tutoring and its delivery.

12. The absence of a personal tutoring policy creates organisation risk for UCL with respect to the OfS B2 conditions of registration (Resources, Support and Student Engagement).

13. The majority of UCL departments have a 'Department Tutor'. The Department Tutor role is described in chapter 12 of the Academic Manual. It is a broad and substantial role that encompasses admissions, academic administration, examinations and assessment, teaching and quality assurance, and pastoral support. Under 'pastoral' support Department Tutors are described as having 'particular responsibilities' for personal tutoring in their department, although this is not the primary focus of the role (as is the norm elsewhere in the sector). The Department Tutor role, in practice, works quite in many areas from how is set out in the academic manual and this role descriptor is widely considered out of date.

14. There is no central Personal Tutor role descriptor at UCL. There are some examples of local role descriptors.

15. There is no consistent workload model for personal tutors at UCL. In some areas there is no workload allocation for it. This can make it difficult for staff to properly deliver against their personal tutoring responsibilities in line with student expectations and/or engage in training.

16. In our staff surveys, only 18.1% reported they felt personal tutoring was appropriately recognised and rewarded. For example, Personal tutoring is only an impact measure up to Grade 8 in the Academic Careers Framework.

17. Only 42.3% of staff said they had appropriate training to support them in their role. There is no mandatory baseline training for new UCL staff and/or staff new to the personal tutor role.

18. Personal tutors report feeling ill-equipped and positioned to provide advice for students on their programmes and module choices, and UCL policies, regulations, and procedures. This has traditionally been part of the personal tutor role in many areas, but further consideration could usefully be given to how students access this sort of specialist guidance and where responsibility for this service sits.

19. Examples have been found of PGR students undertaking personal tutoring responsibilities.

20. Most staff who responded to our survey reported they had 1-19 tutees. A minority of staff reported higher numbers of above 50.

21. There are not standard operating procedures for routine aspect of personal tutoring delivery, such as the assignment of students to tutors.

22. Personal tutors report difficulties with accessing information about their students (programme of study, modules, assessment marks, SoRAs, attendance, mitigating circumstances etc), making advising students, ensuring appropriate support is in place, and safeguarding challenging. Nor is this information available in one place for students. It is now increasingly common for personal tutors and students to have access to learner/personal tutoring digital 'dashboards' that support this. Identifying this as a key requirement for their educational delivery, FoMS has developed their own digital dashboard.

2. Personal Tutoring in Context

2.1 Personal Tutoring in Sector Context

Personal tutoring has been a common feature of UK Higher Education since the 1970s.

It became so at the same time as modular modes of programme delivery became the norm (which now become systematised across much higher education in the UK via the CATS system), seeking to enable students to make sense of their cross-modular learning. Supporting holistic learning, in terms of the entire student experience, was another objective of the system. So too was supporting a personalised experience in a period when there was increasing participation in higher education.

In the UK, it is the norm for personal tutoring to be delivered by academic staff, especially within the Russell Group, the rationale being to enable a direct link with students' academic discipline and studies. This is grounded in a historical approach, modelled on the traditional Oxbridge tutorial system. Whether the primary focus of personal tutoring is on academic support or pastoral support varies, and in many organisations, it has shifted over time.

In the last twenty years, pastoral support has generally become a stronger focus for personal tutoring across the sector, as student mental health has become a growing concern. This has caused much personal tutoring practice to be more reactive and orientated to addressing students' personal issues. Personal tutoring systems have, consequently, been put under strain. There has been limited discussion within the sector about how far the move away from personal tutoring providing routine academic support, towards delivering more reactive pastoral support has been a contributing factor in increased levels of student study related anxiety and staff stress levels.

In the 1970s and 80s, many universities moved to establish professional counselling, wellbeing, and (later), disability services for students, recognising that there were social issues encountered by the student population that required specialist support. Such services have since become an almost ubiquitous feature of higher education. Debates have emerged, in recent years, about how far universities should be providing this sort of social and medical service, with both government and parents and guardians expressing views that universities should have further safeguarding responsibilities. This has thrown up challenges given that most students are classified as adults. Indeed, universities ceased to have a formal loco parentis role in 1970 when the age of majority fell to 18. This change was welcomed by students at the time, and came about due to widespread global youth agitation, in universities and beyond, across the late 1960s and 1970s.

After 1992, the polytechnics were recognised as universities (the so-called 'post 92s) in wake of government legislation. In these organisations, student support was more commonly delivered by professional units than by personal tutors. This was the so-called 'professional' model of advising, also predominant in the United States. Some of these universities retained their professionalised approach, whereas others moved towards the personal tutoring model.

In the late 2000s, following the introduction of quality measures, such as the NSS, sector-wide pedagogic interest in personal tutoring and advising started to increase. The first UK conference on personal tutoring took place in 2005. The UK Advising and Tutoring Association (UKAT) was established in 2015. It now runs regular conferences, and institutional and organisational recognition schemes. UCL has been a member since 2020.

In the last decade, universities within the Russell Group and beyond have reviewed their approaches to personal tutoring, including Warwick (2017), to ensure that approaches to personal tutoring and delivery remain fit

for purpose. Covid-19 was also an escalator for refreshed approaches for universities like Birmingham (2020), which at that time moved to a personal 'academic' tutoring model. Other universities, like Goldsmiths (UoL), made changes to embed personal tutoring in the delivery of the credit bearing curriculum in the same period. Alongside UCL, several other universities in the Russell Group are currently reviewing their personal tutoring and student support offer, including Edinburgh.

Part of the catalyst for this has been the establishment of the Office for Students (2017). Under the new B conditions of registration (notably B2 – quality of resources, support and student engagement) the OfS regulates for academic provision of personal tutoring at all levels of study including postgraduate research (which is out of scope for this review).The OfS expects provides to take reasonable steps in this area to ensure a high quality academic experience for students, enabling them to succeed in and beyond higher education. It is expected that the academic needs of each cohort, based on prior attainment and capability, are considered within this. Support in this context covers academic support in relation to the course and avoiding academic misconduct.

The OfS works as a principles-based regulator, so while personal tutoring might not be explicitly mentioned as a requirement under academic support, it is within scope as a mechanism that universities use to deliver this aspect of education. This is supported by evidence from a recent OfS quality assurance report on the BSc/BA Business Management courses at the University of Bolton, which made significant mention of concerns about the effectiveness of the Personal Academic Tutoring system, in terms of delivery, in supporting students. This shows that these regulations concern local as well as institutional delivery of academic support. Key flags of concern to the OfS include student satisfaction (NSS) and outcomes. Academic support is also a category used in the TEF metrics and assessment.

2.2 What is Personal Tutoring?

Personal tutoring is a common academic support structure across universities in the UK.

There are a variety of different models across the sector and within organisations. There are four main models: academic, pastoral, professional and curriculum based. Academic and pastoral are by far the most common, and are commonly blurred. Professional models may also be delivered alongside academic and pastoral models, as is partly the case at UCL where, since 2020, support for first year UG students is delivered by personal tutoring and Student Advisors. Names for the role can also vary. In different organisations, personal tutors can be known as personal academic tutors, student advisors, academic advisors, student mentors and so on.

As part of this review, we looked at 25 HEIs, including Russell Group and London-based HEIs. We found that there was no standard nomenclature for the role, with policies using 'Personal Tutor', 'Academic Advisor', and 'Advisor of Studies', amongst others. The review also found that;

- 19/25 of the HEIs specified the role of the personal tutor and 15/25 HEIs specified the role of the student;

- The most common minimum number of meetings specified in the policies reviewed was four per year, but ranged from 2 to 9 per year;

- All HEIs specified the PT must be an academic member of staff;

- 3 HEIs made specific mention of a software platform to support Personal Tutoring.

However, most within UK higher education would tend to recognise the definition of the personal tutor as: 'one who improves the intellectual and academic ability and nurtures the emotional wellbeing of learners through individualised holistic support' (Stork and Walker, 2015, p. 3).

Research into personal tutoring has identified that personal tutors commonly provide the following forms of support to students:

• Being a first point of contact

• Academic support & development

• Personal welfare support.

• Community building / peer support.

• Identifying students at risk.

• Promote belonging

• Front-loading provision in year 1

• Provide / signposting additional support services

• Purposefully provide information to help students navigate university and their programme

• Advise on employability and professional development.

• Regular meetings

   (Thomas, 2012 / Grey & Osborne, 2020)

In other words, universities have different emphases on what forms of support personal tutoring provides. This often varies based on the student demographic and the nature of the education provided. Universities have autonomy over the model of personal tutoring they choose to deliver to best support their students and as aligned to their organisational culture.

2.3 Personal Tutoring at UCL

Personal tutoring has been a longstanding feature of academic support and educational delivery at UCL.

UCL is committed to providing all students with the academic guidance and personal support that they need to flourish as members of our active learning community. Every taught student, UG and PGT, should have a named 'Personal Tutor'.

There is no single model used for personal tutoring at UCL. Unlike many universities in the sector, UCL does not have a personal tutoring policy which explicitly sets out the purpose of personal tutoring and/or minimum expectations around its delivery. The lack of a policy creates risks for UCL in the context of the OfS B2 conditions of registration. Student Support has been recognised as a major institutional risk in the UCL 2023 risk register.

Instead, UCL centrally focuses on providing guidance and pedagogic support _guidance_ on the approach including recommending frequency of meetings and scope of the role (based on EdCom Paper 3-xx (15-16), 1/3/2016).

Objective 1 of the UCL Education Strategy 2016-21 "Personalising student support" focussed on ensuring all undergraduate and postgraduates, regardless of their background, experience or stage of learning, were appropriately supported. Projects associated with this objective included:

(a) an enhanced welcome and induction service for students

(b) enhanced academic writing support through The Writing Lab and the Academic Communication Support Centre

(c) revisions to the personal tutoring approach (including staff and student guides "Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing: a guide for UCL staff", "What you need to succeed" distributed to all first-year undergraduates, and a "Things to talk about" guide to conversation topics.

With the onset of COVID-19, the personal tutoring steering group provided support and guidance for transition student support into the online and hybrid environment.

UCL Personal Tutors are generally expected to be able understand the support network available to students and signpost to appropriate services or resources. Examples of recent web-based developments to support staff awareness and signposting to these services and resources include the Student Triage and Referral Tool (STaRT), and Student Study Skills hub. UCL also provides resources and training for staff who are undertaking the role of Personal Tutor, though training is not mandatory across the organisation.

The core Arena training provision for staff in these roles includes the 'Introduction to Personal Tutoring' (run in each academic term; 29 participants in 2022-23), 'Developing as a Personal Tutor' (focussing on discussion of authentic student generated scenarios; 34 participants in 2022-23), and 'Approaches to Supporting Students for Professional & Technical Services Staff' (28 participants in 2022-23). Additional workshops include 'Coaching Approaches for Supporting Students' (34 participants in 2022-23), and 'Academic Support for Programme Leads' (11 participants in 2022-23). These optional development opportunities are advertised in the UCL's monthly Education Newsletter, through Arena communication channels (for example, the Arena News & Events Teams site and the UCL Personal Tutoring Teams site, and Arena Faculty Liaison interactions.

The Moodle course 'UCL Personal Tutoring' contains information, guidance and links to relevant policies and materials. Currently over 1000 staff are enrolled. Some complete it as a single course, but most consider it a 'toolkit' that they can return to when needed. The course is currently being updated to reflect user evaluation, align with latest guidance and processes, and to simplify the structure with core and optional components to improve user experience. The entire UCL personal tutor training and support offer is going to be updated following the findings of this review and as part of ongoing work related to the development of HEDS (see the UCL Strategic Plan 2022-27).

UCL became an Institutional Member of the United Kingdom Advising and Tutoring association (UKAT) in 2021. This provided facility for UCL staff to access UKAT resources and development opportunities as 'Affiliate Members'. Since 2022, Arena has supported 25 UCL staff in personal tutoring and student support role work toward submitting an application to UKATs professional recognition scheme.

There are three common models of personal tutoring and advising described in the literature (e.g. Lochtie et al., 2019; Grey and Osborne, 2020), which are all present at UCL (sometimes in combination, even within departments);

- **Pastoral Model** – this is the long established, default model of personal tutoring in the UK, rooted in Oxbridge practice. It aims to support beyond academic issues but is predominately delivered by academics. It is often considered to be reactionary/deficit focussed and can be insufficient and difficult to monitor.

- **Professional Model** – in this model there is a focus on academic advising and development, and module selection. This is the main 'alternative' model to the pastoral model in UK. It is the predominant model of academic support in the US, where education is more cross-disciplinary and modular than in the UK. Students, by default, receive support by a centralised team of professional specialists. This model can reduce academic workload but moving to this model requires significant central investment, and students' don't always receive the academic support required. It does not support student community building within programme. It can sometimes, as at UCL (student mentors), be used as a useful accompaniment to the pastoral model. Some universities in the UK (OU), who have moved to this model, have seen significant declines in student retention and satisfaction. It is not necessarily well suited to all organisations or cultural contexts.

- **Curriculum Integrated Model** – in this model personal tutoring is embedded into credit-bearing activity within programmes/ modules to maximise engagement and impact. Embracing the curriculum integrated model is a trend within widening participation focused universities. Focus on academic and professional development is directly linked to learning outcomes and effective transitions. In some cases, personal tutoring is used to deliver programme learning outcomes. There are potential challenges around variable student populations and assuming a homogeneous cohort.

These three models were first identified in 1992 by Earwalker. They are still taken as sector norm models. It is not clear that they remain the norm and/or represent desirable models for modern Higher Education. New professional models of

development, involving coaching and mentoring, have emerged since then.

Departments and programmes may decide the specific role that the Personal Tutor should play and how the system is delivered in their area (the 'model'). Significant variations are highlighted in Appendix 6 where we have mapped the key features of personal tutoring as delivered in each department (where information has been provided by Faculty Tutors following a request in support of this review). These variations are also mirrored in varying student satisfaction scores for academic support.

The majority of UCL departments and programmes can be interpreted under the Pastoral Model with 2 – 6 scheduled meetings across the academic year (with variation between use of individual and group meetings) and ad hoc, as-and-when support.

Examples of the Professional Model are present in Archaeology where year tutors provide additional whole cohort academic development/support meetings, and English Language and Literature with additional short individual meetings to discuss academic progress and development. Electrical Engineering also use personal tutoring to deliver module content.

Laws operate a distinct model of personal tutoring, in the form of Academic Mentoring (rather than personal tutoring). The academic mentor provides support for academic and professional progression. The academic mentor role differs from the personal tutor role in relation to pastoral care (as is normally practiced at UCL). They can refer any, including more serious and/or time-consuming issues on to the LLB UG and PGT Support teams. The Laws Student Support teams monitor attendance, provide guidance to students on academic and pastoral matters, and professional development. Laws also has a dedicated careers consultant to give more in depth careers advice to students. This is resource intensive but is an area where the Law Faculty has been willing to invest.

Many departments provide detailed information about how personal tutoring is delivered in student handbooks. Typically, although not formally set out in regulations, Personal Tutors are supported by a Departmental Tutor who can advise if matters require escalation. At Faculty level, personal tutoring tends to be overseen by the Faculty Tutor.

2.4 Student wellbeing, mental health and academic support

UCL was among the first five universities to receive the University Mental Health Charter Award, recognising our commitment to continuous improvement in mental health and wellbeing.

During Covid-19, the university introduced Student Advisor roles in departments. SSW lead in the co-ordination, training and support of the team of Student Advisers (SA). The SA are based in academic departments and are on hand to support first-year undergraduate students who may have additional challenges. Depending on student numbers, some SA are embedded in individual departments and some support students across several departments (agreed at Faculty level). They are expected to get to know their students and to be a first point of contact for wellbeing and pastoral support, using coaching techniques to support the students alongside academics and other professional services staff.

The Student Adviser also provides an interface between the faculty/department and central professional services providing both wellbeing services and opportunities for students to enable students to get the maximum benefit of the wealth of opportunities available.

However, the University Mental Health Charter award assessment team identified the need for enhancements in the delivery of the personal tutoring system to improve student mental health. Above all, it identified that our pluralistic personal tutoring system means that we are currently unable to offer a fully coordinated wrap around student support system. The Assessment Team recommended that:

- All departments use a consistent model of personal tutoring founded on the same principles. There is much emphasis placed on the role of the personal tutor, it is important therefore that all students have clarity and consistency in this role. There was evidence in panels and focus groups of inconsistent practice across the university.

- The consistency of the personal tutoring role in relation to progression is embedded across the institution with a coaching approach as a core principle of the model; whilst this happens in some disciplinary contexts it was unclear as to whether this was consistent across all areas of the institution.

- Evaluation and monitoring of the movement of Personal Tutor to Academic Mentor role. We recommend considering carefully the clarity of this role alongside Student Advisors, (both have been referred to as support roles containing elements of pastoral support) and clarity around how these roles differ from those within SSW. Additionally, consideration should be given to the potential disclosures that staff in these roles may receive, and signposting and debriefing support for these staff members. (see Theme 4).

- While UCL have been able to demonstrate how standard roles link in principle (personal tutor, Student Advisor, SSW etc) there are some support roles that seem to be unique to certain departments e.g. Student Support Officers in Maths. The Assessment Team recommends that UCL review these roles and their boundaries, how they work alongside other roles and the training and support provided to those in these positions.

3. Student Experience of Personal Tutoring at UCL

3.1 Teaching Excellence Framework

In the Teaching Excellence Framework 2023, UCL was awarded a Silver for Student Experience, Gold for Student Outcomes and a Silver overall.

The independent panel of assessors stated that UCL failed to achieve a Gold in Student Experience due to our metrics in both Assessment and Feedback, and Academic Support.

The TEF includes 13 separate 'features of excellence'. In SE5: Learning environment and academic support, the panel of assessors found "insufficient evidence of a very high-quality feature overall but noted some provision of very high quality" in UCL's submission. Although the TEF does not give an official rating for each feature of excellence, the language used should be understood as a Bronze rating. In making their decision, the TEF panel considered qualitative evidence in the form of a Provider Written Submission and a Student Written Submission as well as a large quantitative data set:

Table 1: UCL TEF 2023 Data Summary

	Indicator	Benchmark	Difference (ppt)	Sector quartile	UCL compared to sector average	Most recent year of UCL data
Teaching	81.6% 82.5%		-0.9	3	0.1	0.8
Assessment	62.7% 67.4%		-4.6	4	-7.3	-3.9
Academic Support	72.6% 76.1%		-3.4	4	-3.7	-1.1
Learning Resources	83.6% 82.7%		0.9	1	2.3	3.2
Student Voice	69.0% 71.1%		-2.1	3	-1.5	-0.6
Continuation	96.2%	95.3%	1.0	1	5.5	1.7
Completion	95.2%	94.8%	0.4	1	6.6	-0.1
Progression	84.3% 83.6%		0.7	1	12.2	0.3

Rather than comparing providers to a single national benchmark, each university is given personalised benchmarks which control for course and student characteristics. The TEF Panel's face-value assessments will be based on the distance between our indicator (e.g. NSS % Agree) and our institutional benchmark, using the following rubric:

Table 2: TEF Benchmarking Rubric

TEF Gold	Outstanding Quality	At least 2.5ppt above benchmark OR Any provider with a benchmark of ≥95% who is not materially below that benchmark
TEF Silver	Very High Quality	Within 2.5ppt of the benchmark in either direction
TEF Bronze	High Quality	At least 2.5ppt below benchmark

UCL's overall indicator for Academic Support was -3.5 percentage points below benchmark, and the panel noticed that there was a considerable degree of inconsistency across different subject areas and demographic groups. However, the panel did note the upward trajectory in UCL's data (-1.1 percentage points in 2022) and acknowledged a range of recent initiatives including the Student Advisor roles, the University Mental Health Charter, and the new Student Support Framework launched in 2022.

The panel also found many individual examples of disciplinary initiatives and change programmes, and noted the work done by Arena to raise the profile of personal tutoring. However, they struggled to find evidence of a systematic, strategic approach across departments and faculties. The panel also paid close attention to UCL's student submission, which noted that some students still appeared to have limited interaction with their personal tutor, and that there was 'less satisfaction with course advice and guidance, communication and timetabling'.

3.2 National Student Survey

Our latest NSS 2023 results show some improvement compared to the sector, moving us into the second quartile this year.

However, it is important to note that the NSS response scales and methodology changed in 2023 meaning we are not able to make direct year-on-year comparisons. Moreover, our relative position in the RG rankings dropped so whilst our scores did rise compared to 2022, we dropped from 8th place in the RG in 2022 to 10th place in 2023 (see Appendix 2) and we are only 0.7% behind the 3rd quartile institutions.

The latest TEF submission revealed that we are materially below our benchmark for Academic Support. Given the emphasis on split indicators, identifying where we have low scores in the relevant NSS categories e.g. in particular departments (see Appendix 4) or for specific demographic groups, and putting improvements in place, is a priority before the next submission.

The NSS 2022 Academic Support quantitative scores, which were used in the most recent TEF submission, ranged from 49% to 96.7% across departments, indicating wide variation in experiences/satisfaction depending on where the student was studying. Scores within departments also ranged widely, suggesting it is not only the model of Personal Tutoring which is variable but even when students are studying in the same department the approach and the quality can still differ significantly.

NSS 2022; Comments from two students based within the same department:

Comment 1
No, I haven't heard from my personal tutor in 2 years. Last time I tried to ask for advice on choosing second year modules I got no response and I haven't tried since

Comment 2
My personal tutor has been amazing. They often email to check everything is going ok, and ask if I need a meeting. When I was concerned about my grades, they organised a meeting within a week and spent an hour going through all my marks… There are a number of occasions where they have been really proactive like this

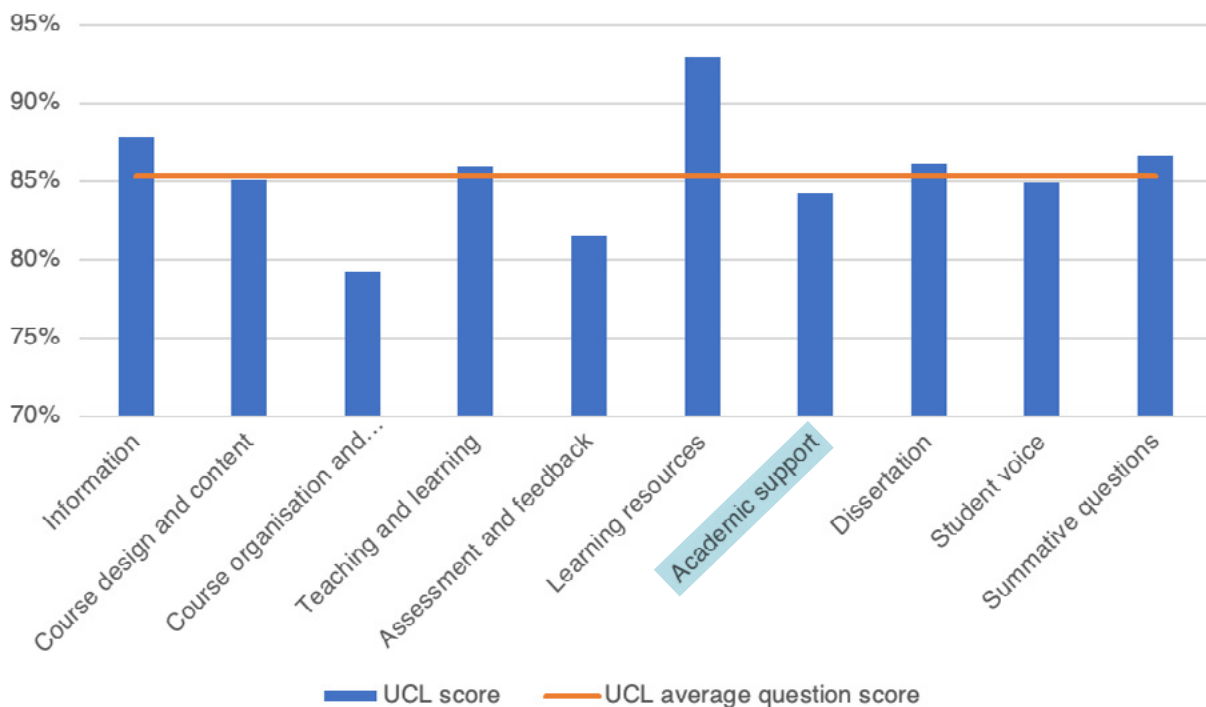# 3.3 Postgraduate Surveys: Postgraduate Survey (PGS)

In 2021-22 UCL participated in a pilot of a new national survey for postgraduate taught students, initiated by the Office for Students (OfS).

Sector comparison data was not made available to benchmark our results. However, internal comparisons show that Academic Support was the 3rd lowest scoring category after Assessment and Feedback and Course Organisation and Management.

Chart 1: Category Scores for PGS 2022

One concerning result in the PGS was the difference in scores for students with a declared disability. This group scored considerably lower on almost every question in the survey and scored particularly low for the question: *'How well have you been supported to meet the academic challenges of postgraduate study?'* with a score of 71.8%. This was 10.0ppts lower than the UCL average.

UCL Scale Scores vs UCL Average Question Score

Overall, the scores were less variable for the 2022 PGS survey than for the NSS, with department scores ranging from 66.7% to 95.7% (see Appendix 4), though of course the methodology differs between the surveys. This may suggest that postgraduate taught students are a little more satisfied with their experiences of personal tutoring than undergraduates. This is mirrored in the Personal Tutoring Survey 2023 results (see section 4).

3.4 Annual Programme Surveys:

Postgraduate Taught

The Postgraduate Taught Students Annual Programme Survey (APS) is a new internal survey launched in 2022/23. Overall, 4,259 postgraduate students completed the survey, a response rate of 22%. The Academic Support category results flag up some interesting insights into what is driving the overall category score of 68.5% for 'Academic Support'.

Table 3: Breakdown of Academic Support questions and scores for PGT APS

Academic Support	68.5%
I know who I need to contact for support with my learning.	80.1%
My personal tutor has supported me to engage successfully with my programme, when I have needed it.	64.4%
My personal tutor has supported me to make study choices, when I have needed it.	61.5%
Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively.	68.1%

Table 3 shows that the highest scoring question in this category is *'I know who I need to contact for support with my learning'* with 80.1%. In contrast the other questions in the category are markedly lower with *'My Personal Tutor has supported me to make study choices when I have needed it'* scoring 61.5%, almost 20 ppt point power than the first question.

Continuing Undergraduates

Table 4: Breakdown of Academic Support questions and scores for Continuing UGs APS

Academic Support	62.4%
I know who I need to contact for support with my learning.	71.8%
My personal tutor has supported me to engage successfully with my programme, when I have needed it.	59.8%
My personal tutor has supported me to make study choices, when I have needed it.	58.4%
Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively.	59.7%

Table 4 shows that the overall category score being driven mostly by the first question on *'I know who I need to contact for support with my learning'* with a score of 71.8%. The lowest scoring question in the category is also *'My Personal Tutor has supported me to make study choices when I have needed it'* with a score of 58.4%. This is a score that should provoke significant concern, as it currently is scoring lower than the nearest approximate in the NSS. Taking note of individual question scores within a category is an important step in targeting our recommendations effectively. Comparing these scores to the expectations of students (see section 5) helps us to understand where there may be a mismatch with the current focus of the PT role.

4. Staff and Student Personal Tutoring Survey 2023

4.1 Background

To gain deeper insights from both students and staff, personal tutoring surveys were distributed to all staff and taught students (UG and PGT) in April and May 2023.

The surveys had similar questions, but with some additional questions targeted as relevant to stakeholder groupings (see Appendix 3). The aim was to understand expectations and experiences of personal tutoring, as well as gathering further details on local personal tutoring operations, such as number of tutees per tutor and meeting frequency.

In total, 298 staff responded to the staff survey. 484 students responded to the student survey. At UCL, we currently have around 47,000 students and 16,00 staff. We accordingly need to recognise that our survey is a sample. It is also a sample of staff and students motivated, for personal reasons, to respond to the survey. We therefore acknowledge that our surveys are far from representative. This is why we started our discussion of student perceptions with discussion of the NSS, PGS/PTES, and APS.

For our surveys, most questions required a response to be given on a 5-point Likert scale. A positivity score was then calculated for each question (where applicable) by combining the 'definitely agree' and 'mostly agree' scores. Department level analysis has not been provided as response rates were too low to protect anonymity for several departments.

4.2: Quantitative Results for Student Survey

The results of the student survey (Table 5 below) highlighted some interesting challenges.

The top scoring question was for the question *'I understand the purpose of Personal Tutoring'*. Based on this we might assume that students are clear that they can go to their PT for academic guidance. Yet the question on *'My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for study concerns'* scored only 39.4%.

In fact, the questions relating to the academic advice/guidance (questions 10 and 11) were amongst the lowest scoring questions. Given that academic advice is usually considered a key part of a Personal Tutoring role, we need to explore the expectations of students around academic-focused advice and how closely this aligns with the purpose and delivery of Personal Tutoring.

Table 5: Personal Tutoring Survey Results: Students

	Positivity Score
I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL	76.76%
I am clear on what I should expect from my personal tutoring experience	63.49%
My personal tutoring experience has met my expectations	49.17%
The organisation and management personal tutoring is working well for me	48.34%
My personal tutor is accessible and approachable	64.11%
It is important to have the same tutor throughout my programme	76.56%
I feel that my personal tutor cares about me achieving success	55.60%
My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for study concerns	39.42%
My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for personal concerns relating to my wellbeing	36.10%
My personal tutor has given me useful advice on assessment marks and feedback I have received	34.23%
My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules	30.71%
My personal tutor has provided useful advice on careers and further study	35.06%
My personal tutor has provided me with information about university support services when I have needed	40.46%
I feel confident in approaching my personal tutor for an academic reference	54.15%
My personal tutor regularly contacts me	36.93%
My personal tutor proactively arranges meetings with me	43.36%
I regularly contact my personal tutor	30.29%
My personal tutor has responded to my enquiries in good time	60.58%
The personal tutoring system at UCL is working well for me	48.55%

Table 6: Top and Bottom Scoring Questions

Top 3 scoring questions	%
I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL	76.8
It is important to have the same tutor throughout my programme	76.6
My personal tutor is accessible and approachable	64.1
Bottom 3 scoring questions	**%**
I regularly contact my personal tutor	30.3
My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules	30.7
My personal tutor has given me useful advice on assessment marks and feedback I have received	34.2

Table 5 shows the results for all questions and table 6 below draws out the top and bottom scoring 3 questions.

When the data was split by level of study (postgraduate taught and undergraduate) there are some differences in the top and bottom scoring questions between groups. Table 7 below highlights these differences and where the groups are aligned.

Table 7: UG and PGT Top and Bottom Questions

UG Top Questions

6	It is important to have the same tutor throughout my programme	77.4%
1	I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL	75.3%
2	I am clear on what I should expect from my personal tutoring experience	60.1%

PGT Top Questions

1	I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL	78.90%
6	It is important to have the same tutor throughout my programme	75.3%
5	My personal tutor is accessible and approachable	71.6%

UG Bottom Questions

9	My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for personal concerns relating to my wellbeing	27.8%
15	My personal tutor regularly contacts me	31.1%
12	My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules	33.0%

PGT Bottom Questions

17	I regularly contact my personal tutor	33.5%
12	My personal tutor has provided useful advice on careers and further study	32.5%
11	My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules	27.3%

Overall postgraduates scores were higher for every question except *'My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules'* which scored 27.3% for postgraduate and 33% for undergraduates.

Both undergraduates and postgraduates score highly for understanding the purpose of the role and the importance of having one personal tutor throughout.

However, undergraduates had lower positivity scores for the question around *'My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for*

personal concerns relating to my wellbeing'. This could mean they are reaching out to others in the support network such as Student Advisors (UG 1st year only) transition mentor or department administrators. Postgraduates had lower scores for *'My personal tutor has provided useful advice on careers and further study'*, possibly reflecting that career pathways are often a high priority for PGTs on a one-year programme.

The questions with the biggest differences between undergraduate and postgraduates responses have been outlined in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Questions with biggest differences in scores for UG and PGT

Question	UG	PGT	Difference (ppts)
The personal tutoring system at UCL is working well for me	42.7%	57%	14.5
My personal tutoring experience has met my expectations	41.3	60.8	19.5
My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for personal concerns relating to my wellbeing	27.8%	48.5%	20.7
My personal tutor proactively arranges meetings with me	34.4	56.7%	22.3

Perhaps one of the most striking differences is in relation to the question *'My personal tutoring experience has met my expectations'*, with the UG response group scoring almost 20ppt below the PGT response group.

Generally, more PGT students report that their experience has matched expectations, perhaps suggesting different expectations having already studied at undergraduate level. They also score higher for being the preferred source of help for personal concerns. This may suggest they are more comfortable or confident in approaching their Personal Tutor about personal issues, having had experience of this already, or the fact that there are fewer alternative networks available to them such as transition mentors.

4.3 Free Text Comments from Students

The survey also included some questions which asked for free text responses, giving students the opportunity to highlight specific challenges or points of good practice.

Good practice

Analysis of the free text comments in relation to the question *'Do you have any examples of when personal tutoring has gone well that you would like to share?'* shows that examples of good practice and specific instances when things have worked well can be split broadly into 3 themes (see below). Many of these themes echoes examples provided in the Students' Union Report **'What do Students Value Most?',** based on the Student Choice Awards. The report highlights good practice such as tutors who:

'Fostered warm and productive relationships with their tutees, and were approachable and present throughout their academic experience… using empathy as well as their own experience to reassure them'

Similar good practices themes from the Personal Tutoring 2023 survey were:

Theme:	Comments related to:	Example Comments
1. Kindness, understanding and reaching out (a person who cares)	• Proactive contact/communication, checking in • Demonstrating kindness/understanding through listening • Offering good advice • Breaking down tasks and taking time to reduce anxiety when students feel overwhelmed by course	**Comment 1** *I did not expect my tutor to help me with mental health problems, but she made it clear that this would not mean I couldn't talk to her about issues I was having in order to find the right support.* **Comment 2** *No specific examples but my tutor has reached out to me for reasons other than just booking routine personal tutor meetings, for example in order to celebrate successes. This has made me feel that my tutor cares and has built up a good rapport between us.* **Comment 3** *My personal tutor gave me some amazing advice on how to structure my time during the Easter break to maximise it for revision and working on my dissertation. She recommended working in 90min blocks everyday in a location separate to your rest place. Also recommended giving yourself something to look forward to at the end of the week to treat yourself for working hard.*
2. Good advice on navigating education or sign-posting to further resources	• Helping students to connect with networks • Module advice/career choice/navigating choices and decisions – helping to weigh up options i.e identifying the pros and cons • Supporting with interruptions and transitions back to study	**Comment 1** *My personal tutor has helped me review coursework feedback, choose modules, deal with workload* **Comment 2** *Advised me to keep my module options as broad as possible in my first year. This has turned out to be great advice.* **Comment 3** *I contacted my PT when I felt lost in deciding my dissertation, I didn't know what would be the most beneficial for my career and whether I am suitable for the project. My PT was very useful in clarifying the expectations and what I should look to gain out of the dissertation.*
3. Supportive Structures and Models	• References to group meetings/sessions i.e. Tutorial groups (but not at the expense of 1:1 meetings) • Support to put students in touch with peers • Office hours, regular slots and examples such as arranging standing fortnightly and Teams appointments	**Comment 1** *Inviting me to their office, offering a glass of water and a proper seat where there's clear allocated time for you as a student and you don't feel like you're eating up their time. Times where they're able to be more casual and less lecturer/academic made my personal tutorial sessions much more enjoyable and I was able to share more (it's not brain science)*

Opportunities for improvements

In response to the question 'What would improve personal tutoring? the most commonly cited themes in the responses were;

Theme:	Comments related to:	Example Comments
1. Managing expectations	• Clearer descriptions of the purpose and role • Setting expectations around what they can help you with	Comment 1 *Set clear expectations as what personal tutoring is for*
2. Continuity and consistency	• Ensuring that students have the same tutor throughout their degree programme • Ensuring consistency in the quality of experience for all students	Comment 1: **I had a different personal tutor every year which made it hard** *to establish a long-standing relationship where my personal tutor might have been invested in helping me.* Comment 2: *For me, nothing; I just know that my friends have not all had the same level of support from their tutors (in other departments) which I think is a shame.* Comment 3: *The standards of personal tutors does not seem consistent within my program and across the board. I think there should be more guidance for personal tutors on expectations.*
3. Being pro-active and arranging frequent meeting	• Reaching out and checking in on students • Pro-active in knowing the student • Scheduling regular catch ups	Comment 1 : *Proactive meetings and looking me up before I arrive. Having a clue what I got in touch about. Not looking generally disinterested.* Comment 2: *Scheduling compulsory tutor meetings to build familiarity* Comment 3: *More contact would be good, as it's hard to feel comfortable contacting your tutor when you only see them once a year, as you don't feel you know them as well. Sometimes you feel bad contacting them for more minor advice because you know how busy they are.*
4. Matching fields of study	• Improved matching process so that staff and students share the same academic interests	Comment 1: *I think it would be nice in my case to have a personal tutor in my area of chemistry. I study physical chemistry and my personal tutor has never been a physical chemistry major* Comment 2: *Potentially a way of matching individuals' areas of academic interest more closely with their personal tutors speciality*
5. Supportive structures/models	• Opportunities for 1:1 catch ups (alongside group meetings) • Different approaches to build rapport	Comment 1: *One to one meetings (maybe one each year) would have been beneficial, especially since we never met in person which made it harder to really get to know and build a relationship with each other, online group meetings were quite awkward and didn't allow much to be achieved*
6. Approachable tutors who care.	• Making the approach less intimidating • Following up with specific concerns • Handling discussions with sensitivity	Comment 1: *Be a little more empathic and understanding. For example, I shared some experience of fostering my niece and the associated challenges and this was never followed up/queried. Neither was advice I'd asked for re support from the uni/ agencies*

4.4 Quantitative results for Staff Survey

It is clear from the responses to the survey that many staff care deeply about the success of their students and dedicate much time and effort to supporting students.

However, many staff feel frustrated by the barriers that make the role challenging and indicate challenges around time pressures, workload allocations and an unfair distribution of tutees. Indeed there were 10 staff who reported having as many as 50 tutees (though this has been built into the department model in some places - see Appendix 6) whilst over 25% of staff respondents reported having only 1-4 tutees.

Others note feeling unprepared for the role with only 42.3% agreeing that they *'have had appropriate training to support me in the role as personal tutor'*. The free text comments suggest that staff feel particularly unprepared to cope with students who have complex mental health issues.

Perhaps most strikingly, only 40.9% agreed that *'Personal Tutoring is working well for me'* (for students this was similarly low with 48.5% agreeing) and only slightly more agreed *'The organisation and management of personal tutoring is working well for me'* with 50.7% agreeing with this statement (with only 48.3% of students agreeing with this statement). This would suggest that in its current set up, the Personal Tutoring approach at UCL is not working well for anyone.

**Table 7: Personal Tutoring Survey Results: Staff**

	Positivity Score
I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL	88.26%
The organisation and management of personal tutoring is working well for me	50.67%
The number of tutees I oversee is about right	52.35%
I have had appropriate training to support me in the role as personal tutor	42.28%
Personal tutoring supports student success	68.46%
Personal tutoring supports student satisfaction	71.81%
Personal tutoring support student engagement	58.39%
I discuss assessment marks and feedback with my tutees, and offer guidance on how they can improve	42.62%
Personal tutoring is appropriately recognised and rewarded, including in workload allocation	18.12%
I provide my tutees with guidance on accessing university support services	83.22%
I know how to refer and/or escalate cases where I am worried about a student	80.54%
I provide my tutees with advice on their programme	67.11%
I provide my tutees advice when selecting modules	43.62%
I provide my tutees with advice on careers and employability and further study	70.13%
I provide my tutees with academic references	67.45%
I schedule my personal tutor meetings with students	81.21%
I follow-up with students who have not been in contact or attended personal tutor meetings	75.17%
The personal tutoring system is working well for me	40.94%
The personal tutoring system is working well for students	38.93%

Table 7 above provides an overview of the scores for staff for the Personal Tutoring Review. Also of note, were the following responses;

- The highest scoring responses were; *I understand the purpose of personal tutoring at UCL* with **88.3%,** followed by *I provide my tutees with guidance on accessing university support services* with **83.2%** and finally *I schedule my personal tutor meetings with students* with a score of **81.21%**

- In contrast, the lowest scoring questions were; *Personal tutoring is appropriately recognised and rewarded, including in workload allocation,* with a score of just **18.1%,** followed by *The personal tutoring system is working well for students* with a score of **38.9%**, followed by *I have had appropriate training to support me in the role as personal tutor* with a score of **42.3%**

- In relation to management and models of Personal Tutoring, the majority of staff had between 10-19 tutees (35.6%), followed by 1-4 tutees for (25.8%) (see Chart 2 below).

Chart 2: Number of Personal Tutees

How many personal tutees do you have?
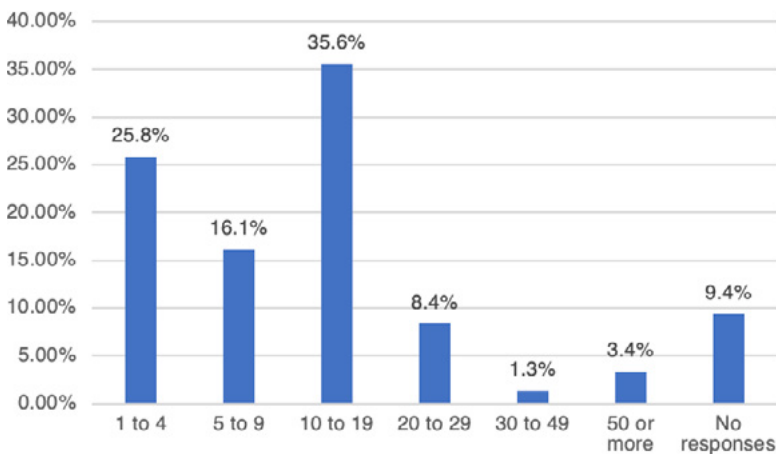
For most staff their locally manged approach requires them to meet with their students at least 3-4 times per year (150 responses). This aligns well with the majority of student responses which indicated that their preference would be to meet 3-4 times per year (see Chart 3 below)

Chart 3: Number of Personal Tutees

How many times are you required to meet your tutees each academic year?
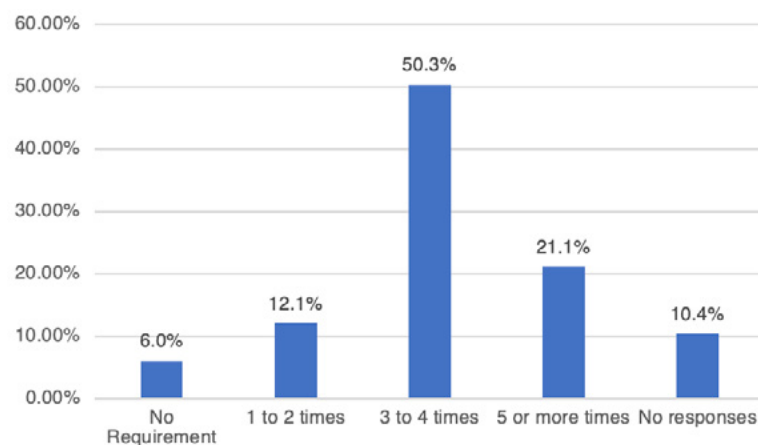
4.5 Free Text Comments from Staff

What works/good practice

Staff were given the opportunity to provide a free text response to the question *'What works well?'*. The main themes have been drawn out below and some free text responses have been paraphrased under each heading (see bullet points) to help draw out examples of what staff considered to be good practice.

Theme 1: Examples of Supportive Structures and Models

- A mix of 1:1 and group tutorials, starting with a 1:1 then scheduling group sessions. Some staff choose to theme these sessions e.g. how to apply for extenuating circumstances or academic misconduct. Many highlighted the opportunity to meet in person initially to build rapport with further sessions offered online.

- Offering mixed year group tutorials (to provide learning across stages of study)

- Using a specific anchor in the timetable e.g. a core year 1 module as a fortnightly meeting point for students

- Responding promptly to requests, scheduling regular meetings and making time for meetings (at the end of each meeting schedule the next), either with regular bookable slots or an Open Door policy

- Giving students small tasks to do for each session-calculations, seeking interesting papers and presenting

Theme 2: Continuity and Matching

- Continuity of one PT for whole programme where this is possible/appropriate (though this was referenced much less frequently than by students)

- Staff being paired with students from programmes/fields of study that they are familiar with and have knowledge of to offer more thorough guidance.

Theme 3: Culture and building rapport

- Encouraging regular check-ins, even when there are no 'issues' to help build rapport and stop problems escalating. This was also cited by students as important.

- Prioritising meetings with students who have poor mental health and may require sign-posting to additional support (for example 5 min weekly check-ins).

Theme 5: Tools, Resources and Training

- Providing tools to help staff signpost to further information e.g. 'Start' tool to find services and Calendly to schedule meetings. Teams and Moodle for hosting resources.

- Appropriate training staff and approaches personalised to department

- Making notes to reference in later meetings

- Using AMS (Attendance Monitoring System) in meetings with students to check tutorial attendance, read Academic Mentor comments and see formative marks and feedback.

Theme 6: Expectations and Effective Links Between Roles

- Ensuring clarity on the role for staff and students with guidance around expectations and aims

- Making it clear what the role of Student Advisors is and how the roles link together

- Working in tandem with the departmental tutor and Support Teams to share expertise and support students more effectively

- Providing improved pastoral provision

Opportunities to improve

As with the student survey, staff were also asked the questions 'What would improve Personal Tutoring?' The main themes have been drawn out below and relevant comments included as an example.

Theme	Comments relating to	Example Comments
1. Training and guidance	• Provide more guidance on expectations/ • aims/accountability and clarity on roles (academic vs pastoral). • More training including compulsory training and resources for staff eg staff-facing Moodle page. • More opportunities to Share best practice	Comment 1: *A much clearer job description and compulsory training, so that people cannot hide behind generic rules (e.g. it is ok to respond in 5 working days) or behind excuse like "I can't support students with mental health issues".*
2. Workload Allocation and Fairness	• Workload allocation and fairer distribution of tutees (recognition of the time and commitment involved to do it well). • A limit on max number of students	Comment 1: *Some colleagues send one email and that is all if they don't receive a reply. It is mostly women like me or Teaching track staff who do much of the tutoring work. I don't know what to do about this. But people who are only focused on themselves are not nice tutors.* Comment 2: *A workload recognition commensurate to the job, and a right to opt out or in of being a personal tutor, so that free-riders or people who genuinely struggle with the role can not be given PT (but with a workload cost).*
3: Improved matching process	• Matching tutors and tutee based on the areas of study and expertise so that staff feel confident in advising on academic matters	Comment 1: *Better matching of tutors with tutees, better engagement of staff.* Comment 2: *I was matched with students from a course in a similar scholarly area to my own students, so it made it easier to tailor advice.* Comment 3: *I really struggle to keep track of 20 students per year. I often don't have the expertise to guide them in module choices because they are not from programmes I necessarily teach on or am familiar with.*
4: Tools and scheduling	• More robust scheduling to ease the administrative burden and build in standard slots across the year • Tools to help with recording of meetings and integration of systems • Ensure physical space for 1:1s.	Comment 1: *Better scheduling so you don't waste time chasing people for appointments* Comment 2: *The scheme works well if you are committed and conscientious to organise meetings. There are still students that claim they have never met or have only met their tutor once! This is unacceptable.*
Theme 5: Improved role and structures	• Creation of 'Super Tutors' who can lead and support each department. • Better links with support services and related roles eg SSW. • More support for students with complex issues and guidance on how to support international students	Comment 1: *Better support for staff with a struggling student in crisis with suicidal ideation. Clearer comms around the fact that we can now inform Next of Kin via SSW if crisis cases.* Comment 2: *From the end of the first year onwards, students should take the lead in asking for support when needed, rather than there being specific requirements. Not all students want regular meetings.*

5. Differences in expectations of the role for staff and students

One of the free text questions asked' *What sorts of support do you think personal tutoring should provide to students?*' which aimed to explore the expectations around Personal Tutoring for students and staff. The tables below help to identify where there are differences (and indeed similarities) in expectations between students and staff.

The responses were tagged by theme. Some comments fell under more than one theme.

Table 1
Student responses to the question *'What sorts of support do you think personal tutoring should provide?*
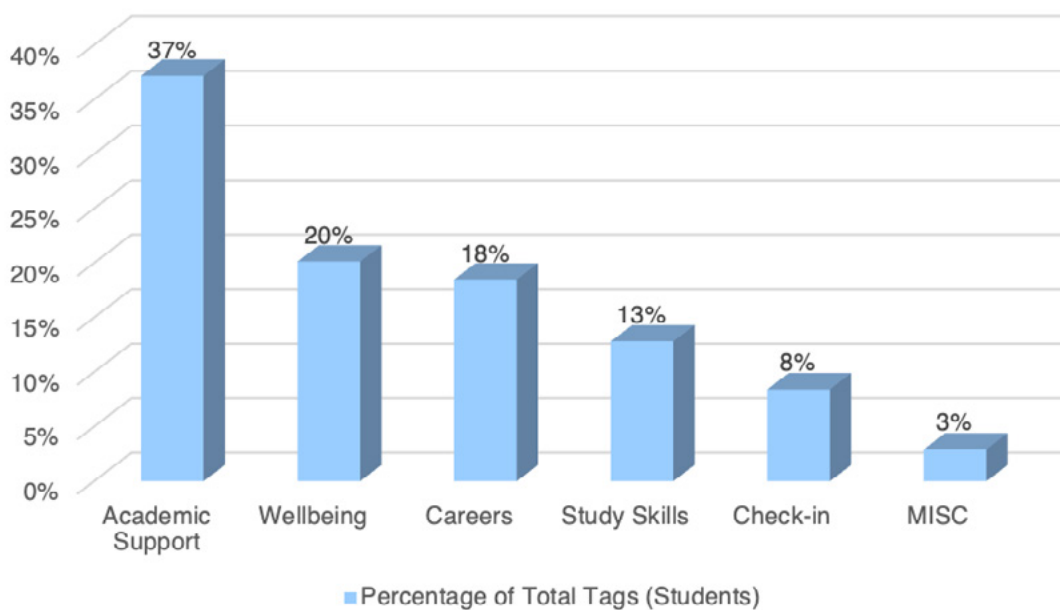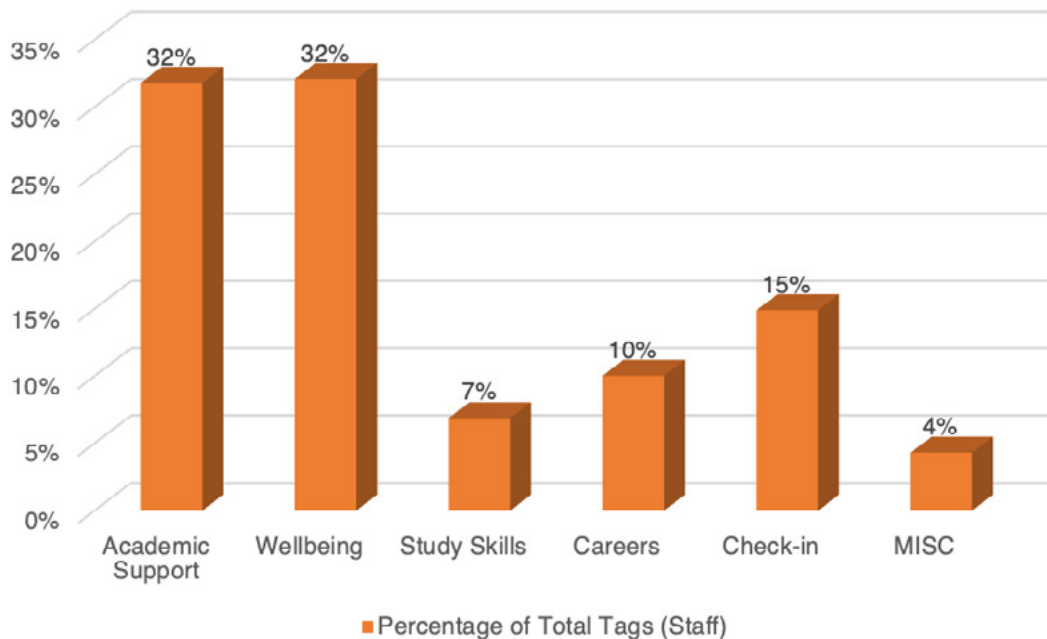
Percentage of Total Tags (Students)

■ Percentage of Total Tags (Students)

Table 2
Staff responses to the question *'What sorts of support do you think personal tutoring should provide?*

Percentage of Total Tags (Staff)

■ Percentage of Total Tags (Staff)

- **Academic Support and Wellbeing/Pastoral support** - These were the most frequently used tags for both staff and student responses. Interestingly more staff thought that the role should be wellbeing/pastoral focused (equal split between Academic Support and Wellbeing/Pastoral) but more students expect the role to be academic focused (this is important given that the quantitative data suggests that students may not be getting the academic support they expect from their tutor).

- **Pastoral Support** - Where staff provided further detail they usually referred to wellbeing/pastoral at a 'basic' level and an opportunity to sign post only. This point was also mirrored in student responses where it was acknowledged that this was about general wellbeing rather than a counselling service.

- **Academic Support** - Staff often highlighted that when their tutee students' field of study were outside of their own areas of expertise, they should only be expected to offer general academic advice and highlighted the value of an 'impartial' role. Many did not feel confident in advising on academic matters.

- **Careers** – Almost double the number of students thought PT should focus on careers advice. Some staff thought there should be a focus on this but many believe this should be offered through specialist services.

- **Check-in** - Approx. double the number of staff believed the role of a PT should focus on a general check-in and being the 'human-face' (or go-to person) of the university, but it was still mentioned by a number of students. The notion of 'pro-actively reaching out' was also cited in the examples of good practice in the student responses.

6. Summary of key areas of convergence between staff and students

Free text responses indicate that most students and staff agree that:

Clarity on purpose - Both students and staff want a clearer understanding of the role and what they can expect from it.

Clearer guidance and training - Many staff believe this would be useful and where experiences of Personal Tutoring are not positive, students noted that some staff don't seem confident with the basics in terms of what to say and how to approach the conversation.

A mix of modes can be helpful - Staff and students can see the value in opportunities such as group sessions, though students particularly highlighted that 1:1 meetings are an important part of the support model, so some flex to include both is important.

Regular contact/reaching out is beneficial - Check-ins to build rapport and head of bigger issues were valued by many students and staff

'Academic Advice' is an area which needs to be defined and understood - Staff frequently commented not feeling confident in giving academic advice and students responses suggest they are not getting helpful advice on aspects such as model selection, making sense of marks and general progress.

Matching and consistency is important - Matching areas of expertise (where possible and appropriate) is valuable for students and staff. Students strongly supported the notion that having one tutor for the whole period of study (again, where possible and appropriate, not for every programme) who is an expert in a related area is crucial for success.

In addition, staff would like to see:

Workload allocations and fairness - Many felt strongly felt that a workload allocation and recognition of the time and effort of good support is required. Though it should be noted that many departments reported having workload allocations in place (see Appendix 6).

Tools and resources - Staff are keen to explore tools that make meetings easier and scheduling more efficient. They would also like to have tools for note taking and integrated systems that share information effectively.

Better/more effective links with support service - It was noted that Student Advisors are helpful, but they are only for year 1 undergraduates. Some staff praised the integration of roles, particularly where the roles had been clearly split with academic advice sitting firmly in the PT role and pastoral or wellbeing provision outside of this.

In addition, students would like to see:

Personalised support - A Personal Tutor who knows who they are and has the relevant information and knowledge to enable them to be supportive

Responsive Personal Tutors - Students expressed frustration when staff did not respond to emails or gave them minimal contact time (or contact time only in a group setting).

7. Summary and questions to consider

It is clear from multiple sources that the role of Personal Tutoring and approach varies hugely across the institution.

For students and staff this can lead to a sense of unfairness and markedly different experiences in terms of quality. For both groups it can cause confusion about who does what, and this review has identified a few areas where things are falling between the gaps and service provision is not entirely clear (e.g. advice on programmes). As highlighted in the What do Students Value Most Report and the free text comments across several institutional surveys, there are also numerous examples of approaches that work well, and students often describe the huge positive benefit this has had on their studies and overall experience. This gives us an opportunity to reflect on what we know and ask ourselves the following questions:

Questions for consideration

• What do we see as the purpose of personal tutoring as a delivery mechanism for academic support moving forward?

• How can personal tutoring be enhanced to positively impact students' and learning and student life experiences (what problems might it help us solve)?

• How can personal tutoring be enhanced to positively support academic and professional staff to deliver high quality education and student experiences (what problems might it help us solve)?

• What are the quick wins? What are longer term goals to work towards?

8. Refences

Grey, D. and Osborne, C. (2020) Perceptions and principles of personal tutoring. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 44(3): 285-299.

Lochtie, D., McIntoch, E., Stork, A., and Walker, B.W. (2018) *Effective Personal Tutoring in Higher Education.* St Albans: Critical Publishing.

Stork, A. and Walker, B. (2015) *Becoming an Outstanding Personal Tutor: Supporting Learners Through Personal Tutoring and Coaching.* Northwich: Critical Publishing.

Thomas, L. (2012). *Building Student Engagement and Belonging in Higher Education at a Time of Change.* Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Vol. 100. London: Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1

EdCom Personal Tutor Review Paper 7
February 2023

**Education Committee Paper
5-07 (22-23)**
7 Feb 2023

Personal Tutor Review

Summary of Paper

This paper sets out a plan for a Review of UG and PGT personal tutoring at UCL.

Prior Consideration

None/Non-applicable

Action Required of Education Committee

To note

Author/Paper Sponsor

Dr Kathryn Woods (Pro-Vice-Provost, Student Academic Engagement)

Confirmation of alignment with UK Quality Code (state section)

Papers to EdCom proposing changes to regulations should provide an assurance here that the proposed change has been checked against, and is in alignment with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code.

Notes on papers to Education Committee

The paper provides an overview of the proposed Personal Tutor Review, including details about its overarching aims, rationale for the review (background), timeline, and proposed terms of reference and membership for the Personal Tutor Review Steering Committee. EDCOM are asked to provide comment and additional input, especially

relating to:

- Overarching aims
- Steering group terms of reference and membership
- Timeline
- Additional information relevant to the review proposal

This paper has been developed with the support of colleagues in the Senior Education Team and Pete Fitch in Arena.

Action Required for the Committee

For approval.

UCL Personal Tutor Review Plan

This document sets out a plan for a Review of UG and PGT personal tutoring at UCL. The Review aims to identify ways that personal tutoring at UCL can be enhanced to improve student and staff experiences and support students' educational gain. The rationale for the review is set out below.

The Review will be overseen by a Personal Tutor Review Steering Group co-chaired by Dr Kathryn Woods (Pro-Vice-Provost for Student Academic Engagement) and Dr Pete Fitch (Lecturer in Education Practice and Development, Arena). The Review Steering Group will report to EDCOM. It will include representation of academic and professional staff and students from across UCL and UCL's Students' Union. The Review Steering Group will undertake research and engagement activities with staff and students across UCL to support its work.

The timeline for Review is January to August 2023. The Review will culminate in a report. This will make recommendations for the enhancement of personal tutoring at UCL for consideration and approval by EDCOM on 25 July 2023.

Overarching Personal Tutor Review Goals

- Improvement of UG and PGT experience of academic support (NSS and PTES);

- A better understanding of the differences needed between UG and PGT personal tutoring;

- Improvement of staff experiences of personal tutoring and academic support;

- Clarity on the purpose and aims of personal tutoring at UCL;

- Development of model for personal tutoring at UCL that enables it to support and measure students' educational gain in the following five areas:

  o Personal development and agency

  o Academic success

  o Employability and career progression

  o Innovation and enterprise

  o Social and community engagement

- Identify a simple and coherent model for personal tutoring - supported by appropriate management arrangements, policies, and digital technologies - that:

  o Supports its effective management and administration;

  o Enables students and personal tutors to track students' progress and learning engagement;

  o Supports students when making study choices;

  o Ensures students can easily access professional service support where required.

Rationale for the Personal Tutoring Review

1. *Need to improve student satisfaction*

Data from the National Student Survey (NSS) identifies 'academic support' as a key area for improvement at UCL. In the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) data, our Academic Support scores have been identified as Bronze: 72.6% satisfaction (-3.4 below benchmark, and –3.7 in comparison to the sector average). Responses to question 14 in the NSS - 'Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices' - have been particularly weak. Analysis of the 2021/22 NSS data revealed a sizable range

in levels of academic support satisfaction: 48.96 - 90.91.

Data from the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) in 2021 also identified academic support and personal tutoring as a site for improvement. Average scores for the question 'There is sufficient contact time between staff and students to support effective learning' were the lowest in the teaching and learning category at an average of 57.3% agree (-5.2 in comparison to the sector). In the same year, the average support score was 74.8% (-1.1 in comparison to the sector), with responses to the question 'The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs' only scoring 68.4%.

Responses to the academic support questions in the Postgraduate Student Survey 2022 were stronger than PTES, with students reporting 84.3% satisfaction. However, the responses demonstrate need for improvement in relation to question Q23 'How well have you been supported to meet the academic challenges of postgraduate study' which scored 81.8%. Satisfaction scores for this question were lower for black students (78.5%), mixed race students (74.5%), and students with a declared disability (71.5%).

2. *Consolidation of initiatives that have aimed to improve students' experiences of personal tutoring, academic support, and student wellbeing*

The Personal Tutor Review is necessary to understand and bring together various fragmented projects and initiatives linked to personal tutoring that have been undertaken across UCL since 2016.

The most extensive work on personal tutoring at UCL in recent times was undertaken by the Connected Curriculum Personal Tutoring Working Group. This working group produced a paper for EDCOM in 2016 which made a range of recommendations that established university, faculty and personal tutor responsibilities.These recommendations were not formally approved as a policy or implemented, excepting the expansion of personal tutoring focused training provision.

In 2019, the Student Success Platform Project (SSP), led by colleagues in SRS, embarked on a Student Information Desk Pilot. This pilot focused on using Tribal to manage case management and appointment booking. Chiefly the intention for use was for professional service student-facing activity, but it was also intended for use to support personal tutoring. This aspect of the project was referred to as the UCL Tutoring Pilot. This work was supported by a UCL Tutoring User Group,

established in 2017, who reported directly to the SSP project board regarding the development of the platform. Notably it was agreed that this group would not make decisions on personal tutoring policy. To undertake this work, a Personal Tutoring Steering Group was established in Feb 2020, reporting to EDCOM. The focus of this group included presenting recommendations on the effectiveness to support the effectiveness of personal tutoring, clarify the role of personal tutoring within the wider network of student success and support services and associated policy, and support the review outcomes of the UCL Tutoring Pilot. The Personal Tutoring Steering Group was put on hold in March 2020 due to Covid-19. It has never been reconvened. Five of the 6 departments who engaged in the UCL Tutoring pilot opted-out an early stage.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many departments and faculties developed local approaches to enhance support for students through personal tutoring, and the university provided general guidance to support personal tutors. In 2021/22, UCL introduced Student Advisors as an additional layer of support for students in departments. These advisors are professional service members of staff who particularly focus on supporting first-year undergraduates. Their work is guided by a new Student Support Framework introduced in 2022.In 2021, UCL also became an Institutional Member of the UK Advising and Tutoring Association.

In the same period, many academic departments and faculties have embarked on local level projects to improve personal tutoring. Many have been supported by the Change Maker initiative (there have been +15 personal tutoring focused projects in the last 3 years). Some of these local initiatives have been highly successful. For example, the Faculty of Laws have sharpened the academic focus of personal tutoring resulting in an improvement in their academic support scores in the NSS from 66% in 2017 to 80% in 2020. These initiatives offer examples for how personal tutoring might be enhanced across UCL. However, if we don't understand what changes are taking place locally, there is a risk that we create unnecessary duplication and complexity in personal tutoring and student support delivery. There are also risks in creating inconsistencies in the student experience across UCL, and inadvertently creating confusion for students, making it more difficult for them to access central support. Equally, any improvements in our digital systems to support personal tutoring are going to rely on greater consistency, rather than deviation, in our personal tutoring model. A review of personal tutoring is also timely in respect to the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.

Review Timeline

Jan – Feb 2023

– Consideration of personal tutoring review plan by SET and EDCOM (Feb 2023)

– Stakeholder mapping

– Desk-based review for consideration Steering Group – gather existing data

March 2023

– Submission of ethics approval to undertake research into staff and student experiences (if required)

– Undertake focus groups and workshops into students' experiences in collaboration with the SU – UG and PGT

– Develop and release survey for key faculty, department, and professional service colleagues on personal tutoring (qualitative and quantitative)

– Engagement and interviews with professional service stakeholders (careers; wellbeing; ITS)

April 2023

– Analysis and review of collected data

– Report on early findings to Personal Tutor Review Steering Group

May 2023

– Preparation of the Personal Tutor Review Report

– Draft report provided to SET and key stakeholders for early comment and sign-off for draft release

April 2023

– Report roadshow – presentation at relevant groups (Faculty Forum; faculty meetings etc.)

– Report release for feedback – released with facility to provide feedback via survey facility

June 2023

– Revision of report in response to feedback

– Identification of recommendations and sign-off from SET

– Submission of the report to EDCOM for discussion and approval

July 2023

– Discussion of the report to EDCOM

August 2023

– Development of an implementation plan

– Review of status of Personal Tutoring Review Steering Group and any further work to be undertaken

Personal Tutoring Review Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Conduct a Review of Personal Tutoring at UCL that considers current personal tutoring models and practices, management arrangements and administration, governance, systems, and student and staff experiences of personal tutoring across the university and compared to the sector;

2. Understand the differences needed between UG and PGT personal tutoring;

3. Identify and analyse data and information about personal tutoring, including relating to student and staff experiences;

4. Identify examples of best practice from UCL and across the sector;

5. To identify areas for improvement, barriers against best practice, and means of incentivizing best practice;

6. Identify how personal tutoring is integrated with other student support structures (e.g. Student Support and Wellbeing, Careers, Study Skills, Student Advisors, and Students' Union), supports' student wellbeing, and connects students' academic and extra-curricular university experiences;

7. Identify ways how personal tutoring can be developed to more effectively support students' learning gain and outcomes, learning progression and its evaluation;

8. Identify how digital technology and data can be utilized to improve student and staff experiences of personal tutoring;

9. Prepare a Personal Tutoring Review Report including recommendations for the future provision of personal tutoring at UCL.

Membership of the Personal Tutor Review Steering Group

To note: Faculties will be asked to nominate representatives for the Steering Committee. We will look to appoint colleagues with experience of personal tutoring at different levels, and a spread of experience in UG and PGT personal tutoring.

Role	Nominee
Co-Chair	Dr Kathryn Woods (Pro-Vice-Provost Student Academic Engagement)
Co-Chair	Dr Pete Fitch (Lecturer, Arena lead on personal tutoring staff development)
External	Dr David Grey (UKAT)
UKAT representative	Susan Smith
VPESE Representative	Professor Parama Chaudhury
SU Representative Education	Hamza Ahmed (Education Officer)
SU Representative Welfare and Community	Umair Mehmood (Welfare and Community Officer)
SU Policy, Advice Centre or Director of Student Experience?	Simon To (Director of Policy, Governance and Advocacy, SU)
SSW Representative	Denise Long
ITS (Education Change Portfolio) Representative	Steve Rowett
Careers Representative	Alyssa Hickson
Faculty Representative Arts and Humanities	Arne Hoffman
Faculty Representative Bartlett	Elizabeth Dow
Faculty Representative Brain Sciences	Bronwen Evans
Faculty Representative Engineering	Liz Jones
Faculty Representative IOE	Evi Kaptusi
Faculty Representative Joint Faculty	Arne Hofmann
Faculty Representative Laws	Karen Scott
Faculty Representative Life Sciences	Martina Wicklein
Faculty Representative MAPS	Daven Armoogum
Faculty Representative Medical Sciences	Sarah Bennett
Faculty Representative Population Health	
Faculty Representative Social and Historical Sciences	Arne Hoffmann
Student Advisor Representative	Katie Baillie
Student Faculty PGT Representative	Aziz Abdulhadi
Student Faculty UG Representative	Yasmine Abdu
Secretary	Peter Philips

To note - Since this paper was written the following additional members have joined the committee:

Appendix 2:

Personal Tutoring, Guidance and Support for UCL students

Summary:

UCL is committed to providing all students with the academic guidance and personal support they need to flourish as members of our active learning and research community. This paper draws on the work of the Connected Curriculum Personal Tutoring Working Group, and on additional consultation on personal tutoring following discussions at the last Education Committee (1 Dec 2015), to recommend a number of changes to UCL's current personal tutoring policy.

Action required of Education Committee:

For discussion and approval.

Author/Proponent:

Dr Dilly Fung, on behalf of the Connected Curriculum Personal Tutoring Working Group (co-chaired by Dr Kathy Barrett, Dr Cloda Jenkins and Dr Anne Vanhoestenberghe).

1 Introduction

In response to discussions of the personal tutoring paper submitted by Dr Paul Walker at the last Education Committee meeting (Dec 2015), and drawing on the recommendations of the Connected Curriculum Personal Tutoring Working Group, this paper makes a series of specific proposals about how UCL can best provide, from 2016-2017 onwards, consistently excellent academic guidance and personal development support for all students on taught programmes. Members of Education Committee are asked to discuss and approve the recommendations.

2 Key principles established through the consultation

It was agreed that:

• 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.

It was also noted that practices vary across UCL with respect to the ways in which personal tutoring and wider student support opportunities are configured. This variation is appropriate given the diverse kinds of academic tutoring and face-to-face contact hours across different subject areas. For example, students who are lab-based are often in regular contact with staff, whereas on some humanities programmes students spend more time studying independently and/or with peers. In some programmes, personal tutoring is closely connected with academic tutoring on the programme of study, while in others it may

be closely connected with the development of professional competencies. In some departments there is a culture of running small tutorial groups, and the UCL Connected Curriculum initiative is providing a framework whereby some programme leaders are considering whether personal tutors might have a role in guiding students as they engage with the connected 'throughline' of research and enquiry activities built into programme structures[1].

UCL recognises and supports the need for variety in the way in which programmes provide all taught students with the opportunity to access a consistent level of support, and is committed to enhancing provision across the institution through the sharing of good practice rather than by stipulating a 'one size fits all' model. It is not seen to be necessary to stipulate the precise number of individual meetings, for example. However, shared principles and an agreed means of evaluating and enhancing provision and sharing good practice in this area are vital. Equally important is a commitment by UCL to continue to develop appropriate central resources for those providing support to students at programme level, including personal tutors, to work effectively alongside the professional services that provide invaluable guidance and information for students, personal tutors and others providing support at programme level, and to reward staff appropriately for their contribution to student guidance and support.

The following recommendations reflect these principles.

3 Recommendations

3.1 The responsibilities of departments and/or programme teams

The Working Group recommends that departments, or programme teams as appropriate, will:

1. Agree annually on their approaches to providing student support a) for undergraduates and b) for taught postgraduate students, and communicate these effectively to *all* students and staff.

The approach should specify individuals, or roles, where responsibility sits for different types of support including welfare, academic development, personal development, skills and careers advice and specialist needs.

2. As part of the overall approach to providing student support, provide clear guidance to personal tutors and to students on the nature of the academic and professional support that personal tutors are expected to provide.

3. Alert students within the first week of their studies to the name and identity of their personal tutor, the date of their first meeting, and where and when the personal tutor can be found in term time.

4. Ensure all other staff responsible for wider student support at department or programme level understand their remit and that students have named contacts for different types of personal, professional and academic support that they may need.

5. Provide clear guidance about how students contact their personal tutors and other staff members responsible for wider student support at department or programme level, for example whether via personal email addresses or generic, role-based email addresses (for example, PT@programme.ucl.ac.uk).

6. Regularly remind all personal tutors, and others responsible for student support, of the Personal Tutoring Handbook and portal, which provide clear guidance, advice and information about when and how to refer students on to other experts.[2]

7. Recommend that all new personal tutors, and others responsible for other areas of student support, attend relevant developmental opportunities through the UCL Arena Open events programme (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/arena/events).

8. Remind experienced personal tutors and others who provide support and guidance about the Arena Open events and associated resources for staff and students (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/personaltutors).

9. Engage explicitly with students as partners in reviewing, developing and enhancing the local provision of personal tutoring, guidance and support.

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1   http://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/connected-curriculum/CC_Brochure__for_online_viewing_.pdf
2   https://www.ucl.ac.uk/personaltutors/documents/PT_Staff_Handbook_2015-16__final_.pdf

3.2 The responsibilities of personal tutors

The Working Group recommends that all personal tutors will:

Act as an accessible[3] point of contact for tutees, providing an appropriate combination of individual appointments, regular 'office hours' and small group tutorials, so that students who want to can discuss academic progress and associated professional development needs.

1. Make every effort to get to know their tutees, and in particular make efforts to support their transition into undergraduate or postgraduate study and out of UCL onto the next stage of their career journey.

2. Offer to schedule at least two meetings in each academic year to discuss explicitly students' academic progress, asking them to bring to those meetings a summary of their assignment feedback, in order to discuss key generic learning points and to help students draw on that feedback as they approach their future studies[4].

3. Understand the wider support network available to students at programme and/or department level and across UCL, and be in a position to direct personal tutees to wider support services and events, including those provided by Student Support and Wellbeing and the Careers Service.

4. As part of their role as academic advisors within a wider support infrastructure, help students to identify how they can access help and guidance with academic writing and wider study skills and encourage them to find ways to undertake independent Personal Development Planning (PDP) including, for example, by making use of online facilities at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ppd.

3.3 The responsibilities of Faculties

The Working Group recommends that Faculties will work with departments to ensure that they:

1. Publish a clear, accessible, annual statement[5] on 'Personal Tutoring, Guidance and Support' statement for their students, which will

   o outline the core UCL principles of student support and entitlement;

   o detail local arrangements with regard to student support and personal tutor provision within that Faculty, department and/or programme[6];

   o include key information about/links to support services, including counselling, accessibility support and career guidance;

   o explain how students can work in partnership with staff, for example through SSCCs and UCL ChangeMaker projects, to enhance the provision of student support.

2. Oversee a streamlined yet formal annual evaluation of how student support is provided within the Faculty, focusing on the quality of communication with students as well as satisfaction with the provision itself. (Education Committee is invited to discuss possible approaches to this process.)

3. Ensure that these annual evaluative reports, in the agreed format, are made available for peer review as part of the Internal Quality Review[7] process.

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3   Departments' provision of education, personal tutoring, guidance and support must ensure that disabled students are not put at a disadvantage, and that 'reasonable adjustments' are made in line with the Equality Act (2010).
4   This use of assessment feedback by personal tutors has already been successfully developed by the Institute of Archaeology, with very good feedback from students. Tutors are not expected to make detailed comments on topic-specific issues, but to help students draw out generic advice they can make use of as they move forward on their programme. Further guidance on this will be provided in the updated Personal Tutoring Handbook.
5   It is likely that provision for postgraduate taught students will differ in emphasis from that developed for undergraduate students.
6   The communication with students should clarify which elements of support and guidance are the responsibility of staff delivering the programme, and which are the responsibility of staff in other departments, e.g. UCL Careers, Student Disability Services and Student Psychological Services. An organisational chart providing the names and roles of the people involved in this provision, and clarifying the relationships between them, will be helpful. It should also make it clear that the onus of responsibility is on the student to make best use of the provision available, for example by preparing appropriately for tutorials, and who should be the first point of contact.
7   Through IQR, students will also be invited to discuss the extent to which the support they receive is in line with the published provision. Examples of particularly good practice emerging will be noted in the IQR Report and shared via the UCL Teaching and Learning Portal.

3.4 UCL's responsibilities to Faculties/departments

The Working Group recommends that UCL will:

1. Publish an introductory document for students, setting out the guidance and support all UCL students can expect, as well as their responsibility in this area.

2. Update its current guidance[8] for personal tutors to reflect changes agreed, and develop new case studies of good practice for personal tutors and others involved in providing support to students at department and programme levels.

3. Develop and circulate adaptable resources, including a generic template for students to collate and review their ongoing academic performance in line with the new recommendations, following the successful use of such a template by the Institute of Archaeology.

4. Invest in the development and communication of a related suite of online resources designed to connect students with the support provided and facilitate information sharing between those providing support, including, for example: MyFeedback, an online system for providing students and their Personal Tutors; the use of Moodle Scheduler for setting up tutorials; more modern and effective alternatives to the current Personal Development Planning (PDP) online portfolio software.

5. Increase its provision of developmental opportunities for Personal Tutors and others who support students through the UCL Arena Open programme (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/arena/open).

6. Include personal tutoring and wider elements of student support explicitly in criteria for staff reward and promotion, ensuring that these criteria are understood, valued and utilised by those who make decisions about reward and promotion.

7. Continue with the work of the Personal Tutoring Working Group, to promote good practice via events, case studies and accessible resources.

Education Committee is invited to discuss and approve these recommendations.

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8   https://www.ucl.ac.uk/personaltutors

Appendix 3.

NSS 2023: Sector Comparison for Academic Support

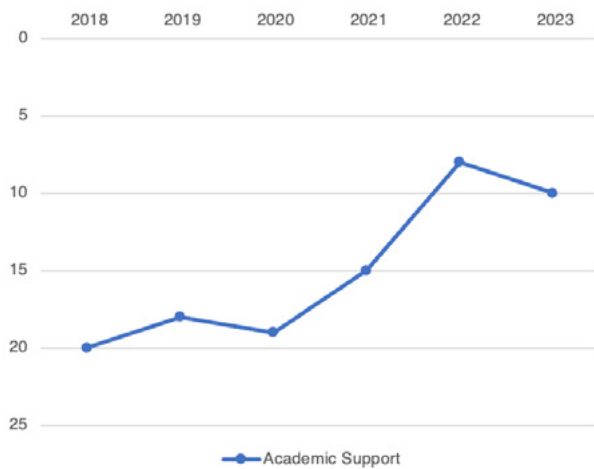### Chart 1: UCL RG Ranking over 6 years.

UCL RG Rankings (2018-2023)

Chart 2: RG Rankings for RG for Academic Support 2023

Institution	2023 score	Rank	Quartile
University of Oxford	90.5	1	1
The University of Warwick	88.1	2	1
LSE	87.4	3	1
The University of Sheffield	86.8	4	1
Imperial College London	86.6	5	1
University of York	85.9	6	2
University of Durham	85.8	7	2
University of Exeter	85.1	8	2
The University of Nottingham	84.9	9	2
University College London	84.1	10	2
The University of Liverpool	83.4	11	2
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	83.4	12	3
Queen's University of Belfast	83.1	13	3
University of Bristol	83.0	14	3
University of Southampton	82.8	15	3
University of Glasgow	81.8	16	3
The University of Birmingham	81.5	17	3
The University of Manchester	81.3	18	4
University of Edinburgh	81.3	19	4
Queen Mary University of London	80.7	20	4
King's College London	80.6	21	4
The University of Leeds	79.5	22	4
Cardiff University	79.4	23	4

Appendix 4.

Personal Tutoring Survey 2023 Questionnaires

Questionnaire for Personal Tutors

- Department

- Personal tutor to UG or PG students? Or both?

NB. answers should otherwise be noted as anonymous

On a scale from 1 to 5 (1= not at all; 5= a lot), rate how far you agree with the following statements

- The personal tutoring system is working well for me

- The personal tutoring system is working well for students

- The number of tutees I oversee is about right

- Personal tutoring supports student success

- Personal tutoring supports student experience satisfaction and engagement

- I have had appropriate training to support me in the role as personal tutor

- Personal tutoring activity is appropriately recognised and rewarded

- I discuss assessment marks and feedback with my tutees, and offer guidance on how they can improve

- I provide my tutees with guidance on accessing university support services

- I provide my tutees with advice on their programme

- I provide my tutees advice when selecting modules

- I provide my tutees with advice on careers and employability and further study

- I provide my tutees with references

- I contact all my tutees at frequent intervals throughout the academic year

- I schedule my personal tutor meetings with students

- I follow-up with students who have not been in contact or attended personal tutor meetings

Other questions

On average, how many times a year do you engage with each of your tutees? (option boxes)

- What sorts of support do you think personal tutoring should provide?

- Are there any examples of good practice that you would like to share?

- What would improve personal tutoring?

- Any other comments

Questionnaire for Students

Key information needed:

- Course

- Year of study

- Part-time/full time, international student

- Key characteristics – age, sex, wp, disabled, etc.

On a scale from 1 to 5 (1= not at all; 5= a lot), rate how far you agree with the following statements

- The personal tutoring system at UCL is working well for me

- It is important to have the same tutor throughout my programme

- My personal tutor is accessible and approachable

- My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for study concerns

- My personal tutor is my preferred source of help and advice for personal concerns

- I feel that my personal tutor cares about me achieving success

- My personal tutor helped me settle in at university

- My personal tutor has given me useful advice on assessment marks and feedback I have received

- My personal tutor has provided me with useful advice on my programme and when selecting modules

- My personal tutor has provided useful advice on careers and employability and further study

- My personal tutor has provided me with

information about university support services when I have needed

• My personal tutor has provided me with a reference

• My personal tutor regularly contacts me to check in, without me needing to make contact first

• My personal tutor has responded to my enquiries in good time

Other Questions

• How many times have you engaged (eg. met in person or online, or emailed) with your personal tutor this academic year: 0; 1-2; 3-4; 4-5; 5+

Open questions

• What sorts of support do you think personal tutoring should provide?

• Do you have any examples of when personal tutoring has gone well that you would like to share?

• What would improve personal tutoring?

• Any other comments.

Appendix 5:

Survey Scores for Academic Support at UCL

1. National Student Survey 2023: Department results for Academic Support

Department	Positivity Score %
Anthropology	82.5
Arts & Sciences BASc	88.3
Bartlett School of Architecture	81.3
Bartlett School of Planning	88.7
Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction	90.0
Biochemical Engineering	80.4
Biomedical Sciences	85.6
Cancer Institute	87.5
Cell & Developmental Biology	82.9
Chemical Engineering	80.7
Chemistry	80.6
Civil, Environmental & Geomatic Engineering	73.6
Computer Science	75.2
Division of Medicine	89.7
Division of Surgery & Interventional Science	85.4
Earth Sciences	77.2
Economics	74.0
Education, Practice & Society	87.0
Electronic & Electrical Engineering	86.8
English Language & Literature	90.5
European and International Social & Political Studies	83.0
Faculty of Laws	90.1
Genetics, Evolution & Environment	91.3
Geography	86.6
Greek & Latin	97.2
History	94.1
History of Art	87.5
Institute of Archaeology	92.4
Institute of Epidemiology & Health Care	88.5
Institute of the Americas	93.5
Linguistics	100.0
Mathematics	85.3
Mechanical Engineering	78.5
Medical Physics & Biomedical Engineering	83.8

Department	Positivity Score %
Natural Sciences	86.1
Neuroscience, Physiology & Pharmacology	86.2
Philosophy	85.4
Physics & Astronomy	76.0
Political Science	78.9
Psychology & Human Development	89.7
Psychology & Language Sciences	83.6
School of European Languages, Culture & Society	82.4
School of Management	88.3
School of Pharmacy	88.1
Science & Technology Studies	96.2
Security & Crime Science	78.6
Slade School of Fine Art	87.2
Social Research Institute	85.7
Social Science	79.5
SSEES Economics	92.2
SSEES History	89.8
SSEES Languages	95.5
SSEES Politics	88.6

Appendix 6.

UCL Department Operational Models mapped against NSS Scores

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Linguistics	100.0		
Greek & Latin	97.2	• Academic and Pastoral • Min. 1 x per term • Issues reported to Departmental Tutors (UG departmental Tutor has reduction in teaching in recognition of workload)	Yes
Science & Technology Studies	96.2	*No response*	
SSEES Languages	95.5	• Academic & Pastoral • Min 4 x 1:1 meetings per year • Timetabled group meeting in year 1 • DT guidance on topics and support types for PT and students • [Standard model for all SSEES programmes]	No, although tutees are allocated in proportional with the tutor's FTE
History	94.1	• Academic & Pastoral • 6 meetings scheduled across the year for UG • PGT have 1 scheduled then adhoc at their request • Department Tutor if fulltime PS role, overseeing Personal Tutoring	No, but an attempt is made to consider other responsibilities (e.g. HoD has reduced load) and allocations are pro rata for part-time staff. Standard allocation of tutees is 25
Institute of the Americas	93.5	*No response*	Yes (not on model but allocations consider FTE and other factors)
Institute of Archaeology	92.4	• Academic & Pastoral • 3 meetings scheduled + adhoc on request • Students complete progress form and then follow up with progress meeting • UG Year-group Tutors, who deliver weekly or fortnightly whole-cohort sessions, mainly on academic matters. • SORA champion currently being embedded	Yes, and for undergraduates, academic staff are assigned personal tutoring roles partly based on existing workload. Masters students' personal tutors are usually the programme co-ordinators
SSEES Economics	92.2	• Academic & Pastoral • Min 4 x 1:1 meetings per year • Timetabled group meeting in year 1 • DT guidance on topics and support types for PT and students • [Standard model for all SSEES programmes]	No, although tutees are allocated in proportional with the tutor's FTE

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Genetics, Evolution & Environment	91.3	Division of Biosciences summary • Academic and Pastoral Support • Y1 – typically embedded in core modules. Structured to include at least first meetings (1:2 or group) with suggested topics • Later years vary by programme, Year Tutor provides oversight. • Overseen by HoT (DT) and HoR	All academic staff and research fellows are expected to be allocated up to 5 UG (or PGT) students per year. Newly appointed lecturers, research fellows and HoRDs take on a half load.
English Language & Literature	90.5	• Tutorial system, plus 30-minute meetings with every student every other week to discuss essays/set work and any other academic or pastoral issues. • Department Tutor supervises the allocation of tutees to tutors and is the first port of call for any problems that cannot be dealt with by the tutor. • DT is also the senior point of contact between SSW and the Faculty on matters of student welfare	Yes and No. The number of tutees allocated to tutors is counted in the workloads, but there is no special allowance for the pastoral element within tutorials, as it is folded in with the academic. The DT does receive some tutorial remission to free them up to deal with pastoral issues arising across the Dept
Faculty of Laws	90.1	• Academic Mentor (rather than PT) work alongside Course Directors who provide pastoral support • Academic and Professional Support • May provide some pastoral support, refers more serious/time consuming issues to Laws Support teams (UG and PGT). • Support team monitor attendance and provide suggested topics. • 2 group and 1 individual meeting per year • 1st meeting schedules, others organised by Mentor. • Academic Mentor guide for staff • VD allocates and has oversight	Yes. All teaching active colleagues on the LLB and LLM are expected to have mentees, subject to a certain list of exclusions (i.e. relevant sabbaticals, certain management positions, other positions where the role already includes heavy pastoral or mentoring responsibilities, or the fractional contract and nature of engagement with the Faculty made mentoring impracticable). Colleagues on teaching contracts have double the # of mentees. 2022-23 - Colleagues with 0.3 and above FTE were allocated a % share of a normal road (based on their contract type), in proportion to their FTE. For example, colleagues on a .5 FTE have roughly half the load of colleagues on 1.0 FTE. For colleagues on below a .3 FTE, we applied a de minimus rule, which is to say loads did not drop below .25.
Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction	90.0	Faculty of the Built Environment "UG - 3 departments with differing approaches to PT" "PGT - 7 departments with differing approaches to PT"	Yes

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
SSEES History	89.8	• Academic & Pastoral • Min 4 x 1:1 meetings per year • Timetabled group meeting in year 1 • DT guidance on topics and support types for PT and students • [Standard model for all SSEES programmes]	No, although tutees are allocated in proportional with the tutor's FTE
Psychology & Human Development	89.7	*No response*	
Division of Medicine	89.7	• All students assigned a T for general academic support (they do not assist with work) and wellbeing (sign posting/referrals) for duration of their programme • 1 scheduled meeting then at students' request • After the initial meeting, it is generally the responsibility of the student to keep in touch, though some tutors are proactive in this regards. • Teaching Manager responsible for assigning PTs with wider admin team tracking meetings and encouraging them to take place.	Yes and No. Personal Tutoring is compulsory for all academic staff, though numbers of tutees are allocated depending on role. Generally those employed for education are given the most tutees (about 6), non clinical academics on research contracts are given the next amount (about 3-4) and clinical academics are given the least (1-2)
Bartlett School of Planning	88.7	Faculty of the Built Environment "UG - 3 departments with differing approaches to PT" "PGT - 7 departments with differing approaches to PT"	Yes
SSEES Politics	88.6	• Academic & Pastoral • Min 4 x 1:1 meetings per year • Timetabled group meeting in year 1 • DT guidance on topics and support types for PT and students • [Standard model for all SSEES programmes]	No, although tutees are allocated in proportional with the tutor's FTE
Institute of Epidemiology & Health Care	88.5	*No response*	
School of Management	88.3	• Academic and Pastoral Support • UG – PT from programme • PGT - 'Academic and Wellbeing Advisor' • Meetings organised by individual PT, more proactive for UG	Yes
Arts & Sciences BASc	88.3	• Pathway Leads are lead PTs • Pathway Reps are PTs and these are associated to the students' Major Pathway • Structured approach to 3 key meetings per year with specific topics to cover • Ad hoc as needed	No just incorporated into the role

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
School of Pharmacy	88.1	• No response	
Cancer Institute	87.5	• Academic and Pastoral • 30 minute meetings at least once per term • Responsibility of PT to keep in touch, student can request additional meeting/communication. • Meeting attendance and notes records on app, monitored by education team	No.
History of Art	87.5	• Academic and Pastoral • First meeting in induction week. • Scheduled meetings at least once per term across academic years • Students encouraged to reach out via email and using office hours. PT asked to check-in with students in reading week. • End of term student skills review to tailor subsequent support/signposting. • MA Tutor for MA student pastoral support.	No. All academic and teaching staff are required to act as Personal Tutors to the students assigned – not currently part of workload weighting. Combined Honours students have a Personal Tutor in the department as well as their parent department.
Slade School of Fine Art	87.2	"N/A"	"N/A"
Education, Practice & Society	87.0	• Academic and Pastoral • [Variable approaches across IOE Departments] • Combination of 1:1, small and large group meetings, and office hours / drop-ins • Students can contact and request additional meetings as required. • Suggested discussion topics provided • No DT roles at IOE – Academic Heads of L&T responsibility PGT - 2021 IOE did a review on personal tutoring for PGT students. The report is offering insight on guidance offered. It is not always followed but there are pockets of excellent practice and we are trying to raise awareness and achieve consistency. Please see below for general information too. IoE Personal Tutoring (FELG Q&A, final)[23] (1).docx	Yes.
Electronic & Electrical Engineering	86.8	• Academic and Pastoral Support • Y1 – group meeting twice per week. Individual meetings twice per term • Y2 – group meetings one per week. Individual meetings twice per term • Y3/4 - supervisors acts as PT in ongoing support	Yes

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Geography	86.6	• Academic and Pastoral • UG – weekly small group in Y1, plus two 1:1 meetings with skills focus. Y2/3 two 1:1 meetings per term when requested • PGT – two 1:1 Meetings per term	Yes (for Y1 UG tutorials)
Neuroscience, Physiology & Pharmacology	86.2	• Division of Biosciences summaryAcademic and Pastoral Support • Y1 – typically embedded in core modules. Structured to include at least first meetings (1:2 or group) with suggested topics • Later years vary by programme, Year Tutor provides oversight. • Overseen by HoT (DT) and HoR	All academic staff and research fellows are expected to be allocated up to 5 UG (or PGT) students per year. Newly appointed lecturers, research fellows and HoRDs take on a half load.
Natural Sciences	86.1	• No response	
Social Research Institute	85.7	• Academic and Pastoral[Variable approaches across IOE Departments] • Combination of 1:1, small and large group meetings, and office hours / drop-ins • Students can contact and request additional meetings as required. • Suggested discussion topics provided • No DT roles at IOE – Academic Heads of L&T responsibility PGT - 2021 IOE did a review on personal tutoring for PGT students. The report is offering insight on guidance offered. It is not always followed but there are pockets of excellent practice and we are trying to raise awareness and achieve consistency. Please see below for general information too. IoE Personal Tutoring (FELG Q&A, final)[23] (1).docx	Yes.
Biomedical Sciences	85.6	*No response*	
Division of Surgery & Interventional Science	85.4	*No response*	
Philosophy	85.4	• Academic and Pastoral Support • 1 meeting per term (can be group meetings if appropriate) • Students can book additional meetings as required • 2023-24 planning to timetable term 1 & 2 meetings.	Yes the Departmental Tutor role is recognised in the workload model Staff with PT responsibilities have an equal load
Mathematics	85.3	*No response*	
Statistical Science	85.0	*No response*	

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Medical Physics & Biomedical Engineering	83.8	• Academic and Pastoral Support • UG/PGT – structured weekly group sessions with suggested topics • Students can book additional meetings as required • Recognise complementary support from T&L Admin team and SA. • Attendance and engagement monitored locally.	Yes, but the question implies the use of a workload allocation model, which we do not use in our department. More generally, personal tutoring is recognised as an important contribution to teaching in MPBE, which most (teaching-active) academic staff engage in.
Psychology & Language Sciences	83.6	*No response*	
Structural & Molecular Biology	83.6	• Division of Biosciences summaryAcademic and Pastoral Support • Y1 – typically embedded in core modules. Structured to include at least first meetings (1:2 or group) with suggested topics • Later years vary by programme, Year Tutor provides oversight. • Overseen by HoT (DT) and HoR	All academic staff and research fellows are expected to be allocated up to 5 UG (or PGT) students per year. Newly appointed lecturers, research fellows and HoRDs take on a half load.
European and International Social & Political Studies	83.0	*No response*	
Cell & Developmental Biology	82.9	• Division of Biosciences summary Academic and Pastoral Support • Y1 – typically embedded in core modules. Structured to include at least first meetings (1:2 or group) with suggested topics • Later years vary by programme, Year Tutor provides oversight. • Overseen by HoT (DT) and HoR	All academic staff and research fellows are expected to be allocated up to 5 UG (or PGT) students per year. Newly appointed lecturers, research fellows and HoRDs take on a half load.
Anthropology	82.5	• Academic and Pastoral Support • First meeting within first 2 weeks of term • Then once per term (individual 1:1), first years encouraged to meet in a group • Students can book additional meetings as required	Yes, assumed equal for all permanent staff in accordance with FTE etc.
School of European Languages, Culture & Society	82.4	• Academic and Pastoral Support • 1 meeting per term (individual or group meetings) • Suggested topics for meetings across academic and programme years. • Students can request additional meetings or use office hours (emphasis on academic advice) • Problems escalated to degree coordinators, DT, or HoD.	No. Pro-rata allocation.

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Bartlett School of Architecture	81.3	Faculty of the Built Environment"UG - 3 departments with differing approaches to PT" "PGT - 7 departments with differing approaches to PT"	Yes
Chemical Engineering	80.7	• Academic and Pastoral Support • At least one meeting per term (1:1). • Initial meetings in induction week. • Students can book additional meetings as required • Oversee by DT, complex cases referrer upwards from PT	Personal tutorial is taken into account in terms of workload, yes, although it is indirectly as all academics are expected to be tutors but we adjust numbers depending on other issues (probation level, departmental roles, fellowships etc) with a few staff not having any tutees due to heavy administrative loads.
Chemistry	80.6	*No response*	
Biochemical Engineering	80.4	• Academic and Pastoral Support • Meeting for new students with tutor in induction week • Then tutor organised meetings (15-30 mins) as required. • Continuity in PT across academic programme • Overseen by DT and HoD	No
Social Science	79.5	*No response*	
Political Science	78.9	• Academic and Pastoral Support • One 15 minutes 1:1 meeting per term (can be group meetings if appropriate) • Students can book additional meetings as required •	Yes Personal tutors are built into our workload calculation, all academic track staff have max. 14 tutees and teaching track staff have max. 26 tutees at 1FTE, this would be pro rata for part time staff. We factor in 2.33 hours per tutee in our teaching workload, this is for the meetings, plus additional pastoral or other support needed. The departmental tutor and deputy roles are considered 40% FTE roles to support the breadth of these activities.
Security & Crime Science	78.6	• Academic and Pastoral Support • UG – one group meeting (1 hour) and 1 individual meeting (20mins) per term • PGT – one group meeting (1 hour) and adhoc individual meetings per term • T&L Administrator schedules and monitors meeting attendance • DT/DoS oversight of allocation and training	No formal workload model in our department, only a teaching load model. All academic staff are personal tutees and the load is spread evenly between them as much as possible.

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
Mechanical Engineering	78.5	• Academic and Pastoral Support • Y1-2 assigned PT groups, Y3-3 PT is research supervisor • Alternate individual and group meetings (30 mins). 5 for Y1, 3 or Y2-3 • Meetings are scheduled by administrators with suggested discussion theme • Moodle for monitoring attendance in 2023-24 • Overseen by DT and deputy DTs.	YES. Generally, all staff share equally the personal tutoring load, but several categories of staff have variations due to workload as follows: • MSc Programme directors and their deputies only serve as personal tutors for students in their programmes, and do not participate in e.g. tutoring UG students • Part time staff are allocated a nr of tutees that is proportional to their %FTE • Allocations are done by the T&L team and departmental tutors, taking into account other factors, such as students who are minors at the time of entry into the programme, special circumstances such as students who will come from the foundation year etc
Earth Sciences	77.2	*No response*	
Physics & Astronomy	76.0	• Academic and Pastoral Support • First Y1 group meeting scheduled for induction week • Y1-2 – 5 meetings with suggested dates/weeks across the year, group or individual. • Y3 – three contact points per year, group or individual meetings • Y4 – individual meetings as requested by student • Overseen by DT. PT staff Moodle site with guidance and support options.	Yes. PT was included – workload allocation is currently under review.
Computer Science	75.2	• Academic and Pastoral Support • Updating model for 23/24 • New Pastoral Tutor role reporting to DT • Weekly office hours or contact • Check in (meetings?) twice per term for Y1 UG and UG finalists, once per term for Y2-3 UG and PGT. • Suggested discussion topics provided	No formal quantification of PT workload, but on average each 100%-FTE academic / teaching fellow is expected to take an equal portion of personal tutees. Exceptions are made for those colleagues who have very high / intensive workloads.
Economics	74.0	"N/A"	"N/A"
Civil, Environmental & Geomatic Engineering	73.6	• Academic and Pastoral Support • Small group tutorials. 1 hour weekly for UG, monthly for PGT • Meetings scheduled in calendar/timetable • PT allocation yearly – new tutor groups each academic year • DT oversight for assigning PT and monitoring engagement	No (All academic staff are allocated PT roles and for both UG and PG students)

Department	Positivity Score % in NSS 2023	Features	Workload Allocation
UCL Medical School	70.4	• Academic and Pastoral Support • 1 meeting per term • 6 PT for Y1-3 students • The PT changes depending on the year of study eg clinical PT in year 4 when they are hospital—based • Records kept on local online system. Meeting attendance monitored. PGT • Academic and Pastoral Support • 3 PTs, offer as many appointments as student requires across programme • PTs have specialist expertise in careers development for Health Professionals.	Yes. In Year 1 and 2, the funding is top sliced from Load. In the clinical years, funding is via NHS Tariff. PGT - Personal tutoring responsibilities are discussed with staff by their line managers, to ensure that both staff and line manager agree that there is sufficient capacity alongside existing workload.