DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL TUTORS

This document is to be read in conjunction with the College Guidelines for Personal Tutors - http://www.imperial.ac.uk/personal-tutors-guide/

Any Tutors new to tutoring at the College will be expected to attend the College led course in their first year of tutoring: Introduction to Personal Tutoring

Each new mathematics student is assigned to a member of staff who acts as the student’s Personal Tutor while the student is an undergraduate in the Department. In a large department such as ours, it is easy for a student straight from school and/or overseas to feel lost. Many students find the transition to university a difficult one and need our encouragement and support.

The purpose of meetings with Personal Tutors is to:

- deal with any outstanding mathematical difficulties
- to identify any problems the student is having (both academic and personal)
- direct students to external support if needed (health/finance/visa/accommodation, etc.)
- to ensure that the student is doing a reasonable amount of work and is adjusted to college life
- to advise on module options/future studies/careers
- to support the student in developing their CV, encouraging academic performance and extracurricular activities to develop further professional skills
- to monitor the progress of the student
- to generate enthusiasm for Mathematics!

It is very important that all students maintain regular contact with their Personal Tutors and we must do all that we can to ensure that they do so. We have a duty of care for our students, in particular for those with (mental) health problems, and personal, academic and general support are often identified, through SOLE/NSS surveys, as areas in which we can improve.

You will find that most of your students will not need very much support, yet regular meeting are necessary to ensure that we keep track and help those student who need it. In addition, we have an obligation to Local Education Authorities (LEAs), other funding bodies and the Home Office to ensure that students are attending and making reasonable progress. Rules relating to undergraduate student attendance can be found in the Undergraduate Handbook.

If a student is not keeping appointments with you or fails to respond to emails it is your responsibility to follow up. Also, please let the relevant Year Tutor know so they can investigate.

Towards the end of their time here, most students will ask for a reference [a Reference Request form is attached for your information]. The reference you provide should be based on your personal and academic interaction with the student and provide a fair, professional, informative and detailed picture of the student’s ability beyond the metrics offered by the exam results. If you need any information on a student, you may access their file through the Undergraduate Maths Student Office. Please give a copy of any reference you write to the Undergraduate Maths Student Office for the student files.

FIRST YEAR PERSONAL TUTEES

In the First Year you should meet your personal tutees every week for an hour. You may see your tutees as a group but it is also important that you set aside times when they can see you individually.

You will be asked to record their attendance on an online attendance form: https://sam.ma.imperial.ac.uk/sam/ weekly. There is further information about the Student Attendance Monitoring System (SAM) below.
Some questions from First Year course worksheets will be designated for informal discussion in the weekly personal tutorial meeting [further information attached]. We are also recommending that times are set in the First Year Personal Tutor meetings for presentations of work by the students to their peers and the Tutor. The students will not get any marks for this exercise but I am hoping that it will give you something constructive to talk about in personal tutorial meetings and enable you to monitor the progress of your tutees from an early stage.

SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR PERSONAL TUTEES

You should see your Second, Third and Fourth Year tutees approximately once a month but weaker students may need to be seen more frequently.

MEET YOUR PERSONAL TUTOR WEEKS (MYPTW)

In the Autumn and Spring Terms, two weeks (the third and eighth weeks in each term) are designated Meet Your Personal Tutor Weeks (MYPTW) when students in Years 2-4 MUST report to their Personal Tutors and meet them in person.

The Meet Your Personal Tutor meetings should not only be seen as an attendance check, but should be a time to give individual advice, support students on their settling in, learn of any concerns students may have, and support students on their professional and academic development.

The first meeting each term is a quick check-in to make sure that the term has started well and to catch any early concerns. For the second meeting each term, you will be provided with information on your tutees’ academic progress and asked to review this with them. It is important to check that your tutees are keeping up to date with their work and to identify any problems that arise. In each MYPTW week you will be asked to record their attendance on an online attendance form: https://sam.ma.imperial.ac.uk/sam/ There is further information about the Student Attendance Monitoring System (SAM) below.

In the week beginning 21st November, you are asked to fill out a more comprehensive report through SAM on your Third and Fourth Year tutees and to provide a generic reference for the student file. If you have provided a reference for a tutee before, you do not need to provide a generic reference but please make sure to turn-in a copy of the actual reference provided. It is important that copies of ALL references are kept in the student’s file as these will be used by others as a basis for further references.

In the week beginning 27th February, you are asked to complete a more comprehensive report on your First and Second Year students through SAM.

If any of your personal tutees fail to meet with you in the weeks assigned, please follow-up with them. If they have not seen you by the end of those weeks, despite your attempts to contact them, please alert their Year Tutor immediately by noting a “No” on SAM for the student’s attendance.

In the Summer Term, week beginning 5th June, we will ask you to have an ‘official’ meeting with your First and Second Year tutees. Attendance should be recorded on SAM. This meeting is to check on the students’ exam experience and progress on their projects.

If any of your tutees has a problem which you feel will disrupt their studies, please inform their Year Tutor.

If you have any questions or concerns about your role as Personal Tutor, please contact:

A Year Tutor
- Year 1 Tutor, Dr Ed Segal: ma.yrentry16@imperial.ac.uk
- Year 2 Tutor, Dr David Helm: ma.yrentry15@imperial.ac.uk
- Year 3 Tutor, Professor John Barrett: ma.yrentry14@imperial.ac.uk
- Year 4 Tutor, Dr Almut Veraart: ma.yrentry2013@imperial.ac.uk

The Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Mrs Anne-Marie Hilder: a.hilder@imperial.ac.uk or Mrs Inkeri Hibbins: i.hibbins@imperial.ac.uk

The Senior Tutor, Dr Christopher Ford: ma.st@imperial.ac.uk