Personal Tutoring Policy: Highlights

Throughout the last three months the Personal Tutoring Policy has been reviewed and developed to encompass both staff and student feedback following its pilot year. The result from this period of consultation is a refined and more adaptable policy, which provides a framework within which programme teams have the flexibility to develop a system which works for their programme, its staff and students, and methods of curriculum delivery.

This document has been created to highlight the key changes that have been made to the policy and provides further detail to aid its implementation. Should you have any questions regarding the policy, these should be directed to Catherine Redding in the Learning and Teaching team (catherine.redding@stmarys.ac.uk).

Tutorial structure

The Personal Tutoring Policy should be seen as a springboard for enhancement and creativity, as opposed to a strict and unmalleable process that all should adopt in the same way. The policy has been changed to reflect this, removing the prescriptive number of individual and group tutorials and introducing a set number of 'contact points'. The reasoning for this is so that programme teams can take a programme specific approach to personal tutoring and apply those contact points as necessary for the programme and its students. Programme teams are encouraged to increase the number of contact points that have been stated in the policy, however must not reduce the number.

Contact points can mean a variety of things to different courses. For example on a distance learning course a contact point might be an email to check in with the student and see if they would like any support, or a longer phone or Skype conversation (more like a typical tutorial however utilising technology to help that student engage from afar). For other programmes, a contact point might be organising for other departments around the University to deliver a developmental session to the students, like Careers or Learning Development. Another option for these contact points is to have a group tutorial with the tutor group or entire cohort to have an open discussion regarding how the students are finding the programme, encouraging them to give feedback. The contact point is there to be developed and enhanced, and creativity and collaboration is encouraged. However please be aware that these contact points have to be evidenced and students must have access to their Personal Tutor for an individual tutorial should they request one. The policy details time limitations for these requests that staff should be aware of. Furthermore, the formation of these contact points must be consistent throughout the entire programme and not vary from tutor to tutor, to ensure equity of experience for all students.

At their first tutorial in the Welcome Fortnight, students should be asked to complete Careers Registration. This is to establish how students classify themselves with regards to their career path, and should be updated each academic year in the first tutorial. Tutors should liaise with the relevant Careers Consultant for their School to establish how to store and utilise this information in

collaboration with the Careers service. If you aren't already aware of whom to contact, the list of Careers Consultants is as follows:

- Jane Angell: Arts and Humanities
- Joanna Pattison: Sport, Health and Applied Sciences
- Vinny Potter: Education, Theology and Leadership
- Oby Oputa: Management and Social Sciences (Business and Law streams)
- Anna Favalessa: Management and Social Sciences (Education and Social Science, Geography, Psychology and Tourism)

Referral System

The updated policy includes a new referral system for when students aren't engaging with their Personal Tutor or studies. The aim of the referral system is to utilise and notify other departments within the University with whom the disengaged student might still be working. A personalised intervention can subsequently be developed between the Personal Tutor and other department(s). The policy specifies that there should be a named contact point for the departments and they are as follows:

Registry - registryservices@stmarys.ac.uk

Chaplaincy – caroline.stanton@stmarys.ac.uk

Students' Union – smsu@stmarys.ac.uk

Careers – careers@stmarys.ac.uk

Residence Life Coordinators - anthony.oreilly@stmarys.ac.uk

As the policy states, if a student disengages with their studies or Personal Tutor then there is a formalised structure for this. The policy details the terms in which tutors should work with the above contacts and the timescales associated with this.

Staff Forums

Staff forums are being introduced alongside this policy to encourage the sharing of practise and institution-wide development of Personal Tutoring. At these sessions, various programme teams will be asked to offer their methods of implementation of the policy as case studies and staff will be able discuss tutoring in its entirety, encouraging innovation. As these forums develop, students will also be invited to attend in order to create an inclusive and collaborative approach. The staff forums have been scheduled for the following dates, and the location for each will be confirmed at a later date:

Wed 04.10.17	Teaching at St Mary's: Personal Tutor Forum	1pm-1.50pm
Wed 29.11.17	Teaching at St Mary's: Personal Tutor Forum	1pm-1.50pm
Wed 17.01.18	Teaching at St Mary's: Personal Tutor Forum	1pm-1.50pm
Wed 02.05.18	Teaching at St Mary's: Personal Tutor Forum	1pm-1.50pm

The updated policy in its entirety is displayed alongside this document. Please ensure that you are familiar with it and it is implemented throughout programme delivery. Students should also be made aware of the policy throughout their induction.