# ‘*Freedom in a Framework*’:

# A Framework for Departmental Personal Tutoring and Academic Support Plans

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‘*Freedom in a Framework*’

UCL

*‘Based on your work as Director of Education and Faculty Tutor at UCL, we thought it would be good to hear more about your work on policy-making within the institution, particularly the support framework around mentoring and personal tutoring.’*

## '*Local Solutions Shaped by a UCL-wide approach*':

- '*Variation is appropriate given the diverse kinds of academic tutoring and face-to-face contact hours across different subject areas. … 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. … However, shared principles and an agreed means of … enhancing provision and sharing good practice in this area are vital.*'
- <u>Freedom:</u> Departments '*to agree on their approaches to providing student support … The approach should specify … where responsibility sits for different types of support including welfare, academic development, personal development, skills and careers advice and specialist needs*'
- <u>Framework:</u> Faculties to oversee, guide, facilitate, and assure quality

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**How?**

# Step 1: Guidance

**Faculty Guidance (not policy) on:**

1. Personal Tutoring
2. ‘Meet Your Researcher’
3. Skills Training
4. Departmental Careers Support
5. Pastoral Care, Welfare, and Mitigation

**Student Voice and Participation**

1. **Personal Tutoring**
   - '*Where responsibility sits for different types of support welfare, academic development, personal development, skills and careers advice and specialist needs*' – not necessarily all through the personal tutor
   - Linking tutor allocation to study interests?
   - Faculty recommendation to remain at three meeting minimum
   - 'Offer' not optional
   - Tutorial group meetings
2. **'Meet Your Researcher':** implement and integrate with personal tutoring
3. **Skills Training**
   - Explicit not implicit
   - Separate from / in addition to content modules
4. **Departmental Careers Support**
   - Local framing
   - Integration with skills training
   - Career Liaison Tutor's place in dept. academic support framework (& introduction of Faculty Career Liaison Tutors Forum)
5. **Pastoral Care, Welfare, and Mitigation:** Minimum all-staff requirement to be competent to refer to local & institutional support

# Step 1: Guidance

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**With six linked appendices:**

A. Reproduction of Institutional Policy
B. Guidance on ‘*My Feedback*’ Functionality in Moodle [for 1.]
C. Case study on Personal Tutoring and Feedback in Archaeology [for 1.]
D. Case study on term reports in History [for 1.]
E. Case study on skills lab in Economics [for 3.]
F. Careers guidance from Deputy Head of Careers assigned to faculty [for 4.]

# Step 2: Departmental Policy Development and Reporting

- Departments tasked by Faculty Teaching Committee with developing and codifying their Departmental Personal Tutoring and Academic Support Framework
- Departments tasked with reporting back to Faculty Teaching Committee
- Using Faculty reporting form:
  1. Personal Tutoring
  2. ‘Meet Your Researcher’
  3. Skills Training
  4. Departmental Careers Support
  5. Pastoral Care, Welfare, and Mitigation
  6. Student Input

## Step 3: Feedback

- Feedback on every draft departmental personal tutoring and academic support statement from the Faculty Director of Education
- Feedback from on every draft statement from the then Arena (≈ Eden Centre) Faculty Liaison
- Highlighting first comparisons
- Ranging from suggestions to revision requirements
- Possible revision and resubmission

## 19 Departmental Personal Tutoring and Academic Support Frameworks

*But:* No or very limited best practice sharing

Good ideas on same issue limited to one or some departments, but not considered elsewhere, even if applicable

*So…*

# Step 4: Faculty Personal Tutoring and Support Framework Compilation

- Introduction
- Reproduction of Faculty Guidance
- Reproduction of all Departmental Frameworks
- But: 19 departmental chapters coming to 82 pages!
- So: Good Practice Index

UCL Careers Support Guidance 1

## II. Good Practice Index

### a) Personal Tutoring

- - Tutor allocation based on module/course selection (*English*)
  - expressed preferences will be taken into account in personal tutor allocation (*Greek and Latin*)
  - personal tutor allocation linked to study interests via teaching on programme (*Information Studies, Institute of the Americas, Geography, SSEES*)
  - final year personal tutors allocated by specialist area (*Slade*)
  - use of pathway representatives for personal tutoring aligns personal tutoring with programme paths (BASc); tutor allocation in accordance with disciplinary interests or language specialism (*EISPS*) as far as possible
  - dissertation supervisors take over academic mentoring beyond dissertation in the final year for undergraduates and term 3 for Masters students to align with students' academic interests (*Anthropology*)
  - matching first-year UG students to members of staff familiar from teaching as personal tutors, then matching 2nd- and 3rd- years based on study and research interests, matching PGT students and personal tutors by study and research interests as far as possible, using teaching on programme-specific modules as a determinant (*PPE/Political Science*)
  - personal tutor allocation, as far as possible, along lines of mutual professional and study interests (*Information Studies*)
  - students retain the same personal tutor over the duration of the degree programme (*Institute of Americas*)
  - tutee assignments taking into consideration the sabbatical cycle in advance to avoid unnecessary disruption and align sabbaticals with either new tutees or the year abroad as far as possible (*History*)
  - Co-ordination of personal tutor allocation across UG and Masters programmes (*SELCS/CMII*)
- - Students can change personal tutor at any time and for any reason (*Anthropology*)
  - personal tutor changes available by administrative request (*Archaeology*)
- - Personal tutoring and teaching strongly and inherently linked through tutorial teaching system (*English*)
  - Personal tutoring and year-1 teaching closely linked through quasi tutorial modular year 1 system (*Geography*)
- - Departmental personal tutoring handbook for personal tutors (*Philosophy*)
  - FAQ document on personal tutoring in the department for personal tutors (*Political Science*)
  - Personal tutoring Moodle page for personal tutors, including appointment scheduler and matters of interest to students; use of 'Your Portfolio' facility on that Moodle page (*Economics*)
  - reminders of current rules and mitigation practices for module tutors and personal tutors at key points throughout the year (*History*)
  - annual briefings/inductions for personal tutors at beginning of academic year (*History*)
  - guidelines on personal tutoring circulated to staff and students at beginning of students' studies (*Institute of Americas*)
  - use of the UCL 'Things to Talk About' handbook (*Institute of Americas*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 2

  - departmental guidelines on personal tutoring updated annually (*SSEES*)
  - departmental administration reminds tutors of the need to conduct meetings and discuss academic during the year (*SSEES*)
- - Departmental induction session and departmental induction handbook explain personal tutoring to students (*History*)
  - Autumn term group outing to Greenwich for first-years, where tutee groups will meet their tutors and receive an introduction to personal tutoring, followed by a social event for the cohort (*History of Art*)
- - All first year students seen by personal tutor on first day of term (*Archaeology*)
  - centrally scheduled PGT tutor meetings (*Philosophy*)
  - designated weeks for personal tutor meetings (*Archaeology, History*)
  - all tutees seen in induction week (*Institute of Americas*)
- - Departmentally determined mix of mandatory and optional personal tutor meetings (*EISPS*).
  - minimum of at least two one-to-one meetings over the academic year (in addition to group meetings) to be arranged by personal tutors, but two one-to-one meetings per term strongly encouraged (*Institute of Americas*)
- Students have two personal tutors, one from each half of the discipline, and keep both throughout their programme (*Geography*)
- Attendance of personal tutor meetings is monitored (*Economics*)
- - Fully mapped out plan of personal tutor meetings and their default content throughout all three years of UG study (*History of Art*);
  - bullet-pointed/tabulated list of areas to be covered in first introductory meeting (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies, SSEES*)
  - structured sequence of first-year tutor meetings with assigned meeting topics (*Philosophy, History*)
  - departmental personal tutor handbook provides tutors with ideas for topics to cover in meetings (*Economics*)
- - Use of progress report forms / tutors reports (*Greek and Latin, Information Studies, Philosophy, Anthropology, Archaeology, History of Art, Slade*)
  - personal tutor reports on tutee's progress to departmental progress meetings (*Archaeology*)
- Module reports on student performance on module (separate from individual assessment feedback) feeding into personal tutoring (*History*)
- - First-year Personal Tutorial Questionnaire for new undergraduate students to inform personal tutoring and transition support (*History*)
  - Moodle-based personal tutor quiz (*Economics*)
- - PGT students asked to write-up their own view of their academic performance and progress for personal tutor meeting (*Political Science, Information Studies*)
  - tutees' self-assessment through 'Annual Record of Activity and Achievement' to be discussed with personal tutors (*English*)
- - Students asked to bring examples of coursework and feedback to personal tutor sessions (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies*)
  - use of MyFeedback to review academic performance in personal tutor meetings (*Economics, Information Studies*)
  - formal, explicit, and timetabled integration of feedback discussion into personal tutoring (*History of Art*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 3

- Personal tutor marks practice essay (*Archaeology*)
- Use of personal tutor sessions to check on students' satisfaction with feedback (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies*)
- - Annual summary of tutorial meetings provided to Departmental Tutor (*Information Studies*)
  - Tutors add to progress form and copies go to departmental tutor (*Philosophy*)
- - Additional group tutorials on set standard topics (*Greek and Latin*)
  - Group tutorials as academic activities (*Slade*)
  - Group tutorials encouraged in addition to individual tutorials (*Institute of Americas*)
- Additional year tutors repeatedly meeting with entire cohort throughout the year (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies*)
- Students can request unlimited academic one-on-one tutorials with any member of staff (*Slade*)
- Personal tutors formally required to keep records of their tutorial meetings (*Information Studies*)
- Named, published contact with oversight, responsibility, and accountability for the overall personal tutoring framework (*Information Studies*)

### b) 'Meet Your Researcher'

- Full implementation of 'meet your researcher'-scheme, linked to year-1 modules, with researcher other than the personal tutor to broaden exposure to different researchers (*Geography*)
- - Meet your researcher exercises subsequently followed up in core course with skills session on research (*History of Art*)
  - Meet Your Researcher aims integrated in first-year core modules (*History*)
  - students interview staff about their research as part of a core module (BASc)
  - second-year UG core course centred on exploring staff members' research amounting to 'Meet Your Researcher' module in addition to initial 'Meet your Researcher' tutorial group meetings at the beginning of term 1 (*Anthropology*)
  - integration of 'meet your researcher' elements in bridge between ECON1000 module and personal tutoring (*Economics*)
- Use of tutorial group meetings for 'meet your researcher purposes' (*Philosophy, Anthropology, History of Art, SSEES*)
- Students write practice essay on articles authored by teaching staff (*Archaeology*)
- Staff research highlighted during induction day trip in London (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies*)
- - Fortnightly 'Wine@6' sessions with short talks by departmental staff about their research, open to all students (*Greek & Latin*).
  - Weekly post-research seminar drinks with final-year undergraduate students (*EISPS*)
- Occasional joint-staff student research projects, subject to funding (*Political Science*)

### c) Skills Training

- - Skills training with map of curricular integration and stand-alone events mapped out over all years of study (*EISPS*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 4

  - mandatory first-year skills training module (*Hebrew and Jewish, Philosophy, History*)
  - mandatory research preparation seminars for PGTs (*Philosophy*); programme core modules are skills-based (BASc)
  - six hour-long sessions on practical skills integrated in compulsory core course (*History of Art*)
  - curricular integration of skills training through data acquisition and research design modules (*Geography*)
  - carefully designed blend of curricular and extracurricular skills training (*Economics*)
  - fully integrated 'methods pillar' as strand of degree programme (*PPE/Political Science*)
  - compulsory methods and research skills modules for PGT students (*Political Science*)
  - research method modules (*Institute of the Americas*)
  - classes on essay-writing linked to year 1 core module (*SSEES*)
  - year-2 research methodology module (*SSEES*)
- - Academic essay writing class for all new students in induction week (*Hebrew and Jewish*)
  - mandatory first-year essay writing workshops involving formative peer marking (*Philosophy*)
  - timetabled skills workshops throughout year (*Greek and Latin*)
  - additional sessions on essay writing skills added to core first-year modules (*Greek and Latin*)
  - new second-year qualitative and quantitative research training currently under consideration (*Anthropology*)
  - skills lab with additional zero-credit modules for each year of study linked to HEAR (*Economics*)
  - policy-report writing exercise (*Geography*)
  - Term 3 method workshops for PGT students, supplemented by policy workshops with practitioners (*Political Science*)
  - annually reviewed study skills sessions offered once each term to first-year, second-year, and third-year students (*English*)
- Module blurbs make skills teaching integrated in other modules explicit (*Greek and Latin*)
- Department has two academic writing tutors offering one-to-one support (*Archaeology*)
- - Progress report form cover skills development in addition to academic performance (*Archaeology, Greek and Latin*)
  - skills self-evaluation form for first-year undergraduates (*History*)
  - development of skills-enhancement exercises for personal tutorials (*Geography*)
- Assessment formats designed to develop practical policy-focussed skills, e.g. simulation games, policy briefs, negotiation briefs, moot courts) (*Political Science*)
- PGT dissertation supervisors meeting with groups of supervised students in addition to individual supervision to foster research discussion between students with similar research interests (*Political Science*)
- More systematic use of *Lynda* under consideration (*Institute of the Americas*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 5

### d) Careers Support[1]

- Departmental Provisions:
  - Annual department-led careers day (*Archaeology*)
  - Taylor-made careers workshops with regional focus developed by UCL Careers Consultant (*SSEES*)
  - Targeted career events by programme (*Political Science*)
  - Highly subject specific annual careers programme developed/led by Careers Liaison Tutor (CLT) (*Slade*)
  - Mock interviews workshops programme for all third-year students run jointly by CLT and UCL Careers CC (*Archaeology*)
  - In-House departmental careers fair, co-organised with students (*Institute of the Americas*)
  - Departmental careers newsletter developed/maintained via funding for additional staff (BASc)
  - Possible 'Anthropology in the Professional World' module under consideration (*Anthropology*)
- Expansion or Planned Expansion of Careers Liaison Tutor (CLT) Role
  - Dedicated departmental careers staff from UCL careers for individual student support, focused on sourcing internships for Y2 students (BASc)
  - Full-time careers and internship officer for students on Q-step programmes (*Political Science*)
  - Plan to formally upgrade departmental careers tutor role in 2017/18 with increased allocated work hours with extensive range of activity (*Anthropology*)
  - New role of 'Careers and Academic Support Tutor' with seat on Departmental Management Committee and on the Staff Student Consultative Committee (*Geography*)
- Alumni Engagement
  - Speakers from a range of professions (*Greek and Latin*)
  - Annual Alumni Forum (*Greek and Latin*)
  - Five panel events, academic staff source speakers and participate, drinks receptions and networking (*Political Science*); alumni panel with networking and drinks reception, alumni sourced by academic staff (*SSEES*)
  - Creative industries event (*SELCS/CMII*)
  - Alumni used in departmental in-house careers fair (*Institute of the Americas*)
  - Invitation to individual alumnus to deliver talks in the department (*Slade*)
  - Plans for alumni interviews led by careers consultant to be recorded and put on website (*Greek and Latin*); plans to put alumni case studies on departmental website (*Geography*)
  - Plans for short video interviews of speakers at forthcoming panel events (*History of Art, EISPS, Institute of the Americas*)
  - Plan to use Alumni for some mock interview panels (*Archaeology*)
  - Alumni networking contact list (*Anthropology*)
- Head of Department or other senior staff involved in addition to the departmental Careers Liaison Tutor (*Greek and Latin, SELCS, Archaeology*)
- Careers Moodle page and/or dedicated careers website (*Economics, Greek and Latin, SSEES, History of Art, EISPS, Archaeology*)
  - Development of dedicated careers website pulling together wide range of activity and resources, example of departmental framing of internal and external resources (*History*)

[1] Parts of the careers section are based on supplementary feedback from UCL Careers in addition to the careers sections of the departmental personal tutoring and support frameworks.

UCL Careers Support Guidance 6

  - Dedicated 'Careers' section in the Undergraduate Moodle Handbook with a sequence of targeted resources aimed at students at different stages of their programme of studies (*SELCS*)
  - Mapping of stages of careers exploration and support over the (in this case) four years over undergraduate study (*SELCS*)
  - Moodle page updated weekly to advertise relevant events (*Greek and Latin*)
- Regular appointments with Careers Liaison Tutor offered to students:
  - Bookable weekly careers office hours, plus termly Q&A event with careers tutor with each year group (*Economics*)
  - Individual meetings with careers tutor available (*Political Science*)
  - Drop-in appointments (*SSEES*)
  - Careers Liaison Tutor has dedicated careers office hours (*Hebrew and Jewish, Anthropology*)
- PGT-specific provision in addition to UG (*Political Science, History, Geography*)
  - PGT careers sessions in induction week (*Greek and Latin*)
  - three dedicated careers workshops for PGT students (*Greek and Latin*)
  - department-led annual workshop specifically on academic careers for PGT students (*SELCS/CMII*)
- Talk or workshop beyond inductions per undergraduate year group (*EISPS, Greek and Latin, Geography, SSEES, English, History of Art*)
  - Annual year-of-study-specific careers events for undergraduates (*Political Science*)
- Bonus of an academic Careers Liaison Tutor able to draw on own industry experience (*Economics, Slade, Political Science*)
- Careers sessions to be mandatory (*Slade, Archaeology*, possibly *SSEES*)
- - Aim of embedding careers support within curriculum (*Geography*)
  - Career workshops partly integrated in research methods module (*Institute of the Americas*)
- Departmental Careers Liaison Tutor leading or co-delivering careers sessions:
  - CLT has direct experience of the challenges faced by her students and can use that to develop/deliver talks/workshops accordingly (*Slade*)
  - Joint delivery with CC of workshop (*Economics*)
  - Chairing of panel event (*History of Art*)
- Departmental Careers Liaison Tutor CLT or other academic colleagues involved in sourcing speakers, alumni or otherwise (*Greek and Latin, SELCS, History, History of Art, Institute of the Americas, Archaeology, SSEES, Political Science, EISPS, Economics, BASc*)
- UCL Careers Consultant attends the Staff Student Consultative Committee and/or departmental meeting (*Greek and Latin, English, EISPS, Information Studies, Institute of the Americas, History of Art, History*)
- Society actively involved in careers delivery (*SELCS, SSEES, History*)
  - Extensive programme of employer-facing events (*Economics*)
  - The society organises journalism and publishing events (*English*)
  - Society involved in administration and hosting of the alumni panel (*Geography*)
  - Society involved in design and implementation of 'panel and table' event and sources speakers (*Institute of the Americas*)
  - Including society representation on Staff Student Consultative Committee (*History*)
- Departmental Careers Liaison Tutor and/or the UCL Careers Consultant forward details of particularly relevant vacancies to students (*Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Greek and Latin, Economics*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 7

- Careers support built into curriculum for professional education plus multiple professionally-oriented events for students to meet and network with professionals (*Information Studies*)

### e) Pastoral Care, Welfare, and Mitigation

- All-staff training session on welfare and pastoral support (*Slade*)
- Mentors assigned to new staff to brief and advise on pastoral care, welfare, and assessment mitigation issues (*EISPS*)
- Professionalised, dedicated Departmental Tutors (*History, Economics, SELCS*)
- Department ensures presence of and presentation from SSW in inductions (*Philosophy*)
- - Welfare support and arrangements explained to students in personal tutor meetings, in addition to documentation, incl. the importance of timely EC applications (BASc)
  - Support offers and arrangements explained to incoming students by personal tutors during the outing to Greenwich for year 1 students (*History of Art*)
- Key information pushed out students through multiple channels (*History of Art*)
- Very early pastoral care interventions in case of possibly developing attendance problems (*Political Science*)
- One skills session dedicated to wellbeing (*Greek & Latin*)
- Departmental gender and sexuality adviser with weekly office hours (*English*)

### f) Student Involvement in Framework Development

- - Ongoing development and monitoring of implementation in SSCC and DTC (*Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Jewish, SELCS/CMII*)
  - annual review (Information Studies)
- - Combination of multiple avenues for involving students in the development of the personal tutoring framework: meetings of student representatives with students, meeting of student representatives with representative coordinators, meeting with the Director and the Head of Teaching, discussion the SSCC, discussion with students in the DTC (*SSEES*)
  - Student representatives present at departmental management team meetings and full departmental meetings (*SELCS*)
  - Widespread student representation in various departmental committees (*Archaeology*)
  - students' development standing item at Departmental Teaching Committee (BASc)
  - development of tutoring and support framework standing item in SSCC (*History of Art*)
- Use of student focus groups for development (*Institute of the Americas*)
- Use of UCL Changemakers as per www.ucl.ac.uk/changemakers (*Philosophy, SELCS, BASc*)
- 'You asked, we did' document on student intranet linked to SSCC (*Political Science*)
- - Feeback on pastoral care gathered in end-of-year programme evaluations (*Political Science*)

UCL Careers Support Guidance 8

  - student recommendations concerning personal tutoring gathered and then circulated to all personal tutors (*SSEES*)
- Departmental Tutor's regular feedback conversations with students (*Greek & Latin*)

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- Harvesting good ideas
- Mapping them to the familiar categories
- Cross referencing the departmental frameworks featuring them
- With live hyperlinks
- In seven+ pages

## Step 5: Best Practice Iteration

- Following Year: Departments asked to review and revise their departmental frameworks in light of:
  - Departmental Experience in Practice
  - Student Feedback
  - *Good practice index, considering applicable good ideas from other departments*
- Submit final steady state baseline version to Faculty Teaching Committee

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# Evaluation

**Achievements**

- Far more good ideas through wide participation
- Empowerment
- Ownership
- Addressing disciplinary and local circumstances
- Local student participation and student voice
- Support through guidance and feedback
- Best practice sharing – local, yet all good ideas benefit all: local without silos

# Evaluation

**Deficits**

- Raised up but not levelled up: inconsistencies
- Good practice index's reliance on cross-referencing
- No link to institutional systems (e.g. dashboard)
- Did not address impacts of mental health crisis
- Did not not go far enough in addressing systemic question of academic support model: pastoral care model vs. tutorial model vs. professional model

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- No link to resources
- No link to institutional staffing models (e.g. student advisers)
- No *institutional* action?

?