



Tutorial Policy and Entitlement

1. Definitions

- 1.1 The term 'tutor' used in this policy statement is taken to refer to the person who has responsibility for the management of an individual student's learning experience and achievement of learning objectives.
- 1.2 The term 'course manager' refers to the individual who has overall responsibility for the organisation and management of a programme and the quality of the tutorial activities within that programme. Course managers may also be tutors.
- 1.3 The term 'subject teacher' refers to other lecturers who teach on a programme but who are not the course manager or tutor.

2. Entitlement

- 2.1 All students at Bedford College are entitled to accessible and informed guidance and support to address their needs in terms of academic progress, personal development and career development.
- 2.2 This document outlines the minimum entitlement which tutors are required to deliver, but they may wish or need to do more to meet individual students' needs in the provision of personalised learning.
- 2.3 The tutor is normally the student's first point of contact for the provision of information, advice and guidance in relation to their learning.
- 2.4 At the beginning of their programme all students must be introduced to their tutor and made aware of the nature of the support, information, advice and guidance that s/he can provide.
- 2.5 It is the responsibility of all staff at the College to safeguard and promote the welfare of students under the Every Child Matters agenda. The five Every Child Matters outcomes encourage being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. Tutors are key to achieving this, both through individual and group tutorials, and tutorial schemes of work must indicate clearly how and where the programme meets the five outcomes.

3. Students on full-time programmes

- 3.1 All students are allocated a tutor. This role is important to all students but it is recognised that individual students will demand varying amounts of support according to individual need.

- 3.2 Tutors are responsible for working with a student to develop their learning objective(s) and should therefore ideally be involved in the same area of learning activity as their tutees.
- 3.3 All students on full-time programmes must have access to a planned programme, covering the elements referred to in 2.1 and detailed in a comprehensive tutorial scheme of work.
- 3.4 The planned programme should maintain a balance between group and individual activity, include pastoral elements as required, and be delivered in a flexible manner to meet the needs of individual students.
- 3.5 Attention should be given to ensuring that differences in individuals' learning styles and the needs of the group are taken into account when developing and implementing tutorial schemes of work and lesson plans. Where appropriate, tutors may wish to consult students about the range of group activities to be delivered.
- 3.6 Whilst there is a need for essential group-centred activities in the first few weeks, for example sessions on transition, study skills, time management, assessment requirements and developing group identity, the major focus must be on the individual student and establishing the importance of the tutorial system.
- 3.7 During the first term of their first year all students on full-time programmes must receive a minimum of one individual tutorial. The first individual tutorial must take place within the first half term to check that the student has settled into College, is on the right course and has clear targets detailed in their individual learning plan.
- 3.8 Subsequently each student must receive an individual tutorial focusing on their academic achievement each term.
- 3.9 Tutors are required to conduct an 'exit tutorial' with each student to review and record their achievements and expected destination. This will normally be the final scheduled individual tutorial, but the requirement includes those students who leave before the end of their course, when reasons for leaving should also be ascertained.
- 3.10 Students on one-year programmes must receive 3 individual tutorials as a minimum. Students on two-year programmes must receive a minimum of 6 individual tutorials.
- 3.11 All individual tutorials are to be recorded on a tutorial action plan and the outcomes agreed with the student.
- 3.12 Individual tutorials should be arranged as appointments and the scheduled dates published in advance. Failure on the part of the student to keep the appointment without prior agreement must be treated as an unexplained absence.

- 3.13 The tutorial should be held in appropriate accommodation and the student expect to receive undivided attention.
- 3.14 The focus for individual tutorials is the student's academic progress, with a view to involving students in their own learning and helping them to become independent learners. Targets must be agreed with the student and be specific, measurable and realistic, with clear deadlines and recorded on a tutorial action plan. Progress against previous targets must also be reviewed.
- 3.15 Personal problems will sometimes form part of the discussion, particularly where they are getting in the way of learning. However, tutors must be mindful of maintaining professional boundaries and avoid taking on a counselling role. If the student's problems seem substantive they should be referred to Student Services who are trained to offer the appropriate support.
- 3.16 The most frequent referral route to Student Services support is via tutors, although students may be referred by subject teachers, student personal advisers and others when necessary. Importantly, a self-referral service is central to the Student Services ethos.
- 3.17 Group tutorials must take place at least once per half term.
- 3.18 The group tutorial curriculum is co-ordinated by Student Services to ensure consistency across programme areas and includes as a minimum induction, equality and diversity, and career development. Further subject-specific or pastoral group tutorials in addition to this minimum entitlement are at the discretion of the tutor.
- 3.19 The tutor must produce a scheme of work for the tutorial programme, indicating the timing and balance of individual and group tutorials. It should include as a minimum all the elements detailed above, follow a sequence which enables students to build on previous learning, be mapped against the Every Child Matters outcomes and be made available on the staff intranet.

4. Students on part-time programmes

- 4.1 Part-time day/evening students have tutorial support which is integrated into their learning provision.
- 4.2 Substantive (6 hours per week or more) part-time programmes must have a planned programme of tutorials delivered at appropriate points within the existing timetabled hours. The schedule of tutorials should be clearly indicated on the timetable and scheme of work. However, the number and mode of delivery of the tutorials is at the discretion of the tutor. A written or electronic record must be made of all individual tutorials, and an action plan agreed where appropriate.
- 4.3 Part-time day/evening class teachers will normally take tutorial responsibility for their classes. Therefore, associate or agency teachers unfamiliar with College student support structures must be given prior guidance by course managers.

4.4 All students are required to be introduced to, or made aware of, Student Services and the services they offer, and referrals made when appropriate.

5. Staffing

5.1 The role of the tutor is defined in separate documents for both full and part-time courses.

5.2 Course managers are responsible for ensuring the overall co-ordination and monitoring of tutorial arrangements in their designated subject area, including checking that an appropriate scheme of work is produced and made available on the staff intranet.

5.3 Tutors should be chosen on the basis of proven interest, skill and experience rather than according to timetabling or structural expedience.

5.4 Descriptions for the roles and responsibilities of tutors apply across all programme areas.

6. Staff development

6.1 A comprehensive programme of staff development has been developed, and predominantly delivered, by Student Services in consultation with the Human Resources and Quality departments and the Director of Teaching and Learning.

6.2 Opportunities for raising tutoring skills via the Cert Ed/PGCE programme are also maximised.

6.3 All tutors are expected to participate in appropriate staff development aimed at developing high levels of skill and sensitivity in the tasks associated with the tutor role. Participation arising from development needs identified through the observation process is mandatory.

7. Documentation

7.1 The Careers and Tutorial Manager provides guidance notes, a tutorial framework (outline scheme of work), sample lesson plans, resources and other appropriate documentation for tutors. The tutorial framework is mapped against the Every Child Matters outcomes.

7.2 Course/Programme Handbooks must include information on the purpose, structure and content of the tutorial programme.

7.3 Student Progress Files containing all essential and optional documentation, including individual learning plans, are provided for all full-time students.

8. Monitoring and review

- 8.1 Information, advice and guidance provided to students, including via the tutorial programme, should meet the requirements of the Matrix quality standard.
- 8.2 Responsibility for monitoring the tutorial system, including observation of individual and group tutorials, lies with the Director of Quality and Marketing in consultation with the Director of Student Services. Course managers are responsible for ensuring delivery to the required specification within their programmes.
- 8.3 Review of tutorial arrangements is included in the course review, self-assessment and programme area MoT processes, according to criteria determined in the common inspection framework.
- 8.4 The Careers and Tutorial Manager will also review elements of the tutorial programme and provide reports to the College Executive as required.

9. Equality and diversity statement

- 9.1 Bedford College is committed to the promotion and development of equality and diversity. We aim to provide a working and learning environment which values individuals equally regardless of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief or trade union membership.
- 9.2 This policy and procedure will be implemented in accordance with our policies on equality and diversity, disability and race equality, and the provision of tutorial support will not be influenced by the student's background or situation. Equality and diversity are embedded in the tutorial framework.

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