ECA Personal Tutoring Statement

Your Personal Tutor

Your Personal Tutor will be a member of academic staff familiar with your general area of study and the expectations of academic work in your discipline. He/she will have a clear understanding of their role in supporting your studies and how to direct you to any other support you might need during your time at the University.

Working in partnership with your Personal Tutor will help you to:

- become a more confident learner in your discipline and play an active part in your academic community.
- reflect on your academic progress and make the most effective use of your academic feedback.
- develop the range of skills and attributes required for success at university and beyond.

More extensive details on all aspects of the Personal Tutoring system, including each School Personal Tutoring Statement from across the University, can be found at the following link:

Your Personal Tutor system
As an undergraduate student you will have a number of scheduled meetings with your Personal Tutor each academic year. During your early years at the University we will schedule meetings to enable you to settle in and build a rapport with your Personal Tutor. Contact will gradually become less formal in the latter years of study however you are actively encouraged to schedule meetings with your Personal Tutor (PT) as required throughout your time at the University.

- Across ECA's 5 subject areas, meetings vary according to your year of study:
  - 1st Year students (YR1) – you can expect a minimum of 4 PT meetings, at least two of which are one to one with your PT
  - 2nd Year students (YR2) – you can expect a minimum of 3 PT meetings, at least two of which are one to one with your PT
  - 3rd, 4th and 5th Year students (YR3; YR4; YR5) – you can expect at least one individual PT meeting per year

- For all undergraduate (UG) students, your first individual meeting with your PT will occur within the first two weeks of Semester 1.

- YR1 and YR2 students - a second individual meeting with your PT will take place within the first three weeks of Semester 2. In most cases, your PT will reflect with you on your academic performance from Semester 1. These meetings will be arranged according to your local Programme's feedback release dates in Semester 2.

- Your PT will contact you prior to the start of each semester in order to arrange these Individual meetings; you will receive a notification through your University email account. Individual Meetings with your Personal Tutor are scheduled to last for 20 minutes.

- Individual PT meetings are student-led: sessions are intended to address particular queries and concerns you may have regarding your academic career, including:
  - course electives and pathways which are appropriate to complement your programme of study;
  - effective study skills and time management;
  - dealing with feedback;
  - effective habits of a successful student;
  - how and where to access University Services to help you achieve your best. We encourage all tutees to consider in advance what they'd like to discuss and reflect on their meetings by following up with summary notes on the Personal Tutor IT Tools on EUCLID.

- YR1 and YR2 students - you can also expect to participate in at least one Group Meeting per year.
  - Group meetings for UG Students normally take place during Innovative Learning Week, which is timetabled between teaching block 1 and teaching block 2 during Semester 2.

- Group meetings vary across ECA's 5 subject areas, in order to align to the various academic requirements and pedagogical methods students encounter across the various programmes of study.

- Group meetings generally last for approximately one hour, and are planned to complement other Innovative Learning Week activities, allowing yourself and colleagues to participate in a variety of events across the University.

- Group Meetings are arranged locally across ECA and you will be contacted through your local subject area with relevant details, time and location.

- Group Meetings are designed with you in mind: sessions are intended to address particular queries and concerns that groups of students may have,
and facilitate group discussions and activities allowing all students to contribute.

- Throughout the academic year, you may require the advice and guidance of your PT at points outside these arranged individual meetings; you are welcome to use the Personal Tutor IT tools to request additional meeting times. In some situations, you may be able to get a quicker resolution to your concerns by visiting the Student Support Officers in ECA’s Hunter Building, or during posted office hours at other ECA Campus locations (Minto House, Alison House).

- Some of your concerns might be easily addressed rather than arranging a meeting with your PT. We encourage you to visit the Personal Tutor section on the ECA intranet (www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors), which provides some guidance on the most common student queries, and who in ECA Student Support is best positioned to answer those questions.

- If you are not on campus (e.g. studying abroad for a period, or on placement, or studying an online degree) then your meetings may take place by telephone, live internet call, or a web conferencing application. Email exchanges are not considered to be meetings unless they take place within a pre-agreed timeframe to enable you to have a “conversation” (e.g. if you are overseas and emailing within a 24-36 hour period to take account of time differences). Please ensure that you agree any extraordinary arrangements with your PT in advance.
As a postgraduate taught student you will have at least two individual meetings with your Personal Tutor in the taught part of your degree programme and one individual meeting in the dissertation / final project part.

- Your first meeting with your Personal Tutor (PT) will occur within the first two weeks of Semester 1.
- Your second individual meeting with your PT will take place within the first three weeks of Semester 2. In most cases, your PT will reflect with you on your academic performance from Semester 1. Semester 2 meetings will be arranged according to your local Programme’s feedback release dates in Semester 2.
- If you are enrolled on an ECA taught postgraduate programme that sits during Semester 3, you can also expect an Individual Meeting during that period, also reflecting on feedback from your previous semester.
- Your PT will contact you prior to the start of each Semester in order to arrange these Individual meetings; you will receive a notification through your University email account. Individual Meetings with your PT are scheduled to last for 20 minutes.
- If you require a meeting with your PT at points during the academic year outside these arranged individual meetings, you are welcome to use the Personal Tutor IT tools to request additional meeting times. In some situations, you may be able to get a quicker resolution to your concerns by visiting the ECA Postgraduate Office, which is located on the third floor of the College’s Evolution House Building.
- There may be a variety of reasons for wanting to meet with your PT; yet some of your concerns might be easily addressed by the Student Support Officers (SSOs). The Personal Tutor section on the ECA intranet ([www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors](http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors)) provides some guidance on the most common student queries, and who is best positioned to help answer those questions.
- If you are not on campus (e.g. studying abroad for a period, or on placement, or studying an online degree) then your meetings may take place by telephone, live internet call, or a web conferencing application. Email exchanges are not considered to be meetings unless they take place within a pre-agreed timeframe to enable you to have a “conversation” (e.g. if you are overseas and emailing within a 24-36 hour period to take account of time differences).

You will also be involved in at least one group meeting (in the taught part of your degree programme) and other activities designed to support your development as a member of an academic community.

- At the Postgraduate Level, your Group Meetings take place during Innovative Learning Week, which is timetabled between teaching block 1 and teaching block 2 during Semester 2.
- Group Meetings across ECA Postgraduate studies vary from programme to programme, in order to align to the various academic programme requirements and pedagogical methods students encounter across ECA’s 5 subject areas.
- Meetings generally last for approximately one hour, and are planned to complement other Innovative Learning Week activities, allowing yourself and colleagues to participate in a variety of events across the University.
- Meetings are arranged within and across the ECA’s 5 Subject areas independently, and you will receive a specific email from your Personal Tutor or Programme Director in due course, outlining the time and location of the meeting you are invited to attend.
Meetings are designed with you in mind: sessions are intended to address particular queries and concerns that groups of students may have, and facilitate group discussions and activities allowing all students to contribute.

Peer Support

Peer Support activities are also available across ECA and we encourage you to get involved with these as they’re a great way to engage with other students.

- There are a variety of Peer Support initiatives in ECA, which reflects the unique teaching approaches and pedagogical philosophies of our 5 subject areas. These may include Academic Families; PALS study groups; student governance, etc. Full details about all ECA Peer Support initiatives are found on the Personal Tutor Section of the ECA Intranet – [www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors](http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors). If you are interested in establishing a new peer support initiative within your subject area, please contact Cara Samuels for more information.
- Information about other Peer Support activities across the University can be found at the following link: [EUSA Peer Support](http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/intranet/personal-tutors).

Support Contacts

All taught students have a Personal Tutor and within each School there is a Senior Tutor, and a Student Support Team. You can find out who your Personal Tutor is through MyEd.

- In most instances, your first point of contact for support will be your Personal Tutor, particularly regarding questions concerning your academic studies. In some cases, you may wish to make an appointment to discuss more personal concerns with your PT, particularly those which are negatively impacting your studies.
- For more general concerns or questions regarding services for supporting students engaged in their studies, feel free to contact ECA’s Student Support Officers. At ECA, we have SSOs dedicated to supporting UG and TPG students:
  - Our UG SSOs are Claire Davies, Jacqueline Plumer and Sara Hollywood - they can be reached at [ECA-SSO@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ECA-SSO@ed.ac.uk).
  - The UG SSO team hold office hours at various Lauriston Campus locations:
    - Rm O30, Hunter Building – Monday thru Friday (9:00-5:00)
    - Rm 2.58, Minto House – Tuesdays (9:00-5:00)
    - Rm 2.14, Alison House – Mondays (2:00-5:00) and Thursdays (9:00-5:00)
  - Our PG SSO is Lucy Hawkins – she can be reached at [lucy.hawkins@ed.ac.uk](mailto:lucy.hawkins@ed.ac.uk), and is located in the ECA Postgraduate Office on 3rd floor of Evolution House on Lauriston Campus.
- For more complicated matters and challenging cases, ECA’s Senior Tutor is Arno Verhoeven - he supports students and Personal Tutors across both UG and TPG programmes, and manages the more complex cases and concerns. He normally meet students through referral (PT or SSO), but in some instances, by appointment. He can be contacted at [ECASeniorTutor@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ECASeniorTutor@ed.ac.uk).
- If you have a question or concern, and your not sure who you should contact initially, send an email to your SSO and they can provide a response or ensure your question is forwarded to the appropriate person.
• In most cases, you should expect a response to your query within three working days. In some cases, however, your PT may not be available and will have outlined in an out-of-office response that they cannot respond in that time frame. In such cases, please contact the Student Support Officers who can ensure that your query is managed appropriately in the absence of your PT.

• Students can request a change to their allocated PT if they are finding the relationship challenging or compromised. Please email or visit the relevant ECA Student Support Officers who can manage this process on your behalf.