

# School of GeoSciences

## School Personal Tutoring Statement

**(Note: This document is uploaded to EUCLID notes record with induction information for all new students)**

### Your Personal Tutor

Your Personal Tutor will be a member of 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: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/personal-tutor/overview>

### Undergraduate Students

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 your School 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 as required throughout your time at the University.

As a new or continuing student you will have a meeting with your Personal Tutor during Welcome Week to select your elective courses and you will have an individual meeting each semester in all years of your degree. Your individual meetings will take place between weeks 5 to 7 each semester and will be organised by your Personal Tutor or Student Support Coordinator. Your meetings will be summarised within your student record. Group meetings will be determined by the requirements of your degree programme; in earlier years they may focus on developing your study skills, and in the honours years they may focus more on research skills.

You may contact their Personal Tutor via your student record or via email to request an additional meeting to discuss academic progression. For any urgent matters affecting your ability to attend class or complete assessment please contact your Student Support Coordinator.

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).

## **Postgraduate Taught Students**

As a postgraduate taught student you will have a welcome meeting during Welcome Week, and 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 phase of the programme. The meetings during the taught part of your programme will take place during weeks 5 to 7 during the semester and between May and July for the dissertation focused meeting. Your Personal Tutor or Programme Secretary will schedule your meetings, which will focus on career development to support your next steps. Your meetings will be summarised within your student record.

Students can contact their Personal Tutor via their student record or via email to request an additional meeting to discuss academic progression. For any urgent matters affecting your ability to attend class or complete assessment please contact your Programme Secretary.

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. The timing of your online-based meetings should be planned during your application to study outside of Edinburgh. 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 two group meetings (in the taught part of your degree programme) and other activities designed to support your development as a member of an academic community.

## **Distance Learning**

If you are registered on distance learning based programme, including the PG Certificate in Global Environmental Challenges or Climate Change Management you will have a Personal Tutor who will review your academic progress on all three courses. Your Personal Tutor will contact you requesting a meeting via Skype or equivalent after your first assignment on each course has been returned to you. This will enable you to review your feedback and reflect on your progression.

## **Peer Support**

Our GeoPALS Peer Support group is also available and we'd encourage you to get involved as this is a great way to engage with other students on your programme:

- More information can be found at: <http://geopals.weebly.com>
- To get involved please contact your Student Support Coordinator

- Information about other Peer Support activities across the University can be found at the following link: [EUSA Peer Support](#)

## 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. The **first point of contact** for students is your **Student Support Coordinator** who is responsible for all aspects of pastoral care:

Emma Latto ([Emma.Latto@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Emma.Latto@ed.ac.uk))

Student Support Coordinator (Earth Sciences and Ecological and Environmental Sciences)  
Room 337 Grant Institute  
King's Buildings

Cathy Campbell and Katy McPhail ([ssc-geography@geos.ed.ac.uk](mailto:ssc-geography@geos.ed.ac.uk))

Student Support Coordinators (Geography)  
Room 2.09 Drummond Street  
Central Campus

Our Student Support Coordinators will upload all induction information and our Student Support Handbook to your student record so you can retain these throughout your study. Our Personal Tutors aimed to reply to your emails within three working days, however, there are times when Personal Tutors may be on fieldwork. In these cases, an alternative contact will be given to deal with your inquiry.

Your Student Support Coordinator is available by drop-in or appointment requested within your student record or via email, and can assist you with a number of matters, including:

- First point of contact for pastoral care
- Guidance on degree regulations and requirements
- Information on submission deadlines and procedures, requests for deferred submission of course work
- Requests for Special Circumstances for degree course work or exams
- Uploading of progression and organising of progression focused meetings with the Senior/Deputy Personal Tutor
- Processing of degree programme transfers or requesting an interruption of studies
- Student Staff Liaison Committee
- Procedures for applying to study abroad
- UK Border Agency or other visa issues (where applicable)
- Requests for reference to confirm student status and non-academic reference letters
- Advice on support for personal, health issues and accommodation problems
- Assisting Personal Tutors in organising and planning individual, group and additional meetings

The Student Support Coordinators use the Notes facility with your student record to document updates and outcome information (confidentiality is a priority). To request a change of Personal Tutor please contact your Student support Coordinator who can discuss your options with you.

The Senior and Deputy Senior Personal Tutors have oversight of the Personal Tutor system in the School of GeoSciences, and will be involved academic progression and special circumstance outcomes:

### **Undergraduate**

Dr Caroline Nichol ([Caroline.Nichol@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Caroline.Nichol@ed.ac.uk))

Senior Personal Tutor (Earth Sciences and Ecological and Environmental Sciences)

Dr Dan Swanton ([Dan.Swanton@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Dan.Swanton@ed.ac.uk))

Deputy Senior Personal Tutor (Geography)

### **Postgraduate/Distance Learning**

TBC (email)

Director of Postgraduate Teaching/Postgraduate Senior Personal Tutor

If you would like to provide feedback or discuss any concerns you may have about our the support services available in the School of GeoSciences please contact:

Sarah McAllister ([Sarah.McAllister@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Sarah.McAllister@ed.ac.uk))

Head of Student Services

School of GeoSciences

0131 650 4917

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/geosciences/teaching-organisation/to-overview>