

Personal Tutor Policy 2020-21

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1 Scope, Aim and Context of this Policy

- 1.1 LAMDA believes that Personal Tutoring plays an important role in enhancing the student experience and, specifically, in student retention and achievement.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to set out details of LAMDA's approach to providing Personal Tutoring for students. This policy is supported by training and written guidance for staff, which is provided to Personal Tutors from the Student Journey & Academic Services staff.
- 1.3 This policy needs to be understood in the context that LAMDA is committed to offering an equal, fair, and inclusive environment for all students and staff in which the rights and dignity of every individual are respected. LAMDA is a centre of excellence for world-leading drama training and is the oldest drama school in the UK, offering exceptional vocational training to actors, stage managers, directors, and technicians, regardless of background or economic circumstances. LAMDA believes that the dramatic arts have the power to transform lives.
- 1.4 The guidance in this policy covers all staff and students who train or work at LAMDA. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity outlined here should underpin how staff approach the Personal Tutor role.
- 1.5 This policy is non-contractual and may be updated at any time.
- 1.6 This policy will be made widely available to all staff and students in order that they are aware of their entitlements and responsibilities regarding personal tuition.
- 1.7 LAMDA is committed to providing equality of opportunity, so in Personal Tutorials staff and students have a right to be treated fairly and not to be subjected to unlawful discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristic:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender identity (a personal sense of one's own gender. This can correspond to or differ from the sex we are assigned at birth)
 - marriage or civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race including colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origins
 - religion or belief including philosophical belief and a lack of belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- 1.8 LAMDA does not tolerate any behaviours which may be classed as discriminatory or bullying towards any individual, and this covers group and private tutorials. LAMDA is committed to ensuring that both student and staff policies provide clear statements and procedures for addressing discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The Personal Tutor relationship must operate in line with these expectations and policies.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 LAMDA defines Personal Tutoring as:

The provision of support to students by a named Personal Tutor. The Tutor acts as a first port of call to assist students with matters relating to their personal development and progress as appropriate. The Personal Tutor can also signpost and encourage student to access academic, professional, and other forms of specialist support during their studies.

2.2 The Personal Tutor role does not cover giving feedback or advice on academic or professional matters. The Tutor can support tutees to contact Academic Tutors, and professional development staff as required.

3 Key Principles

3.1 The key principles are:

- All students are entitled to a named Personal Tutor
- All students should normally meet their Tutor at least once a term
- Staff are given training and ongoing support opportunities to understand how to be an effective Personal Tutor
- Students and staff should be treated with dignity and respect in tutorials
- The institution-wide procedures around complaints, non-academic misconduct and expectations around professional conduct set out in LAMDA's policies and handbooks apply to Personal Tutoring
- Staff and students should set mutual expectations and clear boundaries around when, how and with whom to share any information discussed
- The Personal Tutoring system should be adaptable to students' needs
- Personal Tutoring should support the personal development of students as appropriate
- Personal Tutoring should make full use of appropriate technologies.

4 Personal Tutor Allocation

4.1 All students are allocated a named Personal Tutor. The Tutor will be a member of LAMDA's staff but may be selected from any of our departments.

4.2 Students are notified of the Personal Tutor details as soon as possible after enrolment each year.

4.3 If a Personal Tutor leaves the organisation the Personal Tutee will be allocated another Personal Tutor as soon as possible. Decisions about which members of staff shall perform the role of Personal Tutor will be the responsibility of the Dean of the Drama School.

4.4 Students may ask to change their Personal Tutor; such requests will be considered by the Dean of the Drama School and granted if there are reasonable grounds for doing so. If the Dean is the Tutor the request can be forwarded to the Student Engagement and Quality Manager for consideration.

5 What Students can Expect of Personal Tutors

5.1 As a minimum, Personal Tutors will be expected to:

- Initiate a first meeting and subsequent meetings with Personal Tutees using their official LAMDA email and meet with their Personal Tutees at least once per term, whether on a 1-2-1 basis or as part of a group
- Read and operate with an awareness of any Learning Agreements, action plans, and key policies and procedures to offer an inclusive and safe service
- Ensure that mutual expectations are discussed and set from the outset, including preferred methods of communication, preferred pronouns and name, and any boundaries around sharing information with other staff

- Communicate with other staff as required, being mindful of the boundaries of confidentiality and GDPR requirements so that academic and support staff work holistically with students
- Maintain regular communication with each of their designated Personal Tutees
- Keep records of communications with Personal Tutees within the confines of GDPR and confidentiality boundaries
- Follow up on Personal Tutees who have engaged with them for specific advice or support within an agreed timeframe
- Support and assist students in their personal development, planning and progress
- Ensure that Personal Tutees who have declared disabilities feel safe and empowered to engage with personal tuition in a format that suits their needs
- Refer students to other specialist sources of support as needed, and understand where a safeguarding/PREVENT issue needs to be reported
- Make full use of appropriate technologies in carrying out their role as Personal Tutor
- Undertake staff development on Personal Tutoring as required.

6 What Personal Tutors Can Expect of Students

6.1 As a minimum, students will be expected to:

- Maintain regular communication with their Personal Tutor, including responding to meeting requests using their official LAMDA email
- Contact their Personal Tutor if any issues arise that may affect their personal development or be a risk to their progress or continuation on the programme
- Act on the recommendations and advice offered by their Personal Tutor
- Understand and respect the fact that there are limits to the remit of Personal Tutors, for example, they are not trained counsellors and, depending on the nature of the issue, may need to refer them to other specialist sources of support
- Assist in keeping records of communication, and allowing tutors to share key updates with other staff as needed
- Follow the agreed methods and times of communication with the Tutor and respect boundaries.

6.2 In any tutorial setting all staff and students must uphold LAMDA's standards in terms of being respectful, polite and operate within our expectations regarding inclusivity of people from any race, gender or background. In particular, staff and students should refer to our online guidance about being an Anti-Racist organisation. The [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#) and [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#) should also be consulted. Students are also issued a code of conduct within their Handbooks and this should also inform how they approach staff in tutorials.

6.3 LAMDA is responsible for investigating any reported incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying, fairly and consistently within the timeframes laid out in the relevant disciplinary policies cited above. This is inclusive of incidents within tutorial settings.

6.4 If a student experiences any discriminatory, bullying, or negative behaviour, including micro-aggressions within a personal tutorial, they should report this to the Student Engagement and Quality Manager for advice in the first instance. Alternatively, if something has made a student feel uncomfortable in a tutorial - from either a peer or member of staff – they can report it anonymously online. This includes micro-aggressions, or any form of discriminatory behaviour experienced. Students can speak out as an ally to report issues that have affected others. Students can [report confidential issues here](#) (form opens in new browser) so that issues can be raised with anonymity.

6.5 Staff should contact the Human Resources department for advice in the first instance if they experience any unprofessional conduct from their tutees.

7 Training

7.1 LAMDA is committed to offering any required Continuing Professional Development/ basic training so that staff can comply with and embed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion principles into their working practices (for example indirect/direct discrimination and unconscious bias awareness). This also underpins our approach to Personal Tutoring.

7.2 LAMDA will provide support to new Personal Tutors (e.g. staff may request mentoring support by an experienced colleague via the Student Engagement and Quality Manager or email them for additional guidance at any point during the academic year). The Head of Student Journey & Academic Services will also ensure that staff are able to fulfil the role, by ensuring that existing Tutors are kept informed of relevant changes both within LAMDA and as necessitated by external developments. This will include:

- LAMDA's arrangements to meet the Prevent duty, and safeguarding more generally
- the requirements of data protection legislation
- LAMDA's provision for student counselling
- LAMDA's provision for supporting students with specific learning disabilities.

8 Measuring Success

8.1 LAMDA must ensure that we offer accessible and appropriate forums to offer feedback on pastoral tutoring. This includes the Student Staff Liaison Committee, our confidential online report systems, and direct comments to the Pastoral Tutor which can be escalated to the Student Engagement and Quality Manager.

8.2 Students will be invited to provide regular qualitative feedback via the Student Staff Liaison Committees termly and offer quantitative responses in yearly internal and external student surveys. Feedback will be fed into action plans and annual monitoring reports as required by Student Journey & Academic Services staff to help LAMDA develop the training and delivery related to Personal Tutoring each year.

9 Key Contacts

9.1 In the first instance, to access support or raise a question about Personal Tutors at LAMDA please report this to Harrison Collett Harrison.collett@lamda.ac.uk or the Student Engagement and Quality Manager Sarah Evans sarah.evans@lamda.ac.uk.

9.2 Amy Richardson amy.richardson@lamda.ac.uk is a central point of contact who can signpost staff and students towards specialist advice related to pastoral support on request. Any member of Student Journey & Academic Services staff can signpost you towards key policies and procedures, or help an individual locate specialist support on matters related to student welfare and wellbeing.

VERSION CONTROL: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Academic Board has responsibility for approval of any amendments to this policy and for keeping all such academic policies under regular review. The owner of the policy is the Student Engagement and Quality Manager.

Version: 2 (2020 Review)

Approved: September 2020

Approved by: Academic Board and Student Engagement and Quality Manager

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