Definition
At Heriot-Watt University, the term ‘personal tutoring’ describes the scheme whereby a member of academic staff is assigned to an individual student to provide the first point of contact for those who require advice or assistance on both academic and non-academic matters (with advice on referral to professional service sections where relevant for non-academic matters).

Personal Tutoring is one element of the University’s student support system.

Expectation
All students must be assigned a named member of academic staff as their personal tutor, whom they can contact in relation to a range of academic or pastoral matters.

Responsibilities of the Personal Tutor
- To advise tutees of their availability. For campus based students, personal tutors should offer times for face to face meetings, for example, during office hours or by appointment.
- To be pro-active in making contact with students, having particular regard for differing degrees of need and those making the biggest transition, for example: new undergraduate entrants; those moving from one environment/country to another; and those perceived to be at risk of disengaging from their studies through absence or poor performance in assessments.
- To be pro-active in making contact with students at critical points, for example: at the point of entry, with induction and setting up lines of communication; during the initial period of studying in a new environment; if poor performance in assessments is a concern; or where personal difficulties are highlighted (with advice on referral to professional service sections).
- To be aware of and advise tutees on further relevant sources of professional advice and information available within the University. Tutees who have a disability, including medical or mental health conditions or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, should be referred to the relevant section where there is expertise, such as Student Wellbeing/Student Support Services; Student Success Advisors; or the designated School Disability Contact. Contact information can be found on the University’s Health and Wellbeing webpages.
https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing.htm

Training and Guidance for Personal Tutors
- Training is mandatory for all staff in the personal tutor role.
- The Personal Tutor Handbook provides a global resource for all personal tutors at Heriot-Watt and includes such information as suggested discussion topics and relevant University policies.
- Personal Tutors can also consult the Quick Referral Guide for Personal Tutors for their campus.

Contact Points: New UG (year 1 and direct entrants), new PGT Full-Time and Year 1 Part-time students
- Welcome Week: Students find out about personal tutoring as part of induction.
- By the end of teaching week 2
- Pre-assessment: week 8/9
- Post-assessment: early in semester 2.

Contact Points: Continuing UG, PGT Year 2 Part-Time students
- By the end of teaching week 5
- Post assessments: early in semester 2

Tutees can be invited to other meetings throughout the year and may request meetings at other times if they have concerns; they don’t have to wait until the next scheduled meeting.

References and Further Information
Contact: K_MacAskill@hw.wc.uk
Personal Tutoring Handbook:
http://www1.hw.ac.uk/mediaservices/pageflip/SS/Personal_tutor_handbook_2018/
Quick Referral Guides for Personal Tutors are available on Vision under Key Staff Information and via any HWU staff computer: go to Start, All Programmes, HW Personal Tutoring.
Learning and Teaching Policies and Procedures:
http://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm

Learning and Teaching Briefing Papers
This briefing paper has been produced by Student Wellbeing Services and is one of a series related to Learning and Teaching. The briefing papers aim to provide a concise, informative overview of key policies, and include links to relevant procedures and templates.