



Paper session 2: Tuesday 21st April, 15.40 – 16.30

2a Personal tutoring in the 21st Century

i) A Brave New World. Sue Riddell, Canterbury Christ Church University, England

When undertaking the inter-professional pre-Registration programme in the Faculty of Health & Social Care a considerable amount of time is spent on placement away from the University. The personal tutor is potentially the one constant source of support for students during the three years. Developing a new curriculum gave the opportunity to make some significant changes to the interface between personal tutor and student in order to enable the relationship to develop quickly and effectively and to facilitate a stronger academic advisor role than at present. This presentation will describe a theme that has been created within the programme which will be facilitated by the personal tutor to his/her own group of tutees and will comprise three 20 credit modules each spread over the academic year.

ii) Student support: critical reflections on structured personal tutor support in undergraduate healthcare programmes. Tessa Watts, Swansea University, Wales.

When set against the policy concerns of student retention and completion and in the wake of the socio-cultural and economic pressures experienced by undergraduates, the need for effective student support has never been greater. Undergraduates on healthcare programmes with a practice based learning component face additional challenges of navigating diverse care environments whilst simultaneously developing and demonstrating professional values. For these students continuing personal tutor support is imperative. Indeed to minimise attrition and maximise retention whilst ensuring students are enabled to develop the requisite professional knowledge, skills and attitudes such support should be actively embraced.

2b Models of supporting student success

i) Academic Advising and Personal Tutoring: Success for All? Rosemary Skordoulis and Baqur Nakavi, London Metropolitan University, England.

This paper supports academic advising as an important and useful role academic teachers can fulfil. Academic advising cannot only influence students' academic and career choices, but can also play a critical role in creating and facilitating a productive academic culture among teaching staff within a departmental and university-wide context. This working paper examines the role academic advising plays within a large metropolitan university in the UK and aims to start a dialogue about the connections between academic advising and student success and the mentoring roles faculty and students can play within university departments. As this research is to be viewed as work in progress to be extended across the whole university at a later stage, this paper is limited to presenting the initial findings from surveying faculty in the business school.

ii) The Role of the Personal Advisors at Aston Business School. Catherine Foster, Aston University, England.

Aston Business School has moved away from a traditional Personal Tutoring model to the



Personal Advisor model. During 2006, a review was undertaken of the existing system and proposed the new scheme. This session will present the current model of supporting students within Aston Business School's Undergraduate Programme. It will discuss the research undertaken at the beginning of the change process which informed the decisions and structure of the Personal Advisor Scheme. It will also present evaluation research undertaken with students into their perceptions of the new scheme. The session will conclude with the plans for the future.

2c Identifying students at risk

i) Attendance monitoring as a trigger for student support. Debra Bevitt, Newcastle University, England.

In 2006, the School of Biomedical Sciences, Newcastle University, appointed two academic staff members as "Phase 1 advisors". Their role is to identify students who experience difficulties during the early stages of their university career and to offer them additional support. The Phase 1 advisors perform 3 functions: firstly, they monitor attendance at laboratory practical sessions and seminars and interview absentees with the aim of identifying any underlying problems. They also interview students failing exams at the end of Semester 1 and offer additional support if needed. Finally they act as a back-up to the personal tutor system. This paper will present an evaluation of the impact of the Phase 1 advisor system on attendance, retention and exam performance among 1st year students.

ii) PASS tutorial system: Addressing the challenges of transition to university and providing a safety net through pro-active personal tutoring. Susan Robbins, Oxford Brookes University, England.

On entering university students face many transitions and often have unrealistic academic expectations. Personal and Academic Support System (PASS) supports students during their first year through group tutorials with their Personal Tutor. The programme provides study skills-related activities helping students in their academic work and facilitating understanding of academic expectations at university. Tutorials encourage the development of staff-student and student-student relationships that help students to settle and benefit from university life. Students who approach their tutor with personal issues are referred to me for help. I meet them, listen, then we work out an appropriate way forward. Complex problems are referred on to professionals in Student Services. Student retention has improved by 10% since PASS began.

2d Developing students through tutoring

i) Leeds for Life: Inspiring Our Students to Develop Their Full Potential. Penny Robinson, University of Leeds, England.

An interactive website, Leeds for Life (an entitlement for all taught students), helps them to develop, reflect on and confidently describe the skills and attributes they gain while at Leeds. Thinking about their academic and co-curricular experience as a whole is key, and distinguishes this from similar resources elsewhere. We aim to ensure that Leeds graduates are characterized by their confident ability to articulate their attributes and skills and how these have been derived from their academic education in a particular discipline and from their participation in other activities. The paper examines student reaction to the website in its first six months of operation, determined via a quantitative survey of Joint Honours personal tutees. Future work is mapped, demonstrating planned links with the Leeds Model for Personal Tutoring.



ii) Personal study planning in doctoral education. Katja Lahenius, Helsinki University of Technology, Finland.

In doctoral education in the Nordic countries, besides their dissertation thesis students are required to conduct 30-60 credits of studies, which they can compile in a personal, unique manner. This study focuses on the implementation of personal study planning (PSP) for doctoral education. Material consists of a questionnaire study and returned PSP forms. This study will contribute by reporting topical evidence on the difficulties and benefits of adopting personal study planning for doctoral education, and highlighting the usefulness of personal study plans as a tool increasing communication between faculty and doctoral students. We discuss how personal study plan can promote the students' individualized studies while at the same time offering the faculty important information on study problems.

2e Centralised or local support?

i) Supporting learners through the development of a Student Experience Enhancement Unit. Ian Dunn and Irene Glendinning, Coventry University, England.

The aim of this paper is to present the development of a unit within the Faculty of Engineering and Computing at Coventry University that is designed to enhance the experience. The service is staffed by a team of Student Advocates who are trained to work with their peers and assist in the resolution of issues as diverse as academic matters, timetables, finance, accommodation, disabled student support and many others. The team also conduct surveys and focus groups for academic staff to enhance course design and development and the student experience. Current experience is positive and the team are resolving issues that previously would have resulted in difficult outcomes for students.

ii) Fit for purpose: an institutional approach to student personal support. Karen Fitzgibbon, University of Glamorgan, Wales.

Following a review of the arrangements for personal tutoring at the case study university, a new framework for delivering student personal support has been established. Rather than a 'one size fits all' approach, the framework devolves responsibility for delivery of minimum expectations to faculties (departments). The framework strengthens the whole-institutional approach to student support which includes Student Advice Centres (located in each faculty) that have made a significant contribution to student support acting as 'one stop shop' providers of academic and pastoral care, as well as making referral to the central Student Services teams. This paper will present the factors considered in the development of the advising model from literature and experience and offer some reflections on the process, including student and staff feedback.

2f Creating a Professional Development Program for Personal Tutoring
Workshop by Charlie Nutt, Executive Director of NACADA and Dr Jayne Drake, Temple University and incoming NACADA President, USA.

Personal tutors have the desire to provide the highest quality support to their students as possible but often have not been given the tools, strategies, and/or information they need to do so. This workshop will outline the steps for creating and implementing effective professional development programs for personal tutoring. The presenters will provide key elements that all personal tutors need to be made aware of as well as steps



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in how to coordinate a comprehensive program. In addition, presenters will share with the participants the NACADA resources they can utilize in their professional development programs.

