Welcome to the new Academic session!

The aim of this document is to provide you with an overview of the personal tutoring arrangements in Edinburgh Law School.

**The Benefits of the Personal Tutor system**

By working in partnership with your Personal Tutor and Teaching Staff you will be supported to:

- Become a confident learner in your discipline and play an active part in your academic community.
- Reflect on your academic progress and your effective use of 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, as well as other sources of support at the University, can be found at the following link: [Your Personal Tutor system](#)

**How your School will deliver these Benefits – Undergraduate Students**

As an undergraduate student you will have a number of individual meetings with your Personal Tutor, together with a number of group meetings throughout your degree programme.

**One-to-one Meetings:**

**Year 1:**
Every student will be assigned an appointment time in their welcome letter and will see his or her Personal Tutor in Welcome Week. This meeting is compulsory for students, and it will last about 15 minutes: its purpose will be to confirm attendance and to ensure that students are registered for the portfolio of courses linked to their specific degree programme (including optional courses worth 40 credits in total for single honours LLB students, and courses taken in other Schools for students on mixed honours programmes).

First year students will have a further one-to-one meeting with their Personal Tutors early in semester 2: this meeting will be pre-arranged by the Student Support Office and is compulsory for all students. The aim of the meeting will be to reflect on and discuss overall progress (including a review of exam results and the outcome of first semester formative assessments), and put in place further mechanisms of support where necessary. After the meeting students will be required to make a brief note of the meeting using the EUCLID ‘notes and minutes’ facility.

**Year 2:**
Students will have a one-to-one meeting with their Personal Tutor at the beginning of semester 1 in order to confirm their attendance, seek guidance in choosing any optional courses, and review academic progress. This meeting is compulsory for all students and will last around 10/15 minutes. A sheet detailing times for meetings will be posted on the door of each Personal Tutor. Students are required to sign up for a meeting as follows: (i) those with progression
issues (through failed or missed examinations, or who are returning after an interruption of studies) must see their Personal Tutors during Welcome week. The Student Support Office will contact these students in advance to remind them about the need for an early meeting;
(ii) All other students must meet their Personal Tutors by the end of week 1.

At the beginning of semester 2, all second year students will be contacted (via email) by the Student Support Office: they will be invited to contact their personal tutors to discuss (by telephone, email, or a face-to-face meeting) any questions arising from their performance to date or any other matter relating to their studies. Students experiencing problems relating to their academic progress (for example through failed or missed assessments) will be contacted separately by the SSO and will be asked to sign up for a meeting via the sign-up sheet affixed to the office door of the Personal Tutor. This meeting is compulsory and will aim to put in place further support mechanisms where relevant.

**Years 3 and 4:**
Students will be invited to sign up for a meeting with their Personal Tutor at the beginning of semester 1 in order to confirm attendance, and to discuss progress and other related matters. This meeting is compulsory for all students and will last approximately 10/15 minutes. A sheet detailing times for meetings will be posted on the door of each Personal Tutor. Students are required to sign up for a meeting as follows: (i) those with progression issues (through failed or missed examinations, or who are returning after an interruption of studies) must see their Personal Tutors during Welcome week. The Student Support Office will contact these students in advance to remind them about the need for an early meeting; (ii)  All other students must meet their Personal Tutors by the end of week 1.

At the beginning of semester 2, all students will be contacted by email by the Student Support Office: they will be invited to contact their personal tutors to discuss (by telephone, email, or a face-to-face meeting) any questions arising from their performance to date or any other matter relating to their studies. Students experiencing problems relating to their academic progress will be contacted separately by the SSO and will be asked to sign up for a meeting via the sign-up sheet affixed on the office door of the Personal Tutors. In advance of the meetings, students will send a short statement concerning their performance, so that it can form the basis for the discussion of the student’s needs and future progression and remedial plans.

**In addition to the set meetings, students can request an appointment with their Personal Tutor at any time during the academic year, by using the online tool provided by Euclid or by using email.**

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).

**Group Meetings:**
The dates and venues for all group meetings will be announced in Welcome week.

**Year 1:**
First year students will have three group meetings during the academic year as follows:
(i) Semester 1, around week 7: a whole year group meeting (lasting one hour) on acquiring and strengthening examination skills in Private Law subjects led by Katy MacFarlane.
(ii) Semester 1, around week 11: a group meeting convened by Personal Tutors (lasting approximately 45 minutes) to discuss questions arising from the ‘Private Law Skills’ session and any other matters arising from the semester thus far.
(iii) Semester 2, around week 9: a whole year group meeting (lasting one hour) on addressing the challenges of a Public Law examination.
Year 2:
Second year students will attend a minimum of three group meetings during the academic year, the focus of these meetings will vary according to the programme on which students are registered.

LLB honours programme (single or mixed honours)
The first group meeting in semester 1, will take the form of a “welcome back lecture”, led by the Head of School and the Director for Undergraduate Studies. It will last approximately 30 minutes and will be followed by refreshments and informal conversation with fellow students, and other members of staff. This will be arranged by the Student Support Office and advertised widely among returning students.

Students on mixed honours Law and Modern Languages will attend a group meeting in Week 2 of Semester 1 to gather information on their Year Abroad; this meeting is also open to any other student interested in undertaking an academic exchange (study abroad) in year 3.

All students on the honours programme will also attend, in week 1, a group meeting about career development led by Kay Barbour from the Careers Service.

In Semester 2, students who will not be studying abroad in year 3, will attend a group meeting in week 8 on the topic of “Progressing on to Honours and choosing Honours subjects”; this will be led by the Director of Teaching and the Senior Tutor will be in attendance to assist with any questions.

Students who will be studying abroad in year 3, will attend a bespoke group meeting led by the International Director and Exchange Co-ordinator within the Law School,

Graduate LLB (accelerated degree)
In semester 1, the students enrolled in the Graduate LLB programme will be invited to attend a bespoke welcome-back lecture, also arranged and advertised by the SSO, which will last approximately one hour and will address questions concerning career planning and access to the legal profession.

The Graduate LLB students will also attend, in week 1, a group meeting on careers led by Kay Barbour from the Careers Service.

Graduate LLB students will also be invited to a social gathering at the end of semester 2, to celebrate the end of their degree.

Year 3 and 4:
Students on the honours programme will have two group meetings during the academic year. The semester 1 group meeting will take the form of a "welcome back lecture", led by the Head of School and the Director for Undergraduate Studies. It will last approximately 30 minutes and will be followed by refreshments and informal conversation with fellow students and other members of staff. This will be arranged by the Student Support Office and advertised widely among returning students.

Years 3 and 4 students will also attend, in week 1, a group meeting on careers led by Kay Barbour from the Careers Service.

For year 3 students, the semester 2 group meeting will be led by the Convenor of the Dissertation module and will focus on “how to choose a topic and write a dissertation”. The meeting will last for an hour; the Senior Tutor and other members of staff will be in attendance for the purpose of answering any questions students may have; this will also provide students
with an opportunity to meet with a wider cohort of members of academic staff for the purpose of finding out more about specific subjects and possible topics.

For year 4 students, the semester 2 group meeting will take the form of a social gathering after the hand-in of the dissertation: everyone is welcome to celebrate this important moment.

**Peer Support:**

Peer Support activities are also available to every campus-based undergraduate. We would encourage you to get involved with these as they are a great way to engage with other students.

**LawPALS** is Edinburgh Law School's Peer Assisted Learning Scheme designed to help you adapt to studying law and, for four-year students, studying at university. Every first year LLB student is automatically assigned to a LawPALS Group which meets weekly for an hour a week through the first semester. Groups are led by trained third and fourth year Student Leaders who are there to help you navigate life at law school.

Year 3 and Year 4 students who spent their year 3 abroad will also be given the opportunity to participate in LawPALS Honours, a series of student-led, large group sessions run over Semester 1 and 2.

Further information can be found at: [http://www.lawpals.law.ed.ac.uk/](http://www.lawpals.law.ed.ac.uk/)

Information about other Peer Support activities across the University can be found at the following link: [EUSA Peer Support](http://www.lawpals.law.ed.ac.uk/)

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**Student Support Organisational Structure – Who to Contact?**

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

**Academic and Pastoral support**

Senior Tutor: Prof Lesley McAra; she can also be contacted via the Student Support Office.

The Student Support Team: Ms Anne King (Student Support Officer) and Miss Georgina Donovan (Student Support Assistant).

The Student Support Office is located in Room G.140A and is open on a drop-in basis from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday.

Who to contact?

Pastoral and administrative support: the SSO will be your first ‘port-of-call’ for most queries concerning course and programme registration and access to University services; they also provide references for bank account and landlord purposes. The Office staff can deal with most questions directly and, unless they can do so on the spot, will endeavour to address them within 5 working days. For any other matters, you should contact your personal tutor, by phoning or emailing him or her and, if required, for arranging an appointment. Your personal
tutor will endeavour to respond to your query as soon as possible and in any event within five working days of the initial query being made.

IMPORTANT: if you feel that your studies overall or your examination or assessment performance has been affected by events beyond your control (such as illness or bereavement), you should contact the SSO or your personal tutor in good time to discuss these matters. Please note that sending a message to your personal tutor via the EUCLID 'Notes and Meetings' channel and concerning matters potentially constituting special circumstances will not be regarded a sufficient for your personal tutor to make a plea on your behalf to this effect: you must contact him or her directly (or the SSO) to have a discussion, provide evidence and take the appropriate steps for this purpose.

Academic support and guidance, including academic references: your personal tutor will be best placed to discuss these matters with you and provide advice and guidance.

What to do if the student wishes to change personal tutors?

Personal tutor allocation is a very delicate matter of which the Senior Tutor, in consultation with the Head of School and the assistance of the SSO, is responsible. Requests for changes made by students are an exceptional matter and can only be accommodated as a concession and not an entitlement, upon showing of objectively serious grounds. Students may submit a request in writing to the Senior Tutor by submitting it (either directly or via email) to the Student Support Office. The Senior Tutor, acting in consultation with the Head of School, will provide a decision within ten working days of the request being lodged.