UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Guidelines on the University's Personal Tutor System

Principles

1) *Each department must have in place systems for supporting students in relation to:*

- *Regular pastoral care*
- *Personal development planning*
- *Crisis support*

2) *The responsibility for initiating contact in respect of pastoral care and PDP lies with the department. The responsibility for initiating contact in respect of crisis support lies with the student, but on the understanding that clear arrangements are in place to facilitate that contact.*

3) *Personal tutors must be supported by the provision of up-to-date briefing and support material (provided annually by the central administration and central services), by the induction of new staff into the role, and by relevant on-going staff development, including regular departmental briefings.*

Pastoral Care

4) *Each student must be allocated a personal tutor at the start of their programme. The department must notify the student and the University Registry of this allocation, and of any subsequent alterations. The department must also publish in the departmental handbook the procedures whereby students can apply to change their tutor.*

5) *The allocation of individuals to the role of personal tutor can be undertaken in one of the following ways:*

- *an approximately equal distribution of students across all the department's academic staff*
- *the distribution of students across some of the department's academic staff (excluding, for example, Admissions Tutors and the Examinations Officer –in this scheme, personal tutoring would be factored into the department's system of allocating duties and managing staff time)*
- *the identification of programme leaders as personal tutors (this is a strategy which is particularly applicable to Master's programmes but might be useful for small undergraduate programmes or small departments generally)*

6) *In addition, staff may be identified as 'Senior Tutors', who have general oversight over the department's tutorial system, and specific responsibilities for certain aspects of pastoral care.*

7) *The personal tutor should:*

- *establish initial contact with their new students through group or individual meetings at the beginning of the academic year; this should be regarded as the single most important element in establishing the basis of a sound tutor: tutee relationship*
- *once a semester, either arrange one-to-one meetings with tutees or establish and publish meeting times and 'office hours' (such arrangements to be included in departmental handbooks and displayed on notice boards)*
- *issue written invitations to attend such meetings, with a reminder that tutors are in a position to advise and guide at all times, not just when difficulties occur('written' here include e-mail and/or communication via Blackboard)*
- *attend meetings, where required, in any circumstances where the performance of their tutees is being discussed (Faculty Boards, progress committees, boards of examiners, special cases committees, etc.)*
- *wherever circumstances allow, respond positively to requests from tutees for assistance in understanding departmental or University procedures, and engage in personal advocacy to support students*
- *refer students to the University's central support systems as necessary*
- *undertake such other duties relating to student support as may be determined by the Head of Department (for example, the provision of references).*

Crisis support

8) *Departments must also have an agreed and published arrangement for dealing with students requiring immediate advice or assistance; this means that when a personal tutor is not available, there should be a clear default position. This could be a senior tutor or the Head of Department.*

Personal Development Planning

9) *Personal development planning is something which students have to undertake on their own behalf, but it must be actively supported by departments; this support should be provided by collaboration between the departmental PDP co-ordinators, departmental careers tutors, module conveners and personal tutors, and should be undertaken, where possible, by combining existing opportunities in the curriculum for reflection and self-awareness with some group and individual meetings.*