



UNIVERSITY OF WALES INSTITUTE, CARDIFF | ATHROFA PRIFYSGOL CYMRU, CAERDYDD

UWIC

Cardiff's **metropolitan** university
prifysgol **metropolitan** Caerdydd

PERSONAL TUTOR HANDBOOK FOR STAFF

CONTENTS

(1) Aims of Handbook	1	(8) Relevant Procedures and Policies	10
(2) UWIC Policy on Personal Tuition	1	Data Protection / Confidentiality	10
(3) General Guidelines for Tutors	3	Student Complaints / Appeals	11
(4) Pastoral Support	4	Mitigating Circumstances	12
Disability	4	Withdrawal	12
Careers	4	(9) Other information	13
Finance	4	Fees	13
Accommodation	5	Student Loans	13
Health	5	Writing References	13
Counselling	5	Learning and Teaching Development Unit	13
Day Nursery	6	Staff Development Workshops / Training	13
Chaplaincy	6	Religious Beliefs	13
Student Emergencies	7 - 8	Guidance on Under 18 Students	14
(5) Students' Union	8	(10) Difficult Issues in Tutoring	14
(6) Academic Support	9	Delivering Bad News	14
Learning Centres	9	Failing Students	14
Study Advice	9	Unfair Practice	14
ISD	10	Discipline Issues	14
(7) Specific Student Support	10	Homesickness	14
International Students	10	Well Being and Stress	14
Mature Students	10	(11) Frequently Asked Questions	14
Disabled Students	10	Pastoral Care	14
		Procedural / Policy Issues	15
		Appendices	17

FOREWORD BY THE PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR (LEARNING AND TEACHING)

UWIC has recently undertaken a review of its personal tutorial provision in recognition of the critical role that effective guidance and support plays in enabling students to achieve their full academic potential. This process has involved the explicit articulation of student entitlement to personal tutorial support and the identification of the roles and responsibilities of both the personal tutor and student in the process.

This handbook has been developed to support you in your role as a personal tutor and also provides useful information on a range of other support services available to students in UWIC.

I hope that you find the handbook useful in carrying out this crucial role which is essential in promoting and enhancing student learning.



Jacqui Hare
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)

Acknowledgements

*Thanks are due to the Personal Tuition Task group;
Colleen Connor – Dean of Learning and Teaching
Paul Tanner – Cardiff School of Management
Peter Redding – Cardiff School of Management
Dr Cassie Wilson – Cardiff School of Sport
Dr Paul Sander – Cardiff School of Health Sciences
Julie Piacentini – Cardiff School of Education
Especial thanks go to Dr Cassie Wilson for her hard
work compiling this handbook.*

(1) Aims of Handbook

- To define the roles and responsibilities of a personal tutor
- To raise awareness of the types of issues students may experience
- To provide information on policies and procedures within UWIC relevant to a personal tutor
- To provide information on the student support which exists within UWIC
- To provide practical advice to staff.

(2) UWIC Policy on Personal Tuition

General

- The UWIC personal tuition policy is intended to ensure that all students receive adequate and consistent access to support and guidance whilst undertaking their respective programmes of study.
- It is the responsibility of the Dean of School to ensure that all students have a named personal tutor, that students are made aware of arrangements for scheduled tutorials, and that responsibility for co-ordinating arrangements for the provision of tutorial support within the School is clear.
- The Dean of School should be satisfied that staff involved in the provision of personal tutoring have appropriate training and/or experience.

Student Entitlement

- All students will be allocated a named personal tutor within the first month of commencing their programme at UWIC.
- All students will be provided with a clear statement regarding the role of the personal tutor and their own responsibilities in respect of personal tuition.
- In the event of a tutor leaving or being absent from the university for an extended period of time a second named tutor will be allocated to the student.
- Arrangements for scheduled meetings with personal tutors, including the time and location, will be communicated to students at the beginning of each academic year.
- Scheduled tutorial meetings will occur once per term, as a minimum, and a record of these meetings will be kept by the tutor. An example proforma used to record meetings can be found in Appendix 1.
- If a student is unable to relate to their personal tutor and the situation cannot be resolved they will be allocated another tutor.
- Students can request that personal tuition be provided through the medium of Welsh.

Responsibilities of the Personal Tutor

- Personal tutors will provide help and guidance for students to progress through their programme. This will be achieved by using the tutorial to review students' personal development planning (PDP) unless arrangements for PDP are made in other parts of the programme.

- Personal tutors should act as a gateway to other support services. In particular personal tutors should ascertain whether there are any obstacles to a student's progress and should provide information on available help.
- Wherever possible a student should remain with the same tutor throughout the duration of their study.
- If a student misses a scheduled tuition session without providing a reason the personal tutor should make contact. A standard letter, to inquire whether the student is experiencing any difficulties, will be sent in the first instance (Appendix 2).
- Personal tutors should inform references for students (see Section 9).

Responsibilities of the Student

- The student has a responsibility to attend all scheduled tutorials.
- If they are unable to attend a tutorial they must inform the tutor of the reason for their inability to attend at the earliest possible time.
- The student should undertake any preparation necessary to make full use of the tutorial.

(3) General Guidelines for Tutors

- The role of the personal tutor is not as a counsellor. A personal tutor should provide a base from which appropriate support, from within UWIC and externally, can be referred.

Personal Tutors need to;

- Listen carefully
- Help students explore what possible solutions there may be
- Identify what support students have access to (see section 4-6)
- Assess their own capacity to help by considering;

Does the problem fall within or outside their personal tutor role?

Do they have the skills / time to deal with the problem?

Are they too close to the issue to give appropriate support?

- Explain sensitively the reasons for a referral, encouraging the student to participate in the decision
- Encourage students to self-refer where at all possible.

Doubt about referrals, including who would be the appropriate service or person to refer to, can be clarified by talking to Student Services in confidence. This may include seeking advice on how to address the student's needs when a referral to the appropriate service or person is refused by a student.



(4) Pastoral Support

Services for Students

Disability

The Disability Service based at Llandaff campus in the Student Centre coordinates disability related support. The Disability Service works with individual students to identify issues relating to disability/ dyslexia and university studies. This can include; Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), support needs/adjustments in relation to course, dyslexia screening / identification, study skills tuition, exam and assessment arrangements, referral to other services and information for prospective students.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 applies to students experiencing physical or mental impairments including long term medical conditions and cancer.

If a student discloses a disability to you, you have a legal obligation to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the student is not discriminated against or disadvantaged as a result of their disability. You should therefore advise the student to contact the disability service (disability@uwic.ac.uk) to discuss their requirements with a disability adviser. Experienced disability advisers including a mental health adviser can offer advice and guidance on dealing with issues and types of support available. If a student does not wish to be passed on please ask them to put this in writing to you and this should be placed in the student's file.

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/disability

E-mail: disability@uwic.ac.uk

Phone: 029 2041 6170

Careers

The main Careers Centre is based in A Block Cyncoed Campus. There are drop in sessions and open-access materials at Llandaff (Student Centre), Colchester Avenue (AO.11) and Howard Gardens (Library). The service provides: career guidance; computer aided self-assessment tools; job seeking and graduate recruitment information; help in choosing, changing and leaving a course; further study options; help finding and funding work experience and help finding voluntary work or work abroad. They can also provide help with: preparing CVs and covering letters, completing application forms, preparing for interviews and assessment centres.

For information, students can call into any of the centres to browse, ask a receptionist for advice, attend a drop-in session or ask the information officer. In addition they can arrange interviews with career advisors. There is extensive information on their website and a Careers module is available to all students on Blackboard.

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/careers

E-mail: careers@uwic.ac.uk

Phone: 029 2041 6333

Finance

The Financial Advisory Service offers impartial, confidential and professional advice to students so that they can concentrate on their studies without worrying too much about their finances. The Financial Adviser can advise students on a range of matters such as any funding that is available and where to apply for it, on how becoming a student will affect benefits, on debt management or, indeed, on any other financial problems that students encounter during their time at university.

The Financial Advisory Service is also responsible for administering the Financial Contingency Fund, which is an allocation of money provided by the Welsh Assembly Government each year to help students, who are in financial hardship. Awards from the Fund are not repayable and applications are means-tested on the student's (not family's) income only. Application forms can be downloaded from the website at www.uwic.ac.uk/studentservices/finance/

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/studentservices/finance/
E-mail: financeadvice@uwic.ac.uk
Phone: 029 2041 6170

Accommodation

For any queries related to accommodation, students should contact the accommodation services offices based at Cyncoed Campus. The office is open from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday to Thursday and 8:30 am to 4:00 pm on Fridays.

Contact Information

E-mail: accomm@uwic.ac.uk
Phone: 029 2041 6188 or 6189

Health

UWIC has a team of Nursing Officers, who provide 'drop-in' sessions at each of the four campuses during term-time. They are available to give confidential help and advice on all matters of health and well-being and they organise health education events throughout the year.

The Nurses also act as the first-line of contact for distressed students or for tutors, who need some help or advice in supporting their

students, particularly in emergencies or when there is a waiting list for the Counselling Service. There is also a mental health adviser, based within the Disability team, who can be contacted if you have concerns about a student's behaviour or mental health.

They can be contacted on the following numbers:

Cyncoed Campus Ext: 6175 Monday – Friday
Howard Gardens Ext: 6177 Monday – Friday mornings
Colchester Av Ext: 6178 Monday, Thursday, Friday mornings
Llandaff Campus Ext: 6179 Tuesday and Wednesday mornings
Mental health adviser (Disability Service) Ext: 6170

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday lunch times, UWIC's Medical Officers, who are also local GPs, offer surgeries at Warwick House, Cyncoed Campus, for students registered with their practice. For further information contact UWIC Student Health Service.

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/studentservices/health
Email: healthservice@uwic.ac.uk or studentservices@uwic.ac.uk
Phone: 029 2041 6170

Counselling

During term-time, the Counsellors offer a non-judgemental and highly confidential service to students whose personal, emotional or psychological problems are negatively affecting their learning experience at UWIC.

Counselling sessions are by appointment only and at peak times, there may be a waiting list for appointments. Although the Counselling Service does not routinely provide emergency support, we appreciate that there may be times when students require a more

immediate response to their needs. If you have a specific concern about a student that needs an urgent response, we are able to offer 'fast track' assessment appointments within a short timescale.

In addition to standard appointments, the service offers email counselling (www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/ecounselling/) provision for those students, who may not be comfortable in a face-to-face situation or whose study commitments might prevent them from attending during opening hours.

You can refer students directly or encourage students themselves to make contact with the Service; you can also consult UWIC's core counsellors directly for advice on a range of issues such as your effective support of a student, maintaining appropriate boundaries, appropriate referrals or assessing whether a student is at risk.

The Counsellors can be contacted via the main Student Services' number - 029 2041 6170.

Email counselling is available at www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/ecounselling/

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/counselling/
Phone: 029 2041 6170

Day Nursery

The day nursery facility, situated on the Llandaff campus, caters for 26 children and can be utilised by students from all campuses.

The intake for September is completed in June and an open day for this intake takes place in May. Applications for the following academic year must be made prior to the open day.

Students can apply for funding towards childcare fees from:

- Their LEA – forms for the Childcare Grant need to be completed http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/StudentFinanceFactsheets/DG_10034878

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/daynursery/
E-mail: ppritchard@uwic.ac.uk
Phone: 029 2041 6174

Chaplaincy

UWIC's chaplaincy is a place for those of all faiths and those of none. The Chaplain, Paul Fitzpatrick, is very experienced in working within a wide range of different communities and faith understandings and his role has a strong 'interfaith aspect'. The Chaplain has an unusual role within the university as he can (and will) provide confidential advice and support to all students and staff at any time of the day or night. Paul also leads the universities bereavement care and training program. He is a published author on young person's bereavement and this should be remembered when having to break bad news. The Chaplain is on the 'First Call-out List' for all out of hours significant situations. UWIC is very well provided with 'Sacred Spaces'. There is a newly refurbished Chapel in Cyncoed campus which is open to all. Predominately Christian, the curtains can be drawn to cover the walls so that all faiths (and those who just want a quiet space) may use it. There are dedicated prayer rooms in both Colchester Avenue and Llandaff campuses which are predominately Muslim and there is a developing plan for a sacred space in Howard Gardens as well. All spaces have foot washing facilities and are always open. All spaces may be used by anyone at anytime.

Paul may be contacted on 029 2041 7252 or on 07917 818524. His chaplaincy is based in Cyncoed room A014 in the Career Development Section.

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/chaplaincy/

E-mail: chaplaincy@uwic.ac.uk

Phone: 029 2041 7252 / 07917 818524

Student Emergencies

Support for students

In an emergency, consider who is the most appropriate service to refer the student to. It may be necessary to contact the police, a GP or A&E, or an internal UWIC service. Staff in Student Services can provide advice and guidance on appropriate referrals and will provide any assistance possible, if available to do so. It is also advisable to inform your Dean of School of any action you take.

Student Services is normally open:

Monday – Thursday: 9am – 4.30pm

Friday: 9am – 4.00pm

and can be contacted, by telephone, on 029 2041 6170 or emailed at studentservices@uwic.ac.uk.

If the student is experiencing personal difficulties a referral to the Counselling Service may be appropriate 029 2041 6170. Appointments are normally available Monday – Friday during term time, although there may be times when students require a more proactive response to their immediate needs. For more information, please refer to the section on Counselling.

UWIC's Nursing Officers are able to undertake crisis counselling and will see students from any campus and the mental health adviser is

available for advice and support in emergency or crisis situations. Please see the Health section for contact numbers and availability.

Up to date opening hours of all nursing services are available on the UWIC website at www.uwic.ac.uk/student-services/health/

The UWIC Chaplain has a pastoral role and is available to support students regardless of their religious beliefs. He can be contacted on 029 2041 7252.

Other Useful Contacts

The Samaritans

If a student feels that s/he needs to talk to someone immediately, the Samaritans offer a '24/7' listening service.

Samaritans: 08457 909090 (national) or 029 2034 4022 (local)

Nightline

Nightline is a night time listening service, which is available to UWIC students from 8pm until 8am; it is run by students for students.

Nightline: 029 2022 3993

GP Practices

If you have concerns about a student's health, his/her GP can be contacted.

If the student is not registered with a GP in Cardiff or cannot remember who their GP is, you can contact any GP in the geographical area and request assistance as a temporary patient.

GP practices local to our campuses are:

Fairwater Health Centre Tel: 029 2056 6291 for

Llandaff Campus, Plas Gwyn Halls and Evelian Court Halls.

Minster Road Surgery Tel: 029 2047 3999 (UWIC's Medical Officers) for Cyncoed, Colchester Ave and Howard Gardens Campuses.

Also, in an emergency, UWIC's Medical Officers could be contacted for help and advice at the Minster Road Surgery in Roath on 029 2047 3999.

Check the UWIC website for up-to-date times, or contact UWIC's Nursing Officers or Student Services studentservices@uwic.ac.uk.

Hospital

The student could be taken to the A & E department at the University Hospital of Wales, Heath Park.

Tel: 029 2074 7747

It is important to consider staff safety in these circumstances and, if necessary, an ambulance should be called to transport the student to hospital. (Contact Student Services for more advice on transporting students.)

Police

If you are concerned about the safety of the student or others (e.g. student contemplating suicide or threatening to hurt others or damage property) you should contact the police. It is their duty to ensure, where possible, the safety and security of us all. They also have powers under the Mental Health Act should they feel psychiatric services are required: Police (emergency): 999 (internal phone 9 for outside line then 999)

Police: 029 2022 2111 (you will be connected to your nearest station)

Social Services

For more general concerns about a student's mental health, the local Social Services department can offer advice. An approved mental health social worker is always on duty.

Out of office hours, weekends and Bank holidays the number to call is: 029 2039 6873.

During office hours, the Community Mental Health teams can be contacted for advice; 6 teams cover the Cardiff area but Links in Newport Road will refer you to the appropriate team if necessary. To contact them phone: 029 2033 5555

Support for Staff

Following any incident involving students, the Counsellors, if requested, would be available, where possible, to offer consultative support for any member of staff involved in the incident.

(5) Students' Union

The Students' Union provide a number of services to students which include:

- An advice and representation service:

The Students' Union at UWIC has an Education Officer and a full-time Welfare Adviser housed in its Advice and Representation Centre on the Llandaff Campus. They provide students with a unique free, private and confidential 'drop-in' service covering financial, housing and other welfare issues, as well as advice on academic appeals and complaints. They also provide information on health issues.

- Clubs and Societies:

The Students' Union offers a number of clubs and societies for students, providing a social scene and shared interest activities away from the rigours of study.

If there isn't an existing club or society that captures your interest then the Union welcomes contributions and ideas to broaden the range of interest groups available.

- Sports Clubs and the Athletic Union (AU):

The Students' Union works closely with UWIC to organise all the students' sports teams, which it finances. The sports clubs are essentially student-run, with teams competing in the British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) Championships every year, as well as in local and national leagues where available.

(6) Academic Support

Learning Centres

A Learning Centre is situated at each of the four campuses, providing a range of print-based and electronic services for students. In addition, the learning centres at Cyncoed and Llandaff have large open access IT suites and flexible study rooms for student use. Professional staff provide subject and technical / IT advisory and enquiry services at each learning centre. IT advisors also provide training sessions for students on a variety of applications and technical subjects. All the learning centres provide access to a range of networked computers. Subject advice guides which enable students to find books, journals and e-resources related to their subject are available at www.uwic.ac.uk/library

Students can borrow up to 15 items at a time. Items can be renewed either in person, by telephone or online (www.uwic.ac.uk/library). Students will be notified of overdue materials via email.

Opening times:

Available at: www.uwic.ac.uk/library/about/hours/index.htm

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/library/about/contacts/contacts.htm

Study Advice

- Study Skills

A Learning Support Co-ordinator is based at the Llandaff Campus. Study skills support is being offered to UWIC students this year through three channels: (1) in-course workshops requested by tutors; (2) bookable workshop classes (students should use their Sharepoint portals to access these); and (3) a revision of the existing Blackboard study skills module.

Students should direct enquiries to learningsupport@uwic.ac.uk. This email can also be used to submit a short writing sample attachment (500 words maximum) for language and IT evaluation.

Tutors interested in requesting a workshop for their students within a course can contact the Learning Support Co-ordinator (Sarah Williams) on sjwilliams@uwic.ac.uk, or extension 7110. We also welcome suggestions for new workshops and lessons on the Blackboard site.

- Writing Fellow

A Writing Fellow, Lucy English, based at the Cyncoed Campus and funded by the Royal Literary Fund, is available to help students with writing support on an individual basis.

Further details can be found at <http://www.uwic.ac.uk/ltdu/writingfellow.htm> or contact lenglish@uwic.ac.uk ext: 6561

- Disabled students may be eligible for financial support for study skills. If so this will be arranged by the Disability Service. Specialist dyslexia support is also available. Contact disability@uwic.ac.uk

Information Services Division (ISD)

If a student experiences a fault, problem or has any query relating to any IT support or equipment maintained by ISD they should contact the Helpdesk either by phone (ext: 7000), email (ISDHelpdesk@uwic.ac.uk) or by visiting the on-site support staff at each Learning Centre.

(7) Specific Student Support

International Students

The International Office provides welfare and academic support for international students from outside the EU. The International Office is based at Llandaff, however, the International student support officers / tutors move between campuses when necessary. Any potential international students should apply straight to the International Office.

Contact Information:

E-mail: international@uwic.ac.uk
Phone: 029 2041 6045

- Welfare

For any issues relating to student welfare including Visa issues students should contact Natalie Buckland: nbuckland@uwic.ac.uk

- Academic

For any academic support including study skills and language

support, students should contact Louise Macphail: lmacphail@uwic.ac.uk, ext 6406

Mature Students

Those who have been away from study for any length of time can lack confidence in their academic ability and may be feeling socially isolated. They may need particular encouragement and support.

Disabled students (see section 4)

If a student discloses a disability to you, you have a legal obligation to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the student is not discriminated against or disadvantaged as a result of their disability. You should therefore advise the student to contact the Disability Service to discuss their requirements with a disability adviser. If a student does not wish to be passed on please ask them to put this in writing to you and this should be placed in the student's file.

(8) Relevant Procedures and Policies

Data Protection / Confidentiality

The Data Protection Act 1998 is intended to protect individuals from unwanted or harmful use of their personal data (information about them), by ensuring that organisations process (that is collect, handle, store, use, disclose and dispose of) this information in a responsible and accountable fashion.

When collecting information from a student you should be able to explain why you need all the information you are asking for and there are certain details the students need to be given:

- Who is collecting and using the information – this will usually be UWIC
- What the information will be used for, particularly if this is not obvious
- Any consequences of the processing
- Who the information might be disclosed to
- The opportunity to 'opt-out' of any optional uses of their information

If you need to gain consent then it is usually easiest to do this when the information is collected. The students would also need to be told:

- How the information will be stored
- How long it will be kept

A student can ask to see just about any information about them that we hold.

Information should be edited to remove any details about other people and there are also some exemptions which would allow us to refuse access or to delay releasing certain information. It is important to be sure that information is only released to the student themselves – checking their ID number will usually be sufficient, unless the information is sensitive.

Information about students should not normally be passed to other departments within UWIC or disclosed to someone outside UWIC unless the student has been informed. This would include posting details on a noticeboard or on a website. There are, however, some

exemptions that may allow information to be released in certain specific circumstances.

UWIC's Data Protection Officer is Siân Newton, who is based in the Secretariat Unit at Llandaff. Siân handles formal Subject Access Requests from students and staff and can give you advice or assistance with any data protection aspects of the collection, storage, use, disclosure or disposal of information about students.

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection.asp

E-mail: freedomofinfo@uwic.ac.uk

Phone: 029 2041 6076

Student complaints / appeals

If a student wishes to make a complaint, every attempt should be made to resolve the problem informally with the relevant person or school / unit. However, if this is not possible the formal complaints procedure should be adhered to. In order to start this procedure the Dean of Students (Rob Cummings), who coordinates all complaints across UWIC, should be contacted at Student Services at Llandaff on ext. 6170. Staff who resolve complaints at an informal stage, as well as discussing at school based level, are asked to provide a brief report to the Dean of Students.

If a student wishes to appeal against any academic or examination board decisions they should be referred to pages 165-180 in the academic handbook or UWIC Academic Registry. Students cannot appeal on grounds of academic judgement.

Mitigating Circumstances

If a student brings to your attention any mitigating circumstances which they have, you should inform them of the mitigating circumstances procedure:

- o The student should inform their programme director they will be submitting a mitigating circumstances form.
- o They do not need to inform anyone else of the circumstances.
- o A student should complete a mitigating circumstance form, available via the academic handbook (http://www.uwic.ac.uk/registry/academic_handbook.asp), and submit it to either the programme director or other designated person.
- o All students must submit evidence (e.g. doctors note) with their form.
- o In normal circumstances, forms must be submitted within 5 days of the assessment submission date / exam for which the student wishes to claim mitigation.

Withdrawal

If a student wishes to withdraw from his / her course the following procedure should be adhered to:

- o The student must notify their academic school of their intent to withdraw (usually the programme director or complete the form in the Exit Advice Leaflet).
- o The Programme Director should notify academic registry using a standard online withdrawal form available at

http://www.uwic.ac.uk/uwicnet/staff/acad_info.asp

- o The student should also contact their Local Education Authority and the Student Loans Company (if they have taken out a student loan).
- o If the student is living in halls of residence they must contact the Halls Office as soon as possible. They will require confirmation from their programme director that they have left their programme and withdrawn from UWIC. If the student is living in private accommodation they should contact the Accommodation Office to be placed on a waiting list of students who need someone to take their place.

If the student decides to leave it is very important that they formally withdraw as failure to do so may result in them incurring an unwarranted financial liability for their course fees. All students registering as studying at UWIC on 1st December become liable for a full year's fees. If they have applied to the Student Loan Company for a tuition fee loan this will be paid in full and they will be liable for the repayment of this loan unless they withdraw prior to December 1st. There will be no liability for the tuition fee loan if they withdraw prior to December 1st, although students withdrawing by this date will still be liable for tuition fees proportionate to their period of study.

If a student is thinking of withdrawing advise them to contact the Student Financial Advisor in UWIC's Financial Advisory Service (see section 4). A booklet with advice on withdrawal is available from Nicola Poole, Student Retention Officer (njpoole@uwic.ac.uk), and will be online shortly.

(9) Other Information

Fees

If a student comes to see you regarding tuition fees, refer them to either academic registry or to the UWIC tuition fee web page www.uwic.ac.uk/tuitionfees

Student Loans

For all enquires regarding student loans refer students to academic registry

Contact Information

www.uwic.ac.uk/registry

E-mail: registryenquiries@uwic.ac.uk

Phone: 029 2041 6015

Writing References

One of the roles of a personal tutor is to inform any references for students. When writing a reference, the first thing that needs to be considered is whether you or UWIC have been listed as a referee, or whether the subject has otherwise agreed that a reference will be supplied. Remember that the person the reference is about will normally be able to see a copy. References should, therefore, be mainly factual and any opinion should be capable of being justified. The information contained in the reference should be accurate, relevant and not excessive and it should be sent securely. If a student is disabled this should not appear in their reference.

New guidance on writing references is currently being prepared. Contact Rob Cummings (Dean of Students) (rcummings@uwic.ac.uk) for information.

Learning and Teaching Development Unit (LTDU)

The Learning and Teaching Development Unit works with staff to develop, enhance and support learning and teaching across UWIC. It includes:

- The Learning Development Team, which offers a range of workshops including the pedagogical uses of Blackboard, formative assessment, blogs and wikis. The team also investigates and promotes new technology for learning and teaching.
- The Quality Enhancement Centre, responsible for gathering and analysing data about the student experience and student retention, through projects and surveys.
- The Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education for teaching staff
- Multi-media services for staff (video and audio).

Unit staff are always ready to meet tutors to discuss their needs and work with them. <http://www.uwic.ac.uk/ltdu/>

Staff Development Workshops / Training

Training is offered to staff to aid them in their role as a personal tutor. For details of the latest staff development sessions / workshops see <http://www.uwic.ac.uk/hr/staffdevelopment/>

Religious Beliefs

During various periods of the year some students will be unable to attend lectures / tutorials etc or be unable to take part in certain activities due to their religious beliefs. Personal tutors should be supportive of students in this situation.

Guidance on under 18 students

This is currently being prepared. Contact Rob Cummings (Dean of Students) (rcummings@uwic.ac.uk) for information.

(10) Difficult Issues in Tutoring

Delivering bad news

Personal tutors may have to break bad news to students, which may include bereavement, serious illness of a family member or friend, or failure of a module / year / degree. Tutors should remain calm and deliver the news clearly. Coping with grief will almost certainly affect the student's work and a personal tutor should inform all the necessary people. Tutors may need to offer additional support during what may be a long process. Tutors should be aware that the chaplain (Paul Fitzpatrick) leads the universities bereavement care and training program and should be kept in mind when having to break bad news. (chaplaincy@uwic.ac.uk)

Failing students

If a student is failing, tutors should ensure all possible extra help / services have been offered (including on-line study skills support) so that the student feels supported.

Unfair Practice

Students should be made aware that there are ways in which they could find themselves having broken the rules inadvertently. In order to prevent this, students should be directed to study skills on plagiarism and referencing.

Discipline issues

If a student has been responsible for any form of misconduct on or off campus they may have a disciplinary action brought against

them. In this situation a student should be informed of UWIC's disciplinary procedures (via the UWIC student handbook) and tutor and student should discuss ways to improve the situation / problem.

Homesickness

Homesickness is likely to occur in the early weeks of the first year. Contact with students during this time is therefore particularly important to ensure that they are making the necessary adjustments. In some situations it may be in the students best interest for them to leave. In this case all the necessary information regarding withdrawal should be made aware to the student (see Section 8).

Well being and stress

Some students may find it difficult to cope with the stresses of university life. Sometimes a tutor's support can be sufficient but on occasions students may require more specialist support (see Section 4).

(11) Frequently Asked Questions

Pastoral Care

Q. A student has been to see me after not performing as well as expected in a number of assignments. After reading through some of her assignments I am concerned that she may be dyslexic. What should I do?

A. You should arrange to meet with the student to inform her of your concerns as soon as possible. You should then advise them to contact Disability Services (disability@uwic.ac.uk) where they can access services including dyslexia screening / identification. If she does not want to make contact with Disability Services you should ask her to put this in writing.

Q. A student has told me that he feels his academic work is suffering because of the number of hours he has to work in order to cope financially. Is there anyway the university can help?

A. UWIC has a Financial Advisory Service which offers impartial, confidential and professional advice to students. You should advise the student to contact the Financial Advisory Service (www.uwic.ac.uk/studentservices/finance/) for advice on funding that is available and where to apply for it and on budgeting or money management. The Financial Advisory Service is also responsible for administering the Financial Contingency Fund, which is an allocation of money provided by the Welsh Assembly Government each year to help students, who are in financial hardship. Awards from the Fund are not repayable and applications are means-tested on the student's (not family's) income only. Application forms can be downloaded from the website.

Q. One of my students regularly comes to see me about a number of different issues and is nearly always on the verge of tears. I am very concerned about her state of mind and think some action should be taken. What should the action be?

A. You should make the student aware of the counselling services offered by UWIC. In addition to standard counselling sessions the service offers email counselling (www.uwic.ac.uk/studentservices/ecounselling/) provision for those students, who may not be comfortable in a face-to-face situation or whose study commitments might prevent them from attending during opening hours. You can refer students directly or encourage students to make contact with the Service themselves; you can also consult UWIC's core counsellors directly for advice on a range of issues such as your effective support of a student,

maintaining appropriate boundaries, appropriate referrals or assessing whether a student is at risk.

You could also suggest that they speak to one of UWIC's Nursing Officers, preferably the one based at the campus where they are studying. They can support and advise students on a range of issues and offer a drop-in service, so appointments aren't necessary, and telephone or email advice healthservice@uwic.ac.uk. The mental health adviser may also be able to offer support. If in doubt contact the Student Services reception for advice.

Procedural / Policy Issues

Q. One of my students who is having a few personal problems at home wants to defer for a year. What implications are there for funding?

A. If a student is thinking of deferring for a year, advise them to make an appointment to see the Student Financial Advisor as there are funding implications; these very much depend on the reasons for the deferral, at what stage during the academic year the student decides to defer and when he/she will be returning to the course. The Financial Advisor will work with the student to protect his/her future funding entitlement.

Q. One of my international students would like to have a year out to do a work placement. The school has no objections to her taking a year out for this purpose but are there any visa implications?

A. If a placement year was not set out at the point of applying for a visa, the length of the visa will not cover the period of study plus a placement year. Therefore the student would need to make a visa extension application.

If the application is supported by the school and it explains that the placement has been approved by the institution there should not be a problem. The student will need to provide evidence that they have sufficient funds to support themselves for an extra year.

Q. I have recently had a number of phone calls from a concerned parent. What is the university policy on responding to these enquiries?

A. Although the Data Protection Act would not normally allow you to release information about a student to a relative or to another third party, there are some circumstances in which it is possible to do so, including if you have the consent of the student or in life and death situations. If you are unsure of what to do you should contact UWIC's Data Protection Officer.

Q. One of my students wants to withdraw from her course. What information can I give her and what does she need to do?

A. Any student wishing to withdraw from their course should be advised of the procedures and should also be referred to the Career Development Services and the Student Union Retention Officer where appropriate.

The student must be advised of the requirement to inform their academic school, academic registry, their local Education Authority and the Halls office if living in halls of residence. Students should also be informed of the implications of the timing of their withdrawal (see Section 8). If the student is worried about their future entitlement to funding for a new course, suggest that they make an appointment to see the Student Financial Advisor who will be able to advise them on the financial implications of their withdrawal.

APPENDICES

Appendix 2

Date:.....

Dear,

You have not attended a scheduled tutorial with your personal tutor. There may be a good reason for this but it is essential you get in touch to discuss any issues you have.

As a student at UWIC you have a responsibility to attend all scheduled tutorials. If you do not do so, this may affect your student status.

Yours sincerely

Dean of School



Every effort has been made to ensure the information in the handbook is current and correct. Any amendments or updates should be sent to Cassie Wilson (cwilson@uwic.ac.uk), as the text will be updated on an annual basis. An online version of the handbook is available on the LTDU website <http://www.uwic.ac.uk/ltdu/>



All wood/pulp used in this leaflet was sourced from sustainable producers and responsibly managed forests that create minimal environmental impact.
Please recycle this leaflet.



Learning & Teaching Development Unit
Uned Datblygiad Dysgu ac Addysgu

Produced by the Learning and Teaching Development Unit



BUDDSODDWR Mewn Pobl
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE