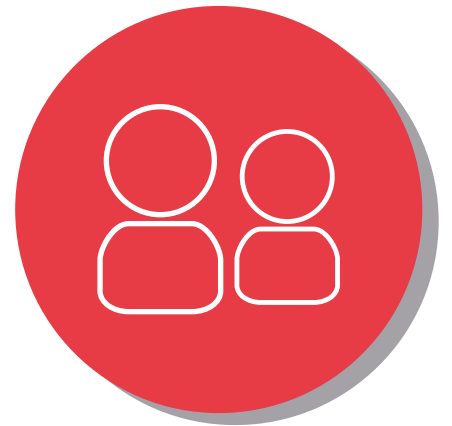


# A Student's Guide to Personal Tutoring

A guide to make sure  
you get 100% out of  
your Personal Tutor.



Staff at Burton and South Derbyshire College pride themselves on their commitment to supporting Learners' academic, professional, and personal development. The learner is at the heart of everything we do, and the positive relationships that staff build ensure that learners develop the skills and confidence needed to achieve at the highest levels; both at BSDC and beyond. The learner journey does not simply stop once courses are completed. Throughout your time here, staff will work closely with you to ensure that you are fully equipped to plan and ultimately succeed at whatever comes next.

Alongside your tutors, your personal tutor plays a key role in supporting your academic, professional, and personal development. They will work closely with you, guiding and advising you through each stage of your qualification, to ensure that you get the most out of your time here and are ready for the next step in your career. The guide below offers an overview of our personal tutoring system, and what you can expect from it. Please read the guide, and actively engage with your tutor: together we will strive to ensure that your time at BSDC is everything you wish it to be.

## *What to expect from your Personal Tutor...*

The role of personal tutor is by its nature varied. Each learner is different, and it's important that we work closely with every individual to ensure that all are given an equal opportunity to succeed. Your contact with your personal tutor may vary depending on whether you are a full-time or part-time learner, and the level of engagement you feel you require. Regardless of this, your personal tutor will strive to:

- Help you to transition onto your course and into BSDC by offering information, guidance, support, and encouragement.
- Support you, alongside your tutors, as you negotiate any issues or problems which may affect your ability to study.
- Work with you to develop the key skills required to give you the confidence to plan, and ultimately achieve, your future goals.
- Encourage and support you to develop the academic, professional, and personal skills necessary for success in the 21st century.
- Encourage you to reflect critically on your own work and practice, and to develop key skills to promote lifelong learning.
- Offer general academic guidance, through both group tutorials and one-to-one appointments.
- Foster independence within you as you learn to take responsibility for your own learning.
- Monitor and discuss your progress with you, and encourage and support you to reach your targets.
- Help you to get the most out of your assessment feedback so that you can continue to improve and develop.
- Meet with you regularly over the academic year, either in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, arranging any additional meetings as and when required.
- Keep records of any meetings that take place. These will be confidential and kept in accordance with the institution's data protection policy.





Your personal tutor may not be an academic expert in your chosen course, so will not be able to offer specific guidance about individual elements of your study. They are, however, committed to ensuring that your experience is as fulfilling and enjoyable as it can be, so will be able to point you in the direction of one of the college's many academic and support staff, who will be able to assist you further.

Key to the success of your experience here is your ability to take responsibility for your own learning, and to motivate yourself to achieve. For you to get the most out of your personal tutor, then, you will need to actively engage with them and the support they offer. Learners are partners in personal tutoring, so ultimately, the more your personal tutor knows about you and your individual learning experience, the more they can help you.

## What is expected from you...



- Respond to **communications** from your personal tutor. Make sure that you check your emails regularly to ensure that you don't miss any meetings or appointments
- **Contact your personal tutor** when you need any help or guidance – don't wait for the next scheduled meeting if it's urgent
- Keep appointments, and **provide your personal tutor with reasonable notice** if you are unable to attend
- Ensure that you **prepare** for meetings: where appropriate, bring along information on your grades and examples of feedback
- Be **honest and open** when talking to your personal tutor about any problems or concerns you have
- **Understand the relationship** between your personal tutor and other support services: where appropriate, your tutor and personal tutor may refer you to other specialists within the institution to provide you with specific support
- **Participate actively** within group sessions, showing respect to other students and staff

# Some questions you may want to ask...

## **How do I contact my personal tutor?**

Your personal tutor will explain the tutoring system to you in more depth when you first meet, and will clarify with you their office hours, when they can see you, and the methods of contact. Ideally, in the first instance you should email your personal tutor, who will be able to set up a meeting where appropriate. Your tutors may ask you to book in to see your personal tutor, you may be invited to attend a meeting (either within a small group, or on a one-to-one basis), or you may refer yourself.

## **How often will I meet my personal tutor?**

Essentially, this all depends on you. Your personal tutor will schedule regular meetings with you throughout the academic year, either as part of a small group tutorial, or as a one-to-one meeting. In between these scheduled tutorials, you can organise additional meetings by booking an appointment with your personal tutor. Alternatively you can email them with any queries or concerns you may have. Your personal tutor may also organise additional meetings with you, so it's important that you check your emails regularly.

Your first meeting with your personal tutor will take place during your first week of taught sessions, or as soon as possible afterwards. It's really important that you meet up soon after enrolling, so that you can both start to get to know each other and discuss your expectations and goals.

## **Do I need to prepare anything before meeting my personal tutor?**

Yes. In order for you to get the most out of your meetings, and to ensure that they run smoothly, it's always beneficial to do a little preparation. Personal tutoring is very much a two-way process, and without your input, there's only so much that your personal tutor will be able to do. Prior to any meetings or appointments that you have, think about what exactly it is that you want to get out of it; is there anything that you can be doing to help your personal tutor help you?

You may be asked to complete some work or tasks in preparation for your meeting. If this occurs, make sure that you understand what is being asked of you, and complete the tasks set to the best of your ability.

## **Will personal tutor meetings always be on a one-to-one basis?**

Not necessarily. While some of your meetings will involve just you and your personal tutor – particularly if there is anything confidential to be addressed – some scheduled meetings may run as small group tutorials. Group sessions will allow your personal tutor to share any key information and advice, and will also encourage you to work collaboratively with your peers to share experiences and develop necessary skills.

## What kind of topics will I discuss with my personal tutor?

It is important that your personal tutor works closely with you to ensure that your individual learning experience is as positive as it can be, and as such, the different topics you discuss will necessarily be varied. Some areas that you might discuss include:

- Your academic and personal transition at key points during the year
- Your attendance to, and engagement in, sessions
- Your health and wellbeing
- Feedback on your assessments
- Study skills
- The extenuating circumstances process and how to apply
- How to reflect on your own work and practices, and take control of your own learning
- Planning your next steps
- Any additional activities you may want to be involved in, or opportunities you may wish to pursue
- Student surveys and how to get your views heard

## Will my personal tutor meetings be recorded in any way?

For one-to-one sessions, personal tutors will provide an overview of the topics discussed, and detail any actions agreed to. These documents can be accessed via 'uploaded documents' on Proportal, and will enable both you and your personal tutor to keep track of what has been discussed, and what support (if any) has been put in place. Any sensitive information that you do not wish to be recorded will be treated appropriately.





## Your Personal Tutor

Zoë Formby  
Room: MB219  
Email: [zoe.formby@bsdc.ac.uk](mailto:zoe.formby@bsdc.ac.uk)  
Telephone: 01283 494522  
Main office hours: 9am – 2:30pm, Monday – Friday

### Useful Links:

As well as your personal tutor, there are many other people, departments, and organisations to support you whilst you're studying with us. Remember, if you need support, and you're not sure where to go, just ask.

Our Learner Services team (based within the Learner Hub) offers a wide range of support, and can also help you to connect with other support services within the college.

[www.bsdc.ac.uk](http://www.bsdc.ac.uk)

Find information about your course, forthcoming events, and college support services.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk>

Office for Students (OfS) regulates Higher Education provision within England. Their aim is to ensure that "all students, whatever their background, have a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers." Their website outlines their vision and policies, and offers links to useful resources.

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk>

Log on to the UK's biggest student community. Includes lots of information and useful resources to answer any question relating to life in Higher Education.

<https://www.thestudentsurvey.com/index.php>

The National Student Survey (NSS) is an important way for you to have your opinions heard, allowing you to shape the future of your course.

<https://www.gov.uk/education/funding-and-finance-for-students>

Keep track of your student finance.

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/study-skills-guides>

Useful links to study skills guides to ease the transition into Higher Education

<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/>

Student Minds is a UK-based charity which supports Learners and member of the HE community to develop the mindset and skills required to take care of theirs and others' mental health.

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>

If you are a Learner with a long-term medical condition, disability, or mental health issue, you may be eligible to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA). You will not need to pay back any allowances, and they can be received in addition to any student finance you have arranged.