



Symposia: Wednesday 22nd April, 11.40 to 13.00

5a Supporting international students

i) Stressing the “Personal” in Culturally Relevant Personal Tutoring. John Cowan, Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland.

In providing personal tutoring, the writers have found that most of their students have important affective needs which are not explicitly addressed in customary support systems, and vary within different cultural contexts. Hence they concentrate on developing affective needs: building confidence, risk taking, and prompting readiness for tasks which create apprehension. They also provide cognitive support in helping students to understand and confront the thinking of others, constructively. The paper reports and contrasts such tutoring and consequent experiences and student reactions, in three settings - in Hong Kong, Scotland, and Taiwan. The study dealt (mainly virtually) with affective and cognitive needs, given particularly cultural contexts. Student feedback has been positive, and the tutors have undertaken their individualised support according to cultural contexts.

ii) How will personal tutoring work under new British immigration rules? Paul Hubert, University of Kent, England.

A new immigration system is being introduced by the UK government. Considerably more responsibility for policing the immigration compliance of students who need visas will be placed on institutions with reporting timescales of a couple of weeks. On the assumption that we will monitor all students in the same way, all will be affected. Issues about illness and absence and about poor performance will have to be raised more quickly and will be closely connected to entitlement to be in the country. Having outlined the changes, we will consider the major questions posed in advising and supporting students. Will personal tutoring become fundamentally different? Can the changes be reconciled with the principles underlying our work? How will we prepare?

5b What is the role of a personal tutor?

i) Personal Tutoring as Teaching and learning. Jayne Drake, Temple University, Philadelphia, USA.

The concept of tutoring as teaching offers us a frame through which to view tutoring as critical to students' academic and personal development and success. It places the role of a tutor squarely within the role of a teacher. We will come to understand that when done right and well, tutoring, like teaching, is a shared and reciprocal responsibility between students and tutors/teachers. Some of the issues to be addressed include: how tutors guide students in identifying realistic academic and career goals; how tutors helps students to integrate their learning and to see its relevance to their lives; the characteristics employed for both effective classroom teaching and academic tutoring in the area of skills, communication, and attitude. These characteristics will be examined along with techniques for incorporating them into the tutoring process.

ii) Toeing a line? Tutors working at the boundary between pedagogy and therapy. Jan Huyton, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, Wales.

The paper is based on research undertaken in 2008/9 which consists of an electronic



survey of 101 higher education tutors from a range of UK universities and academic disciplines, and a reflective study with ten UK higher education tutors. The data document tutors' experiences of supportive interactions with individual students, and the analysis considers a range of challenges which include: training and support needs; institutional expectations; workloads; and personal and professional boundaries. Recent literature on the alleged 'therapeutic turn' in higher education (Ecclestone, 2004; Ecclestone *et al*, 2004; Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009) is used to develop an analytical framework to explore whether personal tutoring in higher education risks evolving from an empowering humanist pedagogy into therapeutic intervention

iii) Personal Tutoring – Having Our Say. Curie Scott, Sue Riddell and ,
Canterbury Christ Church University, England.

Personal Tutoring – Having Our Say, The profile of the 'Higher Education' (HE) student is evolving dramatically in line with Government initiatives aimed at increasing participation from 'non-traditional' students, up-skilling the nation for global competitiveness, enhancing support for those with disabilities and engaging more international students. The diversification of the student body has escalated the variety and complexity of support needed, necessitating advanced skills for support. Advising students now breaches familiar boundaries with academics labouring a shifting educational minefield. A project, part funded by the HE Academy Health Sciences and Practice Centre, was developed to review and develop the role of the 'Personal Tutor' as a vital linchpin for furthering student success. Findings from a survey to assess the role, from the personal tutors' perspective, will be presented as a platform for critical debate.

5c Developing student skills

i) The impact of an Information Literacy Curriculum (ILC) on Undergraduate student development and success: a critical analysis. Susanne Gibson, University of Plymouth, England.

Information Literacy is now considered an essential component of the undergraduate degree offer. Bringing with it tensions as well as innovative developments, (Johnston and Webber, 2003; Maybee, 2006) this paper critically assesses the development and impact of an ILC within one undergraduate degree programme. We address recent changes in our teaching practice supporting student learning, in particular how the working practices of senior subject librarian with academic tutors have evolved to support the development of students' Information Literacy skills. Our research highlights effective ways academic and library tutors can work to embed a rich ILC that enhances both student academic experience and success whilst at the same time noting tensions and complexities involved.

ii) Study Skills For All: Teaching multidisciplinary and cross-year groups.
Verity Aiken, Keele University, England.

Embedding study skills has become increasingly popular and much of the supporting literature champions the use of subject-specific learning (Wingate 2006). Contrary to this, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Keele University is delivering



successful study skills workshops not only across all of its subjects but also across all of its years. This paper profiles the development of faculty level study skills workshops. It describes how this approach can be a workable option as well as revealing the hidden benefits of cross-subject, cross-year support. In summary, it looks at both the art and the advantages of teaching soft skills to a mixed audience. Wingate, U (2006) 'Doing Away with 'Study Skills'', *Teaching in Higher Education* 11: 4

iii) " I never thought how I learn, just that I learn " – an evaluation of the impact of embedding personal tutor support within a credited academic learning skills module on first year students engagement with personal development planning (PDP). Julie Savory, University of Salford, England.

Adjusting to the more independent, less structured forms of learning characteristic of HE programmes is challenging for many students, especially with non-traditional academic qualifications. This paper explores how support has been provided within a 'case study' School at the University of Salford by linking personal tutor support for first year students to an extended induction process which includes an introduction to the Personal Development Planning process. The paper compares experience of inclusion of such support within a credited module with more adhoc provision and concludes, that personal tutor support , provided in a co-ordinated and structured way is an effective model for helping students adjust to studying at university and in planting the seed for further engagement with a personal development process.

5d Mainstreaming and sustaining change in institutions

i) Advising @ Melbourne: Supporting Staff, Supporting Students. Catherine Mann, The University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Advising @ Melbourne: Supporting Staff, Supporting Students As part of its commitment to improving student success, the University of Melbourne places increased emphasis on the quality of academic advice. Advisers must deliver accurate and timely advice to students on course plans and academic progress and, under the new Melbourne Model, must also engage students in enrichment opportunities that will add to the latter's graduate education, career and personal pathways. As a result, the University has instituted a Student Advice Program, which seeks to build a student-centric, whole-of-university approach to the provision of advice. It promotes a collaborative attitude to advising and facilitates critical networking amongst staff in support-facing areas such as Student Centres, Counselling, and Academic Skills. This paper critically examines the concepts, commitment and challenges of implementing a university-wide training program for professional advising staff who deliver student support.

ii) Supporting students: Tutors perceptions. Carol Luck, University of Westminster, England.

The Biosciences Academic Tutorial Scheme (BATS) has been running in the school of Biosciences, University of Westminster, for 5 years now and student feedback shows that they consider this a valuable scheme. At an Institution level , the tutorial review group recommended that key aspects of this scheme be included in tutorial support schemes for all undergraduate students. Over the past 2 years this has occurred with varied success. Some of the factors involved in this will be discussed. Within Bioscience the enthusiastic support of academic tutors has been a major



factor in the continued success of the scheme. This paper explores staff perceptions of the benefits of the scheme and identifies ways in which tutors can be encouraged and supported in their role.

iii) Tutorial development - a ten year review. Margo Blythman, University of the Arts London, England.

This workshop looks at longer term strategy in building personal tutorial as an institutional process. We have completed a critical analysis of the last 10+ years where we have been building our tutorial system at University of the Arts London and we have identified our strengths and weaknesses. In the workshop we will briefly outline our findings and then enable participants in groups to begin to evaluate their own progress. Our method is based on the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (Preskill and Coghlan 2003) where the focus is on building on what is best rather than the problems.

5e Embedding personal tutoring

i) A focussed approach to supporting a diverse student population. Gay Johnson and Barbara Howard Hunt, Birmingham City University, England.

The Personal Development Centre (PDC) complements a robust personal tutor system within the Faculty of Health, offering academic support to all students within the faculty (5860 in 2007/2008) ranging from pre-access preparation to professional development at PhD. This involves collaborative working and a complex range of provision to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Provision includes advice on course options, application, AP(E)L, making up deficits in entry requirements and preparation for higher education. Academic skills development includes Numeracy, English support and a programme for refugee healthcare professionals. There are negotiated workshops, drop-in surgeries, individual tutorials and virtual learning resources. Provision is continually monitored and adapted to respond to constantly changing needs. The presentation will focus on how the above is managed, monitored and evaluated.

ii) Embedding personal tutoring in the curriculum. Nancy Stevenson, University of Westminster, England.

This presentation evaluates an initiative to improve the effectiveness of the personal tutoring system by embedding it into the curriculum for first year students. The system is designed around structured group tutorials to help students make the transition to learning in Higher Education (HE). These tutorials are delivered within a core module and focus on enabling students to develop study skills, reflect on their learning and plan for their future. The tutor has a role in familiarising students with practices, 'norms' and skills required for learning at University. The system provides a structure and rationale for tutors and students to interact, with a clear place and value within the curriculum.



5f Structured support for personal tutoring: three models

Janet Strivens, University of Liverpool, Megan Lawton, University of Wolverhampton and Heather Richardson University of York, England

The three papers in this symposium will present three institutional models of personal tutoring. In each, academics (faculty) act as personal tutors/supervisors and also have an enhanced role to support students' personal development planning (PDP). Each of the institutions offers central support for this role: in each case a vital component of the support involves technology. The symposium intends to go beyond description to analyse and compare the strengths and weakness of the three models. It will look at the evidence for the success or otherwise of each model and identify what can be generalised from the experience of these institutions and where further research is needed.