

Personal Academic Tutor – Role Descriptor 2022-23

The Personal Academic Tutor role

The Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) is integral part of the University of Northampton's approach to *Integrated Learner Support* which provides a holistic approach to supporting student success. PATs encourage social and academic belonging to the programme particularly in relation to transition into HE and induction and undertake personal development planning including transition to the next level of study. The PAT works closely with the Student Support and Advice Team (SSAT) and other relevant Professional Services to support student engagement and progress to provide personalised interventions for success. In this way, the PAT serves as a central figure in a student's university experience. The areas of responsibility outlined below are indicative of the role of the PAT at the University of Northampton and should be considered alongside the [Integrated Learner Support Policy](#). The PAT role is directly aligned with the [Enabling Student Achievement section of the QAA Quality Code \(2018\)](#).

It is expected that the PAT role will cover the following areas although the emphasis on each area will vary depending on the individuals involved, the subject/programme studied and the level of study:

1. Pastoral work

PATs are often the first point of contact for students who need additional personal support and the need for specific interventions will also often be surfaced through regular PAT meetings and activities. PATs should take an active role in working with the appropriate support services within the University to support student welfare. This will be facilitated by MyEngagement.

2. Building Community

PATs can encourage a sense of belonging to the programme, and their pastoral role is central to this aspect. The belonging element is integral to student success regarding the academic and/or professional community, to the university and to its wider environment. There will be opportunities within PAT to encourage students to think about what communities they belong to, about cultural and other differences within those communities and to encourage engagement with activities that strengthen understanding and bonds. Awareness of university support teams and networks make up an important element of this strand.

3. Academic Development and Progress

PATs should use MyEngagement to inform conversations about academic engagement, development, and achievement. They should also encourage students to reflect on their own academic skills (including academic, digital and information skills) as these are important contributors to student success. These interactions also have a pastoral focus. All students should have embedded support for academic, information, digital and employability skills as part of the PAT conversation, especially around early assessments.

4. Employability, personal development and supporting aspiration

The PAT role is key to support students with their pastoral needs. PATs should also encourage students to reflect on social and community engagement, social enterprise and Changemaker awards. They should also support aspiration through discussions of routes to and transition into employment which may be subject specific or more generalist. All would be supported from the Changemaker Hub through targeted intervention or support materials.