

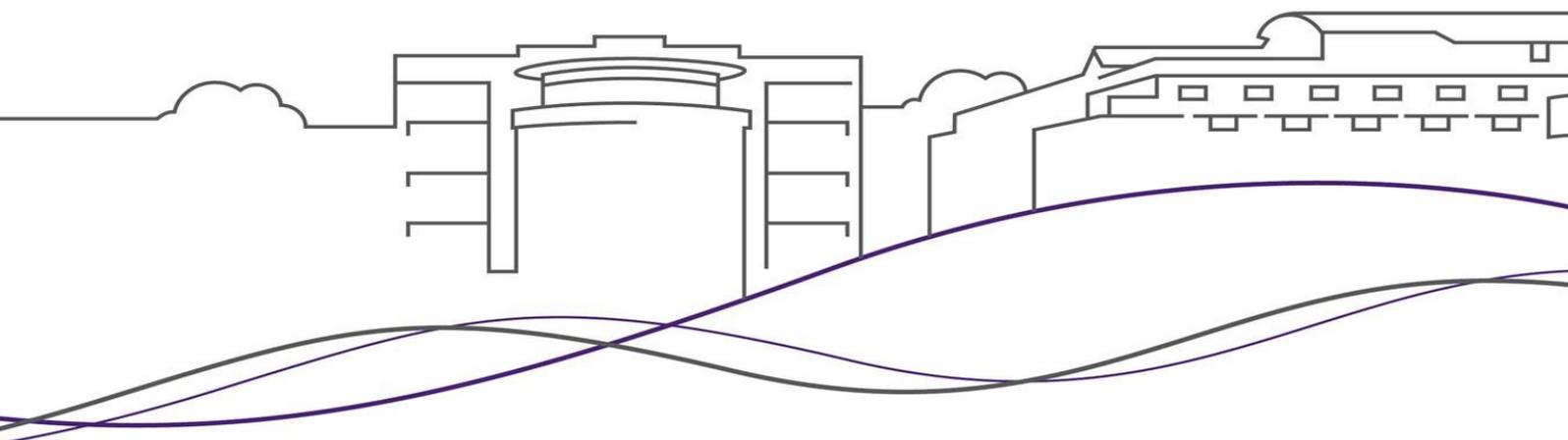
# Academic Policies and Procedures



 South Devon College

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Student Development Policy v1**



## Document Control

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# Student Development Policy

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## 1. Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 The University Centre South Devon (UCSD) is committed to an ethos of equality and inclusivity. We aim to facilitate and promote positive student engagement in learning, wellbeing, academic success, and progression. At UCSD this is coordinated through an integrated tutorial model of all students having a personal tutor, scheduled weekly group and/or one-to-one Tutorials, and access to professional study skills, wellbeing and employability guidance from the HE Student Support Hub.
- 1.2 The integrated tutorial model is part of our student persistence plan which is embedded with the UCSD Access and Participation Plan for the Office for Students which aims to maximise the access, success and progression of students from underrepresented groups.
- 1.3 UCSD encourages all students to actively engage with their tutor and the HE Student Support Hub to access study skills, wellbeing and disability, and employability support throughout their studies.
- 1.4 UCSD is committed to student-centred learning and development, incorporating transparency with strategic decisions and student involvement at all levels. Proactively acting upon the student voice and offering feedback opportunities, empowering student representatives and promoting a respectful and reciprocated team ethos between staff and students.
- 1.5 The key principles of our Student Development Policy are: all students have access to appropriate support from their personal tutor and the HE Student Support Hub; group and one-to-one tutorials are available to all students on a regular basis; we will identify and support student needs, help students to target their aspirations, and facilitate personal and professional development; and give teaching staff the opportunity to feedback to students key issues concerning their own studies and discuss how they can take responsibility for their own progression.
- 1.6 This policy runs parallel to other relevant policies and procedures including the HE Study and Wellbeing Review Policy, HE Fitness to Practice and Cause for Concern Procedure, HE Student Services Complaints Procedure, Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, HE Supporting Pregnant Students and Students with Very Young Children Policy, UCSD Strategy for Enhancing Student Employability, and Guidance for Supporting Students Requiring Reasonable Adjustment

## **2. Key Responsibilities**

- 2.1 UCSD aims to support all students to engage with their studies successfully. UCSD also has responsibilities in relation to the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of our community, including students, staff and visitors.
- 2.2 The Head of Higher Education is responsible for the overall management and implementation of these procedures. The Head of Higher Education may delegate this responsibility as appropriate to the HE Tutorial and Social Mobility Manager or HE Support and Wellbeing Lead Coordinator (or designated substitute). Members of staff are responsible for acting within the framework of these procedures where there are concerns, or where a student refers themselves to a member of staff because of a significant concern.
- 2.3 Higher Education Coordinators (or a designated substitute) are responsible for ensuring that new HE Programme Leads and/or personal tutors receive adequate training to enable them to fulfil their Student Development Policy responsibilities. The HE Tutorial and Social Mobility Manager is responsible for ensuring personal tutors have up to date resources and information to enable them to fulfil their Student Development Policy responsibilities.
- 2.4 Students are responsible for informing UCSD about their ability to study or otherwise. We recognise that there may be times when a student is unable to do this. Personal tutors will endeavour to resolve any barriers to learning by supporting the student, referring them to the Student Support Hub or signposting them to external agencies. (See Appendix 5, Guidance on attendance and achievement). A student's inability or refusal to attend, engage or inform UCSD may result in a student's study being interrupted until such time as the student is able or prepared to reengage with UCSD.
- 2.5 In an emergency situation where it is believed that a student's health or wellbeing condition presents an immediate risk to themselves or others the HE Study and Wellbeing Review Policy will not be invoked. In this situation the appropriate Emergency Services should be contacted and the Head of Higher Education should be notified as soon as possible. (See appendix for information about dealing with emergencies.)

## **3. Integrated tutorial model**

- 3.1 UCSD has an integrated model of personal tutoring involving:
  - i. Personal and pastoral tutoring to monitor students' wellbeing and

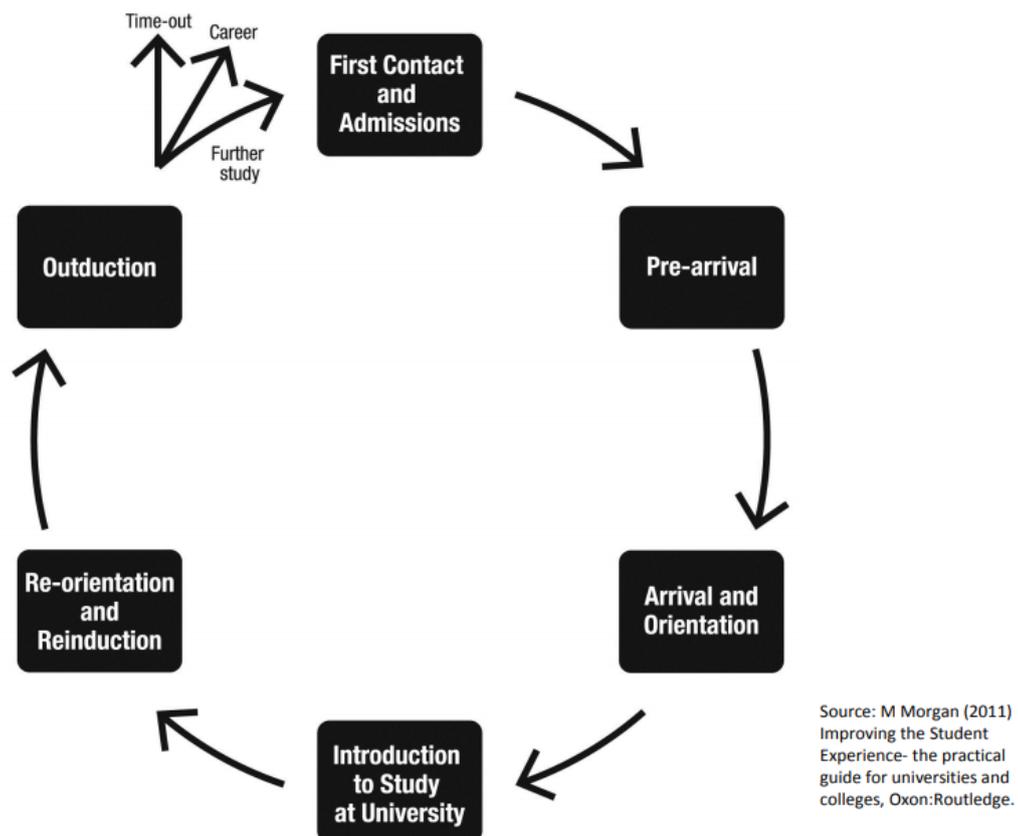
- support their personal development
  - ii. An academic tutoring curriculum to support in the development of academic skills and monitor academic progress
  - iii. Professional services including the Student Support Hub team, library services, employability, academic standards and quality, and the University of Plymouth Student's Union.
- 3.2 The integrated tutorial model ensures all students have a personal tutor, have scheduled weekly group and/or one-to-one Tutorials, and are able to access professional study skills, wellbeing and employability guidance from the HE Student Support Hub.
- 3.3 The aim of the integrated tutorial model is to support students in their academic journey, give students the opportunity to be listened to, identify and remove barriers to success, work with students to review and develop progress, enrich the learner experiences, share course and UCSD information, and to encourage and enable students to take responsibility for key aspects of their own process of learning.
- 3.4 All students will be assigned a named **personal tutor** on enrolment. This is a member of the teaching team, usually the programme leader. In most programmes all students on the same programme will have the same personal tutor.
- 3.5 Personal tutors support students' personal and professional development, develop their academic skills, manage student expectations, achieve positive student-staff communications, provide pastoral support and signposting, and monitor student wellbeing.
- 3.6 Tutors maintain a general oversight of a student's welfare, in the widest sense. This can include personal issues as well as academic needs. Sometimes a tutor can advise and help a student. Sometimes it will be necessary to involve members of the Student Support Hub or other South Devon College staff. These staff can work alongside the personal tutor or, when necessary or appropriate, in a confidential role.
- 3.7 The personal tutor will work with students both individually and as a group to support them on their journey through Higher Education. At the commencement of the course they help students to make the transition into the learning process, to assist with the process of induction and orientation into academic life. After this they will be the student's first port of call for advice and/or direction to further support on academic or pastoral matters.

- 3.8 While personal tutors and other academic and professional services staff have a responsibility for supporting students, they are not expected to provide specialist pastoral care and should not attempt to do so. Consequently, in cases where a student appears to be experiencing severe distress (e.g. serious physical or mental health problems), they should be encouraged to seek appropriate professional help. It may occasionally be necessary for University Centre staff to establish explicit boundaries, especially if the student is reluctant to seek professional support or if their behaviour is having a disruptive effect on others. The Head of Higher Education (or designated substitute) must be consulted in such cases.
- 3.9 Where a member of staff is concerned about the wellbeing of a student, they may want to share personal information about the student with relevant staff whose role is to provide support in such circumstances. Similarly, staff may wish to share personal information about a student with a third party, because of significant concerns regarding the person's wellbeing. Any such actions should be made in accordance with the South Devon College's Data Protection and Safeguarding policies.
- 3.10 Students will meet their personal tutor for a one-to-one progress meeting at least once a semester. Students and personal tutors may also request additional one-to-one meetings as necessary. These one-to-one tutorials are to check on students pastoral and academic development, review the student's personal development plan and set targets and/or make referrals for academic and wellbeing support. If a student is in Level 4 or a direct entry Level 5/6 student they should be referred to the HE Study team for grade boost support if they are attaining less than 50% in assessments.
- 3.11 A **weekly group tutorial** is scheduled for all students with a flexible tutorial curriculum meeting the needs of students at different stages of the academic studies. Often tutorials will be structured group sessions, sometimes the tutor will book individual tutorials. Weekly group tutorials in online or blended learning programmes will be accessible through our virtual learning environment.
- 3.12 Personal tutors are students' first point of contact within UCSD. They can support, guide and signpost students who experience academic and pastoral challenges throughout their studies. Personal tutors will have high expectations of students, challenging students to engage with their learning and make progress with the academic studies.

- 3.13 The flexible tutorial curriculum approach means that all students will have a scheduled tutorial with their personal tutor each week. The tutorial curriculum supports the development of social and emotional, academic and employability skills through addressing the needs of the group at different stages in their studies: induction, mid-course, transition to next level of study, and progression into employment or further study.
- 3.14 **Professional services** including study skills, wellbeing and disability, and employability support is accessible to all students via the Student Support Hub. Students can request support, either for one-off issues or ongoing matters, by contacting the Hub team or via their tutor. Additionally, a personal tutor might make a referral to the Hub team on behalf of their students, or the Hub team may contact students directly to offer support. Students do not have to be experiencing difficulties to use the Student Support Hub, many students use of this professional service to help maximise their progress with their studies.
- 3.15 Personal tutors and other teaching staff may recommend students access the Student Support Hub for study skills, wellbeing and disability, or employability support as part of their assessment feedback. Personal tutors will monitor students' feedback, progress, attendance and engagement with learning to help build a professional development action plan with students.
- 3.16 The Student Support Hub can provide feedback to tutors on common issues that students are dealing with so that the necessary action may be taken, e.g. staff development activity or modification of assessment briefs, etc. It can also, guide tutors in the use of the online resources and interactive activities with their tutor groups or work with personal tutors to develop bespoke resources or workshops for individual tutor groups.
- 3.17 Unless expressly asked not to do so, information shared by students with personal tutors, teaching staff, members of the Student Support Hub, and/or other members of South Devon College staff may be recorded on our student record systems to facilitate effective student support. Information will be stored and shared in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and South Devon College's Data Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

## 4. Student journey

- 4.1 The Student Development Policy covers the entire student journey from pre-entry, induction (arrival and orientation), mid-course, transition to the next level of study, outduction, progression into employment or further study, and alumni. This can be represented by the Student Experience Practitioner model (Morgan, 2011, p. 17).



- 4.2 Pre-entry is the period between being offered a place on a UCSD programme and induction at the start of the course. During pre-entry students are encouraged to engage in discussions with the UCSD faculty office team (student finances, fees, bursary, accommodation, applications and enrolment), the Student Support Hub, and individual programme teams and personal tutors. Opportunities will be offered for individual face-to-face, online and/or phone meetings, as well as group Applicant events.
- 4.3 Prospective students and those progressing from South Devon College or from local secondary schools may be able to attend Taster Days, Research Showcase, Master Classes or other activities to gain an insight into different

subjects or programmes of study at UCSD.

- 4.4 Any student with a difficulty or disability of physical health, mental health or learning is strongly encouraged to declare their difficulty or disability on their application form and/or contact the Student Support Hub before their programme commences so that appropriate support can be arranged as soon as possible.
- 4.5 During the summer months the Student Support Hub offers online and/or face-to-face workshops to help pre-entry students prepare for university-level study. The workshops cover a range of study skills, time-management and organisation, and basic IT skills to support students.
- 4.6 Pre-entry or during the Induction period, students will be asked to complete a Student Profile online survey asking about their pre-UCSD experiences, learning preferences and needs, other commitments and potential barriers to their learning. Personal tutors will review the Student Profiles with the students to help build a professional development action plan. As appropriate these plans may be shared with the Student Support Hub to provide a better service in general and for individuals.
- 4.7 Once a student has enrolled and attended their Induction for a UCSD programme, they will be able to access the online and/or face-to-face Induction course. They can undertake this independently and/or with the support of their personal tutor in the first six weeks of their programme.
- 4.8 The purpose of the Induction is primarily to:
  - i. Prepare students for higher education, reminding them to make the best of their time, energy, interests, and skills in familiarising themselves with the university and their learning journey
  - ii. Familiarise them with UCSD campus layout, facilities, student support services and our Virtual Learning Environment
  - iii. Provide students with the information and resources they need to begin their studies (such as handbooks and timetables)
  - iv. Introduce students to key staff members and make formal introductions
  - v. Enable students to develop friendship groups and support networks at an early stage
  - vi. Ensure students are aware of key policies and procedures and understand what is expected from them to successfully complete their studies
  - vii. Explain the assessment process in detail

- viii. Receive feedback from students about the student pre-entry and enrolment process and their expectations and hopes to promote continuous enhancement
  - ix. Make initial arrangements for representation of the collective student voice in the governance of UCSD
  - x. Provide a basic health and safety briefing and ensure students are aware of what to do in an emergency.
- 4.9 The integrated tutorial model represents students' support mid-course, with all students having a personal tutor, scheduled weekly group and/or one-to-one Tutorials, and access to professional study skills, wellbeing and employability guidance from the HE Student Support Hub.
- 4.10 Whilst enrolled as a UCSD student, students are expected to fully and actively engage in their learning and development. This includes attendance to all of lectures and seminars, the completion of any directed study, and submission of formative as well as summative assessment activities. It is also expected that students participate positively in all activities. Students should be mindful of the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure (including the use of Social Media), and its implications for all UCSD activities including on our campuses, during off-site activities, in UCSD accommodation and the wider community.
- 4.11 Programme teams will provide support to students transitioning to the next level of academic study either at the end of one level of study or the beginning of the next. This support will include information, advice and guidance about the academic expectations and the skills needed, and how they can build on their prior experiences and skills to make progress in the next level of study.
- 4.12 Re-orientation takes place at the start of the new academic year. Personal tutors will lead re-orientation: asking student to reflect their experiences and reminding them of the study, disability, wellbeing and employability support available; introducing or re-introducing them to the academic expectations and skills needed for the next level of study; and promoting engagement in personal and professional development opportunities.
- 4.13 Outduction refers to the support put in place to enable students to progress into employment or further study. This can be present throughout a programme of study but escalates during the second half of a programme. Personal tutors and the UCSD Employability Senior

Coordinator can provide group and individual support to enhance progression opportunities.

- 4.14 All students who have completed their studies at UCSD become part of our alumni. Personal tutors and the UCSD Employability Senior Coordinator can continue to provide support to our alumni as they enter the job market or post-graduate study, this may be with job-vacancies, applications, interview skills or providing a reference for an application.

## Appendices

1. Guidance for pre-entry
2. Guidance for induction and orientation
3. Guidance for engagement in academic life
4. Guidance for personal tutoring
5. Guidance for attendance and achievement
6. Guidance for student involvement and engagement
7. Guidance for re-orientation
8. Guidance for outduction

## 1. Guidance for pre-entry

UCSD is committed to assuring that the information provided to students is of high quality “fit for purpose, accurate and trustworthy”. Of particular concern is that pre-entry information enables students to make informed decisions regarding the programmes of academic study they want to pursue. If students receive appropriate Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and have a clear understanding of their chosen programme of study they are more likely to remain on the programme and be successful.

This is achieved through a variety of means including a regularly updated website, which includes student handbooks to provide detailed information on the content and assessment of the programme. In addition a bespoke HE Prospectus and Programme Handbooks provide additional information on the specifics of course provision, support and facilities.

In order to enhance and promote early engagement, all prospective students receive regular communication, raising awareness of the College HE culture with an aim to promote a shared sense of belonging before a course commences.

UCSD offers a range of support services ensuring that prospective students receive guidance covering academic, social, disability and financial dimensions of their choices.

In addition there are informative pre-entry events aimed at supporting student transition into HE life, and building an early culture with staff and fellow students including:

- Step-up to HE workshops in the Summer
- Open Events
- Tasters days
- Applicant Events
- Targeted marketing events
- Disability disclosure engagement

Students and family members have the opportunity to talk with course specialists providing detailed information on course requirements and expectations. This includes evidence of prior assessment standards, assessment expectations, course content, pastoral care and prospective timetables where appropriate.

## 2. Guidance for induction and orientation

UCSD considers the induction process paramount to early engagement, and essential in developing a sense of motivation and belonging both in university life and academic provision.

An effective induction allows students to make friends, get to know the academic staff, and develop academic skills. In addition having a good understanding of institutional processes and expectations further supports students to be successful.

UCSD incorporates all these elements into the induction process, in that it provides opportunities and support to students to engage in all aspects of student life, through institution-led social events, course-specific induction and integration to university partner provision and involvement.

A standardised approach ensures all students receive equal exposure to all aspects of student life through a bespoke Induction Checklist. All students are issued with a copy of the HE Student Charter and “Supporting Your Success” document to outline the UCSD’s expectations of students, how to access the various support services available and how students can get more involved if they wish to.

Online induction resources and activities are available on the VLE for personal tutors to facilitate with their students, or for students to undertake in small groups or independently.

The importance of developing a sense of motivation and belonging not only within HE life, but also within the academic setting is acknowledged. Programme teams host course-specific inductions and social events incorporating new students, existing students and the course delivery team.

The importance of early engagement and developing a culture of the student being equal partners within the quality processes is recognised. UCSD therefore hold early surveys empowering the students to feedback their experiences on the induction process, prompting improvements for the future.

Returning students can take an active role in supporting new students making the transition into university life. It enables students to make connections and build friendships prior to starting, to create a sense of belonging and integrate into university life more effectively.

Induction and orientation are essential for students who are new to South Devon College and the University Centre, and for students who have progressed directly

from another college or University Centre course. Particular attention needs to be paid to direct entry students who join established peer groups at Level 5 or 6.

### 3. Engagement in academic life

Student engagement is paramount at UCSD and the commitment to this can be evidenced in the [HE Student Engagement Framework](#).

UCSD recognises that students need to develop a sense of belonging and engage in what they are studying, encompassing academic content, course delivery, interpersonal relationships and vocational relevance.

Courses are specifically designed, with input from students and employers, to ensure students relate to their studies and find the course content meaningful.

Programme teams ensure vocational aspects in all our provision from work placements, work-based learning experience, industry guest speakers and industry specific student visits.

UCSD ensures clarity for students regarding assessment expectations/outcomes by implementing guaranteed levels of information on assignment briefs and feedback promoting a transparent approach to assessment.

Robust feedback structures are implemented to ensure that student work is marked, moderated and feedback within a set timeframe highlighting any need for academic support and providing developmental feedback.

To support all learners and learning preferences, a range of teaching, learning and assessment methods are provided to cater for diverse learner needs.

#### 4. Guidance for personal tutoring

The integrated tutorial model outlined in the Student Development Policy recognises the important role the personal tutor has in students' academic and pastoral development during their higher education studies. Guidance is drawn from the [Professional Framework for Advising and Tutoring](#) which has core competencies of advising and tutoring under four headings: conceptual, informational, relational and professional.

##### Personal and pastoral tutoring

Tutors maintain a general oversight of students' welfare in the widest sense. This can include personal as well as academic needs. Sometimes the tutor can advise and help the students. Sometimes it will be necessary and/or appropriate to involve others in support (see professional services below).

In most cases tutees will be able to speak in confidence to their tutors. However, there may be situations when tutors feel they need advice and guidance from others to appropriately support the student. Generally, consent should be obtained from the staff member, child, young person or vulnerable adult before releasing information to a parent or other third party. If an adult is deemed capable of giving consent, this should always be sought. Where an at-risk adult has capacity, and has decided that they do not want action to be taken and there are no public interest or vital interest considerations, their wishes will be respected.

If after a discussion with the adult at risk, who has mental capacity, regarding short- and long-term consequences, they refuse any intervention, their wishes will be respected and recorded, with the following exceptions:

- There is a public interest, for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk.
- There is a duty of care to intervene, for example, a crime has been or may be committed.

It may be prudent to obtain consent from all the participants for the release of specific data to specified third parties. In accordance with the [SDC safeguarding policies and procedures](#) advice can always be sought anonymously from the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first place, where consent is not forthcoming.

You are required to be aware of UCSD policies and procedures around Fitness to Study, Fitness to Practice, Student Conduct and Disciplinary, and Student Service Complaints, and how these policies relate to your tutor role.

There are a range of [UCSD policies](#) for specific situations including pregnant students and those with young children, counselling, wellbeing, harassment and bullying. The UCSD Support & Wellbeing Lead Coordinator, can provide support or signposting on all these matters.

As a personal tutor, you also need to safeguard yourself. Please be mindful of the [lone working guidance](#) when holding one-to-one tutorials, consider holding them in a more open space (e.g. social study space or with your classroom door open). If you need support in dealing with the issues arising during tutorial, please in the first instance see your HE Lead or Programme Coordinator. You can also seek support from department's HE Coordinator or the HE Tutorial and Social Mobility Manager.

The key message with pastoral and personal tutoring is that tutors are not alone, please seek support and guidance from the Professional Services teams (see below).

### **Professional services**

The UCSD Student Support Hub can provide academic skills and disability support, and signpost to a range of other services. If a tutee needs academic study skills support including applying for Extenuating Circumstances you or they can contact [HEstudy@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:HEstudy@southdevon.ac.uk) or if you or your tutee needs advice and guidance about a difficulty or disability, please contact [HEwellbeing@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:HEwellbeing@southdevon.ac.uk)

The UCSD Student Support Hub can signpost students to external support on a range of issues including debt management, mental health and counselling, domestic violence, housing difficulties, disability support etc. Please refer students to the support teams rather than trying to manage the situation yourself. You can also signpost students to:

- Academic Standards and Quality (Head and Deputy Head of HE) for issues relating to academic regulations, fees/finance, transcripts etc.
- employability and graduate careers options [theajones@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:theajones@southdevon.ac.uk)
- the LRC for library support [lrc@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:lrc@southdevon.ac.uk)
- the Helpzone for course or careers advice and guidance [helpzone@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:helpzone@southdevon.ac.uk)
- the [University of Plymouth's Students Union](#) for a wide range of advice issues, or the University's [students support webpages](#).

The UCSD HE Study team organise study skills workshops throughout the academic year. The Step-up to HE workshops (face-to-face and/or online) in the summer months are designed to introduce students to higher education and the

independent learning, study skills and computer skills needed to succeed. The workshops are accompanied by online interactive resources. The UCSD website has a range of study guides that students can access at any time to support their study skills development.

### **Academic tutoring**

As part of the tutorial curriculum, all tutor groups have a weekly scheduled tutorial with their personal tutor (although some may be used for one-to-one meetings).

- **Student Profile:** All Level 4 and Level 6 students and those new to UCSD students, will be asked to complete a Student Profile before their course starts. The Student Profile online questionnaire asks students about their studying experience, life outside of university and career aspirations. All tutors will receive a copy of each student's profile. During the first semester, those students will meet with their personal tutor and/or a member of the Student Support Hub to go through their profile. The aim of this meeting is to prompt students to reflect on their answers and create an action plan which you need to record on OnTrack's Contact Log. Meeting with a member of the Student Support Hub early in their student journey should also make students more inclined to seek help in future.
- **Induction:** In addition to face-to-face course inductions, there are a range of online induction resources. The academic skills online topics that can be delivered in tutorial by the tutor or a member of the HE Study team, or worked through independently by the students. During the induction period members of the HE team will visit every tutor group to introduce the support they can offer.
- **[Personal Development Planning \(PDP\)](#):** During 2020/21 UCSD will be exploring how to relaunch PDP work. Currently, different programmes have different practices. During this academic year, the use OnTrack's Contact Log to record students' aspirations and their personal and professional progression will be employed.
- **Grade boost activities:** Students who fail an assessment, should be referred to the HE Study team (both as a recommendation in the assessment feedback and a direct referral email from the tutor or module leader to the HE Study team). During Level 4 (or if they are a direct entrant to UCSD in Level 5/6), if your students achieve grades between 40-49%, tutors need to have a one-to-one tutorial with them to explore common assessment feedback themes and identify an action plan, including a referral to the HE study team.

- **Supporting Access & Participation target students:** Almost 90% of UCSD students come from at least one of the Office for Student's underrepresented groups. Therefore, as part of our Persistence Programme, the enhanced support that personal tutors need to give to enable students to continue with their studies and attain a 'good' degree, is universal support. However, we have gaps in our success metrics for disabled students, therefore Personal Tutors monitor the progress of disabled students closely. Nationally students from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background, and those who are care leavers are less likely to complete their programmes and gain lower grades. Therefore, Tutors also monitor the progress of these students, offering additional support as necessary and recording support given on OnTrack.
- **Student voice:** Listening and responding to the student voice is a key part of the tutor's role. Within the induction period, tutors need to ensure each cohort has nominated a Student Representative. Student Representatives will be asked to facilitate group discussions to collate module, programme and UCSD feedback throughout the year. Tutors and HE Programme Leads co-ordinate the 'you said, we did' process. Tutors also co-ordinate the annual student surveys in early semester 2.
- **Employability:** Personal tutors work with module leaders, local employers, students and the Employability Coordinator to provide careers and employability opportunities and options. Tutors review the career aspirations of tutees' Student Profiles, and work with programme teaching teams to bring opportunities to the cohort, including authentic employment focused assessments, guest speakers and skills workshops. During Level 5 an employability survey will ask students to reflect on the skills they have developed during their programme and highlight aspects they might want additional support on before graduation.
- **Outduction:** Preparing for graduation and life beyond university is known as outduction. Tutors hold an exit tutorial with students to record their post-university plans on OnTrack contact logs, co-ordinate students' registration with Future First (the UCSD alumni tool), involve students in course-specific networks (as appropriate) and keep in contact for graduate surveys.

### **Support for personal tutors**

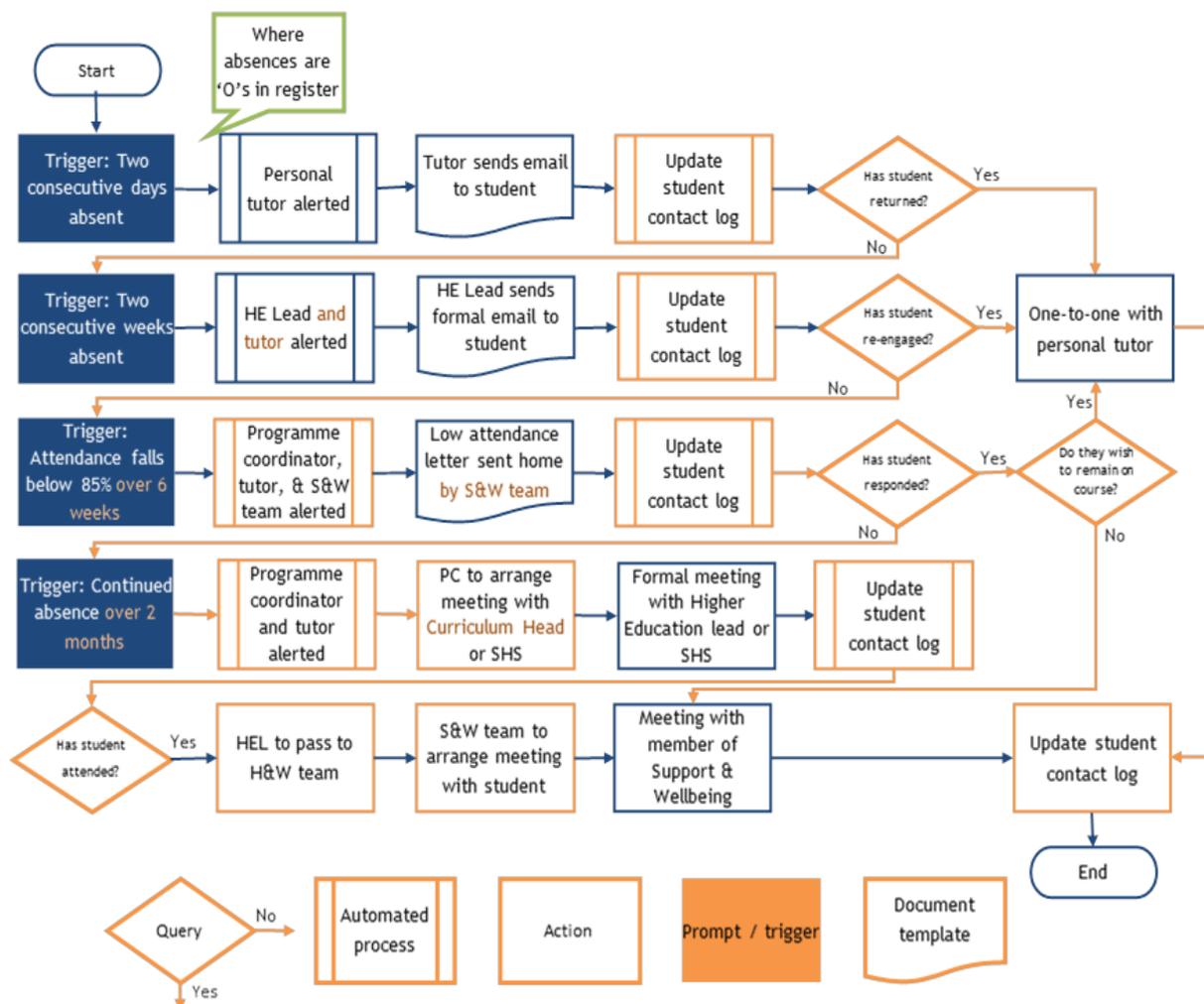
Being a personal tutor can be one of the most rewarding roles within academia, however it can sometimes feel isolating, burdensome, and overwhelming. The HE Tutorial & Social Mobility Manager holds regular briefings and workshops for personal tutors throughout the academic year but is also able to support individual tutors or programme teams. There is also a working group of tutors interested in

developing UCSD tutorial provision, exploring initial tutor training, ongoing support or mentoring, and digital support for tutoring.

## 4. Guidance for attendance and achievement

UCSD implements a proactive approach to supporting students' persistence in their studies, and considers lower attendance and achievement to be indicative of disengagement. UCSD recognises the importance of attendance and expects students to have, at a minimum, 85% attendance to their programme commitments.

If the attendance of a student falls below, or displays signs that they may fall below the South Devon College benchmark of 85%, there are a range of "triggers" in place to intervene, namely:



If a student is not achieving the expected level and does not pass more than one piece of work in an academic year without staff being aware of any extenuating circumstances, they would be invited to attend a meeting, normally with their personal tutor or Programme Coordinator/HE Lead, and a member of the Student

Support Hub. This is intended to be a supportive meeting to determine if any additional help should be offered to the student and will review personal and academic support systems.

## 5. Guidance for student involvement and engagement

UCSD is committed to listening to, and engaging with, all students. Students and staff are 'partners in learning', based on mutual respect and drawing on the knowledge and experience of everyone, to continually enhance the student experience. This is for mutual benefit and contributes to creating a HE culture, identity and student sense of belonging. There are a number of opportunities for students to get involved. The HE Admissions, Outreach and Engagement Senior Coordinator oversees student involvement and engagement. Further details are outlined in the [HE Student Engagement Strategy](#).

Each course elects a student representative from each year group to express the views of their group. Student representatives attend Programme Committee Meetings to review course-specific academic issues, and the Student Forum, which focuses on the student experience and any cross-UCSD issues.

There is student representation on all key decision-making committees at all levels within the UCSD to ensure student opinions and views are presented, listened to and actioned where appropriate. The Lead Student Representative along with other student representatives take on these roles.

Students are kept fully informed of the outcomes of their involvement, activity and feedback. This is done through a range of methods including during Tutorial and updates on actions from previous meetings is the first agenda item on all Programme or Cluster Committee Meetings.

Enrolled students can also become Student Ambassadors and Peer Mentors, enhancing the student experience and supporting peers to transition and integrate into HE studies / student life.

## 6. Guidance for re-orientation

Re-orientation covers the transition between one academic level or year and the next. Re-orientation begins towards the end of the academic year when Personal Tutors and programme teams begin preparing students for the next year.

This might include:

- Explaining the academic expectations of the next level of study
- Developing advanced academic skills
- Preparing students for research activities
- Advising on preparatory reading
- Information about how they can continue access study, wellbeing, disability, and employability support over the break in study

Depending on the curriculum needs of the programme, some of these activities might be at the end of the previous academic level or the beginning of the next one.

During the transition period, break in study, UCSD aims to maintain effective communication with current students. Contact is maintained by Personal Tutors and the University Centre via social media sites, using the VLE and other communication means.

An active re-induction at the beginning of the next academic level or year includes a welcome back talk and course specific re-induction activities, often involving new students. Returning students are also invited to attend social events.

## 7. Guidance for outduction

Outduction refers to the support put in place to enable students to progress into employment or further study. This can be present throughout a programme of study but escalates during the second half of a programme. Personal tutors and the UCSD Employability and Enterprise Senior Coordinator can provide group and individual support to enhance progression opportunities.

Outduction activities might include:

- Focused employability skills: debating, project management and time management skills
- Academic skills refreshers: academic integrity, report writing
- Careers advice: career routes, transferable skills, further study, voluntary work
- Options following graduation
- Getting a job: CV writing, application completion and interview skills

Tutors hold an exit tutorial with students to record their post-university plans on OnTrack contact logs, co-ordinate students' registration with Future First (the UCSD alumni tool), involve students in course-specific networks (as appropriate) and keep in contact for graduate surveys.