



# PERSONAL ACADEMIC TUTORING (PAT) HANDBOOK



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# PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This handbook outlines the structure, responsibilities, and processes related to Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) at Oxford Business College (OBC). The PAT system is designed to provide academic and pastoral support to students, enhancing their learning experience and personal development.

The handbook applies to all students and staff involved in the PAT system.

The purpose of this system is to ensure that students are assigned a dedicated tutor who supports their academic progress, provides guidance, and fosters personal development during their time at the college.

The scope of this system includes all full-time and part-time undergraduate and future, postgraduate students enrolled at Oxford Business College.

Please see Appendix 1 – The PAT Journey for a visualisation of the process.

The PAT system operates in alignment with OBC's Personal Academic Tutoring Policy, ensuring a consistent approach across all programmes. However, subject to the specific programme and awarding partner, OBC adapts and aligns its PAT activities in accordance with the respective awarding partner (i.e. University) policies and procedures where relevant.

This ensures that the support provided is tailored to meet both OBC's standards and the requirements of the partner universities, offering comprehensive and consistent guidance to students across different academic frameworks.

Further information about our Policies and Procedures related to PAT can be found on our website – [www.oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk](http://www.oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk)



# PRINCIPLES

The PAT system at Oxford Business College is guided by the following principles:

- **Student-Centred Support:**  
The PAT system prioritises the academic and personal needs of students, promoting their success and well-being.
- **Consistency:**  
Efforts will be made to assign tutors who have existing rapport with the students, particularly those already teaching them, to enhance continuity and rapport.
- **Proactive Engagement:**  
PAT tutors will actively engage with their tutees, maintaining regular contact throughout the academic year.
- **Confidentiality and Trust:**  
All interactions within the PAT system are confidential unless sharing information is essential to tutees safety and well-being.
- **Continuous Development:**  
The PAT system will be periodically reviewed to ensure it meets student needs and supports their academic journey effectively.
- **Alignment with OfS Requirements:**  
OBC is committed to ensuring that the PAT system meets the expectations of the Office for Students (OfS) regarding initial and ongoing provider conditions. This includes supporting students to achieve successful academic and career outcomes, enhancing retention, and promoting equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds.
- **Accessible and Inclusive Support:**  
PAT activities are designed to be inclusive, ensuring all students, regardless of background, learning needs, or personal circumstances, have equal access to the support provided. This aligns with the OfS's requirements under Condition B (Quality, reliable standards, and positive outcomes for all students) and Condition C (Access and participation).
- **Support for Academic Progression:**  
PAT tutors play a critical role in helping students stay on track academically, which aligns with OfS Condition B3 on ensuring that students succeed and progress through their studies in a timely manner.



➤ **Safeguarding and Well-Being:**

The PAT system recognises its duty of care for students' mental health and well-being, referring to additional support where necessary and aligning with OBC's safeguarding policies and OfS's Condition E2 (Student protection plan).

➤ **Collaboration and Transparency:**

The PAT system promotes collaboration between tutees, tutors, and wider support services, ensuring transparency in how academic and pastoral issues are addressed, with ongoing communication between OBC and students.

➤ **Data-Informed Decision-Making:**

OBC will use data gathered from the PAT system (such as engagement levels and student outcomes) to monitor student progress and inform institutional improvements, in line with Condition D (Financial sustainability, management, and governance).



# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## **PAT Coordinator**

The PAT Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the entire PAT system. They work closely with programme leaders and programme coordinators to ensure that tutors are assigned effectively. Key responsibilities include:

- ✦ Coordinating the allocation of students to tutors (ratio 1:60).
- ✦ Managing the PAT tracking system to monitor student engagement.
- ✦ Supporting PAT tutors and offering guidance when necessary.
- ✦ Ensuring compliance with college policies regarding PAT activities.
- ✦ Provide comprehensive reports to the Head of Student Services and reporting key updates to the Student Services Committee.
- ✦ Provide comprehensive reports to Programme Leaders and Coordinators that are taken to and presented at respective programme commitments, to reflect on developments, enhancements and impact made through the PAT system each quarter.

## **Programme Leaders/Coordinators**

Programme Leaders/Coordinators play a supportive role in the allocation process, providing input to ensure that tutors are appropriately matched to tutees based on subject expertise and existing relationships. Their key responsibilities include:

- ✦ Assisting the PAT Coordinator in tutor-student assignments.
- ✦ Offering programme-level insights on student needs to improve the allocation process.
- ✦ Responsibility of reviewing the effectiveness of the PAT system and its impact on student engagement and experience including retention and outcomes and reporting these back into the relevant Programme Committee



### PAT Tutors

PAT Tutors have the direct responsibility of providing academic and pastoral support to their assigned students. Their key responsibilities include:

- ✦ Initiating communication with tutees within 48 hours of assignment.
- ✦ Conducting a minimum of three meetings throughout the academic year.
- ✦ Maintaining detailed logs of all interactions in the PAT tracker.
- ✦ Offering additional one-on-one meetings when necessary.
- ✦ Referring students to additional support services if required.
- ✦ Recording all PAT sessional activities both manual documentation and student record systems i.e. Tribal.

### Tutees (Students)

Students, as tutees, are expected to actively engage with their PAT tutor and attend scheduled meetings. Their responsibilities include:

- ✦ Responding promptly to communication from their PAT tutor.
- ✦ Attending a minimum of three meetings per academic year.
- ✦ Taking responsibility for reaching out to tutors to arrange additional one-to-one meetings as appropriately required.
- ✦ Seeking guidance and support from their tutor as needed.
- ✦ Meeting key deadlines as per agreement with PAT tutor.



# TABLE 1: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – PERSONAL TUTORING

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
PAT Coordinator	Allocate tutors, oversee system, ensure compliance, report to appropriate committees as per the CAGF
Programme Leaders	Assist in tutor allocation and provide insights on student needs.
PAT Tutors	Provide academic and personal support, log interactions, hold at least three meetings.
Tutees (Students)	Engage with the PAT system, attend meetings, seek advice, and support.





# PROCEDURE

## Allocation of PAT Tutors

At the start of each academic year, the PAT Coordinator, in consultation with Programme Leaders/Coordinators, assigns tutors to students using a 1:60 staff-to-student ratio.

Wherever possible, tutors will be assigned to students they are already teaching to facilitate consistency and rapport-building.

The assignment process is tracked via internal tracking sheets currently, and all tutors receive an email with a list of their designated students. Assignment of tutors will be tracked in the Student Record system (Tribal) in due course.

## Initial Communication

Once assigned, tutors are required to contact their tutees within 48 hours, introducing themselves and outlining the support they will provide. The communication should include an invitation to the first meeting where the role of the tutor and the benefits of the PAT system will be discussed.

## PAT Sessions and Frequency

PAT Tutors must meet with their tutees at least three times during the academic year:

- **Introductory Meeting** – Overview of PAT support and expectations.
- **Mid-Year Check-In** – Academic progress and well-being assessment.
- **End-of-Year Reflection** – Feedback and development review.

In addition to these meetings, tutors are encouraged to provide unlimited one-on-one sessions based on individual student needs. These meetings can address academic challenges, career advice, or personal concerns.

## Tracking and Reporting

All interactions between tutors and students must be logged in the PAT tracker. The tracker records details of both group and one-on-one sessions, ensuring oversight and allowing the PAT Coordinator to monitor engagement levels.

## Additional Support

Tutors are encouraged to refer students to additional support services when appropriate. This includes mental health resources, academic skills workshops, and career guidance.

# COMMUNICATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

## Communication

Communication between students, tutors, and the PAT system is critical. Tutors are expected to maintain regular communication and monitor student engagement throughout the year.

The Head of Student Services will oversee the high-level development, review, and evaluation of the PAT system, incorporating feedback from students and staff to ensure continuous improvement.

During the student induction process, new students will be introduced to the PAT system.

This induction will cover:

- ✦ The role of the Personal Academic Tutor.
- ✦ How to engage with the PAT system.
- ✦ The benefits of regular meetings with tutors.
- ✦ Guidance on seeking additional support when needed.

## Monitoring

The bullet points below showcases an example of the tracking in place at both group and individual level for tutees accessing the PAT system with their tutors.

- ✦ PAT Coordinator to log and monitor comprehensive records allocated tutors to tutees, along with their progress surrounding PAT activities and records being maintained i.e. logs and reviews. This exercise is conducted regularly and reported quarterly.
- ✦ The relevant Programme Leader/Coordinator must ensure they evaluate the effectiveness and maintain records and action plans of actions and enhancements made quarterly within the PAT system



- |                       |                           |  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| ➤ Cohort/Intake       | ➤ Session one (1) date    | ➤ Session three (3) outcome              |
| ➤ Programme           | ➤ Session one (1) Notes   | ➤ Additional session(s) dates            |
| ➤ Group /Timetable    | ➤ Session one (1) outcome | ➤ Further actions/additional information |
| ➤ Engagement Status   | ➤ Session two (2) date    |  |
| ➤ OBC ID              | ➤ Session two (2) Notes   |  |
| ➤ First Name          | ➤ Session two (2) outcome |  |
| ➤ Last Name           | ➤ Session three (3) date  |  |
| ➤ Designated PAT Name | ➤ Session three (3) Notes |  |

### Review

Annual reviews will consider:

- Student feedback on the effectiveness of the support received.
- Tutor feedback on the challenges and successes of the system.
- Data from the PAT tracker on engagement levels.



# SOURCES OF ADVICE AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Students and staff can seek further advice from the following resources:

- **Student Services:** Support with personal, financial, and academic issues.
- **Career Guidance Team:** Assistance with career planning and employability skills.
- **Counselling and Mental Health Services:** Confidential support for mental well-being.
- **Academic Skills Team:** Workshops and one-to-one sessions on academic writing, time management, and study skills.
- **IT Services:** Technical support with college systems and software.





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

**Which members of staff are personal academic tutors?** Your personal tutor is usually an academic member of staff in your department. They will teach students, undertake appropriate research in their field and will sometimes have responsibility for other aspects of teaching and learning, such as university admissions, education or assessment.

**How does the process begin?** You will be notified of your PAT tutor as they will communicate with you via email introducing themselves and requesting for an initial meeting within the first semester of you commencing studies.

**Will I have the same personal academic tutor throughout my time at OBC?** For most students, the answer is yes – your personal tutor will support throughout until graduation. In some cases, however, it will be necessary for you to be allocated a new personal tutor. If your personal tutor does change, your new tutor will make every effort to get to know you as soon as possible – and we encourage you to make every effort to know them, too.

**What if I can't get hold of my personal academic tutor?** If you have tried to meet your personal tutor and you discover that they are not available, then you should contact the Student Services department at OBC where a member from the support team will assist you and escalate the matter accordingly.

**Will I get help with one-to-one tutoring?** Yes, this is OBC's care to its students, however, the student is responsible to arrange the one-to-one meetings with their personal tutors and the tutors will determine how many are required and if they are necessary. These meetings aid tutees to prepare specific pieces of academic work. If you are struggling to complete work independently or experiencing other academic difficulties, you should still speak to your personal tutor. They will encourage you to develop an independent style of learning and help you to seek further specialist support with study skills.

**When will my personal academic tutor direct me to other support at OBC?** As an academic member of staff with various research interests and expertise, your personal tutor will not always be an expert in all areas you are studying, although they will be committed to your general academic progress and development. If your personal tutor does not have expertise in a particular area of your studies, they will direct you to other staff within the department who will provide support for your chosen academic subjects.

**Will my personal academic tutor help with non-academic issues?** This is subject to the nature of support required. Personal tutors are highly qualified members of academic staff with different skills and professional experiences, but they do not receive training to be student counsellors, careers advisers, disability advisers or immigration/housing/money/ welfare specialists. However, OBC has departments offering support within these areas.

Your personal tutor will be committed to supporting your wellbeing and will be able to direct you to further specialist support or guidance, when required and may redirect you to the Student Services team so you can be looked after appropriately in your circumstances.

**Where else can I get help?** Personal tutors cannot answer all questions about all aspects of your study experience. They will do their best to help, even if that's just pointing you in the direction of the answer. OBC staff in Student Services are also at hand to answer your questions, you can visit them on campus or alternatively reach out to them via email or telephone, contact details can be obtained from our website or campus reception.



# KEY CONTACTS

## Student Disability, Inclusion & Welfare Services

- **Website:** <https://oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing/>
- **Address:** Dependant on campus of study
- **Telephone:** 0333 242 0000

## Student Counselling Services

- **Website:** <https://oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing/>
- **Address:** Dependant on campus of study
- **Telephone:** 0333 242 0000

## Student Safeguarding & Prevent

- **Website:** <https://oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing/>
- **Address:** Dependant on campus of study
- **Telephone:** 0333 242 0000
- **Email:** [Prevent@obc.ac.uk](mailto:Prevent@obc.ac.uk)





# APPENDIX 1 - THE PAT JOURNEY – PROCESS MAP

01



## STAGE 1: INDUCTION FOR NEW STUDENTS

- **PAT Coordinator & Student Services**

**Student Induction:** During student induction, the PAT system is explained to all new students.

**Provide Guidance:** Students receive guidance on how to engage with the PAT system and access additional support services.

02



## STAGE 2: PREPARATION & ALLOCATION

- **PAT Coordinator & Programme Leaders/Coordinators**

**Start of Academic Year:** PAT Coordinator collaborates with Programme Leaders/Coordinators to determine the allocation of tutors (1:60 ratio).

**Assign Tutors:** Tutors are assigned to students, aiming to maintain consistency with existing teaching relationships where possible.

**Record Allocation:** Assignments are logged in internal tracking sheets.

**Notify Tutors:** PAT Coordinator sends an email to tutors with a list of their designated students.

03



## STAGE 3: INITIAL COMMUNICATION

- **PAT Tutors**

**Receive Student List:** Tutors receive the list of assigned tutees from the PAT Coordinator.

**Contact Tutees:** Within 48 hours, tutors send an introductory email to all assigned students, explaining their role and the benefits of PAT.

**Schedule First Meeting:** Tutors arrange the first meeting with tutees to explain the support available.

04

**STAGE 4: FIRST PAT MEETING**

- **PAT Tutors & Tutees**

**Conduct Introductory Meeting:** The first PAT meeting is held, covering the role of the tutor, support structure, and student expectations.

**Log Meeting:** Tutors log the meeting details (date, topics discussed) in the PAT tracker.

05

**STAGE 5: ONGOING COMMUNICATION & ADDITIONAL MEETINGS**

- **PAT Tutors**

**Monitor Student Progress:** Throughout the year, tutors monitor academic and personal progress.

**Mid-Year Check-In:** Tutors hold a second mandatory meeting to assess progress and address any issues (mid-point of the academic year).

**One-on-One Sessions:** Tutors arrange additional one-on-one meetings as necessary, based on student requests or academic concerns.

**Log All Meetings:** All meetings are logged in the PAT tracker (group sessions or one-on-one).

06

**STAGE 6: FINAL PAT MEETING**

- **PAT Tutors & Tutees**

**Conduct End-of-Year Review:** The final mandatory meeting is held to reflect on the academic year, gather feedback from the student, and provide further guidance for the future.

**Log Meeting:** Details are recorded in the PAT tracker.

07

**STAGE 7: REVIEW & OVERSIGHT**

- **Programme Leader/Coordinator**

**Monitor Engagement:** The PAT Coordinator monitors the PAT tracker to ensure all mandatory meetings are conducted and students are engaging with the system.

**Annual Review:** At the end of the academic year, the Head of Student Services reviews the PAT process, incorporating feedback from students and tutors.

**Continuous Improvement:** Based on the review, the PAT system is refined to improve student engagement and support.



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