



# Personal Tutor Training Pack: How to be an Outstanding Tutor



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## Table of Contents

About the training .....	1
Using the training pack .....	1
<b>Module 1: Understanding the personal tutor role, responsibilities &amp; relationship...</b>	<b>3</b>
Outcome 1: The Responsibilities and Boundaries of the Personal Tutoring Role.....	3
Outcome 2: The Ethical Principles that Underpin the Personal Tutoring Role.....	11
Outcome 3: Ways to develop professional and inclusive working relationships .....	20
<b>Module 2: Facilitating individual learning and development .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Outcome 1: Planning, organising and managing the one-to-one review process .....	29
Outcome 2: Facilitating Planning for Learning .....	45
Outcome 3: Facilitating the review and evaluation of learning .....	49
<b>Module 3: Enabling learners to recognise, develop and apply transferable skills</b>	<b>53</b>
Outcome 1: Encouraging the development of learner autonomy.....	53
Outcome 2: Facilitating the development of personal and social skills .....	58
Outcome 3: Facilitating the development of learning and employability skills.....	64
<b>Module 4: Supporting learners' academic, personal and welfare needs .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Outcome 1: Understanding learning support needs and the indicating factors.....	71
Outcome 2: Responding to individuals' learning and support needs .....	78
Outcome 3: Identifying learners at risk and providing access to specialist support ....	85
<b>Module 5: Supporting individuals' transition and progression .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Outcome 1: Supporting individuals on entry to the learning organisation .....	95
Outcome 2: Working with others to support individuals during transition.....	100
Outcome 3: Supporting individuals to identify opportunities & prepare for progression .....	104
<b>Module 6: Contributing to the quality and impact of personal tutoring .....</b>	<b>109</b>
Outcome 1: Critical reflection on own tutoring practice .....	109
Outcome 2: Evaluating the quality and impact of own tutoring practice.....	114
Outcome 3: Contributing to improving the quality of tutoring within own organisation	117

# Introduction

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## About the training

This training provides essential professional development for those in a personal tutoring, mentoring or coaching role supporting learners within Further Education and Training Sector. The pack includes six modules covering each aspect of the personal tutoring role:

1. Understanding the personal tutor role, responsibilities and relationship
2. Facilitating individual learning and development
3. Enabling learners to recognise, develop and apply transferable skills
4. Supporting Learners' academic, personal and welfare needs
5. Supporting individuals' transition and progression
6. Contributing to the quality and impact of personal tutoring

The training pack can be completed as self-directed individual personal development or as part of an in-house training course supported by your organisation. This pack can also be used to prepare for the Ascentis Level 3 Certificate in Personal Tutoring. If you wish to pursue the accredited Level 3 qualification please contact FETN for further details.

## How to use the training pack

The training pack is designed to allow you to study at your own pace, gather evidence of your skills and development and reflect on your own tutoring practice.

This is your professional development portfolio so feel free to highlight text and write notes in the margins. You may have questions you want to pursue or thoughts that need recording, so use this as a working document that you can refer to in the future.

Within each section you will find essential information and guidance plus self-assessment exercises to help to develop your knowledge and understanding. You are encouraged to reflect on aspects of your own practice during the course and note your reflections in the learning diary section of your portfolio. Capturing your thoughts in this way will help you to contextualise your understanding in relation to your current role.

As you work through the self-assessment activities you will be required, at times, to provide examples of documentation or reflect on student case studies drawn from your practice. Where this occurs, please remember to protect your learners' anonymity.

As a distance learning package you do not necessarily need to work through each of the modules in turn. You can familiarise yourself with the module content and collate evidence as it emerges in your daily work.

All that remains is to wish you good luck, we hope you enjoy completing this training pack. Remember, FETN exists to support tutors and managers in their work so don't forget to access the website [www.fetn.org.uk](http://www.fetn.org.uk) for useful information and resources.

## Module 1: Understanding the personal tutor role, responsibilities and relationship

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The purpose of this module is to enable you to understand the role and responsibilities of the personal tutoring role and the relationship between other professionals in education, training and support. It includes the boundaries and ethical principles that underpin the personal tutoring role and the development of a positive tutoring relationship.

This module will enable you to:

1. Understand the responsibilities and boundaries of the personal tutoring role
2. Understand the ethical principles that underpin the personal tutoring role
3. Understand ways to develop professional and inclusive working relationships

### **Outcome 1: The Responsibilities and Boundaries of the Personal Tutoring Role.**

#### 1.1 The Role, Responsibilities and Boundaries of the Tutoring Role

The personal tutoring role provides an opportunity for one-to-one time with learners, either face to face or remotely. The purpose of this is to create a sense of value and wellbeing for the learner as an individual and as a member of the learning Community, regardless of the type of learning environment. These one-to-one learning conversations can be referred to in a number of ways. Depending on the organisation you work for they could be called personal tutorial, progress review, one-to-one review to name but a few.

Personal tutoring enables learners to explore their aspirations, plan their individual learning experience, reflect on their progress, identify barriers to learning and explore potential areas for support. It has been found that effective tutoring contributes to improved retention, achievement and successful progression. It has also been recognised that poor tutoring can be detrimental to learners' potential to succeed and, in some cases, to their confidence, self esteem and overall self worth.

The value of effective personal tutoring is recognised through the National Occupational Standards for Personal Tutoring. These standards collectively describe the personal tutoring role and set out both the performance criteria and requisite knowledge that are essential to the role. The standards also contribute to raising the profile of the personal tutoring role, enabling organisations to recruit and train tutors appropriately and improve the quality of tutorial provision.

**Activity 1.1:** Download the National Occupational Standards for Personal Tutoring from the FETN website free resources section [www.fetn.org.uk](http://www.fetn.org.uk) and list the 11 Module titles.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.

The FE and Skills Sector is large and diverse and consists of Further Education Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges, Community Learning and Skills, Work-based Learning Organisations and Independent Training Providers. Each individual organisation will have evolved independently as will the nature of the roles and responsibilities within it. The role of the personal tutor is no exception and you will find an array of job titles that refer, in essence, to the tutoring role, such as:

- Learning coach/mentor
- Progress tutor/mentor
- Achievement tutor/mentor
- Pastoral support tutor

The range of responsibilities a personal tutor holds will vary across the sector, depending on the context of the role. For example, in a further education college a personal tutor is most likely to be a learner's first point of contact for both academic and welfare issues. However, in work based learning where learners are in employment, these responsibilities may be shared between the employer and the training organisation. It is important therefore to understand the context of your tutoring role to ensure you fulfil your tutoring responsibilities.

**Activity 1.2:**

- a) Write your job title here:
- b) Record 5 key responsibilities from your job description
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

Regardless of your job title, the personal tutoring role involves key tasks and responsibilities common across the FE and Skills Sector, which are to:

- Provide support and motivation
- Monitor and improve/enhance learner performance and outcomes
- Identify and reduce barriers to learning
- Develop transferable skills for life
- Develop learning and employability skills
- Develop reflective and independent learners
- Plan and prepare for progression

In order to fulfil these objectives a range of topics may be discussed during individual tutorials. The extent to which any one of these aspects is discussed will be dependent on each learner's needs, the level of progress they are making, how well they are achieving and where they are along the learner journey. Here are some of the key elements you would cover:

- Induction process and outcomes
- Aims, aspirations and where appropriate predicted grades
- Career aspirations, guidance and progression
- Attendance, punctuality and behaviour

- Personal, social and welfare needs
- Additional learning and support needs
- Coursework submission and achievement
- Functional skills assessment and achievement
- Exam registration, preparation and practice
- Enrichment activities chosen and undertaken
- Work experience and placements

These themes will occur during one-to-one reviews to a greater or lesser extent during each stage of the learner's journey.

**Activity 1.3:** Identify at least 2 themes you are most likely to discuss at each stage of the learner journey (2 themes in each box below). For example, it is highly likely that the learner would be encouraged to discuss their career aspirations during recruitment.

Learner Journey		one-to-one review Themes
<b>Pre-Entry</b>	Recruitment	
<b>Entry Stage</b>	Induction	
	Initial Assessment	
	Preparation for learning	
<b>On Programme</b>	Reviewing Progress	
	Supporting Learning	
	Assessing Achievement	
<b>Pre-exit</b>	Preparing for Progression	
<b>Exit</b>	Progression	

## 1.2 The importance of learners and tutors understanding the boundaries of the role

It is important to understand the boundaries of your tutoring role in relation to supporting learners. For example, it is often too easy to become drawn into solving or 'sorting out' learners' problems, but this is not a personal tutor's responsibility. As a personal tutor you are there to support the learner to identify issues and to facilitate the decision making process. This in turn will enable the learner to develop their own coping strategies and learn to resolve problems and difficulties that impact on their learning. In addition, where necessary, you may be required to refer a learner to other colleagues or external services for specialist advice and guidance or academic support so you must always be mindful of your boundaries and limitations in relation to your skills and expertise as well as your job description. If learners do not understand the boundaries of your role their expectations for support may be greater than you can provide and their demands on your time could impact negatively on others you are required to support. Furthermore, there is the potential for learners to become over-reliant on your advice which in turn reduces their ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their own learning.

### **Activity 1:4:**

- a) Working with the guidelines provided by your organisation, identify 5 key boundaries you need to be aware of. For example, referring a learner to a counselling service for specialist support that you are not qualified to provide.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
- b) Identify 3 potential consequences for you or your learners or your colleagues of not working within the boundaries of your tutoring role? For example, providing conflicting advice on the completion of an assessment.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

The Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014): statutory guidance for schools and colleges covers schools, further education colleges and sixth-form colleges, and relates to children under the age of 18.

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014): statutory guidance for schools and colleges**

The statutory guidance identifies the following safeguarding issues:

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking

The organisation you work for will have structures and procedures in place to support you in your role and, particularly in relation to safeguarding, to protect both you and your learners. Written guidelines and/or a staff handbook should set out your tutoring responsibilities, the policies and guidelines relevant to the role and the systems and documentation you are required to use.

### **1.3 Administration and Record Keeping**

Good administration and record keeping is essential to tracking and monitoring learners' progress and enabling you to provide effective feedback for learners to improve and develop. Effective record keeping can also help in identifying emerging issues that may develop into barriers to learning. For example, a learner who is having difficulties with a particular subject (or perhaps a particular teacher) may begin to miss that class. By carefully monitoring attendance it is easy to recognise patterns of behaviour that suggest all is not well. By capturing this information in the early stages it is possible to put intervention strategies in place before the problem becomes out of hand and affects the learners potential to achieve. Certain patterns of behaviour can also suggest that a learner is facing personal challenges or welfare issues (which will be covered in Module

4). Where this occurs it is essential that effective records are kept to evidence the support offered and provided. Sadly there are occasions where individual learners who do not achieve their planned learning objectives, having previously refused support and guidance, go on to criticise the organisation for not providing adequate support. That said, if a learner does question the level of support they have received, you do have a responsibility to investigate the claim, in order to make certain that the support offered was appropriate, timely and adequately designed to address their support needs. Good record keeping will help you to review a case in such an investigation, and support the organisation to improve by passing on useful information that your learners may raise during their individual reviews. These may relate to timetable issues, assessment workloads, accessing support and so. By passing on this information you are providing colleagues with an opportunity to address issues affecting learners' experience and outcomes that they may not be currently aware of.

**Activity 1.5:**

a) Name 3 organisational policies relevant to your tutoring role such as the organisation's Tutorial Policy.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

b) Identify 3 essential documents (paper-based or electronic) that you will use during the course of the academic year as part of your tutoring role. For example an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Explain the purpose of each document.

- 1.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3.

When dealing with organisation, storage, retrieval and interpretation of information you should be aware of your responsibilities under legislation and organisational policy.

**The Data Protection Act 1998** relates to how information about people can be used. The act covers eight Data Protection Principles which state that all data must be:

- Processed fairly and lawfully
- Obtained and used only for specified and lawful purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date
- Kept for no longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the individual's rights (as defined)
- Kept secure
- Transferred only to countries that offer adequate data protection

The act states that '*Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data*'. In your tutoring role you will be responsible for collecting and retaining large amounts of personal information about your learners. Some of this information may be particularly sensitive. Your organisation will have a Data Protection Policy and guidance on how to collect, store and use the information you hold about your learners.

**Activity 1.6:** Identify 3 examples of when data protection might be at risk and explain how these risks could be managed. Include examples of sensitive information.

1.

2.

3.