

Academic advice, careers guidance, and pastoral support

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Cross reference/related documents:		8.1 Roles and responsibilities of academic staff

1.0 Rationale and principles which this policy seeks to uphold

- 1.1 The University will offer students a supportive learning environment and a programme of study conducive to student achievement of graduation requirements.
- 1.2 The University ensures that students are familiar with the values of the University and have knowledge of relevant services, facilities, and policies.
- 1.3 The University recognises that effective academic advice and pastoral support has a positive impact on student performance, time to graduation, and rates of retention.
- 1.4 The University defines structures, roles, and processes for the provision of academic advice and pastoral support.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 Applies to all students and academic staff of the University.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Individual members of academic staff directly involved in advising students are:

- 3.1.1 Personal Tutor: is primarily responsible for offering academic support and guidance beyond subject-specific tutoring; must be familiar with the available specialist support to which they can refer students;
- 3.1.2 Module Tutor: is the person responsible for teaching the module; appointed by the Dean of the Faculty or the Head of Programme;
- 3.1.3 Module Coordinator: each module has a designated Module Coordinator appointed by the Dean; they are full time members of academic staff. Where there is a single module tutor than he/she would hold both roles. However, where there are several module tutors, one will be appointed as Module Coordinator. Modules taught by an adjunct will have as Coordinator a full-time member of academic staff;
- 3.1.4 Dissertation Supervisor: A student completing a dissertation is allocated a Dissertation Supervisor to provide guidance on the programme of research. The Dissertation Supervisor may be the same academic staff member as the Personal Tutor or another academic staff member. Whatever the case, the academic staff member's consent to serve as the Dissertation Supervisor must be formally obtained;
- 3.1.5 Head of Programme: available for consultation should a student experience circumstances with negative effect on their academic progress.

4.0 Policy

PERSONEL

The Personal Tutor

4.1 The Personal Tutor is responsible for:

- 4.1.1 front-line pastoral support for problems not related to the academic programme of study;
- 4.1.2 monitoring and addressing problems associated with student progress and/or low standards of performance;
- 4.1.3 referring students to available support services;
- 4.1.4 supervising student implementation of their study plan;
- 4.1.5 advising students on University policy and procedures;
- 4.1.6 advising students on suspension, withdrawal from modules, changes of programme, and withdrawal from a programme.

4.2 Appointments:

- 4.2.1 the personal tutor need not be an academic teaching on the student's programme of study but should be familiar with it;
- 4.2.2 Personal Tutors should be full-time members of University staff;
- 4.2.3 Personal Tutors are assigned to students by the Head of Programme/Programme Coordinator;
- 4.2.4 A reasonable effort will be made to ensure that each full-time faculty member will have a similar number of advisees;
- 4.2.5 the maximum number of advisees shall be 40 students for any designated personal tutor;
- 4.2.6 all faculty including the Dean, are assigned advisees;
- 4.2.7 the Dean/ Head of Programme/Programme Coordinator shall deputise as advisor on urgent matters if the student's designated advisor is not available.

- 4.2.8 ideally the same person should retain responsibility for the student throughout their programme of study. However, a student may request for a change of personal tutor at any time; the change can be effected subject to the agreement of all parties - the current and new tutor, and the student. Cases of disagreement should be referred to the Head of Programme/Programme Coordinator and advised to the Dean.
- 4.3 In order for personal tutoring to be beneficial and meaningful students will be expected to undertake the following:
- 4.3.1 maintain regular communication with their personal tutor;
 - 4.3.2 to consider the measures, they can take themselves to address problems or concerns raised with personal tutor;
 - 4.3.3 to attend all scheduled meetings or agree an alternative time if it is inconvenient;
 - 4.3.4 contact personal tutors when circumstances have negative impact on their academic performance or progression, or threaten withdrawal.
- 4.4 Act on any recommendations and advice offered by personal tutors. A student should formally meet their personal tutor once in the induction week and then at least at the start of each term. The student must be able to arrange meetings at other times also as required. The students could also seek advice through other informal channels for example email correspondence etc.

Module tutors

- 4.5 Module tutors are responsible for:
- 4.5.1 the day-to-day management of their module(s);
 - 4.5.2 ensuring high quality of teaching and assessment of their module(s);
 - 4.5.3 ensuring the delivery and assessment of the module in line with the information contained in the module descriptor;
 - 4.5.4 ensuring that the delivery and marking etc. of their module(s) adhere to University regulations, policies and procedures;
 - 4.5.5 carrying out all assessment procedures in line with University policy;
 - 4.5.6 Identifying students who may be experiencing difficulties by monitoring attendance and student progress, and offering guidance and support to students;
 - 4.5.7 referring to the Personal Tutor when students at risk are identified;
 - 4.5.8 during the term, the Module Tutors teaching each module will make themselves available to students through establishing weekly office hours (minimum of two hours per week for staff teaching current modules, other staff by appointment) during which they may be consulted on curricular and related matters, and give individual advice on matters pertaining to the programme. Outside these office hours, module tutors may be contacted by students on appointment.

Module coordinators

- 4.6 A Module Coordinator is responsible for:
- 4.6.1 quality management and enhancement and standards of their module(s);
 - 4.6.2 maintaining accurate and up to date module descripts and supplying these to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Module Tutors, and students enrolled on the module;

- 4.6.3 ensuring compliance of modules to University policy;
 - 4.6.4 coordinating the work of all staff contributing to the module in terms of delivery, assessment, feedback and moderation (e.g. adjunct staff, visiting lecturers, guest speakers); providing such advice and support to those staff as may be necessary;
 - 4.6.5 coordinating with administrative staff in a timely manner with respect to timetabling;
 - 4.6.6 implementing procedures for assessment in compliance with University policy, including communications with External Examiners, requirements for moderation, and attendance at meetings of the Board of Examiners for the programme the module contributes to;
 - 4.6.7 ensuring that suggested modifications to modules are brought to the attention of the Board of Studies;
 - 4.6.8 managing the development of the module to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and in line with new academic knowledge and any professional requirements;
 - 4.6.9 completing the review of the module at the end of the term;
 - 4.6.10 ensuring the completion of Module file with the assistance of the Faculty administrator.
- 4.7 Module Coordinators should be available to students by appointment should the student require advice in addition to that given to them by module tutors.

Dissertation Supervisor

- 4.8 The Dissertation Supervisor is responsible for:
- 4.8.1 giving guidance to the student on the nature of the dissertation and standards expected;
 - 4.8.2 helping students to focus the study and draw up a feasible programme of work;
 - 4.8.3 advising student on relevant literature and methodology;
 - 4.8.4 meet with the student in compliance with University policy and as agreed with the student;
 - 4.8.5 monitor student progress against the programme work;
 - 4.8.6 provide feedback on draft chapters of the dissertation, and helping students understand if and how standards are below those expected;
 - 4.8.7 where relevant, advise on ethical and safety implications of the work;
 - 4.8.8 timely, constructive, and appropriate interventions that ensure a student is kept on track, meets deadlines, and submits work that meets the technical requirements of the dissertation;
 - 4.8.9 notify students in case of planned absence and ensuring the student has access to a supplementary Supervisor if absence is prolonged or falls at crucial moments;
 - 4.8.10 prepare progress reports for the student should the student request extension to the normal period of study;
 - 4.8.11 to advise the Head of Programme/Programme Coordinator, Dean of the Faculty and the student, immediately there is reason to believe that the student is at risk of failing the dissertation. Dissertation Supervisors are not required to grade the draft work;
 - 4.8.12 to act as primary examiner of the final submitted work, in compliance with University policy.
- 4.9 At the beginning of the dissertation, a learning contract will be signed between the University and the student laying out the scope of research, research milestones and the

schedule of meetings between the student and the supervisor. The dissertation supervisors will make themselves available to students for these meetings.

- 4.10 A change of the Dissertation Supervisor may be sought by the student or the Dissertation Supervisor and agreed subject to the approval of the Head of Programme and the Dean. Changes are communicated to the Marketing, Admissions, and Student Services department.

Head of programme

- 4.11 Responsibilities of the Head of Programme are set out under relevant University policy for the roles and responsibilities of academic staff.
- 4.12 The Head of Programme and/or Programme Coordinator will discuss problems with academic work and possible solution, and may involve other members of staff, e.g. personal tutors or module coordinators, where appropriate.

Student access to academic staff

- 4.13 Students will be supplied with the contact details for academic staff.
- 4.14 Academic staff will publish office hours, and norms of electronic communication, for term-time and vacation periods. The timetable will ensure staff are available on more than one day each week, and at varied hours in the day.
- 4.15 Students should notify academic staff of their intention to consult, and give indication of the nature of the matter they wish to discuss.
- 4.16 Students may raise matters of immediate and/or serious concern with the most relevant member of academic staff outside any published timetable. Students may also refer to the Marketing, Admissions, and Student Services.

SERVICES

Advice to students on registration

- 4.17 Students and prospective students will be provided with timely, consistent and accurate advice on all matters associated with registration including:
- 4.17.1 descriptions and availability of programmes and modules;
 - 4.17.2 application, selection and registration procedures;
 - 4.17.3 cancellation, deferral and suspension of studies;
 - 4.17.4 transfer to other programmes;
 - 4.17.5 fee, fee support, scholarships etc.;
 - 4.17.6 exemption and module transfer procedures;
 - 4.17.7 other financial support available to students;
 - 4.17.8 services available from the Marketing, Admissions, and Students Services;
 - 4.17.9 facilities and services for disabled and disadvantaged persons including those with learning difficulties;
 - 4.17.10 any specific support programmes for minority, national, gender or other specific groups;

- 4.17.11 student associations and activities.
- 4.18 Academic and administrative staff will be given training sufficient to ensure they have current and accurate knowledge.
- 4.19 Students will be provided with the names/positions of staff in the faculties, Marketing, Admissions, and Student Services department, Student Associations and Student Services (including Dubai International Academic City offices) from whom they may obtain advice on registration and related issues.

Orientation and the student handbook

- 4.20 Each student will receive a student handbook (via email) at the beginning of their studies.
- 4.21 Faculties are responsible for academic orientations to the programme.
- 4.22 The Marketing, Admissions, and Student Services department will advise on generic matters.
- 4.23 The handbook and orientation should include, but is not limited to information on:
 - 4.23.1 registration procedures;
 - 4.23.2 submission of assignments;
 - 4.23.3 examinations;
 - 4.23.4 student advisers;
 - 4.23.5 student services;
 - 4.23.6 library;
 - 4.23.7 information technology services;
 - 4.23.8 study methods;
 - 4.23.9 timetables;
 - 4.23.10 student related University policy;
 - 4.23.11 safety and security;
 - 4.23.12 values guiding behaviour in the academic community and codes of conduct in place to govern behaviour;
 - 4.23.13 student associations;
 - 4.23.14 campus map.

International students

- 4.24 The University will ensure international students have in addition to the standard information and orientation:
 - 4.24.1 the opportunity to gain familiarity and understanding of Emirati and University culture.
 - 4.24.2 appropriate specialist support services with respect to:
 - 4.24.2.1 recruitment;
 - 4.24.2.2 admission;
 - 4.24.2.3 accommodation;
 - 4.24.2.4 immigration, visa and passport requirements;
 - 4.24.2.5 health care advice;

4.24.2.6 where necessary, referral to appropriate government, embassy and similar facilities and support services.

4.25 Opportunity to share cultural and national celebrations in collaboration with students of all nationalities.

Careers guidance and planning

4.26 Career guidance helps students explore vocational interests, and opportunities available in various fields of specialisation in their chosen educational programmes. This is provided through the following means:

4.26.1 members of the academic staff giving careers advice;

4.26.2 students being referred to members of the Programme Advisory Group which comprises specialists in fields relevant to the programme;

4.26.3 access to careers development activities organised by Dubai International Academic City.

4.27 Employment related information is available through employment and corporate websites, copies of corporate directories and databases. The University Library has a specially designated space for access to this information.

4.28 Each Faculty will publish a framework for the provision of academic and careers guidance.

4.29 Enrolled and prospective students will be provided with accurate and appropriate advice from designated and trained personnel.

4.30 Training will include:

4.30.1 principles and techniques of career planning and academic guidance;

4.30.2 programs offered on professional admission requirements, structures and related career opportunities;

4.30.3 academic support services available to students;

4.30.4 work experience and internship;

4.30.5 boundaries of expertise and appropriate referrals.

Services for students with different abilities and special needs

4.31 The University is committed to enabling access and participation to differently abled students, and enhancing their career prospects through their studies.

4.32 The University will provide a supportive environment for differently abled students. It is the responsibility of all Faculties and Departments to contribute appropriate services to meet the varied and special needs of differently abled students.

Student associations and student representation in decision making

4.33 Students will have opportunity to:

4.33.1 participate in the Governance of the University and the Student Association;

- 4.33.2 have a role in the development of the University facilities, services, policies and procedures;
 - 4.33.3 participate in cultural, sporting and recreational activities and facilities on campus;
 - 4.33.4 access convenient commercial services and facilities (where the commercial proceeds are no more than reasonable in the circumstances and supplement those provided by the University).
- 4.34 A Student Association may be established to further student participation and representation in the operation and development of the University, and organization of student activities.

Counselling facilities

- 4.35 The University engages a personal counsellor who is available regularly at times convenient to students, and operates on an independent and confidential basis.
- 4.36 Personal counselling offers:
- 4.36.1 emotional support for students finding it problematic to combine study into their lives;
 - 4.36.2 opportunity to build rapport and connection with the University;
 - 4.36.3 practical assistance with the management of stress, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, bereavement, and the impact of crisis events;
 - 4.36.4 practical assistance with the management of low self-esteem, decision making, and anger/temper;
 - 4.36.5 post-traumatic support following exceptional events and/or emergencies on campus;
 - 4.36.6 guidance for students regarding mitigating circumstances;
 - 4.36.7 practical assistance with the management of time, improving memory, workload, exam preparation.
- 4.37 The Personal Counsellor may periodically host workshops for groups of students on relevant.
- 4.38 Means of access to this service will be communicated to students.

5.0 Structures

- 5.1 The University's Institutional Research framework includes assessment of the effectiveness of academic advising and pastoral support.