# Preparing for your Personal Tutor meeting

## **The purpose of the meeting**

Your Personal Tutor may have specific things to discuss with you but these meetings are also a great opportunity for you to talk about your achievements and interests, to share your concerns and to ask any questions you may have.

The focus of these meetings will be on your academic progress and your future directions. However, if there are other areas where you would like advice, your personal tutor can help you to identify relevant sources of information or support.

**Be proactive**.

If there are any circumstances that you feel are affecting your progress or wellbeing at university, you should not hesitate to raise them. If you think things could be going better, you are struggling or feel unmotivated, talk to your personal tutor about it.

**Prepare for the meeting**

To get real benefit from your meeting, it is essential to prepare by making time to think about how things are going and by doing any other preparation work that has been set for you. If you have not been given any specific preparation tasks, you might want to try one of the following:

**Personal and professional development work**

If your course includes reflective writing, portfolios or self-assessment, look over this work. If you have taken part in group work, projects or presentations, think about your role and how you related to others. What do these experiences tell you about your progress, development and feelings?

**Mind maps**

Make mind maps of the content of each module

(If you are unfamiliar with mind maps, look at the example, *Using mind maps*)

* Annotate them with things like:
  + tasks, assignments and assessments
  + different kinds of learning
  + things that are interesting or enjoyable, difficult or challenging
  + grades and feedback you have received
  + your thoughts and feelings; things you are proud of or worried about
  + questions you have

Reflect on your mind map.

* What does it tell you about:
  + what progress you've made
  + where you are now
  + how you would like to move forward
  + whether there is any advice or support that would help you to do this

**Writing to think**

Some people find that writing freely for themselves –'talking to themselves' by writing – can help their thoughts and feelings to come out. This is completely private writing so you don't need to worry about what you say or how you say it. The idea is just to write whatever comes into your head and then read it over for anything interesting or important.

## You might want to:

## write generally about each of your modules

## or choose some other aspect of your academic life that is important to you

## or use some of the mind map prompts (from page 1) as starting points

## or choose one or two of the questions from the boxes below.

Where am I now?

* What has been new to me this year?
* What skills and abilities have I developed?
* How far have I met the aims or expectations I set myself?
* What are the strategies that help me most in my work?
* Are there things that are stopping me doing as well as I could?
* What can I learn from the spoken and written feedback I have received?

How do I want to move forward?

* What am I interested in doing next in terms of my studies? Why?
* Do I have any longer term study or career goals?
* What do I see as my strengths and achievements to build on?
* What do I see as areas for improvement?
* Are there any problem areas I haven't taken steps to address?

**When you've done the preparation, fill in the summary sheet (next page) and take it with you.**

Personal Tutor preparation: summary sheet

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Progress, goals, future directions** | **Evidence, examples reasons, context** |
| Main achievements and skills |  |
| Main areas of concern / problems |  |
| Interests and possible future directions |  |
| Goals for forthcoming semester / year |  |
| Other questions, matters for discussion, information to pass on | |

**Tips**

* It is helpful to give specific examples of things that you talk about (e.g. achievements, skills, problems), or to be able to give reasons for what you are saying: developing these abilities now will be useful for job applications and interviews later.
* Your Personal Tutor will not be familiar with everything you are studying: think about how to give concise but adequate context if you are talking about things outside their immediate area. Again, this is useful preparation for job hunting!
* When you're thinking about your skills and attributes, it can be helpful to look at them in the context of the graduate attributes framework <http://www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Graduateattributes.htm>