

**Policy Identifier:** Tutor System Policy

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Tutor System Policy
<b>Description:</b>	This policy outlines the role of Tutors providing support for students' general welfare and development insofar as it impinges on students' progression through their course.
<b>Author (Position):</b>	Vice President (Academic Affairs) and Registrar
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## Tutor System Policy

### 1 Context

The personal tutor system has for many years been a key part of the support infrastructure provided for students in Marino Institute of Education (MIE). The purpose of this policy is to outline key aspects of how the system works for staff. Although this document is primarily written for staff members who act as tutors, it may be of interest to students who wish to acquire detailed knowledge of the system. All full-time lecturers and part-time lecturers who work at least two days per week are required to take tutees.

### 2 Purpose

The personal tutor system is for full-time students and students on the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Further Education) part-time only. It is a central component of life in MIE. Tutors provide support for students' general welfare and development insofar as it impinges on students' progression through their course.

All tutors are lecturers in the Institute. The role of tutor complements, but is distinct from, the lecturer's teaching role.

A wide range of supports is available to students in MIE. These include the chaplaincy and pastoral care team, the [Counselling Service](#), the [Health Service](#), the [Student Assistance Fund](#), the [Disability Service](#) and the [Students' Union](#). Often a student's first point of support may be their personal tutor, who may either help resolve a concern or who may direct the student towards another source of help.

### 3 Benefits

The Institute is committed to student care and wellbeing. As part of the range of supports offered to students, they are each allocated a member of the academic staff with whom the student can meet to discuss matters inside or outside college that impact on their studies.

The tutor may provide a listening ear to help the student, or the tutor may direct the student towards other supports that are available to the student.

### 4 Scope

This policy applies to all full-time lecturers and part-time lecturers who work in MIE a minimum of 2 days per week.

The policy does not apply to lecturers who work less than two days per week in MIE.

## 5 Principles

- 5.1 All full-time and part-time lecturers, and contract lecturers, who work at least two days per week are required to take tutees.
- 5.2 Tutees are assigned on a pro-rata basis to part-time lecturers.
- 5.3 Tutors will provide supports to tutees on matters relating to their studies and, where appropriate, will direct students towards other available supports.
- 5.4 Apart from the initial introductory contact, responsibility for initiating contact in relation to seeking a tutor's support lies with the tutee. Such contact may be made by email, by phone or in person by calling to the tutor's office.
- 5.5 Students will differ in the level of support they require from their tutor at any particular time.
- 5.6 Initial training is provided to new tutors, through the [Counselling Service](#), as part of faculty induction. Additional training is provided to tutors, through the appropriate function (e.g. Child Protection Officer and [Counselling Service](#)), as the need arises.
- 5.7 Where a tutor is unable or unwilling to act as tutor for a particular student, either temporarily or on a longer-term basis, alternative arrangements will be put in place.
- 5.8 If a student wishes to be assigned to a new tutor, the student may request a reassignment of tutor.
- 5.9 Students who feel they have legitimate concerns regarding the performance of their tutor, in relation to their situation, can follow the [student complaints procedure](#) as a platform for addressing these concerns.
- 5.10 The personal tutor system as a student support service will undergo quality reviews of its performance, as per the guidelines outlined in the [Procedure for Quality Review of MIE Corporate and Student Support Services](#).

## 6 Definitions

- 6.1 **Off-Books:** Refers to a student's status if they defer their studies for a year before returning to continue the studies the following academic year. Sometimes students

may be off-books (not attending classes during the year) but taking exams during the relevant examination period.

**6.2 Student Assistance Fund:** Provides [financial assistance](#) for students who experience financial difficulties while in college. In MIE it is administered by the Lead Tutor.

## **7 Policy**

### **7.1 Role of Tutor**

Personal tutors are well placed to listen to a range of matters that may impact on a student's academic progress and to provide support for students in such circumstances. Students can encounter several obstacles that affect their smooth progression through their course. Such obstacles may include, but are not limited to, depression, loneliness, relationship break-ups, parental separation or divorce, ill health or death of family members, financial worries, bullying, unplanned pregnancy, emotional insecurities arising from the transition from second level to third level education, and failing exams. Tutors may offer support and/or may direct tutees to other sources of support.

Students may also be offered opportunities during their time in MIE, which necessitate their taking time out from their studies and here a tutor may be able to offer advice.

### **7.2 Listening/Pastoral Care**

A central role of the tutor is to actively listen to students, providing encouragement and support as appropriate. Tutors can offer guidance and advice on the availability of supports concerning study, finance, health and other matters where such matters are affecting the tutee's ability to complete their studies.

### **7.3 Advocate for the Student**

The personal tutor may act, as appropriate, as advocate for the student should a student wish to [re-check an exam](#) result or to appeal the consequence of a result. The tutor will advise the student on the relevant policies and help the student prepare a case for the Court of Appeal<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Appeals Policies: [Appeals Policy \(Academic Progression\)](#), [Court of First Appeal Process](#), [Court of Second Appeal Process](#), [Guidelines on Evidence in Support of an Ad Misericordiam Appeal](#) and [Postgraduate Appeals Process](#)

Students may request the presence and support of their tutor in any [Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students](#) within MIE. Tutors should not be involved in the administration of any disciplinary sanctions imposed by the Institute on a tutee because this could constitute a conflict of interest and may damage the relationship between tutor and tutee.

The tutor will advise the tutee about how to access or interpret the content of Institute policies, as requested.

#### **7.4 Tutor-Tutee Relationship**

##### **Confidentiality:**

7.4.1 Matters arising from the personal tutoring role should be treated with confidence. Personal information will not be disclosed to a third party without the consent of the tutee.

7.4.2 A tutor should always seek the consent of tutee to discuss matters relevant to examinations, school/work placement etc. with the relevant Institute personnel.

7.4.3 Tutors may discuss a student's case with a student's parent/guardian only with the express written permission of the student.

In cases, however, where a tutor believes that the tutee constitutes a danger to themselves or another person, they may need to seek advice from a colleague or from the [Counselling Service](#). Similarly, should a tutee disclose abuse, the tutor may be required under the [Safeguarding Policy: Children](#) to pass on the disclosure to the appropriate authorities.

## **8 Responsibility**

The Registrar & Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for the implementation of this policy in conjunction with academic staff members.

## **9 Related Documents**

9.1 [Tutor System Procedure](#)

9.2 [Safeguarding Policy: Children](#)

9.3 [Child Safeguarding Statement](#)

9.4 [MIE Privacy Policy](#)

9.5 [Student Hardship Support Policy](#)

- 9.6 [Support for Pregnant Students at MIE](#)
- 9.7 [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)
- 9.8 [Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities](#)
- 9.9 [Student Complaints Procedure](#)
- 9.10 [Procedure for Quality Review of MIE Corporate and Student Support Services](#)
- 9.11 [Re-check/Re-Mark of Assessments Procedure](#)
- 9.12 [Appeals Policy \(Academic Progression\)](#)
- 9.13 [Court of First Appeal Process](#)
- 9.14 [Court of Second Appeal Process](#)
- 9.15 [Guidelines on Evidence in Support of an Ad Misericordiam Appeal](#)
- 9.16 [Postgraduate Appeals Process](#)
- 9.17 [Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students](#)