FAQs for Personal Tutees

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is a Personal Tutor?

Personal Tutors are academic staff whose key responsibilities in this role are to be an accessible and approachable departmental point of contact, providing responsive academic and routine wellbeing support and guidance to facilitate your learning development and experience. They are also the most obvious person to provide a reference for you for any internships, graduate programmes or job applications, so it is worthwhile investing time into developing your relationship with your Personal Tutor to support them in writing these references, when the time comes.

Personal Tutors can discuss a variety of things such as; general academic performance, feedback you have received, ideas you might have about study and or employability skills you need to develop, questions you have about the rules and regulations of the department and university, as well as queries about other sources of development and support across the University.

Your Personal Tutor is not an expert in health and wellbeing issues - which are best discussed with your GP/healthcare provider. The University Support Services (Disability Services, Mental Health, Counselling and Wellbeing) are available on campus, if you need professional support with any issues. Your Personal Tutor’s role here is to signpost you to these specialist services, and discuss with you how to manage any impact issues are having on your academic studies and any adjustments that might be recommended.

Personal Tutors are not experts in all subject areas within your department or degree course. You should contact module staff for questions about specific module content. Your Personal Tutor may be able to help you identify the most suitable person for you to contact with a specialist academic query, if it is outside of their expertise.

See the Student Guide here for further information.

Can I change my Personal Tutor?

Yes, you can – but this is an exceptional rather than routine occurrence. If you wish to discuss this possibility, or any difficulties you are having with your Personal Tutor, contact your departmental Senior Tutor in the first instance.

What is a Departmental Senior Tutor?
The Departmental Senior Tutor is an experienced member of academic staff jointly responsible, with your Head of Department, for the effective running of personal tutoring in your department. They also manage complex issues that Personal Tutors refer to them. They are usually involved with the response to, and management of, mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments. They may also be involved in absence monitoring, as poor attendance is often an early indication of difficulties.

Contact your Senior Tutor if you have issues affecting your studying that your Personal Tutor has not responded to (perhaps due to their absence because of study leave or annual leave) or which you do not wish to discuss with your Personal Tutor, e.g. to discuss changing your Personal Tutor.

What is a Faculty Senior Tutor?

There are three Faculty Senior Tutors (FSTs) who work within the Dean of Students’ Office. They are academics in departments outside of their designated Faculty to enable them to work impartially and provide as much objectivity and independence as possible.

Departments refer some students to the FST for further assistance. You may contact your FST directly if you feel your department or other student support services have not been able to offer sufficient support on issues relating to your studies and welfare, or if you have a complaint, or wish to make an appeal and need further guidance.

Who is the Dean of Students?

The Dean of Students is a senior academic and is currently Prof. Louise Gracia. The Dean of Students oversees the work of the Faculty Senior Tutors and is involved with the strategic development of personal tutoring and its interaction with other support services in the University.

What student support is available?

Detailed information about each support service listed below can be found on MyWarwick

There is a wide variety of student support relating to different aspects of university life including:

**Academic Support**: Support around specific academic content is best sought from your department, in particular via your module lecturers and tutors and Director of Study. The Library is also a useful source of support with subject specific skills training and working out how to find information that may be helpful in your studies.

**Skills and Personal Development**: A variety of skills and development training is provided by Skills and Student Development.

**Careers/Employability**: A wide range of advice, support and events are provided by Student Careers.
Wellbeing, mental health and counselling: Student support and advice is provided by Warwick Wellbeing Support Services.

Disability: Disability Services provides support and advice for people with a registered disability and will contact your department to discuss reasonable adjustments if required, e.g. special exam arrangements.

Student Union: The Student Union’s Welfare Advisors provide a range of free and impartial support on issues relating to life as student at Warwick such as personal issues, housing (e.g. finding accommodation or complaining about its condition), course-related problems, funding and finances, immigration issues, or complaints and disciplinary proceedings with the University.

The International Office: Provides advice relating to visas and other issues that might affect International students or students going abroad to study or work as part of their degree.

Student Finance: Offers advice relating to paying and receiving University accommodation/tuition fees, loans and grants. Information relating to support for financial hardship can be found on the Student Funding website.

Warwick Accommodation: Provide advice if you have queries or concerns relating to Warwick Accommodation.

Campus Security: Have trained staff to support in crisis/emergency situations 24/7.

Residential Life Team: If you are living in halls your Residential Tutor/Warden is also a source of support for issues relating to life in halls and any difficulties you are encountering with people there or the accommodation itself. Resident Tutors and Wardens have day jobs - usually PhD students, early career academics or administrative staff in the University. They are not full time specialist wellbeing advisors, but like your Personal Tutor are there to listen, and to refer on when specialist help is required.

What support do I have if studying abroad /working on a placement?

All students who are abroad studying or working should have a named tutor whom they can contact for help in addition to local support at the host University or organisation. This may be your Personal Tutor or a Year Abroad Co-ordinator and departments vary in their arrangements for this. Make sure you know who this is before you leave the UK. If in doubt, you could contact the departmental Senior Tutor. You have the same access to contact all University support services (e.g. Wellbeing Support Services) whilst you are overseas too.
What should I do if something goes wrong for me when studying abroad/working on a placement?

If you have an emergency and local support/emergency services are not able to fully support you, contact University of Warwick Security. They are available 24/7 and are fully trained to respond to emergencies. Contact numbers are 02476 52203 or 02476 52222

Wellbeing and mental health issues can be directed to Wellbeing Support Services.

If you have a problem with the academic side of your studies or are unhappy at the host organisation, and not able to resolve this with them, you should contact your department e.g. Personal Tutor/Senior Tutor or Year Abroad Co-ordinator.

ACADEMIC QUESTIONS

What is expected of me as a University learner?

You are expected to become/be an independent learner, although some guidance and assistance will be provided in the early stages of your studies.

Universities are learning communities in which staff are delivering teaching but also researching into cutting-edge issues. Some staff, for example, are consultants to government and industry, others write textbooks and are examiners for professional bodies.

Universities do not deliver a nationally set curriculum they set their own curriculum and examinations because staff are experts in their field. This provides an environment that will help you develop not only your subject knowledge and skills but also your approach to working and managing your time. Becoming part of this expert learning community brings with it a range of opportunities and responsibilities.

Engagement and independent learning

You have a wonderful opportunity to engage with people developing expert knowledge in your field/s of interest. If you engage and demonstrate your interest in class by taking notes, asking questions, and preparing for class by doing the set work, staff will be more able to support you in developing your particular interests, helping you get over learning obstacles, and to know your strengths if you need a reference. This is also good practice for being in the workplace where you need to be responsible for your own personal / professional development and success.

Independent learning is a shift because lectures and seminars are just the starting point. You need to manage your own diary much more and use your time between classes to do the reading set for you, research topics using the library resources, develop your schedule for making sure your assessed work is done well and on-time, and plan your revision schedule. Good, motivated, time-management is
essential because you will not have a teacher regularly reminding you when assessments are due. Staff will expect you to use their office hours or make an appointment for routine queries because they have a wide range of additional teaching, research and administration work to perform during the week.

Resilience and Support

Being at University is challenging - finding your way around, making friends, working out how to succeed in new subject areas and so on. Resilience is all about rising to challenges and overcoming setbacks, so do not expect everything to be perfect immediately. Your department and the multiple support services at University are here to guide you when you decide you need help. Embrace the challenge, but also remember if you need help with things – ask.

Socialising and safeguarding

Life at University is also the first time away from home for many and this brings with it the opportunities and challenges of being part of new social networks. The University operates a Dignity at Warwick Policy, which outlines unacceptable behaviours and the process for reporting and dealing with inappropriate behaviour. If you have any concerns please let someone know. This might be your Personal/Senior Tutor, your Resident Tutor in your halls, the SU Advice Centre, Wellbeing Support, or security, depending on the urgency or context of the situation and whom you feel most comfortable talking to. Most people around the University that you might approach are aware of what support is available from whom, and will be happy to listen and suggest onward referral as appropriate.

What formal requirements does the University have about attendance?

You are expected to attend lectures and seminars. Departments have various monitoring points which are used to formally record engagement with your course and (for overseas tier 4 visa students) compliance with visa obligations. Departments also routinely record (usually on tabula) attendance at seminars, labs or similar classes, or supervisory meetings. Different departments may have specific expectations about compulsory attendance at particular events or classes and they will inform you of this. Otherwise, University regulations provide mechanisms for departments to request withdrawal either automatically after a period of complete non-attendance or based on unsatisfactory engagement with your studies, which has to be explained fully. If anyone from your department, student records, or elsewhere across the University raises concerns about your attendance, you MUST take this seriously and take advice from your Personal Tutor, Senior Tutor, or the SU Advice Centre. It is understood that problems with attendance are often due to other underlying issues and the University is keen to support you – but we can only do this if we are aware that there are difficulties.

What happens if I have missed any classes?

Check carefully if your programme or department has any specific attendance requirements and if so familiarise yourself with what they are. If your absence is extensive or repeated, you may have to provide evidence to support your absence. In any event, it is expected and common courtesy, to
explain your absence from a class to the relevant staff in advance or as soon as possible afterwards. If your frequency of attendance becomes problematic and your department sends you absence letters asking you about this, you must take this seriously and meet with your Personal Tutor (or anyone else your department directs you to meet with) as soon as possible. If there are legitimate reasons for your absences, (e.g. mitigating circumstances) the University has support that we can offer, and the sooner you ask for help the better.

What happens if I have missed a formal assignment deadline or an examination?

You will need to supply evidence of mitigating circumstances to your department to request an extension (although it is normally expected that you apply in advance) for coursework or an opportunity to sit an examination at a later date, as a first attempt or a further re-sit. Consult your Personal Tutor or department Senior Tutor as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

What is an Examination Board and how are decisions made about my progress/degree classification?

An Examination Board is a group of academic staff from your department (or at the end of first year also your Faculty) who meet to make decisions on progression from one year of study to the next, and on degree classification at the end of your course prior to graduation. They usually work anonymously by student number, have a record of your module marks for the relevant years together with any mitigating circumstances recommendations from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, and then take decisions on classification and progression according to the relevant progression and classification criteria in the degree regulations. Consult your departmental handbook for full details of your course regulations.

The SU provide a simple and useful guide to understanding academic procedures, which you can pick up from the SU Advice Centre.

What should I do if I want to make an appeal or complaint?

Read the information about appeals and complaints. Appeals can only be made against certain decisions and according to certain criteria, so you should read the form carefully to check that your possible appeal fits these criteria – i.e. that you have valid grounds for appeal. You may have to provide evidence of your grounds of appeal. Your Personal Tutor, department Senior Tutor, SU Advice Centre or Faculty Senior Tutor can advise further if you have any questions about a possible appeal or complaint.

Can I ask to resit a year? Can I be required to resit a year?
Re-sitting a year with residence is not a usual course of action. You are normally expected to proceed to the next year of study, take temporary withdrawal, or re-sit exams if you do not meet progression requirements. MBChB (medicine) is a notable exception to this, as are in some circumstances, final year students who have been absent from some of their examinations or failed the degree entirely. For other students, it is more likely that the University would require resitting exams out of residence (i.e. you are not required or permitted to attend), or for a student to take a period of temporary/permanent withdrawal. You can in exceptional circumstances request a restart of the year yourself, which the University would consider and may or may not approve. This normally applies to first years, and would need to be supported by a compelling case as to why your study was significantly and detrimentally impacted by mitigating circumstances through the year. You also need to be aware that a repeat year would involve paying fees again. If you have concerns about your academic progress during the year talk to your Personal Tutor immediately before it gets to the stage where you have fallen so far behind that you are thinking of having to repeat a year.

**What happens if I fail an examination/module?**

This depends on the circumstances, on what programme you are on, what exam or module it is, what year you are in, whether you are on a re-sit or first attempt, and whether the failure is in one module or more. See the general advice from the academic office [here](#). Your department – your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor – is best placed to advise you on your particular circumstances, so talk to them immediately.

**Can I be required to withdraw?**

For academic reasons: You can be required to withdraw, by a Board of Examiners, at the end of first year, after resits, and less often at the end of second year if you do not meet the criteria for progression. This would come in the form of a requirement to withdraw. In the first instance, you have a right to appeal and in second year, you have a right to re-sit without residence, after a requirement to withdraw.

You can also be required to withdraw temporarily or permanently through a Continuation of Registration Committee decision (see next page), if the department thinks your progress is unsatisfactory and has made significant attempts to support you without successfully improving your level of engagement. There is also a *fitness to study* process if you are unwell physically or mentally and your continued study is disruptive to others. This can, in some cases, lead to temporary or permanent withdrawal, although temporary withdrawal may be considered as a first option to allow you time to resolve difficulties rather than moving to permanent withdrawal straightaway.

In disciplinary cases, suspension or permanent expulsion is also the final sanction for the most serious infringements in major disciplinary cases. If you have any of these decisions taken or processes initiated against you, take advice at the earliest opportunity. Your Personal Tutor, Senior Tutor, Faculty Senior Tutor, or the SU Advice Centre can support you. If it is a serious disciplinary matter or
Continuation of Registration Committee, the SU Advice Centre may be best placed to deal with such complex matters.

The University has introduced a system of ‘exit qualifications’ after year 1 and year 2 - Certificate and Diploma in Higher Education - for which you might be eligible if you are not permitted, or decide not to continue with your studies.

**What is a Continuation of Registration Committee (CRC)?**

A CRC is made up of experienced academics who hear any case made by your department that you should withdraw temporarily or permanently. You have a right to have someone (your Personal Tutor or SU Advice Centre advisor) accompany you. You have a right to submit any evidence you wish. Departments do not make cases to this committee lightly and it is highly likely you will have been informed that your attendance or engagement with your course is inadequate prior to this and have been offered support for any difficulties you are having. Act immediately at these early stages to avoid a full CRC hearing.

**Can I take temporary withdrawal from my studies? What are the implications?**

Yes, you can – details are [here](#). There are a range of reasons why you might want to do this (medical, family, financial), and you will often have to provide suitable evidence. There can be [financial](#) and (for overseas students) [immigration](#) implications and you should contact the Student Finance Office and/or International Office to discuss the details of your particular situation.

**What do I do if I want to change/leave my course? (Permanent withdrawal/Course transfer)**

If you want to withdraw permanently, you can do so by completing a form. This is usually a last resort, and consulting the support services that the University offers would normally be encouraged first. We do not want any student to feel they have to withdraw because of lack of support, although we recognise that sometimes students feel their situation cannot be resolved or it is not practical to stay and permanent withdrawal is the right course of action.

If you want to change course you need to speak to the department you wish to transfer to. There are sometimes in-department transfers but you might also have in mind to move to a different department and you will need to speak to them in the first instance. There may be admissions criteria they need to check or they may be over-subscribed and not have any places in the current/succeeding year. Transfers sought beyond a very short time after the beginning of the academic year (for taught courses) may have to wait until the subsequent year and in which case you might seek temporary withdrawal to return to your new course the following academic year. Departments will advise if your request is in time for a direct transfer or whether this can only take place the subsequent academic year. Transfers are not automatic and may not be possible.
If you do decide to leave after one or two years, you may be eligible for a Certificate or Diploma in Higher education as an alternative exit award.

**What are the University’s rules around plagiarism and cheating?**

The University regulations on plagiarism and cheating can be found [here](#) which considers cheating to be ‘an attempt to benefit oneself or another, by deceit or fraud. This shall include reproducing one's own work or the work of another person or persons without proper acknowledgement.’ Plagiarism is the form of cheating involved when you present others’ work as your own without proper acknowledgement, but there are other forms of cheating such as taking prohibited materials into exam rooms. There are potentially significant academic penalties and possibly professional implications if you are caught cheating either in submitted work or in an examination, including having electronic devices or other materials in your possession in exam halls. Poor academic referencing practice, which falls short of cheating, can also affect your marks. You are advised to familiarise yourself with the rules and good practice around academic writing as soon as possible and adhere to these. Your department will probably provide guidance, information and training e.g. [Plato tutorial](#). Attend any workshops your department provides, make sure you are aware of good practice in referencing and the use of any proofreading services, if you happen to use these to check your English.

Findings of cheating are always preceded by an investigation and you may wish to take advice from your Personal Tutor or SU Advice Centre if any allegation is made against you. If you are sent a letter, don’t panic unduly if you think you have done nothing wrong, take advice from your Personal Tutor and respond to the questions asked.

**DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS**

**What is a disciplinary hearing?**

If there is an allegation that you have infringed the University’s disciplinary rules (other than academic cheating), you may be called to a hearing to determine the matter and any penalties to be imposed. These might involve drugs, alcohol, antisocial behaviour, assaults, bullying and harassment or other breaches of the [Dignity at Warwick](#) policy. See the regulations and processes [here](#). Residential Life have their own processes applicable to behaviour in halls, [here](#). Whilst some disciplinary hearings are minor, some can be far more serious and the SU Advice Centre may be the best source of advice if you are called to a hearing. You should remember that the University is a community and as a place of work, study and living, certain standards of behaviour are expected – you should familiarise yourself with the [Dignity at Warwick](#) policy and adhere to it.

**What about illegal drugs and alcohol?**
The University does not tolerate illegal drugs on campus, and although, for many, alcohol is a normal and enjoyable part of student life, drinking to excess can sometimes cause problems and the University expects responsible behaviour. See the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

What is a Fees Committee?

A Fees Committee deals with non-payment of academic and non-academic fees. Full details of the University’s policy and regulations around this are available here.

What happens if I am accused of a serious disciplinary matter, sexual violence or any other criminal offence?

The University’s regulations around student disciplinary offences can be found here. The University takes very seriously the obligation to investigate fairly and to provide appropriate support for students in this situation. The SU Advice Centre is probably the best place to get advice in this kind of situation. In serious cases, it may also be necessary or appropriate to secure legal representation and the SU Advice Centre may also be able to offer support here. You may also wish to inform your department so they are aware and can appropriately respond and take account of any impact on your academic work and progress.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

What should I do if something happens in my life that affects my academic studies?

The University refers to such issues as Mitigating Circumstances. You should be aware of the broad definition of mitigating circumstances and guidance on what is and is not likely to be accepted as mitigating circumstances. The University’s guidance on mitigating circumstances including a link to the form you will need to complete can be found here. Broadly speaking this is something unexpected and out of your control, that has a detrimental impact on your study or assessments on a short-term basis. If, after reading the University guidance, you are in any doubt about what might (or might not) be classified as mitigating circumstances, discuss with your Personal Tutor or department Senior Tutor. Long-term ongoing issues are normally expected to be dealt with by providing reasonable adjustments to study. Consult your Personal Tutor or department Senior Tutor and Disability Services for support and advice around long-term and ongoing issues.

Make sure you inform your department. You are likely to have to provide evidence (e.g. Doctor’s note or copy of a Death Certificate in the case of a bereavement) in support of any claim you make and a brief explanation of when and how you were affected. If a coursework deadline is affected you may
want to consider applying for an extension, if your examination performance is affected you may submit a mitigating circumstances form to your department which will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

**Can I self-certify if I am ill?**

Yes, to a limited extent - see guidance [here](#).

**What can I do if I experience extreme financial hardship?**

Alongside the usual possibilities of part-time work on and off campus ([Unitemps](#) may be a useful resource if you are looking for part-time work), there are a range of University financial [hardship funds](#) available, as well as general [money management advice](#). Although it may be tempting to take as many hours of paid work as you can find, do be aware that this may interfere with attendance at classes and completion of your academic work. The [SU Advice Centre](#) is also a good source of advice on prioritisation, budgeting, and managing financial difficulties.

**What can I do if I get into debt with the university and am struggling to pay tuition and/or accommodation fees?**

Keep the Student Finance Office informed as much as possible, to see if there can be an agreed arrangement for catching up on any arrears – they advise that in the first instance, you should contact the Credit Control Team within Student Finance by emailing student.finance.cc@warwick.ac.uk. Also, enquire with them about your eligibility for accessing any hardship funds that are available – you can do the latter directly via [Student Funding](#).

**What do I need to do to register the fact I have a disability and need support?**

Contact [Disability Services](#) as soon as possible. They can also advise you on Disabled Student’s Allowances. Make sure your department are informed too (your Personal or Senior Tutor). Please note disability can include dyslexia, long-term mental health conditions, cancer diagnosis, as well as visual, mobility and hearing issues. You will require medical or other appropriate evidence, so bring what you have with you to any appointment with Disability Services.

**What can I do if I experience harassment, bullying, hate crime?**

Bullying and harassment within the University Community are breaches of the [Dignity at Warwick](#) policy. You may wish to make a formal complaint and will be supported in this if that is what you chose, but are under no obligation to do so. Approach whoever you feel most able to talk to – the [SU](#), [Wellbeing Support](#), or your Personal Tutor – for an initial discussion about your options.
As regards **hate crime** on or around campus, there are a number of options and you need to consider whether you are looking for advice on what to do next or whether you already know you want to report this to Campus Security or the Police. The SU Advice Centre is a third party **hate crime-reporting centre. Wellbeing support services** can also help and talking to your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor may also be useful. The University takes such matters very seriously, so please do talk to someone if you have concerns, whoever you feel most comfortable approaching is probably the best initial starting point.

**What can I do if I think myself/my friend may be being influenced by an extremist organisation?**

Talk to someone as soon as possible – whether you or a friend - being drawn into violent extremism can be a serious safeguarding and welfare issue. Talk to your Personal or Senior Tutor, the SU Advice Centre, Wellbeing Student Support or the Chaplaincy. If you believe there are acts of terror being planned contact Campus Security (02476 522222) or call the Police immediately.

**What can I do if I have difficulties connected to religious faith?**

University can be a time to explore what you really believe, whatever your faith background. If you ever find such issues confusing or problematic in any way, you may wish to consider contacting the university’s [Chaplaincy](#) to discuss issues with any spiritual dimension. There are chaplains from all the major faiths represented. You could also speak to Wellbeing Support Services directly.

You can of course always talk to your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor about any issues affecting your University life. Whilst they cannot guide you in relation to any faith issues, they can listen to anything troubling you and point you in the direction of relevant support services if your academic progress is impacted.

**What can I do if I need support in relation to my sexuality/gender identity?**

‘Coming out’ if you are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or considering that you might be trans may be a challenging and difficult time, as well as feeling profoundly liberating and the right and necessary thing for you to do. You may wish to consider contacting the University’s Wellbeing Support Services, Counselling Service, or the SU Advice Centre, for advice around sexuality or gender identity. The University’s [Equality Diversity and Inclusion](#) unit has a range of relevant initiatives and networks.

Talking to your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor, or Resident Tutor, about any issues that are causing you concern may be useful. Alternatively, if there is any spiritual/faith based dimension to your questions, you might want to contact the [Chaplaincy](#). The [Dignity at Warwick Policy](#) promotes inclusivity across the Warwick community establishing that discrimination or any other kind of bullying
related to sexuality or gender identity is unacceptable, so please do seek support from someone if this happens.

What can I do if I need support in relation to pregnancy?

Wellbeing Support Services will be able to advise you on support available and implications of pregnancy and combining student life with new parenthood, as well as directing you to advice on alternative options. Make sure you see your GP, and the Counselling Service can help in thinking through your own decision on what to do, if you are not sure.

Whether or not you continue the pregnancy, talk to your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor so any practical support can be put in place for you in the department to address any impact on your study schedule and progression. Departments are aware that this may be a sensitive issue, so if you have concerns about confidentiality around submitting details of your situation (as part of any mitigating circumstances evidence) please speak to them about possibilities for keeping evidence more confidential than normal, i.e. only to your Personal Tutor/Senior Tutor.

If it is your partner rather than yourself that is pregnant, all of this still applies and if you need advice or support please talk to Wellbeing Support or the Counselling Service.

What can I do if I am being subjected to a forced (unwanted) marriage?

Forced marriage is a criminal offence in the UK and is a very important safeguarding concern if it arises. You should discuss your concerns with Wellbeing Support Services, Student Union Advice Centre or the departmental Senior Tutor. If urgent report to Campus Security or the Police and ask for their help if you believe you or a friend are about to be forcibly taken to a marriage ceremony or related event. Further guidance is available on the UK government website here.

What can I do if I am suffering from domestic violence?

This includes violent (physical or emotional) or other forms of coercive and controlling behaviour from a partner, regardless of whether you are co-habitating or however longstanding the relationship – support is available here. There is also some general advice on this from the Counselling Service. You are advised to report this to Wellbeing Support Services and/or the Student Union Advice centre as soon as possible. If this is affecting your studies, you may also wish to inform your department through your Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor. If you do not feel safe to return home (wherever you are staying), please tell them this so they know it is an emergency. It may be possible to arrange temporary accommodation. Campus Security are best placed to advise out of normal hours, or if other sources of support are unavailable.

What can I do if I am the victim of sexual violence?
Wellbeing Support Services have dedicated support available. Your Personal Tutor can refer you or if you feel more comfortable doing this, you can contact Wellbeing Support Service directly yourself. You can also go to the SU Advice Centre, or there is the possibility of going directly to the Police. Please be aware also of an independent organisation that provides impartial confidential advice called the Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre CRASAC. CRASAC are an established part of the network Warwick has for supporting students.

Whilst you are under no obligation to report such matters, the University takes very seriously the need to support victims and provide an appropriate and swift response as soon as any sexual violence is disclosed. If you have been a victim of a sexual assault, it may be useful to be aware of the possibility of collecting forensic evidence at an early stage (the earlier the better) so that it has been secured without necessarily committing to making a criminal or disciplinary complaint until you are fully ready to make that decision. Wellbeing Support Services or CRASAC can advise on this.

*Will you need to let your department know?* Support services will respect confidentiality but if there is an impact on your studies, it may be sensible to let them know. If you find this difficult to talk about to your department yourself, Support Services will be able to assist with relaying information, but only with your consent.

*What if the perpetrator is another student, even someone in your own department or halls?* We would understand that this might make you feel that it is more sensitive and difficult to come forward, but confidentiality will still be important at all stages, and you still have every right to disclose what has happened and have action taken if you wish, so please don’t let this stop you coming forward to speak to someone.

*What can I do if someone close to me dies or is ill during my studies?*

You should mention this to your department if it is troubling you and distracting you from your work. Much depends on how serious it is and when it happens, and you should talk to your Personal Tutor about what is going on. If there is a serious or prolonged issue, you may want to discuss recording mitigating circumstances, seeking extensions for essays, or in the most difficult cases taking some time out or postponing exams. You will need to provide evidence to support any mitigating circumstances application you make. If you suffer a bereavement or are coping with the serious illness of someone close, it is entirely natural that this may be a distressing and difficult experience. The Counselling Service may also be of help.

*What can I do if I am suffering from homesickness?*

The first thing to say is that this is not at all unusual, and a very normal part of the University experience – see the advice here. Although common, it can be distressing and difficult, but there are ways of working through this. Dropping in at a Wellbeing Lounge event, talking to your Personal Tutor, talking to friends/family are all helpful. It is also useful to get involved in things around campus,
whether that is in your department, halls, sports (or any other!) club. If you can find something that interests you, get involved, and you may well find connections and friendships grow from there. You will also probably find that underneath the surface other students are also feeling the same.

MENTAL HEALTH QUESTIONS

What can I do if I have/my friend has addiction difficulties (drink, drugs, gambling)?

The first stop may be to consult Wellbeing Support Services. There are regular wellbeing lounge drop-in sessions that it might be useful to drop into and talk. They are able to advise and will respect confidentiality within the limits of harm-prevention/safeguarding. It may be that the Counselling or Mental Health team is the most appropriate. You might also want to consult your GP. Additional self-help guidance is available on illegal and other drugs, alcohol, and gambling from the Counselling Service.

If you are helping a friend, do talk to Student Support Services about maintaining healthy boundaries. It can be difficult to support someone, and you should not feel responsible for sorting out your friend’s problems yourself.

What can I do if I have/my friend has/might have an eating disorder?

Again, this is a potentially significant issue. Seek help through your GP who can refer you on to specialist help, with the university Mental Health team as a support. If this is a friend, you should encourage them to seek help. If their reluctance to do so concerns you, speak to Wellbeing Support Services. They can advise and assist further – and again you should not try to solve your friends’ problems yourself. Some general information from Counselling is available here.

What can I do if I feel I am suffering from mental health or wellbeing issues?

Do seek help from the Wellbeing or Mental Health team. They run ‘wellbeing lounge’ drop-in sessions in various locations around the campus where you can have an informal chat and you can also book individual session through their website. It can be daunting and difficult to reach out for help, but most people who do, find it useful and far more people wish they had done so earlier than wish they had not done so at all.

What can I do if I/my friend may be feeling suicidal?
Speak to someone. Wellbeing Support Services and the Mental Health team in particular are best placed to help, but if it is easier for you to talk over your concerns with e.g. someone from your department like your Personal Tutor, or your Resident Tutor in halls, do that. In an urgent emergency on campus, call Security, as they are first aid trained including mental health first-aid. If you are concerned about a possibly suicidal friend, do seek help by consulting Wellbeing Support Services, they are well placed to listen to concerns from fellow students in confidence and to advise on and if necessary take appropriate action. Don’t feel that sharing your concerns will be breaching confidentiality if you think there is a real suicide risk (you do not need initially to give any names) and do not feel you have to solve others’ problems for them or take too much responsibility for keeping others safe. Finally, if you are supporting a friend you may need support yourself, which Wellbeing Support can provide. See some general information from Counselling on suicidal thoughts here.

I need support/my friend needs support in relation to self-harming?

The Counselling Service provide guidance about self-harm here. A discussion with Wellbeing Support Services or your GP may be helpful.

I’m stressed out or don’t know what to do about supporting a friend

It is entirely natural to want to support a friend but you need to look after yourself too, and you should not feel responsible for solving friends’ problems. You might feel the impact on you is causing you distress or you simply do not know what to do. Seek advice from Wellbeing Support, or Counselling. You can be reassured that they can listen to your concerns confidentially without you naming your friend in the first instance until it is clear that it would be the right thing to do to bypass confidentiality and name your friend to keep them safe.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

What can I do if I am not happy with the response I have received in relation to a problem I have?

This depends on whom you have asked for help or support. If you have asked your Personal Tutor for help and this is not forthcoming or satisfactory then your Senior Tutor should be contacted in the first instance. If your department or other support services have not resolved your issue then you can contact the Dean of Students’ Office. In the first instance, it is best to contact your relevant Faculty Senior Tutor – Science Engineering & Medicine, Social Science, or Arts – contact details can be found on the Dean of Students’ Office website.

Complaints are regulated by this framework and are made initially to your department (if relevant) or other University division or service that you are complaining about. There is then a clear pathway through two further stages of the complaints process, if you are not satisfied with the initial response.
Again, your Personal Tutor, department Senior Tutor, SU Advice Centre, or Faculty Senior Tutor is able to advise further.

Are my parents/friends allowed to ask the University about me/my progress?

We take your privacy and the confidentiality of your data together with data protection very seriously – see the student privacy notice. The University provides information and guidance given to parents here, if they inquire about your wellbeing or progress. We always encourage family members to talk to you directly, and would only act or enter into any discussion with them, either with your clear consent, or if it appears you or someone else is at immediate risk.

How is my personal data kept/handled?

The University has protocols around data protection and student privacy where you can find all the information you require about this. All departments are expected to comply with GDPR. If you have any questions, ask the department concerned and/or raise with your Personal Tutor.

What can I do if I am unhappy in my University accommodation?

Speak to your Resident Tutor or Warden if you are having difficulties with your fellow residents, part of their job is to ensure life in halls runs smoothly. If you are still not happy or are concerned about other issues (cost, distance, facilities) you may be able to apply for a transfer to alternative accommodation.

What can I do if I am unhappy with accommodation (private landlord)?

The SU Advice Centre can help with landlord accommodation disputes, and may be able to assist with resolving the issues. If you do wish to leave, they may be able to assist you to clarify and negotiate an exit from your rental agreement – although this is usually quite difficult to achieve. You should be aware of the risks of signing up to any other rental agreement before you have a formal release from your initial rental contract as you may end up incurring double costs. It is possible that, depending on the accommodation situation on campus, Warwick Accommodation may be able to assist by offering on-campus accommodation but again you should be aware of the risks of signing any new rental agreement before formally ending the previous one.

Can I secure campus accommodation after my first year?

Yes, some final year students can apply to come onto campus and there is particular provision for students returning from study abroad – see the Warwick accommodation website for details. If you
have particular disability needs or other welfare reasons for wanting to stay on campus, you can apply for priority accommodation, usually evidence is required – see the website pages here.

PGR Specific

**What happens if I am having difficulties with my PhD supervisor?**

Each department should have someone who acts as a Personal Tutor for PGR students, this might be the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or another named contact. Contact this person (the Director of Graduate Studies if you are not sure who it should be) and discuss this with them. If this remains unresolved, the Graduate School or your Faculty Senior Tutor can be contacted for further advice.

The shift from UG to PG study brings a number of changes and working out how to be a PGR and how to work well with the supervisor you have can sometimes be challenging. It is important to have a productive relationship with your supervisor so do talk to someone if you feel this is not the case. Working out what the norms are for meetings and feedback is a key part of this so talk to other PGR students in your department and beyond. The PG Hub, which is a Library initiative, has mentors and other informal support initiatives that can help you work out how to develop your PGR skills and working relationship with your supervisor.

If you have broader wellbeing issues, do contact the Wellbeing Support Services.