

General Engineering

Academic Tutorials – Background, Schedule for Years 1 and 2, and Other Support

Semester 1

This document describes the purpose, operation of, and a recommended schedule for, Academic Tutorials in General Engineering throughout the degree. This document is provided to **both students and Academic Tutors** to allow them to maximise the benefit of Academic Tutorials.

The schedule in this handbook gives detailed guidance on the content of Academic Tutorials for General Engineering students, including how students can monitor their progress in attaining the attributes of the “Sheffield Graduate Engineer”, and how tutors can support students’ progress.

Other sources of information for student support are also provided.

Purpose of Academic Tutorials

Every General Engineering student is allocated an Academic Tutor during intro week. The Academic Tutor acts as a professional mentor to guide, help and support you throughout your degree and the Tutor’s main roles are:

- To act as the first point of contact for students in General Engineering.
- To provide general academic guidance and personal support to students.
- To provide advice on where to obtain more specialist support within the University.

Academic Tutors can’t always provide specialist academic guidance, solve all problems, and they are not trained counsellor or careers adviser. However they can advise on where to obtain help and guidance.

Over the course of your degree, you will build a close relationship with your Academic Tutor and you will most likely want your Academic Tutor to act as a referee for job applications (whether for internships or graduate jobs). The Academic Tutorial meetings are the main opportunity that tutors have to find out about students and form an opinion about them for references. Attendance at Academic Tutorials is compulsory and, in line with University regulations, will be monitored.

Note that whilst Academic Tutors will be the main point of contact for you throughout your time at the University of Sheffield for pastoral matters, there is a large body of support around the university. This includes fellow students, the year tutor (Xiangbing Zeng for Years 1 and 2, and Henriette Jensen for Years 3 and 4), the Director of General Engineering (Andy Nichols), the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, the Students Union and various professional services within the university. Further details on other sources of support are provided at the end of this document.

Academic Tutor Allocation

- Every student will be allocated an Academic Tutor at the start of year 1.
- As far as possible each student will keep the same Academic Tutor throughout the degree. However, occasionally it is necessary to reallocate Academic Tutors, e.g. due to staff leaving. This will be done to ensure that the disruption to students is minimised as far as possible.
- During the final year, students will also have a final year project supervisor. Their main role will be to support the project but they may also act as a secondary Academic Tutor. In particular, it is very likely that students will want references from their project supervisor in addition to their Academic Tutor.

Changing Academic Tutor or Concerns about Academic Tutors

- If any student is unhappy with their Academic Tutor, for whatever reason, they can request to change their tutor by contacting eee-support@sheffield.ac.uk. It is important that all students feel comfortable with their Academic Tutor and that they are appropriately supported. Any such requests and the reasons for changing will be treated in strict confidence.
- If students have concerns about their Academic Tutor or the Tutor system, please contact either the General Engineering Year 1 and 2 Tutor, Dr Xiangbing Zeng (x.zeng@sheffield.ac.uk), the General Engineering Year 3 and 4 Tutor, Dr Henriette Jensen (henriette.jensen@sheffield.ac.uk), or the Director of General Engineering, Dr Andy Nichols (a.nichols@sheffield.ac.uk). This will be treated in strict confidence.

Regularity of Meetings and Contact with Your Academic Tutor

- Year 1, Semester 1: Students to see their Academic Tutors weekly, except on the weeks when large group activities are scheduled.
- There are four large group activities, on topics such as unfair means, ED&I, Myskills and employability, attended by all year 1 students in the 1st semester.
- Year 1, Semester 2: Students to see their Academic Tutors every other week.
- Year 2: Students to see their academic tutors every three weeks.
- Year 1 & 2: Each semester students will schedule a 10 minute one-to-one meeting with their Academic Tutor.
- Years 3 to 4: Students to see their Academic Tutors 3 times per semester.

Students should discuss the exact timing of Tutorials with the Academic Tutor. Whilst available slots are identified in the timetable these are only for guidance and not all Academic Tutors will be available at these times. In addition, students can request one-to-one meetings with Academic Tutors to discuss private matters that they do not want discussed with others present.

It has been found that arranging some Academic Tutorials jointly across different years can be beneficial. In particular when talking about careers and internship opportunities it is useful to have

input and share experience from students in later years of the course. Talk to your tutor about arranging joint tutorials.

It is important that students attend Academic Tutorials and act in a professional manner when dealing with the Academic Tutor. Students should arrive promptly for meetings, conduct themselves and communicate (verbally and via emails) with Tutors in a professional manner.

It is also strongly recommended that any email contact with Academic Tutors is done via university email accounts (**which students should check daily**). If students use a personal email account we cannot be sure that it is the student that we are communicating with.

More generally students might want to contact Academic Tutors outside of these normal meetings to discuss particular matters (perhaps urgently). Tutors will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible to such requests; however, there are times when they may be very busy or away from the office and are therefore unable to respond. **If the matter is urgent students should contact eee-support@sheffield.ac.uk who will be able to help or direct you to someone else who can help.**

Information for Tutors:

How to find a list of your Tutees with email addresses

Click on 'CIES STUDENT' from the MUSE 'MY SERVICES' tab or directly <https://portal103.shef.ac.uk/pls/live/cies.main>. A menu will appear. Click on number 11 'LIST TUTEES BY SUPERVISOR' and click "My Tutees". A list will then appear of your research, dissertation, UG and PG tutees. You can email either them all or in groups. If you have any queries please contact Rebekah Newey (gen-eng-support@sheffield.ac.uk).

How to record meetings and student attendance

This is now mandatory and can be done using the PATS system <https://www.shef.ac.uk/pats>. You can see pictures of all your students, record meetings and add comments. It is also possible to connect PATS with your Google Calendar - if you do, any meetings where students were invited will show up and you can record attendance and comments without excessive form-filling.

Detailed Schedule and Topics for Years 1 and 2 Academic Tutorials in Semester 1

In addition to the topics below it is expected that, in all Academic Tutorials, general pastoral issues will be discussed and students should be encouraged to discuss the course and any issues they have.

Year 1, Semester 1

Week	Topics
1 (or 2)	<p>Introduction to Tutorials</p> <p>Suggested discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of the academic tutor and what help they can give students. ● Arrangements for Academic Tutorials, e.g. venue and time. ● Preferred method of contact outside of normal meetings, e.g. email, phone, video call. ● What students should do if they cannot contact the Academic Tutor and a matter is urgent – see “Other sources of support and information” on the last page on this handbook. ● Blended learning – what is it and what can students expect. <p>Specific tasks to do in this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss how you can create your own, weekly, learning timetable. You will have timetabled face-to-face sessions such as lectures, labs in the Diamond and small group tutorials. But you have also available recorded lectures online (pre-recorded as well as recorded during the actual lectures), that you can watch before and after your face-to-face lecture. There may be online quizzes and tutorial sheets to complete (ensure you take time out for breaks). The Blackboard sites for each module will hopefully include information about what videos you need to watch and by when, and when to complete quizzes and tutorial sheets by. Use this information to start developing your own timetable. <p>Tutorial Activities in semester 1 (Tutor: please remind the students about these)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are recommended to take the report Writing online course https://mee.group.shef.ac.uk/Report_writing_website/home.html ● Each student should give a 5-minute oral presentation, using Powerpoint or another presentation software, on a topic of their choice, in weeks 6 or 8. <p>Some more information: Tutorials will help to develop transferable skills and facilitate students’ personal and professional development, as well as offer pastoral care.</p> <p>For students to develop into independent learners and ultimately engineers, it is essential to develop time management skills, in particular for coursework deadlines, etc. It is important to attend or engage with all academic activities and in particular labs and submitting coursework/lab reports on time. It is important to also develop a healthy work-life balance.</p> <p>Some useful links: The General Engineering Student Handbook: https://sites.google.com/sheffield.ac.uk/general-engineering/home</p>

	<p>Student Guidance for Online Teaching: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/apse/digital/coronavirus/teachonlinestudents</p> <p>Help for students is available through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 301, The Academic Skills Hub, https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301; • MASH, Mathematics and Statistics Help, http://www.shef.ac.uk/mash; • ELTC, http://www.shef.ac.uk/eltc, for English language support; • Sheffield Mentors, http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/mentoring/index, student mentoring scheme is an excellent opportunity for students to have a student mentor; • HEAR, Higher Education Achievement Report, http://www.shef.ac.uk/hear, gives students recognition for their extra-curricular engagement; support students in reviewing their progress and planning for their personal development. <p>Other general help available from the university – refer to list at end of document.</p>
3	<p>Topic 1: University Marking Schemes and Degree classifications</p> <p>Discuss expectations on different degree classes and marking schemes</p> <p>40% is a pass for Level 1, 2 and 3 modules 50% is a pass in year 4 or for any FHEQ level 7 module (unit numbers prefixed with 4 or 6)</p> <p>At the end of year 2, students wishing to take the MEng General Engineering degree must achieve at least 54.5% or above.</p> <p>Useful link: General Engineering Assessment & Progression handbook can be found at https://sites.google.com/sheffield.ac.uk/general-engineering/assessment</p> <p>70% is a threshold for the first class degree. Find out what a 3rd, 2:2, 2:1 and a First class degree is. Discuss what a good degree classification will help you in the future.</p> <p>Topic 2: Presentation skills</p> <p>Have you given a presentation before? Was it scary? Did it go well? What would you do next time? Well in week 6 or 8 you'll have a chance to practice your oral presentation skills in a safe, supportive environment that is your Academic Tutorial!</p> <p>Specific tasks to do in this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your academic tutor will give examples of good and bad presentations - both oral and poster (Tutors - you can either use your own examples, examples will be provided on the tutorial Blackboard site too). • Think about the subject you want to talk about. It could be something technical, or it could be about your hobbies and interests. The aim of this activity is not to test your knowledge, but to give you a fun, supportive experience of giving a short, 5 minute, presentation. • You will be given an example presentation mark schemes, so you can see what is expected and how marks are attained. <p>This is also time to arrange with your tutor for the 1-2-1 session in week 4.</p>

4	<p>One-to-one sessions</p> <p>This is your opportunity to talk to your Academic Tutor about anything you like – good, bad or indifferent! Of course, remember you can arrange to talk to your tutor in confidence outside of this week, and please do so if you need to. Don't wait until this session to raise concerns or issues. You can also use this session to talk about things that are going well!</p> <p>Tutors, please remind your students to prepare their 5 minute oral presentation in week 6 & 8, and send you their presentation slides beforehand.</p>
5	<p>Unfair Means</p> <p>This week there is no meeting with your academic tutor, and a large group activity on unfair means will be held instead. The details will be in your timetable.</p>
6	<p>Communication skills I</p> <p>Specific tasks to do in this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If it is your turn today, give to your group your 5 minute presentation. ● So you have a feel for what it's like to be an academic, students will be given mark sheets to complete and be expected to ask questions. ● You will all give constructive feedback on each other's presentations: what went well; what could be improved; what did you enjoy the most. <p>Remember – this is a safe space, so please be supportive and respectful of your colleagues.</p>
7	<p>Myskills</p> <p>This week there is no meeting with your academic tutor, and a large group activity on Myskills Portofolio tools will be held instead. The details will be in your timetable.</p>
8	<p>Communication skills II</p> <p>Today is a continuation of your 5 minute oral presentations. Good luck all!</p>
9	<p>Employability</p> <p>This week there is no meeting with your academic tutor, and a large group activity on Employability will be held instead. The details will be in your timetable.</p>
10	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (ED&I)</p> <p>This week there is no meeting with your academic tutor, and a large group activity on Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (ED&I) will be held instead. The details will be in your timetable.</p>

Task 1. Exam Expectations

Examinations at university can be very different to what you have experienced before. Today is a chance to talk about those differences and start to think about how to prepare for exams at university.

Suggested discussion points:

- What can you expect when taking an exam at university? Your Personal Tutor can help you with this question!

Specific tasks to do in this session:

- Your Personal Tutor will show you a past exam paper.
- With your tutor's guidance, talk about how to set out answers, such as making full use of space, showing working etc, and how much work is required per question.
- Share exam stories, and any helpful hints you may have about taking exams.

Task 2. Self-reflection - my development so far

This exercise allows you to look at a range of skills and attributes for you to rate yourself and to then reflect on how your year has gone so far, academically and personally.

Self-reflection is **NOT** a reflection on the modules you're taking (you'll do that officially at the end of each semester), but a reflection on how you are doing, and if there are lessons you have learnt and changes you'd like to make.

Suggested discussion points:

- Were there any challenges that you faced this semester?
- What did you do to overcome those challenges?
- Is there anything personally that you want to improve on for next semester and how are you going to do that?
- Is there any extra support the General Engineering team can give?

Tutors: You should also introduce students to the Global Engineering Challenge week (to be held in January). Explain the wider skills needed by engineers rather than just the core engineering sciences. GEC is all about those wider problem solving skills, presentation skills and team working. The engineering science takes a back seat in these weeks deliberately to allow time to explore those other aspects of what it makes to be a good engineer.

Year 2, Semester 1

Week	Topics
1	<p>There will be a Welcome back session held by the year tutor (no academic tutorial this week).</p>
3	<p>Employability - Career, summer job, internship, year in industry? What do you want to do?</p> <p>Using the MySkills portofolio, choose skills and attributes and rate yourself on each of these according to the scale provided. Use this to reflect on your career direction. See below for discussion points for the academic tutorial.</p> <p>Suggested discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What industrial experience do you want to gain whilst at university? ● What are the different options available? ● Do you want to do a Year in Industry? ● Do you need help identifying companies? <p>Specific tasks to do in this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take a look at the university's student Careers Service: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students ● CareerConnect: https://careerconnect.sheffield.ac.uk/unauth ● and the university's CV reviewing service: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/applications/cvs <p>You'll have lots of opportunities to develop your CV and practice interview skills over the next few years.</p>
6	<p>One-to-one sessions</p> <p>In addition to this being your time to talk to your tutor about anything and everything, also talk about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether you want to do the BEng or MEng degree – you need 54.5% or above to take the MEng degree. ● Your first year exam results, were there any weaknesses that we can provide support for. ● Have you thought about your specialism? What might it be?
10	<p>Reflection and Discussions</p> <p>Self-reflection - my development so far</p> <p>This exercise allows you to look at a range of skills and attributes for you to rate yourself and to then reflect on how your year has gone so far, academically and personally.</p> <p>Suggested discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were there any challenges that you faced this semester? ● What did you do to overcome those challenges? ● Is there anything personally that you want to improve on and how are you going to do that.

- Is there any extra support the General Engineering team can give?

Other Sources of Support and Information

The following is a list of support and information available throughout the university on issues related to student support, both academic and pastoral. Some of the links are primarily for Personal Tutors and others for students. Hopefully this acts as a good reference point for what is a lot of information and support available across the university.

Student Support and Pastoral Care

Explanation of the Academic Tutoring role	https://sites.google.com/sheffield.ac.uk/general-engineering/support/academic-tutorial
What to do if you are worried about a student	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/index https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/ssid Your Personal Tutor, Year Tutor, or eee-support@sheffield.ac.uk or Student Support and Guidance 0114 22 24321
What to do in exceptional circumstances or a crisis	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/emergency
Student Services Information Desk (SSID): SSiD can answer the majority of your questions and provide a range of administrative services throughout your studies and after you graduate.	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid
Student Access To Mental Health Support (SAMHS): SAMHS offers a free and entirely confidential service. Trained counsellors can be consulted on a wide range of issues.	www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing/index
FAQ "Ask Sheffield" database contains answers to hundreds of commonly asked questions and is used by staff and students	http://ask.sheffield.ac.uk/
University Health Service	http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/health
Disability and Dyslexia Service	http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability

Academic and Professional Development

Maths and Statistics Help (MASH)	http://www.shef.ac.uk/mash
301: Academic Skills Centre	http://www.shef.ac.uk/studentskills
English Language Teaching Centre	http://www.shef.ac.uk/eltc
Careers Service	http://www.shef.ac.uk/careers
The Sheffield Graduate	http://www.shef.ac.uk/sheffieldgraduate
Higher Education Achievement Award (HEAR)	http://www.shef.ac.uk/hear
Student Guidance for Online Teaching	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/apse/digital/coronavirus/teachonlinestudents
Guidance for studying effectively online	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301/study-skills/everyday-skills/remote-study
Using the digital library	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/index
Studying from home or off campus	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/it-services/studying-from-home/it-services

Staff Training

Staff development and training for University	https://supportingsupporters.ssd.shef.ac.uk/
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staff whose role is student-facing.	
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