Personal Academic Tutoring

Staff Survey Report

2014/2015

www.northamptonilt.com/pat

April 2015

Report highlights

From 137 completed surveys:

1. Over 90% of participants felt qualified to perform the role of Personal Academic Tutor.
2. Over 64% of participants agreed they have resources to support them as PATs.
3. Approximately 40% of participants felt they have enough time to perform the PAT role.
4. Approximately 34% of participants agreed they were aware of the PAT web area.
5. Approximately 20% of participants have referred to the PAT web area.
6. Over 60% of participants agreed they were familiar with the PAT staff development opportunities offered through C@N-DO.
7. Approximately 21% of participants had engaged with a C@N-DO staff development opportunity.
8. Approximately 80% of participants agreed they work closely with their programme team to facilitate Personal Academic Tutoring.
9. Approximately 70% of participants are happy to support students through group tutorials.
10. Approximately 72% of participants reported they preferred to work with students on an individual basis.
11. Over 86% of participants reported they support students who are not assigned to them at tutees.
12. Approximately 51% of participants reported they prefer to facilitate tutorials as scheduled sessions.
13. Approximately 52% of participants prefer to use an open-door policy to support students. This statistic, however, may reflect an approach that uses both scheduled and ad-hoc tutorials.
14. More than 82% of participants agreed their work as PAT made a positive difference to their tutees.
15. Approximately 82% of participants were confidence in providing pastoral support through their PAT role.
16. Approximately 87% of participants agreed they feel confident in supporting students' academic progress as a PAT.

1.0 Introduction

The Personal Academic Tutoring System is integral to the University of Northampton's holistic approach to supporting student success. Each year a survey is carried out to evaluate the Personal Academic Tutoring system from a staff and student perspective. The findings from these surveys provide a basis for action planning and quality enhancement. This report presents the results of the 2014/2015 staff survey. For more information about the Personal Academic Tutoring System and for previous years' survey reports, please visit: www.northamptonilt.com/pat.

2.0 Method

An online survey was sent by email to a sample comprising all staff on academic contracts (*n*=794). Not all staff in the sample perform the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) role. Therefore, Question 3 of the survey allowed those who do not serve as PATs to exit the survey. A total of 207 staff responded to the survey, which represented a participation rate of 26%. A total of 137 staff completed the survey, which represented a response rate of 17%. A different sampling strategy was used last year, so it is not meaningful to compare the response rates across years. Although this year's evaluation attracted 65 more completed surveys than last year's.

2.1 Participation by School

Figure 1 shows the survey participation by School and Department. The School of Health provided approximately 40% of the responses to this survey.
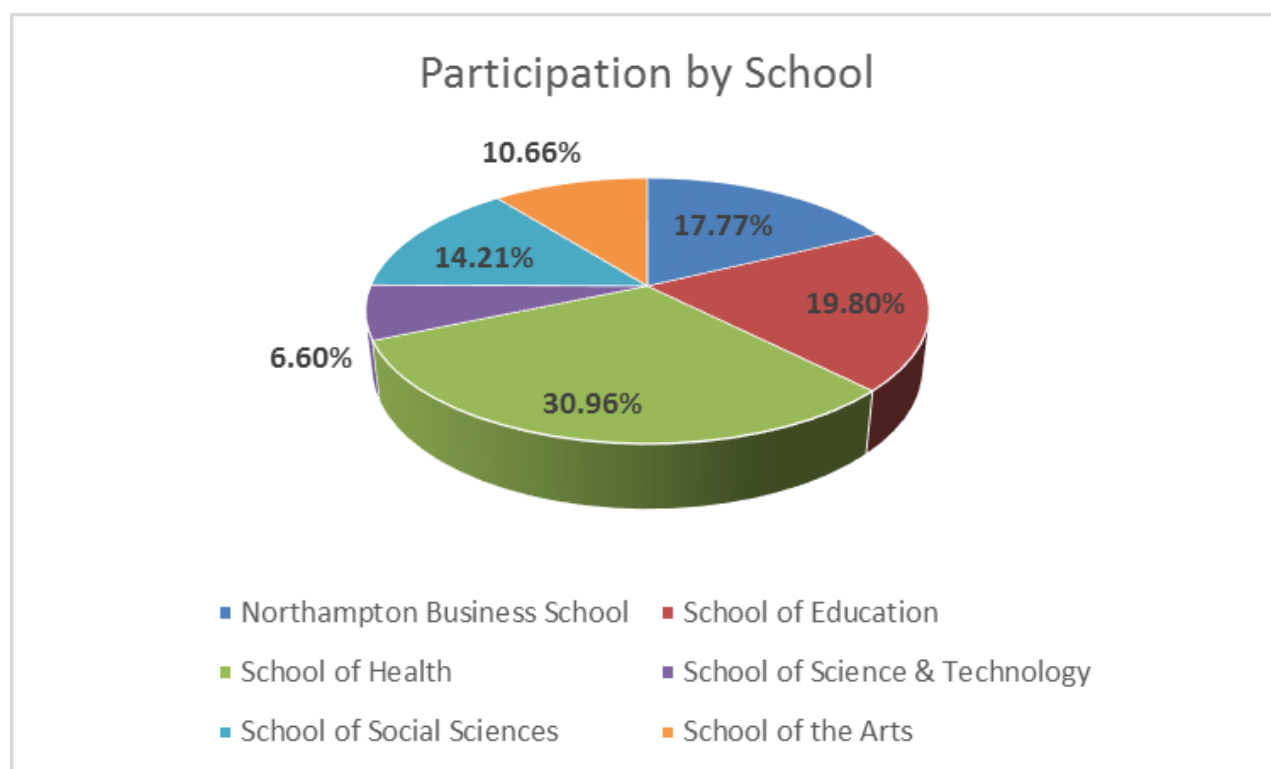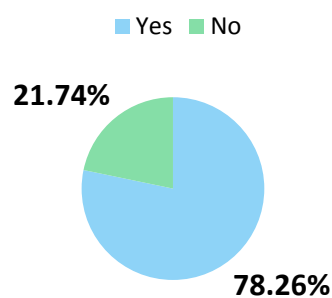
2.2 Main role of participants

Table 1 shows the breakdown of main role of survey participants. Senior lecturers comprised nearly 60% of the participants who responded to this question (*n*=187).

Table 1: Main roles reported by participants

|		
Associate Lecturer	12.30%	23
Lecturer	6.95%	13
Senior Lecturer	59.89%	112
Principal Lecturer	8.02%	15
Associate Professor	1.60%	3
Reader	0.53%	1
Professor	2.67%	5
Administrator	0.53%	1
Other	7.49%	14

3.0 Results

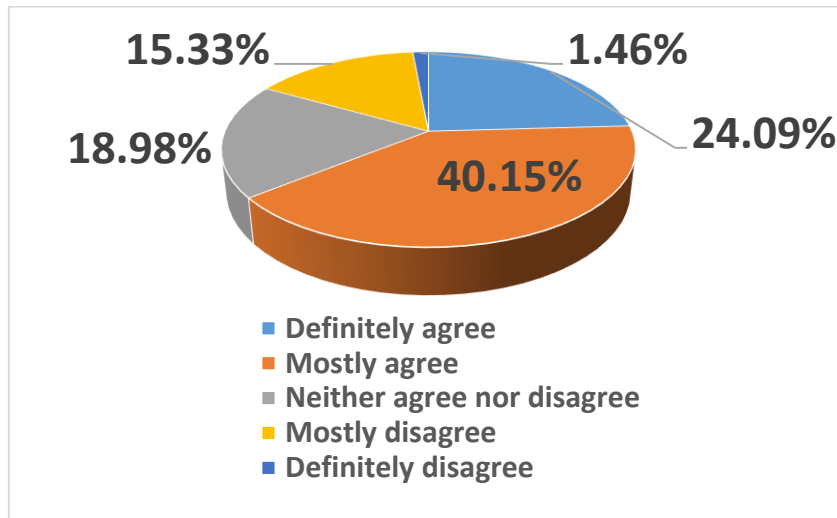## 3.3 'In addition to my academic post, I also work (or have worked) as a Personal Academic Tutor.' (*n*=184)

3.4 'I feel that I am qualified to perform the PAT role (e.g. through experience and training).' (*n*=137)

Over 90% of participants felt qualified to perform the role of Personal Academic Tutor.
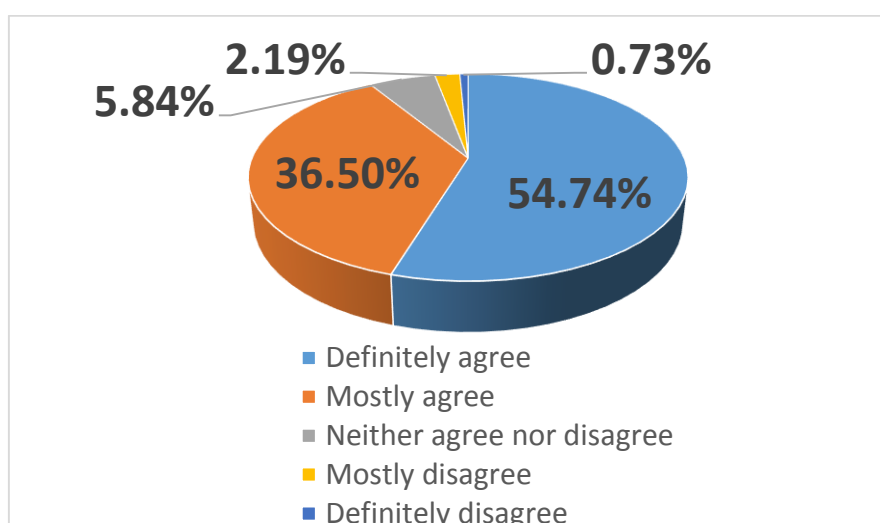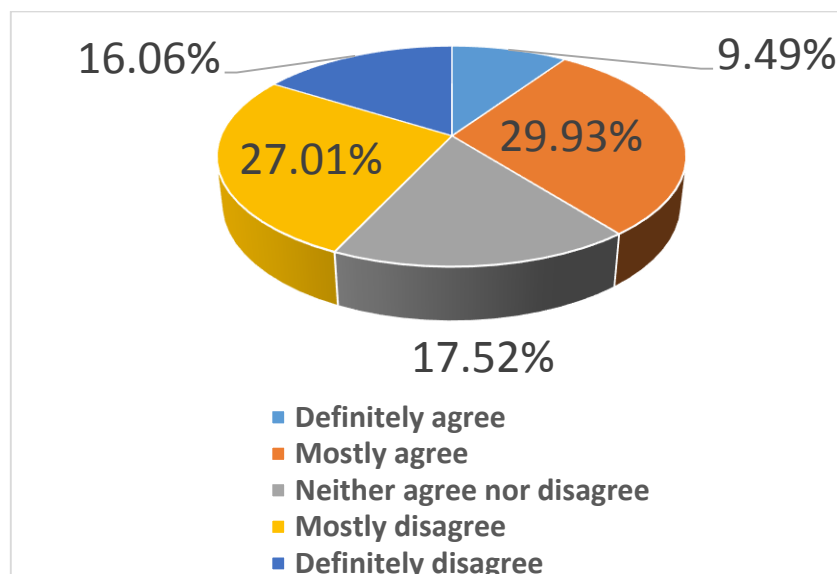
3.5 'I have appropriate resources to help me perform the PAT role.' (*n*=137)

Over 64% of participants agreed they have resources to support them as PATs.

15.33% 1.46%
18.98% 24.09%
40.15%

- Definitely agree
- Mostly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Definitely disagree

3.6 'I have enough time to perform the PAT role.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 40% of participants felt they have enough time to perform the PAT role.

16.06% 9.49%
27.01% 29.93%
17.52%

- Definitely agree
- Mostly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
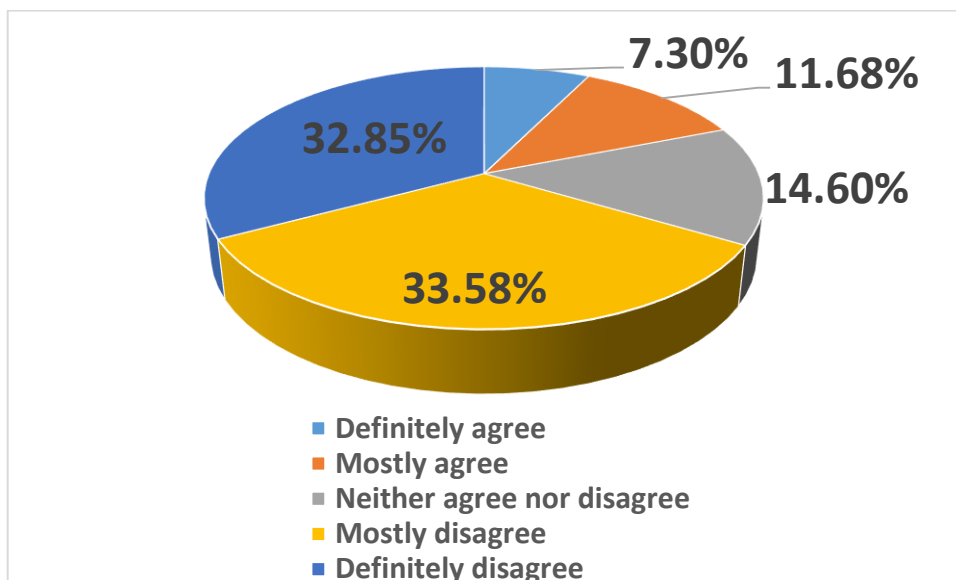- Mostly disagree
- Definitely disagree

3.7 'I am familiar with the PAT web area on the ILT website.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 34% of participants agreed they were aware of the PAT web area.
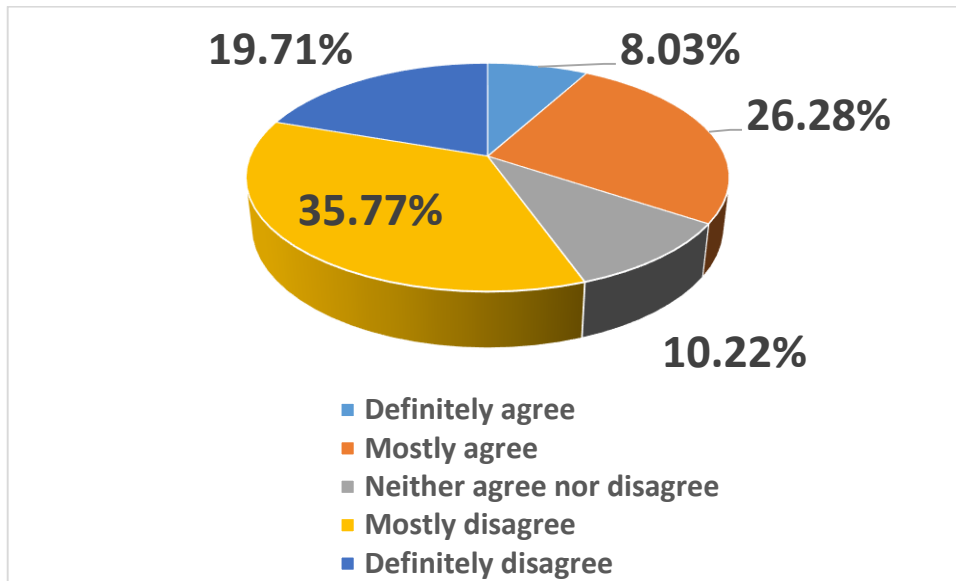

3.8 'In my role as a PAT, I have referred to the PAT web area.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 20% of participants have referred to the PAT web area.

3.9 'I am aware of the PAT development opportunities within the University's C@N-DO Professional Development Scheme.' (*n*=137)

Over 60% of participants agreed they were familiar with the PAT staff development opportunities offered through C@N-DO.
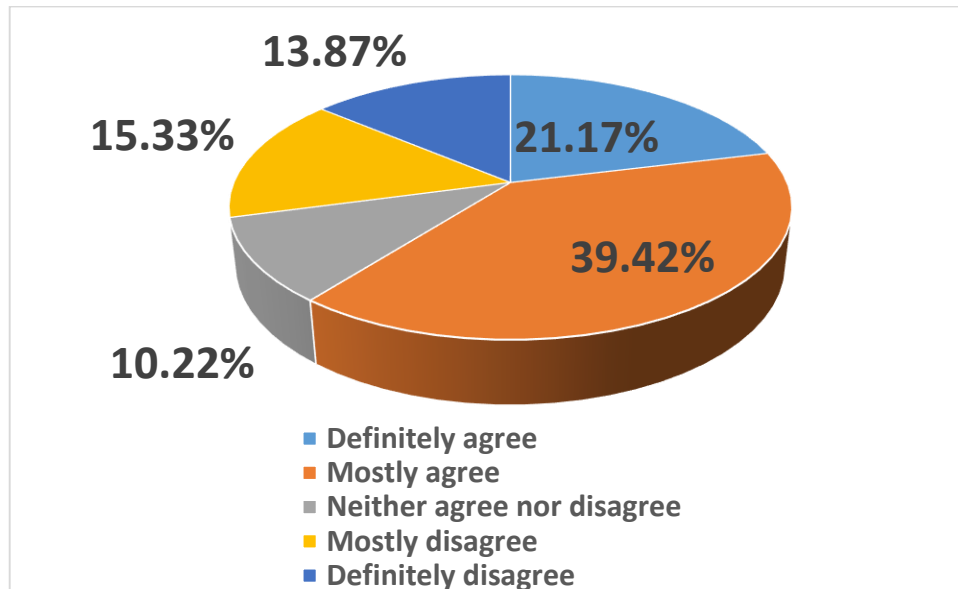
3.10 'I have engaged with one of the C@N-DO PAT Development Opportunities this academic year.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 21% of participants have engaged with a C@N-DO staff development opportunity.
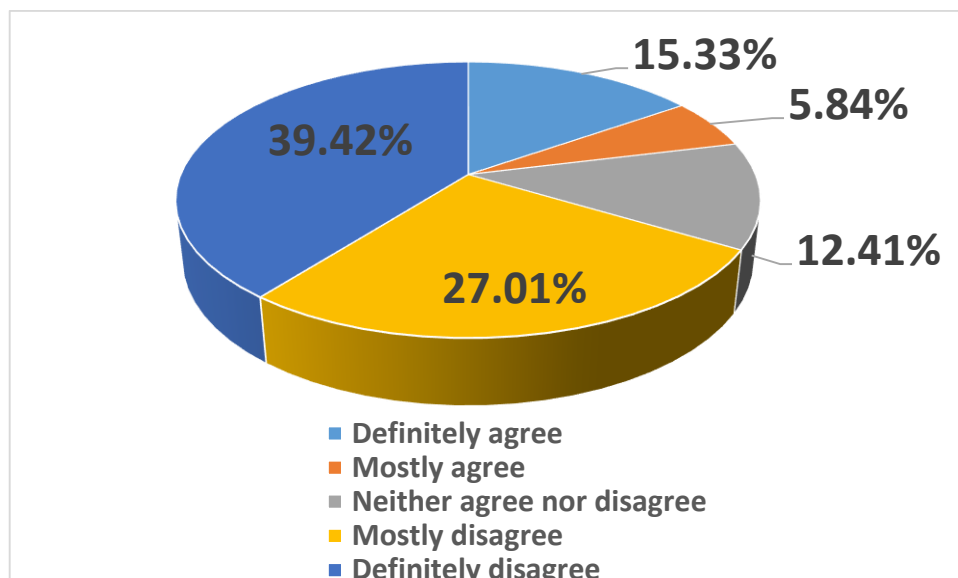
3.11 'I work closely with others in my team to support high-quality PAT provision for students.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 80% of participants agreed they work closely with their programme team to facilitate Personal Academic Tutoring.
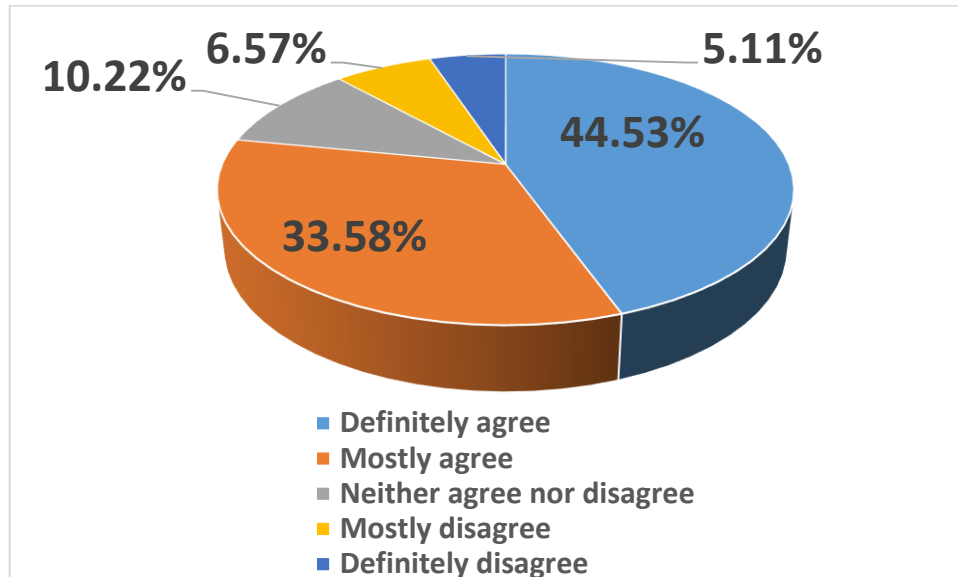
3.12 'As a PAT, I am happy to support students via group tutorials.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 70% of participants are happy to support students through group tutorials.

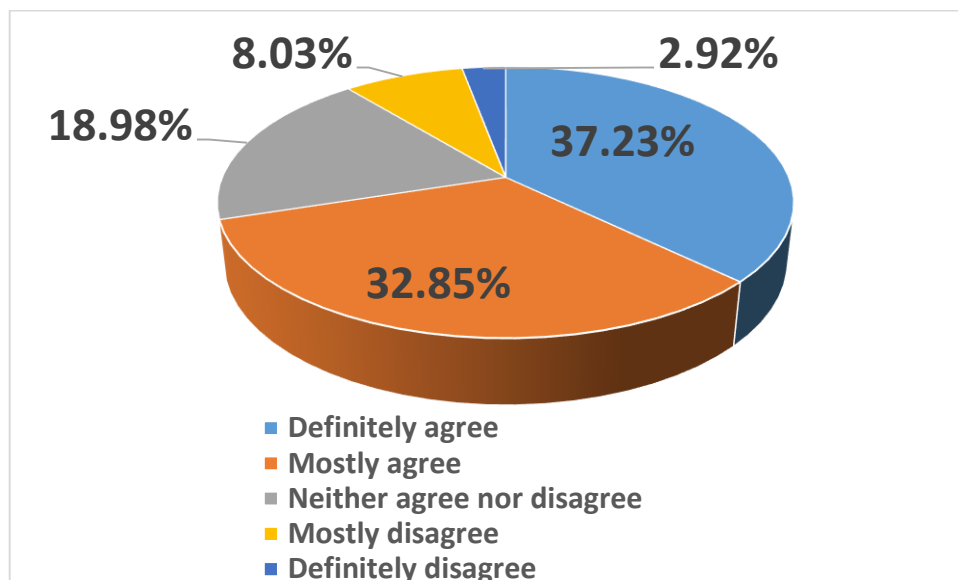### 3.13 'As a PAT, I prefer to work with students on a one-to-one basis.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 72% of participants reported they preferred to work with students on an individual basis.
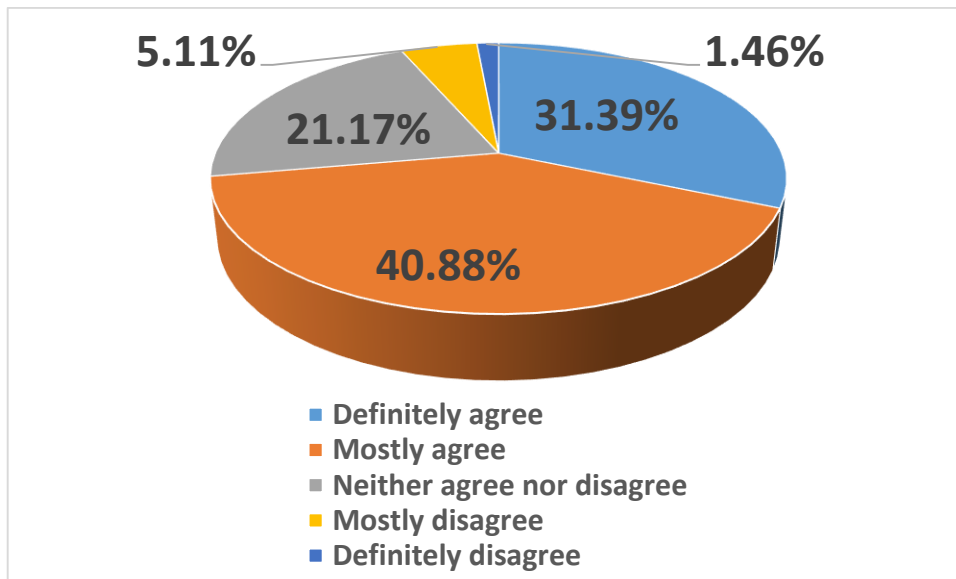
3.14 'Students who are not assigned to me (as a PAT) still come to me for support.' (*n*=137)

Over 86% of participants reported they support students who are not assigned to them at tutees.
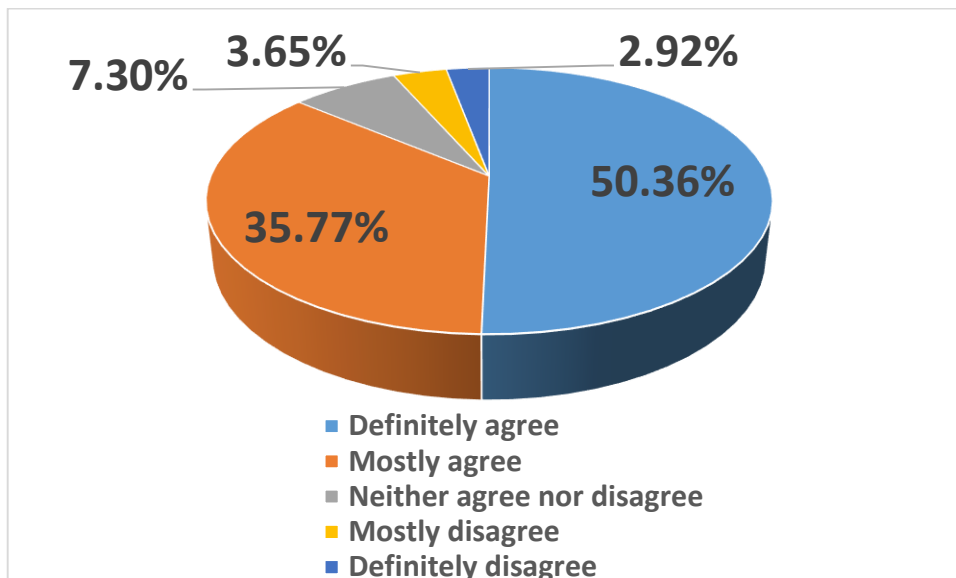
3.15 'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring as scheduled, timetabled sessions.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 51% of participants reported they prefer to facilitate tutorials as scheduled sessions.
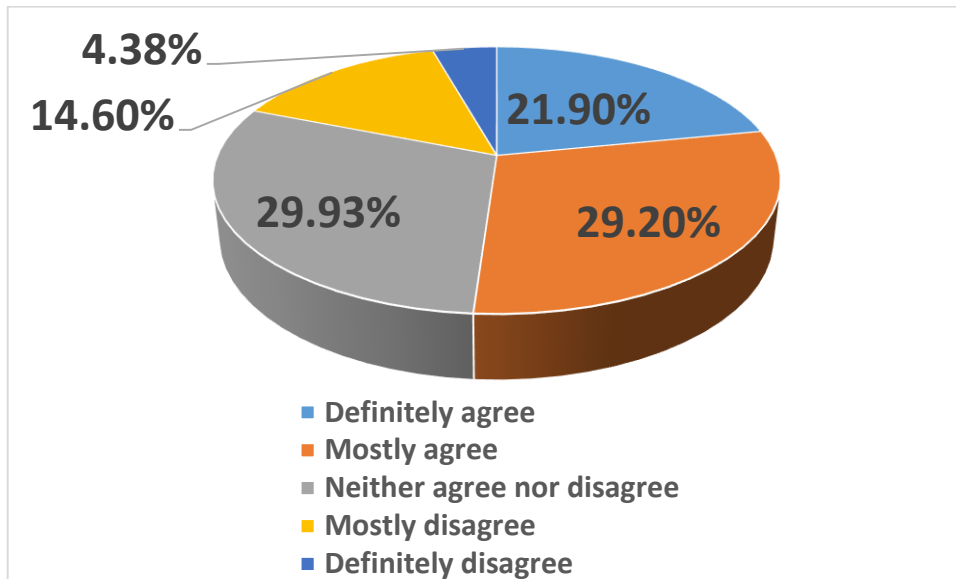
3.16 'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring using an open-door policy.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 52% of participants prefer to use an open-door policy to support students. This statistic, however, may reflect an approach that uses both scheduled and ad-hoc tutorials.
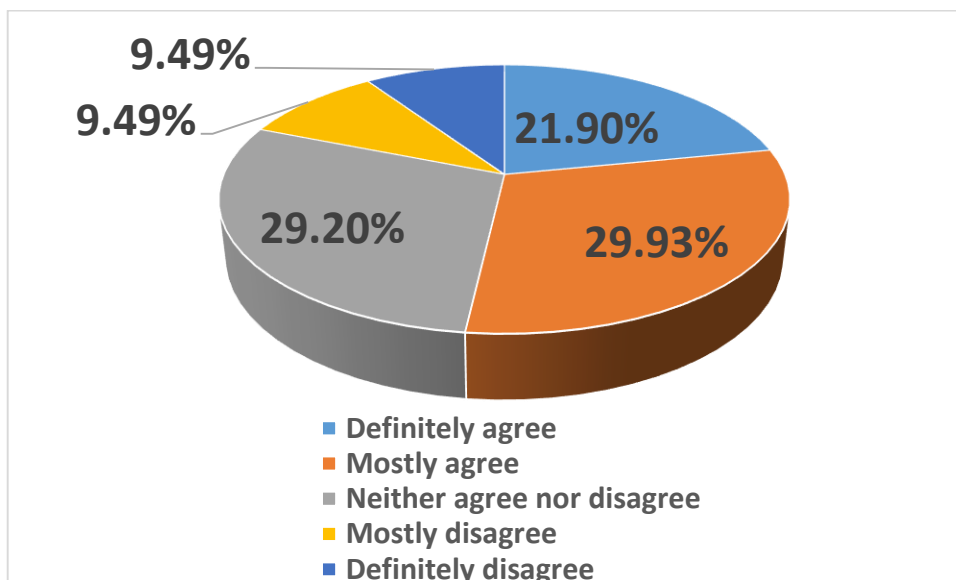
3.17 'In my work as a PAT, I know I have made a positive impact on the lives of my tutees.' (*n*=137)

More than 82% of participants agreed their work as PAT made a positive difference to their tutees.

0.73%	0.73%
16.06%	40.15%
42.34%	

- Definitely agree
- Mostly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Definitely disagree
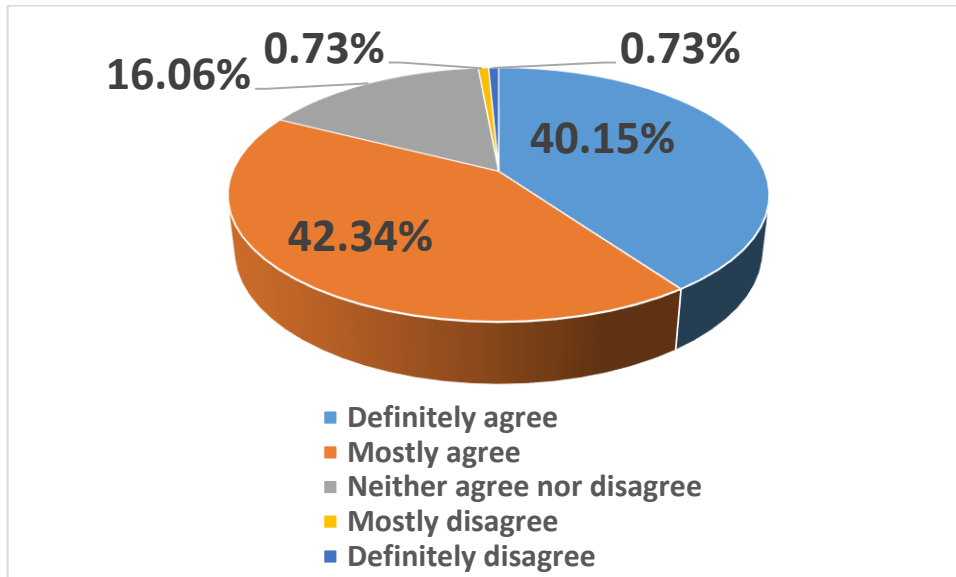
3.18 'I feel confident in the pastoral/personal aspect of the PAT role.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 82% of participants were confidence in providing pastoral support through their PAT role.

2.92%	0.73%
8.76%	45.99%
41.61%	

- Definitely agree
- Mostly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Definitely disagree
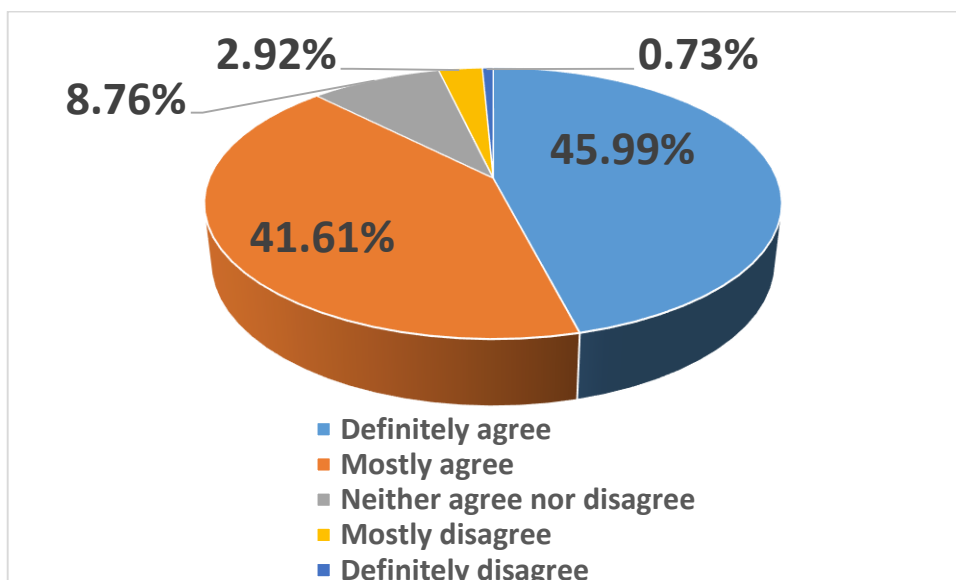
3.19 'I feel confident in the academic support aspect of the PAT role.' (*n*=137)

Approximately 87% of participants agreed they feel confident in supporting students' academic progress as a PAT.

4.0 Written comments

The following comments were provided by 61 participants. Where there are underscores, the field wasn't large enough to capture the entire comment. This is a limitation of the online survey tool that will be addressed for future surveys.

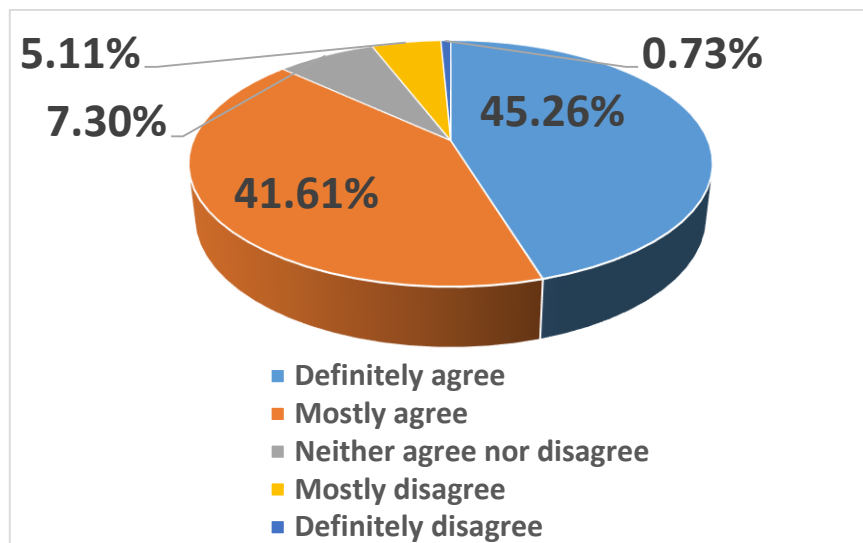| |
|---|
| As an Associate Tutor I am a retired member of staff and some comments directly relate to this fact eg An 'open door policy' is not available to me now. I fully support the PAT role and believe that it enhances the student experience. |
| Clear guidelines on the number of students you have as a PAT. Tutors need to work same guidelines so it is fair for all students with their experience |
| Due to the nature of the course that my students undertake, seeing them at regular times or scheduling appointments is difficult. Students who are on placement and /or live some distance from Park campus are not always able/willing to come to uni___ |
| Essential to the well-being of our students and a service that is appreciated by many students. |
| For most students the PAT role has little baring on their student experience until they do their dissertation because they do not engage and the PATs do not have the time to really develop the role. For other students PATs are lifesavers maki___ |
| Group sessions work well with people sharing their concerns and ideas. It is made a social session with cakes etc. It is also made very clear that also have an open door policy for confidential concerns |
| Group Tutorial – encouraging confidence in discourse regarding personal intentions and outcomes with the opportunity for positive criticism to peers. Individual Tutorial – offering a valuable insight for student and tutor regarding development an___ |
| Group tutorials are useful for updates and to support students on general issues or when all students have the same specific needs but can be difficult when needs are more diverse as areas discussed may seem irrelevant to some. One to one tutoria___ |
| Having access to a confidential space and operating an open door policy (in addition to scheduled tutorials) is key to a positive PAT experience |

I am confident in the pastoral elements of the PAT role. However, this is because I am a qualified professional social worker trained in Family Therapy, solution focussed, counselling, behaviour, attachment. I would be very concerned that someone___
I am designing a return to university booklet for the ICAL students to help engage them back into university life. This is a research project also could run across the university as all schools have ICAL students. It works closely with PATs
I am unsure if the PAT refers to personal tutoring for a start. A lot of what I do with students is very dependent on their needs. I am happy to offer tutorials for very academic focused aspects that several students need help with but at the sam___
I enjoy the role but the hours allocated are woefully inadequate, so to do the role you work over and above the allocated time. An example a 1st year who has health issues had used all her allocated hours within the first two months but I continu___
I feel it is a vital role that helps with the development of both students and academics.
I feel that as a part time member of staff on a zero hours contract that there is not sufficient flexibility to deal with issues which might arise and therefore my students are at a disadvantage compared to those with a PAT who is a full time mem___
I feel that I am at a big advantage when carrying out the PAT role because my background is counselling, therapy and mental health nursing. Hence I feel well equipped to support students both academically and more personally with emotional diffic___
I feel that students could have been better allocated to me as I initially tried to make contact with my first year Joint Honours students at the beginning of the year and only managed to make contact with one as I did not teach the others and th___
I feel that there is little support from mental health side. On attempting to get a student to engage in the mental health/counselling support from the university, there appeared no rapid access for students having a crisis. Waiting times for co___
I have a role in Student Support and believe that the role of the PAT is not given a high enough profile. There has to be more time allocated for the role and a greater understanding of the importance of pastoral care, particularly in the first t___
I have been participating a new system with history students where 2 'year tutors' take half the cohort and we get to know them better. THis allows us to flag up areas of concern allowing us to intervene and help. This has been very effective but___
I really enjoy my PAT role and feel I can make a real different to the students pastorally and in an academic sense.
I think one of the main development for the PAT is to make it more schedule and record the meetings online. I was in an institution where you can add your comments on PAT meetings online for students to see and comment on. I also have some stud___
I think that the PAT role is poorly designed in that you are expected to be all things to all people. Even within what I do understand it is probably the area of my work I feel least happy about. I don't give my tutees the support I think they de___
I think that the reality of the PAT role is more fluid than the policy or the workload planning allows. Students often seem to choose the lecturer that they would like to go to for personal support.
I think the current default system of breaking each student cohort up amongst staff members does not work. Within History we have been experimenting this year with two 'year-tutors' who split the SH students between them. This appears to have s___
I think the quality of PAT support is rather too variable, from anecdotal views of students. I do not think the workload allocation for PAT roles extends to students with complex issues and the extra time needed to support one student with compl___
I would have liked to take part in the Can do sessions but I was unable to commit to all of the sessions. Although I signpost students to other services I am regularly asked (by them) to go beyond my expertise and provide a person to share probl___

If every student has a personal tutor, how do we avoid current issue of lectures on Masters courses having 100 named students (or more?)
In my experience the role of the PAT can be one of the most satisfying aspects of my job. However some students need more intense support than others and this I feel is generally not acknowledged by the University in terms of the time that this c___
In my opinion not enough hours or recognition are given to this part of the job. It is a continual activity with students. There is enormous variation in the extent to which students want to engage with PAT and in my experience many of the outc___
In my view personal tutoring should be an integral part of the academic role however with such high volume of academic work to do it is often something that is overlooked or not prioritised - we tend to rely on the students to come for support th___
In the workload analysis tool, the time allocated to PAT duties is incredibly underestimated for the programmes I am involved in
It is often difficult to get students to engage with PAT and often only come to see us at the last minute
Many students do not know who their PAT is and connect with a member of staff they feel comfortable talking to.
More information about the web based support / access
Most of the knowledge I have has been gained through experience both good and bad
much of the PAT role is done via taught/studio sessions during 'tutorials' that inevitably and naturally cover pastoral issues too, so 'extra' time for explicit PAT meetings is often a duplication of the discussions.
n/a
Need to ensure consistent and equitable approach across all tutor teams, some of my colleagues do not have the same level of commitment or consistency in delivering PAT. Scheduled timetabled sessions in subject teams ensure that all students get ___
Never been properly recognised in terms of hours!
Personal tutees are an important part of the support systems offered to students and they need to continue after the university relocates to Waterside.
Replying to students' e-mails promptly is important.
Some students need more support than others, and in large cohorts this can be demanding of time.
Students go to tutors they know the best or like the best. The specific PAT role is not needed
Students go to who they know and feel comfortable with, rather than their nominated PAT. This means that a formalised approach to PAT is unlikely to be effective. In terms of support provided to students, we are increasingly seeing students bring___
The main difficulty I have is spending sufficient time with students who need it. When students come and see you they do tend to have very complex and in depth difficulties which take a lot of time to sort out. There is just not sufficient time___
The main issue with both the PAT role, and engagement with training and resources to support the PAT role, is lack of time. The time allocation in workload is just silly. But then, that is true of workload allocation in general, and probably PAT ___
The PAT role is one I very much enjoy, I feel my previous work experience in healthcare has equipped me with fundamental skills required to be an effective PAT
The problem with the PAT role is despite the guidelines people interpret these in different ways and students get annoyed as different PATs offer differing levels of support
The role is vital to ensuring the success and well-being of students. It needs to be prioritised and well-co-ordinated across a programme and the approach needs to be tailored to the nature of a programme and the student group. PATs need to be kn___

The university does not value the role in terms of time allocated to this vital task which aids in retention, progression and achievement. The university must allow more time for this role within the hours allocation. I am dreading trying to do___
There may be aspects of the PAT system that I am not familiar with. This is my first year at Northampton and received a list of PAT students without the necessary information of where I might find resources to assist. I have sought these out whe___
this form was not easy to use - suggest you make lines equidistant at least whilst i enjoy the PAT role it is difficult to fit in appointments that fit in with other demands on the working week
This is such an important and supportive role that I do feel we need additional time to be able to offer a more specific service to support individual complex needs.
To do the role effectively takes a lot of time - particularly at key points of the year (start of term, assessment pressure points etc). It takes time and experience to develop the skills needed to perform the role effectively. Students often f___
Training has been helpful. As a part time associate lecturer I am sometimes at a disadvantage as I am not familiar with the day to day running of the university. Contacting the students is really difficult as it has to be by email and getting rep___
Training ideally needs to take place before you actually meet with students - particularly found this with Year 1 and PGCE students. Was not made aware of PAT website until I went on C@nDo course - this needs publishing more, particularly with ne___
We have integrated the PAT role into our curriculum and documentation and this has worked well over the years!
When supporting students in a professional qualification there are several extra considerations that need to be addressed e.g. school placement, that take a lot more time than seeing a student in University when attending a module on campus.
Where do I find the PAT support on NILE that was referred to - I have done the PAT Training and I and still not aware where this is.