**University of Northampton**
**Institute of Learning &**
**Teaching in Higher Education**

# Personal Academic Tutoring

## Staff Survey Report

## 2016-2017

www.northampton.ac.uk/ilt/academic-development/personal-academic-tutoring/

**May 2017**

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# Report Highlights

126 members of academic staff completed the Staff Survey conducted during March-April 2017. This was a response rate of 16% (an increase of 4% on the 2015-2016 survey response rate).

The key findings are:

1. Approximately 87% of staff (agree / definitely agree) feel that they are qualified, through experience and training, to perform the PAT role.
2. Just under 66% of staff have the appropriate resources to perform the PAT role.
3. Only 34% of staff consider that they have sufficient time to perform the PAT role, whereas over half indicated that they did not have sufficient time.
4. Just over 32% of staff are familiar with the PAT web area on the ILT website and only 16% of staff have used this resource in their role as a PAT.
5. Approximately half of staff are aware of the PAT development opportunities provided via the C@N-DO staff development programme but only 8% of staff have engaged with one of these opportunities during the 2016-2017 academic year.
6. Approximately 76% of staff work closely with others in their team to support high-quality PAT provision.
7. While approximately 70% of staff are happy to support students via group tutorials, 70% of staff also indicated that they prefer to work with students on a one-to-one basis.
8. Over 90% of staff have students who are not assigned to them as a PAT coming to them for support.
9. Almost 52% of staff prefer to facilitate personal tutoring as scheduled, timetabled sessions yet almost 66% prefer an open-door policy (it was stated that it is OK for staff to prefer both approaches).
10. Nearly 84% of staff know that their work as a PAT has had a positive impact on the lives of their tutees.
11. Nearly 84% of staff feel confident in the pastoral/personal support aspect of the PAT role and approximately 88% feel confident in the academic support aspect of the role.

# 1. Introduction

The Personal Academic Tutoring scheme at the University of Northampton is a core component of the University's approach to supporting student success. The annual PAT survey is conducted during April of each year to provide a sense of how the scheme is working and being received from both staff and student perspectives. The findings from the surveys provide a mandate for action-oriented approaches to quality enhancement of the PAT scheme.

This is the 4th year in which the PAT staff and student surveys have been conducted. The results of the 2016-2017 PAT Staff Survey are presented in this report. To find out more about the Personal Academic Tutoring scheme, and to access past survey reports, please visit our PAT web area.

# 2. Method

In line with previous surveys, the PAT Staff Survey 2016-2017 was conducted using an online survey tool. The survey was sent via personal email to 779 members of staff on academic contracts. 126 recipients responded to and completed the survey – a response rate of 16% (up from 12% in 2015-2016, 17% in 2014-2015).

# 3. Survey Respondent Characteristics

## 3.1. Participation by Academic Unit (n=126)

Staff from across all academic units were invited to participate. This includes Enterprise, Development and Social Impact. However, only staff from within the 4 academic faculties actually completed the survey. The majority of respondents were from the Faculty of Health (40.5%) with the remainder being broadly distributed equally across the remaining 3 Faculties.



Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology 23 (18.3%)
Faculty of Business and Law 28 (22.2%)
Faculty of Education and Humanities 24 (19%)
Faculty of Health and Society 51 (40.5%)
Enterprise, Development & Social Impact 0
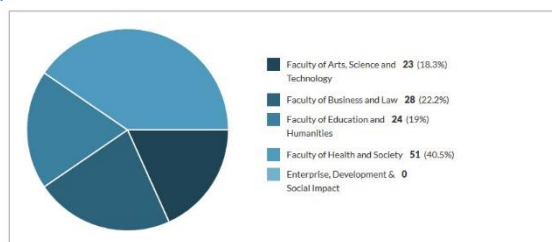
## 3.2. Respondent Role (n=126)

The following graph shows the primary role of staff survey respondents. The majority of staff completing the survey (69.8%) are either Senior or Principal Lecturers, and 22.2% are Lecturers. Of the respondents, all of them have worked as a PAT.



Associate Lecturer 4 (3.2%)
Lecturer 28 (22.2%)
Senior Lecturer 79 (62.7%)
Principal Lecturer 9 (7.1%)
Associate Professor 1 (0.8%)
Reader 3 (2.4%)
Professor 0
Administrator 0
Other 2 (1.6%)
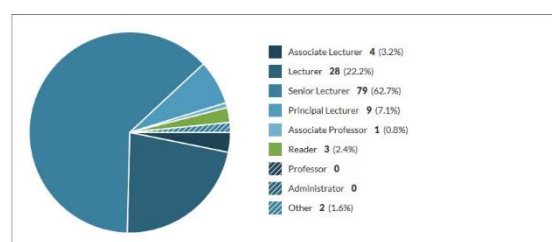
# 4. PAT Staff Survey Findings

The pie charts display the results for 2016-2017.

## 4.1 'I feel that I am qualified to perform the PAT Role (e.g. through experience, training etc)' (n=126)

Just over 87% of staff felt that they were qualified to perform the role of Personal Academic Tutor. This is 4% higher than for the 2015-2016 survey. Less than 5% of staff stated that they did not feel qualified for the role.



Definitely agree **71** (56.3%)
Mostly agree **39** (31%)
Neither agree nor disagree **10** (7.9%)
Mostly disagree **4** (3.2%)
Definitely disagree **2** (1.6%)

## 4.2 'I have appropriate resources to help me perform the PAT role (e.g. PAT web area, peer support)' (n=126)

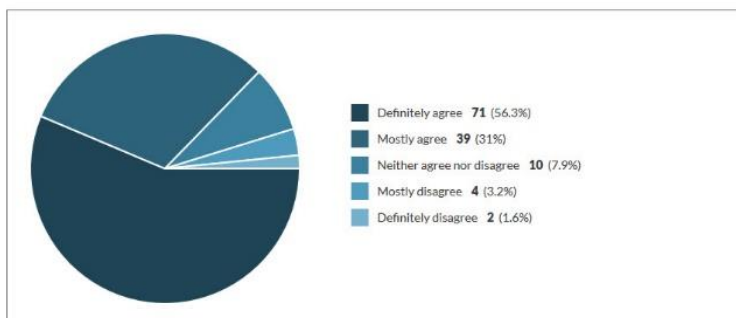Just under 66% of staff felt that they had the appropriate resources for the PAT role. Just over 18% neither agreed or disagreed and around 15% disagreed. This is broadly similar to the findings from 2014-2015 and an increase of just over 10% on the 2015-2016 results.



Definitely agree **29** (23%)
Mostly agree **54** (42.9%)
Neither agree nor disagree **23** (18.3%)
Mostly disagree **11** (8.7%)
Definitely disagree **9** (7.1%)
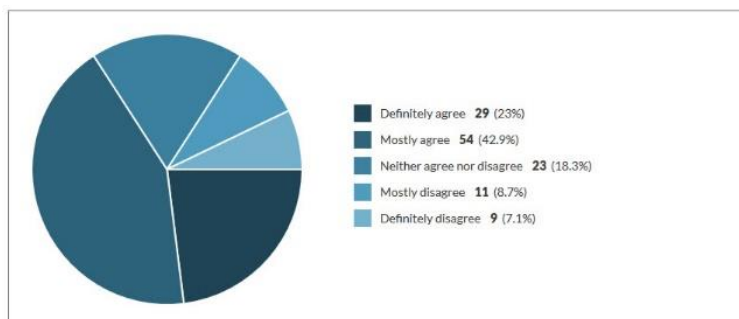
## 4.3 'I have enough time to perform the PAT role' (n=126).

Only 34.9% of staff considered that they had sufficient time in which to perform the PAT role which is an improvement of around 10% on the 2015-2016 findings of 25%. However, a more or less equal number of staff over both years (2016-2017 = 54%, 2015-2016 = 53%) felt that they did not have enough time in which to perform the role.



Definitely agree **11** (8.7%)
Mostly agree **33** (26.2%)
Neither agree nor disagree **15** (11.9%)
Mostly disagree **34** (27%)
Definitely disagree **33** (26.2%)
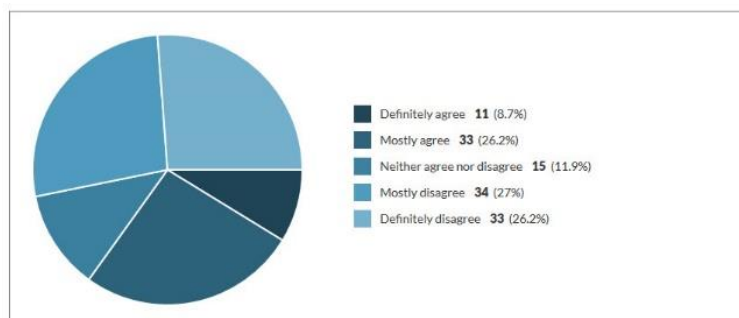
## 4.4 'I am familiar with the PAT web area on the ILT website' (n=126)

Approximately a third of staff were familiar with the PAT web area (a slight increase on the 2015-2016 results of 31%), but over half of staff performing the PAT role remain unaware of this source of support (approximately 55%) – a static trend over the past 3 years.

Definitely agree 13 (10.3%)
Mostly agree 28 (22.2%)
Neither agree nor disagree 16 (12.7%)
Mostly disagree 39 (31%)
Definitely disagree 30 (23.8%)
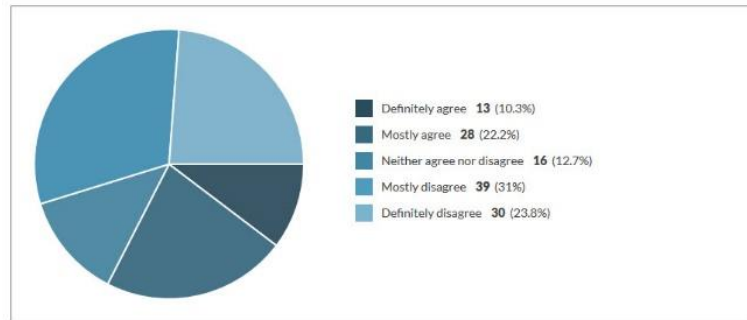
## 4.5 'In my role as a PAT I refer (have referred) to the PAT web area' (n=126)

Given the findings in 4.4 (above) it is perhaps not surprising that only 16% of staff have used the PAT web area in their work to support students. This is slightly higher than the 2015-2016 figure of 13%. However 75% of staff clearly do not use this resource (an increase of 4% on the 2015-2016 results).

Definitely agree 4 (3.2%)
Mostly agree 16 (12.7%)
Neither agree nor disagree 11 (8.7%)
Mostly disagree 46 (36.5%)
Definitely disagree 49 (38.9%)

## 4.6 'I am aware of the PAT development opportunities within the University's C@N-DO professional development scheme' (n=126)
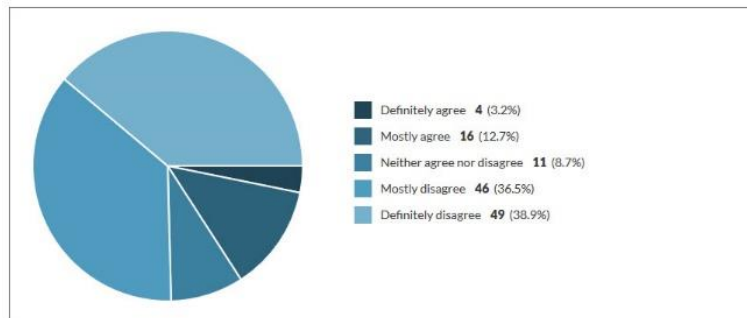
Approximately 50% of staff are aware of the PAT development opportunities contained within C@N-DO. Approximately 40% of staff were not aware of these opportunities, and just over 11% didn't know! This is a drop of around 10% on the 2014-2015 figures and a slight decline (of 3%) on the figures for last year.

Definitely agree 24 (19%)
Mostly agree 38 (30.2%)
Neither agree nor disagree 14 (11.1%)
Mostly disagree 25 (19.8%)
Definitely disagree 25 (19.8%)
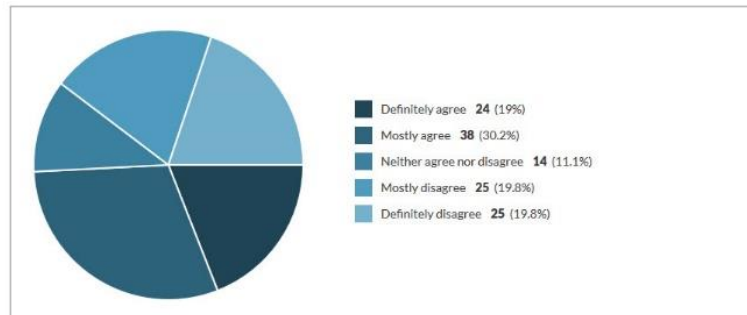
## 4.7 'I have engaged with one of the CAN-DO PAT development opportunities this academic year' (n=126)

Only 8% of staff have engaged with the PAT workshops in C@N-DO this year (down from 20% in 2015-2016). A clear majority of staff (83%) have not engaged at all.

Definitely agree 4 (3.2%)
Mostly agree 6 (4.8%)
Neither agree nor disagree 11 (8.7%)
Mostly disagree 31 (24.6%)
Definitely disagree 74 (58.7%)
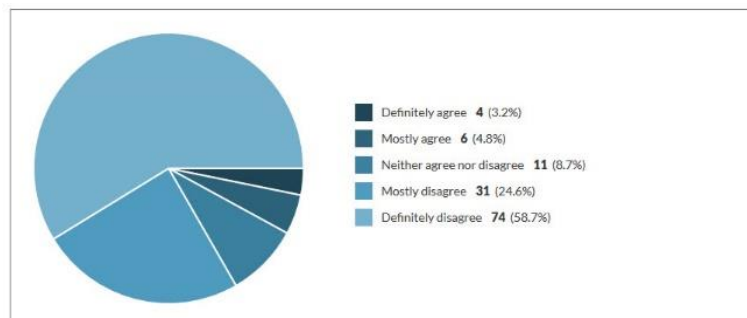
## 4.8 'I work closely with others in my team to support high-quality PAT provision for students' (n=126)

Approximately 76% of staff work closely with others in their team to facilitate Personal Academic Tutoring (up from 73% in 2015-16). Just over 10% indicted that they did not work closely with others in respect of this role.

Definitely agree  56 (44.4%)
Mostly agree  40 (31.7%)
Neither agree nor disagree  16 (12.7%)
Mostly disagree  9 (7.1%)
Definitely disagree  5 (4%)

## 4.9 'As a PAT, I am happy to support students via group tutorials' (n=126)

Approximately 70% of staff are happy to facilitate Personal Academic Tutoring via group tutorials. This is back in line with the figures for 2014-2015 and an improvement of 10% on last year's results.
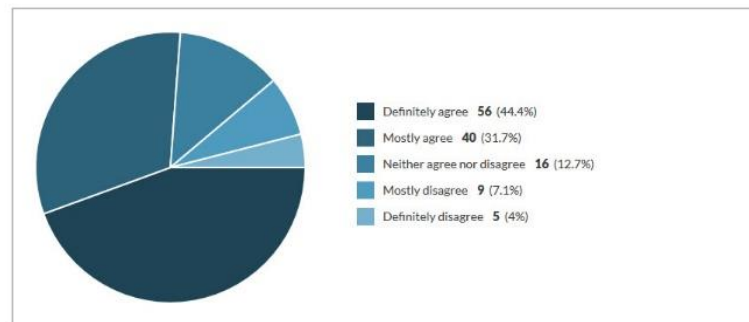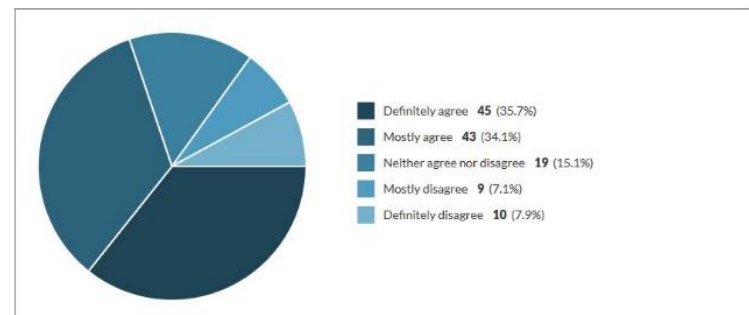
Definitely agree  45 (35.7%)
Mostly agree  43 (34.1%)
Neither agree nor disagree  19 (15.1%)
Mostly disagree  9 (7.1%)
Definitely disagree  10 (7.9%)

## 4.10 'As a PAT, I prefer to work with students on a one-to-one basis' (n=126)

Just over 71% of staff prefer to work with students on a one-to-one basis. Again, this is in line with the findings for 2014-2015.

Definitely agree  49 (38.9%)
Mostly agree  41 (32.5%)
Neither agree nor disagree  30 (23.8%)
Mostly disagree  5 (4%)
Definitely disagree  1 (0.8%)
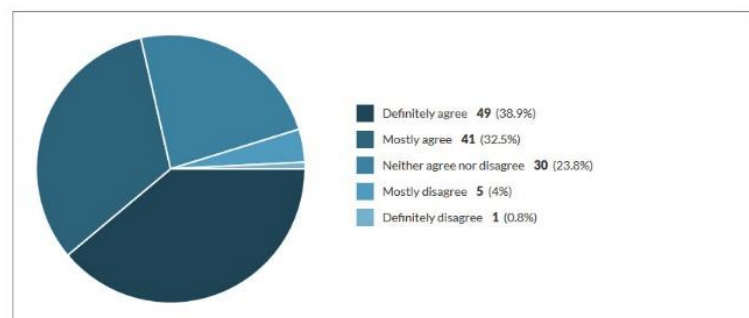
## 4.11 'Students who are not assigned to me (as a PAT) still come to me for support'

Approximately 90% of staff reported that they support staff who are not their personal tutees. This is a slight increase on the findings for 2015-2016 and an increase of around 5% on the findings from 2014-2015.

Definitely agree  81 (64.3%)
Mostly agree  33 (26.2%)
Neither agree nor disagree  10 (7.9%)
Mostly disagree  1 (0.8%)
Definitely disagree  1 (0.8%)
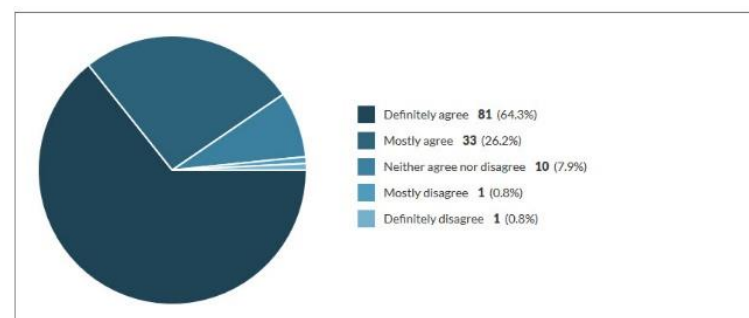
## 4.12 'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring as scheduled, timetabled sessions' (n=126)

Just over half of the respondents prefer their PAT tutorial times to be scheduled (52%). This is a difference of around 17% on the 2015-2016 findings, but is back in line with the findings from 2014-2015. Approximately 28% of staff indicated that they had no preference, with the remaining 20% indicating that their preference was not for timetabled sessions.



Definitely agree **22** (17.5%)
Mostly agree **43** (34.1%)
Neither agree nor disagree **35** (27.8%)
Mostly disagree **15** (11.9%)
Definitely disagree **11** (8.7%)
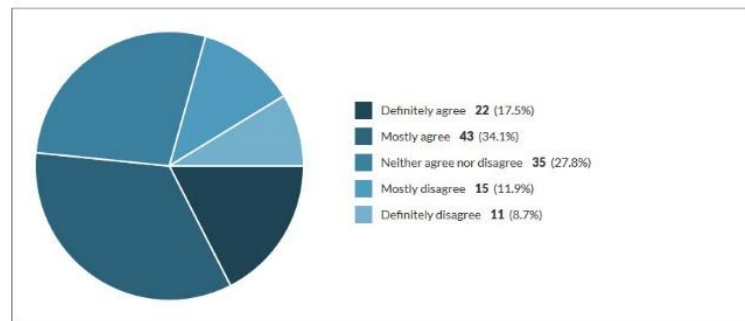
## 4.13 'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring using an 'open-door' policy' (n=126).

Approximately two-thirds of staff (66%) indicated that they prefer to have an open-door policy for their Personal Academic Tutees. It is likely that t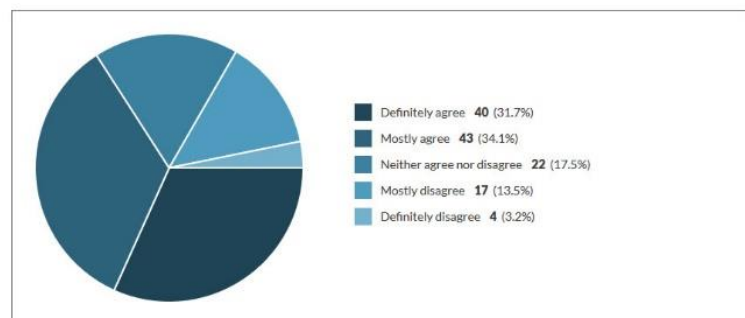hese figures and those for 4.12 reflect the fact that many PATs offer a combination of scheduled and ad-hoc appointments for their Tutees.
These figures are up by 11% on those for 2015-2016.



Definitely agree **40** (31.7%)
Mostly agree **43** (34.1%)
Neither agree nor disagree **22** (17.5%)
Mostly disagree **17** (13.5%)
Definitely disagree **4** (3.2%)

## 4.14 'In my work as a PAT, I know I have made a positive impact on the lives of my tutees' (n=126).

Approximately 84% of staff performing the PAT role agreed that their work as a PAT has made a difference in the lives of their tutees.



Definitely agree **68** (54%)
Mostly agree **37** (29.4%)
Neither agree nor disagree **17** (13.5%)
Mostly disagree **3** (2.4%)
Definitely disagree **1** (0.8%)
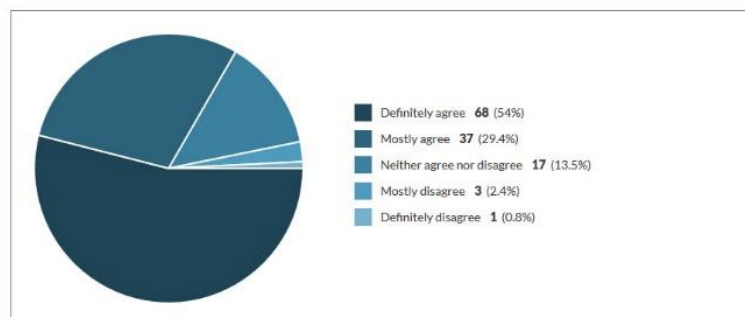
## 4.15 'I feel confident in the pastoral/personal aspect of the PAT role' (n=126)

Approximately 84% of respondents indicated that they felt confident in the pastoral and personal aspects of the PAT role. This is an increase on the results from 2015-16 of 13% and is more in line with the findings from 2014-2015 of 88%.



Definitely agree **66** (52.4%)
Mostly agree **40** (31.7%)
Neither agree nor disagree **13** (10.3%)
Mostly disagree **3** (2.4%)
Definitely disagree **4** (3.2%)
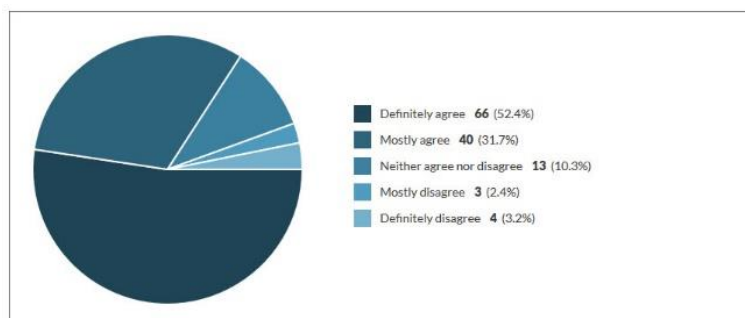
## 4.16 'I feel confident in the academic support aspect of the PAT role' (n=126).

Around 88% of respondents feel confident in providing academic support to students as part of the PAT role. This is similar to the finding in 4.15 and is an increase of 17% on the position in 2015-2016, but on a par with the 2014-2015 findings.



Legend:
- Definitely agree 65 (51.6%)
- Mostly agree 46 (36.5%)
- Neither agree nor disagree 9 (7.1%)
- Mostly disagree 5 (4%)
- Definitely disagree 1 (0.8%)
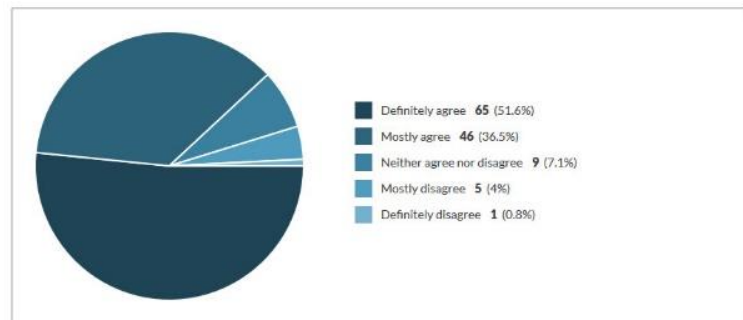
# 5. Free Text Responses

At the end of the survey, staff were asked what they value most about the PAT system and then if they had any further comments about the PAT system. 93 staff members provided a response to the 'value most' question, and 78 to the 'further comments' question. The comments have been broadly categorised below. Where comments from 1 respondent fell into more than 1 category, the relevant parts of the comments were including in the respective categories.

## 5.1 What do you value most about the PAT system? (n=93)

### Supporting Students

- Providing support to students to help them overcome challenges
- Personal support
- Developing student resilience
- Import at students have someone who knows they, there to, support them achieve their goals
- Most of my PAT's are students that I regularly see on a week to week basis. Building a relationship with them so that they know that I am available to support them if they have issues.
- I enjoy supporting students through their learning journey. Ideally I would prefer to allocated hours to support such students and would feel that if these hours were removed from my own allocation then I would be disappointed that the University expected me to provide this level of support. That's not to say I would not support a student that come to me for help but if my 550 hours were full of other responsibilities I would feel under pressure to complete all task and some may not be fulfilled to an adequate and acceptable level, namely student support. I feel this year particularly students were not made aware of their PAT's in an efficient fashion. Oasis displayed incorrect information; in my subject area one program leader was displayed for a huge amount of students as being their PAT. From information I collected I was able to produce a basic spreadsheet that provided accurate PAT allocations and I frequently referred to this information to provide students with their own PAT. Some students did not even recognise new members of the team and were then disappointed that they had been allocated as PAT's.
- Building relationships
- Support it gives the student when done right
- Key to a positive student experience are both set PAT tutorials AND Responsive, timely, confidential support is essential to mitigate attrition when a student is in a crisis. Subject specific PAT support is essential to coach and support development that is personal to the students' career aspirations. A group tutorial works at the start of year, welcome week and first week back levels 5 and 6. In my opinion high levels of satisfaction require active listening not just a mechanistic questioning approach that risks an impersonal experience and pays lip service. As a line manager of a stable team of academics we do encounter situations where urgent referral is essential and most of the time student services can accommodate this but there are some pinch points at certain peak times of the year.
- Personally I thrive on actively facilitating students to achieve their aspirations and open minds and horizons to new challenges which have a positive impact on the lives of others.
- I understand how students benefit from access to confidential face to face discussions about any problems they may be facing and how important the 'immediacy' of action is necessary to prevent

further issues developing for individual students. This also gives me a greater understanding of the individual student's potential learning experience during their educational transition with the institution.

- Providing that one-to-one experience to give support when and wherever possible to students.
- I think that is important for students to feel comfortable in coming to their PAT. I know that this is important from a student perspective from feedback. I value my working and personal relationship that I have with my PATs. I always (far preceding my time at UoN) have operated an open door policy to my students whether or not they are assigned to me as PAT. However, I would value more recognition from the institution that good PAT relationships need time. Far more time than can be afforded on paper.
- I enjoy building up the relationship / rapport with students and developing trust so that they are comfortable to approach my. I like the combination of planned tutorials (both group and individual) and the flexibility of being available at other times. I also really value having the opportunity to visit the (work-based) students in their settings as well as following through the PAT role to support dissertation students.
- That students know they have someone to turn to if they are struggling.  In theory I would value that it meant someone was accountable for the development of each and every student but we do not have the staffing resources for this to be effective through the current PAT system.
- That the students know that there is someone who cares.
- That the whole ECYP division work effectively together to support students and each other.
- Communication
- Quality time with students to discuss how university can support them beyond the course.
- Building a more personal relationship with the students, to discuss their situation, fears and ambitions. I know that I have had a positive impact on many students through the time I spent with them as a personal tutor.
- Getting to know my students and providing appropriate support
- The opportunity to know students better and meet their needs.
- To see students work through their problems and vital to retention
- Getting to know students better, as individuals. Helping them to achieve their potential.
- The relationships that form between student and myself - the satisfaction when I help them to overcome adversity
- I like getting to know the students better, so I can help them with thinking about what strategies will work for them with their academic studies.
- The complex support it can offer individual students to enable then to continue with their studies and progress. Without this support, many students would not complete their courses.
- Space in which to provide pastoral care to the students though the amount of time allotted to this role is not always sufficient
- Building a rapport with individuals
- Getting to know the students on a more individual basis
- Seeing the development and growth of a student.
- The opportunity to build trust with students so that they can access support as and when they need.
- The ability to make a difference
- Being able to offer support to students, whether it is academic or pastoral and to know I have made a positive difference to their student journey.
- Provides an opportunity to support students to enhance the 'student experience'. Helps me to get to know students and identify ways to best support them/best deliver teaching materials. Can identity issues of wider concern to the cohort, enabling appropriate responses to enhance overall student experience.
- Student contact
- The prospect of building a personal relationship
- The ability to offer students guidance in a meaningful way through face to face meetings in a private setting
- Getting to know students on a one-to-one basis and having a better understanding of their own situation with regard to studying

- Space for students to talk openly about all matters, having a hopefully positive effect on them and being able to identify issues early that may affect their engagement and performance
- I value the opportunity to truly engage with our students and offer guidance and support wherever possible.
- That students are informed of a specific person who can support the individual or signpost to the vast system of support available to them.
- The opportunity to develop professional relationships with individual trainees in order to support them personally and academically throughout the programme.
- Getting to know the students is important on a course leading to professions where their personalities and interpersonal skills will be essential; the PAT system enables this.
- Ultimately, the trust that students place with you can be very rewarding.
- Individual feedback from students can be extremely rewarding and one feels it's a positive experience mostly
- The PAT system is a good mechanism for supporting some students and provides staff the opportunity to build greater rapport with students, however the role is becoming increasingly demanding. A greater level of mental health issues are presenting themselves in PAT meetings which can be challenging to manage and direct them to the relevant departments. For example, I had a year two student contact me saying that they wanted to commit suicide; I was aware of this student's vulnerability but had considerable difficulties getting into contact with her support worker at the university and the mental health team in general. The situation was resolved eventually but only after a couple of days had passed during which time I felt anxious and unable to offer more support than I had already done.
- It allows time to support students that need some extra support and advise
- It is very helpful for students particularly in writing reference for further studies.
- Being able to provide bespoke support when required. Responding to urgent needs for help. Seeing someone on my course grow over three years. As PAT this is one of the few opportunities to do this. I think it is important that the PAT role is someone from the academic team supporting whatever programme the student is studying. This knowledge of the programme context is essential.
- The personal connection between academic staff and students
- The ability to help students on a personal basis. The fact that they feel that they can come to me for support.
- Contact with students.
- The opportunity to get to know the students as individual learners, rather than just as a group within lectures/seminars.
- Positive influence on students who are struggling.
- As a Year Leader and Programme Leader I have found the knowledge that PATs have about individual students invaluable in managing and supporting the student experience
- Supporting students to reach potential
- The fact that the students have an assigned person they can go to. As we act as PATS for the same students over the three years in our team, this also helps to build a good relationship with the students.
- Developing students to help them achieve their potential.
- Helping students to be the best version of themselves they can be.
- Opportunity to support and develop students as individuals to gain the best outcomes for them on the programmes of study
- It's an essential support and advice mechanism for the students.
- The personal relationship between me and my students. I come to know them and be able to help them in a number of ways. This is particularly so for international students as sometimes they need to get away from the formal relationships and ask their questions in a bit informal environment.
- Able to keep updated on how students are getting on and support them through the course i.e. personal tutor remains the same
- Getting to know students better on an individual basis and building a relationship during the course of their studies
- It provides students with a named person who can support them throughout an academic year irrespective of module engagement.

- PATs can be the first point of contact for a student who has non-academic issues and from an initial meeting they can be signposted to specialist services on campus or in the community.
- Face to face meetings with students, however, not really sure how far to push them. In previous role as an AL tutoring OU distance learning MSc/MBA students for some 15 years one was encourage to push academic concepts beyond the immediate indicative content of a course module. But more importantly for students who were "struggling" you were encourage to go back the first principles and illustrate these with examples from their working environment. This is difficult to do with undergrad as they have few if any mental models of how things works in practice.
- The holistic connection with a set of students
- Supporting students
- Student contact and help with their development.
- The opportunity to get to know some students well and to have had a positive impact on their university experience
- Enabling the students to progress and succeed
- Continuity with one student, the ability to build a good relationship with my student to ensure they get the best experience possible and feel comfortable to approach me if they experience difficulties
- Building a relationship with the students and being a stable point of contact for them.
- The opportunity to develop a closer professional relationships with students
- Helping students
- Working with a year group as a group and then also as individuals. Knowing that the students feel I am always there to support them both academic and subject specific as well as pastoral.
- Offers students another 'neutral' voice of support or advice if needed
- Students have a member of staff that they can approach and discuss a wide range of issues.
- Supporting individual students through their degrees.
- Although there have been many changes to this system there is still the opportunity to forge a relationship with students and offer guidance and support.
- Seeing progression, improving retention
- Making a different to students with complex problems
- Students have someone to turn to for confidential help in addition to their subject lecturers
- The opportunity to support students in a holistic way.
- The time I can spend with students although this feels as though it is getting less and less
- With reference to first-year students: That students feel confident they have someone to refer to. Good welcoming experience. Effective way to track students' performance and attendance, monitor their progress, and anticipate problems. Brings greater awareness of tutors' responsibility of care. Good ground for reflection for both tutees and tutors.
- Even though I have been a PAT for 4 students in year one, our contact is mainly defined by the modules that I teach. In this capacity I have seen other students more often than my personal academic tutees. Often students tend to recline to year tutors for support on matters relevant to the role of a PAT.
- The opportunity to have 1:1 discussions with students. The opportunity to participate in interviews for new cohorts

## Issues

- In principle a lot, but the lack of any enforcement of a consistent approach in reality means I value pretty much zero of the way it works here.
- If I am honest, the PAT system is a joke. If you read the PAT policy it places multiple duties on the PAT, but when you look at the time allocation we have two hours per first year, 1.5 per second year, and 1 hour per third year for the whole academic year.
- This is typical of the bizarre logic of this place, which tells us that there is lots of public car parks around the Waterside campus, even though everyone familiar with Northampton town centre knows car parking is a nightmare.
- It seems like the people who create the policy and those who have to deliver the policy are working at two different universities or have courses with radically different student needs.
- Nothing, the system we operate doesn't work
- We have a system for this?
- It would be a good system if it allowed staff the freedom to be a PAT in the way they deem best.

- THE NEEDS OF OUR PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS ARE HIGH IN TERMS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND PASTORAL SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL
- I think there is some confusion about what the PAT role is. As a personal academic tutor, the academic member of staff is meant to be someone who can help a student navigate the personal experience through academia. The "personal" aspect was designated to mean a one to one alignment and not to refer to the pastoral element of the role. The inclusion of "academic" was to signify that the role was restricted to issues related to academic development. It was not referring to a quality of the tutor, but rather to the subject of tuition as in a 'maths tutor'. Therefore the tutor has to be expert in the subject of academia, i.e. how to become and be an academic.
- I'm not sure I make any difference to the student's experience. I do it as part of my role. When a student comes to me with a problem I listen, help if I can but often sign post them to others. I don't fix the issue.
- I do not think it matters as much as is often said- students go to the member of staff with whom they feel most confidence.
- I'm new to the University and the PAT role has not been explained to me. Neither have the students who I'm expected to tutor in this way

### Praise
- That staff are given clear direction as to the nature and limitations of the role through training for those who need it and the web area for 24 - 7 advice and direction.
- Almost, I teach all my personal tutees
- Other staff have been very supportive.
- It works well.

## 5.2 Further comments about the PAT Role at UN (n=78)

### System
- I believe there should be transparent programme policies and procedures which inform a collaborative academic staff approach to PAT, including online booking of staff when available to decrease the amount of email communication to actually arrange tutorials and facilitate a collective responsibility. A simple booking system when staff is available would help alleviate student anxiety and staff timetabling issues in recognition of staff work load balance and assessment 'bottle-necking'
- I think that the PAT system here is much prescribed. At my previous institution, students weren't assigned a named PAT, instead it was made clear at induction that the PAT role can be fulfilled by any of the teaching team. I will also add, that more differentiation should be afforded to subject areas when it comes to Pats In studio, practice courses, students have many opportunities to discuss issues and so the notion of fixed PAT sessions from a student's perspective seem strange. They come to us at any time and so fixed PAT sessions can often feel forced
- Certain aspects of the PAT role, such as generic skills training, engagement with the Change Maker hub, and  monitoring and recording progress do not require academic faculty members, but actually developing students to become academics via their chosen field of study, does.  Perhaps a Designated University Coach from the Changemaker Hub could handle many elements currently handled by PATs, so that it would be done better and allow Academic Faculty Members serving as PATs to focus on Academia
- The PAT system is inflexible (for already overworked academic staff) and instead of becoming easier it is becoming more difficult to perform because of the increasingly bureaucratic procedures which have developed. Students, in my experience, want an open door policy where they can simply arrange to meet with their tutors on a one-to-one basis to discuss progress
- I think we need to decide why we have this role - is it to tell others that we offer this service or is it to genuinely take care of our students and offer a personal service? I think that staff should opt into this

role because they value this time, I do not think the role should be imposed on to everyone's work load allocation. Some people are not suited to building these types of relationships and that's ok

- I believe we need a radical rethink of the PAT system, with intense PAT support in weeks 1-11 of Level 4, tailing off in weeks 15-25, and then an increasing emphasis on self-reliance through levels 5 and 6, with the main PAT support at Level 6 being linked to the dissertation

- Increasing numbers of students reporting mental health issues (e.g. anxiety and depression) - University has great support services but these are overloaded and it can take 3-4 weeks for students to get an appointment

- I would advocate having one or two members of staff taking on PAT responsibilities BUT WITH SIGNIFICANT REMISSION FROM TEACHING to enable them to really fulfil this role in a meaningful way. 1st year students would particularly benefit from this

- Think there should be a lead PAT for each faculty / subject area to arrange / monitor and assist staff and students

- Sometimes wonder if it might be better if the pastoral support was from someone other than their academic tutors and was timetabled

- Administratively it appears students need the signature or need to approach their PAT first to start any withdrawal options, this seems unnecessary formality as by that stage students have made their minds up, or have had PAT discussions previously, plus Programme leader or course head seems more appropriate

- As an institution we still have nascent PAT provision which is poorly structured with practical resources/learning activities to support academics. I'm pleased to see things are improving but it has been rather incremental

- If the PAT is to be a tutoring system it needs time allocation for small groups to meet regularly. This happens in Oxbridge colleges but has costs associated with it. and relies on a body of PhD students and postdocs to enable it to function properly

- The students are changing...or so we all think. I think it is vital they have tutors from their programme who can link into wider UoN services if needed who can support all of their transitions. The role has to develop, more time allocate and valued much more than it is now as an essential part of their University experience. We have an excellent well developed, evaluated system that has worked effectively

- There needs to be some consideration of who performs the PAT role (not everyone is suitable) and there also needs to be consideration about the time PAT takes as students are seeing me with more and more complex issues and I am increasingly feeling out of my depth, particularly when having to support students with mental health difficulties, suffering domestic abuse and sexual violence, all of which I am seeing much more of. Students can't always access specialist support services for various reasons and therefore come to see me. I feel confident about supporting students with their academic needs, but their personal and pastoral issues are becoming problematic due to volume and also the time it takes to address these

- I have far too many students allocated to me as a PAT (c50)

- The role of the PAT is not always recognised and valued. Numbers of tutees per PAT vary due to programme size so that as a Lecturer I am PAT to 30 students over 3 year groups whereas some senior colleagues have between 5 and 10 students. Whilst signposting or referring students to specialist mental health, domestic violence or bereavement services for example are part of the PAT role, the nature of the issues and the emotional state of the tutee have an impact on the nominal time allowances for meetings and our own wellbeing

- The issue of how to resource it has never been properly addressed, despite regular assurances that this would be the case. Most attempts to do so have utilised the WLA tariff and have worked on the basis of a set number of hours per student, which is unworkable in practice and doomed to fail. I don't have a fool proof alternative, but personally favour a system whereby a subject/programme is

given a general block of hours based on the overall number of students for which it is required to allocate a personal tutor, and is then able to utilise those hours as it sees fit

- I love this university, and I love working with students. But I have seen so much bad practice and even bullying of students by tutors that it breaks my heart. There are too many tutors here who are procedurals, and insist that policies are followed to the letter, that personalised and person-centred care of students is being drowned out.
- My own experience is that the PAT system is not consistent. I still have emails or drop INS now where students do not know who their tutor is, or they never respond to them. I have taken on two students this year as additional PATs because they were in need of a PAT ASAP due to serious health/mental/personal issues
- Zero consistency, both across the university and within the same degree programme.  On my course some staff gets away without never seeing their Pates whilst others will spend many hours organising and running group sessions - but only for no students to turn up
- The role has to develop, more time allocate and valued much more than it is now as an essential part of their University experience

## Student Support/Information

- What matters are that students have staff they can talk to - not a specific PAT- however, where there are allocated PATs they should teach the students they are PAT to
- There is a lack of support at university level for students who are in need of services.  The PAT role can only extend so far, I am not a counsellor nor should I be. There is insufficient time within the teaching week to perform the role satisfactorily and the ratio of staff to students means that little more than lip service can be given to the role
- Those that are in greatest need of assistance get some service, those that could be pushed on to achieve greater things are overlooked
- Sometimes students feel that PAT is there to manage all of their crises - recently two students "camped" outside my office door to ensure they could talk to me (I only had a few minutes before teaching so was late to my class). These students had demanded a meeting with PAT, Year Tutor and all module tutors they knew). Actually, the issue was with their accommodation
- I take the view that it is primarily up to the students to seek help and they may need lots of clues to indicate how supportive the University can be in times of stress
- As this is often the first point of contact in supporting students it is critical that students are made aware of who their PAT is at the earliest opportunity, I have a smaller cohort and know each student individually throughout their time, however, I sometimes have students from other larger programmes seeking support as they are not clear about the processes available to them
- It is often difficult to timetable meeting rooms which means that PAT tutorials and meetings are often in larger shared offices and I am not sure that this is the best environment in some cases
- Many students have mental health issues so feel group tutorials would be inappropriate.
- It's very difficult to find confidential space to meet with students. Often they are in tears or want to discuss very distressing/private experiences
- What is important is an equitable approach, students quickly realise if their PAT does more or less than another and if it's less feel aggrieved

## PAT Support/Information

- I do not think there is enough information and support for new members of staff performing this role (e.g. key contacts in student support, easy access to documentation and policies through the website). In order to find information it is usually necessary to know where to look for and, as new member of staff, which can be quite difficult
- Not made aware of development support available

- There needs to be lunch and learns for PAT skills or drop in q and a sessions to explain support services PATs can point students to
- Needs more support
- I have not seen the PAT area on the web, I have no spare time in which to peruse the web, and find it extremely difficult to find anything on the staff intranet. I have worked at the university for nearly 8 years, and I am the busiest I have ever been, I am finding I have no time to book on development sessions, including basic training, let alone optional extras. It's very disappointing, I would like to have opportunities but my diary is booked up full, so far in advance, I have no time, or I am just not free
- Annoyed that I was not aware of the online support. I actually begged Learn Tech for an old NILE module I could use to contact all my mentees and put announcements on opportunities etc. at the beginning of the academic year. It took ages but I managed to get one under duress (I haven't been able to use it yet because by the time I got it I had got too busy at work to set it up properly - don't tell them please)
- There is a need to put in place a support system for new members of staff. This will help them to quickly adjust to the new working environment
- In all honesty, I was not aware of a web space for PATs, but will be making use of this going forward
- Guidelines and support for academic staff needs to be clearer
- I think that the support for the PAT system is lacking. I think that the processes and procedures around PAT could be clearer, fit within a more systematic framework and be better supported by secondary services. The truth is that PAT should be a referral service. We should not take on an emotionally supportive role or a role as carer. But because, for example, students take months to see someone at student services we are forced to play a more active support role than we should
- I am experiencing an increasing number of personal tutees disclosing anxiety, depression, emotional difficulties, etc. First year students predominantly. I am frequently signposting students to Student Services for additional support needs which fall outside the remit of the PAT role
- There are often very difficult situations that I deal with that I don't feel qualified for, so I do rely on other teams to work alongside
- I'm very happy to be a PAT, but I'd like clearer explanations of the role and the resources as a newcomer to academia. I've only overheard aspects of this from others
- I feel absolutely overwhelmed by the volume of students with serious mental illnesses and lack of help/resources particularly for students with learning difficulties. Contacting ASSIST several times this year has resulted only in receiving an automated response stating they were too busy to respond to inquiries
- The university may well organize training for these PAT roles, but as we have 100+ students and only 2 staff members, I never have time to attend. Also I am concerned by the unresponsiveness of the University to deal with violent/threatening behaviour towards staff and other students
- I'm new to the university this year and whilst having 20 years' experience of being a tutor and what are needed in the role. I have not had any information about what the unit specifically wants from the role or any support available. I'm not really even sure where to send students if need extra support services the unit has. Obviously I'm experienced enough to be able to find what I need but basic info would have been useful
- Feel helpless sometimes when they come to see me with anxiety, depression, complex mental health issues and I suggest contacting university counselling services and they say there is a 3 month waiting list or that they have already contacted the mental health team
- Like so many things here, PAT is done on a shoe-string. This links to things like the workload allocation tariff, availability of support staff and so on. The University needs to invest properly in support for students given e.g. entry standards and the pressure on us to have students, modules and programmes achieve benchmarks

- Changes to regulations/practice need to be communicated in a much more timely fashion to enable us to properly support our students
- The questions as about group tutorials and one on one. I initiate group tutorials but respond to one on one if students request this due to personal difficulties they do not want to share that require more pastoral support.
- The role seems to be getting more complex- the needs of students more varied.
- Group sizes increase which makes it difficult to ensure contact with all students on a regular basis.
- Not always easy to find a room suitable for a PAT meeting
- There are some staff members who are frankly unsuited to the PAT role because of their personality or their general attitude to staff who face difficulties. What tends to happen is the nice, smiley, kind and open facing staff get bombarded with PAT type issues from students
- The role is mostly pastoral then

## Training

- Being a PAT is a responsible role, and I do feel this should come with training before you are asked to take on the role. This has not been the case for me, despite trying to find available training: I have been told my name is on a list for PAT training, but this has been the case for nearly 6 months now. I am PAT to over 100 students
- I started the role in October and no PAT training was available, I was put on to a waiting list but have never heard anything
- Would be useful to include some training on the PAT system for new members of staff
- New staff needs inducting with compulsory PAT sessions as part of new starter sessions
- I have attended a PAT training session and did not find it particularly useful as it was delivered by someone who rarely if ever comes into contact with students and thus had limited understanding of the type of problems PATs were increasingly dealing with. I am an academic not a counsellor and thus not trained to deal with some of the issue I come into contact with. I can confidently support academic issues and minor personal ones that may impact on academic studies but the level of personal support increasingly being needed for our students is stretching beyond the capabilities of the PAT system

## Time

- There is a lack of support at university level for students who are in need of services. The PAT role can only extend so far, I am not a counsellor nor should I be. There is insufficient time within the teaching week to perform the role satisfactorily and the ratio of staff to students means that little more than lip service can be given to the role
- More time needed
- Would like more time for this role
- Time allocations in no way match the time taken to do the job to the best of your ability and in a way that truly meets the needs of students. They often prefer more time with the PAT than to access other services. Good PATs give that time even when line managers do not support this, and continue to push PATs to move students on to others even when this is not what the students want
- We need more time to do this properly. 3rd year students often need more tutoring, especially when we spend lots of time supporting them through the most pressured time of the degree programme, on top of discussing careers, postgraduate courses, writing references, checking personal statements etc., all of which cannot be done in a group tutorial. Why are we allocated so little time for them on the 550
- Timetabled tutorial time does not work
- Often seems like there isn't enough time to deliver this support effectively

- More time is needed to this role, what is timetabled is not enough and when there are cases where students require a lot of support, this is not identified in the university workload template.
- The PAT role is so important, and an asset to the university, but I'd like to see the university give it the time it deserves and acknowledge realistic hours in the workload template.
- PAT role takes much more time than is allocated in workload plan
- The PAT role is chronically under-recognised by the workload model and more generally by the University. There is precious little time to do anything of any value with PAT students; it almost always comes at the bottom of the list of priorities because of excessive pressures elsewhere (e.g. teaching, mundane administrative duties) and the support provided is difficult to access simply because of the time available
- Still very hard to fit in adequate time in our busy teaching/admin/marketing timetable
- Students with declared disabilities should be allocated additional PAT time and this should be reflected in workloads
- I am flexible with my appointments and suggest times to meet with students on a termly basis at least. They also know they can contact me when needed. However, additional support is needed for students who are in crisis and also those with disclosed disabilities. The PAT is an important 'hub' for supporting these needs, but additional time is needed to support them properly. This will be even more essential if ASSIST are placed at the Avenue site once we move to Waterside. I am also very concerned that because academics will be 'hot-desking' students will not know where to find them. Although I try to arrange things in advance, this is not always possible. What will a student do when there isn't a 'place' to find a PAT. I am also concerned whether there will be enough small meeting rooms at the new campus for PAT meetings
- Insufficient time is set aside for this - I spend at least 8 hours per week doing PAT and most of it is pastoral rather than academic concerns
- I agree that the PAT role is integral to the continuation of students in their academic studies and contributes to their success; however I am not convinced that the University value the role through the allocation of a suitable amount of tutor time within workload planning, particularly within professionally accredited programmes where students have practice/work placements
- Working in ITT, more time is required to cover school visits, especially those that are a distance away.
- There is less time for support and at times feel that the role is just for signposting
- As always there is a lack of time and space to facilitate the meetings quite as much as we would on a more formal basis.
- The University must value the role by allocating sufficient hours to the role to enable us to engage in training and in seeing students.
- This is a time-intensive role and should warrant more time. Also, private spaces to meet with students who are upset would be useful, as it's not ok to try to talk to students about sensitive issues with other members of staff in the office having meetings with their own students at the same time.
- Time. I currently have 55 PAT's. Seeing all these students constitutes a considerable workload
- I think the PAT role is important and it deserves more attention. This is not to say we should adopt the Oxbridge model but at least to be given more time to work with our students. Many of us have third year students to supervise (e.g. research projects or dissertations), teach undergrad and postgrad modules, external and internal moderation, teaching overseas, etc.) And we are overwhelmed with all these activities. However, if we have some more hours to work as PATs this would facilitate a better communication with our students and will certainly help when we have to assist them with any other things.
- I would like to have more time for my tutees, but because of the teaching load and other responsibilities like preparing for the lectures, supervising dissertation, faculty meetings, I spent little time with my tutees

- To do the role properly takes a lot of time. This is not properly acknowledged in current workload models
- This is a valued role but this is not recognised with allowance of adequate time in work load planner
- Not sufficient time in workload allocated to this task.
- I think the assigned number of hours no way represents the amount of time it takes to provide support to students as a PAT. This is even more so when the students may have additional needs such as autism or mental health issues. This certainly needs to be reconsidered if effective PAT system has to continue at the University.
- Students seem to find one or two members of staff more approachable (especially when they need support with personal issues), which increases their workload (though there is no formal recognition of this)

## Praise

- We have an excellent well developed, evaluated system that has worked effectively
- Being a PAT keeps me grounded and really in touch with the student's issues. I PAT our first year international students because of the specific skills needed in the tool box for these students to support their transition and assure growth in recruitment through understanding the lived experience for our students. I think we have excellent support in the student services teams and some staff who have high levels of expertise and experience. I've also had support from line management to support students needing to engage with external services. We take student support seriously and don't just pay lip service to it, we go the extra mile
- I think this is an important and valuable role which can really enhance the student experience - especially if the role and its parameters are clearly set out and understood by both parties. I think it is recognised by settings as they are generally responsive during visits which promotes the course and the university but additionally allows impact to be acknowledged
- It is a scheme that works well if the PAT works well
- My practice is that I will email my students (different standardised emails for different year groups) to introduce myself and offer for them to meet. At no time has a PAT met me at this initial meeting however subsequently when situations occur my PAT's do contact me directly. Even today I have received an email from a PAT in need. Unfortunately I needed support from the Subject Group Leader and as I am off-campus I had to resort to emailing them, something that generally receives no response. The current position is that no email response or support has been offered to me today on how to deal with this issue which is a complaint from a student about a lecturer. I have emailed my PAT twice and we hope that the matter will be resolved by the student meeting the lecturer directly tomorrow. I hope this matter is resolved as other students (not my PAT's) did ask for advice in regard to the same situation yesterday and I referred them to their own PAT's

## Student Engagement

- Students do not turn up to any organised group sessions even if timetabled - unreliable at keeping one to one appointments as well - this has led many in my subject area to effectively give up on the system besides having an open door available
- The system is fine, but the majority students are not willing to engage with it
- Nothing bad seems to have happened as a result of their non-engagement, and forcing students to engage is counter-productive
- The students are entirely disengaged from the process
- Most students do not engage with the PAT provision and don't try to find out who is there PAT - if they have an issue they tend to go to the module or programme leaders
- I think many students do not want to be bothered by attending formal PAT sessions and only access us when there is a problem

## Waterside

- I am extremely concerned that the open plan character of Waterside and its lack of private office space will militate against me performing my PAT role in a meaningful way. I currently have 4 regular office hours in which I can perform my PAT role. How will this be replicated after the move with bookable space at a premium
- Very concerned about how this will continue in Waterside. No offices for students to find us, and no privacy to discuss with students. When sharing an office, we normally respect each other's space, but on one confidential meeting with a student another colleague simply walked in to place something on a colleague's desk; on another occasion, a colleague verbally chastised one of my PATs for not attending her module, which destroyed the idea of the office as safe space. These are only two incidents in nearly a decade at UoN, but in Waterside this will be significantly worse. I fear for the pastoral role at Waterside
- I am worried about the move to  Waterside and whether students will have such  a good experience as we will not have our own rooms where students will know where to find us
- I don't think an open door policy would be possible at Waterside - it is too difficult here where we have offices
- In a shared office there is nowhere to go to talk to students in private I have had to walk a crying student in distress around two different buildings to find a private room - this will only be worse at Waterside - I am talking about the walk in emergencies you cannot foresee and book a room in advance for
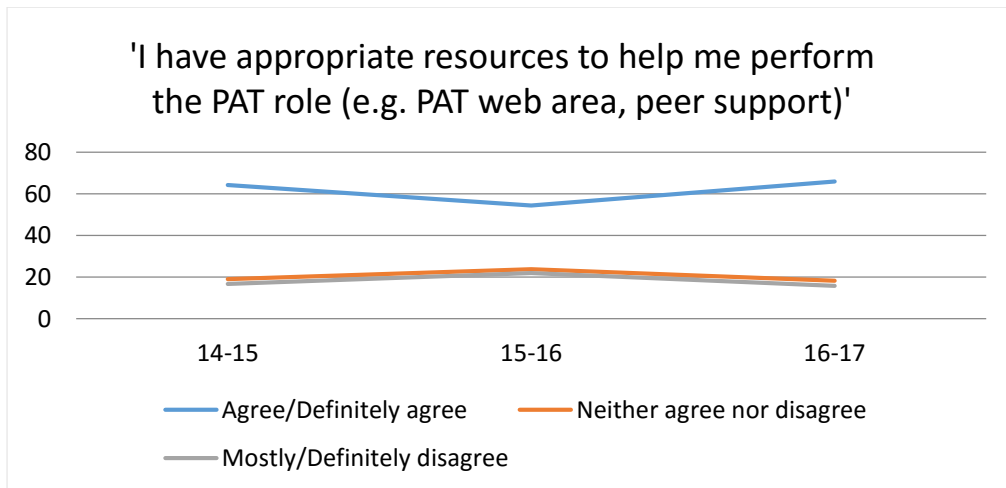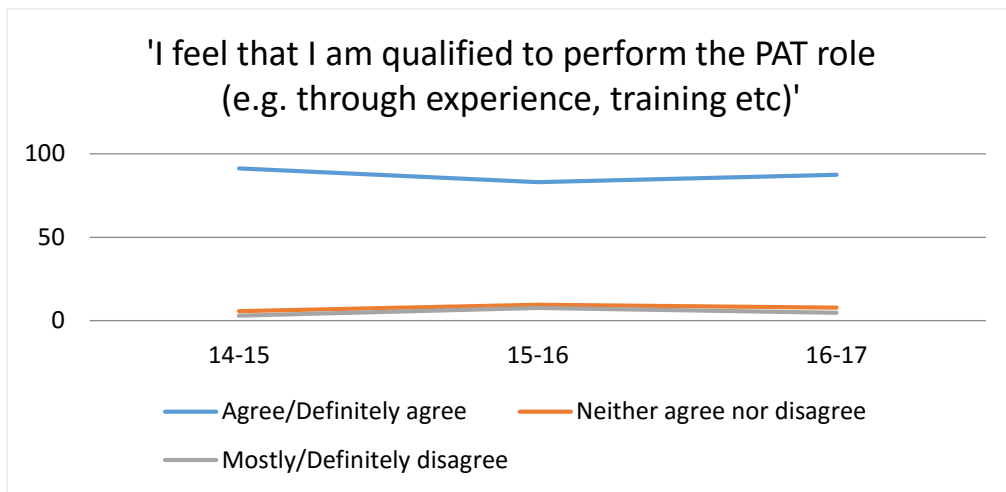
## Survey

- I was frustrated by the question "I have engaged with one of the C@N-DO PAT Development Opportunities this academic year" as I did the full PAT training course LAST academic year and had no opportunity here to say so
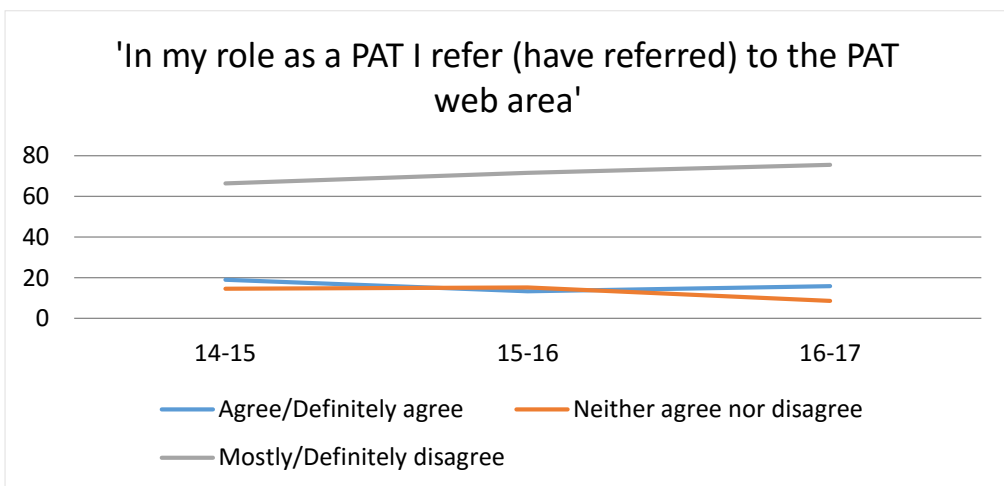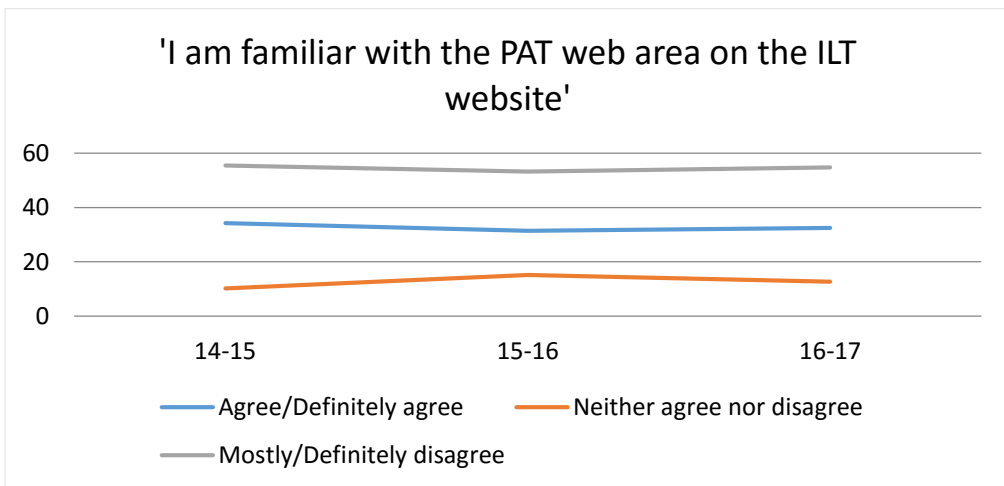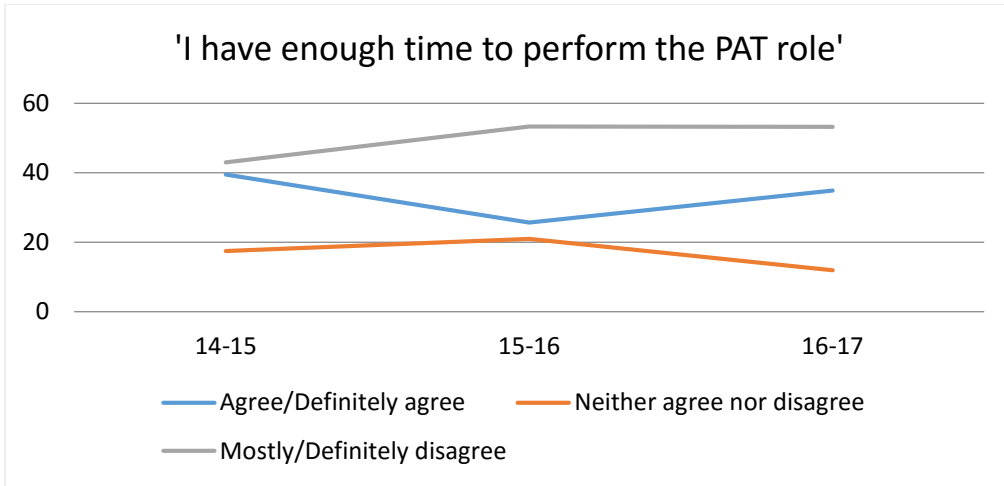
## Other

- I have had up to 60 students in a lecture/tutorial from a very diverse background. This does not really facilitate learning especially when for example, some concepts really require a much smaller tutorial/lecture groups.  For example, "systems do not exist". This is a basic construct of systems thinking and underpins, for example, information theory and operations management. It is difficult enough to explain this concept to a CEO/CIO let alone 60 students. Additionally I have noticed that many  3rd year undergrads do not really have digital literacy and basic  maths - just a general observation
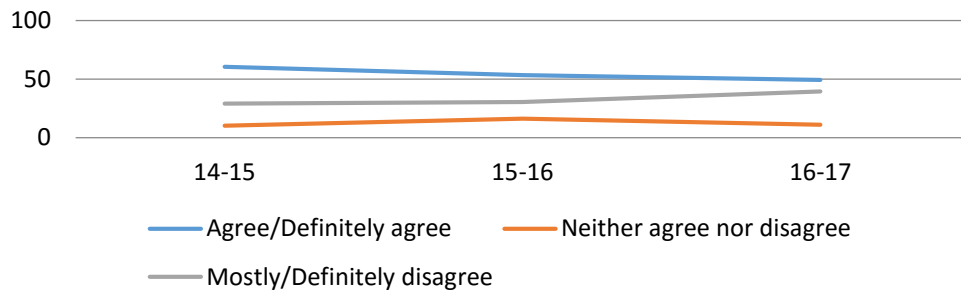
# Appendix 1: Three year trend data

The graphs in Appendix 1 show the trend data since 2014-2015. However, due to an error with the Likert Scale used for 2015-2016, there were only 4 options to choose from: Definitely agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Definitely disagree. It should therefore be noted that the apparent marked increase in the 'Definitely agree' position for 2015-2016 is likely to be due to the fact that recipients only had one 'positive' option to choose from.

## 'I feel that I am qualified to perform the PAT role (e.g. through experience, training etc)'

Legend: Agree/Definitely agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Mostly/Definitely disagree

X-axis: 14-15, 15-16, 16-17
Y-axis: 0, 50, 100

## 'I have appropriate resources to help me perform the PAT role (e.g. PAT web area, peer support)'

Legend: Agree/Definitely agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Mostly/Definitely disagree

X-axis: 14-15, 15-16, 16-17
Y-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80

## 'I have enough time to perform the PAT role'



Legend:
- Agree/Definitely agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly/Definitely disagree

## 'I am familiar with the PAT web area on the ILT website'



Legend:
- Agree/Definitely agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly/Definitely disagree

## 'In my role as a PAT I refer (have referred) to the PAT web area'



Legend:
- Agree/Definitely agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly/Definitely disagree

**'I am aware of the PAT development opportunities within the University's C@N-DO professional development scheme'**



**'I have engaged with one of the C@N-DO PAT development opportunities this academic year'**
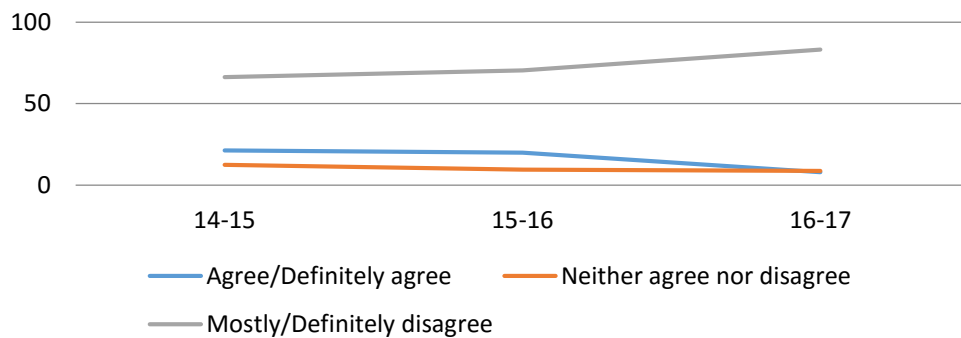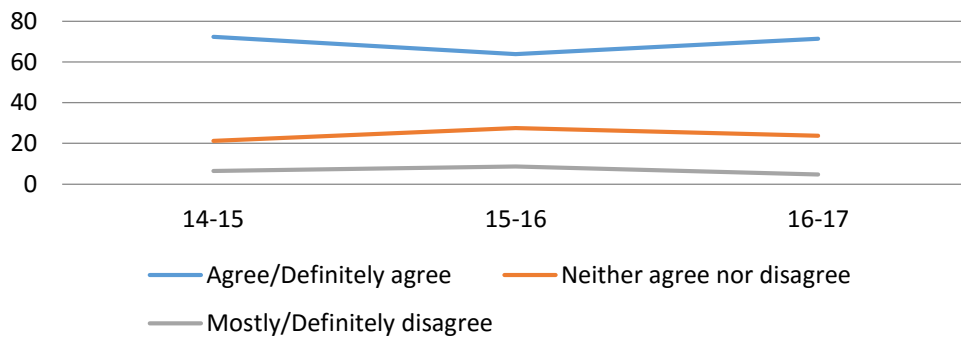


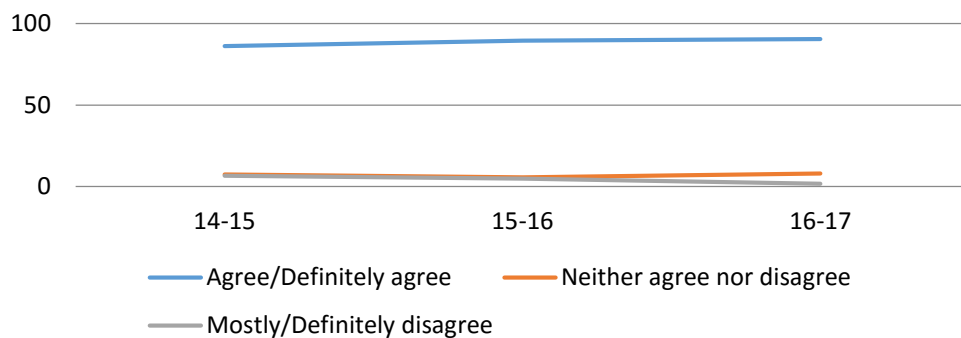**'I work closely with others in my team to support high-quality PAT provision for students'**
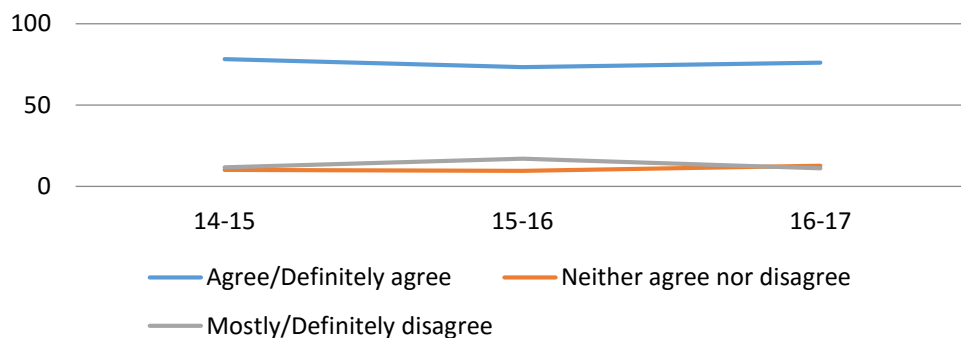
'As a PAT, I am happy to support students via group tutorials'
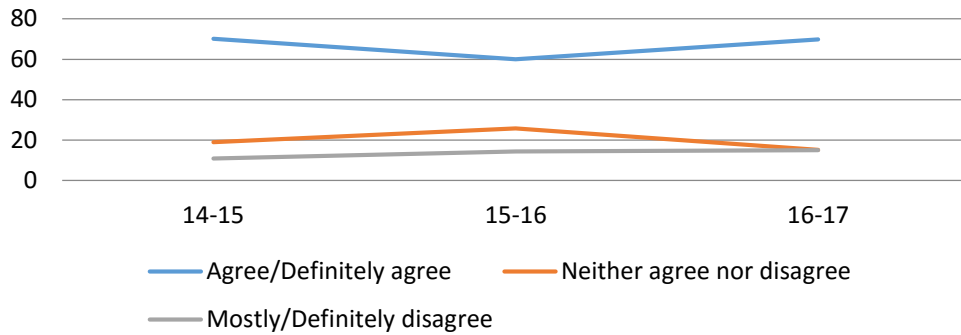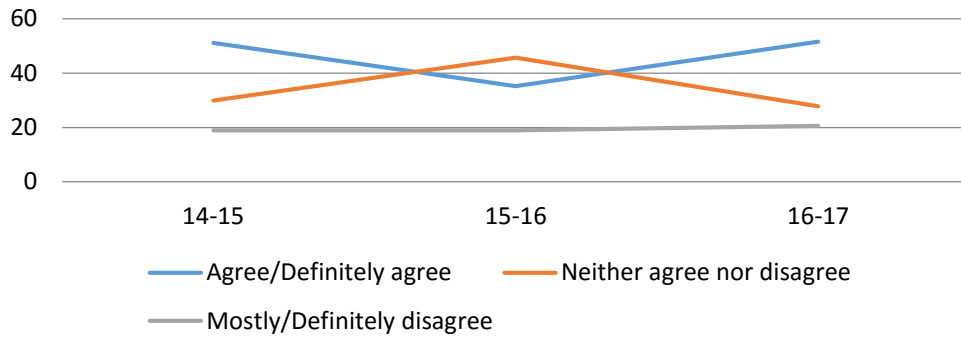


'As a PAT, I prefer to work with students on a one-to-one basis'
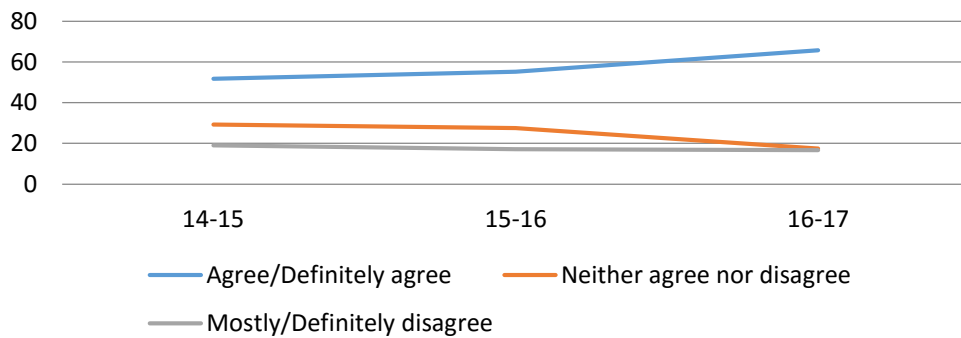


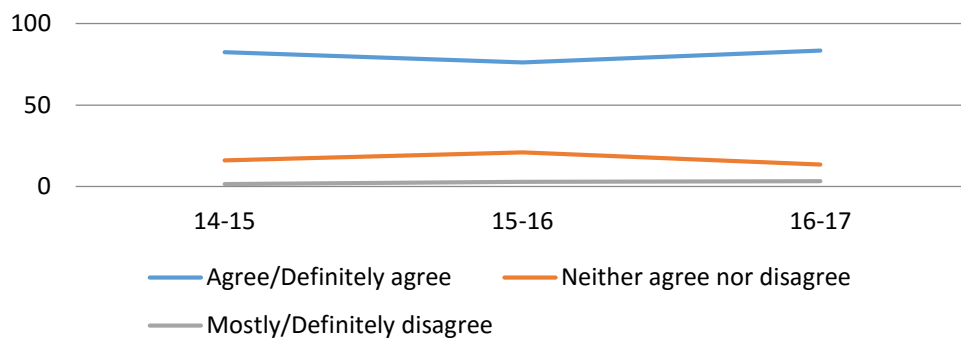'Students who are not assigned to me (as a PAT) still come to me for support'

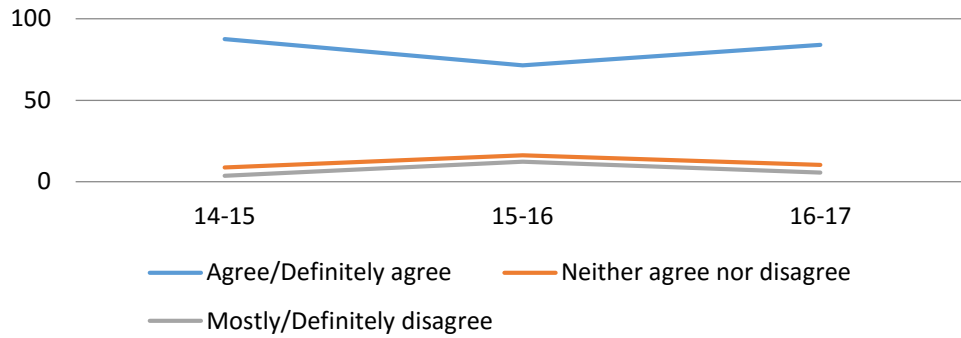**'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring as scheduled, timetabled sessions'**



**'I prefer to facilitate personal tutoring using an 'open-door' policy'**



**'In my work as a PAT, I know I have made a positive impact on the life of my tutees'**

## 'I feel confident in the pastoral/personal aspect of the PAT role'



Legend:
- Agree/Definitely agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly/Definitely disagree

X-axis: 14-15, 15-16, 16-17
Y-axis: 0, 50, 100

## 'I feel confident in the academic support aspect of the PAT role'



Legend:
- Agree/Definitely agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly/Definitely disagree

X-axis: 14-15, 15-16, 16-17
Y-axis: 0, 50, 100