

The Tutors' Association Members' Standards for Private Tutors

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Occupational Standards usually specify standards of performance that people are expected to achieve in their work, and the knowledge and skills they need to perform effectively. They are called standards because they are statements of effective performance that have been agreed by a representative sample of key stakeholders in a given sector.
- 1.2 The Tutors' Association (TTA) Members' Standards for Private Tutors seek to reflect the above definition. Their creation is hindered by the lack of consensus on what constitutes "expected standards of performance" in tutoring and by the problems inherent in measuring a tutor's performance¹. These hindrances by no means make the standards redundant, but do limit their reach. The standards should be seen as voluntary recommendations more than infallible statements of best practice.

2. Rationale: which private tutors are the Members' Standards for?

- 2.1 The standards are designed to be applied across a wide range of roles, settings, levels of responsibility and contexts. The intended audience for these standards is principally those individuals who deliver private tutoring in one or more of the following contexts:
 - 2.1.1 Tutors providing 1-1 private tutoring
 - 2.1.2 Tutors providing group-based private tutoring
 - 2.1.3 Tutors providing online tutoring
- 2.2 The standards are designed to be *entirely voluntary*. They are not in themselves a course of study or qualification. They are rather a suggested framework, devised by The Tutors' Association in conjunction with other stakeholders, by which tutors might reflect on their own professional position and development.
- 2.3 The standards are likely to have an audience beyond individual tutors. They might be used by an individual or organisation for the design of relevant training material for tutors; by tutoring companies to inform the creation of job descriptions, tutor specifications, or review systems; by parents who want to ask tutors about their training; or by an even wider range of people connected to tutoring. Because of this breadth of audience, it is possible that some of the units may not always be relevant. For example, PT03 ("Interaction with parents, guardians, carers or teachers) is likely to apply less to older students or those who have left compulsory education.

¹ It was also decided that the Occupational Standards should limit their scope to describing standards of performance. They do not seek to enter into the debate about what defines a private tutor, such as what distinguishes tutoring from coaching or mentoring, important though this distinction may be.

3. How are the standards structured?

3.1 The Occupational Standards for Private Tutors consist of 4 units:

- 3.2.1 PT01: The practice of tutoring
- 3.2.2 PT02: The tutoring environment
- 3.2.3 PT03: Interaction with parents, guardians, carers or teachers.
- 3.2.4 PT04: Managing self, work relationships and work demands

3.2 Each standard is set out in a uniform way, beginning with an Overview, before listing each standard's Performance Criteria and the Knowledge and Understanding that underpins these criteria.

4. PT01: The practice of tutoring

4.1 Overview

This standard recommends performance criteria, knowledge and understanding relating to the delivery of effective tutoring. It is intended to help tutors develop their own tutoring practice.

4.2 Performance Criteria

- 4.2.1 P1: Tutors demonstrate that they have a secure knowledge and understanding of their subject (or subjects) as outlined in, but not restricted to, national curricula and exam specifications. They are able to demonstrate efforts to deepen their subject knowledge.
- 4.2.2 P2: Tutors demonstrate they are abreast of their subject's (or subjects') relevant skills and practices, especially with respect to the ways in which a subject is examined.
- 4.2.3 P3: Tutors conduct their lessons with appropriate materials.
- 4.2.4 P4: Tutors are able to identify their student's (or students') aspirations and needs, using effective means of questioning and assessment. They agree objectives clearly with their student(s) and/or the student's parents or teachers, and keep ongoing records of the progress of each assignment.
- 4.2.5 P5: Tutors provide accurate and constructive feedback on their student's (or students') strengths, weaknesses, attainment, progress and areas for development, including action plans for improvement. They report in a clear and timely manner to all related parties.
- 4.2.6 P6: Tutors are able to adapt their teaching to their student(s), based on the needs reflected in tuition briefs, assessments and other feedback.
- 4.2.7 P7: Tutors are able to reflect on the effectiveness of their own tutoring practice, using feedback from students and parents. They have a plan for their own continuing professional development.
- 4.2.8 P8: Tutors are able to reflect on how their values, beliefs and attitudes might influence their own practice.

5. Knowledge and Understanding

- 5.1 K1: Tutors know where to find relevant subject knowledge.
- 5.2 K2: Tutors know where to source updates on their subject's (or subjects') relevant skills and practices, including updates to syllabuses and the way subjects are examined.
- 5.3 K3: Tutors know where to source appropriate materials, or how to create their own.
- 5.4 Tutors know and understand different methods and purposes of judging progress.
- 5.5 K5: Tutors know and understand a range of different teaching methods, learning theories and approaches to behaviour management. Tutors know and understand strategies to help students become more independent.
- 5.6 K6: Tutors know strategies for reflecting on the effectiveness of their tutoring practice, such as mechanisms for asking for feedback from students and parents, how to evaluate the effectiveness of a learning resource, or where to find opportunities to share knowledge, skills and improvements to practice with others.
- 5.7 Tutors are aware of the ways in which their own values, beliefs and attitudes can affect their own tutoring practice.
- 5.8 K8: Tutors encourage students to ask questions and assess their knowledge, verbally, in written form and through other relevant techniques.

6. PT02: The tutoring environment

6.1 Overview

This standard recommends performance criteria, knowledge and understanding relating to the establishment of an effective tutoring environment. It recommends how a tutor can create a safe, supportive and purposeful learning environment for their student(s).

6.2 Performance Criteria

- 6.2.1 P1: Tutors provide tuition in an environment where students feel safe, secure, confident and valued.
- 6.2.2 Tutors establish a clear framework for discipline during tutoring sessions to manage students' behaviour constructively, promoting the student's conduct and independence.
- 6.2.3 Tutors arrive at the tutoring environment on time.

6.3 Knowledge and Understanding

- 6.3.1 K1: Tutors know how to create and manage a safe and effective environment for their students. They understand that this environment may differ for individual students, and may require working with parents or teachers to achieve such an environment. Tutors can demonstrate their understanding of each student's specific needs in respect to establishing the most suitable environment.
- 6.3.2 K2: Tutors are aware of their responsibilities under the most recent child protection provisions, and current legislation, national policies and guidance on the safeguarding and promotion of the well-being of children and young people.
- 6.3.3 K3: Tutors know the legal and organisational requirements relating to the storage, retrieval and interpretation of data, information and records.
- 6.3.4 K4: Tutors know how to use appropriate, accessible language and dialogue in order to maintain a suitable learning environment.
- 6.3.5 K5: Tutors are aware of factors that might undermine the tutoring environment, such as making/receiving calls or text messages, or using electronic devices other than for educational purposes, during lessons.

7. PT03: Interaction with stakeholders

7.1 Overview

This standard recommends performance criteria, knowledge and understanding relating to how tutors inform their students' parents, guardians, carers, teachers and other stakeholders about the progress being made in a tutorial or course of tutorials. It recommends how tutors might communicate with these stakeholders to set, review, adapt and improve the plan for each tutorial or course of tutorials.

7.2 Performance Criteria

- 7.2.1 P1: Tutors confirm the aspirations of the parents, guardians, carers or teachers at the outset of the tutorial or course of tutorials.
- 7.2.2 P2: Tutors are able to demonstrate to parents, guardians, carers or teachers that they use valid methods of assessment.
- 7.2.3 P3: Tutors ensure that parents, guardians, carers or teachers understand the purpose, requirements and processes of the chosen assessment method.
- 7.2.4 P4: Tutors provide parents, guardians, carers or teachers with clear and constructive feedback at mutually agreed intervals.

8. Knowledge and Understanding

- 8.1 K1: Tutors know and understand the key factors to consider when setting and agreeing goals with students' parents, guardians or carers.
- 8.2 K2: Tutors know and understand different methods and purposes of assessment and be able to explain them to others.
- 8.3 K3: Tutors understand the different means and media through which to provide feedback.
- 8.4 K4: Tutors know a range of different tools for planning and demonstrating planning, such as "Individual Learning Plans", Schemes of Work or otherwise.

9. PT04: Managing self, work relationships and work demands

9.1 Overview

This standard recommends performance criteria, knowledge and understanding relating to how tutors manage themselves in a complex series of inter-dependent relationships. It recommends how tutors might look after their own wellbeing and understand the importance of developing and maintaining professional working relationships.

9.2 Performance Criteria

- 9.2.1 P1: Tutors are able to identify and manage conflicting demands, and are able to maintain their own personal wellbeing.
- 9.2.2 P2: Tutors respect and adhere to the legal requirements and professional standards of any third party that has introduced them to the student or manages their relationship with the student.
- 9.2.3 P3: Tutors adhere to the relevant ethical principles, standards and codes of professional practice of their own organisation and relevant professional organisations (such as The Tutors' Association).
- 9.2.4 P4: Tutors communicate with colleagues and other stakeholders, while respecting confidentiality, to share any issues, changes and practical arrangements.

10. Knowledge and Understanding

- 10.1 K1: Tutors know strategies for managing conflict, and for maintaining their own wellbeing.
- 10.2 K2: Tutors read and understand the practical and legal requirements of any third party that has introduced them to the student or manages their relationship with the student.
- 10.3 K3: Tutors know where to find the relevant ethical principles, standards and codes of professional practice of their own organisation and relevant professional organisations.
- 10.4 K4: Tutors understand strategies for developing professional working relationships.