Peer Tutoring Training Manual

LIBRARIES + LEARNING COMMONS
NIAGARA COLLEGE
Dear Tutor,

Welcome to the Peer Tutoring Program at Niagara College. You have been approved to be a Peer Tutor. By accepting this position, you have agreed to participate in a challenging and rewarding service. As a Peer Tutor, you will help to encourage and pave a positive path for students that require educational assistance. Your role as a Peer Tutor requires you to have a strong understanding of an academic subject area as well as exceptional interpersonal skills.

This tutoring manual will provide you with information specific to the Peer Tutoring Program at Niagara College and will serve as a valuable resource that may help you to enhance your tutoring methods. The information in this manual has been developed to assist you on your way to becoming an excellent Peer Tutor.

If you have any questions, or require additional assistance in your role as a Peer Tutor, please contact the Peer Tutoring Coordinator at your respective campus in the Libraries + Learning Commons (LLC).

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Libraries + Learning Commons
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What’s inside?

- Program Details
- Tutor Qualifications
- Start-up Information
  - Required Documentation
  - Tutoring Schedule Availability
  - Contact and Notifications
  - Training Modules for Health, Wellness, and Accessibility Services
  - Co-Curricular Record
  - Checklist for Start-Up
- Strategies for Success
  - Confirmed Appointments
  - Tutoring Sessions
  - Preparation
  - Tutor Responsibilities
  - Complete and Submit Hours for Payment
  - Problem-Solving Advice for Peer Tutors
  - Checklist for Success
- Harassment and Discrimination
- Program Expectations
- Frequently Asked Questions
Program Details

The Peer Tutoring Program is run by the Peer Tutoring Coordinators at both the Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses, in the Libraries + Learning Commons. This program is developed to help students who require additional time and understanding in a specific subject area. Through peer tutoring, a student who has completed and excelled in a course helps students experiencing difficulties in the same course. The tutoring program is not intended to replace classroom time, but to assist in clarification of subject material.

The Tutoring program attempts to reach all students who require help by encouraging group study and collaboration. Tutors will be required to assist up to three students per scheduled appointment depending on demand.

Tutor Qualifications

Peer Tutors must have an excellent understanding of the academic subject they are interested in tutoring. Those who wish to tutor a specific subject area that has been previously completed will be reviewed and either approved or denied by the Peer Tutoring Coordinator.

All tutors who wish to tutor for a class they are currently enrolled in will require approval from that course professor. Please be advised, preference will always be given to students who completed the course.

A Tutor Must:

• Be currently enrolled in classes at Niagara College or on Co-op Term
• Have an excellent understanding of the subject they wish to tutor
• Have excellent communication skills
• Gain professor approval in courses they are currently enrolled in that they wish to tutor
• Maintain at least an 80% average in the course they are tutoring
• Maintain an overall program average of at least 75%
• Have exceptional interpersonal skills (empathy, patience)
• Be respectful of the Learners value system and learning abilities
• Complete time entry and pay sheet immediately following each tutoring session

Benefits:

• Paid position
• Set your own schedule and availability
• Submit your experiences on your Co-Curricular Record
Start-up Information

Required Documentation

There is required paperwork that must be submitted in order to get you set up as a Niagara College employee. ALL Forms and Instructions are available on the Get Involved site as follows:

Blackboard > My Apps > Get Involved – Co-Curricular Record > Peer Tutoring Organization

Documents:
- New Hire Form
- New Employee Training Modules Instructions
- Pay Sheet FORM

Please provide a VOID cheque or Direct Deposit form from your financial institution. Handwritten account numbers will not be accepted.

Tutoring Schedule and Availability

Tutors need to submit preferred days and times for availability (included with the New Hire Form above). These hours will be added to the online calendar and will become your weekly schedule.

The number of hours worked will be dependent on learner needs and may vary each week. Maximum of 12 hours per week will be permitted. Please ensure you notify the Peer Tutoring Coordinator if you have been hired by another department on campus which may affect your hours.

Contact and Notifications

Tutors are expected to check their Niagara College email account on a daily basis for notifications, appointments and updates.

For safety and privacy, all students are encouraged to use their college email as their main form of contact in the Peer Tutoring Program. If you need assistance with your college email account, please visit the ITS help desk at your Campus Library.
Training Modules for Health, Wellness, and Accessibility Services

Niagara College offers students who are having difficulty with understanding or accessing their classes the opportunity to obtain assistance through Accessibility Services. Students who are registered with Accessibility Services and request a Peer Tutor are eligible to have an additional hour per course up to a total of 6 hours per week (if enrolled in 2 or more courses for tutoring).

Students with disabilities have the right to confidentiality, equality, and accessibility. Tutors should adjust their teaching to best suit the learning needs of the Learner. Tutors must remember that what may seem easy for them to do or understand may not be as easy for their Learner – stay calm and do not get frustrated.

All Niagara College employees (including Peer Tutors) are required to complete online training modules for the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Customer Service, Educator Awareness and Integrated Services; and Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention (WVHP). You are required to have this completed within 30 days of hire.

Co-Curricular Record

This official form validates the tutoring provided while attending Niagara College and may be a useful tool to enhance your resume or academic portfolio. The Peer Tutoring Coordinators will upload your Peer Tutoring experience based on the hours worked during each term upon request only.

To find out more about the Co-Curricular Record and its benefits to you, visit the Co-Curricular Record Service page on the Get Involved site getinvolved.niagaracollege.ca

Checklist for Start-Up:

- Submit required documentation including direct deposit/void cheque, and new hire form.
- Determine availability and submit form for preferred days/times
- Complete online modules for AODA, Customer Service, Educator Awareness and Integrated Services, and Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention
Strategies for Success

Confirmed Appointments

Tutors are expected to **check their Niagara College email** on a daily basis for notifications and updates.

Tutors will be immediately notified by email when a tutoring appointment has been made by a student. Up to 3 students will be able to simultaneously book an appointment for the same course code.

Tutors will only be paid for booked hours confirmed with the Client Report Form following an appointment. Payments will be deposited bi-weekly according to the pay schedule.

In special circumstances, tutors may be asked to assist students with additional tutoring hours. These hours must be approved by the Peer Tutoring Coordinator. Tutors will be notified by college email of any requests or changes to their schedule.

Tutoring Sessions

All students are required to meet Tutors at the entrance of the Library for scheduled appointments. Please ensure all students have registered and booked an appointment to meet with a Tutor; drop-ins are not allowed.

If there are any issues or problems with the Learner, tutors are expected to contact the Peer Tutoring Coordinator immediately.

Preparation

Students who have been approved to be a Peer Tutor are expected to have a level of expertise in their subject area. Review course material prior to meeting with a Learner to make sure of your proficiency in the subject.
Tutor Responsibilities

- **Listen and Communicate Effectively**
  Provide support to students who require clarification of course material, guidance to find answers to their questions and encouragement to become independent learners.

- **Ensure Confidentiality**
  Respect privacy and never discuss details of your tutoring session with your peers.

- **Stay Professional**
  If possible, use Niagara College email addresses for communicating with your learner; meet on campus and avoid social situations that may interfere with the tutor/learner relationship.

- **Be Reliable**
  Keep appointments and arrive to every session on time.

- **Remain patient**
  Every learner is unique. Always be considerate of different learning styles, levels of understanding, as well as cultural diversity.

- **Complete Client Report Form Immediately After Appointment**
  This helps us monitor the program’s success...and ensures you get paid for your hours.

**Complete and Submit Hours for Payment**

It is the Tutor’s responsibility to complete and submit a Client Report Form after each tutoring session to ensure payment is made.

Tutors will NOT be paid for available hours listed on the schedule without a corresponding appointment. Payment will NOT be made for hours worked on statutory holidays, or days the College is closed due to inclement weather.

Payments will be deposited bi-weekly according to the pay schedule. Please refer to the Pay Sheet Dates available in the Peer Tutoring guide (under Forms tab).
Problem-Solving Advice for Peer Tutors

As a Tutor, you may be working one-on-one with a student, or a small group. You will provide support to students who require clarification of course material, guidance to find answers to their questions and encouragement to become independent learners.

At times, you may experience a questionable or difficult situation with a learner. If this occurs, always remember we’re here to help you. Please contact your Peer Tutoring Coordinator for assistance. We will provide advice to resolve the issue and ensure you feel confident as a Peer Tutor.

Here are some examples of concerns expressed by Peer Tutors in the past. Remember: when in doubt, ask us for help!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inappropriate Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>Always ensure your safety first. Contact your Peer Tutor Coordinator; she will offer further advice for dealing with the situation. In the meantime, postpone your appointment with the learner...and do not delete any messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner sent me an inappropriate text message and now I’m uncomfortable to meet with him/her.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Barrier</strong></td>
<td>Be mindful of cultural differences which may contribute to misunderstandings between a tutor and learner. If language is truly an obstacle, be patient and do your best. Try to clarify concepts with simplified terms and speak slower not louder. Also, an Academic Drop-In Session may be recommended for additional assistance with grammar and writing skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A language barrier between the tutor and learner is making it difficult to communicate ideas and enhance understanding of material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learner Just Wants the Answers</strong></td>
<td>He/she may not understand the purpose and learning outcomes of the Peer Tutoring program. Tutors should never provide answers or complete assignments for a learner. It is best to reinforce your role as a Tutor and offer guidance for areas that may require clarification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner wants me to review his/her assignment and make the necessary corrections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missed Appointments</strong></td>
<td>If a learner repeatedly misses scheduled sessions, tutoring privileges will be suspended. Complete the Client Report Survey as a ‘no-show’ to document the nonattendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My learner isn’t showing up for our appointments and is wasting my time.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Feeling Stressed About My Own Workload
My workload has increased and I’m feeling stressed about my commitment to tutor students.  

Your success comes first. If peer tutoring interferes with your studies, please contact your Peer Tutoring Coordinator immediately. We can adjust the hours and help you find the right balance.

### Learner is at Risk of Failing the Course
My learner has missed many classes and has fallen behind in his/her studies. He/she expressed frustration when I mentioned there won’t be enough time to cover everything before the exam.

You are not accountable for his/her academic failure or success. You can continue to review and reinforce most important elements but it is not your responsibility to teach the entire course. If your learner is at risk for failing the course, he/she needs to speak to her instructor or academic advisor for guidance.

### Checklist for Success:
- Confirm Appointments
- Prepare for Tutoring Session
- Review Responsibilities
- Submit Client Report Form after every appointment
- When in doubt, ask for help!
Harassment and Discrimination

As stated under Niagara College’s Student Rights and Responsibilities:

*Niagara College is committed to the principles of the Human Rights Code which are to recognize the dignity and worth of every person and to provide equal rights and opportunities without any form of discrimination that is contrary to law. With specific reference to Harassment and Discrimination (as described below), Niagara College adopts the principle of zero tolerance.*

Each member of the Niagara College community is responsible for helping to create an environment which is harassment and discrimination free so that work and learning can be conducted in an environment of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and rights of each individual.

This practice is intended to address discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment within the college environment recognizing that conduct to be offensive, degrading, and threatening. The prohibited grounds of discrimination or harassment covered under this practice relate to race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, and disability. In addition to addressing direct discrimination or harassment the practice also addresses systemic or constructive discrimination. However, it is to be understood that this practice is not intended to constrain social interaction between people at Niagara College.

*Harassment and Discrimination, College Practices, Pg. 1, niagaracollege.ca/practices*

**Reporting an issue:**

1. Tell the person that they are exhibiting behavior that is considered harassment or discrimination.

2. Discuss the problem with the Peer Tutor Coordinator in which Libraries + Learning Commons management will be notified, as well as counsellors.
Program Expectations

As a student participating in the Peer Tutoring Program, I will comply with the following expectations of the program:

1. I agree to adhere to the Niagara College Student Rights and Responsibilities as stated in the Student Handbook (page 14), to honesty and integrity, to be considerate of the rights of others, to abide by the college regulations, and keep information confidential.

2. I will allow the release of my contact information to other students in the Peer Tutoring Program in order to make appointments and meet my peers.

3. I will attend classes, do my homework and keep up with all class assignments.

4. I will be on time and be prepared for my scheduled tutoring session(s).

5. I will respect the time of my peers and will provide notice in advance if I must cancel my appointment.

6. I will demonstrate respect for my students’ cultural background and value systems.

7. I will NOT exceed the allotted hours for tutoring. If I am uncertain of the number of hours allowable, I will contact the Peer Tutoring Coordinator to verify. Records of tutoring sessions are the responsibilities of the Tutor to be kept accurate and submitted on time. Any falsification (ex. hours and signatures, etc.) will result in termination of membership to the Peer Tutoring Program and possible disciplinary action.

8. LEARNER: I will NOT expect homework to be completed by the Tutor as this is considered Student Academic Misconduct.

9. TUTOR: I will NOT complete any homework for the Learner as this is considered Student Academic Misconduct.

10. I will keep the Peer Tutoring Office informed of my progress and/or any problems that may arise.

11. I will check my messages daily through my College email to correspond with the Peer Tutoring Coordinators and any other students who may be participating in the Peer Tutoring Program.

For further information regarding Niagara College practices, review the Student Rights and Responsibilities at:

niagaracollege.ca/students/student-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact the respective Peer Tutoring Coordinator (see contact info on page 1)
Frequently Asked Questions

How do I qualify to become a Peer Tutor? What do I need to submit?

- You need to have a minimum grade of 80% in the course you would like to tutor and/or a professor’s recommendation, as well as a minimum of 75% overall average.
- A strong desire to help students succeed and a commitment of your time to help the students who are assigned to you.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Fill out a Tutor’s Application on getinvolved.niagaracollege.ca

When will I be notified that someone needs to be tutored?

- You will be notified via Niagara College email as soon as an appointment is made by a learner in ‘WCOnline’. Please look for messages that will have a subject line, “Peer Tutor Appointment Request”.
- Review the appointment details and ensure the Tutor request matches your approved subject area.

What is the maximum amount of hours that I can tutor?

- Each Tutor is allowed to work up to a maximum of 12 hours per week. Tutors will only be paid for those hours booked by a learner rather than all timeslots entered into the online schedule.
- Please note: Maximum hours refers to the total hours worked for all campus jobs.

Where is the ideal place to tutor?

- All students are required to meet at the designated area by the Campus Library entrance.
- Both campuses offer great spaces for Tutoring Sessions. The Learning Commons provides comfortable seating areas, as well as large tables for collaboration. If a quieter space is preferred, Study Rooms are available in the Libraries + Learning Commons and can be booked online https://nclibraries.niagaracollege.ca/library
- It is strongly recommended that tutoring sessions take place on campus.

How do I get paid?

- Submit either a void cheque, or Direct Deposit form. A Direct deposit form can be picked up at your local bank branch.
- To receive payment for Tutoring hours, a Client Report form must be submitted after each appointment.
- Payments will be deposited bi-weekly according to the pay schedule. Please refer to the Pay Sheet Dates available in the Peer Tutoring guide (under Forms tab).
I have been a Peer Tutor before; do I have to fill out the application again?

- Tutors need to apply each term and receive approval before tutoring can begin.

Do I get paid if my learner doesn’t show up?

- Learners are required to cancel appointments online at least 3 hours in advance of a scheduled appointment.
- If a learner misses an appointment, you will be compensated for your time. Please indicate “no show” on your Client Report Form.
- If learners repeatedly miss appointments without prior notification, their tutoring privileges will be suspended.

I am an International Student and I do not have a Social Insurance Number (SIN). How do I get one?

Please apply in person at one of the local Service Canada Centres:

○ 5853 Peer Street, Niagara Falls, ON L2G 5Z9
○ 395 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, ON L2N 7N6
○ 250 Thorold Road West, Welland, ON L3C 3W1

International students must present a study permit issued by CIC that states the permit holder “may accept employment” or “may work” in Canada.

The Peer Tutoring Coordinator is never available at the same time I am; how do I make contact?

- The Peer Tutoring Coordinator is available to see students on a drop in basis between 8:30 - 3:00, Welland campus: Tues-Fri, NOTL campus: Mon-Thurs
- If the Peer Tutoring Coordinator is not available, please send an email with your inquiry or to set up an appointment. The Peer Tutoring Coordinator will respond as soon as possible.

The Learner is expressing frustration and anxiety regarding his/her course/program. What can I do as the Peer Tutor to help?

Tutors can help by referring the Learners to the following support services:

○ The respective Peer Tutoring Coordinator
○ The respective Academic Advisor for the program
○ Counselling Services

Further notifications and updates will be available on our website. Please visit nclibraries.niagaracollege.ca/peertutoring for more information.