



# Online Tutoring Program

## Acceptable Practice Policy

*Last updated: 14 July 2020*

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## Introduction

The Online Tutoring Program Acceptable Practice Policy (“Policy”) outlines the acceptable practices for the Online Tutoring Program within Embrace Education. Embrace Education is a non-profit, university student-run organisation that offers free educational support to disadvantaged high school students in Melbourne, Victoria.

The Online Tutoring Program is developed due to the unprecedented COVID-19 situation. All face-to-face tutoring programs are currently suspended until further notice. It is unlikely that Embrace Education can continue to run its face-to-face tutoring programs for an extended period. In order to continue supporting high school students with free tutoring, the Online Tutoring Program is developed to replace the existing programs, Homework Clubs (HWC), In-School Tutoring (ISP) and Individual Tutoring (ITP), temporarily.

## Purpose

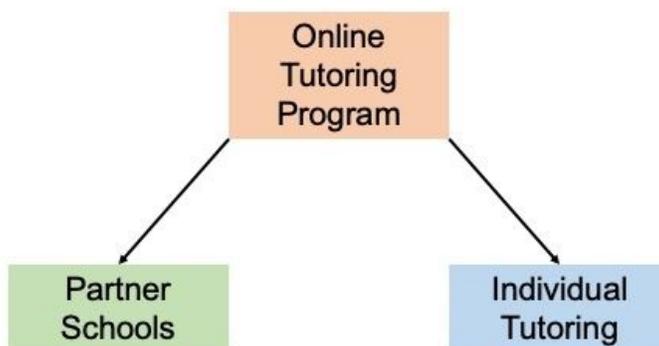
This Policy is intended to serve as a guideline for Embrace Education’s committee members, employees, volunteer tutors in ensuring that the Online Tutoring Program can be conducted in a safe manner that protects the privacy and safety of tutors and students in an online space. It also serves as an overview of the Online Tutoring Program, allowing the above-mentioned stakeholders to understand the details of the program.

## Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Staff Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dale Poon (<a href="mailto:onlineprogram.1@embrace-education.org">onlineprogram.1@embrace-education.org</a>): Handling of communication with school contacts</li><li>• Daniel Chua (<a href="mailto:onlineprogram.2@embrace-education.org">onlineprogram.2@embrace-education.org</a>): Matching of students with tutors</li></ul>
Volunteer Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up and conduct Zoom online tutoring sessions with students</li><li>• Clarify students’ questions over email throughout the week (it is up to tutors to work this out with their students in terms of expectations, e.g. how often tutors will reply students’ questions)</li></ul>

## Online Tutoring Program Overview

### Sub-Programs



There are 2 sub-programs within the Online Tutoring Program:

1. [Partner Schools](#)
2. [Individual Tutoring](#)

There are slight differences in policies for the 2 sub-programs in the relevant “Online Tutoring Sessions” section. The main differences to look out for are summarised in the table below.

	Partner Schools	Individual Tutoring
<b>Merged from (existing programs)</b>	HWC and ISP	ITP
<b>Sources of student referral</b>	Partner schools in HWC and ISP	Teachers or social workers
<b>Number of students per tutor</b>	<b>2 or 3</b> , depending on the school	<b>1</b>
<b>Communication policy (outside of tutoring sessions)</b>	Tutor can only contact student via <b>email</b> (generally) only	Tutor can contact student via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Phone</b> (only for arranging tutoring sessions)</li> <li>- <b>Email</b> (for all other needs, e.g. answering questions)</li> </ul>

## Platform

- Synchronous Tutoring
  - All online tutoring sessions are to be held using [Zoom](#) as the video-conferencing platform
- Asynchronous Tutoring
  - Private communication via email
    - Questions that need be addressed outside of tutoring hours can be communicated through email
  - Tutors can make use of resources such as Google Docs to share academic resources

## Timing

Online tutoring sessions can **only** be conducted between 9am and 8pm.

## Setting Zoom Sessions

Tutors will schedule and send out the links for Zoom sessions at their scheduled times. Tutors have to observe the recommended security settings (see [General Conduct](#) in Volunteer Tutors section).

## Volunteer Tutors

### Background

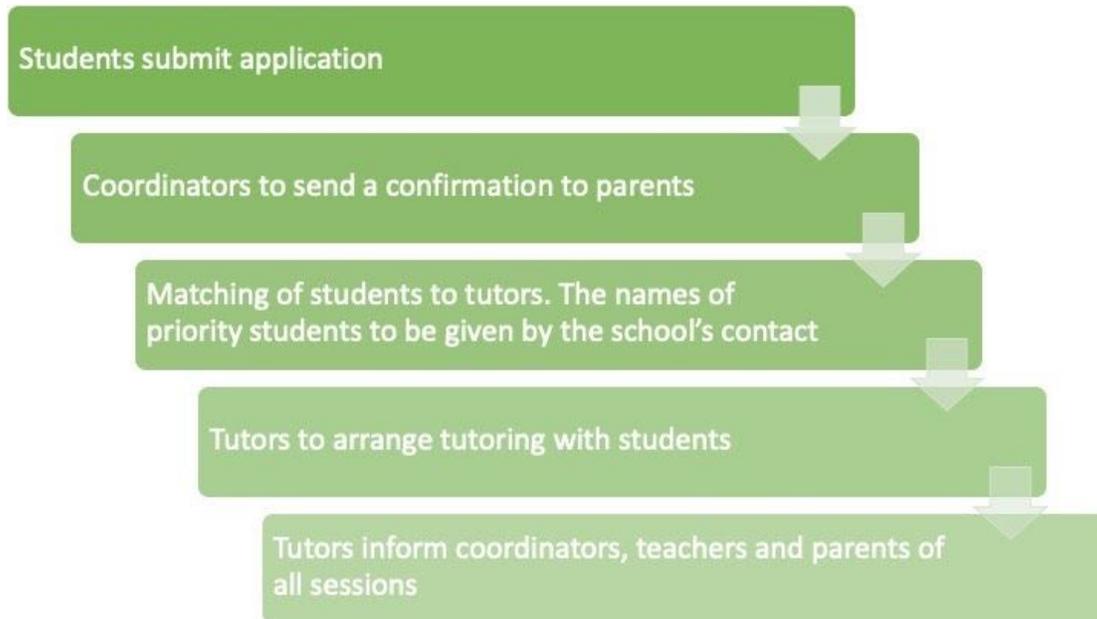
Embrace Education's volunteer tutors are recruited by Embrace Education South East and North West. They are typically made up of students currently enrolled in a university course.

### Working With Children Check

All tutors are required to have a valid Working With Children's Check and pass an interview, before being matched for the Online Tutoring Program.

## Online Tutoring Sessions (Partner Schools)

### Process



The above process is for the students in our partner schools in HWC and ISP.

### Detailed Operating Procedure

1. Application form link made available to contacts at partner schools
2. Schools distribute application form to students
  - a. Application form open to all students at participating schools
  - b. Application form will ask for the following:
    - i. Student details
      1. Full name
      2. Email address
      3. Your age
      4. Gender
      5. Birth country
      6. Home language
      7. Equipment/internet access
      8. School
      9. Year level
      10. VCE status

11. Subject needing MOST help with
12. Additional subjects
- ii. Parent/guardian details & consent
  1. Full name
  2. Relationship
  3. Email address
  4. Phone number
  5. Permission (Yes/No)
- iii. Nominated teacher details (optional - coordinators to request email from school should student wish for tutor to provide updates to a nominated teacher)
  1. Name
  2. Subjects taught
- iv. Any additional information
- c. In addition, schools will be asked to provide a list of priority students (we will then match up this list with wider student submissions to assess priority).
  - i. Refugee/asylum seeker background
  - ii. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
  - iii. Low Socioeconomic background/financial difficulty
  - iv. Current academic performance
  - v. VCE level
  - vi. Other circumstances warranting higher need, at the discretion of teachers, school contacts, coordinators
3. Students fill out and submit application at home
4. Coordinators monitor application submissions
5. Once an application is received, a confirmation email is sent to parents
6. Coordinators allocate/match tutors and students based on preference and need
7. Coordinators notify school contact and nominated teacher of allocation
8. Coordinators notify tutors and students of allocation, and facilitate interaction
9. Tutors and students arrange session times and begin tutoring
10. Tutors keep coordinators, teachers, parents apprised of sessions
  - a. Coordinators should be primary point of contact for tutors
  - b. Teachers may be a useful contact in terms of obtaining learning content, goals, and student needs, or to follow up if students are not contactable. However bearing in mind the heavy workloads of teachers it might be preferable to keep contact to a minimum or only if necessary (and similarly with providing tutoring updates - this may be best done periodically rather than regularly, unless teachers specifically request updates)
  - c. Traditionally, there has been no contact between tutors and parents in any of our programs. However due to the nature of online tutoring, parents may wish to be cc'd in emails between tutors and students

## Group Size

### Students from Partner Schools

**2 or 3** students will be allocated to 1 tutor. **All** tutoring sessions are expected to involve **all** members within each group to maintain a level of accountability.

## Communication Policy for Volunteer Tutors

1. Exchange of personal details
  - a. Tutors shall **not** exchange any form of personal details with students except for the following that is required to ensure the smooth running of the Online Tutoring Program:
    - i. Email addresses
2. Communication
  - a. With students
    - i. All communication with students outside of tutoring sessions are to be made via email
    - ii. Tutors may answer questions that students have via email or any other shared documents (e.g. Google Docs) outside of the Zoom tutoring sessions
  - b. With parents
    - i. Parents have the option of opting in to be copied in all emails between tutors and students
    - ii. Tutors will have to adhere to the option chosen by parents
    - iii. You may find out the parents' preferences in your allocation document containing the students' details

## Nominated Teachers Contact

Students have the option of nominating teachers at their school to receive updates about their learning progress.

Tutors will be notified if your student has nominated a teacher.

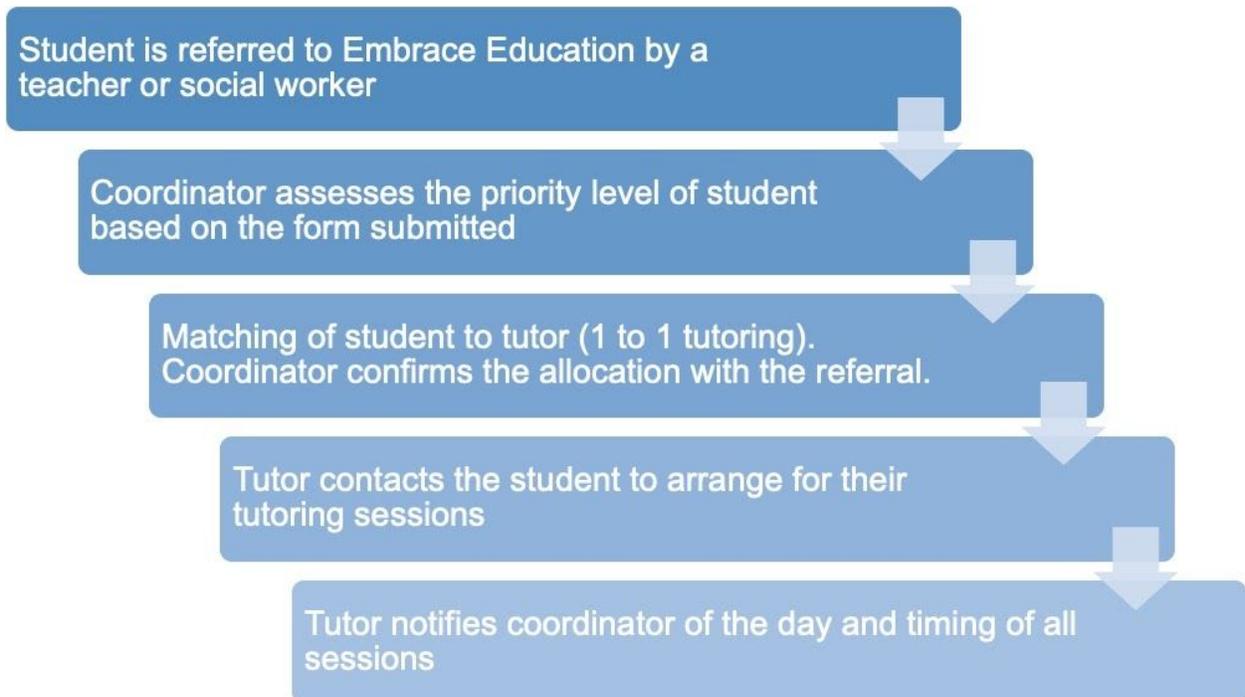
Updates would include things like what areas tutors are currently working on, how the student is finding it, and whether tutors have encountered any challenges. If tutors are okay with this, we will include them in an email with the relevant teachers, to get them acquainted and provide more information.

Updates don't have to be very extensive or frequent, but may provide a good opportunity to share student progress, as well as to find out more from teachers about learning goals and content that is being covered in class.

## Online Tutoring Sessions (Individual Tutoring)

Referrers from other organisations or teachers can continue to use the [ITP referral form](#) to submit student applications. The matching process will be similar to ITP as the priority level will be assessed by the Coordinator based on the referrer's responses.

### Process



### Group Size

#### **Students referred to ITP**

Tutoring will be on a **1-to-1 basis**, subject to the consent of the referrer (and by extension, the student). This is because students referred to the ITP would benefit greatly from individual tutoring.

## Communication Policy for Volunteer Tutors

1. Exchange of personal details
  - a. Tutors shall **not** exchange any form of personal details with students except for the following that is required to ensure the smooth running of the Online Tutoring Program:
    - i. Email addresses
    - ii. Phone numbers
2. Communication
  - a. With students
    - i. Phone numbers (via text messages or calls) may **only** be used for the purpose of arranging tutoring sessions and/or sharing Zoom meeting links
      1. Tutors shall **not** answer student's questions over a phone call or text message
    - ii. Tutors may answer questions that students have via email or any other shared documents (e.g. Google Docs) outside of the Zoom tutoring sessions
  - b. With referrer
    - i. The tutor is generally not expected to check-in with the referrer, unless otherwise requested by the referrer

## Appendix I: General Expectations for Volunteer Tutors

Volunteer tutors represent Embrace Education in their conduct. To ensure that a safe and positive environment is provided for students, tutors are expected to observe the following:

1. Exchange of personal details
  - a. Tutors shall **not** exchange any form of personal details with their student(s) other than those that have already been given to them during the allocation
2. Communication
  - a. Please refer to the relevant communication policy for "[Partner Schools](#)" or "[Individual Tutoring](#)"
3. Confidentiality
  - a. Tutors are expected to treat the information shared (e.g. school grades, academic questions) as confidential and not to disclose with others
  - b. Tutors shall **not** record any Zoom online tutoring sessions, even if asked by students to do so, in any format including but not limited to:
    - i. Video
    - ii. Audio
    - iii. Text (including the Chat function within Zoom)
4. Contact
  - a. Tutors shall **not** meet with students in a physical location anywhere for any purpose, including providing tutoring sessions in a public location
  - b. Tutors shall **not** contact students for any other purpose other than for Embrace Education-related purposes
5. Respect
  - a. Tutors are expected to treat students with the utmost respect, including, but not limited to:
    - i. speaking appropriately towards students, such as not swearing and not talking about inappropriate topics during tutoring sessions
    - ii. treating students kindly and being encouraging and supportive
    - iii. always maintain a professional relationship with students
    - iv. Informing students if they cannot remember specific subject content and need to look it up again before explaining it to students

6. Scheduling tutoring sessions

- a. Tutors shall provide at least **24 hours notice** to students if they cannot conduct a schedule tutoring session
- b. Tutors shall inform students if they are running late for a scheduled tutoring session
- c. Tutors shall provide students and Embrace Education at least **two weeks (14 days) notice** if they have to stop tutoring sessions, whether temporarily or permanently

7. Frequency of tutoring sessions

- a. Tutors are expected to conduct at least one 1-hour tutoring session every week

8. Use of Zoom

- a. Tutors are expected to set up the virtual room at least **10 minutes** before the scheduled tutoring session
- b. Tutors are expected to be fully present during the tutoring sessions, i.e. they should not be using social media or doing their own work

c. Audio quality

- i. Tutors must ensure that they conduct the online tutoring sessions in a quiet location to ensure that the audio quality is clear for students (i.e., switch phones to silent mode, no other music playing)

d. Video background

- i. As tutors will likely conduct the online tutoring sessions in a private location, i.e. their personal residence,
  1. Tutors must ensure that there is a plain background, such as a blank wall, where possible
  2. If the tutor is unable to ensure that the background is free from distractions, the tutor should use a [virtual background](#) instead

e. Screen sharing

- i. Tutors shall ensure that all other programs and windows not relevant to the online tutoring session must be **closed** before they start Screen Sharing with their students

f. Zoom's security settings

- i. Virtual rooms must always be protected by a meeting [password](#)
- ii. Make use of the '[Enable Waiting Room](#)' function
- iii. [Lock the meeting](#) after all students have entered the virtual room

- iv. Disable private chats among students by allowing attendees to chat only with “[Everyone publicly](#)”
  - v. For more information, tutors can refer to Zoom’s guide to [manage participants](#)
9. Other expectations
- a. Tutors shall **not** solicit any payment or favours, whether financial or in-kind, for their tutoring services
  - b. Tutors shall **not** do the student’s homework, essays, or any other assignments for them
  - c. Tutors are expected to act within the law, be honest and fair, and to deliver the tutoring sessions to the best of their abilities

## Appendix II: General Expectation for Students

The Online Tutoring program is a weekly tutoring program conducted by Embrace Education's volunteer tutors. It is a regular program and **not** a drop-in, Q&A session for students. Students are expected to commit to attending tutoring sessions every week.

As tutoring sessions are provided for free for students, and there is a limited number of tutors available, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines to continue receiving free tutoring sessions from Embrace Education:

1. Exchange of personal details
  - a. Students shall **not** provide any personal details to tutors
2. Contact
  - a. Students shall **not** meet with tutors in a physical location anywhere for any purpose, including tutoring sessions in a public location
  - b. Students shall **not** contact tutors for any other purpose other than for Embrace Education-related purposes
3. Scheduled tutoring sessions
  - a. Provide at least **24 hours notice** to their tutors if they cannot attend a scheduled tutoring session
  - b. Inform their tutor if they are running late for a scheduled tutoring session
  - c. Make sure that they attend the tutoring sessions with the necessary resources, such as basic stationery and textbooks
  - d. Work cooperatively with their tutor to schedule tutoring sessions
  - e. Be responsible for ensuring that they are in a quiet location free from other distractions
  - f. Act responsibly during tutoring, and refrain from doing anything to put themselves at risk of harm or injury
  - g. Always treat their tutor with respect during tutoring including, but not limited to:
    - i. speaking appropriately towards their tutor, such as not swearing and not talking about inappropriate topics during tutoring
    - ii. be understanding if their tutor does not remember a concept that the student is trying to learn

- h. Students shall **not** ask their tutor to do their homework or essays for them
- i. Provide feedback to their tutor about how they are finding the tutoring sessions
- j. Provide feedback to Embrace Education when contacted