

# Nurture Durham tutoring guide 2025

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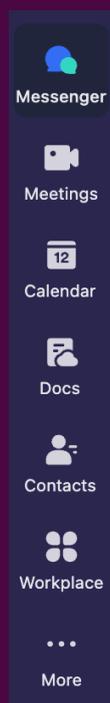
## 1. The platforms we use

### 1.1 Lark and Nurture Connect

At Nurture Durham, we use Lark for scheduling and messaging. It has many useful features to make your life easy. Nurture Connect is our new bespoke video conferencing app.

Once you have signed up for a Lark account and followed steps 1 to 3 in the Summary checklist, configure your settings (in the top right corner) immediately:

- **IMPORTANT: In Lark, go to Settings > Notifications and turn notifications on.**



In Lark, on the left of the screen, you will see various options.

Messenger: Click on this to message other Lark contacts and groups. You will mainly use this for the 'Nurture Durham' chat which is used to organise meetings and communicate with the team about new ideas. We strongly encourage messaging other members of the team individually, especially if you do the same subjects. It is a great learning resource to have access to other tutors' tutoring advice.

Meetings: We don't use this feature with the current plan.

Calendar: This allows you to schedule lessons in a visual fashion. There are some nice tips and tricks facilitated by Lark that are mentioned later.

Docs: Lark allows you to create and share documents during lessons. It is a very powerful tool if you are preparing lessons or if you want to collaborate with your student on an essay, for example.

Contacts: Use this to find other team members to message. If your student is comfortable contacting you on Lark, you can invite them by going to 'Contacts' > 'Add External Contact'. This can help you send content during lessons, as well as more easily sharing your lesson recordings.

Nurture Connect is our own video conferencing app. To begin with it, all you need to do is sign up for an account at <https://nurtureconnect.vercel.app/> (also accessible by clicking 'Nurture Connect' in the menu at [www.nurturedurham.com](http://www.nurturedurham.com)). Then notify your manager, and they will convert your account into a tutor account, after which you can schedule lessons with your tutee.

Videos can only be held with your tutee if you invite them. Click on 'Schedule Meeting' and select your tutee's username under 'Participants'. If you do not know what their username is, get in touch with them.

You can also schedule weekly meetings by clicking the 'Multi-Schedule' button under 'Schedule Meeting'. In case you wish to delete a scheduled lesson, go to 'Upcoming Meetings' and press the cross in the top-right corner of that lesson.

## 1.2 Scheduling a lesson

From experience, we notice that students tend to have weekly lessons at the same time every week. As a result, we recommend these steps to schedule a lesson to drastically simplify your workload. You will end up with weekly lessons scheduled in one go until a pre-set date, and the Meeting ID and invitation link will be the **same** for every lesson, so you won't have to repeatedly send it to your student. Go to 'Calendar', and click on the date and time you wish to schedule an event. On the box that emerges, click on 'More options'.

Here, you can name your lesson. We suggest you put your tutee's name in it so that you can find your recordings later. Click the dropdown box for repeats and opt for 'Weekly', and set an appropriate end date. Add your tutee's and/or parent's email address under 'Guests'. Now when you save the event, you will get the option to send an automatic email notification to your student before each lesson (which is recommended). **IMPORTANT: In either the description box or the lesson title, put your FreeConferenceCall meeting room details. Intimate to your student to use this link and not a Lark link to log in to lessons.**

Suppose in a given week your student wishes to move their lesson. Under 'Calendar', find the lesson to change, and simply drag and drop it to the new date and time. Once again, Lark will ask if you wish to send an email notification to your guests (recommended again). This will not change your other scheduled events within this collection. Similarly, you can delete individual lessons.

## 1.3 How to document lessons

**Fill out your entries in your timesheet by the 1st of the month at 5pm. If you are unable to do so, we may not be able to pay you on time. If for any reason you cannot fill your entries on time, please fill them in as late in the month as possible accurate to that time. You will then add lessons which you haven't been able to document in your timesheet this month to next month, and you will be paid accordingly. Please get in touch with your manager if there are any issues and they will be happy to help.**

## 2. What is a lesson?

### 2.1 No-shows

A lesson at Nurture Durham, unless predefined between tutor and tutee, is one hour long. You are paid £18 for each hour-long lesson. We have everything encompassing the definition of a lesson at [www.nurturedurham.com/terms-and-conditions](http://www.nurturedurham.com/terms-and-conditions), the terms and conditions that the parent and/or tutee agree to when they request a tutoring service. However, it is very tedious.

*The general principle is that Nurture Durham has the rules for every happenstance, but we leave it to your best judgment to make a call. If you need assistance, message the manager and they will be more than willing to provide guidance.*

The rules state that a lesson is to be scheduled at a time and day mutually agreed by the tutor and tutee/parent (the tutee can take responsibility for this only with the consent of the parent). It makes your life easier to schedule lessons at a fixed date and time every week, and it also provides consistency for the student. If you invite your guests and agree to send them reminders (see 1.2), then you can ensure knowledge of the upcoming lesson. We still recommend sending a manual message by email or agreed mode of communication in case of any doubts.

Our policy states that the student or the tutor must provide at least 2 days' notice to reschedule a lesson. If the student fails to do so, then the lesson is considered a paid lesson. This means you are not obliged to reschedule this particular lesson or any part of it. If you feel this lesson was a no-show (the student did not attend the scheduled lesson or a large part of it), then share the lesson recording as you normally would, and it will be logged and you will be paid for it. Similarly, if you do not provide adequate notice and don't show up (entirely, or for any period of time during the predefined lesson timing), the lesson is not charged. Please never do this because it looks very unprofessional (see 5.1) and leads to customer dissatisfaction that we may need to reimburse. We also will not be able to pay you for this lesson.

In practice, the general principle is usually more applicable. You or the student may become ill or have an emergency to attend to. You will inevitably have busy and stressful periods at university, so be honest with your tutee if any such event occurs. It is vital to build a healthy relationship with your tutee and their parent(s) through clear and empathetic communication. If either you or your student are repeatedly causing problems regarding no-shows, it is **vital** that you let your manager know before taking any further steps.

### 2.2 Your responsibilities

*If something doesn't feel right, you must let your manager know. They will be there to provide help and advice.*

- **You must respond to emails with potential jobs (by accepting or rejecting them) within 2 days.** After 4 days, your manager will be forced to step in manually. This is not ideal because potential students may be lost in this waiting period. If this occurs, your manager will reach out to you and may remove you from all potential jobs in the future. In case you are not interested in taking any jobs at a particular period of time (perhaps because you have too many students currently or you have other priorities), you must tell your manager and they will remove you from potential tutor allocation (an automatic process). This is totally normal as we understand the stresses you will undergo throughout your university life. We are here for you to chat with if you require advice.
- **You must comply with our safeguarding policy** (see 3.3). Please read it thoroughly for how to react to a wide array of potential events. If anything doesn't feel right, let your manager know.

- **You must let your manager know if a student is unresponsive to communication.** It can occur that a student/parent does not wish to continue and does not notify you or us. We recommend notifying us after a week of no communication.
- **You must let your manager know if you are concerned that your student is not paying for your lessons.** On the 1st of every month, students will receive an email (with you copied in) with how many lessons they have not paid for. It is normal to be behind by fewer than 10 lessons, but this may vary depending on how many lessons you have had in the past month. It is vital you notify us if you believe they are not paying for large numbers of lessons so that we can agree a plan of action, e.g. not continuing lessons with them.
- **You must attend team meetings.** We will have monthly or bimonthly meetings, typically for no longer than an hour. We will have a poll in the Nurture Durham chat to organise it. It will cover interesting tutoring topics with the goal of learning from each other.

### 2.3 Accepting and rejecting jobs

This is fairly intuitive. If a job arrives, we will select a tutor or tutors automatically based on subject and number of current students. You will receive an email with all the details of the job, and all you need to do is click on the appropriate link to accept or reject it.

This will take you to our website, where you will enter your email and the assigned parent's email. If you reject the job, you will additionally be asked why you rejected it. Submit the form and you're done. **Do not submit the form more than once for a given job** (unless you made a mistake, in which case you will get a follow-up email).


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## Accept job

Press fill up the form to accept the job. If all the assigned tutors for the tutee have submitted, you will be copied into the first email with the parent. From there, you are in control!

Email *	Parent/tutee's email *
<input type="text" value="Email address you came from"/>	<input type="text" value="As in the email"/>
<input type="submit" value="Submit"/>	


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Email *	Parent/tutee's email *
<input type="text" value="Email address you came from"/>	<input type="text" value="As in the email"/>
Why did you reject the job? *	
<input type="text" value="Choose an option"/>	
<input type="submit" value="Submit"/>	

## Reject job

Fill up the form to reject the job. If you no longer wish to be considered for tutoring jobs, please get in touch with Nurture Durham.

**Please ensure you have put in the right email for yourself and the tutee.** If you make a mistake entering the tutee's email, you will receive a follow-up email, and repeat the steps above. If you make a mistake entering both emails, then you will not receive this email and that will cause problems.

If you are the only assigned tutor for a given tutee and you accept, then you will immediately be copied into the first email with the parent, from where you can take control. You may want to ask for old exams or assignments, more details about the tutee, and when to schedule the first lesson (see 1.2).

**If you are one of many assigned tutors for a given tutee, wait until all assigned tutors have accepted.** Only then will the first email be sent out. If another tutor rejects a job you have accepted, you have **not** been assigned the job yet. You will get first priority, but we may need to reshuffle tutors to make the job work. For example, if a tutee requires Maths, Science and English and you accept to do English while the other assigned tutor (who rejects) does Maths and Science, we may need to find a tutor who does English and Science.

**You must communicate with your teammates well, especially if you have a shared job.** This is where Lark messaging will be very useful. You will know who you have a shared job with because you will both be copied into the first email. It may be the case that there are multiple subjects required by the tutee that you could split in different ways between you. As in the above example with a tutee needing Maths, Science and English, suppose one tutor can do Maths and Science and the other Science and English. One tutor may find it easier to combine Maths and Science, say. Moreover, you could learn more about your student from collaboration with each other.

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## Nurture Durham

New tutee, Alasdair Macdonald, Maths

To: Ashwin Bhat



Are you interested in the following job?

Accept job: [www.nurturedurham.com/accept-job](http://www.nurturedurham.com/accept-job)

Reject job: [www.nurturedurham.com/reject-job](http://www.nurturedurham.com/reject-job)

### Message Details:

Full name: Alison Macdonald

Parent/tutee's email: [alison\\_macdonald\\_1@hotmail.com](mailto:alison_macdonald_1@hotmail.com)

Student's full name: Alasdair Macdonald

Subject(s): Maths

Level and syllabus: A-Level AQA

Preferred date/time for free lesson: 17/09/2023, 5pm

Comments: My son requires a tutor who is patient

### 3. Outside lessons

#### 3.1 Team meetings

We will organise meetings as an entire team, typically monthly or bimonthly, at an agreed date and time. This will be clearly communicated on the Lark group chat, and will usually be done in the form of a poll. You will not be paid for this. We like to keep it concise, usually less than an hour, and it's a space where we discuss ideas to become better tutors.

This is a space for you to share any questions, thoughts, ideas or advice. The format is usually based around certain topics that have been prevalent in the past month, strongly informed by parental feedback, but it can deviate! It is a fun space to hopefully learn new ideas that you can implement into your lessons.

**We are not discussing clichés.** Everything we discuss is focused to help you in a specific manner. We strongly encourage participation and involvement to share your unique ideas. Exposure to a variety of teaching styles has been the driving force of our success.

We want you to attend meetings for team building and learning and sharing new ideas. In our experience, it has been an important part of our tutors' adaptability. We will do everything to schedule meetings so that you can all make it, but if you have an emergency or cannot make it for another reason, let your manager know. They will be able to share the meeting with you.

#### 3.2 Communication with students

*Use your best judgment, and if you have any questions, ask your manager.*

This is an important part of safeguarding as you are likely going to be communicating with a minor. We give you more freedom than other tutoring companies to communicate with your student or parent, but there are some key steps you must abide by.

- You must receive the consent of the tutee's legal guardian (usually parent) to communicate directly with them. It is better to ask more than less. Be clear with your tutee and guardian about what channel you will use (e.g. WhatsApp), and what you mainly intend to use it for (e.g. sending homework).
- **If something doesn't feel right, let your manager know as soon as possible.** This includes the points laid out in the safeguarding policy.

We recommend communicating directly with the student because it gives them responsibility and allows you to build a good relationship with them. Find a channel that they are responsive to so that you can ask if they are attending an upcoming lesson.

#### 3.3 Safeguarding

Read the online safeguarding policy at [www.nurturedurham.com/online-safeguarding](http://www.nurturedurham.com/online-safeguarding). We are extremely strict when it comes to safeguarding. You must be DBS certified. If anything doesn't feel right, let your manager know as soon as possible

## 4. FAQs

### 4.1 How do payments work?

You are paid £18 per hour, whether the lesson is a free lesson or a paid one. You will be paid on the 1st of every month. All you need to do is fill your timesheet before the end of the month. We recommend sharing them as soon as the lesson finishes, but you will get many reminders to share them, so don't worry.

You will also be paid for lessons that your student has not yet paid for.

### 4.2 How do I change my details registered with Nurture Durham?

Let your manager know. You may wish to change your registered email address, bank details or subject preferences.

### 4.3 What format should I use for my lesson?

Be creative! Find a way that works for you. Play around with Lark and you will find interesting features to use in your lessons.

Lark is excellent for essay-writing subjects because of its Docs feature. You can prepare typed documents that you can share and edit in real time with your student. It also has a whiteboard for subjects like Maths (we recommend getting a tablet to connect to your computer, like a Wacom). You can share your screen, so you could make a Powerpoint presentation. You may wish to annotate a worksheet, which can be done by sharing your screen and clicking on 'annotate'.

## 5. Tutoring tips

### 5.1 Looking professional

With the parent, you want to instil a sense of confidence and calmness; after all, you are being trusted to take care of their child. Communicate in a clear and empathetic manner with your tutee and their parent(s), showing them respect. Listen to their concerns and make them feel heard. Talk to your tutee like they are responsible adults. Once you have understood their goals (exam results, confidence etc.), have a plan and lay it out in steps for them. This provides clarity and thus a sense of confidence in your tutoring.

With your student, it is important to make a good impression through small actions. Make sure your space is clear - you are not only recording yourself but the space around you. Make sure your Wifi/ internet connection is reliable before a lesson. There is nothing more frustrating than a lesson with bad internet. Make sure your lighting is good. All these factors can instil confidence and make your student feel more attentive during your lesson.

### 5.2 Making the student comfortable

*Imagine being the student.* We were all once at their level, living through the stresses of GCSEs or A-Levels. Your student is unique and requires a unique style of tutoring to bring the best out of them, so always think about what they need and not what you like to provide. We empathise with the anxiety of holding a lesson, and it is very easy to panic and not provide what the student requires or wants. Ask questions, think on your feet and realise that you are an excellent tutor who your tutee trusts. It is alright to make mistakes!

**It is crucial to say 'I don't know' if you don't know.** Your student will respect you showing vulnerability and being honest with them. It goes a really long way if in your next lesson you follow up on a question you didn't know the answer to. It shows you care.

Make an effort to understand what makes your student tick outside your lessons. They have an hour with you every week, so build a relationship with them which makes them look forward to it! Share some of your work from University or elsewhere beyond their school syllabus. Provide them a space to confide if they require life advice, and show that you back them. We are primarily working to improve students' grades, but it is just as important that they grow, be it as confident rounded people or as curious academics.

### 5.3 Feedback

We don't get better without feedback. Make sure to frequently ask your student and parent(s) for feedback on your tutoring. They may point out ways that you could improve. Ask them specific questions, like what they think about the speed of your lessons. Keep an eye on how your student's exam results are changing over time.

We will provide feedback forms to students/parents periodically and ask for Google reviews. We use this to help you one-on-one. Your manager will regularly be in direct contact with you to make sure everything is alright.

We also feel strongly about improving as a company. We will provide feedback forms to you periodically to see how we are running. Please let us know if you think anything needs to be changed. Get in contact with your manager, or bring up the point in a team meeting.