

# Personalized Learning: (adapted from the Glossary of Education Improvement)

Personalized Learning addresses the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students. Personalized learning is generally seen as an alternative to “one-size-fits-all” approaches to schooling in which teachers may, for example, provide all students in a given course with the same type of instruction, the same assignments, and the same assessments with little variation or modification from student to student. Personalized learning may also be called student-centered learning since the general goal is to make individual learning needs the primary consideration in important educational and instructional decisions, rather than what might be preferred, more convenient, or logistically easier for teachers and schools.

Personalized learning is intended to facilitate the academic success of each student by first determining the learning needs, interests, and aspirations of individual students, and then providing learning experiences that are customized—to a greater or lesser extent—for each student.

Students may create and maintain **personal learning plans**, which describe their academic, collegiate, and career goals, while mapping out the educational decisions they need to make to achieve their goals, or portfolios, which are a cumulative record of a student’s academic work and accomplishments. Teachers, advisors, and educational specialists may use these plans and portfolios to guide how they teach and support specific students.

Replacing more traditional homeroom periods or study halls with **advisories**—time in the school day for educators to meet with small groups of students and advise them on academic, social, and postsecondary-planning issues. Students may also be paired with advisors, adult mentors, or peer mentors who meet regularly with students over the course of several months, a year, or multiple years to help them acclimate to a school or program, navigate educational options, or plan for higher education and careers after graduation.