

LTC13D091

Title: *Peer Assisted Learning at UEA: Report on Phase 2*
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Date: 16.6.14
Circulation: Learning & Teaching Committee
Agenda: LTC13A006, Item B1
Version: Draft v6
Status: Open

Issue

Review of progress of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) project + summary of student evaluations. Plans for Phase 3 of the project are outlined and notice is given of a proposal to extend funding. The proposal is to be presented to October LTC.

Recommendation

The recipients are invited to note the contents of the report in particular the student experience and perceptions of PAL and future planning. The current end date for the pilot project for the introduction of PAL is December 2015, which means Phase 3 will be the last opportunity to implement PAL across a full academic year according to the current timescale. Evaluation is critical and any advice regarding additional evaluation methods to those included in the report would be welcomed.

Resource Implications

No additional resources are required at this stage

Risk Implications

The risk implications arising from the report are low.

Equality and Diversity

PAL is available to all first year students taking specific modules in the 11 schools in the pilot project. Recruitment of mentors and officers is also open to all students in senior years in those schools. A shortlisting system has been developed to ensure all applications are treated equally. PAL actively seeks to include students from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds. Access for students with mobility difficulties is taken into consideration.

Timing of decisions

A further report and proposal for extension of the project will be submitted to the October LTC with a request for a decision by December 2014

Further Information

Any queries about the report should be sent to Anne Guyon, PAL Champion: anne.guyon@uea.ac.uk or Adam Longcroft, ADTP: A.Longcroft@uea.ac.uk

Background

This report constitutes the second annual report on the PAL Project. The pilot is designed to determine whether Peer Assisted Learning is seen to benefit first year students and consider whether PAL should be adopted by the University of East Anglia as part of its suite of support services for students.

Discussion

Review of progress to date and future plans

Attachments

PAL Phase 2 Report (Draft v6)- below



Peer Assisted Learning at UEA

A 3-year implementation project
(January 2013 – December 2015)

Report on Phase 2 (Draft v6)

September 2013 – June 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PAL at UEA: Background and introduction:

A three-year pilot is currently taking place to introduce Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) into UEA. First year undergraduate students / mentees are mentored by students in higher years, with the aim of supporting them through the transition into higher education. PAL is run by students for students and supplements rather than replaces teaching. Mentees attend PAL sessions on a voluntary basis in small groups facilitated by mentors working in pairs. Further information about PAL can be found at <http://www.uea.ac.uk/pal>

UEA Objectives

The core objectives for PAL are to:

1. *Enhance the student experience*
2. *Improve performance*
3. *Promote employability for mentors / officers*

Review of Phase 2

Eleven schools took part in Phase 2 which ran in the Autumn semester from September to December 2013 for the majority of schools. Three schools took part in the Spring semester.

Attendance

Attendance remains low in some schools, although it tended to be high initially and tailed off towards the end of the semester. Attendance was found to be higher where sessions were timetabled, sufficient notice of location and content were given and where a number of students attended regularly.

PAL Evaluation in relation to UEA objectives

Enhance the student experience

Evaluations from all students who have participated in PAL as mentees, mentors and officers indicate that they value the experience. Mentees appreciate the support they are given to orientate to life at UEA. The interaction between students in different years is valued by mentees and mentors. Mentors report PAL provides an opportunity for them to reflect on their experience so far and gain additional social opportunities. Officers report a sense of greater involvement with UEA. Examples of PAL making a difference to retention include students have been directly supported by PAL mentors or advised to seek appropriate help from module leads or the Dean of Students.

Improve performance

Mentees and mentors report that PAL has supported them in their studies. This is particularly valuable to international students attending lectures when English is not their first language. Others report on the value of preparation for professional aspects of courses and revision for assignments. Increased confidence in achieving higher grades is reported by both mentees and mentors.

Promote employability for mentors / officers

Mentors and officers report that PAL has provided the opportunity to develop skills relevant to employability from the application process onwards. They describe planning, organisation, time-management, team working and reporting as some of the skills they will take forward into their careers. Examples of the impact of PAL on employability are provided.

The PAL team perspective

The PAL team, Anne Guyon, PAL champion and Vicky Hawkes, the PAL administrator have developed a timeline to ensure forward planning. Systems and processes have been developed and improved during Phase 2 to enable smooth running of recruitment of officers and mentors, record-keeping and ensuring timely payment. A key area was timetabling the PAL sessions where possible and the administrator spent a considerable amount of time on this at the beginning of the academic year.

Phase 3

All schools who participated in Phase 2 are continuing into Phase 3. There have been changes of module and PAL is to be extended across both modules in some schools. Changes associated with the amalgamation of schools in HUM and FMH have resulted in reconfiguration of PAL within those schools.

A number of changes have been put into place in the light of Phase 2 experience and student evaluations.

Recruitment

Recruitment began in January 2014 in order to ensure that it is complete in advance of the revision and exam periods for the majority of students. Approximately 130 mentors and 14 officers have been recruited to date.

Training

A 3-part training programme has been developed with two parts focussing on generic aspects of the development and delivery of PAL and the third part school specific training.

Timetabling and timing of sessions

Meetings have been held with LTS team leaders to put PAL sessions onto the student timetables. Time slots need to be found when both mentees and mentors are available and to ensure that the sessions are not too far removed from relevant teaching.

All schools are offered 12 PAL sessions across one or two semesters. The timing of sessions is decided by individual schools in order to support students at key points of the academic year.

Configuration of groups and teamwork

In a number of schools where attendance has been low the number of groups has been reduced with the potential for increasing the number according to demand.

Communication

Data protection prevents mentors accessing mentees email addresses. It will be negotiated with individual schools for officers, as employees of the university, to have access to cohort email addresses to encourage attendance. Mentors will collect email addresses from mentees who attend sessions. Blackboard will remain the official means of communicating with mentors. Module leads are encouraged to add officers and mentors to module Blackboard sites to access current course materials. Facebook and Twitter are to be used at the mentors' / officers' discretion.

Evaluation evidence

In addition to evaluation measures used in Phases 1 and 2, a Teaching Fellowship project entitled 'Measuring the impact of PAL on students' performance and module evaluations' is to be conducted throughout the course of 2014-15. A project evaluating Speech and Language Therapy students' experience of PAL is also planned.

Timing of evaluation data gathering

Evaluation will be conducted electronically and in hard copy form and made available from the beginning of the academic year in order to try to capture as much data as possible.

Phase 4

Currently the PAL pilot project is due to complete in December 2015. A proposal is to be prepared for submission to the October 2014 LTC to request extension of funding for a minimum of 6 months. This would allow for the completion of a third cycle of PAL across the Autumn and Spring semesters giving the opportunity for further evaluation and collection of data relating to the key objectives.

SECTION 1: PAL at UEA

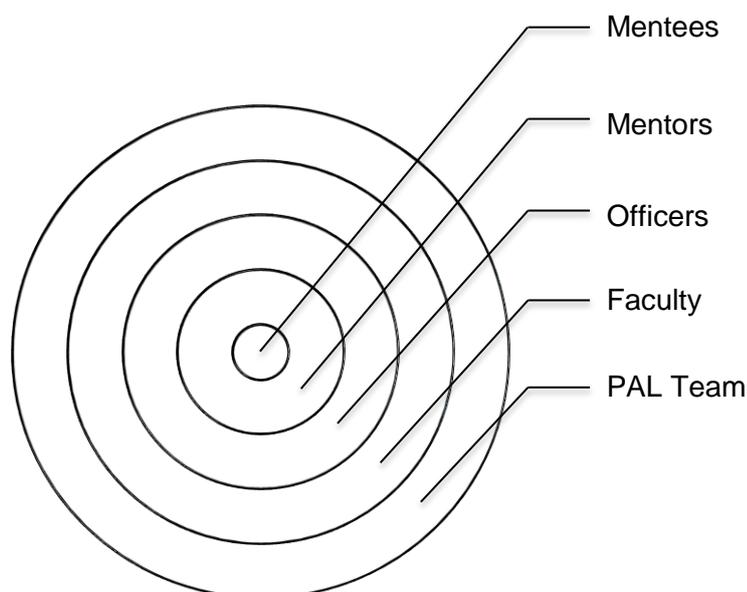
Background and introduction:

A three-year pilot is currently taking place to introduce Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) into UEA. PAL is also known as Supplemental Instruction and Peer Assisted Study. Since its development at the University of Kansas in 1973 it has been adopted by approximately 1500 universities worldwide. PAL is a structured mentoring system based on the principles of social learning (Bandura, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978). First year undergraduate students / mentees are mentored by students in higher years, with the aim of supporting them through the transition into higher education. Mentors provide academic and pastoral support based on the experience and skills they have gained.

The key to PAL is that it is run by students for students. PAL is usually linked to specific modules and supplements rather than replaces teaching. Mentees attend PAL sessions on a voluntary basis in small groups facilitated by mentors working in pairs. Groups meet for about one hour per week and the sessions are designed to be structured, but relaxed, creative and fun. The aim is to create a community of learning with mutual benefits for mentees and mentors alike.

Further information about PAL can be found at <http://www.uea.ac.uk/pal>

Structure of PAL within UEA



Mentees are at the centre of the scheme and are encouraged to contribute to sessions, initially by generating questions about any aspect of transition. As time goes on the expectation is that the mentees will share knowledge, skills and resources with each other.

Mentors are required to attend training which emphasises their role as facilitators, not teachers. They gain the skills to create a safe, confidential learning environment. Working in pairs provides mentors with mutual support and mentees with differing perspectives. Mentors encourage mentees to be proactive in their learning which encourages independence and confidence. Mentors are collect attendance data using the mentees' registration numbers and initials to ensure an element of anonymity. Attendance data is submitted to the PAL champion via the school officer.

Officers are recruited from post-graduate student cohorts or experienced mentors and are provided with leadership training as well as attending the same training as the mentors. They supervise and support the mentors by promoting team-work, liaising with faculty to ensure PAL is based on current teaching materials, observing PAL sessions and collating attendance data to submit to the PAL team. Officers are also required to submit a monthly report of PAL activity to the PAL champion.

The PAL team consists of the PAL champion and PAL administrator, whose roles are to promote, develop, implement and evaluate PAL. The complexity of PAL requires liaison at each level of the university structure.

PAL is overseen by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Academic and Academic Director for Taught Programmes.

UEA Objectives

Phase 2 of PAL coincided with the introduction of the New Academic Model, with the aim of supporting students to meet the threshold criteria for achievement and encourage increased retention. The core objectives for PAL are to:

4. *Enhance the student experience*

- Support 1st year students through the transition into higher education
- Integration into university life and orientation to UEA
- Learn from more experienced students
- Provide additional social and learning opportunities for mentors

5. *Improve performance*

- Attach PAL to core modules / 'tricky' areas
- Interactions between levels – opportunity to share experiences
- Opportunity for mentors to revisit core learning

6. *Promote employability for mentors / officers*

- Consolidate academic studies
- Develop skills, e.g. job applications; facilitation; leadership

SECTION 2: Review of Phase 2

Eleven schools took part in Phase 2 which ran in the Autumn semester from September to December 2013 for the majority of schools. Three schools took part in the Spring semester.

Participating schools

Faculty	School	Autumn semester	Spring semester
SCI	Chemistry (CHE)	✓	
	Computing Science (CMP)	✓	
	Environmental Sciences (ENV)	✓	
SSF	International Development (DEV)		✓
	Norwich Business School (NBS)	✓	
HUM	Film, Television and Media (FTM)	✓	
	Language and Communication Sciences (LCS)	✓	
	Political, Social and International Studies (PSI)	✓	
FMH	Norwich Medical School (MED)	✓	✓
	Nursing Sciences (NSC)	✓	✓
	Rehabilitation Sciences (RSC)	✓	

PAL activity

In order to plan an appropriate focus for PAL information about issues faced by first year students was gathered during PAL training sessions. Key issues identified were:

Orientation and adjustment. Settling in and getting to know the university including people, places and finding the way around; homesickness; fear, uncertainty, confusion or a sense of being thrown in at the deep end.

Social and practical aspects: meeting new people and making friends; choosing clubs and societies; dealing with finances and budgeting; balancing paid work with study; managing laundry, cooking and shopping or dealing with flat-sharing politics

Cultural: language and cultural differences for international students or adjustments such as coping with the drinking culture of peers

Academic: managing workload and deadlines; time management and organisation; getting to grips with reading lists and which books to buy; using the library and other facilities, such as Blackboard and eVision.

Topics covered in PAL sessions reflected these issues. Early sessions focussed on settling in and practical aspects of transition into higher education but quickly moved to addressing academic issues, such as discussion of core concepts; sharing lecture notes and preparing for tutorials or seminars. Revision and assignment preparation were high on the agenda and mentors devised quizzes and exercises to help mentees prepare. Module options and preparation for future modules were also discussed. For students on courses with work-based placements, mentors shared their experiences in preparation for the placement and provided the opportunity to debrief afterwards.

Attendance

School	Total cohort	No of groups	No of sessions	Overall attendance range	Rounded average	% cohort
CHE	55	3	11	6-42	14	25%
CMP	90	4	7	4-28	12	13%
DEV	190	2	10	2-41	20	10%
ENV	132	6	9	1-11	3	2%
FTM	35	2	11	2-7	3	8.5%
LCS	70	4	10	1-18	4	6%
MED	160	4	12	10-56	31	39%
		4	10	7-64	27	34%
NBS	200	13	10	26-125	57	28.5%
NSC Autumn	215	2	3	30-40	37	17%

NSC Spring	80	4	8	15-67	37	46%
PSI	90	4	7	3-15	8	9%
RSC	85	3	3	7-48	19	22%

These data indicate that attendance remains low in some schools, reflecting the experience of other universities in the early stages of introducing PAL (Draper et al, 2003). Attendance tended to be high initially and tailed off towards the end of the semester.

Officers reported that factors which influenced attendance related to timetabling, appropriate location, sufficient notice for sessions. One officer reported the organisation, enthusiasm and encouragement of mentors was a key factor. Group size also influenced attendance. Low attendance appeared to discourage others from joining, whereas larger groups encouraged others to join. Several officers reported that running PAL in the Autumn semester only meant it was too far removed from the exam period for mentees to benefit.

In NSC, where sessions have been timetabled in Phase 1 and Phase 2, attendance has been consistently high. Unfortunately recruitment of mentors was less successful for the Autumn semester, with insufficient to meet the high demand. It was decided to run groups in alternate weeks, however this proved very demanding for the mentors and only three sessions ran overall. Recruitment for the Spring semester was more successful. The combination of timetabled sessions and sufficient mentors encouraged mentees to attend in good numbers which ensured interactive discussion.

When introducing PAL into DEV in the Spring semester it was decided to start with two groups run by 3 mentors with the option of increasing to 3 groups if demand increased. This strategy has been successful in that, although attendance dropped away at times, it averaged 10% overall which is higher than some other schools introducing PAL for the first time.

All Student questionnaires

In order to gain insight into the reasons students do or do not attend PAL sessions questionnaires were distributed to all students on relevant modules in schools operating PAL in the Autumn semester. 635 out of a possible 897 questionnaires were returned. Key findings indicated that 89% of respondents were aware that PAL was attached to the module. 74% had attended at least one PAL session. Of the 12 available sessions 24% had attended one session, with 17% attending two sessions. 2-11% had attended more than 3 sessions and 5% of respondents reported attending all available sessions.

Factors which would attract attendance (10-50+ respondents)

- More suitable timing / location
- Timing sessions later in the module
- Advance notice of location, timing, purpose and content of sessions
- More structure / organisation

Reasons for not attending:

- Sessions not useful or of limited benefit
- Student mindset
- Does not suit learning style

Of those students who had attended PAL sessions 77% had found them useful. Most useful aspects (10-100+ respondents)

- The opportunity to develop study skills and revise
- Mentors' experience, honesty and helpfulness
- General advice and support
- Gaining understanding of the course / module
- Help with professional aspects of the course, e.g. placements / portfolios
- Reassurance, confidence-building
- Help with settling in
- Focus on individual needs

Other benefits:

- Getting to know other students
- Myth-busting
- Enjoying being part of a group

Suggestions for improving PAL. In addition to those considered helpful for attracting students (10-90+ respondents)

- More practice exam papers and questions
- Better communication between mentors and mentees
- Timetabled sessions / protected time
- Closer links to module materials
- Extend sessions into Spring semester
- More practical activities

Evaluation

As with Phase 1 evaluation was sought through individual feedback forms from mentees, mentors and officers. The evaluation forms were redesigned from Phase 1 to reflect the UEA objectives for PAL. The purpose of evaluation was to identify strengths of the scheme and consider improvements for future implementation.

Evaluation is based on students', mentors' and officers' experience and perceptions of PAL. Respondents were asked to provide quantitative data using a Likert scale as well as qualitative data in the form of comments. More detail regarding individual schools is available on request from the PAL Champion.

Evaluation forms were distributed with the option of return via email or hard copy. Regular reminders were sent via officers to mentors to mentees. Returns varied across schools. This is likely to relate to reduced attendance at PAL sessions towards the end of the semester.

Mentees' evaluation

120 mentees completed evaluation forms. A summary is provided below

Has attending PAL sessions improved your experience at UEA?

94% of respondents reported that PAL had 'very definitely' or 'definitely' been beneficial. The remaining 6% reported 'neutral' or 'not sure'.

Illustrative comments:

<i>Increased confidence</i>	Made me more confident about what I actually know. Helped me to be more confident in asking and answering questions in lectures.
<i>Orientation</i>	[...] now I know where to go if I need help with a certain type of problem regarding both academically and living on campus.
<i>Transition</i>	PAL has helped my transition from secondary school to University on both a social and academic level I found hearing another student explaining these things was extremely helpful
<i>Orientation</i>	The sessions [...] helped us to feel more in control of what we were doing, to know what was to come in the future and feel more prepared.

Has mentoring benefited your learning?

86.5% of respondents reported that PAL had 'very definitely' or 'definitely' benefited their learning. 10% were 'neutral' or 'not sure'. The remainder did not respond to this question

Illustrative comments:

<i>Clarification</i>	Helped to explain in more detail what we have covered in the lectures and helped with the tutorial and online BB questions.
<i>Deepening understanding</i>	I am better at trickier concepts in maths

	PAL has aided my understanding of challenging concepts in coursework, helped me improve studying habits and supplemented my learning experience with helpful tips and advice
<i>Revision / assignment preparation</i>	X's reassurance about the OSCE helped me feel much more confident and relaxed. Going through questions similar to those in the written paper [...] helped me refine my revision techniques too. Very useful for covering stuff that is otherwise rushed through and for asking questions
<i>Professional development</i>	In one PAL session we got to look at portfolios, which was useful for seeing what is expected of us academically, not only in the 1st year but in the 2nd and 3rd years
<i>Shared learning</i>	Group revision and being able to have our questions answered

Do you think your PAL experience will help you in the future?

86% of respondents reported that PAL would 'very definitely' or 'definitely' help them in the future, with 12% 'neutral' or 'not sure' and the remainder non-responders

<i>Laying a foundation</i>	Helped to enhance my background knowledge of chemistry which will be beneficial for the coming years. Also gives me another person to talk to whenever I have a problem. I have been more prepared [...] in terms of how to not get stressed out, how to be organised and knowing how to prioritise my work. It has helped to build up a good basis of understanding for the start of the course
<i>Confidence</i>	I feel a lot more confident with examinations Possibly, though things may be more defined in further years and better confidence therefore [PAL] won't be of as much benefit

Some mentees appeared to misunderstand this question, interpreting it to mean PAL would be continuing into future years. Although there are no plans to formalise PAL

beyond first year, mentors are encouraged to continue their relationships with mentees on an informal basis

<i>Ongoing support</i>	Yes because it is good to hear from the students in older years as we progress through the course
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Would you recommend PAL to students starting next year?

95% of respondents would 'very definitely' or 'definitely' recommend PAL to incoming first year students. 4% responded 'neutral' with the remainder as non-responders

<i>Support</i>	<p>More informal than lectures so you feel more comfortable asking material to be explained. Adds to the knowledge you are learning in lectures and tutorials.</p> <p>Not many people turned up to ours, but I'd definitely recommend it because it's just a great way to revise [...] even if you don't feel like you need it, it still helps to reinforce ideas in your head.</p> <p>Talking to individuals who have been on that path it makes it easier because you will all be talking the same language</p>
<i>Easing transition</i>	Most definitely as it was a helpful transition to university and supplemented my overall learning
<i>Sharing concerns</i>	It helps you realise any confusions or troubles you have are likely experienced by the other group members and the PAL mentor can help you feel less overwhelmed and positive
<i>Practicalities</i>	It's a helpful way of getting information about basic stuff which no-one explains when you start, like using BB, library, referencing, filing notes etc
<i>Limited benefit</i>	It is not particularly useful so probably not. Unless someone has many questions to ask it is useful

Are there specific improvements you would suggest for the next phase of PAL?

Most of the improvements suggested by mentees focussed on ways of encouraging attendance such as timetabling sessions and consistency of room bookings and mentor pairings. Others felt that more notice needed to be given for PAL sessions, including content, and that communication could be improved.

<i>More structured sessions</i>	Perhaps there should be a set list of what to do each week, as we don't always have problems to be covered but it would be useful if something was gone over. Having a more structured timetable of the things covered in the sessions would be useful since students don't always speak up when asked to come up with their own ideas of things to cover
<i>Timetabling</i>	I couldn't attend some sessions because of timetable [...]. It would be good if the same time each session is possible
<i>Flexible timing</i>	More sessions? Maybe evening sessions so easier to attend?
<i>Regular mentors</i>	More regular people (like the same each time) so we can get to know them
<i>Communication</i>	Make it easier to contact mentors. Make sure mentors check timetabling and scheduling

Are you interested in applying to be a PAL mentor in the future?

62% of respondents reported they would be interested in applying to become a mentor in the future. This has resulted in a high proportion of mentees being recruited to mentor in Phase 3 of the PAL project.

Skills development

Mentees were asked to rate benefits they had gained across a number of areas.

BENEFIT	Definitely benefited	Benefited	Not sure	No benefit yet	No benefit	N/R
Confidence in starting university	40	48	14	4	6	7
Understanding requirements of university	48	49	12	2	2	6
Getting to know other students	28	55	21	4	4	7
Increased knowledge, understanding & skills	53	54	3	1	0	6
Academic writing	15	43	29	23	1	8
Confidence in getting good grades	27	52	28	3	2	7
Confidence in completing your degree	30	51	27	3	1	7

Although all areas were rated positively there was more variation in some areas than others. Respondents identified 'Increased knowledge, understanding and skills' as gaining most benefit, with 91% reporting they felt they had 'definitely benefited' or 'benefited'. There were also positive responses for 'Confidence in starting university' and 'Understanding the requirements of university'. The widest variance was for 'Academic writing', with 49% rating it as 'definitely benefited'/'benefited' and 43% 'not sure'/'no benefit yet'. This is likely to be a result of conducting most sessions through discussion with minimal writing practice.

Comments on any other aspect of PAL

Finally mentees were asked to comment on any other aspect of PAL, which most used to praise their mentors

<i>Thank you</i>	Thank you. [Mentor] is a top lad, friendly, confident + honest PAL Mentor They were really useful and answered any questions and supplied us with loads of extra information which I think helped. They were really lovely and it didn't feel like we were putting them out.
<i>Survival</i>	I wouldn't have been able to get through my first term without PAL! [Mentors] were amazing!
<i>Developing a social</i>	Overall I feel the PAL sessions that I was involved with this term have worked really well. Students who

<i>learning environment</i>	attended the sessions seemed to really enjoy them and seemed to be benefitting from the sessions. After the first two weeks we started to get a more regular attendance from specific people thus making the group a nice friendly and chilled environment where students felt comfortable and able to bring their questions.
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Mentors' evaluation

A number of mentors from schools in Phase 1 reapplied for Phase 2 which provided a healthy mix of experienced and new mentors. Approximately 120 mentors were recruited overall. Evaluation forms were received from 49 mentors, with poor returns from particular schools, especially those where attendance was low. A summary of responses is provided below. Further detail will be provided by the PAL champion on request.

Have you benefited from being a PAL Mentor?

89% of respondents felt they had 'very definitely' or 'definitely' benefited from being a PAL mentor, with the remaining 12% responding with 'neutral'

<i>Interaction between years</i>	In my second year and this year I have made contacts with first year students who I continue to encounter on campus today, helping to create a more communal university atmosphere.
<i>Benefitting learning</i>	It has helped me in revising for my own degree, with organisational skills It has also been very useful in terms of recapping my own subject knowledge and approaching it in different ways and from different perspectives.
<i>CV building</i>	I have gained some more experience to put on my CV. Now I can apply for jobs as a learning assistant. I have also found the facilitative nature of the mentor work really useful in developing my clinical skills - during therapy in practise [...] is to facilitate and not to 'teach' and these are skills that have been greatly developed through my work as a mentor.
<i>Skills development</i>	Previously to this PAL experience I had not studied the module I was mentoring. So not only was I able to develop my leadership, mentoring and communication skills with people from a variety of backgrounds but I was able to wider my knowledge of the subject by

	learning new notions and theories and discussing said ideas amongst others.
<i>Understanding university</i>	<p>I have learnt even more about the university due to contact with people I wouldn't know otherwise and made friends through the process</p> <p>I also was very keen to explain how systems such as getting an extension work, as I did not understand this in the 1st year.</p>
<i>Building confidence</i>	I now feel much more confident talking in front of a larger group of people. I feel my skills as a facilitator have improved - I now know when to take a step back and let the group decide, rather than be directive.
<i>Insight and flexibility</i>	I have become more self-aware through taking the sessions and they have given me a further insight as to what it is like to be in a role of considerable leadership. Working alongside different pairings exposed me to a variety of cultures to work with and strengthened my team working skills enormously. In comparison to phase 1, it was wonderful to be able to have an attendance from the first year students and I was able to connect to some extent with the regular attenders
<i>Social benefits</i>	Being a Pal Mentor has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience and has been a really positive way of building friendships between year groups.

Has mentoring benefited your learning?

74% of respondents reported that PAL had 'very definitely'/'definitely' benefited their learning. 24% were 'neutral' and 2% felt it had 'definitely not' benefited them.

<i>Social learning</i>	Each student has their own unique way of learning, and I feel PAL provides an opportunity to see how other people best manage things like exam timetabling and revision techniques, along with improving communication between lecturers and students
<i>Refreshing learning</i>	<p>Mentoring helped refresh some of the basic concepts learning during the first year of physical chemistry</p> <p>In order to facilitate the learning of mentees I would have to ensure I knew the subject material in enough</p>

	depth, so I was able to revise previous modules and address gaps in my knowledge.
<i>Reviewing learning</i>	When 1st year students ask me what essay markers are looking for it makes me think about this, and reflect on why I may have got different grades. This was good as I never really understood what they want!
<i>Learning through mentoring</i>	<p>People say that a good way to check your understanding of a particular topic is to teach it to others and although this is a mentoring role and not a teaching role I do believe aspects of this are applicable to PAL.</p> <p>The sessions showed me how different people learn through different styles and strategies so I was able to develop my new styles to work around their interests</p>
<i>Limited benefit</i>	Conducting one on one teaching has not provided me with any new methods of learning or focus. I know my learning style and PAL has not contributed to this.

Do you think your PAL experience will help you in the future?

90% of respondents felt that PAL experience will help them in the future. The remaining 10% were 'neutral' / 'not sure'

<i>Relevance of experience</i>	PAL has shown me personally that schemes in their infancy can vary greatly from year to year and school to school, and to set up a scheme or a business it is important to address a wide range of issues and create a wide range of channels through which everyone involved can communicate, regardless of background, knowledge or need. I feel PAL has shown me that when a new initiative is introduced, difficulties will inevitably arise and the best way to deal with these difficulties is to communicate effectively and try and adapt to circumstances
<i>Employability</i>	<p>Being a mentor is evidence of many key skills for employment and something that is noticed a lot because it shows you not only want to improve yourself, but also to help the people around you in many ways, not just academic.</p> <p>The skills I've developed during mentoring and confidence in my presenting skills will benefit my future</p>

	career. The experience will look good on my CV and provide me with a subject to discuss in future interviews.
<i>Communication skills</i>	I have improved my communication skills which I could use a lot in my study presentation as well as in the future. I learned how to communicate clearly in order for others to understand
<i>Career in teaching – limited benefit</i>	If I work as a support or with children it could. I plan on staying on in academia and this may help me gain an assisting / teaching position when studying for a PhD. However my previous experience is of more value because only one mentee turned up!
<i>Facilitation</i>	<p>... as a doctor, a key part of my job will be helping patients come to a decision about treatment etc. rather than making the decisions for them, I feel the skills of facilitating I have learnt in PAL will aid me with this.</p> <p>I think the experience will help me in the future when I am in positions where I have to lead, or take a session, which will occur frequently in my profession [...] particularly in running group therapy</p>
<i>Taking responsibility</i>	Good experience that I learnt the importance of keeping calm even when the partner was irresponsible or irritating.

Has your PAL experience helped you with applications for jobs / further study?

Responses were more varied. 38% of respondents reported PAL had ‘very definitely’ / ‘definitely’ benefited them. 60% were ‘neutral’ / ‘not sure’, with ‘no response’ from the remainder. Many comments referred to respondents not having applied for jobs / further study yet, so their experience was as yet untested.

<i>Positive re prospects</i>	Not yet but I haven’t applied. In working on my employability, it was something that was noticed by my project supervisor and something that the careers people say is good to have.
<i>Lack of interest in PAL</i>	I had an interview recently which may have been influenced by PAL. I talked about PAL in the interview but the interviewers didn't seem that interested.
<i>Uncertain re benefits</i>	While PAL is a great scheme that I am glad to have been a part of and I will certainly name as an

	achievement on my curriculum vitae, I'm not sure in what context I can bring the lessons learned through PAL forward into my chosen career.
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These last comments suggest that linking experience and skills gained through PAL to future employment should be part of PAL training to help students to see its relevance to a wide range of careers.

Are there specific improvements you would suggest for the next phase of PAL?

<i>Tailor PAL to meet school needs</i>	... it would be helpful to tailor PAL more specifically for separate schools – [some] students are more concerned with academic performance and PAL could be a helpful resource for their degree, whereas [others] may find PAL more helpful as a tool for study skills and campus opportunities.
<i>Continuation across semesters</i>	As it is a year long module and 2nd semester is harder and contains an exam I feel demand would be greater for PAL at this time. PAL didn't start til Week 3 due to the way the module [...] runs which missed a good chance to support students in their 1st couple of weeks at university
<i>Timetabling / timing</i>	Attendance of students might be improved if the sessions were timetabled I think ultimately it is down to the mentors and mentees to agree a mutually beneficial time and that attendance will only remain stable/improve if the sessions are good and there are problems.
<i>Improved communication with faculty</i>	I think it was a really great idea [...] having mentors of different subjects [...] working together as it provided a really brilliant range of help for the students. I think that improvements would be that more contact is needed between mentors/officers and the school lecturers, to know what the students were studying in their lectures, or what their exam structures were to be like this year
<i>Improved communication with mentees</i>	Better explanation to mentees what the sessions are about before they come to the first one. Would be a good idea to have a mid-year evaluation (even if it is just within the PAL sessions) so we can improve the quality of the service provided for students in the latter half of the year, to keep attendance up.

<i>Access to curriculum materials</i>	It would be useful if mentors could be subscribed to the relevant module on Blackboard from the start so they know what topics and level of detail the students have covered at a certain date.
<i>Increase understanding across school</i>	I found out that some second and third year students were recommending to first years not to go to their PAL classes, so I think something needs to be done about the stigma that has been created around PAL.
<i>Encouragement from faculty</i>	Maybe a bit more encouragement from module leaders would help in increasing numbers.
<i>Increase academic emphasis</i>	Greater emphasis on academic writing (didn't have enough time in group). Access to Blackboard and timetables. So we can plan relevant lectures and direct them to important files.
<i>Support during placement</i>	Not enough support during placement (study days to incorporate PAL)

Are you interested in applying to be a PAL mentor / officer in the future?

63% of respondents reported that they would like to continue as mentors or apply to become officers. This has translated into a number of re-appointments.

Skills development:

Mentors were asked to rate their skills development in a number of domains.

BENEFIT	Definitely improved	Improved	No effect yet	Reduced	Definitely reduced
Confidence building in others	15	28	6	0	
Confidence in your abilities	16	24	9	1	
Understanding the student experience	6	33	10	0	
Leadership and team-working skills	16	25	7	1	
Communication skills	17	27	4	1	
Cultural awareness	6	21	19	0	
Flexibility	10	26	10	2	
Problem solving	12	26	11	0	
Ability to articulate skills	9	27	11	0	

The table below shows that most respondents rated their skills as 'improved' or 'definitely improved'. 90% of respondents rated their communication skills as 'definitely improved' / 'improved'. Over 80% of respondents rated themselves as improved in the ability to build confidence in others; their own confidence and leadership and team-working skills. 79% of respondents reported an improvement in understanding the student experience and 59% reported increased cultural awareness. The remaining 49% reported 'no effect yet', which does not appear to reflect the cultural mix within their schools as respondents included those from NBS and DEV, who have students from a wide range of backgrounds. Individual students reported a reduction in confidence in their abilities, leadership and team-working, communication and flexibility. This warrants further investigation.

Officers' evaluation:

As in Phase 1 the majority of officers were recruited from PGT/PGR cohorts. In Phase 2 14 officers were recruited, with one officer in most schools. Due to the large cohorts in MED, NBS and NSC, additional officers were recruited, with a ratio of one officer to 10 mentors. In NSC there had been difficulties recruiting for Phase 1 and the PAL champion took on the role. In Phase 2 experienced mentors requested the opportunity to apply for the role, which was supported by the school.

In the Autumn semester an experienced officer was recruited to 'float' between schools. However as the role was not clearly defined it was not successfully deployed. During the Spring semester, when the NSC officers were out on placement the 'floating' officer assisted with supporting and supervising the mentors, which proved to be a successful arrangement and demonstrated that officers do not necessarily need to come from the same academic background as the mentors / mentees. Nine officers provided feedback which is summarised below

Have you benefitted from being a PAL Officer?

All officers reported that they has 'definitely benefitted' / 'benefitted' from being a PAL officer

<p><i>Development of skills</i></p>	<p>Work experience for jobs that require administrative or even management skills</p> <p>... problem solving skill which I need to deal with a lot of issues and try to sort it out, e.g. timetable clashes, some issues between mentors themselves...etc</p> <p>It also developed my teamwork skills as I worked with my mentors to develop new strategies and make PAL work more efficiently in the school. I felt it was very important to hold regular meetings with my mentors as they valued being included in the development and I feel that this helped with motivation.</p> <p>I've gained a lot of skills such as communication skills</p>
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	during my conversation either with other officers or with my mentors and also with PAL champion and administrator
<i>Problem-solving and flexibility</i>	We had some difficulties in this school about timetabling and mentor changes, therefore I had to be able to think of and develop solutions. I also had to become more flexible and be able to think on my feet when a plan or process did not go according to plan
<i>Insights into project development</i>	It has also educated me about the potential of PAL, and given me the experience of being involved in a pilot project.
<i>Insight into UEA</i>	It was a good opportunity to work on this pilot scheme and do my best to make this scheme work for UEA. [...] I feel that I have learned a lot about the workings of the University and of other schools. This has enhanced my interdisciplinary knowledge.

Has mentoring benefitted understanding of academic structures and university processes?

All but one of the officers felt they had gained a better understanding of academic structures and processes. The remaining officer responded 'neutral'

<i>Understanding structures</i>	<p>If I was not aware of academic structure of university processes, I would not have been able to do my job properly.</p> <p>Working with the module leader and the mentors as a subject-specific team also showed me how students at different levels can become involved with the teaching and support side of university life, and how this is welcomed by the dept.</p>
<i>Understanding beyond own school experience</i>	<p>Although I was part of previous PAL phases and this made me aware of the academic structure it was good to see how [a different] school works as I feel it is extremely different to anything that I have experienced, either as a student or within PAL.</p> <p>I am now aware of how different schools work and operate. I now have a greater understanding of timetabling and I learned how the room booking systems work.</p>

<i>Training</i>	The training sessions for the role increased my understanding of PAL and the way it is being used at UEA and other HEIs. Working within the framework of PAL (i.e. with the levels of communication and responsibility ranging down through PAL Champion, PAL Administrator, PAL Officer, PAL Mentor) has given me direct experience of the admin and management structure of a project such as this.
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Do you think your PAL experience will help you in the future?

All officers agreed that PAL would 'very definitely' / 'definitely' benefit them in the future

<i>Recognition of relevance of skills gained</i>	Most jobs require the skills mentioned before (supervisory and management, organisational and administrative skills, communication) and the job of PAL Officer is a good introduction to this range of skills
<i>Team-working – multi-cultural</i>	Improvement in interpersonal skills in multi-cultural system, such as obtaining colleagues help in team working
<i>Seeing HE from both sides</i>	I have more of an insight into teaching at university level and am seeing things from both sides now
<i>Direct relevance</i>	It is valuable experience to have on my CV at this time - as someone seeking to pursue a teaching-focussed academic career [...] the teamwork and skill enhancement involved will also no doubt help me on a practical level in the future too.
<i>Insight into the student experience</i>	I feel it is great experience to have worked with students and to have a greater insight into what students have difficulties with. It was great experience working with the mentors and gaining their experience and views.

Has your PAL experience helped you with applications for jobs / further study?

As with the mentors, there was a wider range of certainty in response to this question, which related to whether officers has applied for employment or further study at the time of completing the evaluation. The comment below reflects others' comments

<i>Confidence</i>	I believe it will be beneficial and a good topic of discussion for the jobs that I will apply for (e.g. teaching and PGCE courses). Though I haven't used it yet and that's why I didn't choose definitely option
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Are there specific improvements you would suggest for the next phase of PAL?

The officers had a number of suggestions for improvement, which reflected those of the mentors and mentees. These are summarised below

<i>Frequency and timing of sessions</i>	The big number of students that came across the first 2 PAL sessions made me think that PAL was introduced well to the students (induction day, [lecturer] and my presentation). The fact that the number was reduced afterwards can be due to lots of factors (e.g. the students found out later on that they don't feel the need for extra support or they just had a hard schedule and not much time). Though I was wondering if it would have been better to have less frequent PAL sessions in the beginning (that the material might not be so hard) and keep PAL going in the 2nd semester as well, especially closer to their exams.
<i>Mixing mentors from different years</i>	This year all the mentors were 3rd year students who had previous experience of PAL. This is a good element as they knew how to run the sessions etc. Though I think that maybe in future it will be a good idea to mix 3rd and 2nd year mentors together [...] development of new connections and exchange of knowledge and experiences.
<i>Timetabling</i>	Attendance at PAL sessions was an ongoing battle: the undergrads were very reluctant to attend something that was optional! It's possible that officially timetabling PAL onto their schedules might have increased attendance
<i>Quality of mentors</i>	Some of mentors are really friendly and hard working but some of them do not prepare and seems they do not show any interest which reflect to the mentees to be not interested.
<i>Training for officers</i>	I found that the officer training I received wasn't much good! More practical things such as how Blackboard works, how to book rooms, how to liaise with module

	conveners and advertising PAL might have been more useful. I was worried that contacting module leads in case they found me annoying to begin with.
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These final comments suggest that more emphasis needs to be put on the officer and mentor duties in the training sessions.

Are you interested in applying to be a PAL officer in the future?

Three officers responded that they would like to continue. Others are due to complete their studies before the next phase of PAL is complete and will therefore not be eligible

Skills development

BENEFIT	Definitely improved	Improved	No effect yet	Reduced	Definitely reduced
Confidence building in others	3	5	1		
Confidence in your abilities	2	6	1		
Understanding the student experience	4	3	2		
Leadership and team-working skills	4	5			
Communication skills	5	4			
Cultural awareness	1	4	4		
Flexibility	3	4	2		
Problem solving	4	5			
Ability to articulate skills	4	3	2		

All officers reported that their leadership and team working skills; communication skills and problem-solving abilities had improved. The spread was wider for understanding the student experience; cultural awareness and the ability to articulate skills. The first two domains may reflect having less direct contact with mentees, which would warrant further investigation.

Comments on any other aspect of PAL

Comments included suggestions for improvement as well as reflections on the overall experience

<i>Detaching PAL from specific modules</i>	It might be more helpful to have PAL running as less of a module-specific scheme, as changes enacted in the module this year made running and planning sessions very difficult.
<i>Improved support for</i>	I would ensure that officers understand the appropriate and simplest way to approach problems that may arise

<i>officers</i>	through the phase. I experienced several tough weeks where I was unsure as to what they had decided regarding the session I was meant to be holding.
<i>Communication</i>	Poor attendance. Would be much easier if mentors were able to contact the whole year/class directly to encourage attendance and introduce ourselves.
<i>Benefits of PAL</i>	Overall I feel the PAL sessions that I was involved with this term have worked really well. Students who attended the sessions seemed to really enjoy them and seemed to be benefitting from the sessions. After the first two weeks we started to get a more regular attendance from specific people thus making the group a nice friendly and chilled environment where students felt comfortable and able to bring their questions.

SECTION 4: The PAL team perspective

The PAL team, Anne Guyon, PAL champion and Vicky Hawkes, the PAL administrator has worked on a number of initiatives resulting from evaluation of Phase 1. Close liaison with module leads and other interested parties within the schools is critical and planning, implementation and review meetings are a regular feature of the PAL calendar. A timeline has been developed to ensure forward planning and that activity relates to availability of students during the recruitment, training, planning and implementation phases of PAL.

Systems and processes have been developed and improved during Phase 2 to enable smooth running of recruitment of officers and mentors, record-keeping and ensuring timely payment. The administrative workload associated with PAL is very heavy and has resulted in a proposal to increase administrative support.

A key area was timetabling the PAL sessions where possible and the administrator spent a considerable amount of time on this at the beginning of the academic year. Finding times when both mentees and mentors are available is an ongoing challenge, which needs continual review as students' personal timetables vary.

Promoting PAL continues to be a major priority in order to maximise attendance. An image and publicity materials have been developed throughout Phase 2, which is used to promote PAL via post cards, bookmarks, posters, digital screens at strategic points as well as PowerPoint presentations. The PAL webpage: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/pal> and Blackboard site are kept up to date to provide current information re recruitment and other activities.

The PAL champion, three mentors and an officer attended the PASS Students as Partners national conference at Plymouth University in November 2013, in order to network with other universities offering similar schemes as well as raising the profile of the scheme at UEA. The champion, two officers and a mentor presented at the UEA Learning and Teaching day in May 2014 and the champion has joined the UEA Student Academic Transition group which includes members from across the university with an interest in supporting first years. The PAL champion also attended the European First Year Experience conference in Nottingham in June 2014.

We have continued to learn from the experience of Phase 2 and a number of developments are being put into place for Phase 3:

SECTION 5: Overall summary in relation to UEA's objectives

Phases 1 and 2 of the introduction of PAL to UEA have focussed on the practicalities of implementing PAL and much has been learned from this experience. There have been considerable improvements in the planning and organisation of PAL across the 11 schools which participated in PAL. The evidence collated so far is based on the student experience and perception of the benefits of PAL. There have been some difficulties with evaluation and attendance returns. Phase 3 will focus on ensuring that data is collected to provide objective measures of the effect of PAL on the student experience, performance and employability skills

Enhance the student experience

Evaluations from all students who have participated in PAL as mentees, mentors and officers indicate that they value the experience and have made particular gains. Mentees appreciate the support they are given to orientate to life at UEA, from finding their way around campus to understanding the academic expectations in higher education. The interaction between students in different years is valued by mentees and mentors. Mentors report PAL provides an opportunity for them to reflect on their experience so far, realise how much they have learnt and gain additional social opportunities. Officers report a sense of greater involvement with UEA. This is especially valuable for PGT/PGR students coming to UEA from other institutions. Module leads and students have provided examples of PAL making a difference to retention. Students have been directly supported by PAL mentors or advised to seek appropriate help from module leads or the Dean of Students.

Improve performance

Mentees and mentors report that PAL has supported them in their studies. PAL provides the opportunity for students to go over lecture notes and discuss challenging concepts. This is particularly valuable to international students attending lectures when English is not their first language. Others report on the value of preparation for professional aspects of courses and revision for assignments. Mentors revise their own learning to support the mentees. Some mentors report development of communities of learning in their groups which are beneficial to mentees and mentors alike. Increased confidence in achieving higher grades is reported by both mentees and mentors.

Promote employability for mentors / officers

Mentors and officers report that PAL has provided the opportunity to develop skills relevant to employability from the application process onwards. They describe planning, organisation, time-management, team working and reporting as some of the skills they will take forward into their careers. For those entering the health professions mentoring and facilitation are seen as key skills for working with patients. Mentors and officers who are graduating from UEA have been asked to contact the PAL team about the role PAL plays in job applications. Email quotes below were received recently.

'My experience as a PAL Officer was a great asset in my recent job applications. PAL was firstly an ideal first introduction to the application process and prepared me for subsequent interviews where I was then able to draw upon my time at PAL again, with relation to my ability to work as part of an enthusiastic team, to take the initiative and also practical skills such as using spreadsheets to monitor attendance and produce monthly reports. I have recently been offered an internship related to sustainability reporting that will use all of these skills, and I am sure my time at PAL contributed to this.'

'I just wanted to email you to thank you for the chance to be a PAL mentor and it really worked in my favour in my last interview which led to my graduate job offer. The managers that interviewed me [...] were very impressed that I enjoyed helping other people to learn as it is a big part of the company philosophy. I have really developed as a person since joining PAL two years ago, both in terms of confidence and skills.'

PAL offers an opportunity for students to progress from mentee to mentor and in some cases to officer. This in itself provides career progression. All applicants, whether new to or experienced in PAL go through the same application process in order to provide equal opportunities, which requires applicants to articulate their experience, strengths and what they hope to gain from PAL. Empathy for the first year experience and the desire to support students are frequently cited as reasons for application. In some cases applicants refer to not making the most of their first year experience as a reason. In this case it is to prevent first years from making similar mistakes.

Overall the experience of Phase 2 of PAL reflects that of Phase 1. The increased number of schools has provided the opportunity to evaluate PAL from a wider perspective. The focus for Phase 3 will be to increase attendance; ensure that PAL sessions are timed to support the needs of the mentees; sessions are timetabled where possible and improve the collection of attendance and evaluation data.

SECTION 5: Phase 3

All schools who participated in Phase 2 are continuing into Phase 3. There have been changes of module and PAL is to be extended across both modules in some cases. In the new school of Politics, Philosophy and Language and Communication Sciences there will be a single module for all first year students which will be mentored by students from all three programmes. In the new school of Health Sciences first years on the new paramedic course will be mentored by medical students.

Participating schools / programmes

Faculty	School	Autumn semester	Spring semester
SCI	Chemistry (CHE)	✓	✓
	Computing Science (CMP)	✓	TBC
	Environmental Sciences (ENV)	✓	✓
SSF	International Development (DEV)	✓	✓
	Norwich Business School (NBS)	✓	✓
HUM	AMA: Film, Television and Media	✓	
	PPL: Philosophy; Political, Social and International Studies; Language and Communication Sciences	✓	
FMH	Norwich Medical School (MED)	✓	✓
	HSC: Nursing Sciences; Paramedic Sciences; Rehabilitation Sciences	✓	✓

A number of changes have been put into place in the light of Phase 2 experience and student evaluations.

Recruitment

The recruitment began in January 2014 in order to ensure that it is complete in advance of the revision and exam periods for the majority of students. Approximately 130 mentors and 14 officers have been recruited to date. As in Phase 1 mentors and officers are contracted and paid for their roles. The contracted period has been

increased from the Autumn semester only to include the Spring semester. This allows for extending PAL across both semesters and allows mentors and officers to contribute to the recruitment and training of the next generation of mentors. Mentors are contracted to complete a maximum of 50 hours and officers will complete a maximum of 60 hours.

Training

A 3-part training programme has been developed with two parts focussing on generic aspects of the development and delivery of PAL and the third part school specific training. In addition officers are provided with leadership training by colleagues from CSED. The first part of training has been completed for the majority of students. The second and school specific parts will take place in Week 0 or Week 1 of the new academic year.

Timetabling and timing

Meeting have been held with LTS team leaders to put PAL sessions onto the student timetables. This is one of the most challenging aspects of implementing PAL as time slots need to be found when both mentees and mentors are available and to ensure that the sessions are not too far removed from relevant teaching.

All schools are offered 12 PAL sessions across one or two semesters. The timing of sessions is decided by individual schools in order to support students at key points of the academic year, such as settling in, formative or summative assignments, and preparation for work-based experience or choosing modules for subsequent years.

Configuration of groups and teamwork

In a number of schools where attendance has been low the number of groups has been reduced with the potential for increasing the number according to demand. In some cases mentors will work in groups of 3 or 4 initially to allow for flexibility of delivery. Officers are encouraged to work in teams themselves and encourage the same of their mentors, with regular meetings and debrief sessions. This provides the opportunity to problem-solve and share good practice.

Communication

Difficulties with direct communication between mentors and mentees have been addressed. Currently data protection prevents mentors accessing mentees email addresses. It will be negotiated with individual schools for officers to have access to cohort email addresses to encourage attendance. Mentors will collect email addresses from mentees who attend sessions. Blackboard will remain the official means of communicating with mentors. Module leads are encouraged to add officers and mentors to module Blackboard sites to access current course materials. Facebook and Twitter are to be used at the mentors' / officers' discretion.

Evaluation

As in Phase 2 schools identify their own aims for PAL. This may be enhanced retention, improved performance, stronger engagement with the module, improved social interaction within and between years and employability. In Phase 3 there will be stronger evidence on gathering data such as comparisons of attrition before and after implementing PAL; comparing marks / grade profiles; monitoring attendance; student satisfaction surveys; reports to SSLCs; gathering exit data on mentors' and officers' first employment destinations.

In addition to evaluation measures used in Phases 1 and 2, a Teaching Fellowship project entitled 'Measuring the impact of PAL on students' performance and module evaluations' is to be conducted throughout the course of 2014-15. A project evaluating Speech and Language Therapy students' experience of PAL is also planned.

Completion of evaluation forms during later PAL sessions has been the most reliable way of collecting data in Phase 2; however this does not capture students who drop out of the scheme earlier in the year. Evaluation will be conducted electronically and in hard copy form and made available from the beginning of the academic year in order to try to capture as much data as possible.

Formalising CPD opportunities for mentors and officers

Mentors will be encouraged to include PAL activities in their Higher Education Achievement Records (HEAR) when these are introduced into UEA. Discussions have taken place with PGR training coordinators in some Faculties to ensure that PAL activities can contribute to PGR/PGT officers' Personal and Professional Development (PPD) credits

SECTION 6: Phase 4

Currently the PAL pilot project is due to complete in December 2015. A proposal is to be prepared for submission to the October 2014 LTC to request extension of funding for a minimum of 6 months. This would allow for the completion of a third cycle of PAL across the Autumn and Spring semesters giving the opportunity for further evaluation and collection of data relating to the key objectives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The PAL team would like to thank the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Academic, Heads of Faculties and Faculty Learning and Teaching Quality Committee members for the support they have given to the implementation of PAL. We are especially grateful to Adam Longcroft, Academic Director for Taught Programmes, for his support throughout Phases 1 and 2 of PAL.

We are very grateful to our colleagues in the Centre for Staff and Educational Development, Dean of Students and the Students' Union for contributing to the training of officers and mentors.

Within the schools module conveners, officers and mentors have worked extremely hard to make PAL work for them. In particular the enormous enthusiasm of the officers and mentors in sometimes difficult circumstances has helped to motivate the whole team and drive PAL forward.

We also thank the mentees who attended the sessions and helped to demonstrate that PAL can and will work.