

PEER ASSISTED LEARNING (PAL)

Bridging the gap between school and university is a longstanding issue in HE, requiring students to adapt to a different educational environment.

What is PAL?

PAL is a student-to-student support in which higher year students ('leaders') facilitate study sessions for lower year students.

It is noteworthy that the students' active engagement from the early stages of the process is a critical element of a successful scheme. PAL is a scheme which is run by students for students.

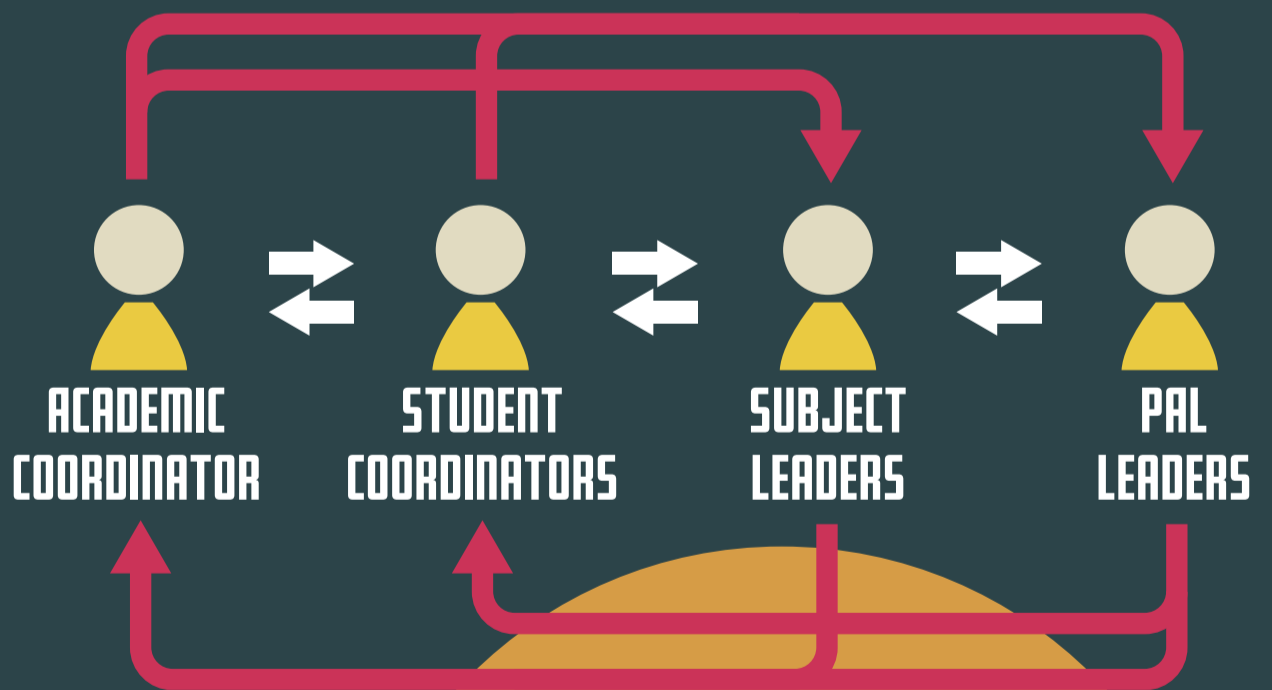
PAL Structure

Leaders and coordinators take on different responsibilities:

Subject Leaders plan the sessions and prepare the relevant materials.

PAL Leaders use these materials to facilitate discussions around selected topics in small groups of students.

The Academic Coordinator and Student Coordinators supervise the overall organisation of PAL and the communication between leaders and participants.



Evaluation of the Scheme

Staff-student partnership in planning, implementing and coordinating the system is essential. PAL is a scheme run by students for students.

Getting feedback, feeding forward the feedback and taking quick action in order to resolve the issues and to improve the scheme are crucial strategies to keep students motivated.



Challenges

Participant attendance is usually a significant issue in PAL, but formally timetabling the sessions and linking session plans to recent teaching materials and future class tests can help.