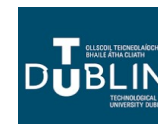


**International Forum for Peer Learning and Support  
Livestream Programme  
March 25<sup>th</sup> 2024 (GMT)**



<b><i>Morning Lightning Talks &amp; narrated poster presentations</i></b>	<b>EQ002 *Livestream</b>
10:30 – 11:00	<b><i>Lightning Talks (10:30-11:00) and narrated poster presentations (11:30-12:40)</i></b> Fionnuala Darby, TU Dublin: <i>'BRAVING' the 'Four Freedoms' for Peer Review</i>  Jonathan Cole, Queens University Belfast: <i>Enhancing sense of belonging through PAL</i>  Jo Lewis, University of the West of England: <i>From practice to professional qualification</i>
11:00 – 11:20	
11:30 – 12:00	Kerry Lawless, Amber Walsh Olesen, Órla O'Donoghue, Kerry Lawless, and Aoife Griffin University of Galway Students' Union: <i>CÉIM Peer Learning: The Leader Journey</i> (poster)  Anna Wirstedt, Annette Zeidler and Ghiya Maatouk, Malmö University: <i>Lowered Thresholds to Higher Education through SI</i> (poster)  Conor Start, University of Hull: <i>Using feedback to support impact evaluation of Peer Assisted Student Success (PASS)</i>
12:10 – 12:40	Presenters: Akasha Dryden and Ryan Smith, Senior Peer Leaders, University of the West of England <i>Supporting the Creative Environment: Studio practice, facilitation, wellbeing and resilience.</i>
12:45 – 13:30	
<b><i>Afternoon Presentations</i></b>	<b>EQ002 *Livestream</b>
13:30 – 14:20	PRESENTATION Presenter: Jenny Stowar and Anna Baker, London School of Economics <i>Peer Mentoring for Neurodivergent students: a staff/student collaborative pilot at LSE</i>
14:30 – 15:00	Presenter: Samantha Pilkington, Senior Peer Leader, University of the West of England <i>Life beyond PAL: drawing parallels between good, reflective habits in peer learning and in healthcare</i>

**Lightning Talks and Posters (10:30 – 12:00):**

<p>Fionnuala Darby, Technological University Dublin</p>	<p><b>'BRAVING' the 'Four Freedoms' for Peer Review</b></p> <p>This lightning talk will share an approach to peer review that aims to foster meaningful learning with curiosity and trust at its core. Peer learning and support in higher education is often exclusively student-centric in focus. The collaborative and reciprocal learning activities our students in an academic setting engage with through peer review are lacking among staff. Cross-cutting and intersecting the work of Brené Brown's 'BRAVING' inventory tool (2021) as an approach to how we show up at work, and Laura Morgan Robert's Four Freedom's at work (2023) that liberate a workforce, attendees will find out how to engage with this approach with colleagues and adapt the principles and tools introduced for student-to-student peer review. Implementing this approach benefits both staff development and student learning, emphasising the interconnectedness of staff and student learning experiences. Practical tips and strategies for implementing this approach in an academic setting will be provided and potential challenges and how they can be overcome are considered and addressed.</p>
<p>Jonathan Cole, Queen's University Belfast</p>	<p><b>Enhancing sense of belonging through PAL</b></p> <p>Connection is said to be the key foundational theme to promote a sense of belonging, which is associated with motivation and engagement. The peer-assisted learning (PAL) scheme for first- and second-year engineering undergraduates, which involves informal and friendly sessions characterised by collaboration and communication, represents one part of our School's strategy for enhancing connections. PAL sessions are marked on students' timetables, emphasising their place in the schedule, albeit attendance being voluntary. Mentors consist of second-, third- and final-year undergraduates and a new team is selected each year. Mentees can work on whatever they need to, with as little or as much help as needed. Mentoring involves challenging the learner rather than just giving the method and answer. This has enabled the learner to understand the key principles, learn throughout the process and present solutions confidently. The PAL mentors are open to chat about academic-related and extracurricular aspects, thereby further building connections. Students report no barriers to attending PAL although many choose to work in their own small groups instead. Conditions for a successful PAL scheme include invested and enthusiastic mentors, suitable time and location for sessions, and effective advertising.</p>
<p>Jo Lewis, University of the West of England</p>	<p><b>From practice to professional qualification</b></p> <p>UWE Bristol PAL Leaders and Senior PAL Leaders can opt in to undertake an ILM* Level 3 qualification in Effective Mentoring as part of their personal and professional development. This short presentation will highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how this formal qualification supports our Leaders in their role;</li> <li>• the employability 'edge' it gives them;</li> <li>• the impact on UWE's PAL provision and on Library staff involved in the assessing.</li> </ul> <p>*Institute of Leadership and Management</p>

<p>Kerry Lawless, Amber Walsh Olesen, Órla O'Donoghue, Kerry Lawless, and Aoife Griffin, University of Galway Students' Union</p>	<p><b>CÉIM Peer Learning: The Leader Journey</b> (digital poster presentation)</p> <p>At University of Galway Students' Union and University of Galway, CÉIM* peer learning has become an integral piece of the academic support provided to 1st year students. Since 2013, CÉIM has supported the transition to higher education and learning of thousands of students, and is now operating across 10 different disciplines, and the programme is continuing to grow annually. All this progress cannot be done without the hard work and dedication of our student leaders. This poster focuses on the leader journey and highlights all the steps involved in being a CÉIM leader, from the recruitment process to their final week as leaders, and beyond. We drill down into leader training, and the support provided to the leaders throughout their time in the programme, as well as the work they commit to over the year. And of course, how could we not mention the ways in which we celebrate all our leaders' efforts throughout the year! *CÉIM means 'step' or 'degree' in the Irish language.</p>
<p>Anna Wirstedt, Annette Zeidler and Ghiya Maatouk, Malmö University, Sweden</p>	<p><b>Lowered Thresholds to Higher Education through Supplemental Instruction (Peer Assisted Learning)</b> (digital poster presentation)</p> <p>Through the project "Lowered Thresholds to Higher Education through SI" students from groups that are underrepresented in Swedish higher education get inspired to apply to a university. For Malmö University the project is an important part of its work with widening recruitment. SI Leaders from Malmö University become a way to reach out to presumptive students in upper secondary schools in the region. Through the SI Leaders young people from homes that are unaccustomed to higher education can get a dedramatized image of university studies. The project aims to decrease the number of pupils dropping out of their upper secondary studies and at the same time increase the throughput in challenging courses, school results and the pupils' self-esteem. It also aims to stimulate pupils' skills of creative thinking and problem solving. The thresholds between the education systems need to be lowered. Another purpose with the project is to create and strengthen the collaboration between Malmö University and the upper secondary schools in the region. The project has a regional SI-platform for exchanging experiences and networking.</p>
<p>Conor Start, University of Hull</p>	<p><b>Using feedback to support impact evaluation of Peer Assisted Student Success (PASS)</b> (digital poster presentation)</p> <p>The University of Hull first implemented PASS in 2011 and the scheme has been delivered through the Skills Team. PASS typically involves more experienced students (trained PASS Leaders) facilitating student learning in timetabled study sessions. PASS has been found to have several benefits for students, staff and the wider institution. For example, PASS appears to cultivate course communities (Hilsdon, 2014), enhance student motivation and reduce learning difficulties (Tu &amp; Chiang, 2016), as well as improving equity in diverse cohorts (Dancer et al., 2016). These findings suggest that PASS can be beneficial in multiple ways, offering benefits to a wide range of students and subject areas with diverse challenges. As part of the University of Hull's Student Experience and Success Strategy 2022-2027, we aim to bring the benefits of PASS to as many students as possible. One of our roles is to evaluate the PASS programme in our community, examining multiple angles to understand its impact. Throughout the academic year, we ask PASS Leaders to tell us about their experiences and provide feedback on our training and support using surveys. Additionally, we collect feedback from those students who attend PASS to understand the impact it has had on them and their studies. In the coming months, we will be looking at other sources of data to help us evaluate the PASS programme throughout 2022/23. This could include student focus groups, attendance and grade data and feedback from our academic contacts.</p>

## Presentations (12:10 -15:00)

<p>Akasha Dryden and Ryan Smith, University of the West of England</p>	<p><b>Supporting the Creative Environment: Studio practice, facilitation, wellbeing and resilience</b></p> <p>As PAL session attendees, former PAL leaders and now Senior PAL Leaders (SPLs), we have both experienced the benefits of PAL at the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol). The peer-to-peer support network which the scheme facilitates has been fundamental to our integration into university learning processes. The opportunities provided to develop reflective practice and facilitate skills sharing between students, including ourselves, has been invaluable to our experiences at UWE Bristol. The PAL scheme also provides useful support from the PAL team, who create a welcoming and safe environment to develop our facilitation and mentoring skills.</p> <p>We are both interested in the wellbeing and resilience aspect of our current SPL roles. Akasha is mentoring Art Department PAL leaders at UWE City Campus; Ryan is mentoring Architecture PAL Leaders at Frenchay Campus. In this presentation, we will highlight how both roles require care and attention to the safeguarding of the creative process and active support of studio practice and explain how these elements are integral to the wellbeing and resilience of our mentees and, in turn, their students at UWE Bristol and beyond. We will also show how the consistent reflection of: 'What did we do? What worked? How could we improve?' embeds a healthy, fluid practice which supports growth, problem-solving and an empowering positive attitude, which in turn will provide a healthy basis for them/us in their/our workplaces beyond university.</p>
<p>Jenny Stowar and Anna Baker, London School of Economics</p>	<p><b>Peer Mentoring for Neurodivergent students: a staff/student collaborative pilot at LSE</b></p> <p>The transition to higher education for students who identify as Neurodivergent can be marked by high levels of stress and anxiety, and may be shaped by their poor prior educational experiences (Bhandari &amp; Rainford 2023). Many Neurodivergent students enter higher education expecting to have a difficult time; as institutions it is our duty to make sure this particularly negative expectation does not come true. However, considering the diversity of Neurodivergent students' experiences, how can we effectively address this? LSE has had an extensive Student Academic Mentoring (SAM) programme since 2017. The SAM programme's dual key aims are to improve students' wellbeing and sense of belonging through peer to peer mentoring. In 2021 a student proposal was brought to us to pilot a branch of SAM for Neurodivergent students. In this presentation we would like to show you the story so far of our response to that proposal. We will take you through year 1 of our pilot, important lessons we've learnt along the way from our Neurodivergent mentors and mentees, and our plans for improvements and expansion in phase 2 of the pilot next academic year. We hope this presentation may inspire other institutions and connect us with others who are interested in trying a pilot like this themselves.</p>
<p>Samantha Pilkington, University of the West of England</p>	<p><b>Life beyond PAL: drawing parallels between good, reflective habits in peer learning and in healthcare</b></p> <p>In this session, we will explore reflective practice as a means of continuous development and improvement: how it can be used in peer learning, and the parallels between reflective practice for peer learning and for healthcare. For healthcare degree programmes, and by extension, other vocational degree programmes, we can use the peer learning pathway as a means to form good reflective habits before qualification and embarking upon continuous professional development &amp; reflection in the workplace. We will discuss good, workplace-relevant reflection and development techniques that can be incorporated into PAL, which are</p>

	<p>used across the University of the West of England. These should encourage the recognition of strengths and weaknesses to guide on-going learning throughout the student journey and as a graduated professional and allow us to consider whether we are producing experienced PAL practitioners that engage positively in reflection and understand the need to continue to do so. PAL at UWE provides the opportunity to fully embrace reflective practice, embed positive habits whilst reconstructing negative habits, and boost confidence and well-being before joining the clinical workforce, and indeed, the wider workplace beyond PAL and healthcare too. We will also discuss how to keep our practice current and relevant, and how to dynamically assess and revise our practitioner toolbox as reflective peer learning leaders and supervisors.</p>
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