Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

PAL
PEER
ASSISTED
LEARNING

PAL Facilitator Training Manual 2019

Acknowledgement

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Some information in this booklet has been adapted or taken from the:

USA
- Supplemental Instruction Facilitator and Supervisor Manual - University of Missouri – Kansas City
- Skyline College handbook
- University of Wyoming Supplemental Instruction handbook
- Chaffey College Supplemental Instruction Manual

UK and EUROPE
- University of Manchester PASS Facilitator and Supervisor Manual
- Lund University, National Centre for Supplemental Instruction Scandinavia

AUSTRALIA
- University of Wollongong (PASS Facilitator and Supervisor Manual)
- University of Newcastle PASS Facilitator Manual

Web links (where documents are available online)
http://www.uwyo.edu/learn/Participantstaff/_files/201510.pdf
http://www.chaffey.edu/titlev/si/documents/si_training_manual.pdf
https://www.skylinecollege.edu/collegesuccessinitiative/assets/documents/resources/Supplemental%20Instruction%20Training.pdf

Contents

Introduction

Welcome to Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) training!

We will

- *help* you develop the confidence, knowledge, and skills you need to be effective PAL Facilitators.

- *help* you understand better why PAL methods work, and how similar schemes are used effectively all over the world.

- *introduce* you to some of the established theory underpinning PAL.

- *model* some of the techniques you can use during your own facilitated sessions.

- *give* you practice in using these techniques yourself through guided activities.

- *explain* how to be a PAL Facilitator in the Goldsmiths' context.

- *start* to build a Goldsmiths PAL community where we can support and help each other.

- *enable* you to critically evaluate your strengths and weaknesses to allow you to grow as a PAL Facilitator.

- *explore* with you the benefits you will gain from participating as a PAL Facilitator.

- *show* you where to go if you need more help.

- *help* you establish lines of communication with Participants (participants) and staff

Chapter 1 Meet the team

By the end of this chapter you will be familiar with the PAL team in the Academic Skills Centre at Goldsmiths. You will know when, how and why to contact them.

Siân Cannell: Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) and Academic Skills Centre (ASC) Coordinator

Siân is the PAL and Academic Skills Coordinator and the most important contact for you to remember.
She is a Goldsmiths Alumni (English & Comparative Literature) who understands the excitement and struggles of being a student. Having worked in Higher Education for 6 years across various departments, she is passionate about the student experience, student wellbeing and success throughout the student journey. Siân is interested in how peer-to-peer learning can benefit all Participants, and believes that both the participant and the facilitators of the PAL programme will develop a better understanding of their subject area.

Will Hall: Study Skills Tutor

Will has over 10 years' experience working with Participants supporting their academic skills development. As well as his wider study support knowledge, Will has training in working with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties. This knowledge has enabled him to work successfully with Participants who might have various challenges with their academic studies, Participants who may need to spend more time working on their studies than others, and feel frustrated at times. He believes everybody has different challenges with learning, regardless of their current academic ability, and this is where the PAL program can help. Will is now a true convert to PAL- style facilitation which he believes can encourage growth and bring out the best in all Participants.

Will can be contacted at w.hall@gold.ac.uk

Sian and Will are accredited PAL (also known as PASS/SI) trainers. They will work with you to help you become an effective PAL Facilitator through training sessions and modelling some of the techniques you will be using in your departmental sessions. They will also help you on your PAL journey with follow-up activities throughout the academic year.

For any issues, questions or administration of tasks such as timetables, rooming, pay, attendance or help with how to plan and run your sessions contact Siân at PAL@gold.ac.uk
Always copy your PAL Partner into any emails that also concern them.

For urgent enquiries or questions you can also call Siân on **020 7896 2147**

Chapter 2 History of PAL and why it is successful

By the end of this chapter you will be able to understand what PAL is, how it developed and why it is successful.

History

PAL derives from the American Supplemental Instruction (SI) model developed at the University of Missouri, Kansas City in 1973 by Dr Deana Martin. In the early 1990s the SI model was adapted for use in the UK and renamed PASS.

PAL was first introduced at the University of Manchester in 1995. The University of Manchester has been recognised internationally as the UK national benchmark for PAL and operated as the National Centre for PASS/PAL/SI from 2009-2015.

PAL was introduced to Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2006, PAL has been refreshed
PAL does not replace any form of interaction between staff and Participants but instead provides additional opportunity for all Participants to interact with their peers in collaborative study groups within the context of their discipline. PAL supports the student experience both academically and socially, providing an opportunity for peer interaction and fostering a greater sense of community. PAL is aimed at benefiting all Participants, regardless of academic competency.

How PAL works

PAL is usually attached to a challenging unit(s) within a degree course or department and provides a safe environment for Participants to discuss ideas, share problems and resolve questions in a setting that supplements the core curriculum.

Trained higher year Participants (PAL Facilitators) work in pairs to facilitate regular study groups usually comprising 6-12 lower year Participants (participants). Sessions generally take place in weekly, one-hour timetabled slots at a time available to all Participants, although sessions are not compulsory and are also tailored to fit departmental needs.

Why PAL works

The sessions are intended to promote collaborative learning through exploratory discussion and provide an opportunity for PAL Facilitators and participant to share their experiences. Discussions are based on existing course materials – information that has already been received by the participant or that which is in recommended texts. In this way, it helps to ensure Facilitators are not engaged in the delivery or teaching of new material.

What PAL is NOT

PAL sessions are not tutorials/ seminars and therefore the Facilitators do not offer answers to problems, but promote a coordinated group effort to find the solution.
The sessions are more like a structured study session.
Facilitators do not re-teach material but instead encourage Participants to

compare notes, clarify what they read and hear, analyse, criticise, question and seek verification of ideas. In addition to consolidating knowledge of the subject and gaining deeper conceptual understanding, study and learning strategies are integrated into sessions.

The sessions are structured to ensure that a productive learning environment is created but it should also be noted that they are informal, flexible and can be fun!

Who are the PALs

PAL Facilitators are the key people in making the scheme a success. They are continuing Participants that have previously been at the same level of study as Participants. They receive comprehensive training and ongoing support which is critical to the maintenance and development of a scheme. Initial training is supplemented with ongoing observations and regular, discipline-based debriefs; these bring all Facilitators together to share best practice and challenges/successes of their individual sessions.

PAL Facilitator debriefs focus on both process and content of sessions: reflecting on their initial training and current experiences to provide support in their facilitation skills and techniques; ensuring effective feedback to academic staff on common problems experienced by participant and an insight into how the current material delivered within lectures, seminars and tutorials is being received.

As a co-curricular activity, PAL can be implemented to:

- support the learning experience and involve Participants as partners in their learning experience
- assist the transition into and within HE
- enable enhanced interaction with peers (within and outside year cohort)
- provide opportunities for Participants to become more engaged in their course
- improve academic performance and achievement and increase retention
- provide an additional mechanism for communication and feedback between teaching staff and Participants
- provide further opportunity for the development of intellectual and professional competencies of PAL Facilitators and participant

Chapter 3 Running PAL Sessions

By the end of this chapter you will understand more fully what a PAL session is and will be more confident running a PAL session with another PAL Facilitator.

You will be equipped to run a session. You will understand the importance of group study to effective learning. You will practise group management and some techniques on how to move between different group patterns effectively.

Some specific group management skills you will be able to see and practice during the training are:

- *Setting up the room and being prepared.*
- *Agenda Setting.*
- *Timing the sessions*
- *Encouraging discussion and redirecting questioning,*
- *Reviewing, giving feedback, and ending sessions*

Your First Session

The first session is likely to be your most daunting (that is perfectly normal!).

This plan provides a *semi-structured* method to help it run smoothly. You may use it in full, adapt parts, or use the principles to create your own. You should always have some structure prepared for your sessions, even if you don't follow it rigidly.

Although this first session may be the most structured of all sessions, it should still be informal and friendly.

Aims of the first PAL session:
- To get to know your Participants
- To explain your role as a PAL Facilitator
- To set expectations about PAL sessions and interactions for the term
- To give Participants an opportunity to ask for advice or information
  about the university/college, the local area, the library, accommodation, second-hand books etc.
- To agree some ground rules/ set boundaries for the sessions
- To operate like a PAL session even though subject content may be minimal

Example first session:

Welcome
Introduce yourself and explain your role as PAL Facilitator
Tell them the outline of the session - you may want to write it on the board or get a scribe to do so
(e.g. 1. Welcome and Introductions, 2. What is PAL? 3. Benefits of PAL etc.).

Introductions
You will want to introduce yourself at the start - the main thing is to make it short and lively.
There should be a sense that you are glad to be working with them, looking forward to what unfolds, and that the sessions are designed to be collaborative.

It will be useful to spend some time just getting to know your Participants (and them getting to know each other!).

You may want to use an icebreaker around names to get everyone feeling at ease or put the group into pairs to get people to find out about, and introduce, each other.
Name badges or cards for the first session can be a good idea.

Register! Take registers and surveys in session
- Every student must sign into the PAL session.
- Please send the attendance sheet around the room at both the beginning and the end of your session.
- This information is purely for statistical information as it helps PAL to continue to run. Around weeks 4-5 and weeks 9-10 of each academic year, Facilitators will be asked to take copies of a PAL survey to distribute and collect during their PAL sessions. It is a requirement of all Facilitators that these surveys be completed and promptly returned to the PAL office, as they provide essential qualitative feedback to assist with the evaluation of the PAL Scheme.

What is PAL?
A few ideas:
- Explain that as PAL is not something they are likely to have come across before, it will be useful to explain the aims and features of PAL.
- Ask if anyone has come across PAL before or anything similar.
- Explain that PAL is being introduced to help Participants learn more effectively and do better in their academic work
- Reinforce the idea that PAL works by using group discussion to enhance understanding of
course material and by making it less risky to admit to problems and confusions.
- Talk through the features of PAL sessions

General challenges
Make sure you have a general check-in with your participants at the beginning of each session.
- Ask if there are any challenges with settling-in they might be dealing with.
- Ask if there are any questions about or challenges with the course/ department/ module
- Check to see if they need help with finding their way round,
using library computers, form-filling etc.
- Ask whether they have settled into their hall of residence
- Ask if they have found their way around New Cross
- Ask what nightlife they have discovered

Remember to 'redirect' questions – Ask whether anyone in the group knows the answer or can offer advice. You, or even better a member of the group, can scribe the questions and responses.

How do we want PAL to run? (or Ground Rules)
Setting ground rules with your participants in friendly peer-to–peer setting is particularly important. These should be discussed together, agreed, and written down but can include:
- we agree and stick to starting and finishing times
- we are working collaboratively, not competitively
- The atmosphere is inclusive with everyone having a voice
- everyone turns up regularly unless they notify you otherwise
- we encourage everyone to contribute in whatever ways they choose
- dominant and aggressive behaviour is not acceptable
- discriminatory comments are not acceptable

- anyone can point out if any of these rules are being ignored or broken

With that being said, keep you PAL sessions informal and relaxed. Let the Participants know that you are there to work with and help them.

Wrap up
- Tell them you are available to help if they see you around the campus, etc.
- Invite them to say hello if they see you around the campus, and indeed any other members of the group.
- Tell them you look forward to working with them over the year.
- Give them the PAL@gold.ac.uk email address. If you wish to provide your @gold.ac.uk email address you can do so but set boundaries on what it should be used for.
- Find out how they would like to be communicated with.
- Remind them the date, time and place for the next PAL session and suggest they write it in their diary.
- And finally… thank everyone for their contribution to their first session, and say that you look forward to seeing them next time.

Subsequent Sessions

Now that you have already met *most* of your group you can start to do a little planning for the next session. Don't worry too much about having a perfect plan but it is important for you to have an idea of what you are doing.

Remember you are **a Facilitator NOT a Teacher** so the content should come from the group within the framework you have designed. Make sure you have talked to your partner about your respective roles.

New Participants can attend at any time throughout the term and you will also have some regular Participants leave. This is fine but feel free to ask the PAL team to contact them and check in with them.

Before the next Session
- In the week leading up to your next PAL session make an announcement at the end of lectures/seminars that the PAL session is taking place.
- Check you have a copy of the register or can access this online.
- Make sure you have all the materials you need e.g. stationery and paper
- Set up the room
- If you need the internet and projector display set it up and log on before your session starts.

During the Session
- Start your session promptly
- Remember to be open to facilitate what the group wants to do set an agenda.
- If you already have an agenda from last week review it again and adapt it to whatever suits the group.

Before closing give everyone time to reflect either individually or as a group.
Close the session and end on time.

After the Session
- Input completed PAL registers on the VLE (learn.gold) and/or return them to the PAL team by email.

Chapter 4 Participants are all different

E*quality, diversity and inclusion are core* principles of *PAL and Goldsmiths*

By the end of this chapter you will be able to deal more effectively with some of the different types of Participants you may encounter. You will be more confident in handling challenging situations that you may experience in your group sessions. You will be more aware of how to use inclusive practices in your facilitation of sessions.

*Note: Inclusive practices in learning and teaching are **good** important practices in learning and teaching and will develop the learning of all Participants. These techniques are great for any kind of group facilitation and are not just focused on 'difficult' Participants.*

Some of our ideas:
In a group situation such as PAL, people act differently than they would in a one-to-one situation, or in a lecture. PAL Facilitators should be aware of the characteristics or behaviours that Participants might bring to these sessions and the potential roles that Participants can play within a PAL session to help enable better group dynamics.

Below outlines some of the types of student behaviour that you may experience in your groups and how to best facilitate their learning.

Specific learning difficulties, disabilities or neuro-diversity (SpLDs)
It is important that your sessions are accessible to a wide range of Participants. These might include Participants (and PAL Facilitators) with physical disabilities, mental illness, learning difficulties or demonstrate neuro-diversity such as autism. They might:
- have limited concentration
- need longer breaks
- need certain lighting or seating conditions
- need proximity to the board
- need to lip read

It is important to ask at the beginning of each session if there are new members of the group and give an opportunity for Participants to tell you quietly or in the group if accommodations need to be made. Research shows that inclusive practices for such Participants are also beneficial for **all** Participants so remember to think about a possibly diverse set of needs in your planning. Most of all, don't worry about Participants declaring disabilities or difference. It means they are comfortable with you and the group.

Participants who seem introvert or quiet
In any group there are usually some quieter Participants who do not talk much in group discussions. They may seem withdrawn from the group. Some quiet Participants may be active listeners, taking notes on the group progress, whereas others appear to be less interested in the group's activities. Remember not all Participants are extrovert, and introverts can play an important role in facilitating learning. Research says that introverts in many circumstances can be higher achievers in academic work. They are often good listeners and pay attention to detail. They may be thinking about the best thing to say or be trying to process information in a more critical way.

Encourage Group Input
When dealing with quiet Participants it is important to assure the group that all

input is appreciated, regardless of whether if it is correct or incorrect. This will encourage quiet Participants to contribute answers and questions that they are less confident with.

Rather than saying "that's right" you could use phrases such as: "thanks for that" or "That's a useful comment".

Ask Personally Directed Questions
Previous PALs say: 'This is recommended to be used with caution because it can single people out.'

Another strategy used when dealing with quiet Participants is to ask them specifically by name for an answer. This should be used carefully, as some Participants are made overly uncomfortable by being "put on the spot". Asking a student for their input directly can encourage them to say things that they otherwise may be less confident to say. This technique also reinforces the idea that their input is valued. It will also help the Participants remember each other's names.

Break into Sub-Groups
Previous PALs say: 'this works really well.'

Separating a group into smaller subgroups can encourage a quiet student to talk. This strategy is particularly effective when Participants are given a task to do in pairs that necessitates input from both members. If a task is given that involves reporting their results to the rest of the group, it can be helpful to require both Participants to be verbally involved in this report.

Useful Phrases
"Remember that all answers and questions are appreciated here"
"John, what do you think about it?"

Participants who seem extrovert, talkative or want to take control
There are some Participants who are confident in giving answers to all questions and like to talk in order to demonstrate learning. They may not be as good at writing notes. Maybe they process their learning through talking. These Participants may be motivated by a desire to impress other Participants with their knowledge, but may just want to demonstrate their enthusiasm and share it. These types of Participants are very important to group dynamics but we need to be careful that they do not dominate the session, especially if paired with a quieter student.

You may need at times to be **assertive** in dealing with such Participants.

Pair with struggling participants
Talkative/ knowledgeable Participants usually appreciate this opportunity to spread their knowledge, and less knowledgeable or struggling Participants can benefit greatly from this.

Ask Student to Scribe
If a student is dominating a brainstorming session, it can be useful to request that they scribe for the group. This acknowledges their worth as group members, and clears the conversation space for other Participants to contribute.

Require References:
Previous PALs say: 'this can be too scary and formal for a PAL session. You could ask them to send these to the PAL team to distribute to the group in a follow-up email.'

A student that has contributed many answers to the group discussion is often very

confident in their answers. To slow the pace of this student and allow other Participants to participate, it can be useful to ask the student to back up their answers with a source such as the lecture notes or a textbook.

Test Answers with Group:
This is an essential element of PAL, and one that is made more vital when dealing with talkative Participants. Struggling Participants become involved more if they are asked their opinion of the talkative student's answer.

Useful Phrases
"John, would you come up and scribe for the group"
"That's a great answer Sirca, can you find any references to back it up?"
"Mohammed, what do you think of Sirca's answer?"

Participants who seem disengaged
Sometimes Participants come to the session but seem disengaged. Maybe they start playing with their mobile devices, and don't join in with the group. There can be many reasons for this. Maybe the session was not what they expected. Maybe they have a specific question and so not want to engage with the process until that question is answered. Maybe something is going on in their personal life and so they are preoccupied. Maybe the Participants is from a different culture, or may have a specific learning difficulty where social engagement is problematic. It is important not to jump to conclusions about the motivation for their behaviour but to try to stress that joining in is an important part of the PAL methodology and it doesn't work if some Participants do not engage.

Break Into Smaller Groups:
When the group size is small enough, it becomes much more noticeable for all participants that the student who seems disengaged is not participating. This is particularly noticeable in pairs, as when Participants are given a task that involves talking, it is difficult to not do so.

Target Areas of Interest:
A good method is to ask each student to write an issue of concern on a piece of paper, crumple it, and put it in a container at the start of each session. As the session progresses, the group could take each issue out of the container and discuss it until all are satisfied with their knowledge about it. This method ensures that each member has an equal say in group direction, and that the areas of interest of the less engaged student are addressed.

Useful Phrases
"Janine, could you and Jose discuss this and develop a definition for the group?"
"I noticed that you are investigating [topic], Chan. Have you found anything the rest of the group might be interested in?"

Participants who want your individual attention
The type of behaviour is seen when the student attempts to ask questions directly to the PAL Facilitator during the session, or stays to talk with the Facilitator one-to-one after the session. They might send emails in the holidays asking for academic or pastoral help. A common request is for the PAL Facilitator to privately tutor the student, or for a referral to a private tutor.

Redirect the Question:
Previous PALs say: 'yes! Do this all the time!'
This is a primary tool for use with the student wanting attention, and is discussed in 'Redirection' found later in the manual.

Refer Student to Help
Textbooks, Lecturers, Tutors, websites and student organisations are valuable resources to PAL participants. Often, the student looking for attention is unaware of these resources, and could benefit greatly from them. These resources can offer help in ways that the PAL Facilitator is unable to, and can enhance the student's learning and contribution to the group. *See Referring Participants section of the manual for services that are available to Participants at Goldsmiths.*

Suggest Greater Attendance:
Previous PALs say: 'keep stressing this to participants!'
Attendance at all Lectures and Tutorials should be encouraged to all Participants, and greater attendance at PAL sessions can also be encouraged to those looking for more attention.

Pair Student with a Knowledgeable Student:
If the student requests help after a session, or during one, the intrinsic knowledge sharing goals of PAL suggest pairing them with a student who can help them, but making it clear that help should be confined to within that session.

Useful Phrases
"I think the **Academic Skills Centre** might do workshops on that"
"If you find my PAL sessions useful, perhaps you should keep attending- we can cover your question next week."
"Participant 1, could you come over here and listen to what Participant 2 is saying, I think you might be able to help him"

Participants whose first language is not English
These Participants may be quieter and sometimes seem less active during group discussion. Occasionally they might stay in a group with someone from their country and discuss questions in their own language. As English is not their first language, they may be afraid of making mistakes and as such avoid speaking in public or in groups with more confident colleagues. Research says that most international Participants are very keen to engage more actively and have made a big effort to come to another country to learn. They are often highly motivated and may be very knowledgeable in study skills as they have had to write many essays in English as part of their entrance to this country.

The following strategies were suggested by an international student who was a PAL Facilitator.

Explain concepts slowly and clearly:
Speaking is not the only language problem some Participants might face whose first language is not English. Listening can be a big challenge for them to overcome, as this may be their first time studying in a different language environment. A good strategy to help deal with this situation is to present the question or concept clearly and a little more slowly. However, be careful in using this strategy, as international Participants may feel insulted if the speed is too slow. Also, try to avoid using slang, colloquial expressions or abbreviations that

will be unfamiliar and possibly confusing to some Participants.

Break into small groups:
Group work is another effective way to deal with language barriers. Dividing the group into smaller groups or even into pairs will encourage everyone to become involved. Try to mix groups so that you don't always have the same nationality sitting together.

Scribing:
Another way to allow Participants to express their ideas, become involved and contribute is to allow them to scribe on the whiteboard. Some Participants may feel more comfortable being a scribe on the whiteboard as it requires fewer communication skills. Reassure these Participants if they have a problem with spelling or have difficulty with English grammar.

Build confidence:
Begin building confidence by selecting some easier questions for second language Participants to answer. This will help them build their confidence speaking in front of the group and in feeling comfortable with group activities. Again this technique has to be used carefully as some Participants may feel insulted if they are given too many easy questions.

Useful Phrases
"Well done, excellent job Chang. Why don't you go to the front and write you answer for everyone"

"Before we finish this topic, are there any questions anyone wants to ask? How about you, Sabine?"

English Language Centre
Ask these Participants whether they have spoken to or are aware of the English Language Centre: www.gold.ac.uk/english-language-centre

Chapter 5 Understanding relationships - Roles and Responsibilities of a PAL Facilitator

The experience of PAL largely takes place in a small group environment, therefore relationships formed are important. These relationships include Paticipants, PAL Facilitators, PAL Coordinator and departmental staff involved with the organisation of the sessions. Successful working relationships with all of these people are extremely important.

Understanding Relationships through PAL

Friendships
Within PAL Sessions, Participants are encouraged to ask and answer questions and gain valuable experience in communicating ideas related to their field of study with their peers. They are encouraged to direct conversation at the group, and to both ask and answer related questions, they have a motivation to get to know each other.
This has been observed to develop friendships, but also to help particularly knowledgeable Participants to express sophisticated concepts in words that all others can understand.

Familiar Social Interaction
For many Participants that attend PAL, their most recent education before university has been Secondary School or Further education. They may also have been out of education for some time. For these Participants, the small group nature of PAL, and the personal nature of the relationships it can foster may be similar to past social experiences in education. This can ease the transition into higher education for these Participants.

REDIRECTING - Direct discussion back to the group
Previous PALs say: 'this is the best facilitation tool!'
Through redirected questions answered by their group members, Participants learn that their peers hold much useful information and may have experienced similar problems. When questions are redirected to the group, steps are made that promote development of better peer-to-peer relationships. This is known as "redirecting".

Promote expansion upon one word answers and statements
If the PAL Facilitator encourages it, a culture can be developed within sessions of asking for expansion on these simple answers, promoting greater dialogue between Participants.

One method for achieving this would be to ask Participants to expand upon their answer. 'Can you say a little bit more about that?' By encouraging Participants to expand on their answers, relationships between Participants are enhanced, and communication skills are developed.

Set appropriate boundaries to avoid individual criticism

Appropriate boundaries must be negotiated by the group to ensure effective peer-to-peer relationship building in a PAL session. The group environment must be established to be inclusive and equal, and avoid personal criticism. This should be done in the first session.

Most PAL Facilitators favour using subtle statements to steer the group away from inappropriate topics of conversation. An example of this may be in a group that has just completed an activity, to which one group member's contribution was flawed. Rather than allow the group to search for the person who made the error, the PAL Facilitator should direct the conversation flow towards rectifying the error, by using subtle statements like "… but how do you think we could solve this problem". Redirection can then lead to a more rounded answer e.g. 'Can anyone think of another meaning for this concept?' or 'Can we interpret this in a different way?'.

PAL Facilitator to Participant Relationships

The relationship between PAL participant and their PAL Facilitator is vital to the success of their PAL experience. It should have clearly defined boundaries, but also be informal and friendly. Many of the "don'ts" are common to most other roles at the university; these include not forming too close a relationship with the Participants, and not privately tutoring Participants.

Participants should be very clear that it is **NOT** the role of the PAL Facilitator to provide answers or be a tutor.

PAL Facilitators are there to facilitate and promote the groups learning and this point needs to be made clear to participant (in a positive manner) during the first session, and throughout PAL sessions.

End of Term feedback from participants indicates there is sometimes confusion over this issue, with Participants commenting they had a "bad" PAL Facilitator who wouldn't or couldn't tell them the answer.

Suggestions for establishing good PAL Facilitator to attendee relationships
- Avoid participating in or allowing criticism of or complaint about teaching staff:
- It is not productive for Participants to complain about or critique the teaching style of lecturers or other staff in a PAL session.

Some possible phrases to use when group discussion strays into this territory include

"… Maybe try asking your tutor for help again in a different way if you think they are ignoring you"

"… Maybe you could ask the lecturer to re-visit the topic that needs more clarification"

"… Which part of that topic didn't you understand in the lecture? Perhaps we could talk about it here"

"… If you think that your assignment hasn't been marked properly, you should see your tutor/lecturer as soon as possible"

"… PAL isn't really the best place to complain or critique the lecturer/tutor. We are focusing on how we can all improve in our academic work."

Avoid content-related discussion outside of the session

Often Participants requiring extra help will approach the PAL Facilitator after their session. Sometimes they will request help on a particular issue, and occasionally ask if the PAL Facilitator can tutor them privately. When Participants are asking for extra help, the PAL Facilitator often feels obliged to answer their questions, particularly if it is a simple question. This should be avoided, because if encouraged, even just by one answer, it can become a regular occurrence. It can also take the session outside of the weekly PAL meeting and become instead an email group where Participants don't bother showing up.

Some possible ways to handle this situation, bearing in mind that it usually happens in a rush at the end of a session include:
- Write down their problem, and tell them it will be covered in next week's session.
- Refer them to the lecture notes, a textbook or another source like the Internet
- Encourage them to see their lecturer/tutor and discuss the problem with them
- If there are any other PAL participants still in the room, encourage the student to talk about their problem to the group
- Encourage them to attend the next PAL session.
- Signpost them to relevant services in the University.

Utilise opportunities for rapport building

Rapport is an integral part of the relationship between a PAL Facilitator and their session participants. Participants participate more in sessions for each person they feel comfortable and connected with in the room.

Some suggestions for rapport building with PAL participants include
- Learn participant's names. This enhances your connection with the Participants and facilitates group learning and management
- Sit with participants during lectures when appropriate
- Sit and speak as an equal during PAL sessions
- When constructing an example problem, perhaps relate it to your own life
- Acknowledge that the course is difficult, and that the Participants' problems are valid and reasonable
- Remember details about individuals that they have shared in previous sessions- maybe write them down so you can remember.

Boundaries

You are not part of the Academic Staff.
PAL does not replace any form of interaction between Academic staff and students but instead provides additional opportunities for all Participants to interact with their peers in collaborative study groups within the context of their discipline.

As such, **your role is not to teach**; your role is to facilitate student learning, helping Participants to find their own answers.

Please **do not take part in criticising** the Academic Staff in your department.
It is not productive for Participants to complain about or critique the teaching style of lecturers or other staff in a PAL session.

Some possible phrases to use when group discussion strays into this territory include:
- "Which part of that topic didn't you understand in the lecture? Perhaps we could talk about it here."
- "PAL isn't the place to complain or critique the lecturer/tutor. If you have a problem about them, then talking about it here won't achieve anything."

Do not provide answers to content-specific questions
Participants should be very clear that it is not the role of the PAL Facilitator to provide answers or be a tutor. PAL Facilitators are there to facilitate and promote the groups learning and this point needs to be made clear to Participants (in a positive manner) in the first session.

Through redirected questions, which are answered by their group members, Participants learn that their peers hold much useful information and may have experienced similar problems. When questions are redirected to the group, steps are made that promote development of better peer-to-peer relationships. This is known as "redirecting".

Do not provide support outside your PAL scheduled session
Often Participants requiring extra help will approach the PAL Facilitator after their session. Sometimes they will request help on a particular issue, and occasionally ask if the PAL Facilitator can tutor them privately. This should be avoided, as if encouraged, even just by one answer; it can become a regular occurrence.

Chapter 6 Being a PAL Facilitator at Goldsmiths

By the end of this chapter you will understand the expectations and demands of being a PAL Facilitator at Goldsmiths. You will know the key people you need to work with to achieve this. You will understand the administrative communicative and procedural tasks you need to perform to fulfil the role. You will be able to determine whether you can help a student with a particular issue or situation or whether to refer them, and you will have a clearer understanding of the referral process.
You will feel ready to understand and sign the contract outlining what a PAL Facilitator is.

It is worth checking this information regularly and it will be updated in the digital copy of the PAL handbook on the VLE page.

Referring Participants
Overall guidance and information for Participants can be found here:
gold.ac.uk/Participants

Most rooms you will be facilitating your PAL sessions in will have a phone by the lectern, however it would be helpful to **save the following telephone numbers into your phone in case of an emergency:**

Security – 020 7896 2121
Student Centre – 020 7919 7050
Campus Support Officers - 020 7919 7284
PAL coordinator – Siân Cannell – 020 7919 2147

Security
Security are open 24hrs.
They can assist in an emergency, with first aid, if you feel uncomfortable or need to report something, and they can also unlock rooms for you.
020 7896 2121
gold.ac.uk/Participants/report-a-problem

Student Centre
The Student Centre can help with all non-academic aspects of being a student at Goldsmiths.
They can help with general advice, signposting, enrolments, funding, fees and they can direct Participants to wellbeing, study skills and disability support.

Student Centre - Richard Hoggart Building - RHB 117
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
020 7919 7050
studentcentre@gold.ac.uk

Out of hours support
Campus Support Officers
6pm-6am seven days a week
020 7919 7284
campus-support@gold.ac.uk

Wellbeing service and drop in
This is for Participants with personal issues affecting their studies, mental health difficulties, extenuating circumstances, counselling, goal setting and planning, signposting and referrals.

They offer appointments on a first-come first-served basis.
The drop-in is in RHB 123

	Registration	Appointments
Mon-Thurs	2-3.15pm	2.30-3.30pm
Fri	9.30-10.15am	9.30-10.30am

wellbeing@gold.ac.uk

Disability Drop-in
Every Tuesday 11am-12pm in RHB 123.
No appointments are needed.
disability@gold.ac.uk

Assistive Technology
Assistive Technology can help Participants study more effectively.
If Participants have difficulty planning their time, mind-mapping ideas for an essay, reading or writing, or preparing for a presentation then Assistive Technology could make the tasks easier.
Participants should be directed to go to a disability drop-in to find out more.

The website **dnamatters.org** has free assistive technology apps and software for computers, tablets and phones Participants can use.

MyGoldsmiths
Participants can access their student record to make changes, enrol on modules and get letters to prove they are a student on MyGoldsmiths, more information can be found here: gold.ac.uk/Participants/mygoldsmiths

Academic Skills Centre

This information is from the Academic Skills Centre flyer which you will be provided as part of your PAL pack.

The Academic Skills Centre at Goldsmiths is situated in the Library, offering workshops, tutorials and embedded sessions to all Goldsmiths students.

The Academic Skills Programme runs throughout the year and offers opportunities to learn and develop a wide range of academic skills. Sessions are run by academic lecturers, study skills tutors and subject librarians.

Academic Skills Centre – The Library
Rutherford Building, 1st Floor
020 7896 2147
academicskills@gold.ac.uk
gold.ac.uk/asc

Twitter @GoldsmithsASC

The PAL office is in the Academic Skills Centre.

One-to-One Sessions

Academic Skills Drop-in
These 30 minute tutorials are given by academic skills lecturers and study skills tutors.

Where   Opposite the library help desk (ground floor)
When   Different times through the week during term time.
Bring   A piece of work to discuss and questions you would like answered.
Booking   Arrive 30 minutes before the first tutorial to register.

Royal Literary Fellows
These 50 minute tutorials are given by Royal Literary Fund Fellows (RLFs) are professional writers who help Participants improve their writing skills.
Where Their office is in the Library.
When Throughout the week during term time
Bring A piece of written work you would like guidance on.

Bookable one-to-one tutorials
These 45 minute tutorials are given by specialist study skills tutors.
When Monday to Wednesday during term time
Bring a piece of academic work and / or questions around study skills.

Workshops

Workshops are run by the Academic Skills and Subject Librarian teams.
If you attend four or more workshops you can enrol on Learn.Gold (VLE) for the Academic Skills Certificate which can form part of your HEAR transcript.

Our workshops cover areas such as:

Managing your studies	Academic writing
Researching	Dissertations
Exam skills	Referencing
Reading	Finding resources
Critical thinking	Additional skills

More information about the Workshops including whether these need to be booked can be found on the webpage: gold.ac.uk/asc

Academic Skills Online

Academic Skills Online is a series of online tutorials designed to help you develop the academic skills you will need whilst studying at Goldsmiths.
These tutorials be accessed here: learn.gold.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6613
> *This link will be added to, and updated when necessary, on the PAL VLE page which you will be auto-enrolled onto.*

Goldsmiths Library

Goldsmiths Library is normally open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The staff in the library are knowledgeable and they are there to help, if you have any questions the help desk staff on the ground floor will be able to assist you.

Information regarding the library can be found here: gold.ac.uk/library

Goldsmiths Library – Rutherford Building
020 7919 7150
020 7919 7189
library@gold.ac.uk
gold.ac.uk/library

Goldsmiths library is more than just books, there are: DVDs, e-resources, journals, special collections and archives plus more.

IT Service Desk

The staff at the IT Help Desk will try and help with any queries you may have regarding IT issues.
They also have IT and media equipment that can be loaned to staff and Participants.

IT Service Desk
1st floor of the library
020 7919 7555
helpdesk@gold.ac.uk
gold.ac.uk/it/service-desk/
Weekdays: 9am - 10pm
Weekends: 9am - 5pm

Careers Service

Goldsmiths Careers service can help current Participants (and alumni) learn new skills, gain experience, and get expert advice to assist with finding a career whilst at Goldsmiths and after they finish.

The SPACE
Careers Service - RHB 180/181
Monday to Friday 9.30am-4.30pm
020 7919 7137
careers@gold.ac.uk
gold.ac.uk/careers

Goldsmiths Student Union

Goldsmiths Participants' Union represents and supports students throughout their time at University. They have offer activities such as sports and societies, as well as volunteering, student development, advice and representation for all Participants.

More information about the Student Union can be found here: goldsmithssu.org

PAL Facilitator Description, role and responsibilities, bursary

What is PAL?
PAL stands for Peer Assisted Learning programme.

What does a PAL Facilitator do?
PAL Facilitators facilitate weekly one-hour study sessions for Participants starting their first year of undergraduate study at Goldsmiths.
These sessions are programme specific and timetabled.
You will be responsible for planning, facilitating and running sessions.
PALs are not lecturers/teachers.

What are the benefits of being a PAL Facilitator?
You will receive payment for your training by one-off payment or addition to your bursary.
You will receive a bursary, paid on successful completion of the role each term (**£200** Autumn Term / with a further payment of **£200** for the Spring term if your PAL sessions continue)
Your PAL activity will be recorded on your HEAR
You will get training and professional development
You will share your own experience and provide a supportive environment to new Participants
You will have a deeper understanding of the content of your degree
You will have the opportunity to become a Goldsmiths Student Ambassador
It looks good on your CV
You will join a prestigious network of PAL leaders and facilitators across the world

As a PAL Facilitator you will be expected to:
- Attend 2 days of training in September
- Be achieving passing grades in your own studies
- Facilitate approx. **20 hours** of face-to-face sessions.
- Be regularly involved in PAL promotion
- Engage with planning and debriefing of sessions
- Integrate content and learning skills into sessions
- **Read** and **respond** to emails and other communications from the PAL team and your Academic Champion
- Introduce yourself to your Departmental PAL Champion, as well as the academic staff involved in the core module. The PAL coordinator will email you their details and where possible be present at the initial meeting.

Departmental PAL Champion and Lecturers
The PAL Coordinator will introduce you to academic and administrative members of your department who will be liaising with PAL to make sure you can work effectively in your department.

At the beginning of term (teaching) – first two weeks
- Assist on the promotion of PAL to new Participants during Welcome Week.
- Put up PAL marketing in departments specific areas. This will be provided by the PAL coordinator.
- Visit Lectures to **promote PAL** to first year Participants. Notify the PAL coordinator if there are certain lectures and seminars you would like to attend, or liaise with you department directly and let the PAL coordinator know how many lectures you have attended.

Throughout the term
- Prepare and run 1 hour (50 minute) weekly PAL sessions, as timetabled.
- **Take a register** in every session, recording all fields
- Fill in the register on the VLE
- Inform the PAL Coordinator if there are any issues with the room, time, or if any other concerns arise.
- Remain in your session for 30 minutes in the event that no Participants attend
- Inform PAL Partner and PAL Coordinator if you are unable to complete a session.

PAL Facilitator Bursary Conditions of Offer 2019/2020

1. The bursary will run in the first instance during the autumn term, from September to December 2019, and is offered to PAL Facilitators chosen by the Peer Assisted Learning Coordinator in consultation with the Academic Skills Centre and the Department.
2. Upon satisfactory completion of activities during the autumn term, renewal will be offered for the Spring term, January 2019 to June 2020.
3. Renewal may be offered for the following academic year, subject to the availability of College funds and the satisfactory performance of PAL Facilitator.
4. Goldsmiths reserves the right to vary the terms of the renewal for future periods.
5. The PAL Facilitator must be accepted by Goldsmiths as a registered student, who has completed one year of study at Goldsmiths.
6. The bursary amount will be **£200** for the Autumn Term, with a further payment of **£200** for the Spring term if your PAL sessions continue.
   - Payment will be made for providing Peer Facilitator support as required by the PAL programme.
   - A payment will be made which will not be liable to income tax or National Insurance. This will be paid by the Goldsmiths Payroll team, by credit transfer to a nominated bank account of the holder.
   - Payment for the autumn term will be made on receipt of satisfactory performance in December 2019 (participation in sessions, following the PAL Model, taking attendance and surveys of participant, engaging with the PAL coordinator).
   - Where renewal is granted, payment for the spring term will be made on receipt of satisfactory activity reports at the start of May 2020.

   The PAL Facilitator undertakes to:
- Attend 2 days of training in September
- Be achieving passing grades in your own studies
- Facilitate approx. **20 hours** of face-to-face sessions.
- Be regularly involved in PAL promotion
- Engage with planning and debriefing of sessions
- Integrate content and learning skills into sessions
- **Read** and **respond** to emails and other communications from the PAL team and your Academic Champion
- Introduce yourself to your Departmental PAL Champion, as well as the academic staff involved in the core module. The PAL coordinator will email you their details and where possible be present at the initial meeting.
7. The PAL Facilitator agrees to be bound by all regulations made by Goldsmiths for Participants and any other regulations, statutes or codes of practice regulating the activities of student members of Goldsmiths which shall be in force.
8. The PAL Facilitator notes that the bursary does not entitle the holder to commit Goldsmiths in any way to expenditure in excess of obligations under this agreement.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

Confidentiality
As a PAL Facilitator, I understand that I may have access to confidential information such as grades, student records, student progress, student issues and similar data. I am aware that I may receive verbal or written communication concerning course grades which should be kept confidential.

I also understand that involvement with the PAL scheme means I must accept responsibility to preserve the confidentiality of this information and that failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the termination of my bursary payment and contract.

I have read the above PAL confidentiality statement and understand and accept the responsibility to preserve the confidentiality of privileged information.

Conflict of Interest
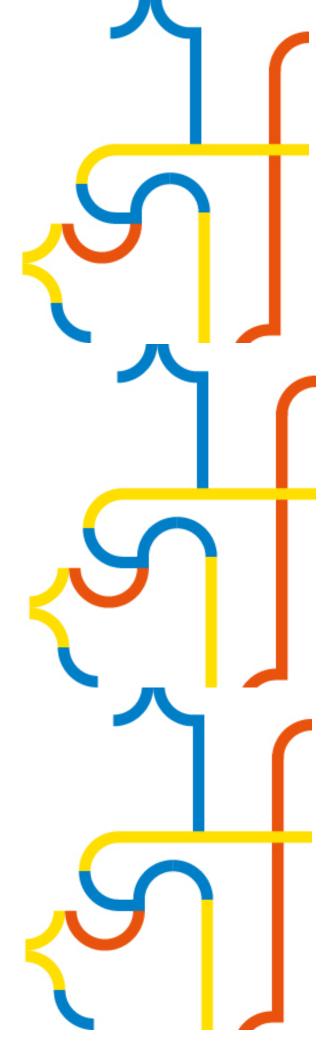*PAL Facilitators are required to adhere to the following conflict of interest policy.*

Goldsmiths intends to create and maintain a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment in which staff and Participants can achieve their potential whilst working and learning. It is recognised that the development of mutually rewarding relationships between members of its community contributes to the dynamic and vibrant environment at Goldsmiths.

Where a personal relationship overlaps with a working relationship, this may give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest which compromises the integrity of the parties and undermines the good running and reputation of Goldsmiths. Goldsmiths values professional relationships based on trust and confidence, where there is a requirement to provide academic teaching and support, pastoral support, or administrative and technical support, consistent with the staff member's role and Goldsmiths Regulations. It is essential that Goldsmiths is able to demonstrate integrity in all of its endeavours and the intention of the policy is to provide members of the college with a supportive and transparent approach. A conflict of interest is not, in itself, an indication of any wrong doing on behalf of a staff member.

Where there is a pre-existing personal relationship when either a member of staff or a student enters Goldsmiths or one develops following a student's enrolment, the member of staff is required to declare the interest. Please consider any possible conflicts of interest.
Example: sibling/ partner commencing first year in same programme or partner is PAL Facilitator in same department.

http://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/policies/personal-relationships-policy/

Contacts and Quick reference

PAL Coordinator – Siân Cannell – 020 7919 2147

Security – 020 7896 2121

Student Centre – 020 7919 7050

Campus Support Officers - 020 7919 7284

For any questions email: PAL@gold.ac.uk

www.gold.ac.uk/asc