

Peer to Peer Tutorials:

*If we can't teach them maybe we
can get them to teach each other*

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Introduction

- In the last two academic sessions, the Department of Physics and Astronomy has run a series of Peer to Peer tutorials (P2P).
 - *Honours years students teaching 1st and 2nd years.*

Aims of the P2P tutorials

For the tutors:

- Gain teaching experience.
- Broaden their understanding of “basic” physics.

Aims of the P2P tutorials

For the tutees:

- Learn from their undergraduate peers.
 - Exposing them to another form of teaching.
- Get the chance to meet their predecessors to discuss physics and more.
 - The amount of work set per tutorial allowed for time for wider discussions.

Aims for the P2P tutorials

For the Department:

- To broaden the skills of our honours students.
- To increase the feeling of “community” in the department for the younger students.

Format

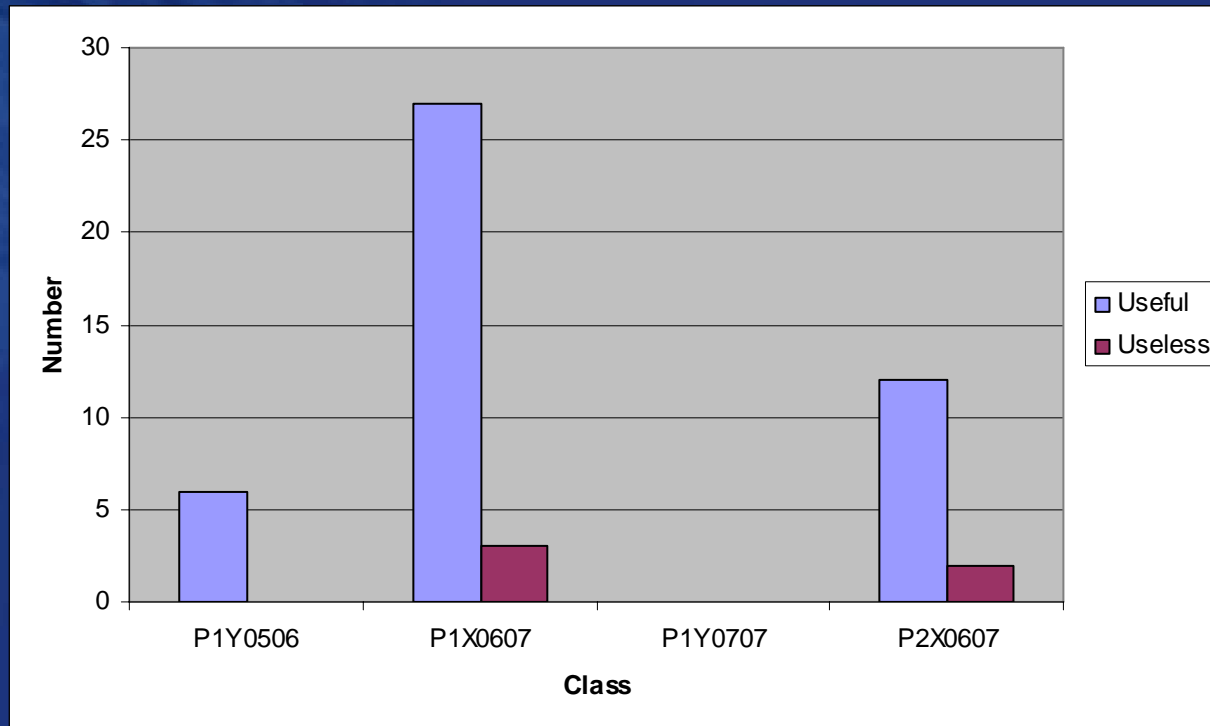
- One hours sessions.
- 2 or 3 times per semester.
- P3/4 students teach P1; P4 teach P2.
- Questions set at tutorial.
 - *Tutors see the questions/solutions in advance.*
- **No staff.**

Success?

From the tutees point of view ...

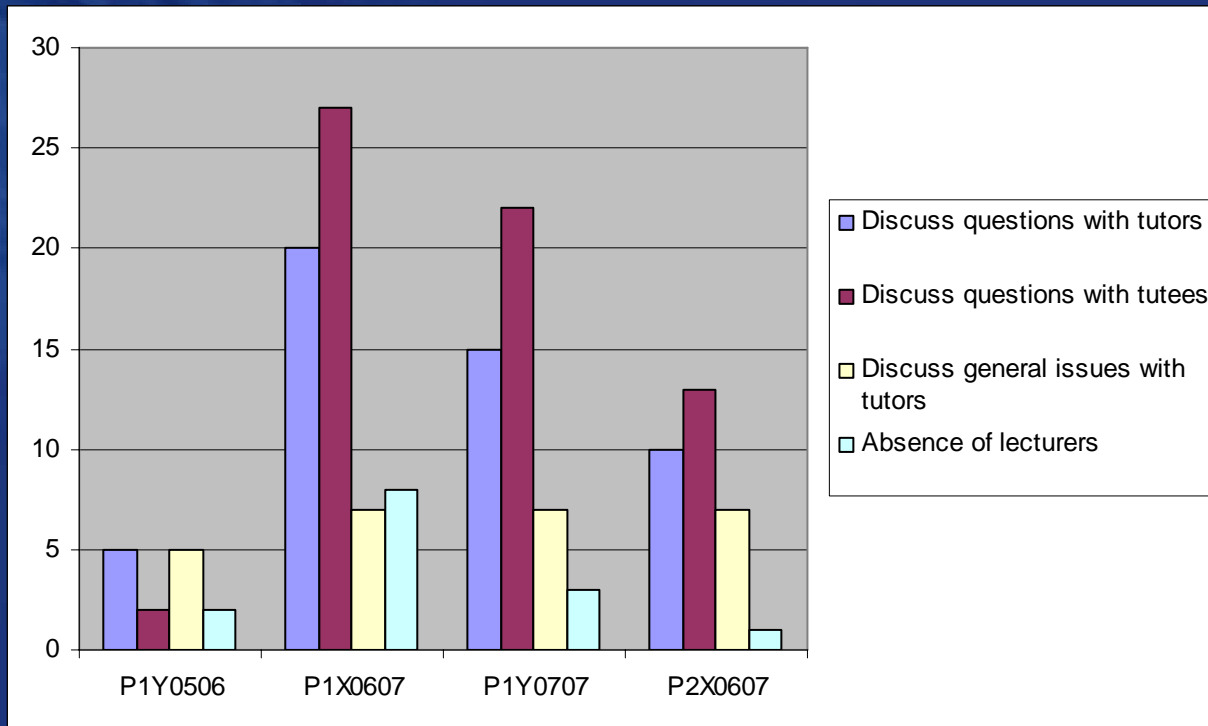
- The students were given a questionnaire.
- Four classes were asked over two semesters:
 - Level 1, sem 2 – P1Y05-06
 - Level 1, sem 1 – P1X06-07
 - Level 1, sem 2 – P1Y06-07
 - Level 2, sem 1 – P2X06-07

Were they useful?



Class sizes: P1 ~ 150; P2 ~ 80

Best aspects of the tutorials?



Success?

From the tutors point of view

- I spoke to some of the tutors to get their general views on the success of otherwise of the sessions.

Tutors point of view

- “Generally, the P1 students seem to be getting plenty out of the tutorials, so long as they ask questions and think about what they're doing. I say this because there were plenty of students who were content to sit around with newspapers, or books open but doing no work. That's fair enough, but they'd really be better just taking the extra hour in bed surely?”

Tutors point of view

- “On the whole it went fine; there were a respectable number of students there so we had enough to keep ourselves busy.”
- “I think the tutorials; on the whole; worked OK for the students ready and willing to ask questions and get problems sorted out.”

Tutors point of view

- “Of the students I spoke to, many seemed quite grateful we took the time to help them and were very courteous. If they weren't pleased with the explanation, they weren't shy about telling us, but then again those are the sort who aren't shy about asking in the first place.”

Tutors point of view

- “The fact that the students themselves didn't seem to expect us to be flawless (naturally not the case!) got rid the misguided idea of you having the hopes of some poor soul's exam success resting in your shoulders.”

Conclusions

For the tutees:

- Learn from their undergraduate peers.
 - A large number considered this to be one of the best aspects of the tutorials.
- Get the chance to meet their predecessors to discuss physics and more.
 - Again, a frequent choice for best aspect.

Conclusions

For the tutors:

- Gain teaching experience.
 - An obvious success.
- Broaden their understanding of “basic” physics.
 - I’ve been assured this occurred.

Conclusions

For the Department:

- To broaden the skills of our honours students.
 - Teaching skills/crowd control
- To increase the feeling of “community” in the department for the younger students.
 - A success given the popularity of communicating with their peers.

With thanks to

- The dozen or so P3/4 students without whom these tutorials couldn't have happened.
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