Student Peer Mentoring: an E-Tool Kit
Project Leads

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Swansea University agreed to participate in the Student Experience theme of the TRA programme.

We are adopting a framework based on student and programme needs, which gives options to academic Colleges in providing services for meeting specific outcomes. Peer assisted learning is improving student transition and enhancing students’ sense of belonging.
Value Added Institution

- enabling all students to achieve their full potential
- working to improve transition, retention and attainment
- enhancing institutional capacity to offer peer mentoring as part of a framework of student transition support at all levels

The Swansea Academy of Inclusivity and Learner Support (SAILS) has support from all our academic Colleges for these improvements
Key Questions

- What is peer mentoring, and how is it used in higher education?
- How can peer mentoring help address transition, retention, and progression?
- What issues must we consider in setting up a peer-mentoring program?
- How will we deliver mentoring support and services?
- How are we going to train our peer mentors?
- How will we evaluate the impact of our peer mentoring program?
- How will we maintain our peer-mentoring program – succession planning?
For the UK Higher Education, peer mentoring relates to peer support and learning. A peer mentor helps to enhance and promote the overall university experience of either an individual student, or group of fellow students. Peer mentors are generally slightly more advanced in their studies than peer mentees; by using their own experiences and insights, peer mentors help newer students settle into and succeed at university.
Why and what form of peer assisted learning do you want to develop or encourage?
Different Formats of Peer Mentoring

Peer assisted learning (PAL)
- an overarching term that includes all programmes where ‘learning’ is a desired outcome

Peer assisted study sessions (PASS)
- student led sessions addressing a specific module or subject topic – sometimes timetabled

Peer mentoring (PM)
- Allocated student mentors to address concerns falling within the framework of the scheme
Our preferred model is Peer Mentoring (PM) as it is susceptible to both, scale and transferability. Each individual college can adopt the programme by changing its purpose, aims, timings, form or evaluation.
Project Aims

- Enhance student transition and experience
- Complement the STEP4Excellence Academic and Pastoral Support Framework recommendation to introduce:
  - Academic mentoring focused personal tutoring
  - Embedding of study skills within programmes of study alongside the Academic Success Programme
  - The creation of a Student Life Network with professionally qualified staff providing welfare support in Colleges, Student Hubs and Student Services as a partnership and working with the SUSU Advice and Support Centre.
Project Aims

- Support the Enhancing Degree Outcomes Project (EDOP) which seeks to improve and maintain student retention, progression and attainment.

- Align with the early interventions being planned as part of the Student Experience Analytics Project (SEAP).
Issues to Consider

- Establishing a timeline
- Developing a budget
- Developing Policies, Procedures and E-Toolkit
- Securing Funds
- Recruiting Mentors and Mentees
- Getting Commitments from Stakeholders
- Hiring Staff
The development of an e-toolkit for peer mentoring providing guidance and resources on:

• The nature of peer mentoring
• The benefits of peer mentoring
• The timeline for setting up peer mentoring
  • Sample forms
  • FAQ’s
E-Tool Kit

Including best practice and recommendations on:

• Student partnerships
• Staff involvement
• Recruitment and selection of mentors
• Mentor training and on-going support for mentors
• Reward and recognition
• Evaluation and feedback
Evaluation

Two Point Evaluation

After the first semester of the programme

At the end of the programme
Evaluation

A pre-programme questionnaire of mentee’s could be used as a benchmark to establish the progress of student and learning gain.
Evaluation

Evaluation after the first semester of the programme

Using focus groups and questionnaires

To ensure that the best practise of a successful peer mentoring programme is taking place in accordance with our Peer Mentoring Handbook

Results would show any organisational issues and the programmes affect on student transition
Evaluation at the end of the programme

Using focus groups, questionnaires and reviewing academic success of mentees

To evaluate the overall success of the programme and to seek suggestions for improvements

A different perspective on improvements could be given by the mentees as to what they felt the programme lacked
Evaluation

Self Evaluation by Mentors

By the completion of a log or session review forms

Help spot weakness and successes within the programme including the training process

A different perspective on improvements could be given by the mentors as to what they felt the programme lacked
Evaluation will be used to improve the scheme as well as determine its impact on mentees.