

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)

'PASS was the best thing that could have happened to me academically and for the first time I am actually enjoying education.'

PASS Participant



Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) gives students an opportunity to work together and discuss their learning. PASS sessions are weekly or fortnightly one hour study groups for students who are new to an academic module. Sessions are facilitated by student Leaders in higher years.

The PASS Leaders are trained facilitators who support groups of student Participants in lower years by helping them find solutions to academic problems through discussions and guided questioning. PASS does not replace teaching by staff, but offers instead another opportunity for students to build confidence, consolidate and enhance their learning.

PASS Leaders encourage active learning in an informal, friendly and fun environment. The focus is on key modules identified by the Schools' academic leads and students.

PASS offers a safe, friendly space to help students:

- Adjust quickly to University Life
- Improve their study habits
- Enhance their understanding of the subject matter of their course through collaborative learning
- Enhance their awareness of course direction and expectations

Benefits to Leaders

- Consolidating their own learning
- Developing personal and employability skills such as: confidence, time-management, presenting, leadership, collaboration, initiative

Benefits to Participants

- Deepening their understanding of key concepts
- Testing learning in safe environment
- Getting used to university life

Benefits to Schools:

- Flexible and can be delivered as an 'opt-in' or an 'opt-out' scheme that's embedded in the timetable.
- Contributes to building a culture of learning
- Resolves many student questions
- Enables immediate feedback on learning
- Underpins enquiry-based and personalised learning

PASS is successful because it is discipline-owned and student-led



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'The most beneficial aspect of PASS was knowing someone in the 3rd year who was somewhat like a mentor.'

PASS Participant, Accounting and Finance

PASS Case Study – Accounting and Finance

In 2011/12 Accounting and Finance introduced PASS for the first time to support their Basic Accounting module. PASS is opt in and runs weekly, with participants signing up for the sessions on Web-CT.

With 20 Leaders running 7 PASS sessions, first year participants have a number of possible time slots to pick from, with a typical session attracting 7-8 students each week.

PASS Leaders meet weekly to debrief with the PASS team and on occasion the Academic Lead to share any common themes or issues that have arisen from the sessions. PASS was raised by students in the student-staff committee as a great way of feeling part of the department. Students also tell us they enjoy informal peer learning and conversation; it was particularly highlighted by international students as a useful way of improving their spoken English.

Value to student participants

- Improved transition into University life, creating a sense of learning community
- Promotes reflective learning and aids transition to enquiry based learning
- Opportunity for non English speakers to develop their speaking skills

Value to PASS Leaders

- Consolidates their own knowledge of basic accounting
- Develops employability skills, particularly leadership, organisation, and communication skills

'By running the PASS sessions I have gained leadership and interpersonal skills by directing discussions and encouraging collaborative learning.'

*Muqaddas Javed,
Accounting and Finance PASS Leader*

'PASS helped me digest everything I was learning in lectures.'

PASS Participant, Accounting and Finance



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