

## Peer Assisted Study Skills Initiative: Pilot Project

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### Abstract

*This case study provides a reflective analysis of the Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) pilot project, which took place between June to August 2022 at the East London Global Banking School campuses. The pilot project evaluated the effectiveness of the student supporting student initiative in providing academic support for initial-year students from two chosen programmes and partnerships. Volunteer second year students from these programmes were recruited and trained to be PASS leaders. Findings illustrate initial year students' improved motivation, voice and development of academic writing, study and IT skills. Leaders reported enhanced confidence, learning and employability skills. Lecturers attested to the effectiveness of PASS as initial year students acquired the relevant skills much faster than they would normally have done whilst leaders developed skills for their future careers. These significant outcomes paved the way for its expansion beyond the East London campuses, initially to the Manchester campus.*

**Keywords:** Peer learning; pilot project; implementation; evaluation; leaders

### Introduction

In 1973, Dr. Deanna Martin at the University of Missouri, Kansas City (UMKC) developed the Supplemental Instruction Peer-Assisted Study Sessions (SI-PASS) initiative. This was to enhance the attrition rates of minority professional students in medicine, pharmacy and dentistry (Martin, 1973). Positive student outcomes led the Department of Education in the United States of America to certify this initiative as an Exemplary Educational Programme in 1981 (Blanc et al., 1983).

Over the years, the competitive nature of the diverse international and widening participation market for students in Higher Education (HE) worldwide presented challenges in learning development. Recognising that student satisfaction metrics were connected to student retention and institution rankings (Bell and Brooks, 2017, Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010) led to 1500 HE institutions in over 30 countries to design and establish the renowned structured SI-PASS schemes. This also led to the setting up of five SI PASS centres worldwide: University of Missouri-Kansas City (USA), University of Guelph (Canada), Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (South Africa), Griffith University (Australia) and Lund University (Sweden). Within this initiative, trained senior students as leaders work collaboratively with academics to provide a safe, informal, and supportive environment for initial year students. Topping (2005 p. 631) stressed it enabled the “acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping among status equals or matched companions.” Further, the

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learning community it fosters nurtures a sense of belonging within initial year students. This impacts positively their ability to learn, well-being, retention, progression, achievement, experiences, and transition into HE (Bengesai et al., 2023; Mc Daniel et al., 2022; Malm et al., 2021; Marshall, 2019).

Senior students in the same programme that facilitate sessions develop their confidence, self-esteem, communication and interpersonal skills as they work with diverse students and their needs (Taylor, 2020; Ford et al., 2019; Cornock et al., 2019; Cole et al., 2018; Topping et al., 2017). In addition, their learning is deepened whilst their soft employability skills are enhanced (Donald & Ford, 2023; Malm et al., 2022; Hoiland et al., 2020; Barnard et al., 2019; Chilvers & Waghorne, 2018; Cornock, 2016).

Although the reciprocity of learning is of great value, there are also pitfalls, mainly in the early stages of this scheme such as student attendance is low despite the provision of both online and face-to-face sessions. The tendency for a few students to dominate the sessions at the expense of their other classmates is high (Tibingana-Ahimbisibwe et al., 2020 and Fulton & Haynes, 2019). Also, there tends to be a lack of leader commitment in facilitating sessions. Further, some leaders demonstrate inappropriate professional behaviour despite being provided with training and guidance. At times, there is resistance from academic staff (Connolly-Panagopoulos, 2021; Fredriksson et al., 2020; Tinker & Hill, 2018).

In the UK, institutions have changed the terminology from SI-PASS to suit their context such as Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS), Peer Support (PS) and Peer Assisted Learning Support (PALS). In addition, the schemes have been adopted by a wide diversity of academic disciplines and are continually adapted to meet the changing student needs and internal structures of individual institutions (Hargreaves et al., 2022; Fish and Tucker, 2021; Tibingana-Ahimbisibwe et al., 2020; Olender and Lisetto-Smith, 2019).

Despite the changes and adaptations, all initiatives are based on the SI PASS model: designed to be led by students for students, trained senior students/leaders work with academics as partners to support initial year students and there is a Supervision/Coordination team. To ensure quality, Supervisor training is delivered only by SI Trainers certified by the International SI Centre at UMKC, Kansas City, USA, and is provided by the European Centre for SI-PASS in Lund.

There is widespread research on peer learning initiatives across HE institutions worldwide but there are limited studies that refer to the profile of students at Global Banking School (GBS). These are open entry policy, returning-to-learning mature students that come from a variety of cultural, educational, and linguistic backgrounds with parental or caring responsibilities, attend classes 9 hours per week on campus but are registered as full-time students and are also in full-time employment. Hence, this case study will provide a reflective analysis of the Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) pilot project.

### **Aim of Pilot Project**

The Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) scheme was initiated to enable senior students to provide additional academic support to initial-year students. Academic support is key to enabling students to have a fair and equal chance to complete their studies successfully (British Council, 2023). At GBS, module academics were unable to provide sufficient support for all students within the limited contact time. Also, Study Skills Lecturers (SSLs) found arranging



in-class academic support sessions were a challenge as lecturers needed to complete the required module content within the short teaching time frame. Further, most students did not seek help outside class time as they had full-time jobs, family, and life commitments (Garcia-Melgar, 2021; Clughen and Connell, 2012). All these led to a high number of learners leaving their programmes of study within the first 8 weeks. The PASS pilot project aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative in providing academic writing, study, and IT skills support for initial-year students.

## Methodology

The name Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) was adopted in line with the name of the Study Skills team that was already providing academic support and also as the Supervisor line managed these lecturers. Consultations were held with academics, foundation, and Level 4 undergraduate students from the University of Suffolk (UoS) partnership and first-year Level 5 students from Pearson Higher National Diploma (HND). These two programmes were identified for the PASS pilot project as the initial year students would be attending classes during the three-month pilot.

There was keen interest in this type of support with academics, foundation/first-year students and senior students who were potential PASS leaders requesting for PASS sessions to be scheduled on the days they were attending classes. This was to enable them to stay back after classes to attend or facilitate sessions. They acknowledged that it would be a challenge to attend or facilitate sessions an hour each day for two days a week beyond their normal class schedule due to work, family, and life commitments.

Planning and designing the PASS initiative in preparation for the pilot project was undertaken. To ensure the quality of this scheme, the 21 principles of Supplemental Instruction that guide both the implementation and continuation of the initiative were used (The European Center for Supplemental Instruction for Peer Assisted Study (SI-PASS), 2022). Inclusion and exclusion criteria to participate in the pilot project were given to senior students (Table 1). A leaflet outlining the role of the leader (Appendix A) and another for what students attending PASS sessions can expect (Appendix B) were designed and shared with the students from both partnerships.

**Table 1.** Inclusion and exclusion criteria

<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>
UoS Level 4 students.	UoS Level 3,5 & 6 students.
Level 5 HND students.	HND Level 4 students.
Students attending classes on Wednesdays and Thursdays only.	Students attending classes on other days and evenings.
Students who completed the online PASS Leader Application form.	Students who failed to complete the online PASS Leaders Application form.
Students who volunteer to be PASS Leaders.	Students unsuccessful at interviews.
Commitment to attend PASS Leader training.	Inability to attend PASS Leader training.
Lecturers' positive feedback about students.	Negative student feedback from academics.
Commitment to facilitate PASS sessions.	Inability to commit to lead PASS sessions.

## **Recruitment and Leader Training**

The potential PASS leaders were students from the same programmes who were attending classes on the days the foundation/first-year students from the two chosen partnerships were attending classes. Volunteer senior students who expressed interest, and met the inclusion criteria and completed the online PASS Leader Application Form were shortlisted. Following one-to-one and group interviews, class lecturers were informed and requested to confirm the suitability of the students as PASS Leaders. 10 students were successful, Level 4 (n=6) and Level 5 (n=4).

A 2-day activity-orientated PASS Leader training based on the SI-PASS model was designed and provided by the Supervisor. The first day of training aimed to provide clear role definition, exploration of scenarios they might encounter, manage group dynamics, and introduction to the SI PASS App. The second day focused on the theory-practice connection with leaders working in pairs to plan and create collaborative and interactive activities to support initial year students learning.

Leaders provided positive written and verbal feedback on how the techniques and tools including the SI PASS App would assist them in creating relevant activities to engage initial year students. The leader training encouraged animated communication between students, theory-practice connection and a sense of community. Certificates of completion of training were given.

## **Pilot Project**

The PASS Pilot Project was launched between June-August 2022 in Bow/Cam Road and Global Education House (GEDU), the Global Banking School East London campuses. On completion of the Leader training, Level 4/5 leaders visited the foundation/first-year students on the same programme. This was to speak to students about PASS and their role as leaders. Attendance at sessions was voluntary but students were informed that it would offer a safe, friendly and informal space for additional support from their peers to assist them acquire the relevant skills. Leaders invited students to share areas they need support. In agreement with all students, a topic was chosen for the following week. Leaders were to work in pairs to plan, create activities and facilitate a session to engage students in their learning.

Initially, in line with the outcome of classroom visits and views of initial year and senior students, the decision was taken for PASS sessions to be arranged after teaching time in pre-arranged rooms. PASS sessions operated as 'drop-in' sessions. The initiative was designed so that the class academic would not be present at these sessions. However, leaders would communicate and work with academics as partners to ensure student learning (Sedghi & Lunt, 2015).

Leaders were expected to facilitate two weekly one-hour sessions during the 3-month pilot for groups comprising a maximum of 15 foundation/first-year students who stay back after class for these sessions. It was agreed that leaders would be given £250 vouchers for facilitating sessions during the pilot project, in recognition of the time and effort they had devoted.

In addition, leaders would receive 30-60 minutes of guidance and support from the Supervisor to ensure the initial year students were given relevant activities to learn how to write

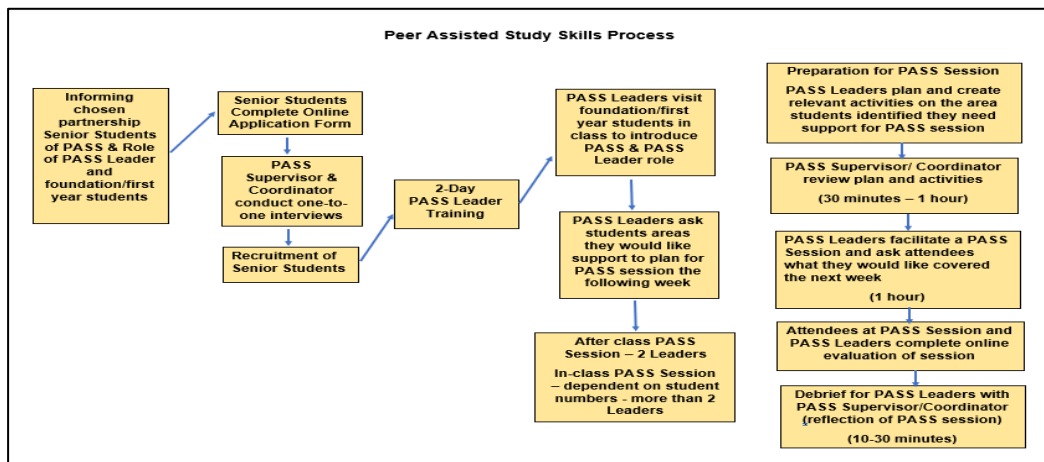


academically and develop study and IT skills. Leaders would also attend weekly debrief sessions to reflect on the previous sessions and to share and compare their experiences. These sessions were vital as they allowed issues that arose to be quickly resolved and identification of developmental needs. For example, in the beginning, leaders were challenged to create interactive activities to engage students and/or encourage group discussion. This led to further training that included how to create online activities. Three observations of leaders facilitating sessions were held at various points during the pilot period. Both attendees and leaders were encouraged to give feedback through a short evaluation questionnaire after each session to understand their perspectives and reactions.

Students demonstrated a strong inclination towards the timing of PASS sessions both during consultation and when visited by the leaders. However, when PASS sessions were initially provided after class, attendance was very low in both classes (1 out of 46 students and 3 out of 52 students). This continued for five out of the twelve weeks despite students assuring the supervisor and leaders they would attend. Reasons given for not staying back for the sessions remained the same, working, family, and other commitments

To promote higher attendance and inclusivity, the Supervisor negotiated with initial-year class lecturers for PASS sessions to be timetabled during teaching-time. The PASS process is demonstrated below in Figure 1. This meant the number of leaders in a session had to be increased to ensure sufficient support was given to all students. This allowed all students the opportunity to participate. 283 students in total from both classes attended the remaining 7 PASS sessions.

**Figure 1.** Peer Assisted Study Skills Process



## Results

The findings presented in this case study provide insights into the experiences of student attendees and leaders. The Class lecturers attested to PASS positive impact on initial-year students and leaders. The main themes that emerged from the evaluation feedback are presented below:

## Attendees at PASS sessions

### Enhanced motivation

Students attending PASS sessions informed of the challenges they faced with academic writing, study and IT skills before PASS: “I don’t understand what is this academic writing?” (Student 4), “How do I paraphrase?” (Student 53) and Student 179 wrote, “I didn’t know how to use laptop.”

Attendees informed how leaders encouraged them: “I tell leader, I cannot do it, I want to leave course. She told me, if I can do it, you can do it, don’t leave.” “He is from my country. He said, this was also all new to me, but I learnt how to do academic writing, you can learn too.” (Student 211). Another student stated how a leader said, “... see I finished my first year, you also can” (Student 67).

Several students identified the reassuring effect leaders had on their learning: Student 221 wrote “he shared his own struggles in the first year.” Student 5 said, “he told us why he failed and what we need to do so we don’t fail.” Another student stated: “She was confident to share with us, this is what I did when ..... to calm our anxieties.”

Other students wrote how the approaches used by leaders encouraged them to take ownership of their learning, “Leaders give us activity on doing reference list. They told us ‘you try it first’, we will tell you the right way after you finish. I like that, it made me to do it myself first” (Student 86). Student 143 wrote: “they gave us links for online resources that can help us.”

Initial year students considered them as role models: Student 77 stated: “I want to be confident like them. I want to be a leader next year to help new students.”

The positive impact the change in timing of PASS sessions was evident by the high number of attendees. None of the students left the classroom during PASS sessions. Student 99 believed: “PASS in class is good, I and my mates have learnt so much. I have three children, a husband and a job so I cannot attend after class PASS.”

### Encouraged Student Voice

Students outlined how PASS provided a friendly and supportive space that gave them the confidence to share with their classmates: “Sometimes we do activities in groups. Before I keep quiet when I don’t know so my mates don’t think I am stupid. PASS make us to learn together. Now, I say to my mates, I don’t understand what they are asking! They help me” (Student 15).

Student 86 who earlier stated how she liked the leaders allowing them to attempt the activities by themselves first, also stated, “I feel good when I can finish activities, sometimes my answer is wrong so I go home and try until I get it right.”

Students expressed: “it was helpful” and “useful” to have trained peers who had “just finished their first year” as “they know what we are going through”, “they know what we need to know” and “they have a student-like approach.” This meant they felt “less intimidated” and “more confident” to “ask questions”, “express fears”, “voice ideas and thoughts” and “share what we don’t know and ask for help.” Student 32 stressed “I cannot tell teacher I don’t know what she is talking about, I don’t want her to think I am stupid”.

### Development of academic skills

All students acknowledged they had: “learnt academic writing, study and IT skills with PASS.” They also began to recognise the areas they were “still struggling with” and “asked leaders for activities to





help them to learn.” Leaders had also provided them with relevant resources which they found, “very helpful” and “useful”. Written feedback showed how much they valued the PASS sessions: “The way they show us we learn so much” (Student 58). “PASS helped me to learn by doing activities” (Student 2). Student 84 wrote: “group activities help me to learn together with my classmates.”

Two students were open about their previous anxieties but also how PASS sessions had changed their thinking, “I don’t know what is academic writing before but I learned how to do it” (Student 33). Another student was reassured by their learning from the PASS sessions: “Before, I scared I going to fail. Now I know I can pass” (Student 6). PASS really helped me learn how to do academic writing.” (Student 211). Written feedback confirmed students thoughts about PASS: “Continue doing it, it is very helpful for students.”

## **PASS Leaders**

### **Deepened Learning**

Leaders reported to plan and prepare activities for PASS sessions led to their “revision of first year academic writing material” that “enhanced their own knowledge and understanding”.

Creating collaborative and interactive activities was a new experience for leaders: “At first it was difficult to do the activities but I am proud I can do it now!” (Leader D). Leader E said: “When we did after class PASS sessions, only 1 student came. This gave us time to try out different activities with the student.” Leader A wrote: “I learned how to do online activities to help first year students learn but it also helped me create an online survey and show my mates how to do it for my second year module.”

“PASS helped me to improve my academic skills and gave me the opportunity to help other students to improve their skills as well. I think PASS means development and progress for everyone” (Leader B).

### **Enhanced Confidence**

Leaders shared their experiences of initially going to the classroom to introduce themselves and PASS to foundation/first-year students and lecturers they did not know: “I was nervous, my tongue was dry, I couldn’t speak” (Leader E). Leader F said: “I said my name, then I just smiled!” Leader A stated, “I was a ..... in my country, I was confident to talk about PASS.”

To facilitate a PASS session: “We have to communicate with the supervisor, lecturer, other leaders and students. This helped me become more confident to talk” (Leader E). Leader C said: “My English is not good but in PASS I wanted to help new students so I prepared well for the session and it helped me be more confident to speak to other students. Leader B wrote: “I am a confident person but PASS has given me more confidence for public speaking.” Leader A shared: “It has surely given me more confidence in dealing with students trying to understand academic writing which was once a challenge for me when starting as a new student.”

All leaders shared similar feedback: “Students told I made them feel they too can be confident like me in a year.”

### **Employability Skills**

The impact of facilitating PASS sessions: The impact of facilitating PASS sessions: Leader A stated: “Learning how to use a student-centred The approach in PASS changed me! It gave me a different perspective. My first assignment ... was a fail. I did not have a colleague to give advice or guidance! Helping other students means helping myself, as I realised what I know and don’t know.”

To assist students in understanding how to write academically, leaders worked together to plan, create activities and facilitate PASS sessions: “I put in place with other leaders a few simple tips to help support students in moving forward with their assignments.” (Leader B). Leader D said: “This experience was quite awesome. It helped me improve my skills for my future job. Leader E wrote, “.. my confidence, facilitation, team-working and communication has improved – useful employability skills”. Leader C wrote: “I don’t like to listen to others, I was a ... and I had to lead and make decisions. When I was preparing for a session with ....., I wanted her to listen to me. She said, we are here to help students, not show how good we are! I was angry but she was right! I am learning to work with others but sometimes I still struggle.”

Leaders interacted positively: “We have to be friendly and patient so students feel comfortable to ask us questions they don’t want to ask their teacher. I’m a student just like them and have been there – anxious and don’t know what to do!” (Leader E). Leader C wrote: “I learnt to listen to what the students are saying and not talk all the time.” Leader D shared: “When a leader is speaking, I don’t interrupt. This shows students we need to respect other students views.”

Facilitating sessions had enhanced leaders self-confidence/self-esteem, communication/interpersonal skills, team-working/leadership skills, organisation/time management skills and creating activities/presentation skills.

### **Academics Perspectives on PASS sessions**

Class lecturers were appreciative of PASS as they were aware their students were struggling with academic writing, study, and IT skills, and this support was crucial to enable them to complete their module assessments. Hence, when attendance at after class PASS sessions was very low, both lecturers agreed to in-class sessions. Academic A stated, “I was particularly glad to welcome the Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) leaders because teaching new intake can be very challenging. Many of them struggle with IT skills and even Academic skills. It can be so distracting and daunting to be delivering teaching and at the same time having to be sorting IT issues which slows down learning.”

Academic A’s views were supported by Academic B, “They don’t know what is academic writing or how to use their laptops. They memorise information in their country and they don’t write assignments. Before, I never had a break when I teach (students don’t want to stay back after class) because I tell all students I am there to give them academic support. Some students come to me for help, others don’t.”

Lecturers recognised the positive impact of PASS on students attending sessions and reported that there were changes in students motivation, confidence, and learning. Academic B reported: “PASS during teaching time helped students learn how to use their laptops, write their assignments and references. The activities leaders gave students engaged them and helped them learn the ‘what’, ‘how’, and ‘when’ in academic writing. Seeing leaders make it to second year, made them feel they can be like them in one year. They are more confident and ‘tell me off’ when I make a mistake but I can now have a break!”

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### **Academic Perspectives on PASS leaders**

Lecturers of leaders were initially curious about PASS and its impact on their students. They began observing their students to identify if there were any changes attributed to their leader role. Academic C stated about Leader D, *"He was generally quiet, even in group activities, maybe because his English is not very good. During break time, he normally leaves the classroom. After PASS, he appears more confident and also speaks during group work. He stays in class now during break and speaks with his classmates. PASS has improved his employability skills."*

In one class, there were three leaders, Academic D wrote about Leaders A and B: *"They both have shown good collaborative energy with their classmates. This was evident in the coursework that they did as a group presentation. They both made so much effort to help their mates throughout the presentation preparation."*

*Both students are very good communicators but I will say that now they can impart information more effectively and very bold to speak to their classmates. Both have more confidence in themselves and are committed more to the course. Student B has got a much-improved time management and more discipline in all aspect of his coursework. Student A has got a very good approachable quality; I observed her dealing with personal issues of some of her colleagues".*

Academic D emphasised that Leader C, *"... is a confident student, he was a ... in his country. He struggled in group activities because he wanted everyone to listen to him! After PASS, he listens to others and encourages his mates who struggle to share their views to contribute during group work to speak."*

### **Discussion**

PASS, the renowned student-supporting student initiative was considered an alternative learning strategy for initial-year students to attain additional academic support. This was because academics and SSLs found it a challenge to provide sufficient support due to limited contact time, students not seeking help (Clughen & Connell, 2012), and/or unable to engage or invest time outside the curriculum (Arendale, 2014) due to competing work, life and family demands (Bornschlegl & Caltabiano, 2022).

Forbes et al., (2021) emphasised that all 'linguistic identities' should be taught academic writing, study, and IT skills when studying in HE. According to the British Council (2023) academic support enhances students' self-directed and independent learning skills. However, Hathaway (2015, p.506) stressed the importance of 'an explicit and structured introduction to academic writing.' This will provide students with the relevant tools and techniques (Garcia-Melgar, 2021) or targeted support to complete their coursework and be successful in exams. At GBS, the after-class drop-in PASS sessions were not particularly successful, due to low attendance. However, according to the widening participation students from a wide range of educational, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds, the in-class sessions provided an inclusive and friendly space for them to learn (Voisin, 2023). Interactive activities created by leaders enabled a 'scaffolded' learning approach (Cassar et al., 2012, pp. 35) that encouraged engagement (Culpeper & Kan, 2019; McCartney, 2016) and active learning (Allen, et al., 2019 & Topping,

2017). As students tried out the activities, they began to learn by making mistakes (Sewagegn & Diale, 2019; Blake and Illingworth, 2015) and connecting the theory to practice (Hill and Tinker, 2018). Kuh (2019) believed it enhances their performance.

Based on evidence that first years have a lower “ability to work cooperatively with diverse people” as they have lower “tolerance of others” (Haynes, 2014, p14), leaders created learning activities that required each member of the group to engage for the task to be completed (Alexandrou, 2020). Bang & Reigo (2017) stress the importance of collaborative learning as it supports professional development. Initially, these students struggled with group activities but encouragement from their peers led to a sense of identity, belonging, well-being, and community (Crisp et al., 2020; Lavy, 2017; Byl et al., 2015; Chiriac, 2014).

Students acknowledged that PASS was a motivating additional element that gave them newfound confidence, and voice, and developed their academic skills. Students believed leaders assisted them in navigating the ‘hidden curriculum’ (social, cultural, and institutional expectations) of HE (Jackson, 1960) which also enhanced their ability to progress along their educational journey.

Leaders were keen to assist their peers in developing the relevant academic skills as they reflected on their own struggles during their first year. Helping their peers transition into HE gave them a sense of satisfaction (Markowitz, 2020). Also, their own knowledge and understanding were deepened as they had to revisit the academic writing resources to create relevant activities (Cornock et al., 2019). Knowles (1984) stated adults bring a wealth of knowledge to their learning and when they share with their peers, it brings a positive impact on their own experiences. Further, the opportunity to work in partnership with academics made leaders feel valued. This enhanced their confidence, negotiating, and interpersonal skills.

However, leaders were often challenged by the level of commitment, time, and effort that was required in planning, preparing activities, and facilitating twice-weekly sessions. At times leaders displayed unprofessional behaviour towards other leaders or students in the classroom. This contradicted the professional values and attitudes they learned in the leader training to make a meaningful contribution.

The pilot project aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative in providing additional academic support. Though the time frame of the pilot may be considered short, the non-traditional students’, leaders’, and academics’ feedback towards in-class PASS sessions was both positive and encouraging. However, it was too short to determine the impact on student retention, grades, and progression which is important in an educational intervention research such as PASS.

## **Limitations**

This case study describes a closely supervised 12-week pilot project of a PASS initiative. The success of PASS was dependent upon first-year and senior students’ willingness to engage fully with the initiative. The initial challenge was encouraging senior students to volunteer to attend the 2-day leader training and commit to facilitating twice weekly one-hour PASS sessions. This was because these students had no prior experience with this kind of learning strategy and were also studying and working full-time with family and life commitments.



Initially, leaders facilitated after-class sessions but initial year students' voluntary uptake was very low. Hence, the Supervisor negotiated with class lecturers for in-class sessions. This meant leaders who facilitated in-class PASS sessions were themselves attending classes on the same day and time. For the pilot project, the class lecturers kindly staggered the time of lunch breaks to enable leaders to leave their classes and facilitate sessions.



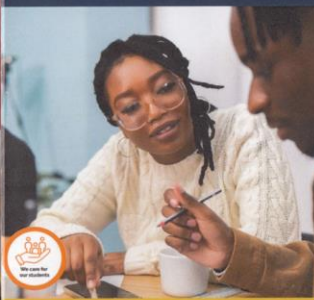
## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The PASS pilot project findings were consistent with research evidence that suggests PASS provides an active, inclusive, sustainable, and progressive approach to learning development that enhances the initial year and leaders' experiences in HE. The endorsement by academics acknowledged that within the three months, students had progressed in writing academically and developing study and IT skills much faster than they would normally have done. Also, leaders had developed valuable personal attributes and highly coveted soft employability skills. The effectiveness of PASS as a learning and teaching tool at GBS paved the way for its expansion beyond the East London campuses, initially encompassing the Manchester campus.

Expansion of the PASS scheme necessitates some strategic and operational considerations:

- a) Recruitment of leaders to include senior students attending classes on different days and evenings to enable them to facilitate in-class sessions on days they are not in class.
- b) The two-day PASS Leader training is to be split days to allow leaders the time to acclimatise with the new learning and teaching strategy. Also, an extended follow-up training programme was to be developed.
- c) In-class PASS sessions will be made available to initial-year students on all programmes, partnerships, and campuses twice weekly for six weeks (one block) at a time agreed with the lecturer.

## Appendix A:

<p><b>A PASS Leader will be able to practise and develop these skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English language</li> <li>■ Subject learning</li> <li>■ Setting boundaries</li> <li>■ Planning</li> <li>■ Organisation</li> <li>■ Leadership</li> <li>■ Critical thinking</li> <li>■ Problem solving</li> <li>■ Time management</li> <li>■ Creativity</li> <li>■ Interpersonal</li> <li>■ Teamwork</li> <li>■ Decision making</li> <li>■ Verbal communication</li> <li>■ IT</li> <li>■ Confidence</li> <li>■ Note taking</li> <li>■ Public speaking</li> <li>■ Facilitation techniques</li> <li>■ Dealing with conflict</li> <li>■ Listening</li> <li>■ Professionalism</li> <li>■ Employability</li> </ul> 	<p><b>PASSport to your success</b></p> <p><b>Achieve your goals</b></p> <p><b>Safe and friendly guidance from student leaders</b></p> <p><b>Solutions through discussions and activities</b></p>  <p><b>For further information, contact:</b></p> <p>PASS Supervisor Dr Nirmala Arunasalam narunasalam@globalbanking.ac.uk</p>	<p><b>GBS</b> GLOBAL APPLIED KNOWLEDGE</p> <p><b>PEER ASSISTED STUDY SKILLS LEADER</b></p>  <p>PASS is a student led study group which fosters a supportive and informal collaborative learning environment. It aims to enhance understanding of course content and essential study skills in order to improve overall achievement.</p> <p>The PASS Leader is a trained Level 4/5 student who will guide foundation/ first year students in achieving their learning potential through facilitating discussions and interactive abilities.</p>
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<p><b>Commitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Volunteer for 12 weeks</li> <li>■ Attend two-day training</li> <li>■ Facilitating 2 one hour PASS sessions weekly</li> <li>■ 30-60 minutes planning sessions</li> <li>■ 30 minutes weekly debrief</li> <li>■ Keep a diary for the pilot project to be used as research data</li> </ul>		<p><b>Training and support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2 day PASS leader training and additional training during the pilot project</li> <li>■ Meet with PASS Supervisor and/or Coordinator weekly to share plans for sessions</li> <li>■ Attend debriefs with PASS Supervisor, and/or Coordinator and other PASS leaders to review, discuss issues and share good practice</li> </ul>
	<p><b>PASS leader duties and responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Promote PASS and encourage attendance</li> <li>■ Record and maintain attendance registers</li> <li>■ Work collaboratively with other PASS leaders to facilitate sessions in pairs</li> <li>■ Plan, publicise and facilitate weekly small group support sessions for first year students</li> <li>■ Deliver in pairs 2 sessions per week (1 session per cohort)</li> <li>■ Maintain contact with academics of modules</li> <li>■ Enhance student understanding of course content using group discussions and interactive activities</li> <li>■ Guide students to develop skills to prepare for exams and assessments</li> <li>■ Maintain a professional attitude when communicating with staff and students</li> <li>■ Complete the PASS session feedback form after each session</li> </ul>	





Appendix B:



**PASSport to your success**  
**Achieve your goals**  
**Safe and friendly guidance from student leaders**  
**Solutions through discussions and activities**

**For further information, contact:**  
 PASS Supervisor  
 Dr Nirmala Arunasalam  
 narunasalam@globalbanking.ac.uk





**PEER ASSISTED STUDY SKILLS SESSIONS**



Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) is a student led study group which fosters a supportive and informal collaborative learning environment. The study group will enhance your understanding of course content and essential study skills in order to improve overall achievement.

PASS Leaders are Level 4/5 students who have completed the same modules during their first/ foundation year. These students are keen to share their knowledge and experience with you.

They are trained to guide you through discussions and interactive activities to develop and support your learning, understanding and study skills.

**In a PASS session...**

- You will decide what you need help with or want to discuss
- You will be in a small group (maximum 10 students)
- You will be there for one hour
- You will have two PASS leaders who will facilitate using discussions and interactive activities
- You will be in a friendly, social and safe environment to get to know each other and our PASS leaders
- You will be able to share ideas, solve problems and get useful advice from your peers
- You will develop your English language skills
- You will improve your communication and interpersonal skills
- You will gain a better understanding of the content of your module and develop study skills
- You will evaluate each session with your group to improve your academic development



**Benefits of PASS**

- Helps you to adjust easily to higher education
- Improves your confidence and self esteem
- Develops your ability to recognise your own knowledge, understanding and study skills needs.
- Enhances your knowledge and understanding of a subject through group discussion
- Improves your spoken and written English
- Develops your independent learning and academic study skills
- Prepares you better for assessed work and exams





**ATTEND PASS SESSIONS FOR STUDENT-TO-STUDENT SHARING TO IMPROVE YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE!**

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