

Language PAL Leader Handbook 2023 - 24





“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.”
–Nelson Mandela



Hola! Bonjour!

Hello and welcome to Language Peer Assisted Learning .
Thank you for being a PAL Leader, this means you are also a Student Leader.

What is Language PAL?

- Drop-in style study sessions for all students led by PAL Leaders who are proficient/ native speakers in the language.
- They tend to run for five to six weeks and cover topics you could start conversations about, for example animals, food and locations.
- Sessions will allow you to come together with other language learners to practise speaking and listening to languages, as well as finding out about their respective cultures.
- Sessions are interactive, informal, and fun!

Benefits include:

- Own development and progression.
- Opportunity to meet peers from various courses and levels of study.
- Chance to improve your skillset.
- Learn a new language and immerse yourself in the culture.
- Aim is to improve overall experience by offering students peer to peer support!

What is your role as Language PAL leader?

- Work together with your PAL leaders
- Plan and Lead sessions around language and culture
- Focus on different topics
- Facilitate discussions with your peers
- Make learning fun!

Not sure where to start? Don't panic!

This handbook alongside the training will support you, as well as lots of resources too. There will also be also be Senior PAL Leaders who will email you to introduce themselves and support you throughout your journey.

You have got this!

Support available to you from the Peer Support Team

Gemma, Annette, Andy, and Sophie are based in the Students' Union and support PAL Leaders in their role. You can email them on peersupport@bath.ac.uk.



Gemma is the Peer support Manager, who oversees all the Peer programmes



Annette is the Skills & Development coordinator who coordinates the language PAL programme, language cafes and training modules.



Sophie and Andy are the Peer administrators who support the day to day admin and logistics of the programme



Daisy Zhu is based in the Skills Centre as well as being a lecturer of Mandarin Chinese and supports PAL Leaders in their role as does Nick Regan, Lecturer, Politics, Languages & International Studies

Senior PAL Leaders

They are here to support you, will meet you for debriefs and are on hand to answer any queries



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Lets Get Started

Structure of a Language PAL session

Here is a basic outline of a PAL session. It is important to include all sections in some way, however you may wish to reduce the length of time spent on icebreakers or use an initial main activity as an icebreaker activity. There is a blank template for you to work on at the end of the handbook

Part Of Session	What Does It Involve?	Time
Start Of Session	Informal conversations as students arrive - register, Icebreaker activities	5-10 minutes
Main Body Of Session	Activities to explore content for session Redirecting questions and wait time Student to student interaction Checking understanding	30 minutes
End Of Session	Summarise content learnt Activity to embed knowledge Thank attendees Encourage them to join next week	5-10 minutes
After The Session	Send register to Peer Support Discuss session with peers	5-10 minutes

Activity Ideas



Activities you can use for the sessions

Here are some example activities that you can use in your sessions. You may find some of the activities are more suitable as ice breaker or main activities, or could be aimed at the more advanced language sessions.

There are more ideas on the resource page via our website; you will also be emailed a copy of the Example Activity Handout and can find this online as well. There are physical resources in the Peer Support Office. You can bring your own ideas to your session plans too!

Memory

This strategy works as a great opener for a PAL session. The PAL Leader should prepare 12-24 note cards. Half of the cards should have vocabulary terms and the other half should have the corresponding definitions. At the session, the PAL Leader should shuffle the cards and place them face down. Then get the students to work together to find all of the correct matches.

External Material

This is a good way to start a session if no one suggests a topic they would like to cover. Bring in copies of an article in your language and have students read the article and highlight any points they have found interesting. There are also some great clips on YouTube or TED.com

Peer Pong

Students are divided into two teams, each at either end of the peer pong table. Instead of filling the cups with drink, put slips of paper with questions, problems, concepts or translations in each cup. If a student gets a ball in a cup, a member of the opposing team has to answer the question, solve the problem, explain the concept, or translate the phrase.

Activity Ideas



End of Session Activities

These are used to review aims and consolidate the students' learning. They are a vital part of every PAL session.

- Quiz – prepare a quiz on the topics discussed in the session.
- WWW and EBI – students write down one thing that went well (What Went Well) and one thing they'd like to improve (Even Better If).
- Two stars and a wish – students write down two things they have done in the session (two stars) and one thing they'd like to improve (a wish).
- Emojigrams or dingbats – students summarise key concepts from the session using only emojis or pictures. Swap questions for others to try.

Other Resources

Peer Support Training Resources

You can borrow training resources from the Peer Support Team to help you in your sessions. We have lots of stationery, flipchart paper, games, etc. and you can find a full list of resources on the PAL Leader Resources Hub. Use the Example Activity handout online for other ideas or come into the office to have a look at what we have!

if you want to use any of the resources, either email peersupport@bath.ac.uk to reserve them or pop in and collect.

The office will be staffed between 09:00-17:00 each day, the doors will open freely from 10:00-16:00 so if outside these times just knock!

Online Resources

There are also plenty of online resources which you can sign up to for free to use during your sessions. Here are some of our favourites:

- Kahoot – create fun and interactive quizzes
- Mentimeter – create interactive presentations and add polls, quizzes, etc.
- Quizlet – create revision games and flashcards or use existing ones
- Sli.do – crowdsource questions and ideas from attendees



Your First Session

- Your first PAL session is likely to be a mix of excitement and nerves This is perfectly normal, and your fellow PAL Leaders will probably be feeling the same. Here are some tips to help you during your first session.
- Plan the session– ensure everyone is clear on what they will be doing and how each activity will run. This will give you confidence going into the session.
- Attendance may be either very big or very small in the first session. Think about how you will cater for both groups.
- Get to know your students and encourage them to get to know each other, so that group working will be more natural going forward.
- Explain your role as a PAL Leader and how sessions will work. PAL is often very different to how students have learnt before.
- Some activities may not work – plan a couple of simple additional activities that you can try if this happens. Don't be afraid to improvise!
- Don't forget to thank everyone for their contribution to their first session and tell them that you look forward to seeing them next time.
- Remind students of when and where the next session is and that they can suggest topics to cover for future sessions.

PAL Leader Facilitation Techniques

Student to Student Interaction

- Leaders should plan student to student interaction into their sessions.
- Getting students to ask each other questions or discuss topics or methods in groups encourages all members of the group to interact with one another.
- Leaders should redirect questions to other students to encourage students to answer each other's questions.
- Students should work in small groups whenever possible.
- Leaders should pay attention to student responses and check for understanding when needed.
- Wait for responses, allow time for learners to think and construct answers back.

Checking for understanding is crucial

- Maintain eye contact with students during the session – you can often tell when students are confused. Be aware that students who are neurodivergent may find eye contact difficult so do not rely on this solely as a solution.
- Ask questions that require the student to answer correctly or use the resources to play games that will encourage the learning.

Collaborative Learning Techniques

Collaborative learning techniques refer to how the group is arranged. We can use these with an activity idea to help run our session. Below are the eight collaborative learning techniques you could use in your sessions:

1. Group Discussion – The entire group discusses an idea or question together, students can contribute if they want to.
2. Turn to a partner – Split the group into pairs (and a three if there's an odd number) to work on an activity.
3. Individual presentation – One member of the group presents an answer, topic or discussion to the group.
4. Clusters – Split the group into subgroups – you may let the students choose who they want to work with or you may allocate groups.
5. Think, pair, share – You give students time to think on their own, before turning to a partner to discuss further, and then finally sharing with the whole group.
6. Assigned discussion leader – A participant gives their answer or interpretation of a topic and then leads the group discussion.
7. Jigsaw – Split your activity into multiple parts and allocate each part to a different group – it should rely on every group doing their bit.
8. Group survey – Each member of the group gives their opinion or answer to a question or topic.

Key Things to Know

GROUND RULES

There are normally hidden and assumed rules about what students do and respect in lectures, seminars etc., but as PAL sessions are run by fellow students it may be necessary to outline some ground rules for the sessions.

Examples of ground rules include:

- We agree and stick to starting and finishing times.
- We are working collaboratively, not competitively.
- We encourage everyone to contribute in whatever ways they choose.
- Dominant and aggressive behaviour is not acceptable.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, and transphobic comments are not acceptable.
- Anyone can point out if any of these rules are being ignored or broken.
- You might ask them to talk briefly in pairs to check whether these ground rules are acceptable and if they want to clarify or add any more.

DEBRIEFS

Debriefs are an important part of your role as a PAL Leader. The role of the debrief is to work with you to check how your sessions are going, discuss problems, help plan future sessions, and update you on relevant PAL related information.

Debriefs should be treated in the same way as PAL sessions - if you cannot attend a debrief, then you should let your Senior PAL Leader know. Debriefs will be led by a Senior PAL Leader and in some cases your PAL Coordinator may attend as well. Your Senior PAL Leader will schedule these with you, and they will take place on Microsoft Teams.

Debriefs can last anywhere from 10 minutes to half an hour based on your needs.

VARIED ATTENDANCE

Attendance at PAL sessions can vary week to week and the numbers of students in the session can impact how you run the session. Here are some tips for handling different sized groups.

If 20+ students turn up...

- Large group activities – jigsaw, clusters, think-pair-share
- Divide into subgroups and summarize as smaller groups
- PAL Leaders split off and work in smaller groups

If 1-4 students turn up...

- Work as a whole group – avoid splitting into pairs
- Be more hands on and sit with the group (if appropriate)
- Share more of your experience
- Seek feedback for why others may not be attending

LEADING THE SESSIONS

As a PAL Leader you need to commit to leading the PAL sessions that you have been allocated. Students will attend these voluntarily and, if no one is there to run the session, then they will not come back. This will have a knock on effect on the overall integrity of the PAL scheme.

However, if you cannot make a session then please do try to arrange cover informally with your peers or alternatively get in touch with the Peer Support Team.

If nobody turns up...

- Wait in the room for 15 minutes
- Plan with your fellow PAL Leaders how you can promote PAL for next week

Key Things to Know

REGISTERS

It is really important that you record who is attending each PAL session. We use this data to evaluate schemes, including numbers of students engaged, weekly and semester PAL attendances, and average sessions attended. Please ensure that your register is submitted to the Peer Support Team at the end of each session.

A template of the register is at the back of this handbook. If you would like to use this

OBSERVATIONS

The Peer Support Team will observe sessions once per semester. This is not an assessment; this is our opportunity to see the amazing PAL sessions you are running and see how well you are using the techniques covered in training. We will also provide feedback to you to support your learning and development.

Some of us will arrange with you and others we may drop in, if you would like us to observe certain ones or would like more feedback. Just let us know and we would gladly do this!

MICROSOFT TEAMS

All PAL Leaders will have been added to the Microsoft Teams group 'Language PAL Leader Community'. It's the perfect place to discuss ideas and chat as a group of PAL Leaders. E.g., if you wanted to ask if anyone else had run a certain activity and if they found it worked well, or perhaps something didn't go to plan in your previous session and you'd like some support. You can also share resources.

SAFEGUARDING

You might find that a student has built up such a rapport with you that they wish to disclose something important to you.

If able to, you should actively listen and signpost to appropriate support services available.

If you have reason to believe a learner is in danger or a danger to someone else, they should raise their concerns with an appropriate staff member in the Peer Support team, their department, the Advice and Support Team or the Wellbeing Team.

If you are concerned for the immediate wellbeing and safety of an individual, University Security are available 24 hours a day on 01225 383999, or in the library.

Inclusive Learning

Your learners may all have different needs and requirements to learn. Be conscious that you may need to ensure locations are fully accessible and any presentations are readable and not too text heavy.

Learners may need to get up and move or have something to keep them occupied while learning.

You may find some learners will need anything printed to be in larger print or different colours so encourage your learner's to tell you of anything they may need

The disability team have some supportive fact sheets - it may be best to look through before any sessions to feel prepared if any learners have different needs.

The also offer a useful pdf on inclusive teaching methods

Also ensure that you take time to learn the learners name and ask how to pronounce any names you are unsure of. Identifying people correctly is a great way to build rapport for your group so if people feel comfortable to do so, share your name and pronouns to encourage a safe learning space for all.



Reward and Recognition

Volunteer of the month is a regular way to nominate your team mates or yourself to show others what great work you are doing! You can nominate via the [website](#).

At the end of each semester you will be sent a feedback form so we can evaluate the programme and as part of this you will be asked if you would like a certificate for your time as a PAL leader.

Certificates are a great way to build up a portfolio of extra curricular activities you do alongside your degree- employers will be looking to see what makes you stand out from the rest!

Why not check out the [training](#) available to you as a student leader on the Student Hub or look to see what else could be suitable for your own development and awareness with these [workshops](#).

There are other **awards and events** throughout the semester where you can nominate yourself, your Language PAL team members or you Senior Language PAL Leaders.

Register of attendance

Language session:

Date:

PAL leader/s:

Student Name	Username

Blank planning templates

Session...

Theme...

Part of session	What does it involve?	Time
Start Of Session		5-10 minutes
Main Body Of Session		30 minutes
End Of Session		5-10 minutes
After The Session		5-10 minutes



Come and see us!

Peer Support Office
Level 2, SU Building

(we're the same level as the Plug, next to the SU
Finance Office)

peersupport@bath.ac.uk