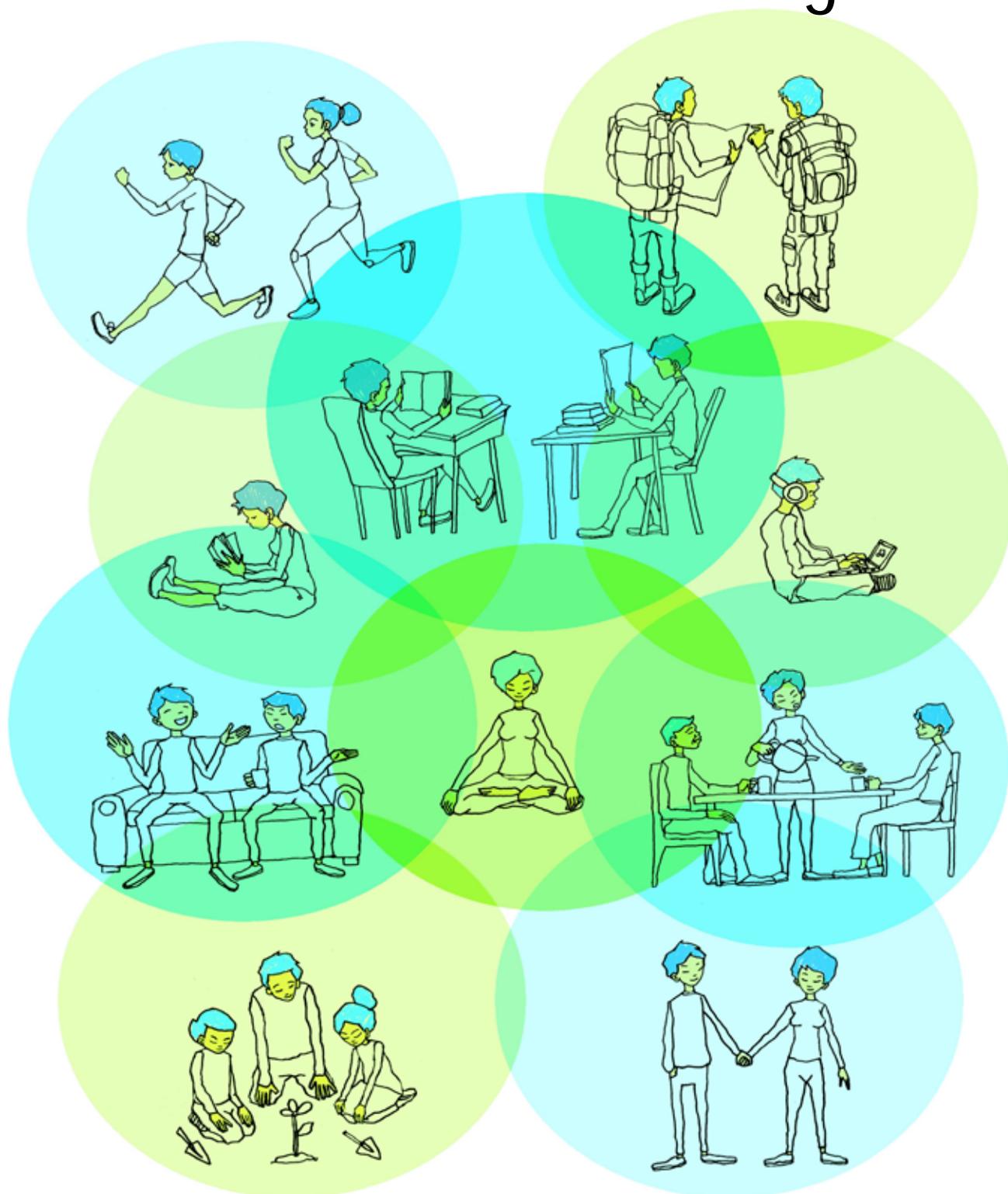


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CHAPTER B10

Developing and Implementing a Co-Curricular PASS Leadership Module at the University of Brighton

Catherine McConnell and Lucy Chilvers

SUMMARY

This PASS leadership module has been designed to enable student leaders to obtain additional academic credit for their commitment and contribution to the Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) scheme, and support development of leadership skills. Student leaders are introduced to the skills, knowledge and strategies necessary to facilitate group learning, and use reflection as a key approach to improving their PASS sessions and personal development. The module offers a range of workshops, online materials, group and individual activities for students to draw upon, to inform their PASS sessions, and enable the leaders and PASS students to get the most out of the scheme. This chapter describes the peer learning scheme, how it was developed and the challenges faced during the first two years of implementation. It considers the variety of reflective and transformative learning theories that informed the design and development of the module and explores the transformational learning opportunities that leaders have experienced, drawing upon students' written 'critical incident reports' that enabled them to critically reflect on a particular case study or an area of personal development. It considers what has been learnt and how this learning might be used to improve the module in future.

BIOGRAPHIES



Catherine McConnell is Senior Lecturer in Learning Development in the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of Brighton. Her role encompasses a range of research and practice, working directly with students, academic staff and central services to develop students' academic and professional skills, their successful transition into and through university, co-curricular learning opportunities and improving student engagement, employability and retention. Catherine introduced the PASS scheme to Brighton in 2009, and together with co-writer Lucy they have grown the

scheme to engage over 180 leaders in 2013/14.



Lucy Chilvers is a member of the Student Academic Success Programme Team within the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of Brighton where she develops and coordinates learning development projects across the university including the Academic Study Kit website; the PASS Scheme; and resources for academic staff. Her teaching encompasses



students' academic skill development, peer mentoring, and personal development for PASS Leaders and Course Reps. She also provides support for curriculum development via bespoke workshops and contributions to the PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in HE.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the development and evaluation of a co-curricular module for undergraduates who are volunteering as leaders in a formal peer learning scheme. The use of reflection and transformational learning experiences in this co-curricular module are designed to facilitate lifewide learning alongside students' degrees. The chapter is organised into five interrelated sections. Part one, sets out the elements of this formal peer learning scheme, including the role of a PASS Leader and the benefits of PASS for the student attendees as well as the leaders. Part two, describes the how and why behind the module, and gives practical advice and considerations for the process of getting the module up and running, as well as descriptions of the module portfolio requirements and taught sessions. Part three, explains the variety of reflective and transformative learning theories that informed the design and development of this module and seeks to explain the reflection process that we ask of the leaders using a theoretical framework that has helped us to underpin good practice. Part four, explores the transformational learning opportunities that the leaders have experienced, drawing upon students' written 'critical incident reports' that enabled them to critically reflect upon a particular case study or an area of personal development. Part five, considers some of the challenges we have faced during the first two years of delivering this module, and outlines our future plans for development. Consideration is also given to how students who have completed the module have taken their knowledge and understanding into the workplace.

Context

The role of Higher Education (HE) in preparing employable graduates is being increasingly emphasised by government and industry. This incorporates both subject knowledge and academic skills, alongside the 'transferable' skills often highlighted as essential by employers such as communication, leadership, organisation and self-management. The University of Brighton strategic plan sets out that

students will be able to participate in ways that will develop their skills, help them to translate and apply what they have learned and prepare them not only for immediate employment but ongoing career development and socially purposeful citizenship. (University of Brighton, 2012)

This highlights Brighton's valuing of additional learning experiences for students' lifelong learning. Brighton is keen for development opportunities to be both embedded within curriculum areas, and to provide co-curricular activities for which students can be recognised and appropriately rewarded.

The opportunity to volunteer as a leader in addition to their studies attracts a healthy number of students who see it as an opportunity to gain extra experience for their CV. This level of engagement and enthusiasm motivated us, the PASS coordinators, to consider ways of

accrediting the leaders for their co-curricular contribution, and of helping them acquire the language and ability to articulate their newly developed skill set for future job applications and interview situations.

Role of PASS leaders

PASS is a peer assisted learning programme aimed at enhancing the learning and student experience of undergraduate students (Martin and Blanc 1981, Wallace 2003). PASS derives from an American model called Supplemental Instruction (SI) (Martin and Blanc 1981), and is driven by HE agendas for the improvement of student retention, progression and achievement (Martin and Blanc 1981, Blanc et al 1983). Typically, PASS is led by second and third year student volunteers who are trained and supervised to work in pairs to facilitate weekly small-group study sessions for first year students (Ody and Carey 2009, Wallace 1995). The role of a PASS leader involves working with a co-leader to perform a range of activities including planning and facilitating engaging sessions which foster collaborative learning; keeping attendance in sessions; communicating regularly with academic staff to pass on student feedback and discuss topics for sessions; and meeting their PASS Supervisor for debriefs. PASS Supervisors are members of staff who coordinate PASS for a particular course, conducting occasional observations of sessions and regular debriefs to provide leaders with the opportunity to reflect on their experience and be supported in their role. For more information about the PASS Schemes at the University of Brighton [please visit our website](#).

There is extensive literature evidencing the benefits of PASS for both the student attendees and PASS leaders. For the students regularly participating in PASS, research suggests that participation in PASS contributes towards improving students' transition into university life and helps them to develop confidence, friendships, study skills and their understanding of course material (Doust and McConnell, 2012) and provides a supportive environment to ask questions (Fostier and Carey, 2007; Coe et al, 1999; Arendale, 1994). The PASS leaders benefit from improved confidence in their subject knowledge and development of transferable and employability skills such as leadership, organisation, presentation and communication skills (Stout and McDaniel, 2006; Donelan, 1999; Coe et al, 1999). Some writers argue that PASS leaders are the greater beneficiaries of PASS (Donelan, 1999).

The PASS leaders' role is outlined to students in a job description, which they receive at their two-day intensive training course. PASS leaders have a balance to strike in being both responsible role models to the students, demonstrating good study habits, positive attitudes and being professional in their conduct, whilst also being friendly, approachable, honest about their experiences and enthusiastic. The range of activities and skills that students develop in their role as a PASS leader has the potential to be under-sold or overlooked by students when applying for jobs if they have not reflected on the impact of their experience on their personal and professional development. The PASS Leadership Module aimed to create a space and opportunity to encourage and facilitate students' engagement in this reflective process.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PASS MODULE

The process of developing and validating the module, the requirements of the module portfolio and the design and content of the taught sessions and interdisciplinary peer groups are outlined below.

Validation

Ideas for the module were initially discussed with the Faculty Officer for Quality and Standards. Standard protocol at the University of Brighton is to first submit a draft module descriptor to the Academic Board, and receive and address comments from board members. During the drafting process, particular attention and consideration was paid to the following issues:

The location of the validated module, in other words, which School or Faculty should have responsibility for the administration, assessing the work, and awarding the credits? The decision was taken to validate the module at faculty level, aligned to the Faculty of Education, Sport and Service Management as the Centre for Learning and Teaching coordinating the PASS scheme and module across the university is based within this faculty.

The interdisciplinary nature of the cohort. Every trained PASS leader is eligible to opt in to the PASS Leadership Module, which means that the cohort is made up of students from across the university. Therefore, the learning outcomes and assessment tasks need to be described in such a way that students from a range of subject areas can relate to them and articulate their achievements in the context of their discipline. This is particularly important when considering the nuances between employment sectors, and how employers might require different emphases on various skills.

Workload. Careful consideration was given to the amount of work required for submission, as the students need to prioritise their own course work, but manage to complete the module with relative ease. Much of the portfolio requirement (outlined below) contains evidence of practice that the leaders are already collating as part of their role. The module is assessed as pass or fail, in order to minimise the pressure on students to go over and above the requirement to pass.

The need for an additional transcript. At the time of developing the module, the university's Registry system did not allow for, or have capacity to record, the extra 10 credits, aside from creating an additional transcript that is awarded on graduation through the student records system.

Minimising the impact of student failure. In the event that a student who has opted for the module is not able to complete, or submits unsatisfactory work, we wanted to ensure that this failure is not documented on their student records. The solution was to register students on the module at the time of completion and marking of the assessment task.

Portfolio requirements

The purpose of the module portfolio is for students to evidence their practice as a PASS leader. As well as planning for and conducting PASS sessions, students are required to demonstrate that they have the ability to reflect on their experience, and use this to inform future session planning and areas for personal development.

The contents of the portfolio consist of at least one of each of the following:

- session planning sheets
- self evaluations, for discussion at debriefs
- peer evaluations shared between PASS interdisciplinary module peer groups
- supervisor observations
- final critical incident report of 1500 words that highlights a particular scenario, challenge, or area for improvement
- a reflective personal development plan for future skills development that builds upon skills developed through PASS Leadership
- a CV and covering letter that expresses skills developed through PASS leadership work

In the second year of running this module, the portfolio was developed into an e-portfolio using 'studentfolio' a dedicated web based portfolio tool adopted by the university. This is used for the creation and presentation of electronic artefacts within the context of an electronic portfolio. A portfolio is a showcase of students' work, which can be in a variety of different electronic formats such as online text, PDF, word documents, digital images, video files etc. The structure of studentfolio is not dissimilar to how a paper-based portfolio folder might be organised; you collect and create items in the content area and then organise and share the content with other people using pages created in the portfolio area.

There are a number of advantages of moving to e-portfolios for this module. Firstly, when students are applying for jobs they are able to email employers a link to their e-portfolio making their work more easily accessible before even being given an interview. Secondly, students have the option of developing and sharing electronic evidence and resources such as photographs and videos from their sessions, or other electronic resources they might have created for their sessions such as Prezzi or PowerPoint slides. This also allows for online networking between students which is particularly advantageous in the context of Brighton being a multi-campus university. We did encounter some challenges in the first year of using e-portfolio which shall be discussed towards the end of the chapter.

Taught Sessions

The module consists of four taught sessions, each with a different focus and a number of interactive activities to ensure students are engaged in the sessions. Whilst the students are conducting their PASS sessions every week and collecting evidence for their portfolio as they go, the taught sessions aim to provide the following:

- Session 1: An introduction to the purpose of the module and their interdisciplinary peer groups (see Figure 4); also including an introduction to studentfolio and guidance on setting up their e-portfolio from a Technical Advisor.
- Session 2: Active listening exercises (see Figure 1) in interdisciplinary peer groups, reflecting on PASS sessions so far, and identifying potential scenarios that could be used for the Critical Incident Report (see Figure 2).
- Session 3: Session focuses on students' personal and professional development, focusing on how to articulate their experiences from PASS in CVs, covering letters and job applications. Exercises include a content-analysis of graduate job adverts and writing targeted covering letters (see Figure 3).
- Session 4: One to one tutorials with module tutors about the contents of their portfolio, and a drop-in session with a Technical Advisor for finishing e-portfolios.

Figure 1 Active Listening Exercise

Purpose: to develop active listening skills which are useful for the role of a PASS leader; to stimulate reflection on PASS experience so far; to generate ideas for the critical incident report.

1. Give some input into the difference between hearing and active listening; including the role of body language and questioning styles.
2. Ask students to write independently and quietly for 2 mins about their experience as a PASS leader and their PASS sessions so far.
3. Allocate students into groups of 3, then number students in each group 1, 2 or 3.
4. Explain the activity - each student is going to have a chance to play each role, (or 2 of the roles depending on time); 1= speaker, 2= active listener, 3= observer; 45 mins for the activity, 15 - 20 mins for each round but you might only have time to do 2 rounds - it should still trigger thoughts off for all students on what they can write about their experiences so far in their critical incident report.
5. In one round:
 - a. (5 mins) the speaker talks uninterruptedly about their time so far as a PASS leader whilst the active listener is listening to what they are saying
 - b. (3 mins) the active listener tells the speaker what they understand the speaker to have said and felt
 - c. (5 mins) the active listener asks the speaker questions and they have a discussion about what the speaker has said
 - d. (throughout) meanwhile the observer is writing observations, noting body language, types of questions asked etc.



Figure 2 Critical Incident Report: framework for structured reflection

Students were provided with this framework as a starting point for triggering their thinking and writing - they did not have to answer every question.

Description of experience

- Phenomenon: describe in detail the 'here and now' of the PASS session or event, without interpretation or judgement
- Context: what were the significant background factors to this session? In other words, briefly recall in general terms why the session took place, and what its purpose was.
- Clarifying: why has this experience been selected for structured reflection? What would you like to achieve through the process of reflecting on this experience?

Reflection

- What was I trying to achieve?
- Why did I intervene as I did?
- What were the consequences of my action for myself, my students, and my co-leader?
- How did I feel about the experience when it was happening?
- How did the students feel about it?
- How do I know how the students felt about it?

Influencing factors

- What internal factors influenced my decision-making?
- What external factors influenced my decision-making?
- What sources of knowledge did/should have influenced my decision-making?

Could I have dealt better with the situation?

- What other choices did I have?
- What could be the consequences of these choices?

Learning

- How do I feel about this experience now?
- How have I made sense of this experience in the light of past experiences and future practice?
- Has this experience changed my way of understanding aspects of my practice as a leader?

Assumptions, beliefs and ideology

- What do my practices say about my assumptions and beliefs about leadership/ facilitating learning?
- What views of power do they embody?

Action

- Given the chance, what would I do differently next time?
- What changes will I make immediately in order to put my learning into practice?
- Should I communicate this learning to the students, my co-leader, or PASS supervisor? If so, how?

Figure 3 Graduate Job Advert Content Analysis and Targeted Covering Letter Exercise

Purpose: for students to learn how to ensure their CVs and Covering letters are written strategically to target specific job adverts and demonstrate how they meet requirements.

- Icebreaker- ask students to discuss in twos or threes about their previous job experiences and what skills they have gained from those positions (can be humorous!)
- Print off a range of graduate job adverts; give each student one advert to read and ask them to highlight any words or phrases that demonstrate what the employer is looking for - have some feedback and group discussion
- Now show students a couple of examples of good covering letters and discuss them together as a group
- Ask students to spend 7 minutes writing a draft cover letter for the job advert they were analysing earlier, making sure they refer to their experience gained as a PASS leader (or other co or extra-curricular activities).
- Finally allocate students into pairs and ask them to peer review each other's covering letters, giving each other constructive feedback on ways they could improve their writing.

Interdisciplinary peer groups

In the second year of the module Interdisciplinary Peer Groups were established in order to help leaders develop a Community of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and to receive support in their roles as PASS leaders and share their experience of the module. Students on the module were allocated to small, interdisciplinary peer groups to facilitate working together both in the module sessions and outside of the sessions.

In the taught sessions, active listening activities in the peer groups facilitated students in exploratory and reflective discussion about their practice, aiming to create an open space for dialogue (Bohm, 1996). With PASS leaders on the module representing a wide range of subjects and campuses, it was hoped that students could offer each other fresh insights into how PASS sessions are led on other courses.

Outside of the module, students were asked to meet up to observe each others' sessions and encouraged to keep in touch to support and motivate each other. Figure 4 gives an example of the guidance students received for working in their interdisciplinary peer groups.

Figure 4 Interdisciplinary Peer Group Guidance for Students

Your peer groups are encouraged to function in a number of ways:

- you will arrange at least one observation of a PASS session run by one of your peers, and share your feedback online via studentfolio
- you can share experiences and reflections and keep in contact with your peer group for the duration of the module
- you will share your experiences of PASS within the module sessions using the active listening activities

Within session one, please do the following to ensure your peer group gets off to a good start:

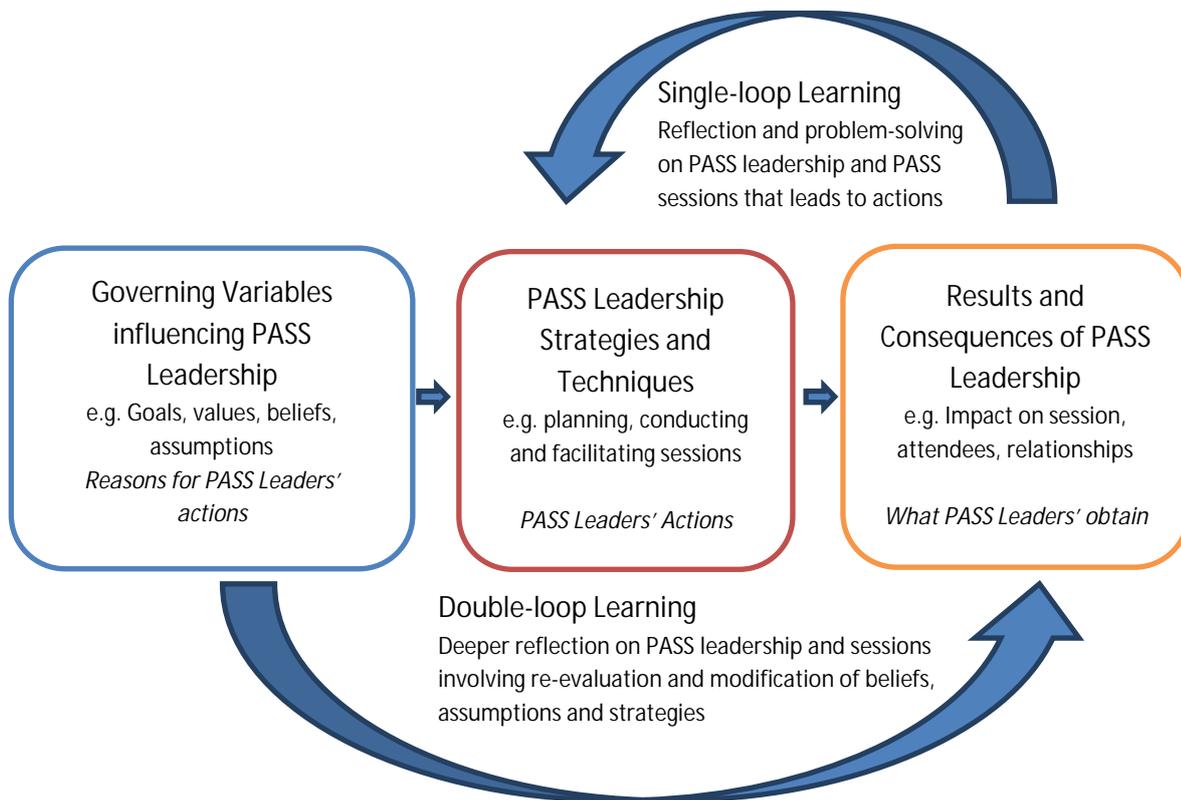
- introduce yourself, the course you are on (icebreaker)
- swap preferred contact details to keep in touch (email/ facebook/ studentfolio)
- and spend a few minutes each talking about your PASS sessions and how they have been going. Have you had any critical incidents yet? What has been successful? What not so successful? Are there any resources that you could share?

THEORETICAL MODELS

Designing the content of the PASS leaders' portfolio and activities used in taught module sessions was underpinned and informed by a number of theoretical models for reflective learning. Argyris and Schon's (1978) concepts of single and double loop learning identify two ways that people can learn through reflection. In single loop learning, reflection on experiences and problems leads to an action, although sometimes the same strategies are drawn on in future experiences learning is not advanced beyond a certain point. In double loop learning the consequences of actions are reflected on more broadly, considering the deeper beliefs, goals, assumptions, and from others' viewpoints. This leads to the modification of assumptions and strategies so that the situation can be responded to differently the next time it arises.

The PASS module aimed to facilitate PASS leaders in engaging in double loop learning (Figure 5). Through reflection on challenging situations that have arisen in sessions, they would reflect more deeply about the underlying assumptions and beliefs informing their own actions, in order to identify new ways of responding and changing their assumptions where needed.

Figure 5 Single and Double Loop Learning for PASS Leaders, interpreted from Argyris and Schon, 1978



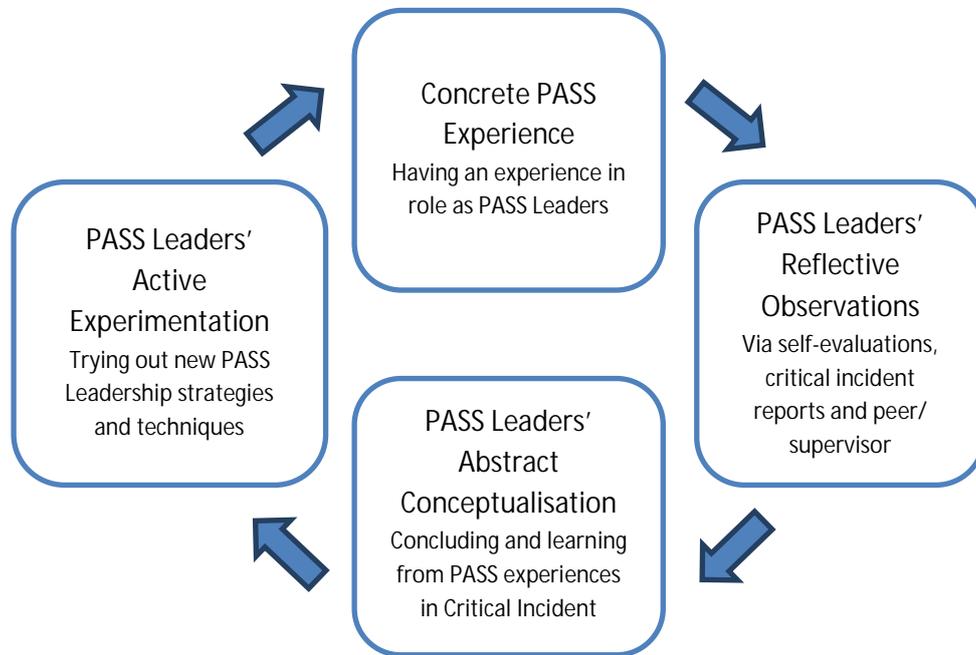
Schon (1983) went on to make the distinction between the notion of 'reflection in action' whereby you are thinking on your feet, and 'reflection on action' involving reflection in hindsight. The module aimed to nurture a level of critical self-awareness amongst PASS leaders so they would consider during a session how it is going, whilst also engaging in reflection after a session to determine ways of improving their sessions in the future.

Experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) has also informed the module material, in which Kolb defines learning as 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience' (Kolb, 1984, pp.38). Through reflection on experiences, Kolb highlights the importance of experimental actions for the application of learning, leading to transformative experiences.

The aim for the module was to encourage and facilitate PASS leaders to critically reflect on their concrete experiences (Figure 6) so that when working with their co-leaders and conducting

sessions, transformational learning experiences would be triggered, thus enhancing their personal and professional development.

Figure 6 PASS Leaders' Experiential Learning, in relation to the Kolb (1984) learning cycle



Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991) suggests that people's beliefs and actions can be changed through the process of critical reflection on their underlying assumptions. This process is often effective when reflecting on an action that did not align with expectations, and therefore challenges assumptions and encourages their modification (Mezirow, 1991; 1997). Through engaging in the process of critical questioning by writing a Critical Incident Report (Figure 2) and Active Listening activities (Figure 1), students were prompted to critically reflect at a deeper level about aspects of their experience as PASS leaders which were either challenging or unexpected. Through reflecting on their underpinning assumptions and responses to situations - from their own perspective and the view point of others - leaders consider new ways to approach situations in the future.

The importance of developing multiple opportunities for PASS leaders to reflect on experience from a variety of viewpoints was explored by Skalicky (2008) who drew on Brookfield's (1995) framework of critical reflection for teachers, which suggests four lenses for reflection:

- our autobiographies as learners and teachers
- our students' eyes
- our colleagues' experiences
- theoretical literature

These multiple lenses informed the design of the portfolio contents to ensure students were critically reflecting about their roles and sessions from both a personal perspective, and also

from their module peers', student attendees' and supervisor's perspectives through peer and supervisor session observations. In both PASS leader training and the taught module sessions, theoretical literature about reflective learning and peer learning were also drawn upon to contextualise their roles and the purpose of the module.

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS OF PASS LEADERS

One of the module portfolio requirements as described in Figure 2 is for the student to write a 'critical incident report', in order to extract in-depth reflection and learning about something significant in their experience of being a PASS leader. With students' permission, we are able to include here some particularly interesting excerpts from their reports that illustrate how they evidenced their learning in the context of PASS and their wider learning or student experience.

I hope that in my reflection I will realise how to assume the role of a knowledgeable helper, aiding them [students] to come to the answers themselves rather than a teacher just giving them information.... I felt like I'd almost failed in my role as a PASS leader when the incident occurred because the whole point was not to teach the group and I felt like I had just tried to assume a teacher role.... I wasn't upset by the incident at all but it did make me think about the way I was presenting myself to the group.... After the incident I tried to base my actions on being a PASS leader and averting the situation without compromising the goals of the session....I think that the incident showed me that I thought a leader had to stand at the front and teach and that the group expected me to fill them with knowledge. Now I realise that we're all helping each other....The changes I immediately made were to change the layout of the classroom so that we all sat as a group on the same level. (Undergraduate PASS Leader in Ecology)

The first session of PASS has been chosen for this report... as it entailed dominant characters and foreign students... I believe that reflection upon this session will enable me to review my skills regarding managing people and also that of facilitating others to realise their ability... I was initially hoping to engage each member of the group and enable each member to participate equally.... on reflection what was most disappointing about our [leadership] behaviour was the lack of consideration we had for our non-English speaker... and the necessity for us as leaders to ... ensure he was able to be included and learn from our sessions... I have lived abroad as a young foreign student and understand how assumptions are made about individuals and their ability... it has only been since partaking in PASS as a facilitator that I have been able to see just which difficulties these students contend with... in retrospect I have behaved much as the students did in this particular session, caught up in my needs.... [As an intervention] we the leaders set and timed specific limits for people to talk and watched carefully for signs that the foreign student was struggling... so we could step in and ask him if he needed clarification... I have loved this opportunity to help others, to learn new things, to be able to use these experiences to learn more about myself and my beliefs and be able to reflect on them and improve my future ability and actions. (Undergraduate PASS Leader in Podiatry)

My behaviour in PASS sessions [as a leader] has been influenced by a few factors; internal factors include my desire to lead. This is a very important factor for me because I



enjoy being 'in the spotlight' and commanding the attention of a room, which makes it hard to stand back and let the students reach the answers without my help. ... Having reflected... my perspective on teaching has changed. I now have a deeper understanding of the difference between teaching and facilitating and the importance of using each technique in the right situation. I still enjoy teaching and think that it will be a good career path to follow, but now realise that this is not the most beneficial way to run our PASS sessions as it means the students have less involvement and do not learn as effectively, or potentially do not learn anything as they may not speak out and tell us as leaders that they are not following. (Undergraduate PASS Leader in Mathematics and Computing)

Many of the students' critical reflections evidence a conscious adaptation to their leadership practice as a result of consideration and modification to their assumptions or norms. Mostly we observe the changes to their PASS Leadership practice, but there have been occasions where students have transformed their values or beliefs, or aspirations such as career options, as a result of their involvement with PASS and the module.

EVALUATION

Having reflected and evaluated upon our experiences as module convenors, and gained feedback from students who participated in the PASS module, we have learned greatly from the two years that the module has been running. In 2012/13, 100% of the students agreed that studying the module had enhanced their experience as a PASS Leader. In response to the question: *How did the PASS Leadership Module impact your experience as a PASS Leader and your university studies overall?* students' responses included:

The module has helped me in terms of solidifying my experience and skills of being a PASS leader. Therefore, I am able to recognise those skills and experience better, and able to transfer them to my study more efficiently.

It highlighted areas of my learning, which either need work or showed just how far I've come from the first year. It made me think more about what I was actually doing as a PASS leader and ways to improve, as it made me self-evaluate a lot more which I wasn't doing as much before. It also made me think a lot more about what I have gained from PASS and transferable skills which I have gained, some even without realising.

Students' comments highlight the value of the module in prompting critical reflection and self-evaluation, enabling students to realise the range of lifewide skills they have developed that might have otherwise been overlooked. When asked: *What did you do in preparation for, during and after the sessions that you think contributed to your learning and that of your peers?* one student explained:

I ask for criticism from my fellow PASS leaders on the way that I was conducting the PASS sessions. And changed my approaches to the way I attracted students to the PASS sessions. Learning how to present myself effectively in a variety of contexts helped build my confidence and the stimulating discussions improved my ability to express an opinion



respectfully. Overall, I think the main benefit of the sessions was learning how to actively listen - something I hadn't thought about before.

This demonstrates the impact of the module on students' own learning and personal development such as being able to receive critical feedback from peers, developing effective listening skills, and having improved confidence in public speaking and presentation skills.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

A number of practical and developmental considerations have arisen for us that, at the time of writing this paper we are currently discussing:

Should the module remain as part of the co-curriculum, or be embedded within the subject curriculum? This question, raised initially at Academic Board stage when considering the module for validation, relates to the relevance of developing 'generic' skills, or in some way making room for this within the academic curriculum. Conversely, do students appreciate and value the opportunity to engage in activity outside of and additional to their course and gain the 'extra-factor' for their CV?

Should we impose a maximum capacity on the cohort size? In the first year of running the module the cohort was made up of 14 students. In this current second year, there are approximately 40 students (60 expressed interest initially). Building a rapport with a cohort of this size is a significant challenge and we are concerned that our limited capacity to engage students will affect their persistence on the module and impact the quality of their experience.

How can we foster improved interdisciplinary communications between leaders? PASS leaders have expressed interest in observing other PASS sessions outside of their subject area, and we hoped that the module would provide the structure to facilitate this. However, due to logistical challenges such as timetables, availability, multi-campus locations, and enough time to build relationships across disciplines, we have reached a barrier to this.

How can we better support students in using studentfolio? Despite the numerous advantages for students in developing an electronic portfolio, we did encounter the expected challenges of using a new technology. This was exacerbated by the co-curricular nature of the module and the subsequent need for submission of portfolios to be as simple and achievable as possible. Due to some students being unfamiliar with studentfolio, the first half of one of the four taught sessions was dedicated to students learning how to use it. Whilst this was a very helpful session, for some students the task of having to familiarise themselves with a new interface appeared to be a barrier for continuing with the module. This also put pressure on the remainder of the first taught session for building relationships between the students although an additional session was timetabled to address this. Additional drop-in sessions will be developed in order to support students in developing their e-portfolio if required.

How could the impact of the module be researched further? 90% of students in the 2012/13 cohort agreed that taking the PASS leadership module contributed to the development of their employability skills. Further research could qualitatively explore the impact of this module on



students' employability by interviewing graduates who have completed the PASS leadership module. Examples of how graduates' have used their e-portfolios and learning experience from the module in the context of employment could be explored, such as how they referred to PASS in their job applications and interviews, or how they are transferring and applying the skills they developed through PASS leadership in their current employment. A resource that could be developed from this research could be a series of short video interviews with the graduates for current PASS leaders taking the module to watch.

CONCLUSION

The issues discussed in this paper provide significant evidence that detailed planning, organisation and support for students involved in PASS leading is essential for the success of any formalised accreditation for their learning and development. Developing and implementing a new process to support student development should be regularly evaluated. As module convenors we have learnt a considerable amount in the two years that the PASS leadership module has been running and this learning will inform the further development of the module.

One area in particular that, given the opportunity, we will investigate further, is gathering both quantitative and qualitative data that may illuminate why students participate in the PASS leadership module and the impact of their development on their employability and career progression. The reflective element appears, by far, to be the most rewarding aspect of the module for the students, which will undoubtedly have positive repercussions on their academic experience and their lifewide and lifelong learning trajectories.

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