



2010

# Dublin Institute of Technology Peer Assisted Learning Initiative

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## Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) in the School of Languages, Dublin Institute of Technology

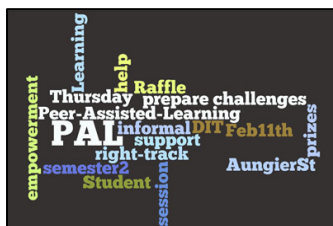
Pilot project in the BA International Business and Languages. PAL provides academic support and encouragement to 1<sup>st</sup> year students by involving 2<sup>nd</sup> year students as mentors.

### Principles of PAL

Peer Assisted Learning is based on:

- collaborative learning
- autonomous learning
- active learning
- the role of intrinsic motivation.

Mentors and 1<sup>st</sup> year students spend time together sharing and reflecting on their learning experiences, regardless of their level of competency. Year 2 students are better equipped with the skill-set that needs to be fostered in 1<sup>st</sup> years.



### Reasons

PAL aims to:

- facilitate integration
- help students acquire third level study skills
- improve pass rates and retention

### Process of Implementation in DIT

#### Semester 1:

Information on the initiative and its benefits to students was presented to all 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> year students on the BA International Business and Languages. The project started with an induction session for year 2 mentors in the Spanish, German, French and English streams. A get together session between 1<sup>st</sup> year students and 2<sup>nd</sup> year mentors kick started the PAL sessions.

#### Semester 2:

Participation from 1<sup>st</sup> year students was encouraged through a second get together session, promotional material and the launch of a Facebook page as well as a Webcourses module.

A survey and a focus group provided insights for the evaluation of the project.

#### Action Plan 2010-2011

- Identify and train mentors by September 2010 to take part in 1<sup>st</sup> year induction.
- Include PAL in 1<sup>st</sup> year students' handbook and timetable.
- Roll out PAL from induction onwards to increase 1<sup>st</sup> year students' participation.
- Feedback session during review week semester1
- Maintain active involvement among programme team.

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