Welcome

Welcome to the second PASS Newsletter. Many thanks to those readers who have sent in feedback on the first issue. Please feel free to email me (d.m.andrews@qmul.ac.uk) contributions for future issues. The deadline for contributions or comments for Issue 3 is 27 April 2009.

PASS plays host to PAL: mentoring forum with UCL

Queen Mary PASS mentors are taking part in a Mentoring Forum with PAL (peer assisted learning) mentors from UCL, hosted by Queen Mary, on 4 February. Many of the ideas for this were generated by the undergraduate PASS organisers. A full report will be given in the next issue of the Newsletter.

In this issue:

- Filming PASS
- PASS plays host to PAL
- PASS certificate and awards event, 25 March
- Sharing ideas
- Alumni news
- Conference and research news
- Work available
- Finding out more

Filming PASS

Work on the film, PASS at Queen Mary, funded by a grant from Educational and Staff Development and mentioned in the last Newsletter is now underway. A 'mock' mentoring session and other opportunities have been set up but filming will continue at least until the end of the semester so any PASS mentor who would like to get involved but has not yet come forward, please email d.m.andrews@qmul.ac.uk.

Alumni news

It was good that the first edition of the PASS Newsletter prompted some former mentors (now out in the big, wide world) to get in touch and tell us what they are up to:

Ivy Man (PASS mentor 2006-8 and PASS student organiser for the School of Mathematical Sciences, 2007-8) emails that she is back from travelling (modestly described by her as ‘My 10 million-year-long holiday’) and looking for work. Suggestions can be passed on! She thought the design of the newsletter was great (‘Wow’), so thanks for this to Glendina Reid in the Publications and Web Department.

Jenny Gregory, who was in Ivy’s PASS team in Maths, is on a training contract at chartered accountancy firm, H W Fisher. She emailed that the newsletter was a great idea and said, ‘it was really interesting to read how things are going now we’ve all left.’

Samia Faruq (PASS mentor 2006-8 and PASS student organiser for the Department of Computer Science), known by many new mentors from mentor training sessions has not torn herself away from Queen Mary. She writes:

After graduation, I carried on with my studies in colour vision research (jointly with Computer Science and Biological Sciences). I also began work as a tutor and coordinator of the Professional Skills Programme for the first-year undergraduate students.

Samia has encouragement for all the hard-working PASS mentors out there:

I can really appreciate the support that PASS mentors provide. In fact it is absolutely unique! It is not like the Skills Programme that I run or the kind of support that one can seek from an academic member of staff. PASS is run by the students, so it truly is something that the first-year students can relate and look up to. I always recommend my tutorial group to seek the wisdom of PASS mentors in our department, as I know that they will benefit from the invaluable experience of mentors who hold their first year fresh in their minds!

Work available

If any PASS mentor is interested in becoming a student ambassador for Young, Gifted and Talented at Queen Mary, please contact Nepa Begum on 020 7882 8887 or at n.begum@qmul.ac.uk for further details. This project, run from Widening Participation at Queen Mary, needs undergraduates who like working with young people of school and college age for various projects this year. Work is occasional and paid at an hourly rate.
Finding out more

Anyone reading this newsletter is likely already to be involved in PASS at Queen Mary. However, if there is anything about which you would like to know more (or if you would like to contribute to the next edition of this newsletter), please contact:

Dr Debbie Andrews, Peer-mentoring Coordinator (Widening Participation Team, Corporate Affairs): d.m.andrews@qmul.ac.uk (central coordinator for PASS).

Below is a list of the key PASS people in schools and departments. These are the academic coordinators and the undergraduate student organisers, each of whom is a PASS mentor leading a team of mentors.

Established PASS schools and departments

**Computer Science**
Academic coordinator: Dr Jane Reid; student organiser: Nuzhah Gooda Sahib

**Electronic Engineering**
Academic coordinator: Dr Janine Lajudie; student organiser: Jason Lizarraga

**Mathematical Sciences**
Academic coordinator: Dr Robert Johnson; student organiser: Inna Polichtchouk

Schools and departments running PASS as a pilot this academic year

**Biological and Chemical Sciences**
Academic coordinator: Dr Caroline Brennan; student organisers: Khaled Abid, Tendai Dvuke, Nima Farah

**Dentistry**
Academic coordinator: Dr Rachel Ashworth; student organiser: Prina Patel

**Engineering and Materials Science**
Academic coordinator: Professor Julia Shelton; student organisers: Mel Gabriel, Mohamed Kadir

Ongoing feedback

As well as those all-important sign-in sheets, PASS Facebook groups set up by student organisers are also proving useful for feedback. One SBCS mentee posted this comment (passed on by Nima Farah):

I thought the PASS meeting was really helpful - most concepts I was stuck on I managed to understand. It helped me a lot to settle down into uni life and realise that uni isn't as scary as I thought it would be. Overall I think it was very helpful and all the mentors were great!

Conference and research news

UK National Transition Conference: research and good practice in promoting student engagement in the first year, 24 April 2009

Debbie Andrews and Samia Faruq are running a workshop (People who’ve been through it: the use of past mentor experience in mentor training and development) at this conference, held at UCL (Gower Street, WC1) on Friday 24 April. Places at the conference for undergraduates from presenting universities are free so please email d.m.andrews@qmul.ac.uk if you would like to come along to the conference and/or participate in the QM workshop. You can find details at:

www.ucl.ac.uk/transition/student-mentoring/transitionconference

PASS certificate and awards event, 25 March

Please make a note to keep free the afternoon of Wednesday 25 March for the annual PASS celebration event (invitations will be sent out by email to all mentors and others involved in the scheme nearer the time). It will begin at 3pm and is in the Skeel Lecture Theatre, Mile End campus. Extracts from the film-in-progress, PASS at Queen Mary, will be shown and some of the event itself will be filmed. Mentors who aren’t camera-shy should be ready to be ‘vox popped’ for the film. This is an enjoyable interlude, marking the end of the mentoring sessions for the academic year and giving us a chance to express our thanks to the mentors who volunteer their time to help others. There will be certificates for everyone and an award for an outstanding mentor in each department.