2nd PASS Conference

Who is the modern-day student?

Wednesday 4 February 2015
2-4pm

Further information
Attendance is by ticket only, limited tickets available.
For more information about the event please speak to the PASS student organiser in your department or check out the QMUL PASS webpages.
Overview of PASS

What is PASS?

If you are here today, you probably know the answer to that question but just in case…

It stands for Peer Assisted Study Support and is run by higher-year students for first-years (and sometimes second-years) in their subject. Once or twice a week, trained volunteer mentors are ready to help on a drop-in basis with getting to grips with study and life at university. Look at the list at back of this programme for contact details of the PASS student organiser in your subject if you want to find out more. Going to PASS sessions adds something unique to the experience of being at QMUL – fellow students who have walked in your shoes understand you in a way no one else can.

PASS is great for the first-years who come along for help but it is also a very good personal development opportunity as many alumni, who have gone on to further degrees or into employment, tell us. As well as mentoring in their own academic school, mentors get the chance to meet fellow students from other subjects and exchange ideas as you are doing at this conference. Mentors become very knowledgeable (sometimes more than they realise) about the motivations, worries and outlooks of the present-day student. Opportunities to communicate with each other, as well as learning to communicate effectively with students they are helping in sessions, gives mentors something special. PASS mentors are among the most interesting and committed students at this university and the staff who work with them all feel lucky.
Welcome

With the support of PASS Student organisers and academic coordinators from across Queen Mary University of London and staff in Widening Participation (Directorate of Marketing and Communications), we are delighted to welcome you to the 2015 PASS conference. This is the second time this conference has been held and we hope that you gain a lot from listening and participating in today’s discussion. Delegates are invited to share their views around the overall theme of:

Who is the modern-day student?

Those attendees who are involved in PASS will be able to draw on their experiences from student mentoring during discussion and how this relates to the overall theme.

Michelle McAvoi
Widening Participation Coordinator

Schedule:

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Registration at Fogg LT Foyer. Sign up for one discussion group.</td>
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<td>14:10</td>
<td>Welcome and Key Note address from Dr Guglielmo Volpe, senior lecturer in economics and finance</td>
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| 14:20  | Presentations on four key topics  
1. Why arts/humanities degrees are still relevant in our society today  
2. Studying in the UK – an EU student perspective  
3. Employability - transferable skills and the infinite job market  
4. Student choices – a plethora. Why we can’t do it without mentoring |
| 14:45  | Move to break out rooms  
Talk 1 in Laws 1:00  
Talk 2 in Laws 1:02  
Talk 3 in Laws 2:07  
Talk 4 Remain in Fogg LT |
| 14:50  | Begin discussions in break-out rooms |
| 15:30  | Refreshments in Fogg LT Foyer – Danishes, cookies, tea, coffee and juice available |
| 15:40 – 16:00 | Plenary (feedback) session. One spokesperson from each discussion group |
Speaker biographies

**Ryan Hill**
*PASS Student Organiser, Physics and Astronomy. Third-year MSci physics student*
A third-year physics student woefully unprepared for the real world; he likes sarcasm, to-do lists and long walks on the beach. His favourite TV show is *Suits* and he dislikes all hot drinks.

**Catalina Andreea-Romila**
*PASS Student Organiser, Biological & Chemical Sciences. Third-year biochemistry student*
I am the first person in my family to attend university. Some individuals can be lucky and I am one of them, for I had people to help me choose my path. I desire nothing more than a future explosion of humanity! Humanity may be the answer to the world’s entropy as we witness it today!

**Michael Khoshdel**
*PASS Student Organiser, Mathematical Sciences. Second-year mathematics student*
Besides mathematics, which I am enormously and immensely passionate about - I hope the emphasis is clear - I am deeply interested in mathematics teaching. Indeed, I am planning on becoming an A-Level mathematics teacher, whose classes will always comprise purely attentive, well-behaved, error-free, enthusiastic and highly intelligent 17-/18-year olds - you can always hope, right? My main message to all is that mathematics can be learnt by anyone.
Giulia Campolo
PASS Student Organiser, Mathematical Sciences. Third-year mathematics student
I come from Milan, Italy and I moved to London for my undergraduate degree two years ago. I am the current president of the Mathematics Society and student ambassador for the mathematics department, things which allow me to share my passion for mathematics with others. I am an extremely active person; I recently got into aerial acrobatics, so I spend most of my free time upside down on silks or on the flying trapeze.

Kateryna Hrynychak
PASS Student Organiser, Economics and Finance. Third-year economics, finance and management student
I am an international student moving countries since I was a child. I decided to study in the UK to challenge myself in an unknown country. Two years after I can say I survived it in an amazing way!

Catherine Palmer
PASS Student Organiser, Drama. Second-year drama student
This is a glimpse of me - I run a youth theatre for ages 5-19 at the Broadway Theatre, Barking. Offering accessible opportunities for all the community to engage in. I also work as a workshop facilitator for Green Shoes Arts, a community arts group. I deliver workshops for a range of demographics from: creating a ‘play in a day’ about World War 2 with English Heritage in schools, to drama workshops for adults with learning disabilities about accessing NHS services.
Presentation summaries:

**Why arts/humanities degrees are still relevant in our society today**

Creativity is not a sin. However, the society we live in encourages us to suppress creativity and talent and discourages careers in the arts, embellishing them as risky, unstable and 'not a proper job' - for the dreamers, the lost, the unambitious. It has never been a more crucial time to rethink how and what we value in education. We don't just enjoy or want art in our life...we need it in order to fulfil one of the most basic needs of a human being; an avenue to express ourselves.

*Please think in particular about:*
- So how can we change attitudes around arts and humanities degrees?
- How can we encourage young people to embrace their talent and creativity and not suppress it?
- What does a society without art look like?

**Studying in the UK – an EU student perspective**

The modern-day student is often studying overseas; we will discuss the benefits of this for the student and for the UK as a whole. We will also debate how well these students are integrated into the UK. We will talk specifically about international students at QMUL.

*Please think in particular about:*
- What do you think the future student will look like?
- What are the major challenges the modern student faces in adjusting to the British culture?
- What are the impacts the international students have on the UK’s economy?

**Employability - transferable skills and the infinite job market**

What do I need to be employed in the modern world? What exactly are these ‘transferable skills’ I have? And just how do I become a ‘direct debit and membership and professional development stock and credit administrator’? All these questions and more will be explored in this talk.

*Please think in particular about:*
- What should careers services be doing to help students find the right kind of job?
- Are transferable skills the ‘be all and end all’ they are sometimes made out to be?
- Is it possible to find out what you love, or are you stuck once you enter a field?

**Student choices – a plethora. Why we can’t do it without mentoring**

The modern-day student is confused and overwhelmed. Undergraduate mentoring is vital for the modern day. What is the global perspective on undergraduate mentoring?

*Please think in particular about:*
- Has abundant choice for the modern-day undergraduate diminished their university experience?
- How can undergraduate mentoring bring order and clarity in the face of abundant choice?
- How is undergraduate mentoring viewed by society, and should there be changes in how it is viewed?
## PASS contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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The outcomes of today’s discussions will be presented on the PASS webpages and inserted into the next PASS Newsletter which are viewed by a variety of audiences throughout the campus and beyond.