



Meet-Up Program: Peer learning for success

Lindy Kimmins, Douglas Eacersall, Aruna Devi, Megan Kek, Anita Frederiks, Mark Emmerson, Eddie Thangavelu, Bronwen Dickson & Elizabeth McCarthy

Student Learning & Development, Library Services
Scholarly Information & Learning Services, Academic Services Division

Peer Learning

Meet-Up is a peer-assisted learning (PAL) program and is one of the suite of co-curricular services offered by Student Learning and Development and Library Services.

Meet-Up provides opportunities for students to enhance or develop their academic learning skills and their understanding of discipline concepts through engagement with peers and peer leaders, both in a discipline-based context and in a general study enquiry mode called Meet-Up Student Community (MUSC).

The Impact of Meet-Up

Participating students

Student participants across all campuses have given **course-based Meet-Up sessions** an average rating of 3.7/4 each semester since 2012.

Comments made suggest that the program meets the needs of participating students ...

... from those who are lacking in confidence:

"So glad I came along, was worried I wouldn't know anything but I learnt a lot and even contributed to the conversations, thanks guys"

... to those who enjoy extending their conceptions:

"very hard questions, was what I needed".

Student leaders

Meet-Up contributes to the growth of a pool of USQ student leaders who show initiative and creativity, and demonstrate highly developed employability skills including communication, leadership, teamwork and independent learning.

"I have learned the value of what the students can teach me as much as them valuing that which I have to share with them. My ability to manage conflict and problem solving skills have improved more than I could have imagined. I also have an attitude change in myself that allows me to keep growing and not so much worry about what others think".



References:

Arendale, D.R. (2014). Understanding the Peer Assisted Learning Model: Student Study Groups in Challenging Courses. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 3(2), 1-12

Kek, M. Y. C. A., Padro, F., Kimmins, L., Frederiks, A., & Ayriss, P. (Forthcoming). Exploring the contributions of co-curricular learning programs on student success: The case with a learning advising program. *Higher Education Research and Development*.



Feedback from participating students

- Helped me not feel so stressed and helped me understand some of the content
- Useful in inspiring me to start on the assignment, gave me a starting point
- Beneficial, in a sense that there is time to go over examples of topics and further break them down.
- This was very helpful in how to progress through the modules, what to spend more time on etc
- The quiz was a great review on our subject, thank you

What the sector says

"Both quantitative and qualitative studies of PAL validate its effectiveness for increasing academic success of participating students and fostering development of personal and social skills" (Arendale, 2014).

Students Enabling Student Success

- Echoing Arendale (2014), a similar finding of a USQ mixed methods research on peer learning has shown statistically significant benefits of Meet-Up on academic achievement and progression.
- Meet-Up is a part of a larger student success framework that not only helped students to experience cognitive or academic success but also to develop confidence, motivation and a sense of being supported.
- This is achieved through a shared responsibility between students, academics, administrators and other professionals (Kek et al, forthcoming).