

Peer assisted learning to support student role transition in occupational therapy education

Jones J, Scott S, Gibbins A Bournemouth University Peer assisted learning (PAL) is an integral part of the Occupational Therapy programme at Bournemouth University.

PAL may be defined as learning support enabling students to work co-operatively under the guidance of more experienced students. Second and third year students (PAL leaders) facilitate study sessions for groups of first or second years. PAL aims to support students to adjust to university life, to develop independent learning skills, and to acquire a clear view of course direction and subject matter through collaborative group discussion (Bournemouth University 2017). Transitioning into student roles can be complex and involves gaining a sense of relationships to others and of expected behaviours (Kielhofner 2008). Students are expected to dedicate their time to work activities to ensure academic success which may have a negative impact on occupational balance. Wilson and Wilcock (2005) suggest that first year occupational therapy students find it difficult to attain occupational balance due to environmental and personal factors and PAL sessions can assist with this transition.

PAL has a positive impact not only for the student recipients but also for the PAL leaders in terms of confidence building, developing transferable skills and enhancing employability (Capstick et al 2004). From an educational perspective the PAL approach enhances deeper levels of engagement with the curriculum, supports stronger cohort identity and increases employability through the development of transferable skills.

This poster will explore and reflect on the value of PAL in occupational therapy education for the students, PAL leaders and the educational organisation.

References

Bournemouth University (2017) Peer Assisted Learning, Bournemouth, Available at: <https://www1.bournemouth.ac.uk/students/learning/peer-assisted-learning> Accessed on 05.11.17.

Capstick S, Fleming H, Hurne J (2004) Implementing Peer Assisted Learning in Higher Education: The experience of a new university and a model for the achievement of a mainstream programme, Bournemouth University, Available at: <https://www1.bournemouth.ac.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/capstick-fleming-hurne.pdf> Accessed on 05.11.17.

Kielhofner G (2008) Habituation: Patterns of Daily Occupation. In: G Kielhofner. Model of Human Occupation: Theory and Application, 4th ed, Baltimore, MD, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 51–67.

Wilson L, Wilcock A (2005) Occupational Balance: What Tips the Scales for New Students? British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 68(7), 319–323.

