

East Norfolk Sixth Form College



Peer Assisted Mentor Strand

Rationale for introduction of output

Peer Assisted Learning Mentoring scheme, where students, with or without additional needs, support new students with academic, welfare and social introductions and advocacy. Follows a model of student support operating at University of East Anglia *Student Ambassadors*

- a) 250 new students per year with a variety of additional needs across diverse degrees of scope and development
- b) Early engagement and attachment to college, learning and peer group is essential to avoid withdrawals
- c) 90 students per year withdraw on course and between years. 1 in 3 have an additional need of some description
- d) Engagement process that is friendly, easily accessible with an immediate effect on students with additional needs and their family/carers
- e) Promote Student with Disability participation and leadership
- f) Challenge low expectation in students and their family/carers on success and achievement
- g) Common theme is low expectation of their ability to socialise, and perform well academically. Sometimes frightened of bullying or what people may think because of their learning differences. Have strong role models
- h) Integrate with mentoring scheme for students with mental health needs purposefully designed to reduce withdrawals
- i) Extends current student volunteer service of 12 students

Output content and relevance to users

Peer Assisted Mentors:

1. Based on UEA “Student Ambassadors” model then have 12 students with or without additional needs trained and delivering a range of support services for other students with or without additional needs
2. Payment by voucher, bus pass or other non-monetary means; £30 – 100 per term depending on activities
3. UEA “Student Ambassadors” train key staff and 12 student volunteers
4. Integrate with Mentor for Mental Health Needs to reduce withdrawals by students with additional needs and mental health needs
5. Peer assisted mentoring scheme is work in progress with launch for September 2012 following trial runs in April – July

Staff input:

1. Senior Teacher from Pastoral Team has asked for training in UEA “Ambassador” scheme for 12 East Norfolk Sixth Form College students and 5 support staff

2. Management plan and preparation for payment in kind for students

Who uses output and how and where

1. Students with students with or without additional needs pre and on entry
2. New students with additional needs applying for September 2012 and part of pre-college Transition process
3. Strengthen high expectations by students with additional needs who have engaged with DVD
4. Some students with additional needs and their professionals in Education, Social Services, Health, Residential provision will need a mentor at college as identified at Final Review or S139a
5. East Norfolk Sixth Form College Pastoral and Welfare Teams will integrate existing support for Disadvantage and Equality for students with or without additional needs

How learners were involved in both the development and the use of output:

1. 12 volunteer students without additional needs in college led by Student Welfare Co-ordinator to design an action plan for a Peer Assisted Mentoring Scheme by 31.01.12
2. March 22 conference “ Support for Disability in Higher Education” volunteer student involvement working alongside UEA “Student Ambassadors”
3. Peer assisted mentoring scheme is work in progress with launch for September 2012 following trial runs in April – July with 12 student volunteers and feedback from Student Association to finalise scheme

How the output ensures challenge to low expectations of learners:

1. Some students with or without additional needs are scared about college and without sufficient nurturing to engage with their studies, environment, peers and teachers can become disengaged leading to withdrawals. A peer mentor may help alongside other interventions and nurturing in first 6 weeks to strengthen this engagement.
2. Professionals in other schools and college have acknowledged that some students with or without additional needs have not performed academically to their full achievement despite being gifted and talented. A college with high academic achievement that encourages such low achieving students but with potential through various ways such as a peer assisted mentoring scheme can overcome these low expectations. Professionals and colleagues in schools and colleges can follow East Norfolk Sixth Form College’s example of inclusion yet without lower academic standards providing the curriculum offer for such students is relevant and appropriate to their level of academic attainment at that time of entry at the end of year 11.

Impact of use of output (actual or potential):

1. 5 students with additional needs by July 31st in trial run
2. 50 students with or without additional needs supported for an average of 1 hour a week by July 31st 2013
3. 5 students with or without additional needs who do not withdraw from college and stay on courses or new courses

4. Measurable impact by 5% on reducing withdrawals in 2012-13

Particular successes from use of output:

1. College wide support for a formal peer assisted learning scheme for students with or without additional needs
2. UEA "Student Ambassadors" are keen to set up a GCSE/A Level version of University scheme
3. Schedule of implementation
4. Support from volunteer students shown in strength of action plan

Lessons learned from use of output:

1. Always include students with additional needs, disadvantage and difficulties. They are best placed to develop, extend and make "user friendly" information, advice and guidance for them.
2. Plan well with likeminded colleagues. Be prepared to change things quite radically
3. Do not hold back on payments and costs for quality
4. Trust students can work on their own initiative and be flexible
5. Out of college input is vital. Make project measurable and specific

Dissemination, to date, of output and evaluation of use

1. Feedback to other college colleagues March 9th and sharing resources.
2. March 22nd at East Norfolk Sixth Form College student volunteers invite to work alongside UEA "Ambassadors" and attend workshops at a Conference about Support at University for Students with Additional needs.
3. Informal feedback to date has been positive.
4. Work in progress

Any planned extension of use or further development/changes/refinements of output

1. Planned schedule of trial runs will change current concept, focus and form of the project which is work in progress
2. Training of student volunteers has been reduced from 3 hours to 90 minutes
3. Training and Mentoring Package is incomplete

Proposed applications of output for other users/providers

1. Share format, resources, methods and contacts with other feeder High Schools
2. Present Scheme at Regional Events
3. Share impact measures of reduced withdrawals and indicators of engagement with other colleges
4. See further funding to extend scheme by subject area for a more personalised service