Scenario

Poppleville University runs a peer-assisted learning or PAL programme where trained second and third year students run small group sessions for first year students to support development of study skills, critical thinking and engagement with their subject area in an informal and non-judgemental environment. Here's an excerpt from the programme flier.

Peer Assisted Learning at PopU

On the **PAL Scheme**, you will have regular small group sessions with your PAL Leader. Each session will include collaborative tasks and group discussions as well as help on topics and assessments. Through engagement in the scheme we hope you will:

- ❖ **Network with new and current students on your course;**
- ❖ **Engage more with your subject and gain new perspectives;**
- ❖ **Consolidate study skills relevant to your course;**
- ❖ **Hone your critical and independent thinking skills;**
- ❖ **Develop groupwork and collaborative skills;**
- ❖ **Better understand marking schemes and how to make the most of assignment feedback;**
- ❖ **Discover areas of personal interest through exploring your subject;**
- ❖ **Find out about becoming a PAL Leader yourself next year.**

Theory of Change

The scheme was planned focussing on the NERUPI Framework objectives **Practise** (skills curriculum) at **Level 5** (student success). The team developed the following Theory of Change statement for the PAL scheme.

Theory of Change: Year 1 PAL Scheme

If students from target groups participate in the PAL scheme, the **short-term benefits** will be that they:
- Have more opportunities to engage with their subject and gain new perspectives
- Discover areas of personal interest through exploring their subject
- Enhance their critical and independent thinking strategies
- Understand and practise study skills relevant to their course
- Develop groupwork and collaborative skills
- Understand marking schemes and how to make the most of assignment feedback.

If target students benefit in these ways, the **medium-term outcomes** will be on-course improvements in their:
- Depth of understanding and contextualisation of the subject matter
- Capacity to apply critical and independent thinking strategies
- Effective application of study skills relevant to their course
- Effective application of groupwork and collaborative skills
- Capacity to respond appropriately to assignment feedback.

If there are these improvements, the **longer-term impacts** will be:
- Improvements in target students' academic attainment
- More target students achieving 1sts and 2:1 degree awards.

See the Reflexive Cycle Toolkit online for more on the [NERUPI Framework aims and objectives](#) and [developing a Theory of Change](#) as well as help on [Targeting](#).

Task 1:

In your breakout group, discuss what evaluation methods you would use for the PAL scheme.

Add your group's suggestions to the Padlet: https://padlet.com/katemholmes/9may22_evaluationmethods

Task 2:

In your breakout group, use the NERUPI Question Bank tool to develop an evaluation instrument for either:

- **A pre- / during / post-programme student survey or outcomes wheel to measure short-term benefits**
- **A set of focus group questions for students and/or teaching staff to measure medium-term outcomes**

You can download the Question Bank from the website: https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/resources/nerupi-framework-question-bank. Use the Master tab – Level 5, Educational Capital. Consider what type of questions you need for your evaluation:

Exploratory: Learn more about a topic, probe on the main factors involved	Predictive: Thinking about the potential future outcome of taking part in an activity	Evaluative (pre/post): Documenting impact against a measure	Process: Understand the mechanisms at play in successful programmes

We suggest one person shares the Question Bank on their screen and leads the discussion.

Be ready to share your feedback on what you came up with and how you found the process back in the main room – you may need a spokesperson.

Task 3:

What would you would need to consider in your planning to implement this evaluation? Put your thoughts in the Chat.

See the NERUPI Reflexive Cycle Toolkit online for more on Evaluation Methods, NERUPI Question Bank and Evaluation Logistics.