

**The tasks in this workshop activity are based on a scenario using NERUPI's fictitious [Poppleville University](#).**

Poppleville University runs a peer-assisted learning or PAL programme where trained second and third year students run small group sessions for first years 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)<sup>1</sup>. 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](#).

<sup>1</sup> Depending on the context and its purposes, a PAL Scheme may have other objectives – relating to the NERUPI **Become** aim for example. To keep things simple, just the objectives under **Practise** are used in this exercise.

**Below are suggested tasks that you could do in groups to explore using the NERUPI Question Bank.**

**Task 1 (5-10 mins):**

In small groups, discuss what evaluation methods you would use for PopU's PAL scheme and complete this table.

| Evaluating short term benefits | Evaluating medium term outcomes | Evaluating longer term impact |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                |                                 |                               |

You could present this online as a Padlet. See the example here: [https://padlet.com/katemholmes/9may22\\_evaluationmethods](https://padlet.com/katemholmes/9may22_evaluationmethods)

**Task 2 (30-45 mins):**

Again in small groups, use the NERUPI Question Bank tool to develop an evaluation instrument such as a survey 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

Spend about 30 minutes on this and then:

- Compare your evaluation materials with other groups
- Talk together about how you found the process of using the Question Bank

## NERUPI Reflexive Cycle Toolkit Workshop: The Question Bank

Worksheet created by Kate Holmes  
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- Discuss the practicalities of implementing this evaluation and what you would need to consider in your planning

You can download the Question Bank from the website: <https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/resources/nerupi-framework-question-bank>. Use the Master tab and filter for 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 |
|---|---|---|---|

Use questions from the Question Bank directly or as inspiration for questions and/or prompts in your evaluation instrument.

If running this online, we suggest one person in each small group shares the Question Bank on their screen and leads the discussion.

**See the NERUPI Reflexive Cycle Toolkit online for more on [Evaluation Methods](#), [NERUPI Question Bank](#) and [Evaluation Logistics](#).**

### Task 3 (15-30 mins):

Having tried it out with a scenario example, use the Question Bank to develop evaluation materials for one of your own outreach or student success activities.

Don't forget to share your feedback and your practice examples with the NERUPI Network! Get in touch: [nerupi@bath.ac.uk](mailto:nerupi@bath.ac.uk).

**Hear about an example of the NERUPI Question Bank being put into practice at FutureHY Uni Connect: [QB Practice Example](#).**