

## First Year Experience of PAL at GMIT and AIT

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# Background

- First Year Experience Plans
- SIF II, HEA Funding Awarded
- GMIT Lead
- GMIT Student Leadership Programme
  - Student Led Learning (AIT Partner)
  - Curriculum Reform (NUIG Partner)
- Bournemouth University, University of Manchester, PALNET Ireland Members
- PAL @GMIT and PASS @AIT





# About PAL/PASS at GMIT & AIT



- *“PAL/PASS at GMIT & AIT is a scheme that offers cross-year support between students on the same programme. It encourages first year students to support each other and learn co-operatively under the guidance of a trained student (a PAL/PASS Leader) from the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> years of the programme.”*

# Overall Programme Involvement in GMIT and AIT

## Phase One January 2009:

6 Programmes  
(3 GMIT & AIT)

143 1<sup>st</sup> Year  
Students

15 PAL  
Leaders

## Phase Two September 2009:

18  
Programmes  
(12 GMIT & 6 AIT)

7 Disciplines

700 1<sup>st</sup> Year  
Students

45 PAL  
Leaders

## Phase Three September 2010:

32-40  
Programmes  
(16-18 GMIT +  
NUIG 1 & AIT 21  
proposed )

7 Schools/  
Disciplines

1800 1<sup>st</sup> Year  
Students

130+ PAL  
Leaders (50  
GMIT + 30 NUIG  
and AIT 53)



# GMIT Programme Involvement



## Phase One January 2009:

1. Bachelor of Art in Hotel Management
2. Bachelor of Science in Business Computing and Digital Media
3. Bachelor of Art in Furniture Production and Technology

## Phase Two September 2009:

1. BSc in Business Computing and Digital Media
2. BSc in Computing and Energy Systems
3. BA in Gnó agus Cumarsáid
4. BA in Art & Design
5. BA(Honours) in Hotel and Catering Management
6. BB in Bar Management
7. BB in Hotel Management
8. BSc in Construction Management & Refurbishment Maintenance
9. BB Personnel Mgt.
10. 11. & 12 All First Year Programmes in Letterfrack Campus

## Phase Three September 2010:

### + New:

13. Bachelor of Science
14. BB Culinary Arts
15. BB Tourism Management
16. BB Retail and Customer Service Management
17. BB Event Management and Public Relations
18. B Eng in Computer and Electronic Engineering

# AIT Programme

## Involvement

### Phase One January 2009:

- 1.BBS in Hospitality Business Management
- 2.BSc in Construction Technology and Management
- 3.BBS in Business (Ab Initio)

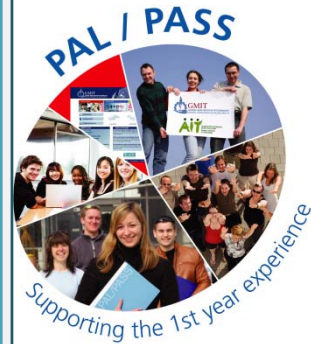
### Phase Two September 2009:

- 1.BBS in Hospitality Business Management
- 2.BSc in Construction Technology and Management
- 3.BBS in Business (Ab Initio)
- 4.BSc in Nursing in Psychiatric Nursing
- 5.BSc in Veterinary Nursing
- 6.Higher Certificate in Business Studies
- 7.Higher Certificate in Civil Engineering

### Phase Three September 2010

#### + New:

- 1.BA in Hotel and Leisure Management
- 2.BBS in Hospitality Business Management Year 3 to year 2
- 3.Bachelor in Business Honours in Mgt in Tourism & Sport
- 4.BSc in Veterinary Nursing year 3 to year 2
- 5.BSc in Biotechnology
- 6.Higher Cert in Science
- 7.BSc in Toxicology
- 8.BSc (Hons) General Nursing
- 9.Higher Cert in Music and Instrument Technology
- 10.Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design (Web Development)
- 11.Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design (Game Development)
- 12.Higher Cert Electronic and Computer Engineering
- 13.Higher Cert in Applied Social Studies
- 14.Bachelor of Business in Business Computing



# Leader Opportunities & Benefits



## + Phase 3: Leaders gaining 5ECTS credits *PAL Leadership Module*

- *PAL Leader Workshops Participation 30%*
- *PAL Leader Practice 40%*
- *PAL Leader Evaluations: Observation and Reflective Journal 30%*

# Benefits through Collaboration

- Design and deploy a research project
- Faster implementation process
- Snr. management buy in – both institutes
- Rollout & evaluation experiences shared
- Best practice model
- Development of a PAL Leadership Training Programme
- Development of a PAL Tool Kit/Manual
- Joint Public Relations
- Development of a 5 ECTS PAL Leadership Module





# Research Findings

# (Phase 1) 1<sup>st</sup> Year Experience Findings – GMIT

## How has PAL helped you?

*"It helped me get a better idea of what kind of standard was expected of me."*

*"It has helped me to adjust into college life better and given me more confidence in interacting with my peers."*

*"PAL was a great experience I only wish more people had attended. PAL helped me to understand what was to come on the course in following years and I now feel more prepared for the next stages on the course."*

*"It has helped me integrate with my classmates more in a very friendly environment."*

*"Through pal, I was introduced to something that I might had only see them by next year, such as 'Google Sketchup' ."*

# (Phase 1) 1<sup>st</sup> Year Experience Findings – AIT How has PASS helped you?



*"The Pass class helps me to improve my English. Helping us to finish the assignment."*

*"Share the information, classmates know more about each other, have an effect on team work."*

*"Get information on my class project. Help get idea out of my head. Make the class work as a team."*

*"Get to know the class better and helped with projects."*

*"It has helped me to get a better understanding of the course."*

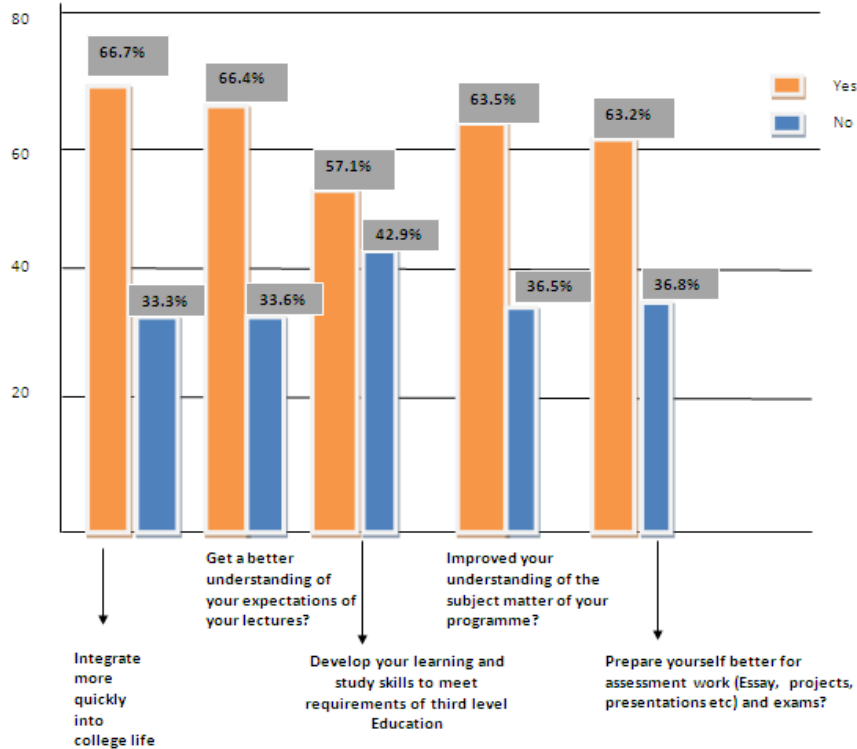
*"Helped me make friends in the class."*

*"It has helped get a better understanding of college life from people who have been here longer."*

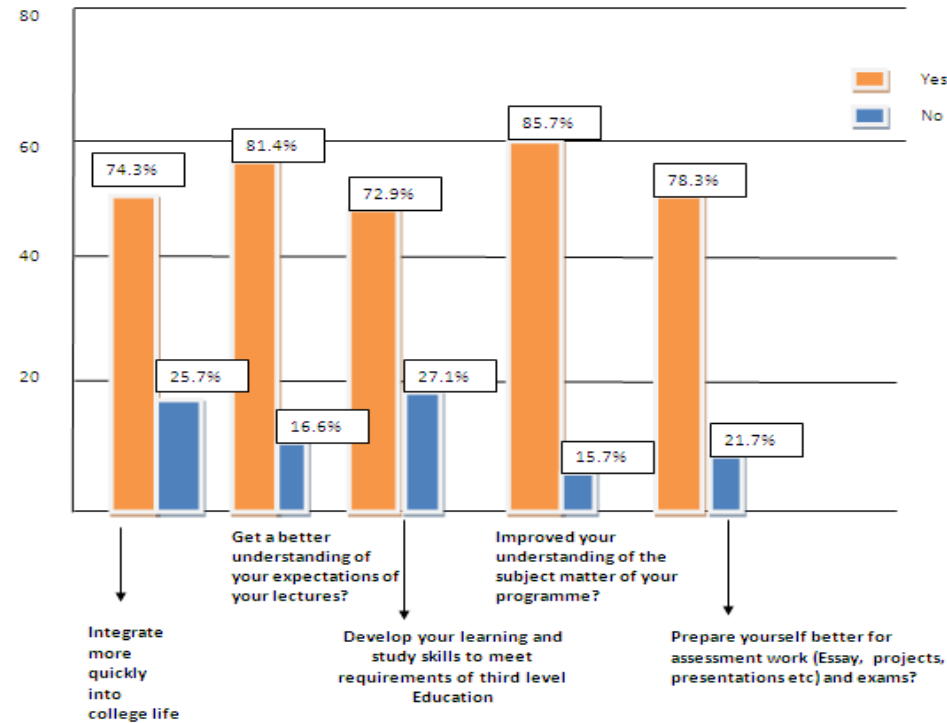
# (Phase 2) Do you think attending PAL/PASS Sessions has helped you?



Do you think that attending PAL Sessions has helped you to?



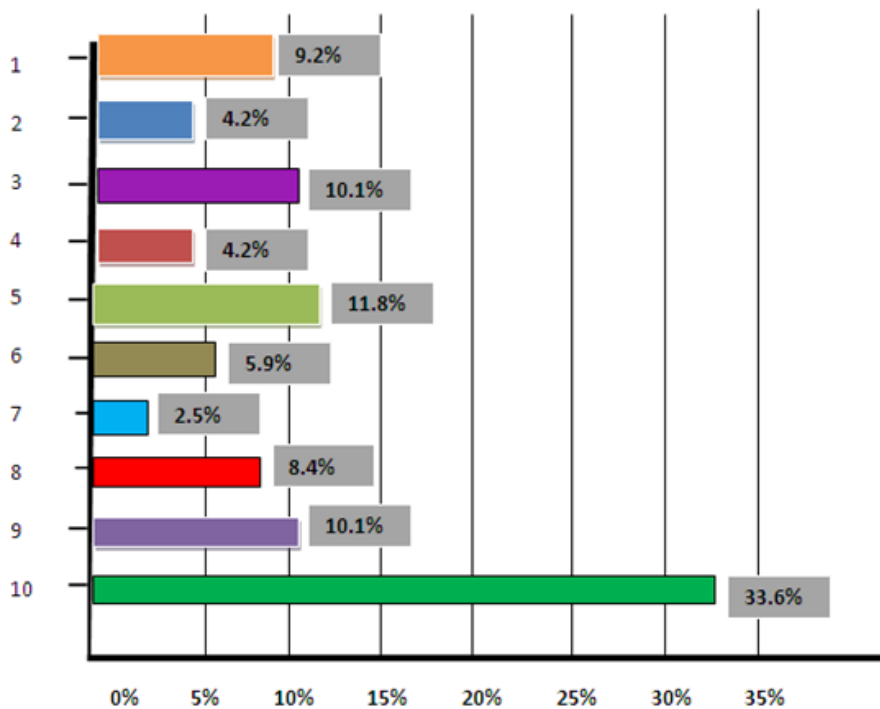
Do you think that attending PASS Sessions has helped you to?



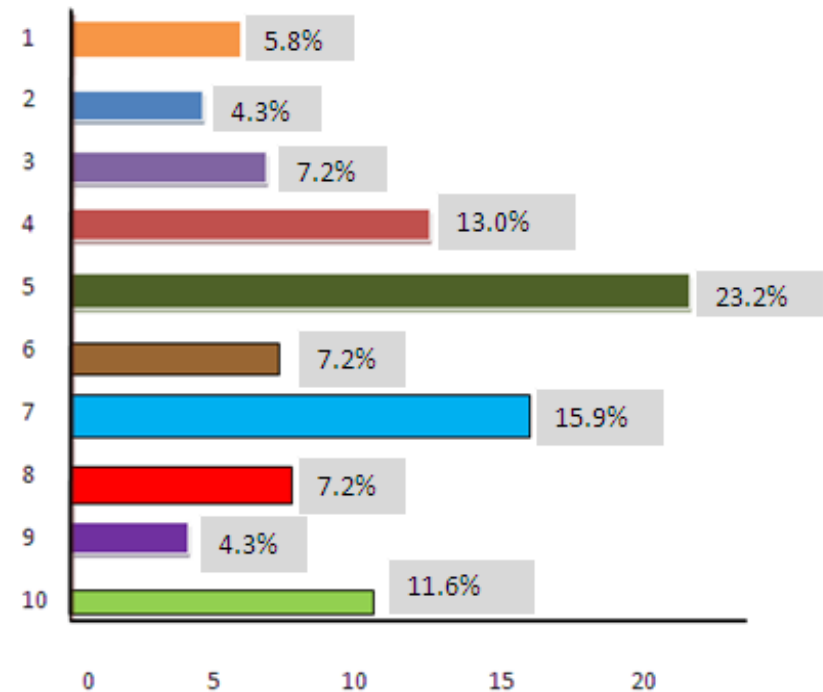
# (Phase 2) Number of PAL/PASS sessions attended in Semester 1



How many PAL sessions did you attend in Semester?



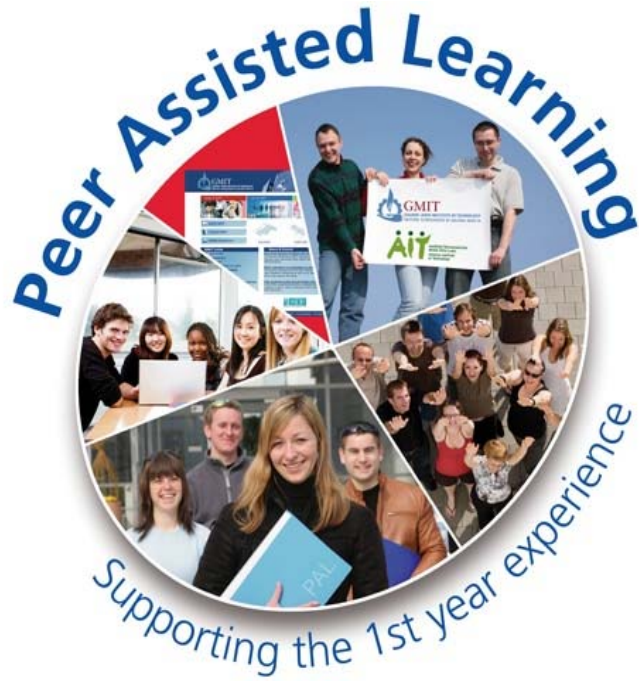
How many PASS Sessions did you attend in Semester 1?



# PAL Leadership Experience



- Professional Development
- Employability Skills
- Group Work



# **PAL/PASS Leader Perspective**

## **Q&A - Discussion**

# Student Leader Experience

## Findings - GMIT

### Skills Development

- Confidence
- Communication Skills
- Time Management
- Speaking in front of large groups
- Team Work
- Guiding Students
- Planning
- Organising
- Creativity
- IT/Computer Skills

### Training

- Good Fun
- Great Trainer
- Relaxed Environment
- Really enjoyed the Simulation PAL Session
- Board work on what PAL is and not
- Lots of interaction with the other leaders
- Very comprehensive
- Future phases of PAL adapt training more to Institutes of Technology with Irish Leader experiences video clips etc.
- PAL Manual Brilliant

### Feedback from First Years

- 1st years' supportive
- Relaxed Environment
- Didn't use Moodle much as not many knew how to access
- Saw the benefits immediately
- Helped socially
- Had trouble understanding Lecturers sometimes – found PAL very helpful
- Solving problems about Maths and using woodwork tools
- Learning about Google sketch book
- Helped with assignments and exam prep
- Sept. start would be much better

# Student Leader Experience

## Findings - AIT

### Skills Development

- Coaching skills
- Assignment work coaching outside sessions
- Supporting students
- Communication/Delegation
- Team Work
- Planning & Organising
- Speaking to Group
- Prior to this very nervous speaking
- Confidence in speaking
- Team Encouragement

### Training

- Fun
- New Experience
- Hugh excellent trainer
- DVDs – exercise helped leaders interact
- Fun
- Informative
- Before - apprehensive

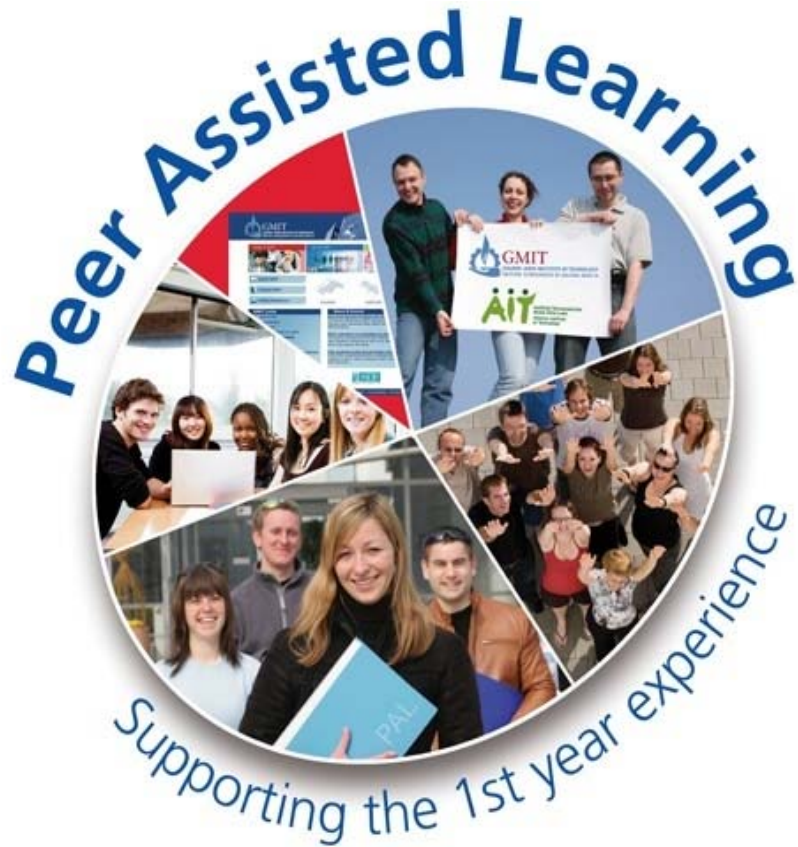
### Feedback from First Years

- Beneficial: Economics – very happy
- Negative: Poor attendance
- Help with projects
- Accounting
- Interaction
- Christmas start - problematic
- Helped with preparation for in-class test
- Dedicated – came in during rag week
- Positive – drawings of former houses
- CAD drawings – support outside PASS sessions

# Challenges & Next Steps



1. Staff Training & Regular School Briefings
2. Timetable Management
3. PAL Delivery Options – *FYE (S1), Future Opp.*  
- *Snr. Year PAL System, Module Specific*
4. PAL Participation Rewards
5. PAL School Role – Mgt, Programme Boards, Communication & Support to 1<sup>st</sup> years and leaders



**Thank You**

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