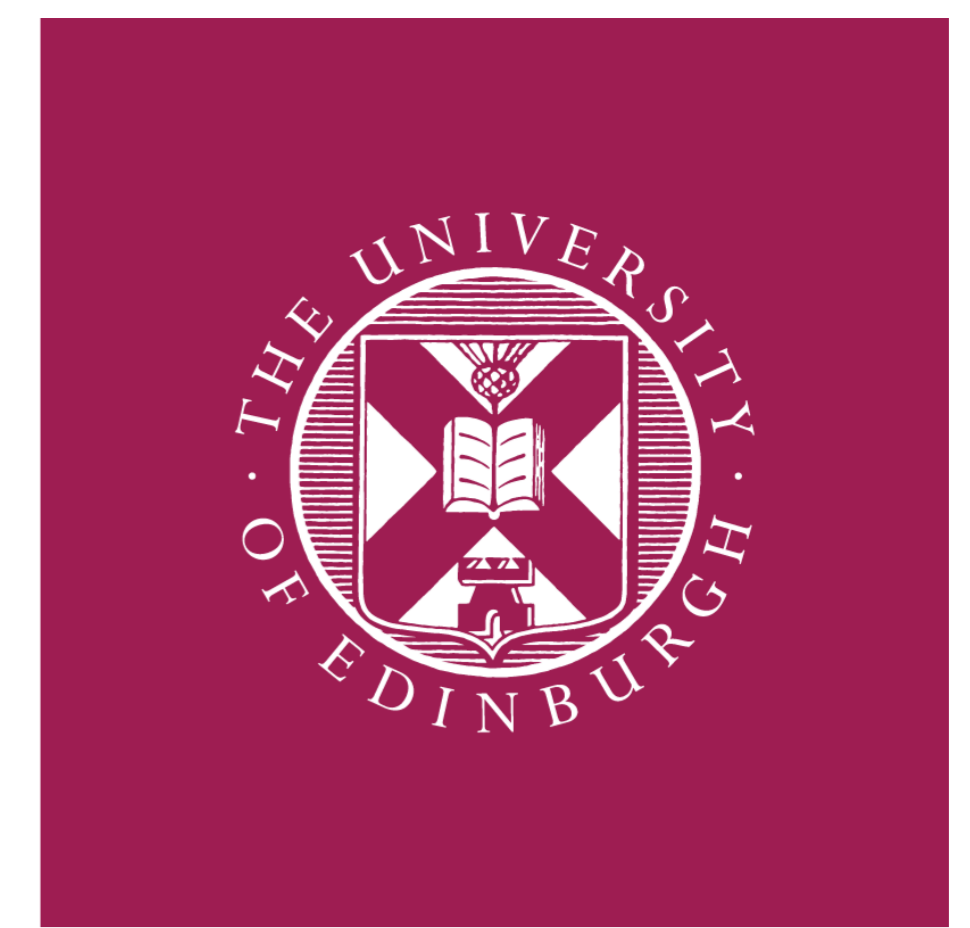


# THE ROYAL (DICK) SCHOOL OF VETERINARY STUDIES



## Evaluation of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) as a teaching methodology for veterinary clinical examination training

*N.H.Stansbie<sup>1</sup>, N.P.H.Hudson<sup>1</sup>, S.M.Rhind<sup>1</sup>, I.G.Handel<sup>1</sup>, R.J.Mellanby<sup>1</sup> & C.E.Bell<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, Easter Bush Campus, Roslin, Midlothian, UK. EH25 9RG

### Introduction

Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) has been defined as: “People from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn, and learning themselves by teaching”<sup>1</sup>. Studies have shown that PAL is a valid and effective tool used increasingly in the training of healthcare professionals. The body of work however, relating to the use and efficacy of PAL in veterinary education is relatively limited.

The R(D)SVS has received funding from the Edinburgh University Principal’s Teaching Award Scheme for an MSc in Veterinary Medical Education, part of which will include evaluation of PAL as a teaching methodology for veterinary clinical examination training at the R(D)SVS.

### PAL Course Structure

#### Canine Clinical Examination PAL – Mandatory

- 1<sup>st</sup> year/Graduate Entry Programme (GEP) ‘PAL tutees’ previously taught clinical examination in Faculty-led practical classes.
- 4<sup>th</sup> year ‘PAL tutors’ trained in design and delivery of teaching session.
- Small groups of PAL tutors (4-5 students) design and deliver a practical clinical exam teaching session to consolidate skills for small groups of tutees (4-6 students).



#### Equine Clinical Examination PAL – Voluntary

- A similar course is run on a voluntary basis for 4<sup>th</sup> year tutors focusing on basic equine clinical examination.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year/GEP ‘PAL tutees’ in groups of ~8 students



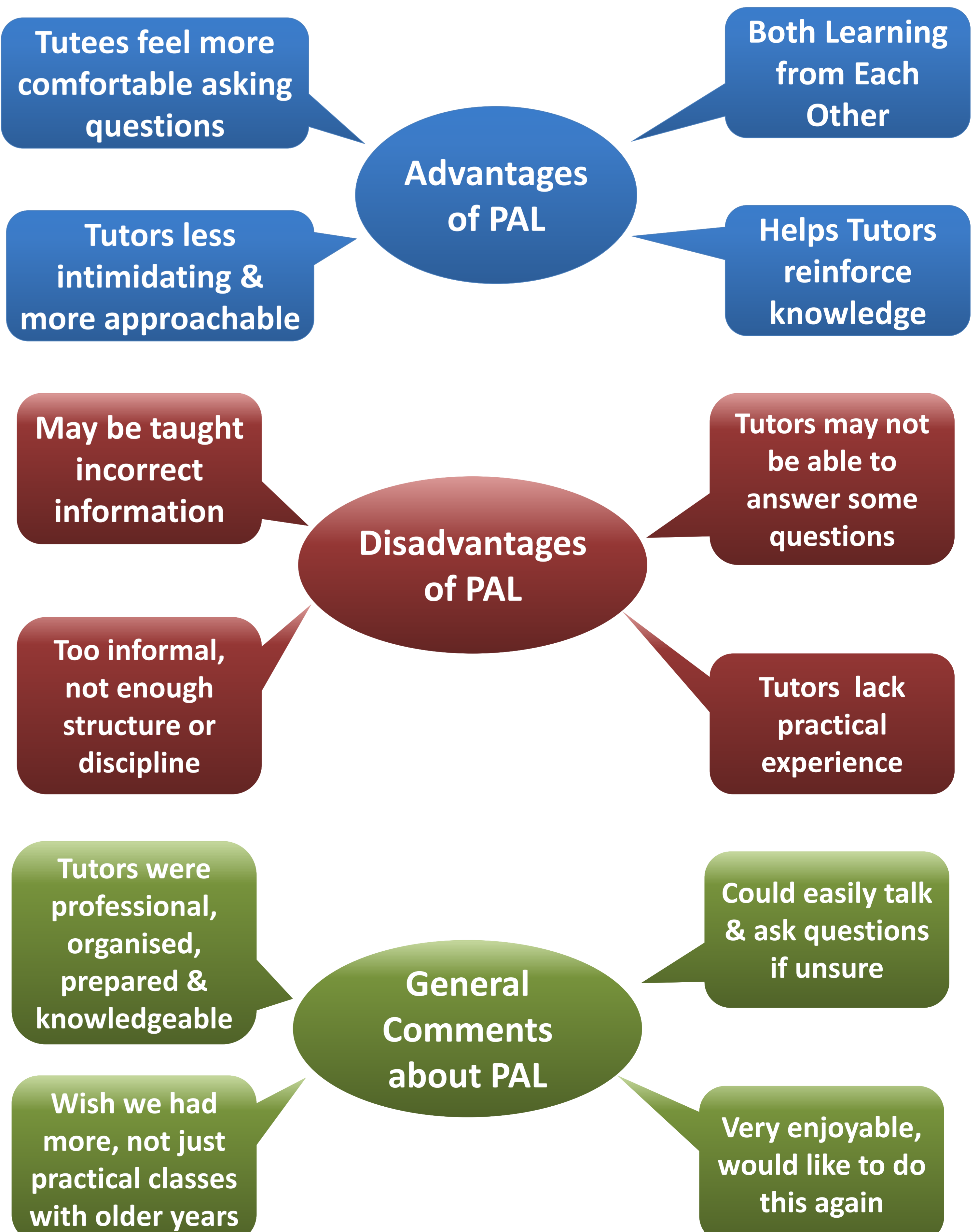
### Evaluation of PAL Classes

- PAL tutees & tutors were asked for feedback on the teaching they received/delivered using a standardised evaluation form completed at the end of each session.
- The forms were designed to collect quantitative data using a Likert scale for certain set questions and qualitative data by providing space for free text responses.
- Currently, four full academic years of surveys (2010/11 to 2013/14) have been collected.

### Initial Data Analysis

Initial qualitative and quantitative assessment of the collated data has indicated support for our research hypothesis that PAL is a valuable teaching methodology, which enhances the learning/education of both PAL tutors and tutees.

### Common Themes From Qualitative Feedback



References:  
1) Topping KJ. The effectiveness of peer tutoring in further and higher education: a typology and review of the literature. Higher Educ 32:321-345, 1996.