

**Middlesex University
SLA Newsletter**

Middlesex University
The Burroughs
Hendon
London
NW4 4BT

Student Learning Assistants (SLAs) are Middlesex University students who have been identified by their academic tutors as being highly motivated and capable individuals.

SLAs work collaboratively with academics in lectures, labs, seminars, workshops and small group sessions to support other students in their learning.

Contributors:


- ◆ Barbara Heribanova
- ◆ Ana Lorena Marinica
- ◆ Kestutis Seskevicius
- ◆ Simbo Ajayi

Lest we forget...

- [Session logs](#)
- [Communication tips](#)
- [Referrals](#)
- *SLAs facilitate and do not teach*
- *SLAs are not counsellors—when in doubt refer to Academics, PAL Manager, or to the counselling service on <http://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/counselling/index.aspx>*
- *SLAs are students and should keep on top of own workload*
- *SLAs work collaboratively with Academics*
- *SLAs are the best. Let this reflect in all aspects of our education.*

Join us on
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at SLA Middlesex

Feedback!



'SLAs are useful. Having extra help in understanding the module is very good'.

'I think the work that SLAs are doing is great. I find it difficult to reach some tutors but SLAs are my fellow students and engaging with them is much more easier and convenient.'

'I think that SLAs are helpful and useful, particularly for students in year 1 as they help us to adjust easily to the university life.'

'SLAs are useful. Having extra help in understanding the module is very good. Also, I can see a large difference in my studies. I was not such a good student until I started to use my SLAs.'

Please send all feedback received from your sessions to sla@mdx.ac.uk.

The feedback given by 1st year HRM1100 students is positive and encouraging. It is really fulfilling to know that SLAs are indeed facilitating student learning and making a difference. Students claim that SLAs are supportive and help them understand the module better. Therefore, with the great feedback received so far, we are happy and ready to do our best for the Middlesex University students.

Alumni News

An short interview with Emily Mascoll, the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) supporting International Management and Innovation module, gives an insight into her role.

Emily graduated in July 2012 from Middlesex in BA Business and Management. While she did not work as an SLA, she was a very active student, working as a university administrator throughout her undergraduate course.

What were your feelings when the academic staff offered you the GTA role?

I was excited because it is very interesting to work with students As part of the job you have to do a postgraduate course at Middlesex University. I am starting my MA Marketing Management programme at the end of January and I am very much looking forward to it.

What are the main benefits of being a GTA?

In order to stay in the academic environment all GTAs are required to do a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education to become a fellow of the academy.

What are your plans for the future? Do you plan to remain in the academia or pursue a different career path?

I would like to work in the business development field. However, I would still like to teach in the evenings or in adult colleges so as to stay in contact with students.



What are the main challenges you face in your role?

Because I support BA International Business module, there are many international students. It is vital to communicate clearly with them and facilitate their learning in a foreign country.

What would you recommend to students who want to increase their employability prospects?

Always work hard and do not procrastinate. Also, if you would like to stay in the academic setting university provides a lot of opportunities. Good luck :)

Emily working hard in her office to prepare lecture materials for the International Management and Innovation module. As she points out wisely, students should not procrastinate. Hard work always pays off!



THE STUDENT LEARNING ASSISTANT

WELCOME

Welcome to the 5th issue of the Students Learning Assistant Newsletter. The newsletter is aimed at all Student Learning Assistants (SLAs) and the wider university community of academic and administrative staff who are involved in the SLA scheme. The objective is to create awareness regarding the SLA scheme and to provide a forum for discussions, suggestions and contributions by all currently involved and also those who have been involved in the past such as SLA Alumni and other members of staff.

Thanks for all the feedback we have received so far. If you have further comments on our work and the SLA newsletter do not hesitate to feedback your ideas to:

s.ajayi@mdx.ac.uk

Deadline for contributions for **Issue 6 is 2 March 2013.**

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Famous Quote:

As Olin Miller remarks wittily "to be absolutely certain about something, one must know everything or nothing about it."

SLA TRAINING SEPTEMBER 2012

Due to the enormous success of the SLA scheme, the number of Student Learning Assistants has been increasing constantly. It is vital that new and existing SLAs become familiar with their role in order to get outstanding results with their students, and the key to such success is comprehensive training. Knowing how difficult it is to get all SLAs together on a particular date, we were pleasantly surprised by the remarkable attendance at the training in September. Over 100 students gathered in the Hendon campus to experience two days of training which was packed with hard work and a lot of enjoyment.



Different services and units in the university such as Centre for Learning and Teaching Enhancement (CLTE), The Learner Development Unit (LDU), Library services, UniHelp, and subject lecturers delivered training topics that the SLAs will find useful when supporting students. SLAs were active listeners throughout the day. The training encompassed several workshops that provided SLAs with the opportunity to get to know each other better and to enhance their team working skills. Probably the most popular activity among students was the Spaghetti and Marshmallow challenge where SLAs got to know each other and worked in teams while constructing the tallest structure they could out of a piece of tape, some spaghetti and a marshmallow!

Spaghetti & Marshmallow challenge

Such fun!!!



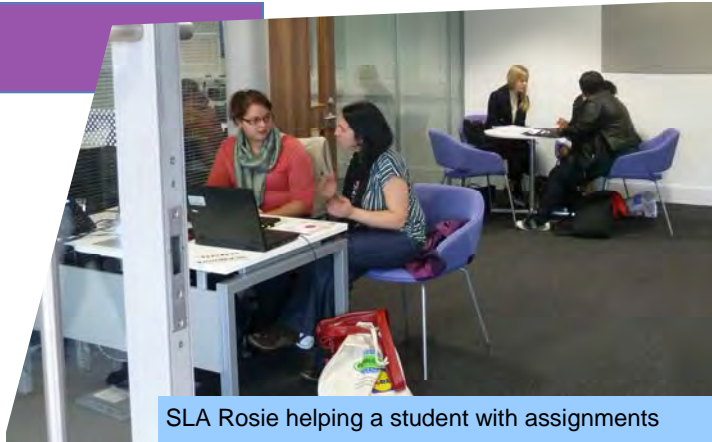
SLAs enjoying team work and the opportunity of bonding together

New Learning Lounge

SLAs now have an official place to call their own! The new LDU Learning Lounge which is located in the basement of the Shepherd Library is a great place for SLAs to work with students as well as on their own. The Learning Lounge also has a dedicated team of SLAs who are available to assist students with study skills.

LDU lecturers hold academic writing, numeracy and dyslexia sessions in the Learning Lounge Workshop room. SLAs also assist lecturers run the "The Writing Space" which is a good environment for students to develop their writing skills.

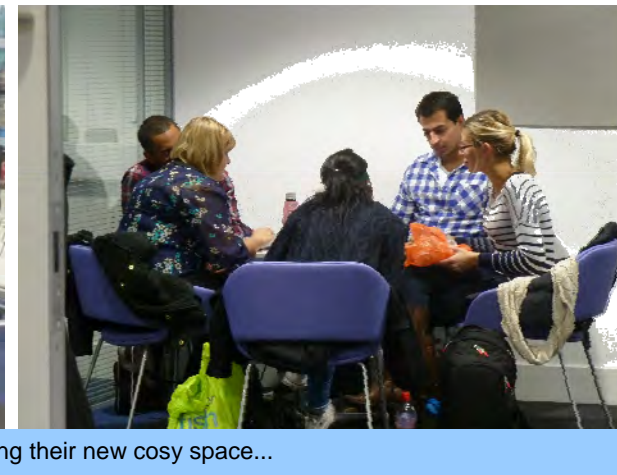
The Learning Lounge is available for SLAs from different Schools to run their own drop-in sessions. (Email sla@mdx.ac.uk for more information)



SLA Rosie helping a student with assignments



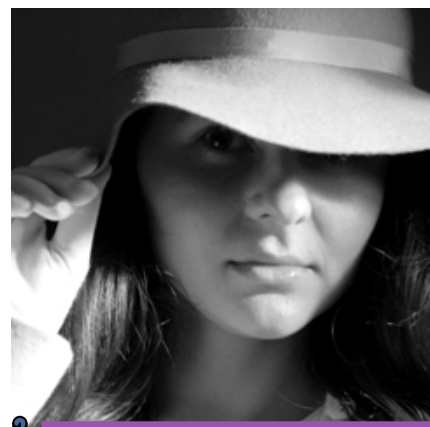
SLA John and students enjoying their new cosy space...



Are SLAs multi-talented?

Our contributor BA Business and HRM student Ana Lorena Marinica is not only an exceptional SLA and student, but also an actress. We can find her starring in a trilogy movie called C.O.O.L.I.O. - which stands for Change Original Lives Interface Oracle. Ana impressed the director Paul Cahalane in the auditions held here, at Middlesex University. Thanks to Ana's natural acting talent, she got the role of Sineater, a student journalist who has encounter with the main character, Charlie Darwin, the time traveller.

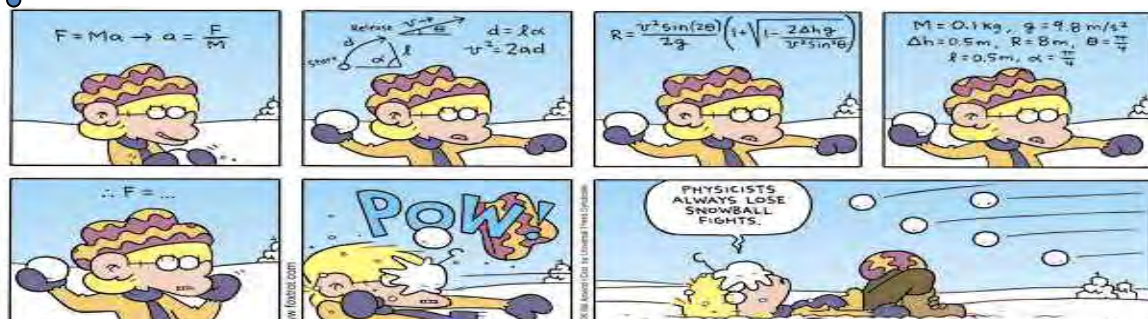
As Ana says, "I feel amazing being in the film and I find it a challenging but wonderful opportunity! The plot is fascinating and I love my character." The first part of the movie had its premiere on 21st November and we will be looking forward to see Ana again in the second part, which is going to be released soon.



LATESTS TWEETS...

Foxtrof by Bill Amend

Time to laugh out loud ...



SLA X-mas party

SLAs had some time off to celebrate the approaching Christmas period after a very stressful term full of exams, hard work and assignments. We had the opportunity to share our experience and ideas on improvements with fellow SLAs supporting students in a number of different modules.

For more photos visit : <http://www.facebook.com/sla.middlesex>



Accounting SLAs discussing their experience



SLA providing feedback

Academic staff and GTAs came to celebrate with the SLAS



The Writing Space team: Barbara, John & Jen

Venue: Claddagh Ring, Hendon
Guests: Academic staff, Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), Student Learning Assistants alumni.

Learning Tips to students by Kestutis

My name is Kestutis. I am a third year student from Lithuania studying BA Law and Business. In this short article I will try to share my experience on how to succeed in your studies.

Finally, last but not the least – make sure you are not left behind. Try to do everything on time as it might be difficult and too late to catch up afterwards.

That is all from me for now. Sounds simple, but I believe it works. Good luck with achieving your flying colours!

In my opinion, the most important thing is to be interested in what you are doing, so hopefully you made the right decision when choosing your programme.

Another important factor is time management. Make sure that you have enough time to study. Furthermore, I would recommend that you test what time is the most suitable for you to study or to do your homework/assessments. For instance, I find it useful to study late at night as there are almost no distractions and I can easily concentrate on whatever I am doing.

As I mentioned before, your studies can, and should be challenging. If you find it too easy, you may start feeling lack of motivation. If this occurs, try to go deeper, learn even more than is required from your course or your lecturer.



Salsa Explosion

Apart from being a successful student, a devoted SLA and a bartender, Kestutis is actively engaged with the Salsa society as the treasurer of the Association at Middlesex University. Thanks to the high commitment and dedication that Kes puts into his work, the salsa classes provide a great opportunity to learn how to dance and socialise.

Everyone is welcome at the Salsa session every Tuesday from 7-11 pm in the Forum, Hendon campus.

SLA Xmas Party Special!!
Salsa tips from Kestutis (left).
Picture on the right shows SLAs Ivan and Angelina.