**Mathematic Support - University of Essex**

We, Liliane Kamalendran and Malika Rezougui joined the Talent Development Centre (TDC) team as Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) Advisers in the Autumn Term of 2016 and currently offer Mathematics and Statistics support to fellow students.

Mathematics and Statistics support at the University of Essex is integrated with English Language and Academic Skills and is delivered through the Talent Development Centre (TDC). Students can either come to workshops or book 1:1 Adviser sessions to get help with specific areas they would like to develop.

In the summer of 2016, the TDC was looking for Peer-Assisted Learning Maths Advisers through the University’s Frontrunner placement scheme. This scheme offers students flexible placements in the various departments at the University with full training and supervisor support.  This presented the perfect opportunity to use the skills that we learned in our lectures and apply them in the workplace. The interview process covered the challenges we faced when dealing with maths topics we found hard and how we overcame them.

Many students come to us because they feel more comfortable talking to another student; we ensure they understand the basics which can then be applied to their disciplines. This academic year we introduced the Maths Arcade – held at the TDC, which is a shared open learning space. This is a social event open to all departments where maths is explored through various strategic games to encourage logical thinking adjacent to their disciplines. The Maths Arcade was particularly beneficial to first year students, as it provided a supportive environment and encouraged a relationship between Advisers and Students and the opportunity to meet course mates and fellow students. After seeing the high interest in maths from running these events Liliane introduced the Maths Society which she is now President of. The aim is to unite those with a passion for maths by building a maths community through social and academic activities.

This opportunity to work as PAL mentors has provided us with more confidence and better communication skills through various workshops and a number of 1:1 adviser sessions. This has provided us with critical skills we can use in the workplace; from the interview process to everyday tasks working in a team, we now have experience of a job in the working world. By assisting students and observing their different learning styles, we have developed our maths skills and changed our perspectives on learning styles. In particular, it has helped Malika understand that the best way to learn is to teach. By advising, she has more in-depth knowledge on the Statistics and Finance modules, which has been reflected in her results this academic year.