



**Embedding academic tutoring to  
increase engagement**

**Dr Nicola Cutting**

**Talk about Teaching 2023**





**Increasing academic tutoring  
engagement through compulsory  
attendance**

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# Academic Tutoring is important

## Reflect on progress and goals

- Discuss challenges and opportunities.
  - Collaborative relationship
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## Sense of belonging (Evans, 2003)

Personal contact increases sense of belonging and increases wellbeing.

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## Support Mechanism (Malik, 2000)

- Links student, curriculum & central support services
  - Signposting
  - Ensuring students receive support.
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## Retention

All these factors link to retention.

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# Poor Engagement

**“Good” students attend**

- High engagement
- Good attendance
- No real concerns

**Some students reach out for support**

- Talk about struggles
- Signposting

**Non-engagers**

- Some will be engaged in studies.
- Some will not be engaged
- Some will be struggling
- Some will not be receiving support

# Compulsory attendance – How did we do it?

- **First Years only**
- **Written into a non-credit bearing Pass/Fail Module**
  - **PSY4012M Psychology Professional Development and Participation.**
    - **50% Research Participation points**
    - **50% Academic Tutoring**
  - **Academic Tutoring**
    - **Attend all group and individual sessions**
    - **Submit academic tutoring portfolio**
    - **Tutor to mark attendance within portfolio**





# Portfolio



## All about me...

Use this page to tell your tutor more about yourself. You can share as much or as little as you would like. You do not have to fill in all the sections, just the ones you are comfortable with.



Use this section to list your interests and hobbies, i.e., what you enjoy doing in your spare time. Think about what skills you have gained from these that will be useful to highlight on future job/study applications.

For example, playing a team sport demonstrates team-work ability, achieving something to a high level shows commitment and dedication, coaching or helping out at groups demonstrates leadership and organisational skills....

| Activity | Length of experience | Skills attained |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------|
|          |                      |                 |

### Extra-curricular responsibilities/experiences

Use this section to record roles and activities you have conducted at university which go above and beyond your degree. For example, have you been a class rep or worked as a student as Researcher?

| Role/Responsibility | When? | Skills attained |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------|
|                     |       |                 |



## Qualifications

### Education

Use this section to document your current qualifications

(Only share your grades if you are happy to do so)

| School/College/Institution | Date started | Date finished | Qualifications | Grades |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|--------|
|                            | Select date  | Select date   |                |        |

### Other Qualifications

Use this section to document your current qualifications

## What career paths appeal to you?

You may know exactly what you want to do after your degree, have a general idea of the area or people you would like to work with, or still be undecided. Use this space to note down your current thinking.

## What have you already achieved that will help you pursue any career path you outlined above?

## What would help strengthen your chances of achieving your career path?

Set between 1 and 3 goals to help you strengthen your CV



## Transferable skills

Many of the activities and assessments you engage with during your degree give you skills that are transferable to other settings. For example, a group presentation gives opportunity to evidence communication skills, team-work, and perhaps leadership skills. Extended projects give opportunity to evidence planning and time management. Use this section to make notes on all the transferable skills you have gained during your degree. The more detail you give the better you will be able to use these as evidence for job applications and interviews.

| Module | Activity | Skills gained |
|--------|----------|---------------|
|        |          |               |

# Portfolio



COMPLETED BY: ASSESSOR ONLY

## Academic Tutorial Attendance Semester 1

- Attended Group Tutorial 1
- Attended Group Tutorial 2
- Attended Individual Tutorial

COMPLETED BY: ASSESSOR ONLY

## Academic Tutorial Attendance Semester 2

- Attended Group Tutorial 1
- Attended Group Tutorial 2
- Attended Individual Tutorial

COMPLETED BY: ASSESSOR ONLY

## PSY4012M Academic Tutoring Component

To be completed by tutor at the end of semester 2

- Pass
- Fail



Welcome week

Meet tutor in  
Group Tutorial

Week 1

Group Tutorial – Settling in

- Do you know what you're doing?
- Is it what you expected?

Week 4

Group Tutorial - Retention

- Study skills

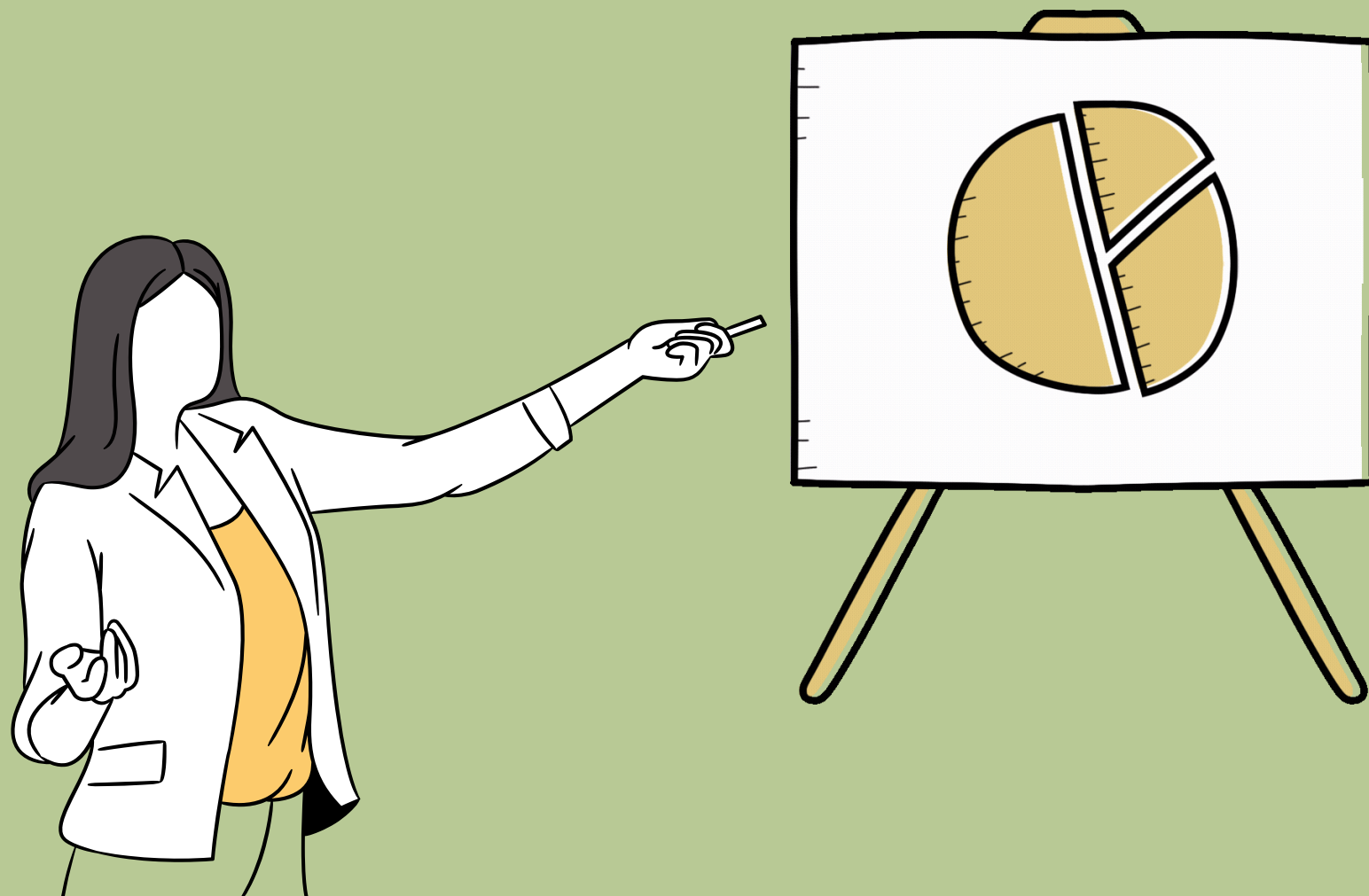
Week 10

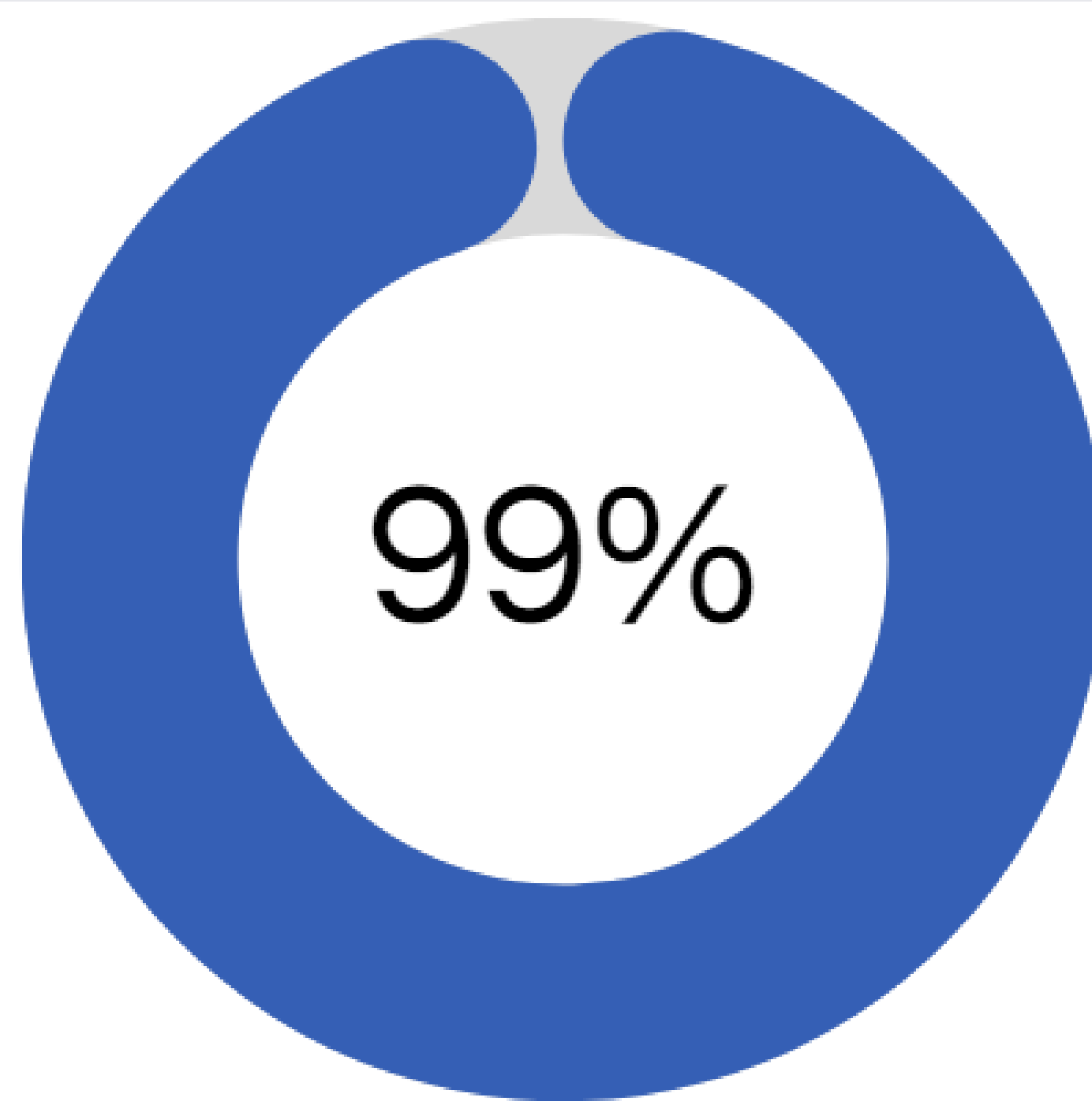
Individual Tutorial

Plus Weekly Office Hours



**Did it make a  
difference?**





Engagement with at least one session.

- 2 students did not engage.
- 1 of these is an external resit.

# What did we learn?

## **Illness makes compulsory attendance difficult**

Need to be flexible

Engagement rather than attendance

## **Need to meet individually earlier**

Focused on sense of belonging

Need 1-to-1 to gain info and give support

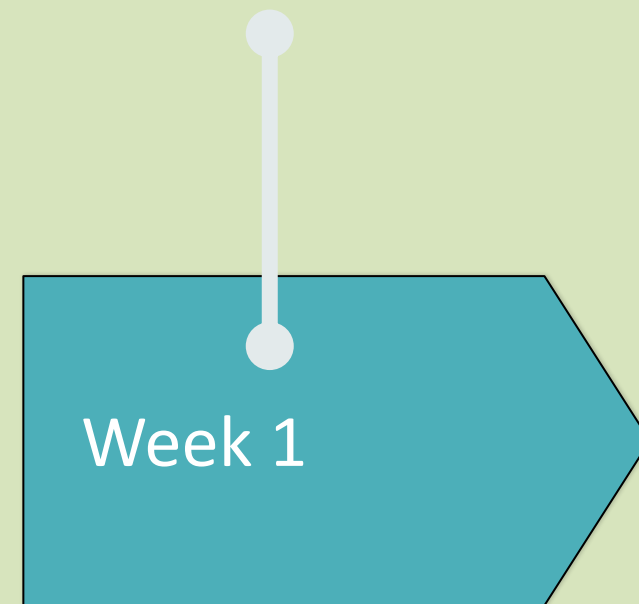
## **Individual session too late to chase up**

Once you get to end of week 12, very difficult to contact students.

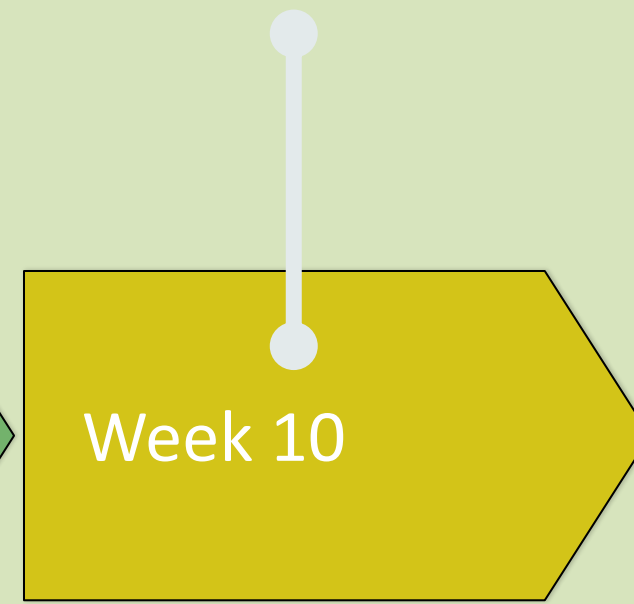


# Semester 2

Group Tutorial –  
Feedback



Group Tutorial -  
Reflection on Year 1

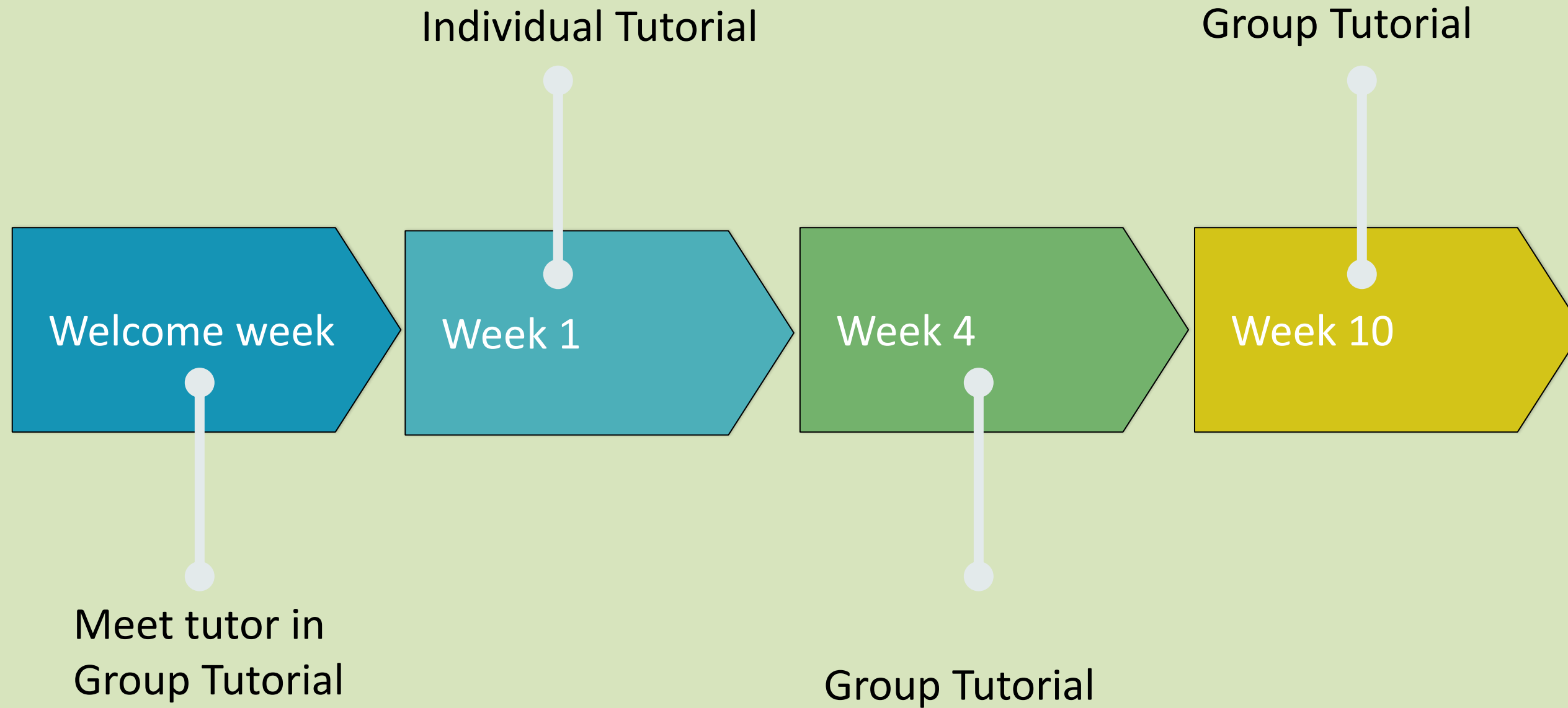


Individual Tutorial

Plus Weekly Office Hours



# Next Year – Semester 1



Plus Weekly Office Hours

## Concluding Thoughts



Compulsory attendance did increase engagement in semester 1 compared to previous years.

Full picture will not be clear until May.

Need flexibility in approach.

Requires Staff buy-in.

Methods to lower demands on staff time.



## **Any Questions?**

### **My question for you:**

Do we need a compulsory attendance approach to academic tutorials to create academic communities that will help us to better support students in their studies as well as their mental health and wellbeing?