

First steps in building an evidence-base for postgraduate personal tutoring; exploring diversity, challenges and solutions.

The Medway Learning And Teaching Festival 2023

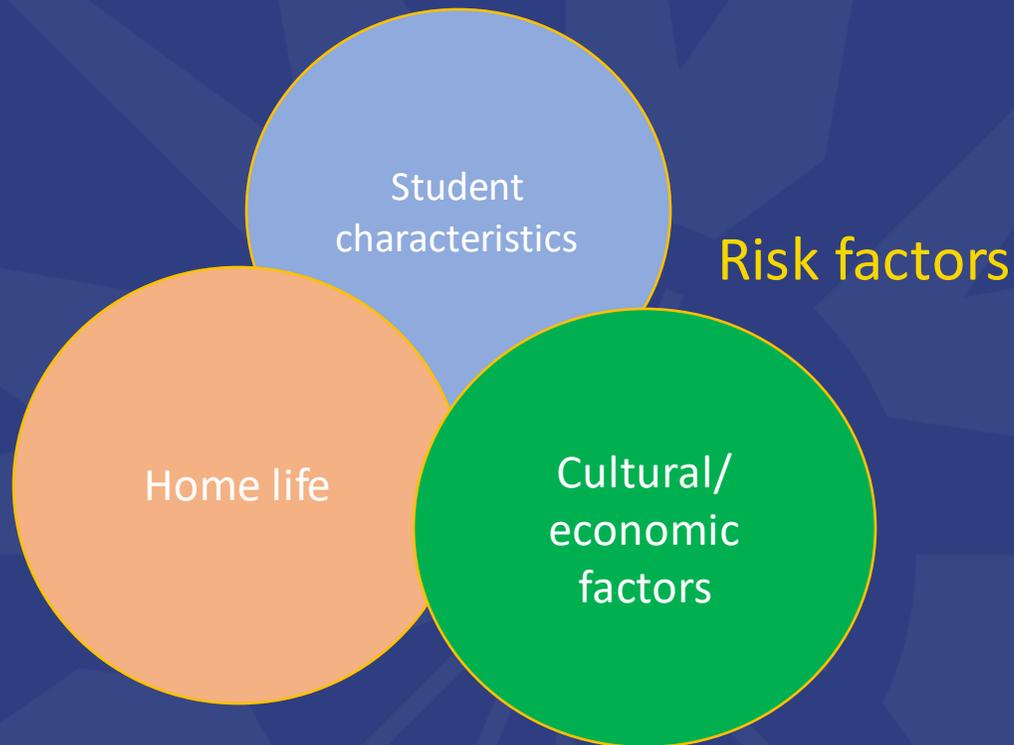
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# Today's workshop

- Brief introduction to personal tutoring
- Discuss characteristics and needs of students on taught postgraduate degrees
- Share PG personal tutoring practices, challenges and solutions
- Begin to consider how PG students' diverse backgrounds and needs can be accommodated and supported by personal tutoring.

# The value of personal tutoring



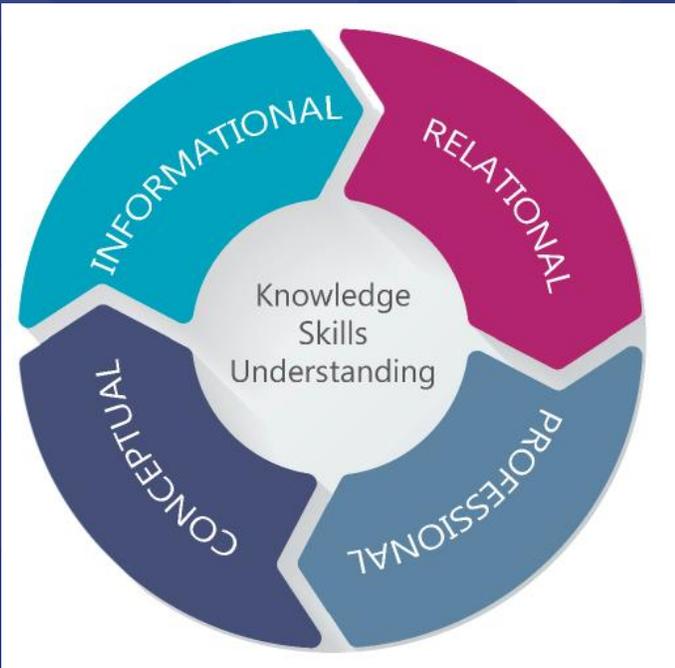
- “Academic advising is integral to fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of higher education” (cited in Gordon, Habley, and Grites, 2008, p. 523).
- Facilitates transitions, accessibility, belonging
- “At risk” students experience barriers to success (Lochtie et al, 2018).
- “Effective personal tutoring can be the difference between dropping out or staying; between suffering a crisis or achieving full academic or professional potential” (Rapley and Talbot, 2022).

# Postgraduate students



- A smooth transition into PG study?
- May appear well-prepared, but many report anxiety (Bamber et al, 2017)
- Compounded by intense nature of PG study, with little time to adapt to new systems
- Risk factors likely
- “The overlooked cohort.” Coneyworth et al (2020)
- From 2020-21 rapid increase (+10% in UK PG enrolments (Unitegroup, 2022); +45% in international PG (Universities UK, 2022))

# Gap in the literature



- Growing research base on personal tutoring, but PG students relatively neglected
- UK Advising and Tutoring (UKAT)
- PG SIG to develop expertise and resources tailored to the needs of this important and growing group of students.
- “The diverse backgrounds of today’s students mean that the role of the personal tutor is more important than ever.” (Swain, 2008)

# Discussion points

- What are key challenges and risk factors for postgraduate students in your context?
- How are you currently addressing these issues in your personal tutoring for postgraduates? Are you aware of any innovative solutions/approaches?
- Are you working with postgraduate to understand what works for them and to design personal tutoring around their needs? How might this be done?

# Personal tutoring possibilities

## Personal tutoring models (Earwaker, 1992)

- Pastoral
- Curriculum
- Professional
- Hybrid

## Key dimensions

- Location (online, on campus)
- Staffing (academic and/or professional services)
- Responsibility (named 1-1 individual or team?)



# Key takeaways



# Thank you

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