

# Learning support services at Edith Cowan University

*Comparison of service choice and academic  
outcomes for students*

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# Acknowledgement of country





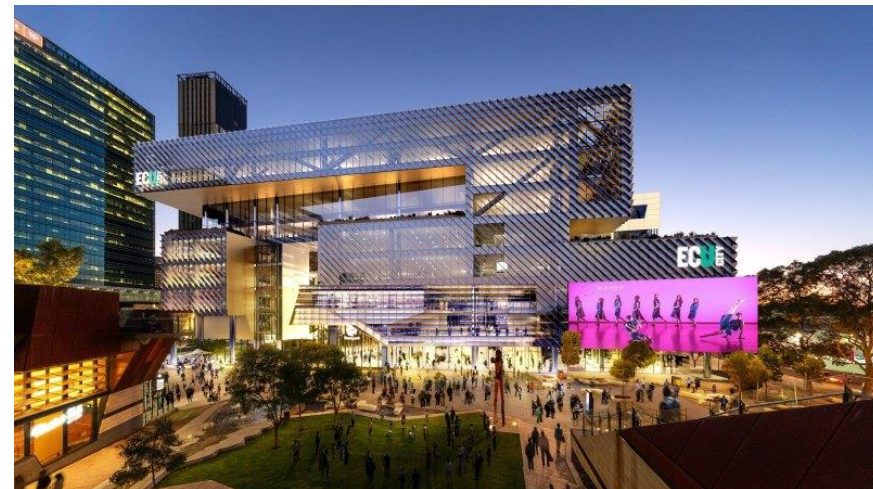
## **Presentation (~45 min)**

- ECU context and research focus
- Study population and methodology
- Learning support service use by demographic and study variables
- Exploration of three key services: Learning Advisers, PASS, Studiosity
- Limitations of analysing service use and success rates

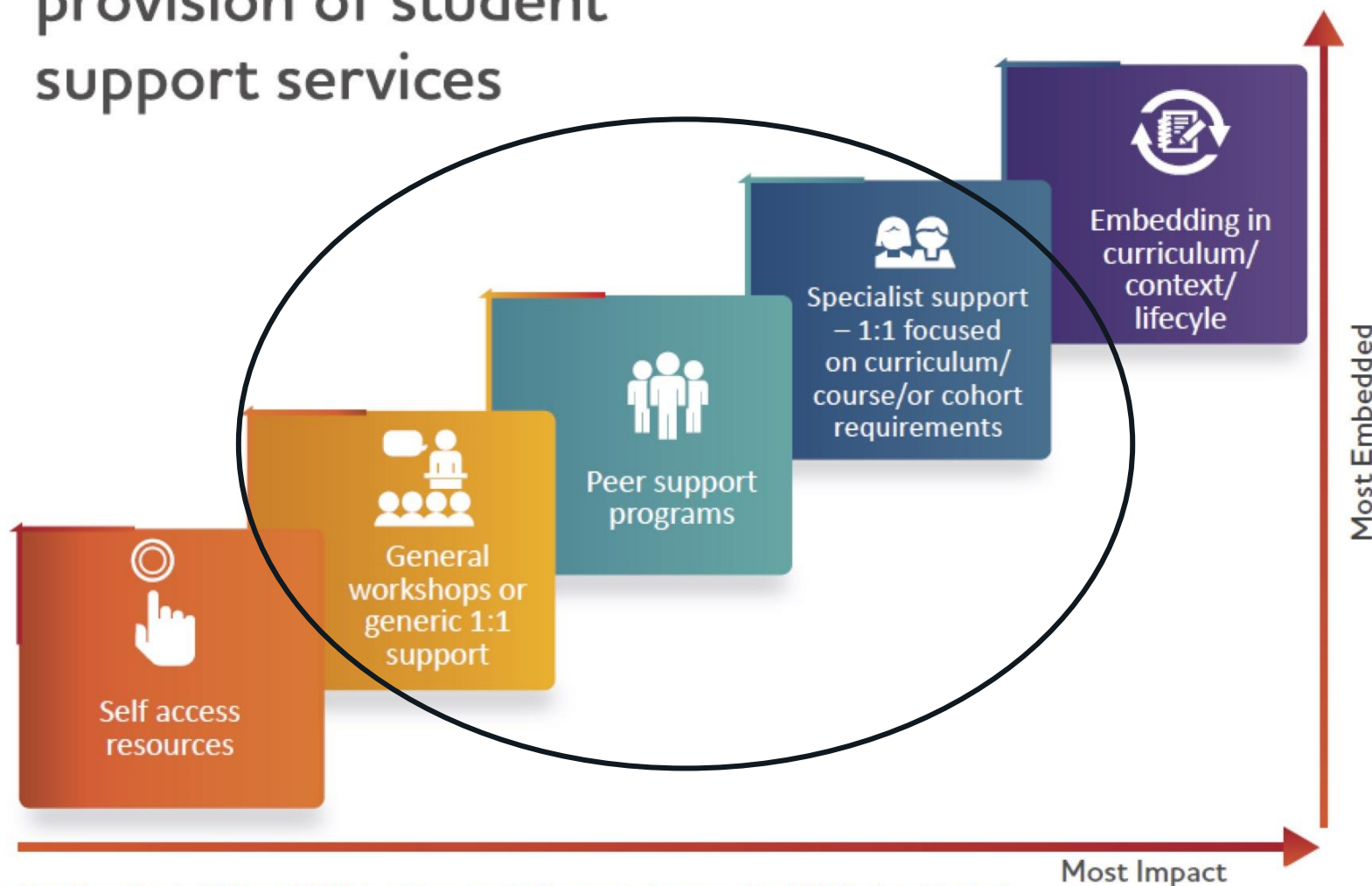
## **Discussion (~30 min)**

- Break out groups: reflections on the findings and applications for practice
- General Q&A
- Opportunities for future research

- 30,000+ students with campus locations in metropolitan Perth, Bunbury, and Sri Lanka plus online course options
- Highly diverse student cohort
- Construction of a new Perth city campus (pictured) due for completion late 2025
- Australia's top public university for undergraduate experience, teaching quality, skills development and learning resources (QILT, 2021)
- ECU's first listed priority in its strategic plan is 'personalised learning and study support' (ECU, 2021)



## A framework for the provision of student support services



Embedding communication skills in the curriculum and upskilling academic staff must necessarily remain the priority for language and learning support staff (Evans, Henderson, & Ashton-Hay, 2019; McWilliams & Allan, 2014)

Students that engage in support services are more likely to be retained (Roberts, 2018; Newman et al., 2020)

Support services reduce student inequities in succeeding at university (Davison et al., 2022; Remenick, 2019)

Learning advisers facilitate improved feedback literacy and study practices (Gravett & Winstone, 2019)

***But which students access what types of services? Can we determine impact?***

This study explored three key questions:

- Which types of students use learning support more than others?
- Which specific services are used, and by which students?
- Can we determine a link between use of learning support services on grades, unit fail rates, and retention?

This research explored three key learning support services: Learning Advisers, PASS, and Studiosity

A total of **159,344** enrolment cases\* (including **16,662** cases who used learning support) from **2019 to 2021** were analyzed based on **demographic**, **study-related** and **competencies-related** variables.

## Demographic variables:

- Age
- Gender
- Dom/international
- Equity (e.g., disability, SES, FIF)

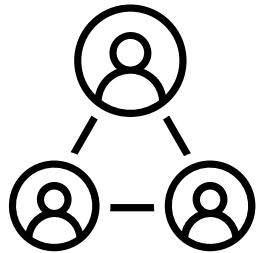
## Study-related variables:

- Year/year half
- Course level
- School
- Mode of study
- Enrolment group (commencing or continuing)

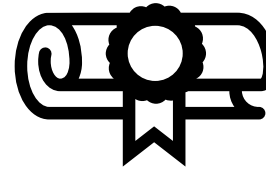
## Competency-related variables:

- PELA
- Made Census
- EFSTL
- WAM
- Retained





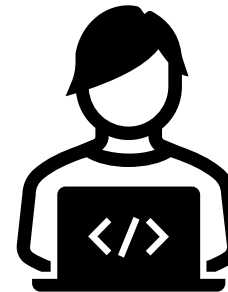
**54%** mature  
**36%** youth  
**10%** school  
leavers



**67%**  
undergraduate



**62%**  
female



**52%** on campus  
**30%** online  
**18%** mixed



**18%** international  
2019-20  
**13%** 2021



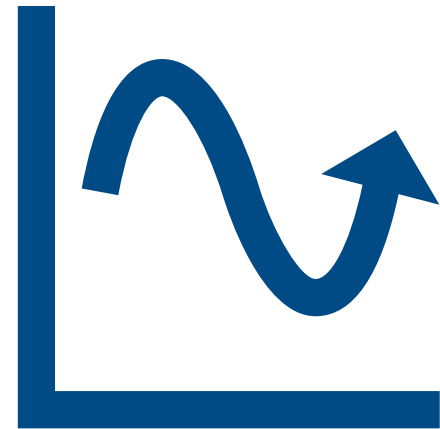
**70%**  
continuing

Variable	% who used Learning Support	Statistics
Gender	Male 7.1%	P<0.001 Phi 0.085
	Female 12.4%	
Age	School Leaver 13.3%	P<0.001 Cramer's V 0.068
	Youth Age 7.7%	
	Mature Age 11.6%	
Enrolment	Domestic 9.6%	P<0.001 Phi 0.087
	International 14.3%	

Variable	% who used Learning Support	Statistics
<b>Disability</b>	Self-identifies with a disability 8.3%	P<0.001 Phi 0.021
	Self-identifies without a disability 9.4%	
<b>First in Family</b>	First in Family 9.8%	P<0.001 Cramer's V 0.049
	Not First in Family 8.3%	
	Undeclared 13.3%	
<b>Non-English Speaking Background</b>	NESB 23.2%	P<0.001 Phi 0.054
	ESB 9.3%	

### We cannot confidently predict who will use Learning Support

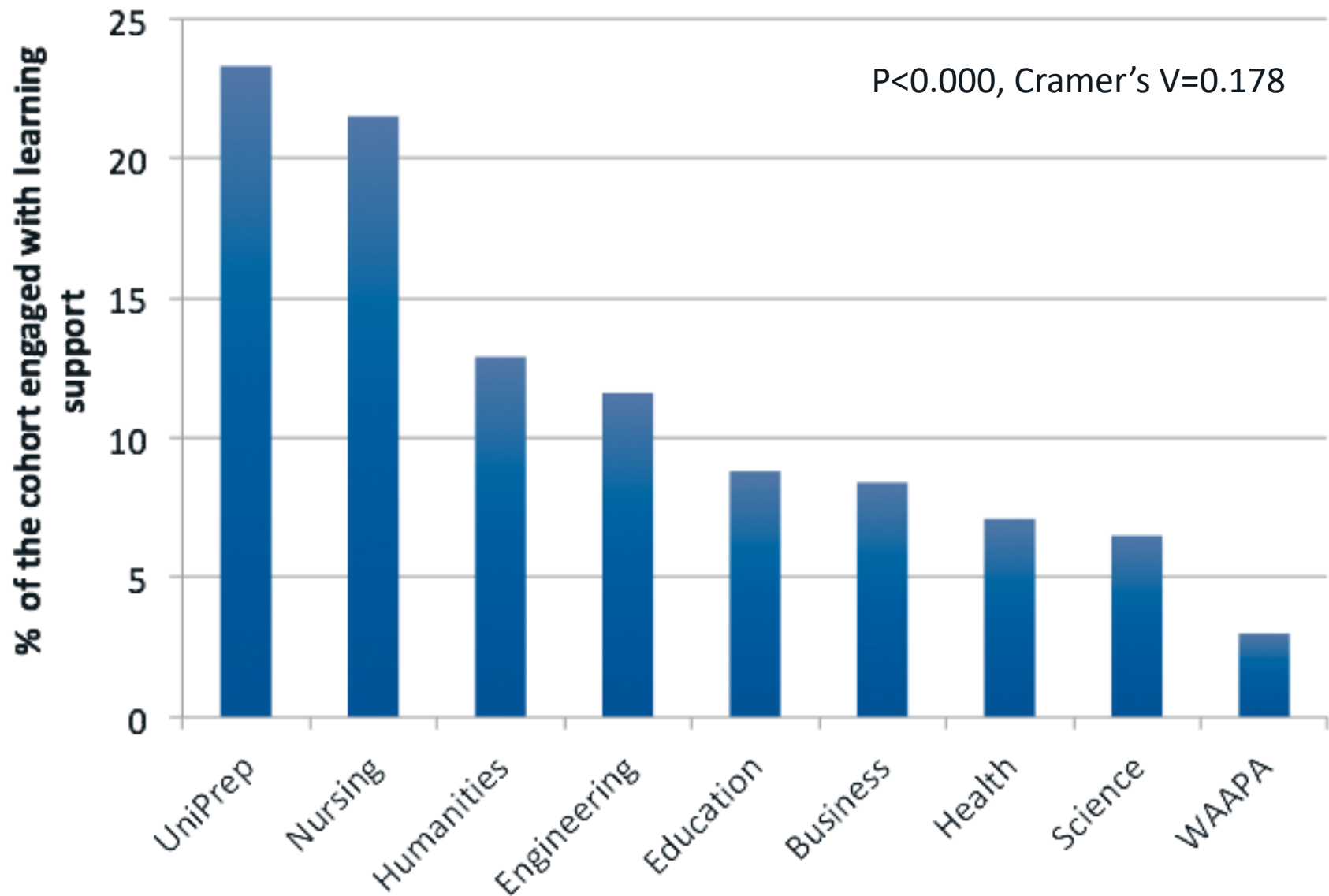
- Sample size bias
- Small effect sizes
- Intersectionality



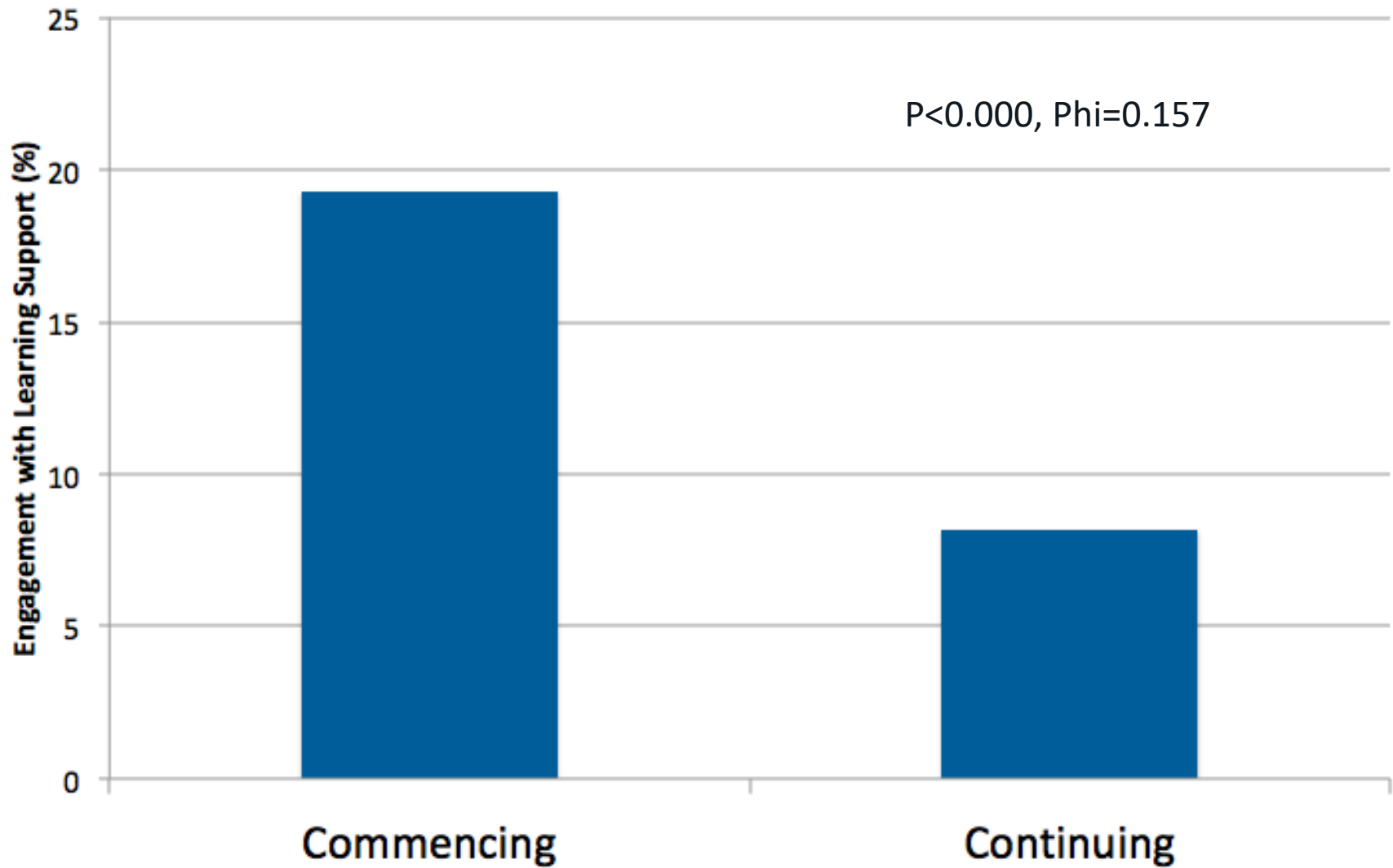
*However, the strongest influence on the use of Learning Support appears to be which ECU School a student was enrolled*

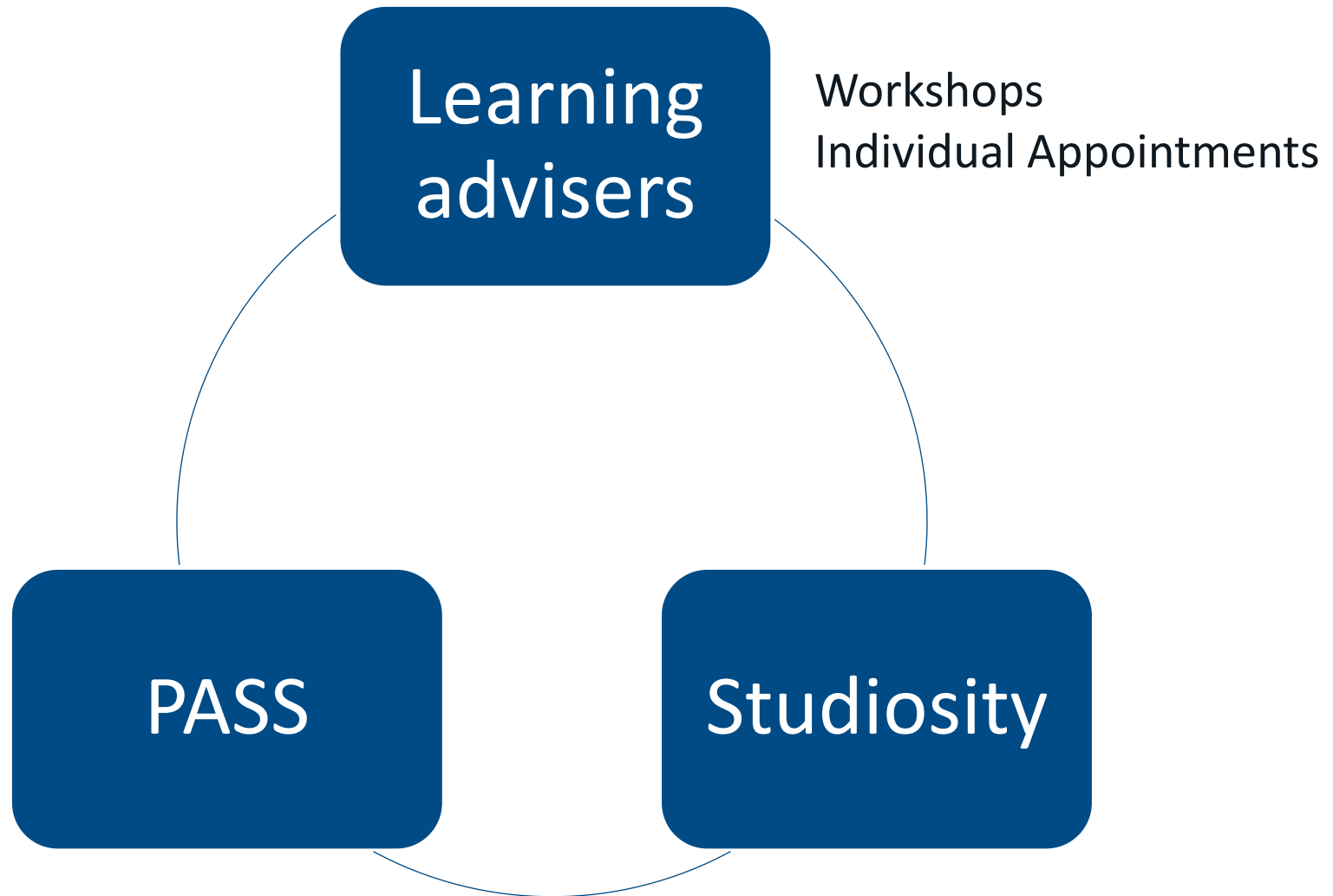


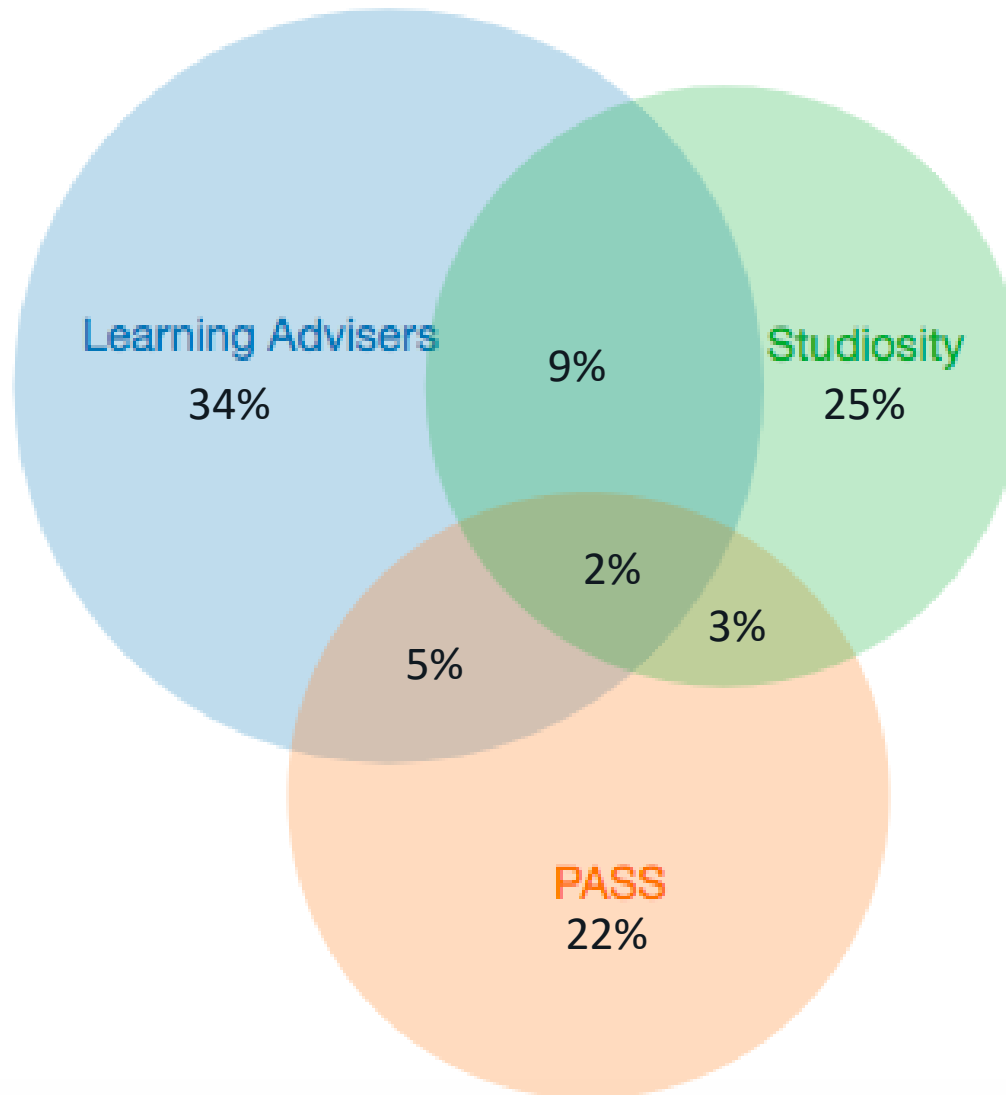
## Who uses support services? (School)



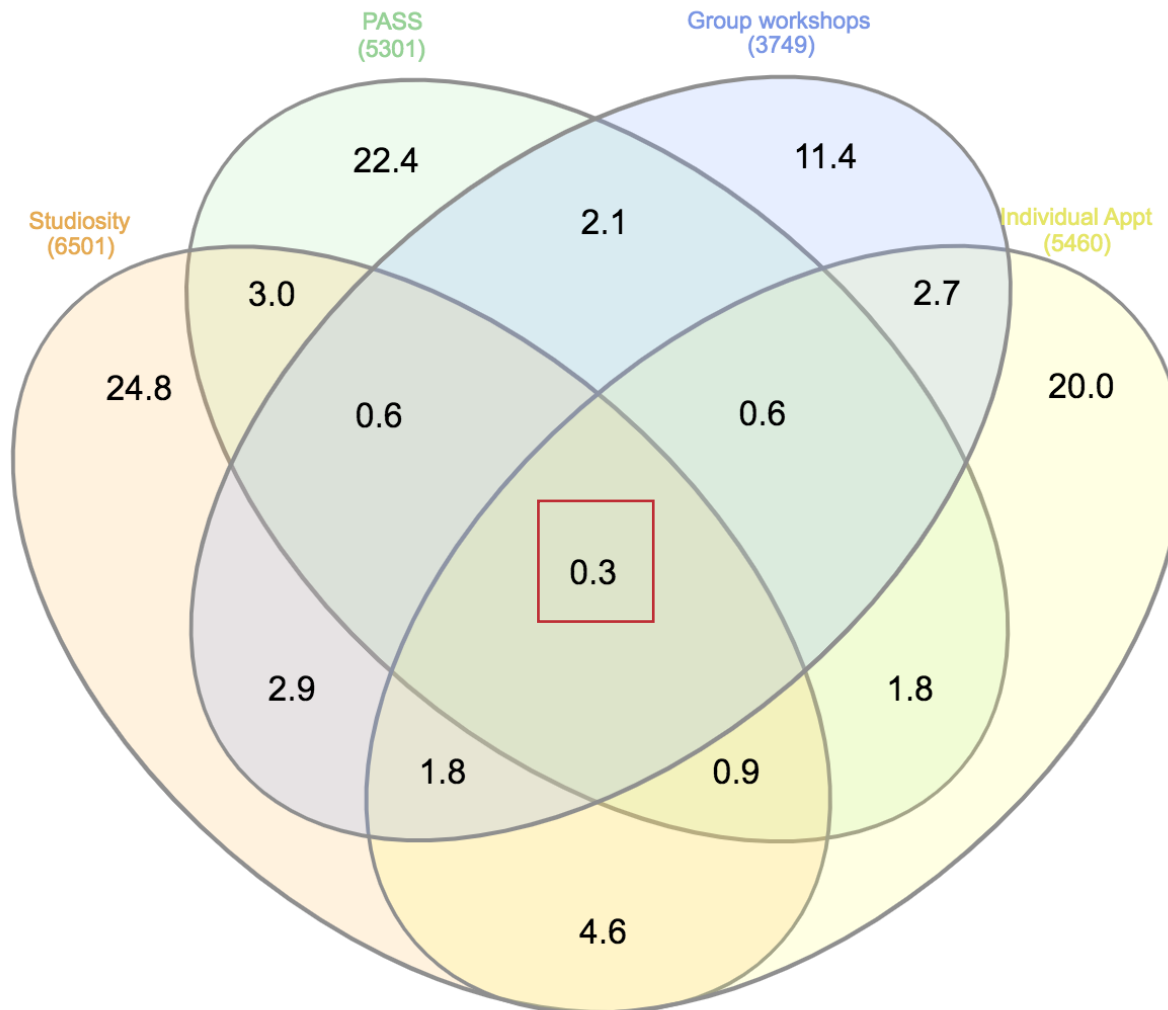
## Who uses support services? (Enrolment)





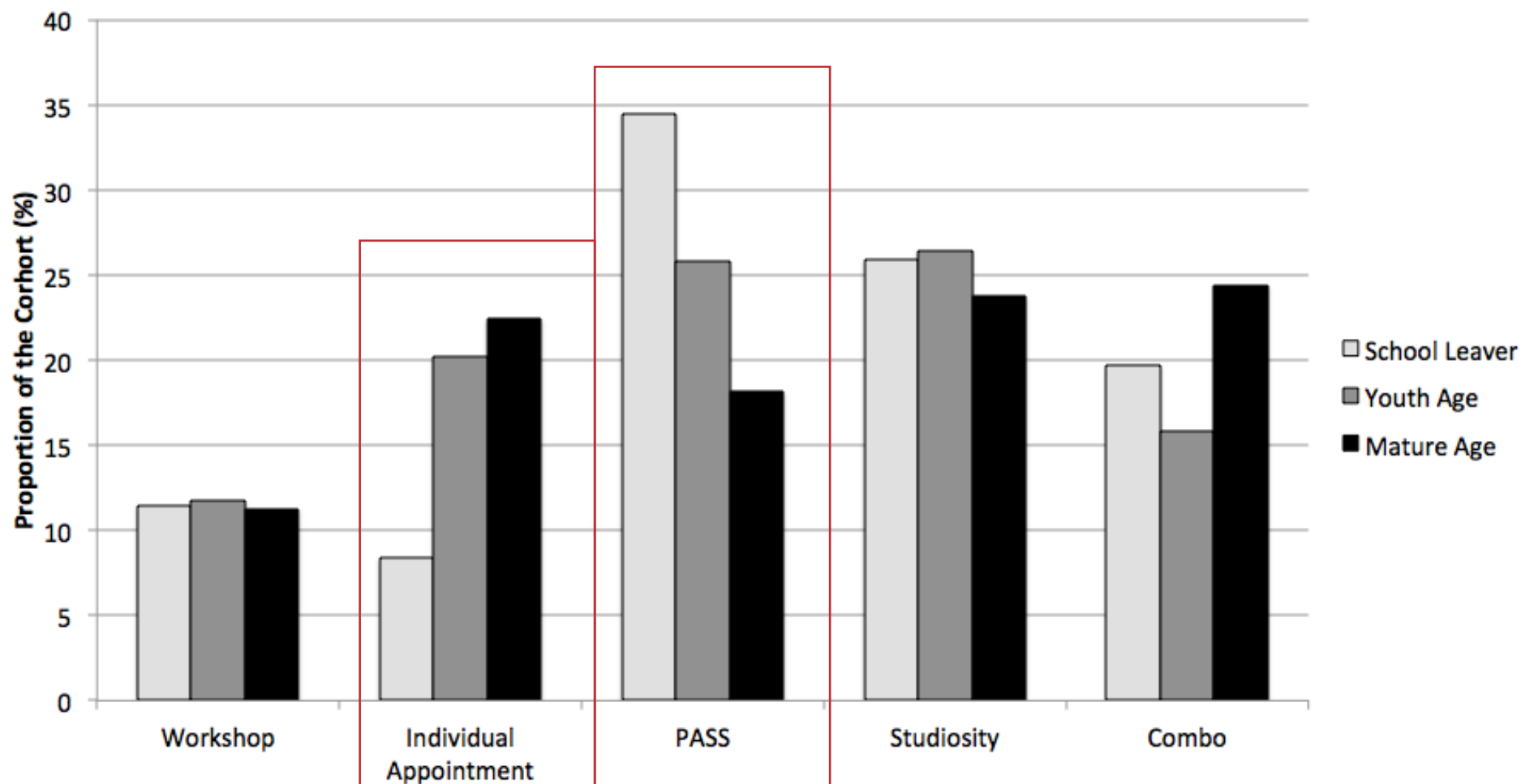


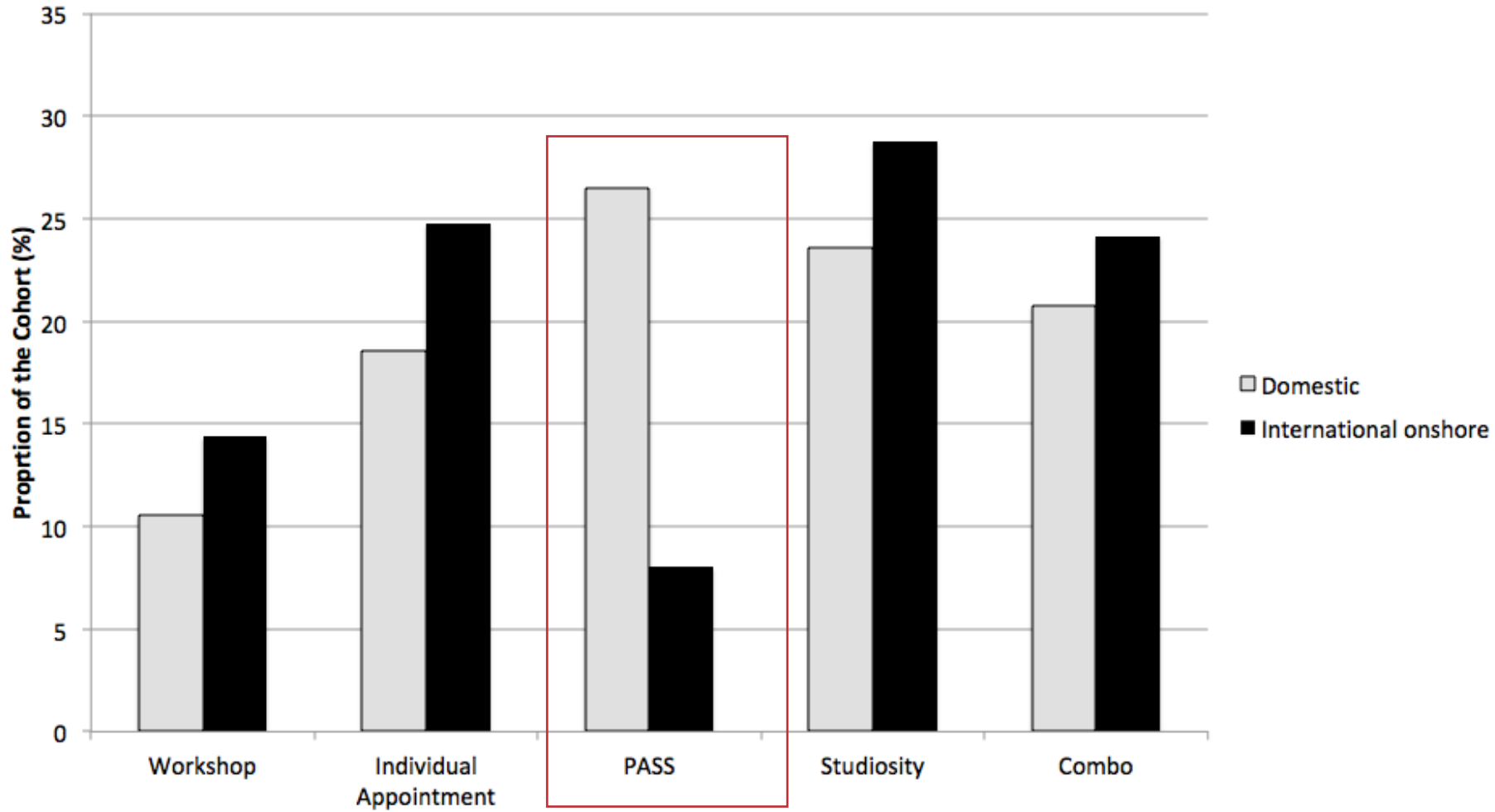




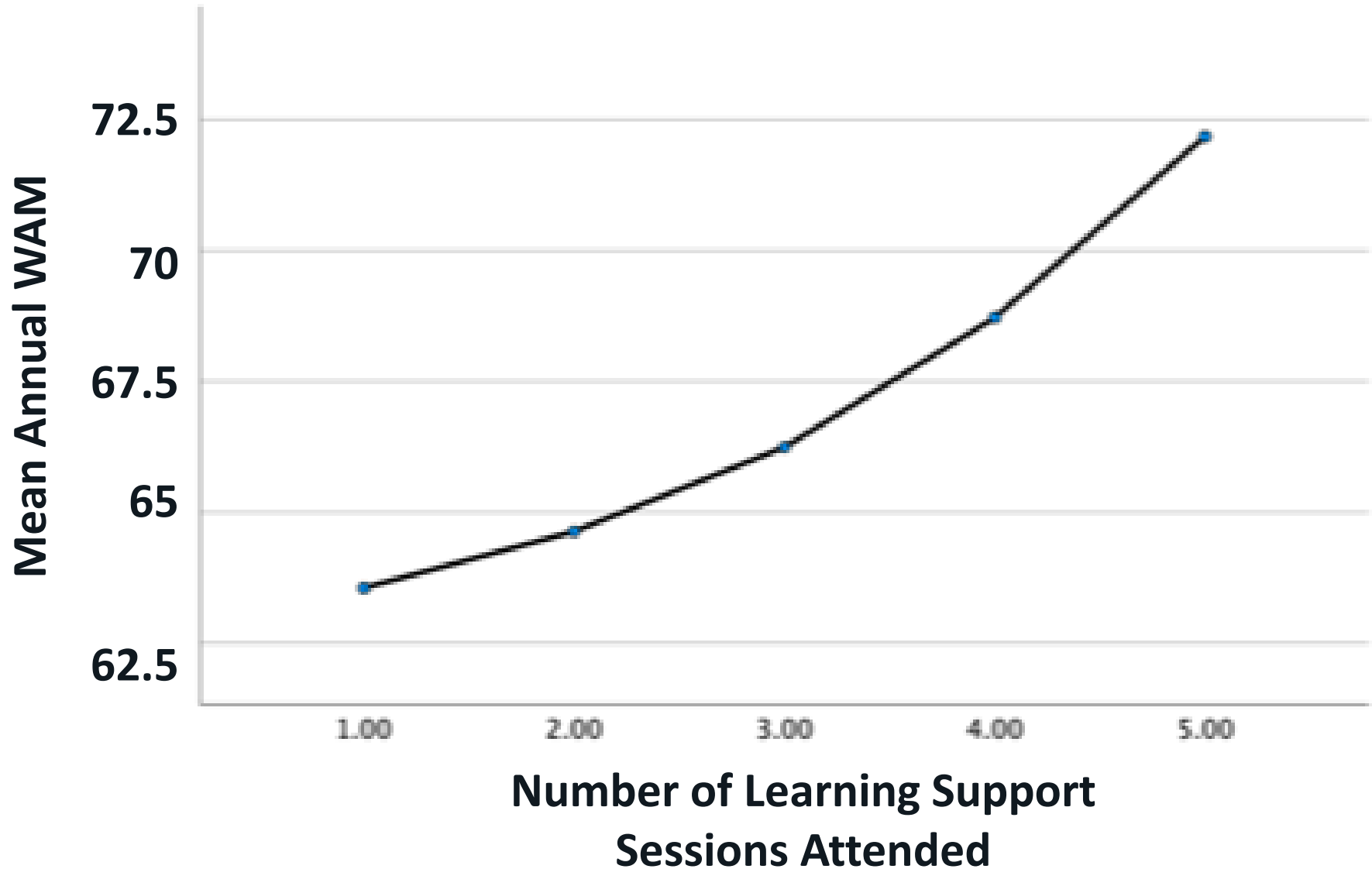
78.6%  
used a single  
service

'Pick and  
Stick'



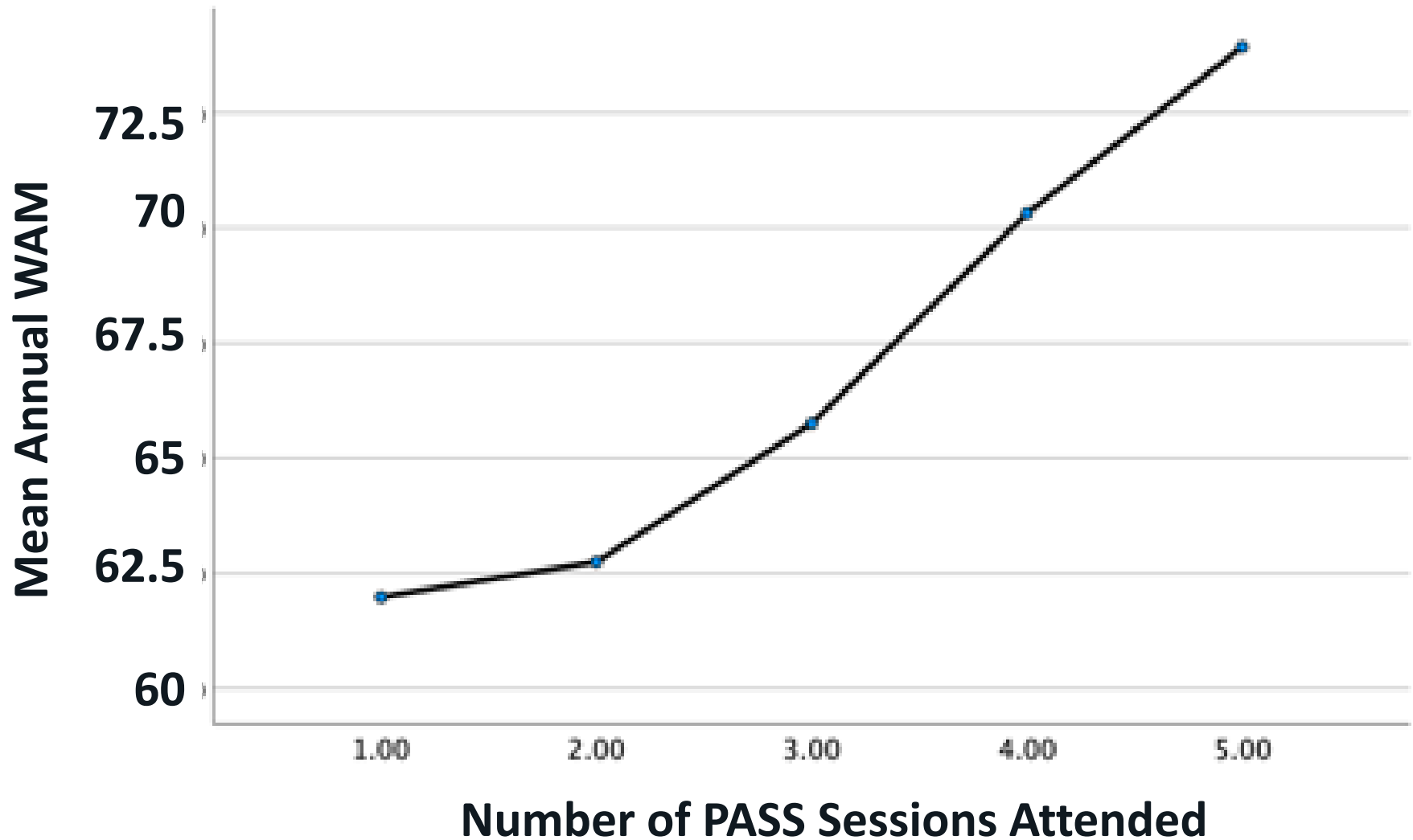


## Example of correlation on WAM (Weighted Average Mark) - All Support

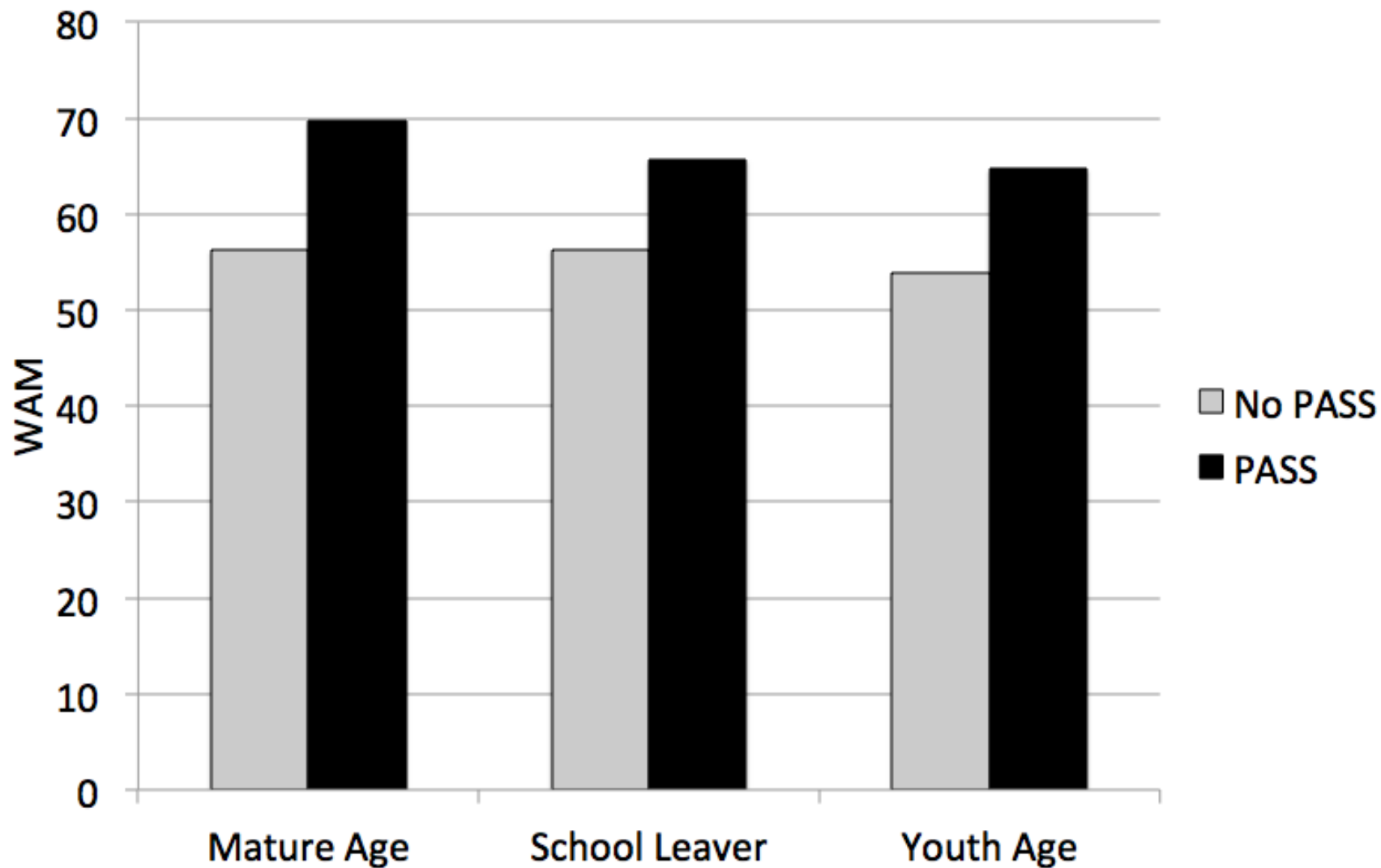




## Example of correlation on WAM (Weighted Average Mark) - PASS



## Example of correlation on WAM (Weighted Average Mark) - PASS



### Activity

Reflect on the context and data presented today.

In break out rooms (and then as a broader group), let us consider:

- Do you think the data would be similar at your institution? What **practical applications** could we take from the data presented?
- What questions remain unanswered? What **future research** may be valuable?
- Any other interesting observations or reflections?

- Students that do engage in learning support tend to choose a preference rather than use all available
- Different student cohorts tend to choose different forms of learning support
- There are statistical limitations in determining links between use of learning support and student success metrics
- Future research can expand on these findings by conducting focus groups and gathering student feedback at scale about the reasons for service choice



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