

Private Tuition in England

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Executive Summary

As part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind to reach up to 300,000 pupils in each of English and mathematics by 2011. With a few specified exceptions, tuition will be offered by qualified teachers, including private tutors. As there has previously been very little research into the private tuition market, the DCSF commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Institute of Education (IoE) to investigate the market of private tuition providers for students in Key Stages 1-4 in England.

Key Findings

Agency characteristics

- Five forms of agency business practice were identified, as follows:
 - **Traditional agencies:** maintained a selected bank of registered tutors and allocated work in response to requests from prospective clients.
 - **Notice board:** agency maintained a website notice board for individual tutor advertisements with contact details allowing clients to negotiate directly with the tutors.
 - **Mediated notice board:** agency maintained a list of registered tutors, from which clients selected but no individual tutor contact details were provided, so contact with the tutor occurred solely through the agency.
 - **Individual / small agencies:** individual tutors or informal professional networks of tutors that allowed work to be shared out or passed along.
 - **Educational centre:** tuition took place at a designated location, often solely dedicated to providing tuition.
- Web searches identified 504 private tuition agencies in England, of which 223 had a working website, and 130 participated in the telephone survey.
- The majority of private tuition agencies surveyed operated regionally (86%), with 14% operating nationally. Regional agencies covered most regions of the country but were concentrated in London (32%) and the South East (25%), and in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham.
- The size of agencies varied hugely but most agencies were small - 41% of those surveyed had 10 or fewer tutors active during the last academic year.

Tutor characteristics

- Around four in 10 agencies (43%) reported that all their tutors were qualified teachers and a further 40% of agencies required tutors to hold a degree. On average, smaller regional agencies reported higher levels of qualifications among tutors than larger or nationwide agencies.

- Security checks were considered important by agencies and tutors themselves. Most agencies (79%) reported that all their tutors had Criminal Records Bureau checks. Most agencies also required all tutors to submit references (75%) and to be interviewed (73%).
- Almost all agencies surveyed offered tuition in maths (97%) and English (93%).

Arrangements for private tuition and delivery of sessions

- One-to-one tuition was more common among agencies than paired or group tuition and was felt, by individual tutors, to offer the best environment for private tuition.
- Tutorials mostly took place at the home of the student (68%) and typically lasted one hour (66%).
- The extent of agency provision for tutoring was highest at Key Stages 2 and 4, suggesting that much private tutoring is in preparation for secondary school entrance and examinations.

Costs

- Surveyed agencies reported that the average (median) cost of a one hour tutorial was £24 but the hourly costs ranged from £1 to £60. Also the information gathered from the website analysis showed that typical tutorial costs were between £22.90 and £24.50 depending on subject and level.
- Average costs were highest in agencies located in London and the South East. Small agencies charged slightly higher median prices than large agencies. Costs were also related to the qualification requirements of tutors within agencies.
- Three key factors influenced the price of tutorials set by individual tutors: local demand and market tuition rates; the Key Stage of the student; and associated travel costs. Tutors offered discounted rates for multiple sessions, group sessions, and for friends and family.
- Tutors felt the following factors underpinned successful outcomes from tuition: sufficient time; the tuition environment; the one-to-one dynamic; the qualities of the tutor; student commitment and engagement; and, parent support.

Background

Little systematic information has been available on the extent of tutoring or the nature of the private tuition market. Previous research shows that the private tuition market is complex and contains a variety of organisational forms (Ireson and Rushforth, 2005). These range from large, high profile agencies and franchises to individual tutors who keep a low profile and see no need to advertise their services as they obtain sufficient business through word of mouth recommendations. This means that there are both visible and hidden components of the market.

The national programme of individual tuition which is being introduced by the Government from 2009, aims to deliver one to one tuition for students aged seven to 16 who are making slow progress in English and mathematics. Tuition will mainly be delivered by qualified teachers, including private tutors. This research investigates the nature of the private tuition market.

Aims

The purpose of this research was to provide a national profile of private tuition providers for students aged 5-16 in England and to offer more detailed information on the characteristics of private tuition transactions, including the costs, location, frequency and length of sessions, how providers find clients and how they assess students' tuition needs.

Methodology

A national database was constructed of private tuition agencies in England that had a 'web presence'. From the 504 entries, information was systematically gathered about the 223 agencies that had their own websites which provided details about the characteristics of the organisation and transactions between tutors and clients. A local database containing the contact details of individual tutors in three local areas (Great Yarmouth, Edgbaston and Marlow) was also constructed. The databases were used for analysis and to provide a sampling frame, and are not available as outputs of the project.

From the 504 agencies in the national database, 300 were sampled and invited to take part in a telephone survey to augment the findings of the database analysis. Structured interviews covering the characteristics of agencies and tutors, arrangements for tutorials and costs were completed with 130 agencies. Sixty-six agencies were screened out on the grounds that they comprised of individual tutors operating under a company name or were no longer trading. The response rate was therefore 43% overall and 56% of agencies known to be eligible.

In addition, 17 in-depth interviews were conducted with individual tutors in Edgbaston and Marlow. These interviews sought to explore the nature of private tuition transactions, including their content and how they were arranged. The sample for the interviews with individual tutors was designed to achieve diversity in tutor experience.

Findings

Agency characteristics and sourcing business

Five forms of agency business practice were identified, as follows.

- **Traditional agencies:** maintained a selected bank of registered tutors and allocated work in response to requests from prospective clients.
- **Notice board:** agency maintained a website notice board for individual tutor advertisements with contact details allowing clients to negotiate directly with the tutors.
- **Mediated notice board:** agency maintained a list of registered tutors, from which clients selected but no individual tutor contact details were provided, so contact with the tutor occurred solely through the agency.
- **Individual/small agencies:** individual tutors or informal professional networks of tutors that allowed work to be shared out or passed along.
- **Educational centre:** tuition took place at a designated location, often solely dedicated to providing tuition.

Web searches identified 504 private tuition agencies in England, of which 223 had a working website, and 130 participated in the telephone survey.

The size of agencies varied hugely in terms of the number of tutors, number of students, amount of tuition offered and the number of offices or branches in England¹. Larger agencies claimed to have nationwide coverage (14% of those surveyed), while smaller agencies covered only a region or local area (86%). Most agencies were small - 41% had 10 or fewer tutors active during the last academic year.

The availability of private tuition was unevenly distributed across England, being more common in London and the South East and in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham, but less available in the North. Regional agencies in the survey covered most regions of the country but were concentrated in London (32%) and the South East (25%).

Overall, word of mouth was the most popular means by which agencies recruited students (58%). This was followed by recruitment through the agency website (42%), Yellow Pages (41%) and adverts in local newspapers (40%). Larger agencies used a wider range of methods and smaller agencies focused more on word of mouth. Individual tutors sourced business via multiple means: online notice-boards; directory listings; leafleting; advertising in local press and shop windows; word of mouth; and private tuition agencies.

Agencies recruited tutors primarily by word of mouth (50%), an agency website (33%) and adverts in local newspapers (32%).

Agencies were busier in spring and autumn months and quieter in winter and summer. Some agencies worked in collaboration with other agencies, with 37% passing work to tutors not registered with the agency when they could not take on the work.

Tutor characteristics

In the survey, fewer than half the agencies (43%) reported that all their tutors were qualified teachers and a further 40% of agencies required tutors to hold a degree. On average, smaller regional agencies reported higher levels of qualifications among tutors than larger or nationwide agencies.

The extent of experience held by tutors in agencies mirrored to some extent their qualifications. Most of the agencies with the more highly qualified tutors also required tutors to have some teaching experience. Conversely, most of the agencies with the less well qualified tutors also did not require tutors to have prior experience of teaching or tutoring.

Most tutors working in agencies worked part-time (79%) and were self-employed (84%).

Security checks were considered important by agencies and tutors themselves. Most agencies (79%) reported that all their tutors had Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. Most agencies also required all tutors to submit references (75%) and to be interviewed (73%). Of the remaining agencies, many were among those that did not routinely recruit new tutors. Information about security checks was often omitted from websites, leaving the onus on clients to obtain this information from the agency or from individual tutors.

Individual tutors prioritised providing personal safety assurances to parents and students. References were reportedly considered less critical than personal recommendation and continued reflection on individual student-tutor relationships.

¹ For the purpose of analysis the agencies were classified into three categories according to the number of active tutors registered with an agency (small with up to 10 tutors, medium with between 11 and 50 tutors, and large with more than 50 tutors).

The main forms of quality assurance were formal feedback from parents (reported by 79% of agencies) and students (64%). Agencies reported a wide range of quality assurance measures. Tutors did not routinely refer to their own performance and development but offered parents the opportunity to view tuition sessions as quality assurance.

Arrangements for private tuition and delivery of sessions

Many agencies covered most or all subjects in the school curriculum, while a significant number specialized in English or mathematics or both. Almost all the agencies surveyed offered tuition in maths (97%) and English (93%).

The extent of agency provision for tutoring was highest at Key Stages 2 and 4, suggesting that much private tutoring is in preparation for secondary school entrance and examinations. In the survey, 72% of agencies offered preparation for school entrance.

One-to-one tuition was the main mode of tuition delivery among most (78%) agencies. In addition, group tuition was offered by over half the agencies (55%) and paired tuition was offered by 40% of agencies. One-to-one tuition was felt to offer the best environment for private tuition among individual tutors.

Tutors considered the following before arranging to provide private tuition services: the individual circumstances and needs of the student; requirements for the subject and Key Stage; and the location, timing, and cost of sessions.

Agency managers reported that tutorials usually took place at the home of the student (68%). Other locations cited by agency managers included the tutor's home (52%), at a centre (40%) or school (25%). From the viewpoint of tutors, the advantages of conducting tutorials in the home of the student were that they felt more able to offer assurances of safety and it was easier to give regular feedback to the parents following tuition sessions. When tutorials took place in the home of the tutor, the dedicated environment for tuition sessions was thought to impact positively on students' motivation and commitment.

Tutorials typically lasted one hour (66%).

Almost all agencies (96%) offered individualised tuition tailored to the needs of the student. A minority of agencies (22%) offered a pre-defined programme of tuition. Individual tutors emphasised a flexible approach to tuition sessions based on the specific needs of the student.

Individual tutors attributed successful outcomes from tutorials to the following factors: sufficient time; the tuition environment; the one-to-one dynamic; the qualities of the tutor; student commitment and engagement; and parent support.

Costs

The average (median) cost of a one hour tutorial was £24 but the hourly costs ranged from £1 to £60. This cost was based on the assumption that travel costs were included and the tutor was a qualified teacher. In case of the website analysis typical costs were between £22.90 and £24.50 depending on subject and level.

Most agencies (62%) set a fixed price for tutorials. For the remainder, the cost depended on a number of factors, including the level of learning, location or travel costs and length of session. The number of students in the group also affected the cost.

Individual tutors set the cost of tuition according to local demand and market tuition rates, the Key Stage of the student, and travel costs. Tutors offered discounted rates for multiple sessions, group sessions, and for friends and family.

Median costs were similar for English and maths and rose slightly with level of learning. Median costs were highest in agencies located in London and the South East and lower in agencies that were nationwide or located in regions outside the South East. Small agencies charged slightly higher median prices than large agencies. Costs were also related to the qualification requirements of tutors within agencies.

Some agencies provided a price range within which tutors negotiated fees with their clients and in some cases discounts were offered for two-to-one or group tutoring.

1 Introduction

As part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) is introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind to reach up to 300,000 pupils in each of English and mathematics by 2011. With a few specified exceptions, tuition will be offered by qualified teachers, including private tutors. As there has previously been very little research into the private tuition market, the DCSF commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Institute of Education (IoE) to investigate the market of private tuition providers for students in Key Stages 1-4 in England.

The study had two components: 1) the construction of a national database of private tuition providers supplemented by additional mapping in three local areas; and 2) detailed information on the nature of private tuition transactions obtained through a national survey of a sample of agencies and interviews with individual tutors in the local areas. The findings from both parts of the research are presented in this report.

1.1 Policy and research background

Private tuition has a long established role in learning for many young people in England and published advice for parents on selecting a tutor dates back to the 18th century. In the past, private tutors have operated in a largely hidden market and little systematic information has been available on the extent of tutoring or the nature of the private tuition market. A study by Ireson and Rushforth (2005) estimated that about a quarter of students received private tuition at some point during the primary or secondary phases of education and that tutoring was most popular in mathematics, followed by English and science. In a recent survey, 11% of parents and carers reported that their child received private tuition in an academic subject (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009).

The private tuition market is complex and contains a variety of organisational forms. These range from large, high profile agencies and franchises to individual tutors who keep a low profile and see no need to advertise their services as they obtain sufficient business through word of mouth recommendations. This means that there are both visible and hidden components of the market and no straightforward way to assess the relative size of each. The extent of the hidden market is difficult to estimate as there is no requirement for tutors to be registered and many operate independently. Even estimating the size of the visible part of the market can be problematic, as a tutor who usually works independently may at times pick up work from an agency, or a tutor may work for more than one agency, or a registered agency tutor may become inactive for a period of time yet remain on an agency list.

A study by Ireson and Rushforth (2005) indicated that a student's chances of receiving private tuition were strongly related to their parents' education and occupational status, with parents who attended university being almost twice as likely to employ a tutor as compared with parents who received only a school education. While some parents viewed private tuition as a more affordable option than paying to send their child to an independent school, other parents found the costs of private tuition were beyond their means. Even if they wish to help their children when they fall behind at school, some families are unable to offer supplementary tuition. The recent survey of parents and carers also found that the use of private tuition varied according to household income (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009).

The national programme of individual tuition which is being introduced by the Government from 2009, aims to deliver one to one tuition for students aged seven to 16 who are making slow progress in English and mathematics. Tuition will mainly be offered by qualified teachers, including private tutors. This research investigates the nature of the private tuition market, and offers information on availability and costs of employing tutors.

1.2 Research design overview

The purpose of this research was to provide a national profile of private tuition providers for students aged 5-16 in England.

The research aims were twofold:

1. To profile the market of providers of private tuition in numeracy/mathematics and English/literacy for students in Key Stages 1 to 4 in England. This required information about the numbers, sizes and activity profiles of tutoring agencies and individual private tutors. This is referred to henceforth as *the mapping task*.
2. To provide more detailed information about the nature of private tuition transactions, including the costs, location, frequency and length of sessions, how providers find clients and how they assess students' tuition needs. This is referred to as *the research task*.

During the first phase of the research a database was compiled from information available on the internet. This contained provider names and contact information as well as data that allowed provider characteristics to be profiled, such as: size of operation (e.g. the number of tutors in the case of agencies); average costs charged; subjects covered and qualifications required of tutors. The database was used for initial analysis and also as a tool to draw a sample of agency managers who participated in a telephone survey to provide more detailed information about the nature of private tuition transactions. The database is not available as an output of the project.

1.3 Methods for mapping task

In view of the hidden nature of much of the private tuition market, the mapping task was designed to provide two databases: 1) private tuition agencies operating in England that maintained a presence on the internet, and 2) individual tutors working within three local areas. A 'web presence' was taken to mean any agency that could be returned by a standard internet search engine such as Google. The task involved a) desk research to construct a national database of private tuition providers and b) additional desk research supplemented by fieldwork in local areas, to create a local database of individual tutors using different advertising media.

National database parameters

A national database was constructed using Microsoft Access as this type of database provides for flexible coding and searching. It thus had advantages in setting up a sample of agencies for the survey of agency managers that formed the second part of the project (the research task) and which provided more detailed information on private tuition transactions.

The database parameters included all those specified by DCSF, such as size of agencies (e.g. the number of tutors in the case of firms), average costs charged, subjects covered and whether tutors are required to be qualified. The full list of parameters was agreed in consultation with members of the DCSF steering group and is provided in Appendix A. Information on certain aspects of private tuition transactions, such as how tutors work with

their tutees, were obtained in the second phase of the research through a national survey and interviews with tutors.

An initial search was conducted through the Google UK search engine and repeated using Metacrawler and Zapmeta. The internet search was conducted for all agencies with a web presence and full details of the search methodology are included in Appendix B. The search encompassed not only websites operated by agencies, but also advertisements and descriptions within online business and specialist listings. A small number of tuition centres were included in the database even though no systematic search was undertaken for centres as such. Three franchise groups were identified and each was listed as one record on the database.

A number of websites were found that appeared to be a single tutor working under a company name. These sites provided direct contact details for services and did not request enquiries from prospective tutors. In some cases, the range of services or locations offered appeared too wide for a single tutor. Such sites were included in the database as they could be operating as a form of agency, by passing work on to other local tutors through informal local professional networks.

Some local authorities maintained online lists of tutors and agencies within their community web pages. Although these sites were not commercial ventures they acted as a local resource for prospective clients. Furthermore, a number of major tutoring agency sites, were non-profit making open resources. The local authority listings were, therefore, recorded in the database and trawled for agency information.

Following advice from DCSF, a number of sites were excluded from the database as they were not considered to fit the specification for the study. Sites focusing exclusively on home education were only included if they provided tutor contacts. Organisations that offered tailored homework materials, with tutors giving limited feedback or advice to parents were excluded. Agencies offering only English language tuition (Teaching English as a foreign language/ English for speakers of other languages/ English for foreign students) or elocution tuition were also excluded, as were agencies that provided solely online tutoring.

Website accessibility and reliability

As with many commercial websites, the websites reviewed within the data search were often designed to perform a number of functions such as to promote the agency's services, provide general advice or give access to database information, whilst being directed at several different audiences, including students of all ages, parents, prospective tutors and even other agencies. Given this, a number of issues were encountered during the data collection:

- Websites differed in the levels and standards of information provided, making it difficult to ensure consistency across the dataset.
- Poorly maintained or designed sites made it difficult at times to locate or recognize information.
- Most sites provided no timestamp by which to date the information they contained. This meant that it was not always possible to establish whether the data was up to date, or even if the agency was still operating.
- Inconsistent or contradictory information was encountered within some sites. This was especially seen with pages designed for prospective clients and prospective tutors.

- As online adverts, the claims made by agency websites, especially in regard to the size or coverage, have to be taken with some caution. There is no independent check, therefore, on the validity of the data gathered by the mapping task.

The websites represent those agencies with the money, time or expertise to create such sites. This may be motivated by a perceived need to generate more custom, and to do so through the internet. The review of websites took in, therefore, only a section of the tutoring market, which may not reflect the full extent of tutoring in England.

Concern was also raised as to whether compiling a database from website information contravened the Terms and Conditions of some websites. The Google site, for instance, stipulated

'You may not modify, rent, lease, loan, sell, distribute or create derivative works based on this Content (either in whole or in part) unless you have been specifically told that you may do so by Google or by the owners of that Content, in a separate agreement.' (<http://www.google.com/accounts/TOS?loc=GB>)

Similarly, Yell.com warned that their website could not be used to

'create, check, confirm, update or amend your own or someone else's databases, records, directories, customer lists, mailing or prospecting lists' (<http://www.yell.com/legal/home.html>)

It was decided that, whilst caution should be adopted in the systematic trawling of site data, the scope or purpose of the research project did not fall into the protection of commercial data which lay behind these various Terms and Conditions.

Local database fieldwork

Three local areas were selected to provide examples of contrasting demographic characteristics: a city in the Midlands, a coastal town and a small town in a rural area.

Edgbaston, Birmingham, a ward close to the city centre, had a population of 20,749 with 16% having no qualifications and 8% unemployed. The proportion in rented accommodation was 27%. In comparison to the other local areas Edgbaston had a significant ethnic minority presence (33%) (Birmingham City Council, 2007).

Nelson Ward, Great Yarmouth had a population of 7,950 (Office of National Statistics, 2007) which was predominantly white British (95%), with 48% having no qualification, 11% unemployed and 35% in rented accommodation (Office of National Statistics, 2001).

Marlow, Bucks, a rural area in a selective authority, had a population of 5,192 which was predominantly white British (92%) and well qualified (14% with no qualifications). There was low unemployment (2%) and a low rate of rented accommodation (7%) (Office of National Statistics, 2001).

Information obtained for the national database included a number of websites providing searchable lists of tutors with contact and tutoring details. These lists were used in conjunction with Google Earth to compile the local databases. For each area, the local database was filled using an initial web search, utilising the sites and understanding of tutor web presence gained through compiling the national database.

The web search was augmented with field visits to locate additional sources of information on tutors. All shops and sites which could display local notices were investigated, local newspapers were purchased and searched for classified adverts and enquires were made at the libraries and at community centres.

1.4 Methods for research task

Quantitative telephone survey of agency managers

The telephone survey of agency managers was designed to extend the findings from the national database. While the database provided a comprehensive list of agencies (within the parameters specified) and information about a wide range of topics, there was a large amount of missing data. Also, the different ways of coding key information such as costs of tutorials made it difficult to summarise across agencies. The survey offered the opportunity to gather information about agencies in a structured and consistent way covering all the key topics of interest.

Survey instrument

A questionnaire was designed in June-July 2008 incorporating comments from the DCSF steering group. The questionnaire was divided into sections for each of the main topic areas: location of agency and geographical coverage, subjects and levels taught, mode and location of tutorials, tutor's characteristics, cost of tuition (with a focus on English and mathematics), and future of the business, including questions about sourcing of business and seasonal variation in the demand for tutoring. The questionnaire was administered using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) with Blaise software. The final version of the questionnaire (in Word) is included as Appendix C.

Sample design

The sample for the agency survey was drawn from the national database of agencies which had 506 entries². The following procedures were followed to select the sample:

1. The eligibility criteria used in the mapping task were further refined while defining the sample frame for the telephone survey in order to best meet research objectives. As a result, the following types of agencies were excluded: sole traders, agencies offering online tuition only, family run businesses and co-operatives.
2. The agencies included in the database were inspected for incomplete contact information and the missing fields were completed where additional information was available on websites or by contacting the agency by phone or email. At a minimum, a phone number and either postal address or email address were required. As a result of this process, 67 agencies were removed from the sampling frame (see Table 1.1).
3. From the remaining 439 agencies, 19 were selected for the pilot.
4. 300 agencies were selected for the main stage sample (including all 178 agencies in the non-pilot sample that had a working website), leaving a reserve sample of 120 agencies.

² Two agencies were added following the submission of the interim report from the mapping task in July 2008. Therefore, the findings from the mapping task are based on a total number of 504 agencies but the sample for the research task has been drawn from a full database of 506 agencies.

Table 1.1 Sample of agencies*Base: All agencies in national database*

	N
Agencies removed due to incomplete contact details	67
No telephone number	31
Number disconnected/unobtainable	6
Duplicates	5
No longer trading	4
Local authority directory	6
Not agency	3
Opted out during process of finding contact details	1
Sole trader	11
Agencies selected for pilot	19
Agencies selected for main stage	300
Reserve sample of agencies	120
<i>Total agencies in database</i>	<i>506</i>

The main stage sample included 178 agencies with working websites to maximise the likelihood of them being currently in business and operating as ‘true’ agencies. The remaining agencies had very little information about them so they were stratified by region and 122 were randomly selected. (It was not possible, as originally planned, to stratify by size of agency since information about size of agencies was insufficient.)

Pilot

The aim of the pilot was to test the questionnaire and survey procedure. Nineteen agencies were selected for the pilot from different regions of the country. Most of these agencies (18) were selected from among those that had no information apart from contact details in the database, so as to reserve those with websites for the main stage sample. One large agency with a working website was included in the pilot in order to ensure that the questionnaire had been tested with at least one large provider. Outcomes from the sample are presented in Table 1.2. The low response reflects the limited amount of information about these agencies on the database. Four agencies were confirmed ineligible and of the 8 where no contact was made or the respondent was unknown, it is likely that a proportion were no longer operating.

Table 1.2 Outcome from pilot*Base: All agencies in pilot sample*

	N
Full productive interview	5
Refusal	2
Non-contact	4
Invalid phone number / respondent unknown	4
Ineligible - agency closed down	2
Ineligible - sole trader	2
<i>Total agencies in pilot sample</i>	<i>19</i>

The pilot briefing for telephone interviewers covered the background to the project, detailed information about the questionnaire and opportunities to practice conducting the interview with researchers present to answer questions. Agencies were sent advance information about the study by letter a few days before being contacted by telephone. Multiple attempts were made to contact agencies by telephone at different times of the day and week over a 6 day period. Following an interviewer de-brief, a number of changes were made to the questionnaire, including wording changes to questions about tutor qualifications and experience, question ordering and a function to terminate the interview if the agency was a sole trader or only offered on-line tutoring.

Main Stage

The procedure for the main stage was similar to the pilot with telephone interviewers briefed by the researchers. The main exception was that the letter with advance information about the study was sent in different formats depending on the contact information available for the agency. Letters were sent by post to 244 agencies, by direct email to 49 agencies and via website email to 7 agencies. A copy of the posted letter is included as Appendix D; the same wording was used in emails. The letter included background information about the study, outlined what was being asked of selected agencies and provided information about data protection and contact details of researchers. Follow-up letters (a copy of which is reproduced in Appendix E) were sent to all the agencies with whom no direct contact had been made three weeks into the fieldwork. The final outcome from the main stage fieldwork is presented in the table below (Table 1.3):

Table 1.3 Outcome from main stage

Base: All agencies in main stage sample

	N	% of all issued cases	% of all known eligible cases
Full productive interview	130	43	56
Ineligible	66	22	-
Refusal	30	10	13
Technical phone problems	25	8	11
No direct contact	24	8	10
Wrong number	12	4	5
Broken appointment	9	3	4
Other non-response	4	1	2
<i>Total agencies in main stage sample</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>234</i>

All selected agencies were called multiple times at different times of the day and on different days of the week over a period of 6 weeks. Overall response rate was 43% but this proportion went up to 56% when calculated from the known eligible sample. Ineligible cases included mainly sole traders (32) and those no longer trading (27).

Analysis

The data were analysed in SPSS. The geographical areas covered by the agency were coded into counties and regions for inclusion in the analysis. Questions that allowed multiple responses were recoded into sets of binary response variables and new variables were derived, notably to record the average cost of tuition sessions by subject and level. The data were not weighted according to the size and/or geographical coverage of agencies as initially planned because the required information was not complete for all of the participating agencies. However, the stratification of the sample by region ensured some geographical spread of agencies and the distribution of agencies responding to the telephone survey was similar to the profile of agencies in the national database. The findings are descriptive in nature and presented in figures and tables, showing relationships between variables where this is of interest (for example, cost of sessions by region). Where the base for tables and figures is over 100, percentages are shown. Where base numbers fall below 100 (as in the case of break down tables), numbers are presented instead of percentages.

Qualitative interviews with individual tutors

Alongside the quantitative survey of agency managers, 17 qualitative interviews with individual private tutors were conducted. These interviews sought to explore the nature of private tuition transactions, including their content and how they are arranged.

Sample design

The sample for the interviews with individual tutors was designed to achieve diversity in tutor experience. Quotas were set for the types of qualification held by tutors, whether they accessed students via a private tuition agency or independently, and for the location in which they worked. The subjects tutored and level at which tuition was offered (Key Stage) were also monitored.

Sample selection and recruitment

The sample was drawn from the local and national databases of private tutors (see Section 1.3 for details of these databases and how they were compiled). The type and quality of contact details contained in the databases for individual tutors varied considerably and this affected the approach to recruitment.

1. Where postal addresses and telephone numbers were held tutors were initially sent a letter by the research team introducing the study and outlining what participation would involve (Appendix F). This letter was followed by a telephone call from a NatCen researcher to gauge tutors' interest in the study, answer any questions they had, collect information relating to the sample quotas and, if appropriate, arrange an appointment for interview. In cases where an email address and telephone number was held, an email version of the same letter was sent to tutors and followed up with a telephone call as described.
2. Where no telephone number was held in the database, either a letter or email was sent to tutors inviting them to contact NatCen if they would be interested in hearing more about the study and potentially taking part (Appendix G).
3. Where tutor details obtained through agencies were incomplete, the research team sent a letter to the agency to request their assistance with an opt-out exercise (Appendix H). These letters were followed up with a telephone call by a member of the research team to ask for their assistance. One of the three agencies approached agreed. NatCen provided the agency manager with a letter to send to tutors

registered with that agency who worked within the three study locations - Marlow, Edgbaston and Great Yarmouth. This letter (Appendix I) gave details of the research study and advised tutors that the agency would pass their details to the research team after a two week period, unless they wished to opt-out by contacting the agency. Following the two-week opt-out period, the agency was able to pass the NatCen research team the contact details of all those tutors who had not opted out. At this point, the recruitment process outlined above for those tutors whose contact details were contained within either the local or national database was followed. A second agency declined to help and the third had recently started to make the details of tutors registered with it public on its website and therefore it was no longer necessary to conduct an opt-out exercise with this agency.

Achieved sample

A total of 49 tutors were provided from the three local databases. These were spread across the study locations as follows: 21 in the Marlow area; 23 in the Edgbaston area and 5 in or near Great Yarmouth. A further 30 were acquired via the agency opt-out process described above (2 in the Marlow area, 27 in or around Edgbaston and 1 in the Great Yarmouth area). The total sample frame for the qualitative interviews therefore contained 79 private tutors. Where a contact telephone number was held, the research team attempted to contact an individual tutor a minimum of five times. Table 1.4 below gives a breakdown of the outcomes from attempts to contact tutors in the sample frame.

Table 1.4 Summary of recruitment outcomes

	Marlow	Edgbaston	Great Yarmouth
Interviews completed	7	10	-
Recruited but interview not completed	-	1	-
Declined to be interviewed	6	4	-
Unable to contact	5	20	2
Did not meet sample criteria	-	8	-
Unable to access contact details via agency	5	7	4
<i>Total in database</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>6</i>

The research team was unable to contact 27 tutors: the reasons for this included incorrect email addresses and telephone numbers, but also instances where the research team attempted to make contact multiple times by telephone and/or email but were never successful. Eight tutors were excluded from the sample frame following conversations with them on the grounds that they did not provide tuition at relevant Key Stages, or because they provided tutoring services outside the areas specified for the study. The 16 tutors for whom contact details were not available were either tutors registered with the agency that was unable to assist the research team with the opt-out exercise, or whose contact details were not returned as part of the opt-out exercise (the research team therefore assume that these tutors opted-out when given the opportunity to do so).

One respondent was recruited and an interview arranged but was unavailable when the researcher called at their home. It was not possible to re-arrange the interview with this tutor within the fieldwork period for the study.

Interviews were achieved with 17 private tutors in the Marlow and Edgbaston areas. Table 1.5 gives a breakdown of the sample characteristics of these 17 tutors.

Table 1.5 Breakdown of achieved sample characteristics

		Edgbaston	Marlow
Qualifications	QTS or equivalent*	6	3
	Other teaching qualification	0	3
	No teaching qualification	4	1
Accessing students	Agency only	2	1
	Independently only	0	3
	Both agency and independently	8	3
Subjects taught**	Maths	8	5
	English	4	2
	Other	9	4
Levels taught**	KS2	3	2
	KS3	6	2
	KS4	9	6
Total		10	7

*Note this includes participants who did not confirm their qualified teacher status but who held a B.Ed or PGCE and had a number of years' teaching experience in a full-time permanent post.

**Some tutors taught a number of different subjects at different Key Stages. The same tutor may therefore appear more than once within these categories.

Data collection

A topic guide was designed for use with private tutors to ensure that a similar set of issues were explored with every participant. A copy of this topic guide can be found in Appendix J. Interviews with tutors were conducted face-to-face by a NatCen researcher and lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours. Interviews mostly took place in tutors' homes: in one case, the interview was conducted in the tutor's workplace and another in a public library at the request of the participant. Interviews took place in September and October 2008. Tutors who participated in an in-depth interview received £30 as a token of appreciation for their participation.

Analysis

Interviews were digitally recorded with participants' permission and later transcribed verbatim. Interview transcripts were analysed using 'Framework', a method developed by the Qualitative Research Unit at NatCen. A thematic framework was developed through the identification of emerging issues from the transcribed data. Data from each case was summarised within the framework retaining the location of the information from the transcript. This approach ensures that the analysis is comprehensive and consistent and that links with the verbatim data are retained. Organising the data in this way enables the views, circumstances and experiences of all respondents to be explored within an analytical

framework that is both grounded in, and driven by, their own accounts. A copy of the analytical framework is reproduced in Appendix K.

1.5 Report outline

The findings from the national and local databases (mapping task) are presented in Chapter 2, structured under the key themes of agency characteristics, tutors, tutorials and costs. Chapter 3 integrates the findings from the survey of agency managers and qualitative interviews with tutors (research task), following similar themes to Chapter 2. In order to clarify the data to which the discussion refers, the term 'survey' and sections about agency characteristics draw on the telephone interviews with agency managers and the sections about 'individual tutors' refer to the qualitative depth interviews with tutors. It should be noted that because of the small sample size, statistical significance has not been reported as it may be misleading. Chapter 4 (Conclusions), draws together the findings from the different elements of the research study.

2 Findings from the mapping task

2.1 Introduction

In total, 504 agencies were originally located from internet searches and recorded in the database. Of these, 223 had working websites from which additional information was obtained and used in the analysis for this chapter. Other entries supplied very limited information and were therefore excluded from the data analysis. As the information supplied on websites was very variable in content and detail, this section provides a description based on the evidence available and it should be noted that agencies did not all provide the same amount of detail on their sites.

Key findings from the mapping task

Agency characteristics

Five forms of agency business practice were identified, as follows.

- **Traditional agencies:** maintain a selected bank of registered tutors and allocate work in response to requests from prospective clients.
- **Notice board:** agency maintains a website notice board for individual tutor advertisements with contact details allowing clients to negotiate directly with the tutors.
- **Mediated notice board:** agency maintains a list of registered tutors, from which clients select but no individual tutor contact details are provided, so contact with the tutor occurs solely through the agency. The agency thus operates as a mediator between the client and tutor.
- **Individual / small agencies:** individual tutors or informal professional networks of tutors that allow work to be shared out or passed along.
- **Educational centre:** tuition takes place at a designated location, often solely dedicated to providing tuition.

Agencies use their websites as a means of advertising their services and thus provide information on the areas of curriculum covered by their tutors, together with variable amounts of other information. Whereas some website information was useful for purposes of comparison, some appeared to be of questionable reliability so that caution is required by all users when interpreting the information provided. Agency websites serve a variety of purposes and different pages target specific audiences, so the website as a whole may be lacking in consistency. Agencies varied in size, with the largest claiming to have just under 7000 registered tutors and several others having over 2000 tutors on their books. A significant number appeared to be small businesses with only a handful of tutors.

Larger agencies claimed to have nationwide coverage, while smaller agencies covered only a region or local area.

The availability of private tuition was unevenly distributed across England, being more common in London and the South East and in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham, but less available in the North.

Arrangements for tutorials

Many agencies covered most or all subjects in the school curriculum, while a significant number specialized in English or mathematics or both. About a third of the agencies offered preparation for the 11+ and entrance examinations for local schools.

The extent of agency provision for tutoring in Key Stage 2 was as high as for Key Stage 4, suggesting that much private tutoring is in preparation for secondary school entrance.

The most common location for tutoring was in the student's home, followed by a centre, and less frequently in the tutor's home.

Although one-to-one tutoring appeared to be the norm, a substantial number of agencies offered group tuition.

Tutor characteristics

Variable information was available from websites on the educational and teaching qualifications required of tutors. Some sites indicated that tutors should possess an undergraduate degree, not necessarily in the subject to be tutored, some required qualified teachers or experienced tutors and some required a combination of these.

Websites also varied in the extent of information provided about security checks thus, in many cases, leaving the onus on clients to obtain this information from the agency or from individual tutors.

Costs

The cost of employing a private tutor varied a great deal both within and between regions of the country. Quoted prices varied between £9 and £58.50 per hour; however, information provided on websites was not always consistent and sometimes included charges for travel to the student's home. Some agencies provided a price range within which tutors negotiated fees with their clients and in some cases discounts were offered for two-to-one or group tutoring. On average agencies charged between £23 and £29 per hour for individual tuition. Fees in London and the South tended to be higher than those in the North.

2.2 Agency characteristics

Agency business practices

A great variety was found in the form and business organisation of the 223 agencies with working websites. From the information gathered five broad and overlapping categories of private tuition provision were identified.

<p>Traditional agency (56%)</p>	<p>Traditional agencies maintain a selected bank of registered tutors and allocate work in response to requests from prospective clients. No individual tutor details appear on the website and tutors work as representatives of the agency, which takes responsibility for ensuring that the tutor meets the standards required. Detailed criteria may be given, therefore, for tutor registration.</p>
<p>Notice board (10%)</p>	<p>Agency websites act as a notice board for individual tutor advertisements with contact details allowing clients to negotiate directly with the tutors. Tutors may be vetted by the agency to ensure a given standard is met, or clients may be left to make their own choices and checks.</p>
<p>Mediated notice board (5%)</p>	<p>Mediated notice boards provide a list of tutors registered with the agency, from which clients select a tutor but no individual contact details are provided, so contact with the tutor occurs solely through the agency. The agency thus operates as a mediator between the client and tutor. These agencies often provide an online database of registered tutors, and may also utilise web based forms or embedded email as the primary means of communication between the client, agency and tutor. Varying details were provided of the qualifications held and subjects taught.</p>
<p>Individual / Small agencies (11%)</p>	<p>Whilst not recruiting or maintaining a register of tutors, some agencies allowed work to be shared out or passed along through informal professional networks. A more advanced version of this practice was seen in a named group of 'tutors', which was a company name of a single tutor in English, maths and science. Clients wishing "<i>to try other tutors or subjects</i>", were directed to another site, which was a site maintained by the same tutor, but now acting as a tutor introduction service.</p>
<p>Educational centres (18%)</p>	<p>In educational centres, tuition takes place at a designated location, often solely dedicated to providing tuition. Although tutoring may take place with other clients, it can still be individually based. Within this category, Kumon, KipMcGrath and Explore Learning education centres represent a large proportion of the private tuition industry in England.</p>

Size of tuition agencies

Figures regarding the number of tutors or clients registered with an agency were obtained from only 50 of the 223 websites. This information covered differing geographical areas and timescales, and so cannot be used for any detailed comparison. Furthermore, most of these figures were supplied with promotional text designed to emphasise the agency's position in the marketplace. As such, they need to be treated with some caution. From viewing those sites which provide tutor contact details, it is apparent that tutors are often registered with several agencies, meaning that the figures cannot be used to calculate any geographical total. Given the size and weakness of the dataset, therefore, it is possible to draw only a broad analysis.

The national agencies that reported on their tutor and client numbers all put their figures into the thousands. Of these, the largest claimed to have 6,900 tutors and 28,000 clients, some way ahead of its closest competitor that fielded 4,000 tutors serving 8,000 clients. Substantial claims were also made by a number of the London based companies, two of which claimed to have 2,500 registered tutors.

As noted above, the web searches also showed a significant number of agencies that appeared to be individual, or small groups of, tutors working under a company name. Whilst not openly recruiting, it is thought that such agencies may pass clients on to other tutors through informal professional networks.

The size of tutoring agencies in England varied, therefore, from large enterprises with thousands of registered customers and tuition providers, to small concerns that may encompass only a handful of informally linked tutors. These agencies operated across differing geographical areas, and thereby provide a tutor with access to different markets of clients. As such, agencies may be used as resources by individual tutors wishing to build a client base.

Geographical coverage of tuition

Whilst these agencies were found in most areas of the country, the majority were based in or covered the Greater London area (83 agencies). Birmingham (16 agencies) and Manchester (15 agencies) also stood out as urban areas with high concentrations of tutoring, with the counties of Cheshire (18 agencies) and West Yorkshire (10 agencies) also well served

The highest general tuition coverage was in the southern counties, and the ‘home counties’ in particular. There was a concentration of agencies covering the counties surrounding Greater London – Essex (27 agencies), Middlesex (13 agencies), Kent (18 agencies) and Surrey (24 agencies). This trend extended out westwards across the country, with agencies covering Berkshire (16 agencies), Hampshire (16 agencies), Oxfordshire (14 agencies) and Buckinghamshire (9 agencies). Coverage levels then dispersed out into the South East, South West and East Midlands, declining until, at the other end of the scale, are the far northern counties and West Midlands (excluding Birmingham) with little or no recorded tuition coverage in some counties. In all, 204 agencies provided clear information on their location and this forms the base for calculating percentages in Table 2.1. The percentages do not total 100 as some agencies covered more than one region.

Table 2.1 Regions covered by agencies

Base: 204 agencies that provided location information

Region of England	Number of agencies providing tuition	%
South East	130	64
Greater London	83	41
East	54	26
North West	40	20
South West	37	18
Yorkshire & Humberside	28	14
East Midlands	23	11
Greater Manchester	15	8
West Midlands	15	8
North East	7	3
Total agencies providing location information	204	

2.3 Tutors

The 223 working websites were searched for information on the educational qualifications and teacher training required by agencies to register as a tutor. Traditional agencies provided more details than notice boards, which provided only contact information and left the clients to check tutors’ details themselves.

Tutor educational qualifications

Just over half of the websites (128 or 57%) provided some information on educational qualifications. Of these, only 14 (11% of the 128 agencies) required tutors to possess a degree in the subject to be tutored while 86 (67%) required tutors to have undergraduate degrees without specifying that this should be in the subject to be tutored. Four agencies (3%) required tutors to have a higher degree.

Six agencies (5% of the 128 that mentioned educational qualifications) stated on their website that they only accepted tutors who were either Oxford or Cambridge graduates. A further 2 (2%) stated that most of their tutors were Oxbridge or London graduates *‘majority of our tutors hold doctorates from Oxbridge or the London colleges’* and *‘Many of our tutors have recently graduated from Britain’s top universities (the majority being Oxbridge graduates)’*. One agency (1%) mentioned that tutors were sourced from leading teaching universities.

Notice board sites listed tutors’ details and did not require tutors to hold any qualifications in order to register. These sites often encouraged clients to select a tutor with appropriate qualifications to meet their individual needs. Tutors sourced from these sites could range from highly qualified to having no qualifications.

Teaching qualifications

Less than half (46%) of the 223 websites provided information concerning teaching qualifications and of the 120 that did provide information, 47% specified that a teaching qualification was not a requirement to register (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Teaching qualifications required by agencies

Base: 120 websites giving information on qualifications

	N	%
Teaching qualification not required	56	47
Teaching qualification required	45	38
Degree or teaching qualification required	14	12
Majority are teachers	5	4
Total	120	101

Note: total greater than 100% due to rounding

A few agencies (4%) stated that the majority of their tutors were qualified teachers, or at least had experience of working for an educational establishment; *‘all new tutors have a degree at least and most of our tutors are qualified teachers with extensive tutoring experience’*. The majority of agencies did not specify what teaching qualifications were required although two agencies specifically mentioned that the teaching qualification had to be from the UK.

The information available from agency websites suggests that although there may be substantial numbers of qualified teachers involved in the private tuition industry in England, the majority of agencies do not require tutors to be qualified teachers.

Tutor training

Only 8% of the 223 agencies specifically mentioned any training provided for their tutors. It is possible that many more agencies do provide training for their tutors but details are not included on the agency websites. For the 17 agencies that specified some sort of training the details varied and were often unclear. Of these, 7 mentioned induction training, including two franchise operations, where specific programmes of tutoring were offered. Other agencies were more vague making statements such as *‘regular training and guidance where necessary’* and *‘fully trained to carry out tuition in the way we believe best enables a student to learn quickly’* or *‘Tutors are also encouraged to attend training seminars’*. One agency offered a 1.5 hour course on teaching methods for £60 and another required all their tutors to complete a 4 hour training course before being allowed to register as a tutor with them.

Tutor experience

The 223 agency websites contained limited information on the level of experience required of tutors wishing to register with them. Only 71 (32%) made some mention of tutors’ experience and the level of experience tutors required to register. On 16 websites it was noted that no experience was required, although one of these agencies specified that if the applicant was not experienced they would require a minimum of an undergraduate degree (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Tutor experience required by agencies

Base: 71 websites that mentioned tutor experience

	Number of agencies	%
Experience required to register	39	55
Some experience required	17	24
Must be very experienced	4	6
Unclear	11	15
No requirement	16	23
Total	71	100

Security checks

Agency websites provided limited information on security checks such as CRB checks, references and interviews. CRB checks were mentioned on 119 websites and were required by 85 agencies (71%) before tutors could register with them. A further 2% mentioned that some of their tutors have CRB checks. Three of the agencies that listed tutors recommended that clients should ask the tutors for CRBs before tutoring commenced.

About a quarter of the 223 agencies (26%) required references in order for tutors to register with them and one of these required tutors to present references to the client during the first session, while 10% stated they required tutors to be interviewed to register. Of the 85 agencies which required CRB checks, 46 also required references and a further 14 of the 85 also required interviews.

From the website evidence it would appear that the majority of agencies made limited security checks, leaving much of the onus on clients. This information was checked during the survey to see whether agencies carried out such checks but did not post this information on their websites (see section 3.3).

Tutoring style

The majority (93%) of the 209 agencies that provided information on style of tutoring used words such as ‘individualised’ or ‘flexible’ to describe their tutoring. Only 7% offered specific programmes, and some of these provided both bespoke and programmed tutoring services. The majority of the agencies offering programmed tutoring used materials and programmes specific to their agency. For example Kumon and Kip McGrath education centres both follow specific programmes of study. Explore Learning centres stated they used programmes which included SuccessMaker, Longmans Digitexts, Immersive Education and Spelling Force.

In view of the limited number of websites that supplied information and the variety of the information given on tutors, these findings should be treated with caution. Nevertheless they indicate that there is an onus on prospective clients to check tutor details with the agency or with individual tutors. The telephone survey of agency managers provides further information (section 3.3).

2.4 Tutorials

Subject areas and Key Stage level

Whilst many of the agencies covered all or most of the curriculum subjects, a significant number specialised only in particular subjects, or a small selection of subjects. Mathematics and English were the most commonly taught subjects, with 15% of agencies providing tuition solely for this combination. A further 9% provided tuition only in maths or associated sciences, as compared to 1% solely specialising in English.

Just under a third of agencies (30%) offered preparation for 11+, Common Entrance and other school entrance examinations. In 5 cases this formed the primary area of tuition, with a further specialisation in only the 11+ exam. Many of these agencies also provided a particular focus on the entrance exams of named local schools.

This concern with examinations appeared to be reflected in the data gathered for age level, with a similar number of agencies providing for students in Key Stages 2 and 4 (188 and 186 respectively), as shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Agency tuition by Key Stage in Maths and English				
<i>Base: 223 agency websites</i>	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	n	n	n	n
Agencies providing tuition in maths	150	181	169	177
Agencies providing tuition in English	149	173	164	165
Total agencies providing tuition at Key Stage	156	188	175	186

Location for tutoring

Private tuition takes place in a number of different locations but the most common location is in the student's home (43%). A substantial number of agencies (24%) offer centre based tutoring (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 Location of tutorials		
<i>Base: 205 agencies giving information on location</i>		
	N	%
Student's home	88	43
Centre	49	24
Tutor determines location	34	16
Home of student or tutor	24	12
Home of tutor	10	5
Total	205	100

One-to-one or group

A majority (65%) of the 208 agencies giving information on modes of tutoring indicated they provided mainly one-to-one tuition, with some also offering group tuition. Only 21 agencies (10%) provided primarily group tuition and these were mainly education centres where students attended for group tuition sessions. Agencies that provided a notice board of tutor listings were classified as 'determined by the tutor'. This was because each tutor was listed individually and each had his/her own method of tutoring. Each tutor made arrangements with the student and could decide to provide group tutoring for more than one student. For the remaining agencies information on mode of tutoring was not available (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 Number of agencies supplying different modes of tutoring

Base: 208 websites giving information on mode of tutoring

Mode	Number of agencies	%
Predominantly one-to-one	136	65
Predominantly group	21	10
Equal amounts of individual and group tuition	20	10
Mode determined by the tutor	31	15
Total	208	100

It appears that one-to-one tutoring is very much the norm for private tuition agencies in England. There is however a substantial proportion of group tutoring, which may be due to the reduction in cost as some agencies offer discounts for groups (see section 2.5).

Length of tutoring sessions

Of the 90 agencies that supplied information on the length of tutorials, the majority (85%) indicated that sessions were of 1 hour duration and only 2 (2%) provided shorter sessions of 45 and 50 minutes. Longer sessions ranging from 90 minutes to over 6 hours were offered by 12 (13%) and these were generally for those agencies that provided revision courses.

2.5 Costs of tutoring

Price information

The amount of fee information varied across agencies, from price lists of varying detail, which were provided by 32% of the 223 agencies, to general price ranges provided by 4% of agencies. The price was set in 44% of agencies out of the 223, as against 24% of agencies which allowed the tutor to establish the tuition fee (53 agencies). Ten of these 53 agencies (5.4%) provided a recommended price range for the tutor to work within.

Travel Costs

Only 2% of agencies provided tuition fee information inclusive of travel. Even among these agencies, 3 stipulated that extra travel costs would be incurred in certain circumstances. For example one agency stated that outside of '*major city and town centres*' on '*certain assignments*' additional charges '*of £10-per-hour-travelled, in addition to tutors' reasonable travel expenses*' would be made. Travel costs of this order were not common, with figures generally closer to £3-£5 extra. While some agencies provided structured price plans for the travel costs, most gave a price range and allowed the tutor to negotiate a final figure.

Travel costs are, therefore, an initially hidden yet significant extra cost when considering private tuition. As they are often dependent upon the location and negotiations of individual tutors and clients, however, it was not possible to make any detailed assessment of these costs from information available on websites.

Registration fees

Of the 223 agencies, 143 (64%) provided information on registration fees. The majority of these (55%) did not require clients to pay a registration fee. Many of these agencies acted as notice boards and listed individual tutor contact details.

A small number of agencies (9%) levied a registration fee from clients before tuition could commence. The majority of these agencies supplied information on registration fees which ranged from £7.50 to £129.50. A registration fee was usually a one-off placement fee, payable before tuition commenced which covered the cost of sourcing a tutor. In some cases this fee was the equivalent of one tuition session. Additional registration fees were also charged for detailed assessments for Special Educational Needs such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia or dyscalculia. Charges could be as high as £129.50 for an assessment lasting 1.5 hours.

Tuition Fees

Fee information was found for 40% of agencies (out of the 223), with some of these providing more detailed fee breakdowns covering Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and GCSE maths and English. Where necessary, fees were recalculated to provide an hourly price, in order to allow cross comparison. It should be noted that the websites showed varying degrees of maintenance and coherence in their construction. There was no guarantee, therefore, that the price information gathered was current.

Analysis was run on broad geographical categories, based upon the stated areas that the agencies covered. The information provided by a number of websites, however, was vague or unclear, whilst some agencies could be included in more than one category. These broad geographical categories provide, therefore, only a general reading of regional variation.

Of the 90 agencies that provided fee information, only 11 offered geographical price differences. The 3 nationwide agencies within this group all set broad regional price bands. For example, one agency split the country into Region A (South East) and Region B (Rest), with costs generally £1.50 extra per hour in Region A. There was evidence that price variance was linked to the availability of tutors in a given area, for example one website stated 'In Cambridge teacher demand is so high that we need to charge more to attract quality teachers to work with us. In Dorset, on the other hand, the same teachers will happily work for £2 per hour less'.

General fee information obtained from the 90 agencies indicated a wide variation in fees from £9 to £58.50 per hour. Figures were not readily comparable, however, as although the majority of agencies stated that tutor travel costs were negotiated separately, some agencies included travel costs into the standard hourly fee, whilst other agencies provided no, or unclear, information regarding their policy. Filtering out these inclusive records and unknowns provided 57 agencies with fee data, and a slightly more limited range of fees from £10.68 to £52.00 per hour. It was apparent that agencies adopted varying degrees of flexibility concerning their fees, with the quoted prices constituting in some cases (7 out of the 57) a price range within which tutors negotiated their fees on a client by client basis. It is obviously impossible to know how closely these guidelines are followed in practice.

To provide a clearer basis for comparison, educational centres were then excluded so as to compare only those agencies providing one-to-one tuition. This left 41 agencies with clear one-to-one fee information. Data from all 41 agencies indicated that a wide range of fees was charged, from £15.00 to £45.00 per hour. Mean fees for Key Stage 2, 3 and GCSE were £22.90, £23.40 and £24.50 respectively.

Table 2.7 provides a comparison of fees by region, and includes data only from agencies that supplied both location and fee information for tuition in mathematics at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 (GCSE). Mean prices and range of fees for mathematics are shown, together with the number of agencies included at each level.

Table 2.7 Mean price and range for one-to-one mathematics tuition at Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and GCSE levels

	Key Stage 2 n=22		Key Stage 3 n=21		GCSE n=24	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Nationwide	20.43	20.00 - 22.00	22.00	20.00 - 25.00	22.57	21.00 - 25.00
London	26.50	19.50 - 35.00	27.00	21.00 - 35.00	27.20	21.00 - 35.00
South	23.50	15.00 - 30.00	23.58	18.00 - 30.00	25.56	18.00 - 30.00
North	19.17	17.50 - 20.00	19.58	18.75 - 20.00	22.25	22.00 - 23.00

On average, fees appear to be higher in London and the South of England and lowest in the North and GCSE tuition was charged at a slightly higher rate than Key Stage 2.

Mean fees charged per hour for English and mathematics tuition were compared and appeared to be very similar at each level (Table 2.8). As the number of agencies in each category of these analyses was quite small (less than 10), these findings should be taken as indicative. Additional information on fees was collected as part of the survey of agency managers (see section 3.5).

Table 2.8 Mean prices for one hour of tuition in maths or English by level

	Key Stage 2		Key Stage 3		GCSE	
	Maths n=22	English n=21	Maths n=21	English n=21	Maths n=24	English n=22
Nationwide	20.43	20.43	22.00	22.00	22.57	22.57
London	26.50	26.50	27.00	27.00	27.20	27.20
South	23.50	22.42	23.58	23.58	25.56	24.93
North	19.17	19.17	19.58	19.58	22.25	21.92

Discount information

Of the 223 agencies, 42 offered a discount for tutoring students in groups. A number of agencies did not specify the discount but explained that group tutoring was available and more cost effective.

As an example, the discounts offered on one agency website were dependent on the size of the group:

'If there is more than one student per lesson then there is an extra charge for each additional student but no more extra charges after 5 students. See the table below for additional fees'.

<i>No. of Students</i>	<i>% Increase in Tuition Fee</i>
2	40%
3	55%
4	60%
5	65%
6	70%

Group discount was calculated by charging the first student the full amount and subsequent students sharing the session paying half the tuition fee. The total amount was then divided amongst the students so that each additional student benefited from the group discount.

One agency that offered two-to-one tuition in addition to their one-to-one tutoring services charged a £20 fee per student for a 45min session of 2:1 tutoring, as compared to the standard £27 for a one-to-one 45min session.

In addition to group discounts there were a number of other discounts mentioned on agency websites. A number of agencies offered discounts for extended bookings and a small number did not specify specific fee information on their website as they had a number of packages which depended on the length of tuition required. A number of tutoring agencies gave discounts for additional members of the family or for tuition in more than one subject.

2.6 Local areas analysis

The national agencies database was checked for agencies that covered the 3 local areas of Marlow, Great Yarmouth and Edgbaston. The results are set out in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9 Number of agencies covering each of the three local areas

Local area	Total number of agencies covering area	Number of agencies with working website covering the area
Edgbaston	19	5
Great Yarmouth	2	1
Marlow	12	7
Nationwide	57	55

Information was found for 94 tutors in the three local areas (Table 2.10). Advertisements for 5 tutors were found in local papers covering Marlow and Edgbaston (Birmingham Post covering the whole of Birmingham). The wide circulation of these papers and the lack of detail in the advertisements, however, meant that the tutors could not be guaranteed to cover the local area. Only one tutor was found directly through the fieldwork, and this was only a name supplied in Great Yarmouth. All other tutors were found through website searches and a number of these tutors were taken from two web listings which did not provide contact details.

Table 2.10 Number of tutors identified in the three local areas

Local area	Total Tutors	Tutoring in Maths	Tutoring in English	No subject information
South Birmingham, including Edgbaston	69	49	27	9
(Edgbaston)	24	21	10	1
Great Yarmouth	5	3	1	2
Marlow	20	13	6	0
Total	94	65	34	11

A larger number of tutors were located in Edgbaston than in Great Yarmouth, where only 5 tutors were located through searching websites and visiting the area in person. With a population of about 5192, Marlow had almost as many tutors as Edgbaston, which had a population about four times its size.

2.7 Summary

The mapping task revealed that agency websites differ in the services they offer, with traditional agencies allocating work to a selected bank of registered tutors, whereas some websites act as notice boards for individual tutor advertisements. Websites are also operated by individual tutors who may pass on work through informal, professional networks.

Agencies use their websites as a means of advertising their services and generally provide information on the curriculum subjects and levels offered by tutors, together with variable amounts of other information. While some website information was useful, some appeared to be of questionable reliability so that caution is required by all users when interpreting the information provided. Agency websites serve a variety of purposes and different pages target specific audiences, so the website as a whole may be lacking in consistency.

Agencies varied in size, with the largest claiming to have just under 7000 registered tutors and several others having over 2000 tutors on their books, while a significant number appeared to be small businesses with only a handful of tutors. Larger agencies claimed to have nationwide coverage, while smaller agencies covered only a region or local area.

This report focused on private tuition in English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy and specifically excluded sites devoted to home education, online tutoring or language tuition for foreign students. The analysis suggests that the availability of private tuition was unevenly distributed across England, being more common in London and the South East and in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham, but less available in the North.

Many agencies covered most or all subjects in the school curriculum, while a quarter specialized in English and mathematics. About a third of the agencies offered preparation for the 11+ and school entrance examinations. The extent of agency provision for tutoring at Key Stage 2 was as high as that at Key Stage 4, which suggests that parents employed tutors to assist their children as they approached key transition points in the education system.

Websites provided limited information about the qualifications required of tutors, however some asked for a degree, teaching qualification or experience and a few offered training. Less than half mentioned that CRB checks were required. From the available information, it seems that many tutors may not have had degrees or teaching qualifications. It may be that agencies make greater demands than is evident from their websites, but it is likely that in many cases it is the clients' responsibility to check the quality of tutors provided.

It appears that the most common location for tutoring was in the student's home. Private tuition also took place in the tutor's home and in many cases location was the subject of negotiation and agreement between the tutor and student. Most tuition was one-to-one, yet certain agencies offered group tuition, which usually took place in a centre. Tutoring sessions tended to last between 45 and 60 minutes, though longer sessions up to 6 hours could be held for revision classes.

The cost of employing a private tutor varied a great deal both within and between regions of the country. Quoted prices varied between £9 and £58.50 per hour, however information provided on websites was not always consistent and sometimes included charges for travel to the student's home. On average agencies charged between £23 and £29 per hour for individual tuition. Fees in London and the South tended to be higher than those in the North. When figures were compared for one-to-one tuition, tutors tended to charge more for GCSE than for Key Stage 2 and 3, but differences were small. Much of the information obtained from the internet searches was verified by the telephone survey of agency managers (See Chapter 4 for a comparison of the findings).

3 Findings from the research task

3.1 Introduction

This chapter integrates the findings from the survey of agency managers and the in-depth interviews with private tutors within the local areas. Some issues were appropriate to explore with both groups of providers (e.g. factors influencing the cost of tutorials). Others were more pertinent to agencies (e.g. organisational structure of agencies) or tutors (e.g. the assessment of student need). The survey questionnaire (Appendix C) and topic guide for the qualitative interviews (Appendix J) were developed collaboratively to complement one another, covering the issues of interest in this study.

A total of 130 agencies were surveyed; however, in some cases the responding base was smaller than 130 as some agencies either did not answer some of the questions or questions were not applicable to them.

3.2 Agency characteristics and sourcing business

Key Findings

- The size of agencies varied hugely in terms of the number of tutors, number of students, amount of tuition offered and the number of offices or branches in England.
- Most agencies were small - 41% had 10 or fewer tutors active during the last academic year.
- The agencies in the survey covered most regions of the country but were concentrated in London (32%) and the South East (25%).
- Word of mouth was the most popular means by which agencies recruited students (58%). This was followed by agency website (42%), Yellow Pages (41%) and adverts in local newspapers (40%).
- Larger agencies used a wider range of methods and smaller agencies focused more on word of mouth.
- Individual tutors sourced business via multiple means: online notice-boards; directory listings; leafleting; advertising in local press and shop windows; word of mouth; and, private tuition agencies.
- Registration with an agency was perceived by tutors to lend credibility to their business, and offer an easy way for them to source students through good exposure to potential business.
- Tutors reported relying most heavily on private tuition agencies to source business during the early stages of their tutoring career, and on word of mouth as they became more established.
- Agencies recruited tutors primarily by word of mouth (50%), agency website (33%) and adverts in local newspapers (32%).
- Agencies were busier in spring and autumn months and quieter in winter and summer.

- Some agencies worked in collaboration with other agencies, with 37% passing work to tutors not registered with the agency when they could not take on the work.

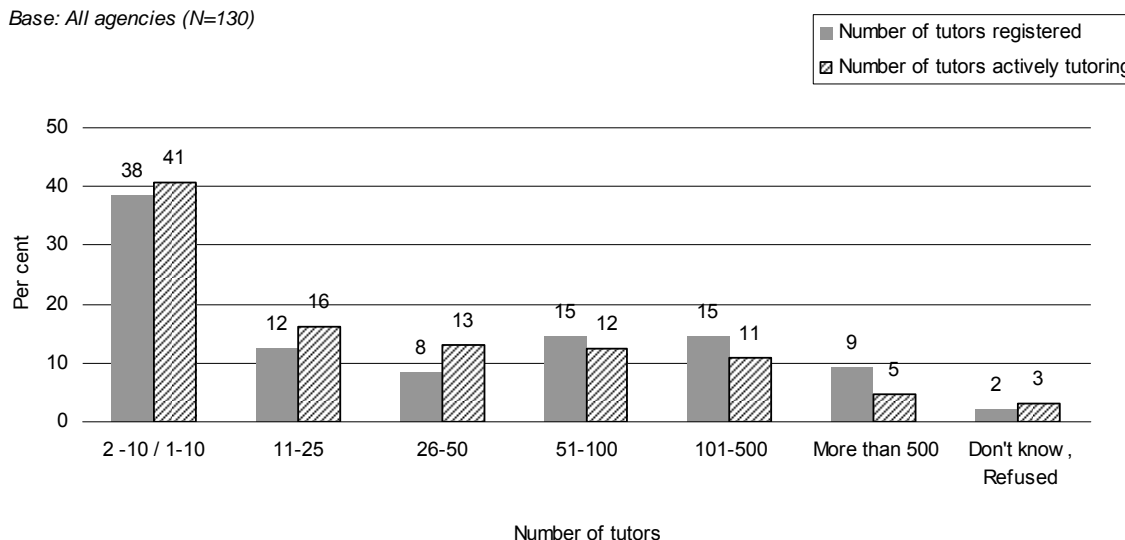
Size

The size of agencies was measured in various ways: the number of tutors currently registered, the number of tutors who were actively tutoring during the last academic year, the number of students currently being tutored, the number of hours of tuition given by an agency in a typical week and the number of branches or offices of the agency in England.

Figure 3.1 shows how the number of tutors was distributed across the agencies. Over one-third of responding agencies were small with between one and 10 tutors registered or actively tutoring³. The remaining agencies were fairly evenly spread across the other size categories with a small number of very large agencies as was found in the database (Chapter 2). Overall, fewer tutors had actively tutored during the last academic year than were registered with agencies.

Figure 3.1 Size of agencies (number of registered and active tutors)

Base: All agencies (N=130)



As shown in Figure 3.1 most agencies had up to 10 tutors registered or actively tutoring, and there was an equal spread in the proportion of tutors in the remaining categories. Therefore, for the purpose of further analysis '10' has been assumed as a natural cut off point for determining the size of agencies. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, where agency characteristics are broken down by size of agency, size is based on the number of *active* tutors as shown in Table 3.1. 'Small' agencies referred to those with 10 or fewer active tutors, 'medium' sized agencies had between 11 and 50 active tutors and 'large' agencies had more than 50 active tutors.

³ As mentioned previously, individual tutors operating under a company name were excluded from the quantitative survey and therefore the minimum number of *registered* tutors in the data was two. However, if an agency only had one *active* tutor, they were included in the survey, and this circumstance applied to one such case. Therefore, the range for active tutors in small agencies starts with one.

Table 3.1 Agency size according to the number of active tutors

Base: All agencies

Size of agency	N	%
Small (1-10 active tutors)	53	41
Medium (11-50 active tutors)	38	29
Large (More than 50 active tutors)	37	28
Missing	2	2
<i>Total</i>	130	100

The majority of survey respondents (86%) reported that their agencies had a single office in England, confirming the finding that the majority of agencies were small-scale. However, the survey included some agencies that were very large with over 40 offices or branches (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Size of agencies (number branches / offices)

Base: All agencies (N=130)

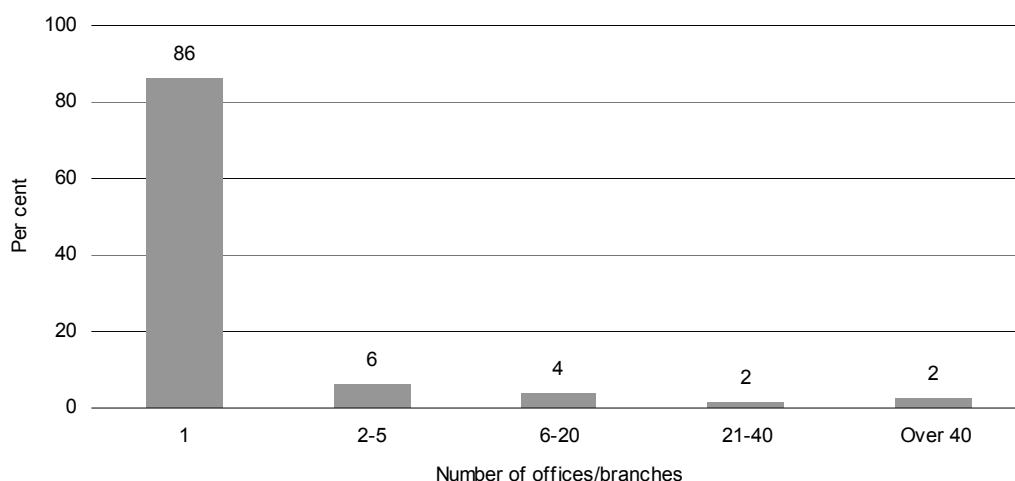


Table 3.2 shows how the number of students tutored by agencies and the number of hours of tuition provided by agencies in a typical week varied according to the number of active tutors. The median number⁴ of students increased more than twice between small and medium size agencies, and went up more than three times once medium and large agencies were compared. A similar pattern can be noted with reference to the median number of hours of tuition. The median number increased three times between both small and medium size agencies and between medium and large.

⁴ The median (the middle value from an ordered list) was chosen instead of mean due to a small number of agencies that reported a very high number of pupils and hours of tuition given per week.

Table 3.2 Size of agency by number of students and by number of hours of tuition per week*Base: All agencies*

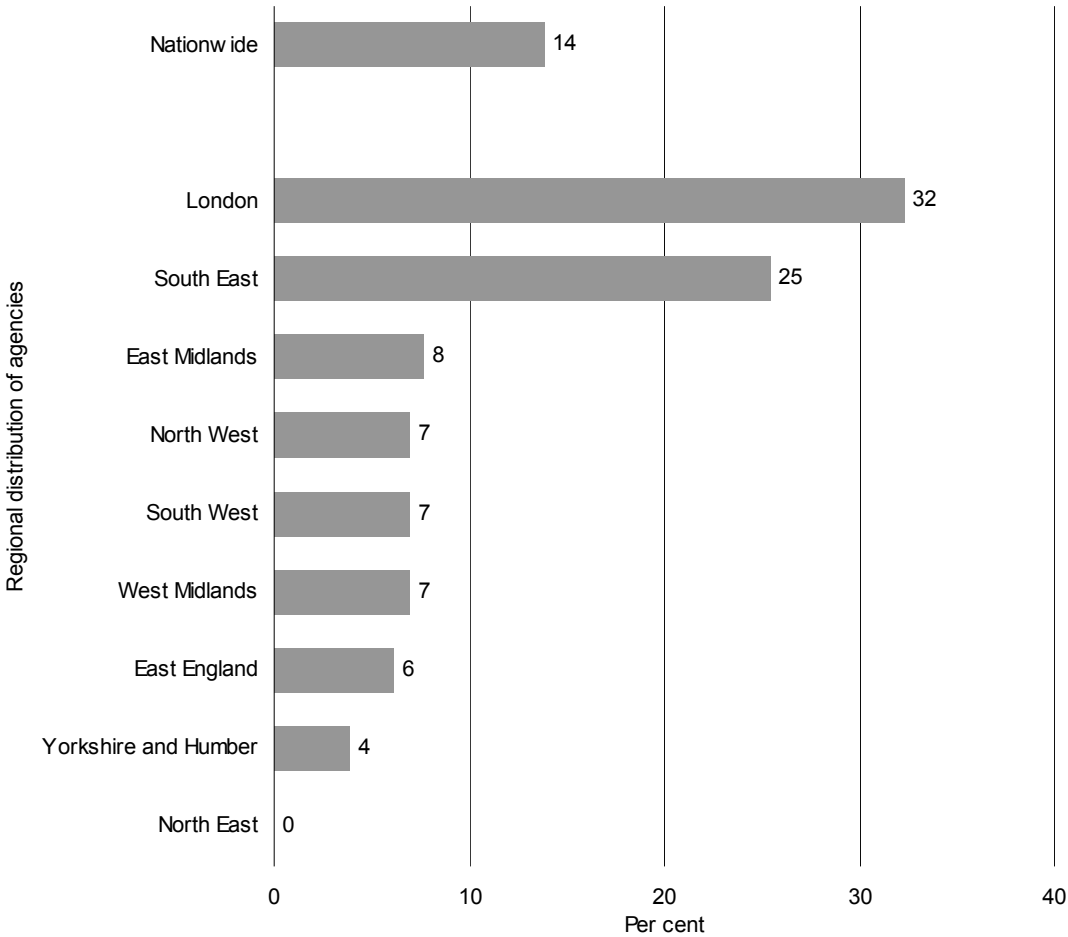
Size of agency	Median number of students	Median number of hours tuition provided each week	Base
	n	n	n
Small (1-10 active tutors)	26	15	53
Medium (11-50 active tutors)	55	50	36
Large (More than 50 active tutors)	200	150	32
Total number of agencies	-	-	121

Geographical coverage

Agency managers were asked whether their agency provided private tuition across the whole of England or just in particular local areas. The majority of agencies operated only in local areas (86%) and the remaining 14 per cent were national. The agencies that offered tuition locally were concentrated in London and the South East where they accounted for more than a half of all regionally based agencies (Figure 3.3). There was a broadly equal spread of agencies across other parts of the country but a dearth of agencies in the north, particularly the North East where there were no regional agencies in the responding sample⁵. The findings chime to a large extent with the analysis of agency websites in Chapter 2. For regional breakdowns in the rest of this chapter, agencies were grouped into the following categories: nationwide, London, South East and outside the South East⁶.

Figure 3.3 Geographical location of tutorials⁷

*Base: All agencies (N=130)
Nationwide agencies not counted in regional breakdown*



⁵ Although it may be the case that the North East was served by one or more of the agencies classified as nationwide.

⁶ Due to the small numbers, it was not possible to provide more detailed regional breakdowns.

⁷ Some of the regional agencies provided tuition in more than one local area, therefore overall percentage for the geographical location of tutorials adds up to more than a 100.

An association was observed between the geographical location of agencies and their size. A higher proportion of agencies in London were small compared to other regions. In contrast, most of the nationwide agencies were large. Regional agencies located in other parts of the country, both in and outside of the South East were of similar sizes: around a quarter of them were large, one-third were of medium size and a little under half were small (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Agency region by size

Base: All agencies

Size of agency	Geographical location of tutorials				Total
	Nationwide	London	South East	Outside South East	
	n	n	n	n	
Small (1-10 active tutors)	1 ⁸	17	17	18	53
Medium (11-50 active tutors)	4	9	12	13	38
Large (over 50 active tutors)	13	3	9	12	37
<i>Base</i>	18	29	38	43	128

⁸ In the telephone survey (and on the website) this agency reported that it covered the whole of England and had over a hundred registered tutors. However, in the interview the agency reported having only between one and ten active tutors.

Sourcing business and accessing students

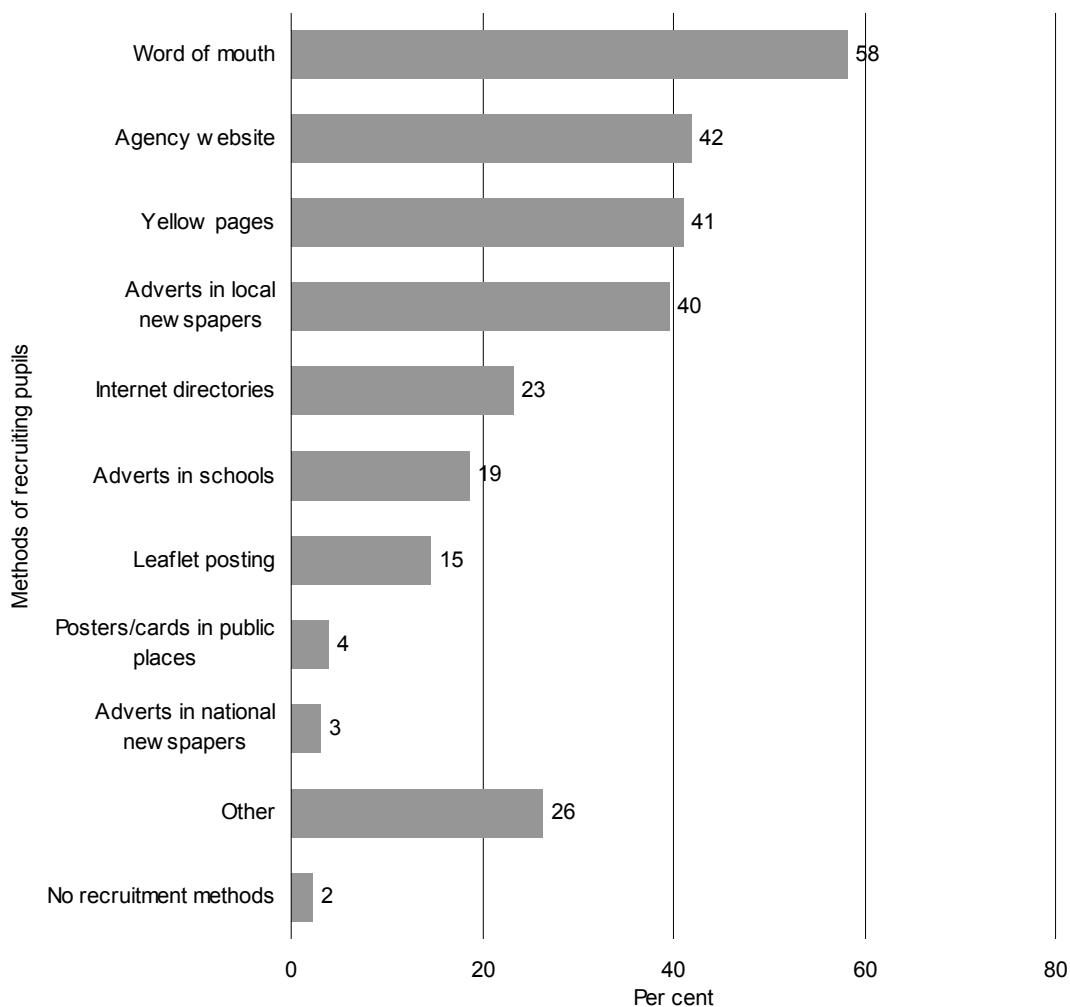
Both the telephone survey of agency managers and the in-depth interviews with tutors explored the ways in which students were accessed and business was found. Both the agencies and independent tutors used a variety of methods although similar means of sourcing business were used by both.

Agencies

According to agency managers, word of mouth proved to be most popular method across agencies of different sizes and locations (58%). Advertising on agency websites, in Yellow Pages and in local newspapers were also very popular, with around 40% of agencies deploying these methods. A wide range of other methods were also used but on a smaller scale (Figure 3.4). Among the large proportion of responses recorded during the telephone interview as 'other', these included: school guides, local school publications (i.e. Primary Times), school psychologist/school referral, adverts in local shops and shopping centres, using a search engine advertising tool and a website advertising local services. Most of these methods were also mentioned in the qualitative interviews (see below). Only 2% of responding managers reported that they did not use any methods to recruit new students.

Figure 3.4 Methods of sourcing business used by agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



There were some variations in the recruitment methods used according to the location and size of agency (Table 3.4 and Table 3.5).

- The 18 nationwide agencies used a wider range of methods than smaller or regionally based agencies.
- Word of mouth was the most popular method generally and most widely used by agencies offering tuition in the South East and by smaller agencies.
- Yellow Pages were more likely to be used by agencies operating outside the South East and by large agencies.
- Adverts in local newspapers were a fairly popular method used by all kinds of agencies in similar proportions.

Table 3.4 Methods of recruiting students according to location

Base: All agencies

Methods of recruiting students	Geographical location of tutorials				Total n
	Nationwide n	London n	South East n	Outside South East n	
Word of mouth	9	17	25	24	75
Agency website	9	13	12	20	54
Yellow pages	5	13	8	27	53
Adverts in local newspapers	7	11	18	15	51
Internet directories	8	2	6	14	30
Adverts in schools	7	5	4	8	24
Leaflet posting	4	3	6	6	19
Posters/cards in public places	2	1	1	1	5
Adverts in national newspapers	3	1	0	0	4
Other	4	5	13	12	34
No recruitment methods	0	0	1	2	3
<i>Base</i>	18	28	39	44	129

Table 3.5 Methods of recruiting students according to size of agency*Base: All agencies*

Methods of recruiting students	Size of agency			Total n
	Small (1-10) n	Medium (11-50) n	Large (above 50) n	
Word of mouth	34	18	22	74
Agency website	11	18	24	53
Yellow pages	16	16	19	51
Adverts in local newspapers	16	16	18	50
Internet directories	6	9	14	29
Adverts in schools	6	9	9	24
Leaflet posting	11	4	4	19
Posters / cards in public places	3	1	1	5
Adverts in national newspapers	1	1	2	4
Other	13	11	10	34
No recruitment methods	1	2	0	3
<i>Base</i>	53	37	37	127

Individual tutors

Quotas were set in the qualitative sample for private tutors who accessed students via a private tuition agency only, and who sourced their business solely independently of any agency. The sample frame however yielded few tutors who accessed students in only one way and individual tutors described employing a range of methods to source their business and access students. This range included the use of specific private tuition agencies with which tutors registered and which then sourced students on their behalf. Alternative methods relied more heavily on continued action by tutors themselves to find new students. A number of private tuition websites were reportedly used: these are free sites on which tutors can post details of their private tuition offer and their contact details free of charge, and interested students can contact them directly (referred to as 'notice-boards' in Chapter 2). Other promotional routes reported by tutors were listings in directories such as the Yellow Pages, or on free-post websites not specifically geared towards private tutors such as Gum Tree. Door-to-door leafleting and distributing business cards were also used: one tutor reported incentivising parents to distribute his business cards by offering a discount on future private tuition sessions for those who secured him new business in this way. Finally, tutors advertised their businesses in local papers, including free papers, and in advertisements in shop windows and even the windows of their own homes.

No clear patterns were either reported by tutors or evident in their accounts in terms of the sources of business that appeared to be the most or least effective in accessing students, or in the types of students accessed via these different routes. Indeed, individual tutors' experiences of employing the same method to source business varied widely. It was however clear that those tutors who were more well-established in their local areas, or who had been tutoring privately for some years, tended to rely less on actively promoting their business and more on word-of-mouth and recommendations from past and present students to source new business. Some reported relying on private tuition agencies when they first entered the private tuition market, using them to build a client base and private tuition experience which they now supported with occasional online advertising or leafleting. Those who relied less on private tuition as a key source of income also appeared less inclined to

actively search for new business and instead trusted word-of-mouth to provide sufficient students.

Where tutors reported a preference for sourcing business in particular ways, this was supported by a clear rationale. Those that relied primarily on agencies valued this way of accessing students for two reasons: ease and quality of exposure. Once registered with a private tuition agency, tutors reported that they simply waited for students to contact them: that this avenue did not require them to actively seek students was appealing. Tutors also benefited from not having to 'mess around with paperwork' where agencies handled payments from students and tutors received fees directly into their bank account. The other key advantage of registration with some agencies was their online presence. Tutors felt that the internet would be the first choice for parents or students seeking information about private tuition and were satisfied that a private tuition agency would guarantee them good exposure to the private tuition market. Online methods generally received favourable reviews from tutors because they provided prospective students and their parents the opportunity to access considerable detail about a tutor and make comparisons with others in the market before making an informed choice about whom to approach. Association with a tuition agency was also perceived to offer parents and students reassurance as to the tutors' experience and authenticity such that prospective clients would be more inclined to choose a tutor affiliated to an agency than one operating completely independently.

Tutors did however recognise limitations of sourcing their business via private tuition agencies. A key consideration was the commission charged by agencies for sourcing students on their behalf (see discussion of costs in Section 3.5 for more detail about attitudes towards commission rates). Where tutors passed the cost of the commission directly on to their students, or where students paid a one-off fee to the agency to access tutor contact details, they felt this had the potential to deter students from choosing their business on the basis of cost. Some felt that they were not routinely accessing students from lower socio-demographic groups via private tuition agencies for this reason. Tutors also reported feeling that the 'quality' of students sourced via private tuition agencies differed from those accessed via other means. They explained that students who came to them via an agency often wanted only a handful of private tuition sessions to prepare them for a particular assessment or examination - although tutors were not able to offer an opinion as to why this should particularly be the case for students accessed in this way - and were therefore neither long-term nor lucrative business. The requirement of some agencies for regular reporting about the private tuition sessions delivered by tutors registered with them was also off-putting for some.

Beyond private tuition agencies, cost appeared to be a key factor in private tutors' appraisals of alternative ways of sourcing business, although this was balanced with their perceptions of how successful different avenues were felt to be. Advertisements in local newspapers were felt to be effective, with tutors reporting receiving enquiries each time they placed one. The low cost of advertising in shop windows was appealing since tutors felt they needed only one response per advertisement to recoup the cost of placing the card, although tutors generally reported that this method, and similarly leafleting, yielded little business. Free websites and word-of-mouth were valued since they required no investment by the tutor. Other advantages of sourcing business via recommendations from past and present students were felt to be that parents tended to have fewer concerns for the safety of their child since they knew of another student who had used the private tutor's services and therefore were more inclined to trust the tutor and use their business. Relying on recommendations was however recognised to be an unreliable and inconsistent source of business. Tutors also suspected that some parents were not inclined to recommend their services in case the tutor secured so much business that their attention was no longer concentrated on their child.

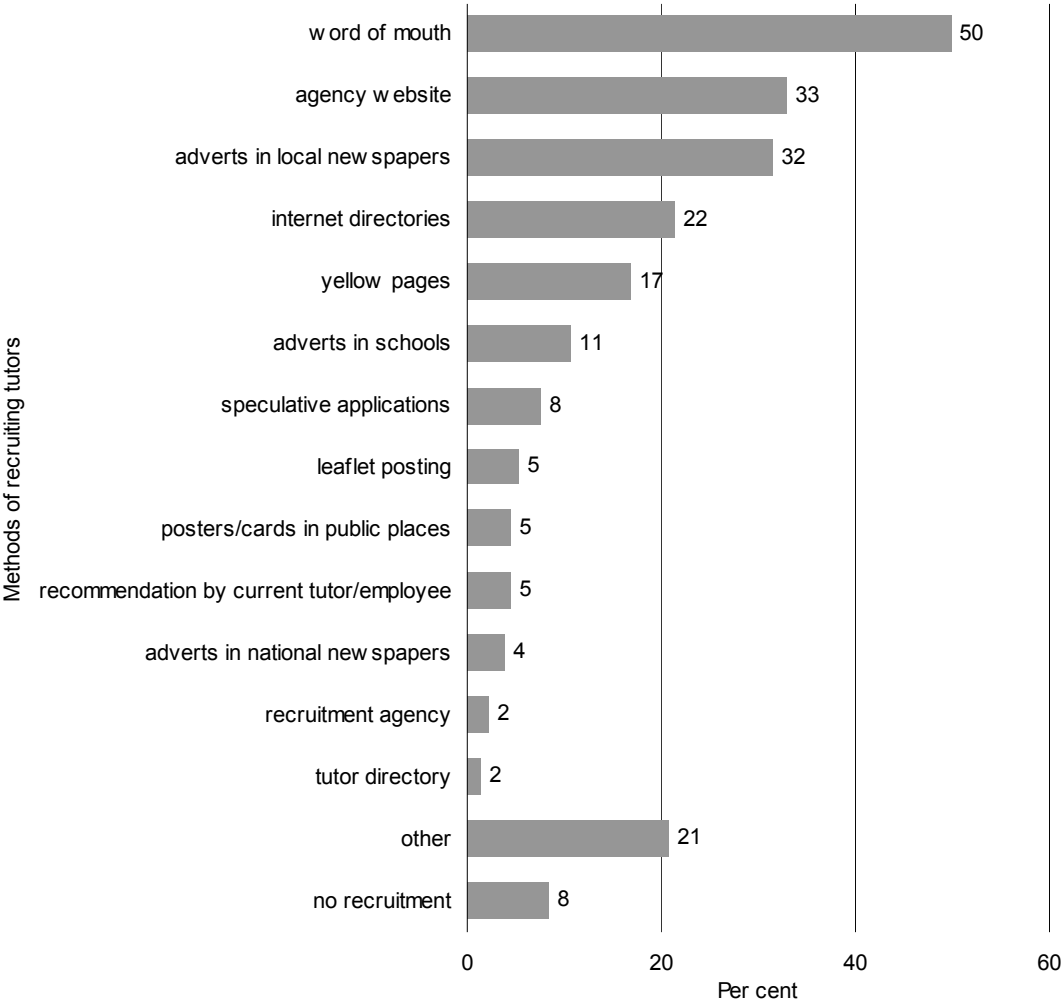
Recruitment methods

Agency managers were also asked how they recruited *tutors*. As with the methods used for accessing students, word of mouth and via the agency website proved to be most popular in recruiting tutors (50% and 33% respectively). Also, adverts in local newspapers, internet directories, Yellow Pages and advertising in schools were frequently mentioned as means of recruiting tutors. The remaining methods were named by fewer than 10% of responding agencies. A large proportion of managers (21%) mentioned methods coded as 'other' which included: advertising in educational journals and school magazines, universities, colleges, educational fairs and job centres (Figure 3.5).

Eight per cent of agencies (11 organisations) did not recruit new tutors. Since the majority of these (nine out of 11) had only two active tutors, it is likely that the agencies (which were effectively a business partnership between two tutors) were not looking to expand.

Figure 3.5 Methods of recruiting tutors

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Methods of tutor recruitment varied according to the size and location of agencies (Table 3.6 and Table 3.7):

- As in the case of accessing students, nationwide agencies and those larger in size used a broader range of recruitment methods than others. Small agencies relied mostly on word of mouth and adverts in local newspapers.
- As before, all internet based methods (agency website and internet directories) as well as advertising in national newspapers were broadly used by nationwide and large providers. Using an agency website was the least popular with London agencies and small agencies.
- Yellow Pages was most frequently cited by agencies outside the South East and by large agencies.

Table 3.6 Methods of recruiting tutors according to location

Base: All agencies

Methods of recruiting tutors	Geographical location of tutorials				Total n
	Nationwide n	London n	South East n	Outside South East n	
Word of mouth	9	15	23	18	65
Agency website	9	7	13	14	43
Adverts in local newspapers	7	9	9	16	41
Internet directories	8	4	6	10	28
Yellow Pages	2	5	2	13	22
Adverts in schools	3	4	1	6	14
Speculative applications	2	2	2	4	10
Leaflet posting	3	2	2	0	7
Posters / cards in public places	2	2	1	1	6
Recommendation by current tutor / employee	2	0	2	2	6
Adverts in national newspapers	3	1	0	1	5
Recruitment agency	0	1	1	1	3
Tutor directory	0	0	1	1	2
Other	5	6	4	12	27
No recruitment	0	4	1	6	11
<i>Base</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>130</i>

Table 3.7 Methods of recruiting tutors according to size of agency*Base: All agencies*

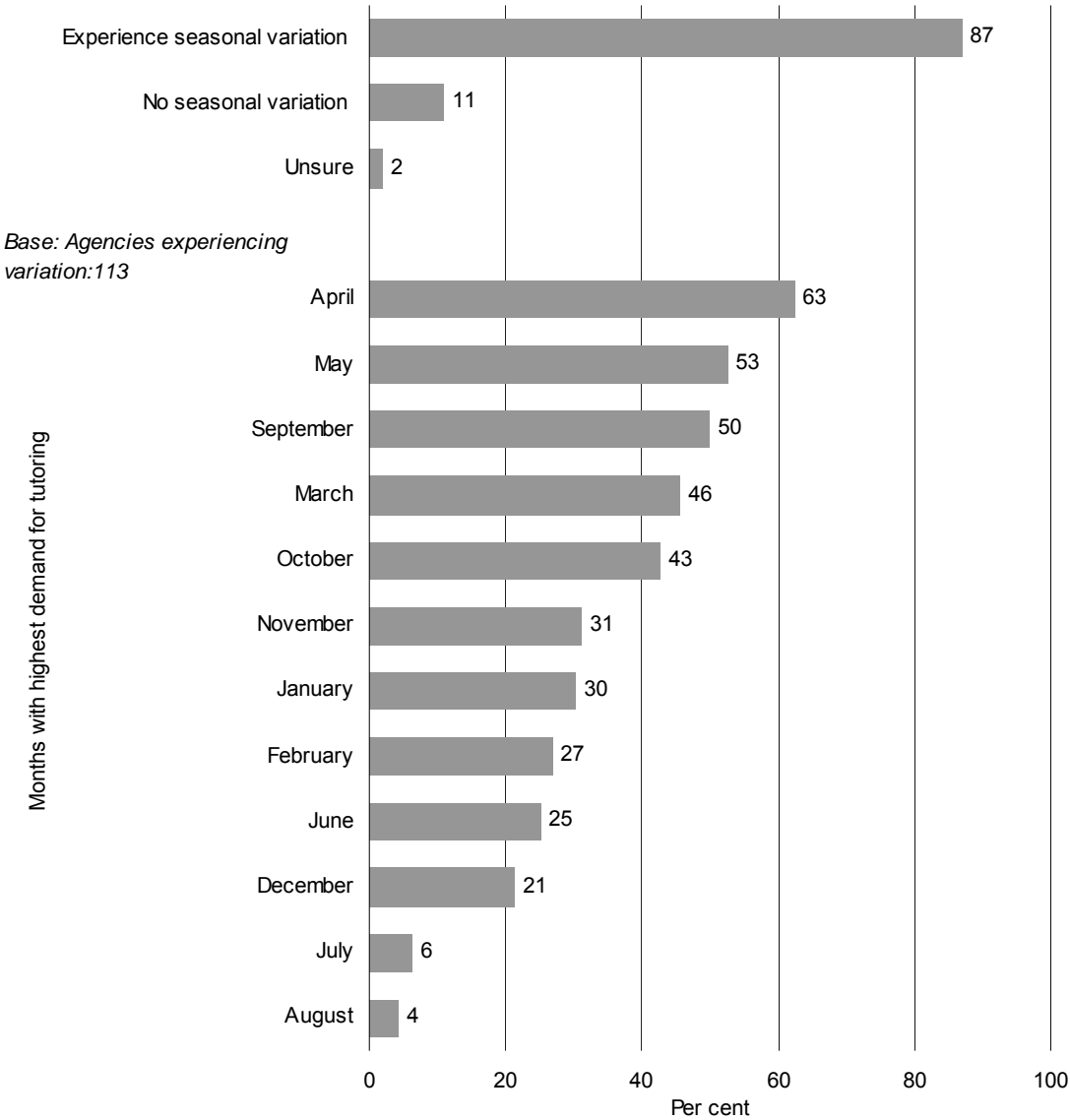
Methods of recruiting tutors	Size of agency			Total n
	Small (1-10) n	Medium (11-50) n	Large (above 50) n	
Word of mouth	25	19	21	65
Agency website	8	15	18	41
Adverts in local newspapers	11	13	16	40
Internet directories	5	7	14	26
Yellow Pages	2	7	13	22
Adverts in schools	0	8	6	14
Speculative applications	3	5	2	10
Leaflet posting	2	3	2	7
Posters/cards in public places	2	3	1	6
Recommendation by current tutor / employee	1	1	4	6
Adverts in national newspapers	0	1	4	5
Recruitment agency	1	1	1	3
Tutor directory	0	1	1	2
Other	8	7	12	27
No recruitment	9	2	0	11
<i>Base</i>	53	38	37	128

Seasonal variation

The majority of agencies experienced seasonal variation in the demand for business (Figure 3.6). Out of the 113 agencies who said that demand for tutoring varied, most reported that spring was the busiest time of the year (April, May, March), followed by autumn (September, October, November). Winter and summer seemed to be quieter times of the year.

Figure 3.6 Seasonal variation in demand for tutoring

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Tutors also reported that the demand for their business varied throughout the academic year. Demand was felt to be highest between January and June, particularly during the May half-term when students were revising in earnest for summer examinations, or following the results of mock examinations early in the spring term when students who were disappointed with their results turned to private tuition for extra help. Tutors generally felt that demand for private tuition was growing although they feared that the current predicted economic downturn could negatively impact their business.

Links to other agencies

The telephone survey included a series of questions aimed at establishing whether agencies had any connections with other agencies and whether they were collaborating in any way. Just over one-third (37%) of agencies passed work to other tutors not registered with them when they could not take on the work. Out of 48 agencies that passed on work, 19 were located outside the South East, 14 were in the South East and three were nationwide. During the mapping task it was noted that some of the agencies were operating under multiple names and in such instances only the main agency was kept in the sample frame. During the telephone survey, 15% of respondents reported that their agency was known by another name. Additionally, a small number of the respondents (8%) were managers of more than one private tuition agency.

3.3 Tutor characteristics

Key Findings

- Fewer than half the agencies (43%) reported that all their tutors were qualified teachers and a further 40% of agencies required tutors to hold a degree.
- Whether or not individual tutors held teaching qualifications appeared to be related to their route into private tutoring: those with teaching qualifications currently or had previously held teaching posts in schools or higher education establishments.
- On average, smaller regional agencies reported higher levels of qualifications among tutors than larger or nationwide agencies.
- The extent of tutor experience in agencies mirrored to some extent their qualifications. Most of the agencies with the most highly qualified tutors also required tutors to have some teaching experience. Conversely, most of the agencies with less well qualified tutors also did not require tutors to have prior experience of teaching or tutoring.
- Most tutors working in agencies worked part-time (79%) and were self-employed (84%).
- Security checks were considered important by agencies and tutors themselves. Most agencies (79%) reported that all their tutors had CRB checks. Most agencies also required all tutors to submit references (75%) and to be interviewed (73%). Of the remaining agencies, many did not routinely recruit new tutors.
- Individual tutors prioritised providing personal safety assurances to parents and students. References were reportedly considered less critical than personal recommendation and continued reflection on individual student-tutor relationships.
- The main forms of quality assurance were formal feedback from parents (79%) and students (64%). Agencies reported a wide range of quality assurance measures.
- Tutors did not routinely refer to their own performance and development but offered parents the opportunity to view tuition sessions as quality assurance.

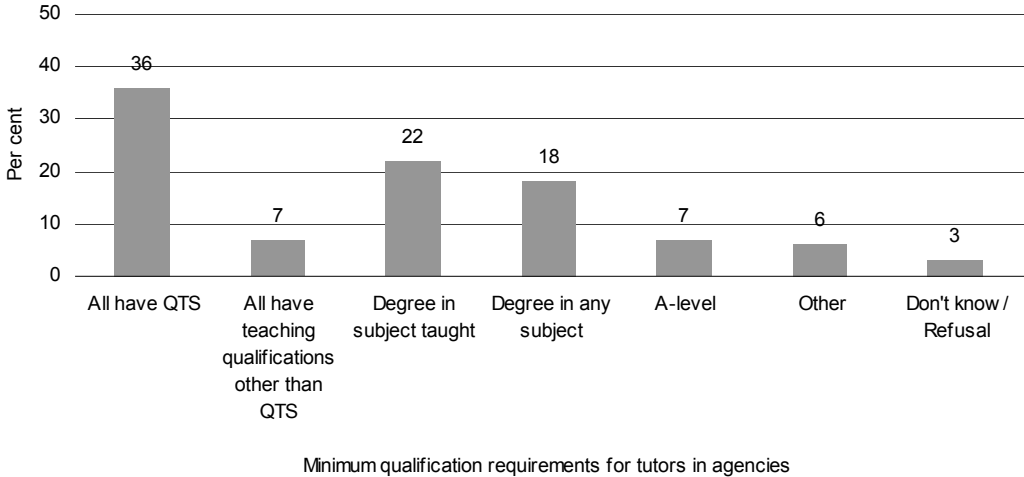
Qualifications

Agencies varied in the types and levels of qualifications that they required of tutors, but the majority (84%) reported that their tutors held either a degree or teaching qualification (Figure 3.7). In 36% of agencies all tutors had Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and in a further 7%, all tutors had a teaching qualification. Among agencies where tutors did not all have a teaching qualification or QTS, most set a minimum requirement for tutors to have a degree level qualification and in over half of these cases, the degree needed to be in the subject taught.

The findings from the survey and analysis of websites were similar in terms of the proportion of agencies that required their tutors to be qualified teachers. In the survey, 43% of agencies reported that all of their tutors had teaching qualifications or QTS (Figure 3.7) and according to the website analysis, 38% of agencies required tutors to have teaching qualifications (Table 2.2).

Figure 3.7 Minimum qualification requirements for tutors in agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



The accounts from private tutors themselves provided further insight into the range of qualifications held. Private tutors in the qualitative sample were not uniformly in possession of a specific teaching qualification (see Section 1.4 for more detail about the achieved qualitative sample breakdown). Where teaching qualifications were held, these included university undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Education and the postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE), but also City and Guilds qualifications in further education. Others held subject-specific qualifications, for example an undergraduate or postgraduate degree, or a doctorate, in one of the subjects in which they offered private tuition. One tutor of English who specialised in tutoring students with special educational needs held a degree-level qualification in speech and language therapy. Tutors themselves were unclear as to whether certain qualifications were required or requested by private tuition agencies, although all those that were registered with agencies in the sample either had teaching qualifications or experience of teaching in further education settings (see also discussion of quality assurances below).

In the survey data, region and size of agency were two important characteristics associated with the qualification levels of tutors in agencies. The regionally focussed agencies were more likely to report that all of their tutors had QTS or teaching qualifications than the nationwide agencies (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 Qualification level of tutors in agencies by region

Base: All agencies

	Region			Total
	Nationwide	London / South East	Outside London / South East	
Qualification level of tutors	n	n	n	n
All have QTS or teaching qualification	5	31	20	56
At least degree level	8	27	18	53
Less than degree level or other	5	7	5	17
<i>Bases</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>126</i>

The qualification levels of tutors also varied by the size of agency (Table 3.9). Two-thirds of small agencies reported that all their tutors had QTS or teaching qualifications compared to 6 of the 37 large agencies. Most of the nationwide agencies and large agencies imposed a minimum requirement on tutors of degree level qualifications. Overall, a minority of agencies (14%) set qualification requirements below degree level.

Table 3.9 Qualification level of tutors in agencies by size of agency

Base: All agencies

	Size of agency			Total
	Small (1-10)	Medium (11-50)	Large (above 50)	
Qualification level of tutors	n	n	n	n
All have QTS or teaching qualification	33	16	6	55
At least degree level	11	17	24	52
Less than degree level or other	7	3	7	17
<i>Bases</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>124</i>

Among the agencies in which all or some of their tutors had teaching qualifications other than QTS, half of the agencies said that all these were UK qualifications, and half reported that they were a mixture of UK and overseas qualifications, while only one agency reported that all were overseas qualifications.

Experience

To a large extent the experience required of tutors by agencies mirrored the qualification requirements, so that most of the agencies with the highest qualification requirements also required tutors to have some teaching experience (Table 3.10). Conversely, most of the agencies with the lowest qualification requirements also did not require tutors to have prior experience of teaching or tutoring. The evidence did not suggest, therefore, that agencies use experience to compensate for lack of teaching qualifications. The small agencies (where qualification requirements were higher) were more likely to require tutors to have teaching and tutoring experience than large agencies (Table 3.11).

Table 3.10 Experience of tutors by qualifications required

Base: All agencies

Experience	Qualifications required			Total n
	All have QTS or teaching qualification n	At least degree level n	Less than degree level or other n	
Experience of teaching and tutoring usually required	21	10	4	35
Experience of teaching but not tutoring required	28	12	3	43
No experience of teaching or tutoring required	7	30	10	47
<i>Bases</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>125</i>

Table 3.11 Experience of tutors by size of agency

Base: All agencies

Experience	Number of active tutors in agency			Total n
	Small (1-10) n	Medium (11-50) n	Large (above 50) n	
Experience of teaching and tutoring usually required	19	11	6	36
Experience of teaching but not tutoring required	20	12	10	42
No experience of teaching or tutoring required	13	15	21	49
<i>Bases</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>127</i>

Where agencies required tutors to have experience of teaching or tutoring, managers were asked to provide more detail about the nature and extent of this experience. The answers varied greatly, but mostly related to teaching experience within schools. This could range from experience as part of a teacher training course at a minimum to decades of school teaching.

Evidence from the qualitative interviews with private tutors suggests that the type of qualification held by tutors to some extent reflects their route into private tuition. Where tutors currently or had previously held full-time positions in primary or secondary schools, they held teaching qualifications and QTS, and had up to 35 years of experience of teaching the subject in which they offered private tuition. Others with teaching qualifications had worked in schools as supply staff but had never held permanent, full-time teaching positions, or had worked as higher education professionals in adult colleges and universities. Not all the private tutors in the sample had previous teaching experience and some brought

experiences of other professions, such as the financial and business sectors and industry, and continued to work in other jobs whilst tutoring on a part-time basis.

Private tutors' accounts of how they came to offer private tuition were markedly different. Some did offer a very clear rationale for having entered this market and the income generated by private tuition was an important motivator. Tutors with full-time teaching jobs or other full-time employment described a need to supplement their income and choosing private tuition for the flexibility it offered alongside another full-time role. Some used private tutoring to supplement part-time hours or maternity pay, or to support them whilst they studied at university. For those with teaching experience, private tuition was felt to offer a more appealing environment in which to teach when compared with the classroom: students were felt to be more attentive and motivated in the private tuition context, and tutors reportedly enjoyed the greater flexibility with which they could approach teaching that tutoring privately offered. The pressure to meet attainment targets and the burden of paperwork were also described as rationale for moving away from teaching in schools and into private tuition. Finally, tutors described being motivated by a desire to help others or 'provide a service to the community': that private tuition also offered an additional source of income or fulfilled an individual interest in teaching were felt by some to be secondary considerations in the decision to take up private tutoring.

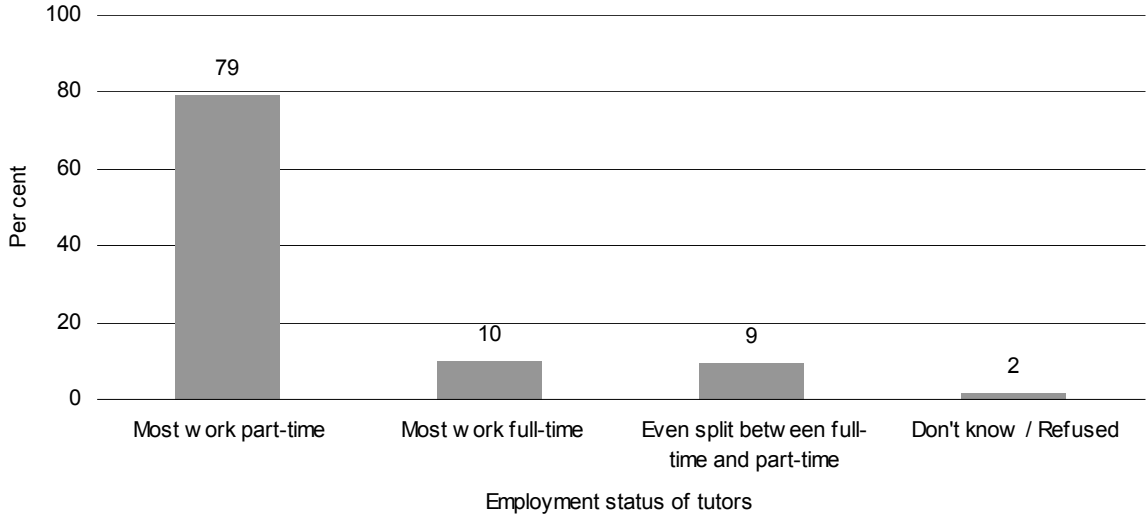
It was not the case that all tutors described a clear and planned pathway into private tuition, indeed it was clear that tutors had sometimes fallen into the profession by chance rather than design. These tutors described early experiences of 'helping out' a family member or friend on an informal basis or, in the case of a full-time teacher, being approached by a parent to privately tutor their child. This had led to other offers of private tuition work and eventually a private tuition business. Others had been introduced to private tuition through a tutor friend or had been attracted to advertisements by private tuition agencies when searching for other jobs. It is perhaps unsurprising that tutors describing such a pathway into private tuition in the qualitative sample tended not to hold professional teaching qualifications.

Type and terms of employment

The norm for tutors working in agencies was to work part-time and to be self-employed. 79% of agency managers reported that ‘most’ of their tutors worked part-time and a further 9% said there was a split between full-time and part-time workers. In only 10% of agencies, did the majority of tutors work full-time and these were predominantly small agencies comprising of 6 or fewer tutors (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Employment status of tutors in agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Agencies were also asked about the type of contracts their tutors held. As shown in Figure 3.9, tutors in agencies were usually self-employed, although a small proportion of agencies also had tutors that were employed on temporary contracts (15%) and permanent contracts (11%).

Figure 3.9 Type of contract of tutors in agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)

More than one answer was allowed at this question, therefore percentages can add up to more than a 100.



The qualitative interviews supported the survey findings in demonstrating how private tuition occupied different spaces in the working lives of the tutors. Among those for whom private tuition represented their only employment, the number of students 'on their books' was as high as 45, although not all attended sessions every week, while others described tutoring between 14 and 30 students per week at different times of the year. The workload for those tutoring part-time or alongside other full-time employment was reportedly less: up to 12 hour-long private tuition sessions per week, although this figure was considerably less for others in this situation and for individual tutors at certain times of the year.

Tutors described offering private tuition sessions throughout the week. During term-time, private tutors reported that most of their tuition sessions took place between four o'clock and eight o'clock in the afternoon/evening, after students had finished school or college. During school holidays, tutors offered sessions at other times of the day as well. For those with other full-time employment, weekends and evenings were felt to be particularly convenient for delivering private tuition sessions.

Security checks and quality assurance

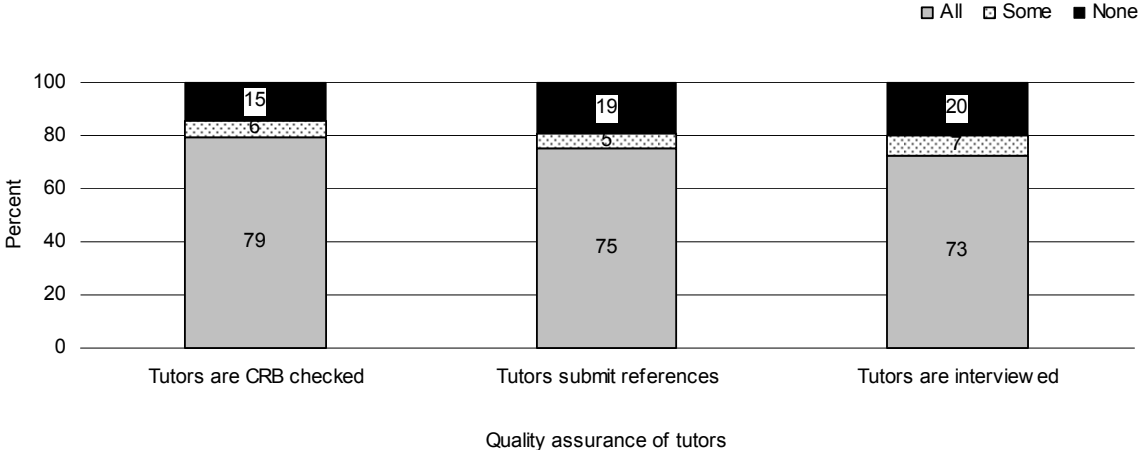
A number of quality assurance measures were described by private tutors, including those that they themselves offered and those required or requested by private tuition agencies, students and parents. These were Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, references and tutor development and performance monitoring. In the telephone survey, agency managers were also asked about ongoing performance assessment of tutors. This section reports first on security checks carried out on new tutors and then turns to ongoing performance assessment.

CRB checks were emphasised in the reports of both agency managers and individual tutors. 85% of agencies carried out CRB checks on at least some of their tutors, with the majority (79%) carrying out checks on all their tutors (Figure 3.10). Private tutors themselves were concerned that they were able to offer parents and students assurances of personal safety and appeared more inclined to offer these assurances proactively than other forms of reference. Interestingly, this did not necessarily imply providing proof of a CRB check but was reflected in how they described and arranged their tuition sessions with students. For example, tutors were keen to describe practical arrangements for working with students in rooms with the door open, they invited parents to sit in on sessions or would only ever tutor in the student's home and never their own. Indeed, tutors themselves felt this was more important than a CRB check and took pains to make their working practices clear to parents who enquired about their services. Tutors reported limited experiences of parents asking to see proof of a CRB check: those that currently taught in schools felt that this association was sufficient to reassure parents. Tutors who were registered with a private tuition agency reported a requirement to provide a CRB check although some noted that this represented a recent change in requirements.

The majority of agencies also required new tutors to submit references and to be interviewed (Figure 3.10). Those agencies that did not require references or interviews were mostly small enterprises that did not recruit new tutors. In the qualitative interviews, tutors gave mixed reports concerning the requirement to provide references or proof of qualifications by students, parents or private tuition agencies. Those currently teaching in schools and registered with an agency understood that the agency had requested a reference from the school though none described any formal interview with the agency. Tutors reported that parents did ask for details of tutors' teaching experience and qualifications although for those who approached tutors via an agency or online portal, this information was often available to them before contacting the tutor. Others wanted the opportunity to speak to other parents who had previously used the tutor's services. Tutors themselves felt that references should be less important for parents and students than continued reflection on the particular relationship between the tutor and an individual student. They recognised that a good private tutoring relationship was determined in part by how well the child and tutor worked together and therefore that there could be no guarantees that theirs would be a successful relationship, regardless of others' recommendations.

Figure 3.10 CRB checks, references and interviews for tutors in agencies⁹

Base: All agencies (N=129)

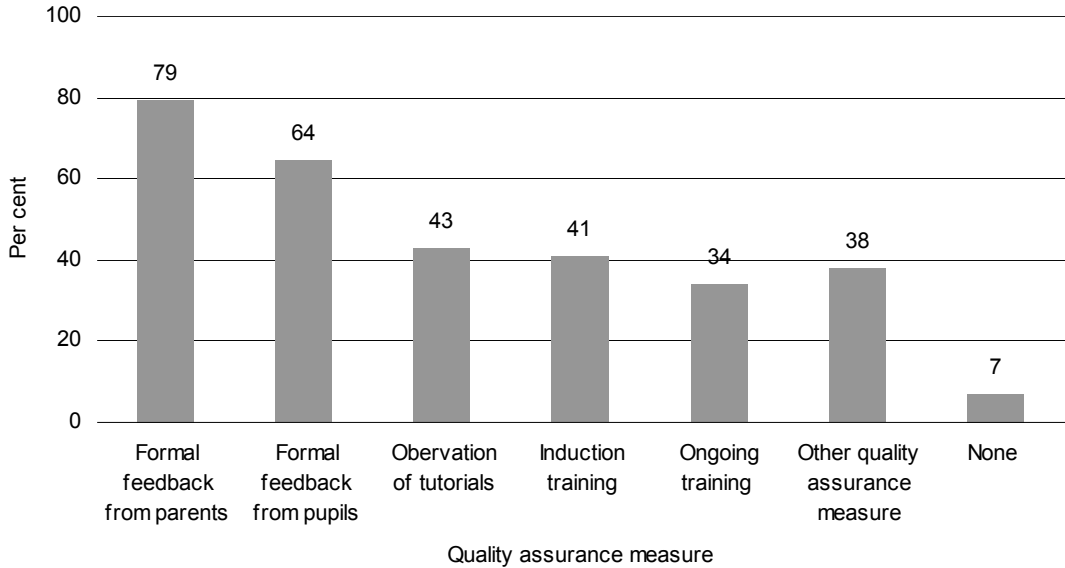


⁹ The base excludes one agency with missing answer.

The most frequently cited form of ongoing performance assessment of tutors in agencies was formal feedback from parents (79%), followed by formal feedback from students (64%) and observation of tutorials (43%). Only 7% of agencies did not use any form of ongoing performance assessment (Figure 3.11). The responses listed as 'other' in Figure 3.11 included students' exam results, tutors' lesson plans, weekly records kept by the tutor, informal feedback from students and parents and regular reviews with tutors.

Figure 3.11 Ongoing performance assessment of tutors in agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



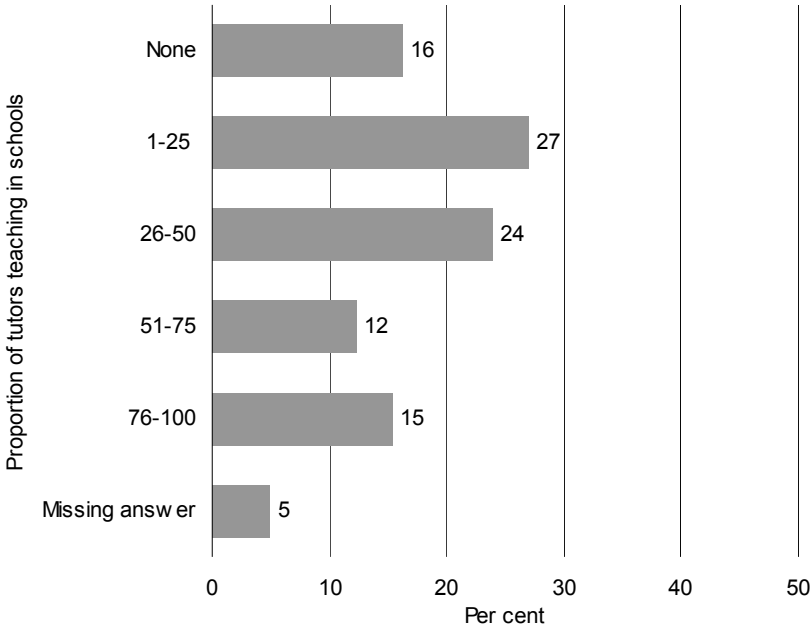
Tutors did not routinely refer to their own performance and development and even where prompted appeared not to place great emphasis on this aspect of their work. None described an obligation to undergo any form of training where they were registered with a private tuition agency. Some were in the process of studying for teaching qualifications such as a PGCE or City and Guilds qualification and one tutor regularly attended training sessions run by the local authority for teachers and tutors which provided updates on changes to the curriculum, although this kind of development appeared to be motivated by individual tutors themselves. No formal support networks were mentioned by the tutors although some were in touch with other private tutors in the local area and would share experiences and pass work between themselves on an ad-hoc basis. Tutors registered with agencies were unaware of the exact nature of procedures for monitoring their performance although they suspected that the agency received feedback from students and their parents. Whether registered with an agency or not, tutors offered parents the opportunity to sit in on the first tuition session with their child to give them a sense of the nature and content of the session, and to provide some quality assurance.

Teaching in schools

Agencies were asked to report what proportion of their tutors also taught in schools. This information has particular relevance for the Government’s development of a national programme of individual tuition since it indicates the possible extent of additional resource for delivering private tuition. Twenty-one agencies (16%) reported that none of their tutors worked in schools and in half the agencies, between one and 50 per cent of the tutors worked in schools (Figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12 Proportion of tutors in agencies who also teach in schools

Base: All agencies (N=130)



These proportions were multiplied by the number of active tutors to provide an estimate of the number of tutors among the surveyed agencies who did (and did not) also work in schools. In total, an estimated 4192 tutors (40%) also taught in schools and 6393 tutors (60%) did not teach in schools.

3.4 Arrangements for private tuition and delivery of sessions

Key Findings

- Almost all agencies surveyed offered tuition in maths (97%) and English (93%).
- Agencies offered tuition at all levels with a slightly higher proportion offering tuition at Key Stage 2, reflecting the involvement of private tuition in preparation for school entrance.
- One-to-one tuition was more common among agencies than paired or group tuition and was thought to offer the best environment for private tuition among individual tutors.
- Four-fifths of agencies assigned tutors to students. In a minority of cases (28%), students or parents contacted tutors directly.
- Tutors considered the following before arranging to provide private tuition services: the individual circumstances and needs of the student; requirements for the subject and Key Stage; and, the location, timing, and cost of sessions.
- Tutorials mostly took place at the home of the student (68%). Tutors felt more able to offer assurances of safety and the home environment facilitated regular feedback to the parents following tuition sessions. Other locations cited by agency managers included the tutor's home (52%), at a centre (40%) or school (25%). Tutors were able to offer a dedicated environment for tuition sessions in their own home which they thought benefited students' motivation and commitment.
- Tutorials typically lasted one hour (66%).
- Almost all agencies (96%) offered individualised tuition tailored to the needs of the student. School entrance preparation was offered by 72% of agencies. A minority of agencies (22%) offered a pre-defined programme of tuition. Individual tutors emphasised a flexible approach to tuition sessions based on the specific needs of the student.
- The following factors were felt by tutors to underpin successful outcomes from tuition: sufficient time; the tuition environment; the one-to-one dynamic; the qualities of the tutor; student commitment and engagement; and, parent support.

Characteristics of private tuition offered

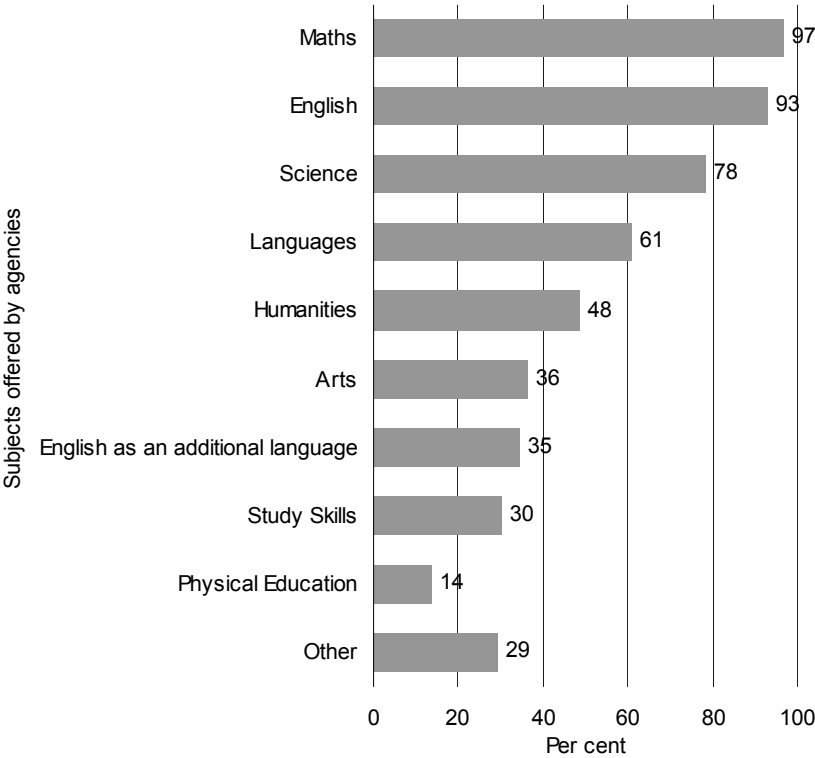
Subject and levels

A range of subjects across different Key Stage levels were provided by both private tuition agencies and the individual tutors interviewed.

As Figure 3.13 shows, almost all surveyed agencies offered tuition in maths (97%) and English (93%), followed by science (78%) and languages (61%). Other subjects such as humanities, arts or study skills were also provided for but by less than half of the participating agencies. The predominance of maths and English was also found from the agency websites (Chapter 2).

Figure 3.13 Subjects offered by agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Surveyed agencies provided tuition in all subjects for all Key Stages (1 to 5), as well as beyond the age of 18. Generally, most agencies tutored in KS2 to KS4, whereas less than half (44%) offered tuition beyond the age of 18 for any subject¹⁰. In the telephone interviews respondents were asked specifically what levels of tuition were offered in English and maths.

¹⁰ This is partly as a result of intentionally filtering out agencies that were directed principally at adult learning.

As shown in Table 3.12, the highest proportion of agencies provided tuition in both subjects for KS2 (90%), followed by KS3 and KS4 with maths tuition being offered slightly more often than English. The slightly higher proportion of tuition offered at KS2, in all subjects, reflects the role of private tuition in the preparation for National Curriculum tests and school entrance (also reported in Chapter 2). The recent survey of parents and carers (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009) found that students at Key Stage 2 level were slightly more likely to use private tuition (14%) compared to those at Key Stage 1 (9%), Key Stage 3 (7%) and Key Stage 4 (11%).

Table 3.12 Level of tuition offered by agencies by subject

Base: All agencies

Level of tuition offered by agency	Subject		
	Level taught in	Level taught in	Level taught in
	Maths %	English %	any subject %
Key Stage 1	78	77	81
Key Stage 2	90	90	93
Key Stage 3	88	86	92
Key Stage 4	88	82	91
Key Stage 5	73	66	78
Beyond 18 years	38	35	44
Other	2	1	2
<i>Bases</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>130</i>

Within the qualitative sample criteria were included to capture tutors who provided tuition for students within Key Stages 2, 3, and 4, however, some tutors also covered Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 5. Private tutors also discussed providing tuition at the specific key assessment and examination points of 11+ entry to grammar school, National Curriculum tests, GCSE and A level.

Individual tutors delivered tuition in a number of subjects, offered separately and in combination. Private tuition was offered in particular subjects and levels according to tutors' own levels of qualifications, experience and their perceptions of their substantive knowledge. For example, an individual tutor might hold an A-level in one subject and teach that subject up to Key Stage 3; in another subject, the same tutor might hold a degree-level qualification and teach students up to A-level. Some tutors were motivated to teach at a higher level by their own enjoyment and interest or for greater financial rewards because they felt they could charge more money per session at A-level (see also section 3.5).

The ability of the students that tutors taught were described as diverse and variable and tutors were working with a range of students with different levels of ability at any one time. Tutors taught students with special educational needs or English as an additional language, students who were underachieving or at an intermediate level, and those who were high achievers academically. Some tutors described routinely working with students who were already achieving at a high level or who wanted help to pass 11+ grammar school entry examination.

One-to-one or group tuition sessions

The predominance of one-to-one tuition found on agency websites in Chapter 2 was confirmed by the survey and accounts of individual tutors. Private tutors expressed a preference for a one-to-one approach for the following reasons:

- There was a higher demand and need for one-to-one sessions;
- Tutors held the belief that private tuition was fundamentally concerned with the needs and abilities of the individual student and focus on this was only possible within a one-to-one session.

However, some tutors had either current or past experience of group work and paired/triad sessions. Group tuition was offered in these instances because students lived in close proximity as neighbours or were family members. Other tutors taught group sessions through mainstream schools, for example providing additional lessons for students for whom English was not their first language. Tutors also advertised or suggested paired or triad sessions at a discounted rate per person to increase take up of their services (see section 3.5 for further discussion of costs).

Findings from the quantitative interviews reflect these observations as the majority of agencies offered tuition sessions on a one-to-one basis (89%), followed by group sessions which were offered by over a half of providers (55%) and paired sessions (40%) (Table 3.13). One-to-one sessions were the main mode of tuition for 78% of agencies with group tuition the second most popular mentioned by 20% of agencies.

Table 3.13 Modes of tuition offered by agencies

Base: All agencies

Mode of tuition	Mode %	Main mode %
One-to-one	89	78
Pairs	40	1
Group	55	20
On-line	12	0
Other	2	2
<i>Bases</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>130</i>

These findings resonate with the recent survey of parents and carers (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009). The majority of students who had received private tuition reported this to be in a one-to-one setting (70% for maths tuition and 66% for English tuition).

'Selection' of students

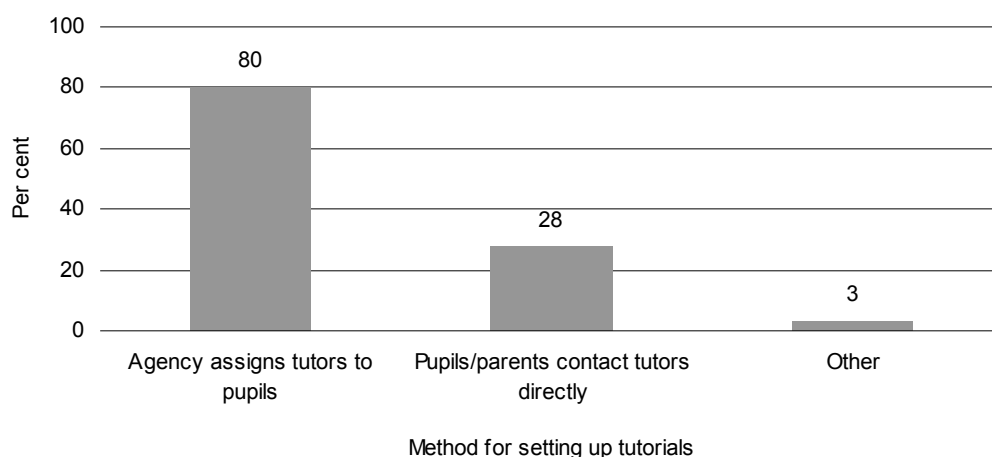
According to individual tutors the extent to which agencies 'selected' students was minimal. Tutors who accessed students via an agency described the agency's role as either providing an introductory or directory service, whereby tutors provided their details about location, subject and levels taught, and then clients chose and selected tutors on this basis.

However, from the perspective of agency managers it was the agency itself that assigned tutors to students in the majority of cases (with 80% saying that this was the most common practice) (Figure 3.14). Fewer than a third of agencies (28%) reported that students or parents contacted tutors directly.

This discrepancy between the findings from the telephone survey of agency managers and from interviews with individual tutors may be explained by the characteristics of the qualitative sample. The majority of individual tutors accessed students both through an agency and independently and it is possible that these tutors, being accustomed to some degree of control over which students they tutored, had a preference for working with tuition agencies that allowed for direct contact between tutors and students and thus facilitated some opportunity for student selection.

Figure 3.14 Methods for setting up tutorials in agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Tutors, who accessed students both privately and via an agency, described their own decision-making processes for offering private tuition services. In general, tutors felt they offered tuition to the majority of students that approached them. However, tutors did report a number of factors that they considered before an arrangement was made with a parent or student. These followed three broad themes: the individual circumstances and needs of the student; requirements for the subject and Key Stage in which tuition would be provided; and, practical circumstances such as the location, timing, and cost of sessions.

For some tutors the needs of the parent or student were most important in deciding whether or not to agree to provide a tuition service. In other circumstances tutors considered the ability of the client: some felt they could only tutor students who were already achieving at a high level because they felt more confident that these students would achieve good exam grades at the end of the tuition. Other tutors felt that they lacked the skills or training to privately tutor students with special educational needs (SEN). Tutors also took into account the motivations of the students and expectations of parents.

Tutors imposed certain boundaries on the levels and subjects they were willing to teach¹¹. Some covered a broad range of age groups, but would actively select students at higher Key Stages because they perceived that there would be more scope to focus on advanced topics which some tutors found easier to teach than basic concepts and principles.

'I tend not to do GCSE students anymore because I can get enough A-level and it's easier in a way...it's just easier because you are concentrating more on the, you know, on the subject at a higher level, you are not struggling so much... [because] they've already shown that they've not got huge problems with their Maths. Well, some still have actually [laughs] but not that bad. GCSE erm, it can be more problematic because they are struggling a bit more with basic concepts'

Tutors also considered the practical considerations of location, timing, and cost of tuition. Individual tutors tended to have a preference for teaching either at a student's home or in their own home. For those tutors who preferred to teach at the homes of their students, the distance from their own home and ease of travel was an important consideration in deciding whether to offer their services. Some tutors set limits on the distance they were prepared to travel or considered the convenience of public transport routes if they did not have access to a car. Distance was less critical in this decision-making process if the travel costs were covered by the client.

The timing of the tuition session was also important, especially if the student was working towards a particular exam. Some tutors would routinely decline to provide tuition if they were approached 'too close to the exam' although tutor's perceptions about when this was varied widely. Others discussed the limitations of private tuition within such a timescale with students and parents rather than simply turning such prospective students away. Individual tutor workloads were also a consideration, especially where private tuition was undertaken alongside other full- or part-time employment.

These three factors - the needs of the student, level and subject requirements, and practical arrangements for tuition sessions - varied in terms of their influence on a decision to offer tuition. Making satisfactory arrangements for the timing and location of sessions appeared key, as were the requirements for specific subjects and Key Stages - these were only seen to be negotiable in circumstances where a student was a relative or otherwise known to the tutor. Some tutors said they had never declined tuition on principle and felt that if they were approached for tuition they should provide that help because the student was in need of support.

'If they contact me, that's it, that's enough, I will do it. I don't say no to anybody. I won't. It's... because they've obviously made the first move. I think if you say no to them that's a bad start, so I would never say... it doesn't matter how full I was, I would never say, 'No, I haven't got enough room, sorry.' I'd somehow make room.'

One private tutor described their motivations for the selection of students as purely financial and would take on any student due to the financial gains.

¹¹ The subjects and levels offered were also determined by the experience and qualifications of the tutor (see section 3.3).

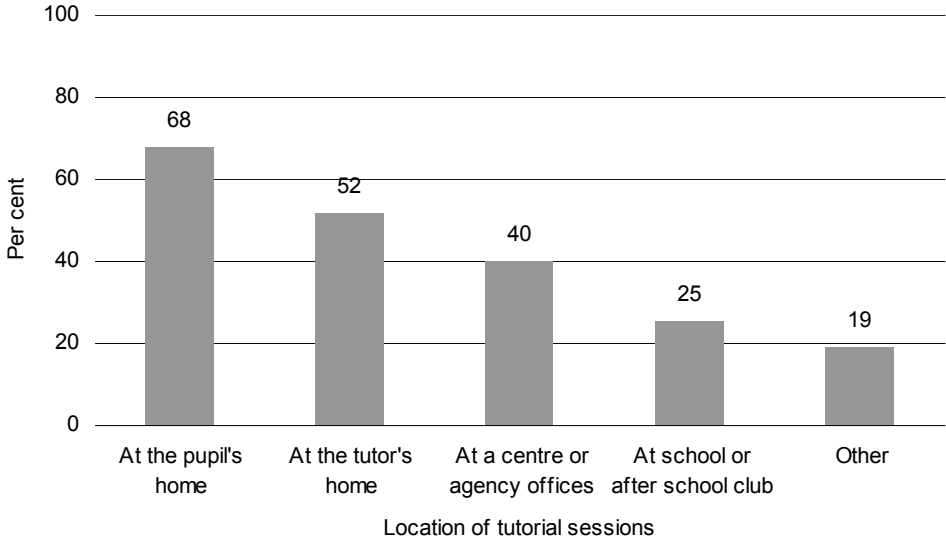
Arrangements for private tuition sessions

Location of sessions

According to agency managers there were various locations in which tuition took place, with students' homes being most common (68%), followed by tutors' homes (52%) (Figure 3.15). This chimes with the findings from the agency websites in Chapter 2. A high proportion of tuition sessions also took place at a centre or agency offices (40%) and a quarter of agencies said they could also happen at school or an after school club¹². A number of other locations were also mentioned by some providers, for example: a public library, university/college, café, conference room, community centre and church hall.

Figure 3.15 Location of tutorial sessions of agencies

Base: All agencies (N=130)

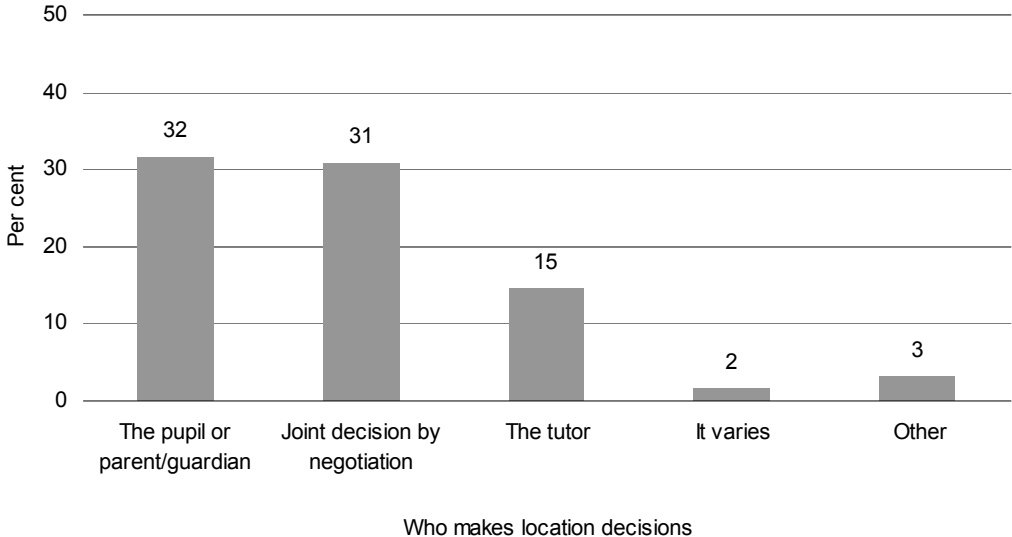


¹² Note that agencies were not asked how frequently they used these different locations.

As the qualitative findings showed, the location of tutorials depended on individual arrangements and circumstances. This was also true from the viewpoint of agencies themselves. A third of agencies reported that either the student or parent made a decision about location, or the decision was made by negotiation between both parties (Figure 3.16). Rarely did it depend solely on the tutor (15%).

Figure 3.16 Location decisions for agency tutorials

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Individual tutors either provided tuition at their own home, the student’s home, or both. Tutors discussed a number of reasons for providing tuition within their own home, and distance and locality were seen to be important factors. Tutors preferred teaching from their own home because it was more convenient and allowed them to reduce the time and cost of travelling between their appointments. Indeed, some who had felt they had not been properly remunerated for the cost of travel in the past now offered private tuition exclusively in their own homes.

Tutors’ homes were also felt to offer benefits for the student. Tutors could provide a dedicated room for tutoring containing all the resources and materials needed for the sessions, without any of the distractions of the students’ own home or family. It was also felt it could raise the motivations and commitment of students by providing a ‘neutral territory’ that requires students to take responsibility for their own learning.

‘I mean often if you go to people’s houses, obviously it depends on the house, but in some cases you might be tutoring in an area where, you know, there’s people coming in and out, you can hear sort of a row going on in the kitchen in the background... I felt they [students] quite like it in that they’re sort of taking ownership for their learning and they’re coming to a neutral territory, it’s not at home, they haven’t got those kind of... the parental presence.’

Tutors who preferred to provide tuition at the homes of their students felt better able to offer parents and students assurances around personal safety. Tutoring in a client’s home also facilitated regular feedback following tuition sessions since parents were at the home and the tutor had easy access for any communication. Some tutors were happy to provide tuition at either location and discussed the advantages and disadvantages outlined above. These

tutors made arrangements for tuition on a case-by-case basis believing that offering flexibility and choice to parents and students was an important element in the success of a private tuition relationship.

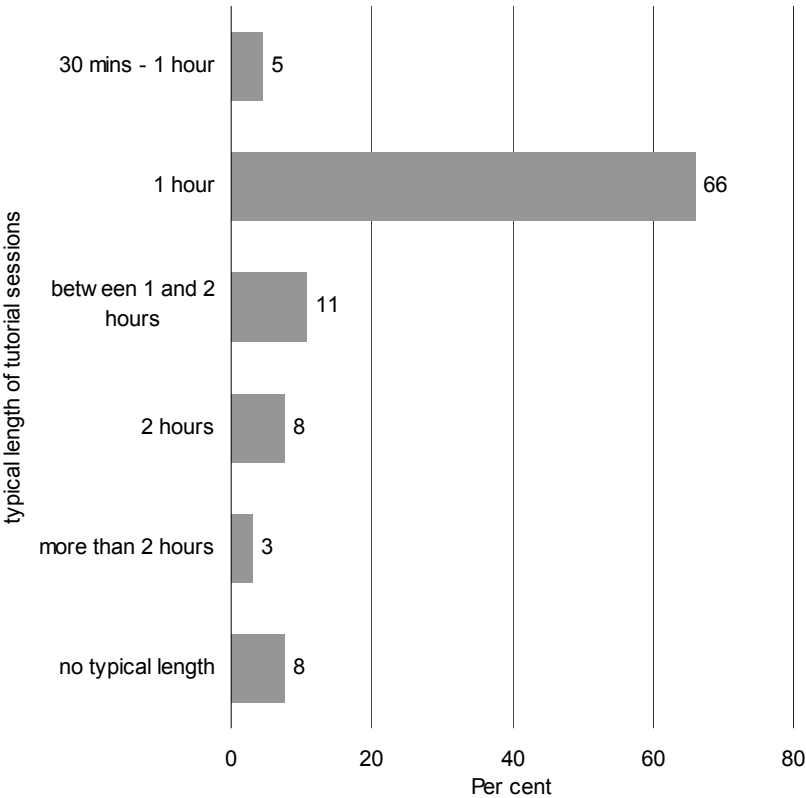
Length of sessions

The length of a typical private tuition session was one hour, but could vary from 30 minutes to two hours depending on the Key Stage taught, whether or not the student had a disability or SEN, the student’s age, and the distance travelled by the tutor. The frequency and timing of sessions was usually once a week and fixed to a particular day and time although this could vary during school holidays or in the run-up to exams or assessments.

This observation was also reflected in findings from the telephone interviews, where two-thirds of agencies said that the typical length of a tutorial session was one hour (Figure 3.17) and confirms the findings from Chapter 2 and the survey of parents and carers (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009). Other durations were also reported but in much lower proportions.

Figure 3.17 Typical length of agency tutorial sessions

Base: All agencies (N=130)



Whilst some students and tutors made fixed arrangements for the length, timing, and frequency of tuition, in other circumstances these were flexible. Tutors’ flexibility depended on their own circumstances, for example whether or not they had other employment or caring responsibilities. Some tutors particularly emphasised their willingness to be adaptable to the needs of students and parents because they enjoyed the work they did as tutors. Parents were usually involved in making arrangements but older students also played a part.

None of the tutors had a written agreement with either the parent or student concerning the terms or nature of the private tuition to be offered. Tutors described having verbal agreements based on trust where both parties agreed obligations about punctuality and letting each other know if they needed to cancel or change an appointment. Some agencies had clauses in their terms and conditions which included a commitment by the parent to a certain period of tuition, although this was an agreement made between the agency and client, rather than with the individual tutor. Tutors tended to view verbal agreements as preferable because it maintained a personal and relaxed relationship between tutor and parent or student. Others felt that not having a written contract left them without recourse to charge clients for cancellations or infrequent attendance.

Developing and delivering sessions

The issues explored in this section are largely drawn from the qualitative in-depth interviews with tutors.

Assessment of students' needs

Private tutors approached assessment in three ways. Some met with students at an introductory session which allowed tutors to assess the needs of the student. This then formed the basis of a tuition plan or needs assessments for future sessions. Others carried out an assessment at the first tuition session or described an ongoing process of discovering students' needs and understanding through the first sessions.

Tutors described using a range of assessment tools based on exercises or tests designed to understand a student's knowledge of a subject. These were written and verbal subject-based questions/mini tests, diagnostic checklists, grid based forecasts of expected targets based on previous and predicted grades, and informal discussions of the student's knowledge and subjects. Tutors felt it was important that they carried out their own assessment to see how the student's predicted grades matched up with their own understanding of the student's knowledge and ability. This was particularly important where tutors felt that students were underperforming at school because of a lack of confidence in their own abilities rather than because of their actual level of ability.

The student's role in the assessment process was to provide information about their attainment at school, by passing on information about current and predicted grades and providing examples of class work. Tutors also asked students about their own views of their strengths and weaknesses and understanding of a subject. Tutors felt it was important that assessment was also based on student's own understanding of their needs because it helped them to develop the private tuition relationship with the student, and provided important information about the student's feelings about the school and school context. It also allowed the tutor to explore the student's perspectives of their needs and motivations for achieving in that subject.

Parents appeared to play a less significant role in the assessment of students although some tutors felt it was important that parents were involved to ensure their trust and to establish clear expectations for the tuition based on the needs of the child. For younger students however, parents played a greater role in providing information about students' experiences at school and their tuition needs. The student's school and the private tuition agency (where relevant) tended not to have a role in the assessment process. Generally, information about the school syllabus, student attainment, and topic coverage in the classroom was passed to the tutor via the student or parent. Tutors were generally not in direct contact with schools or classroom teachers. This was based in part on a perception among tutors that schools were not interested in or supportive of private tuition. Some teachers were also known to be difficult to contact and tutors felt they did not have the time to pursue them. Whilst tutors felt

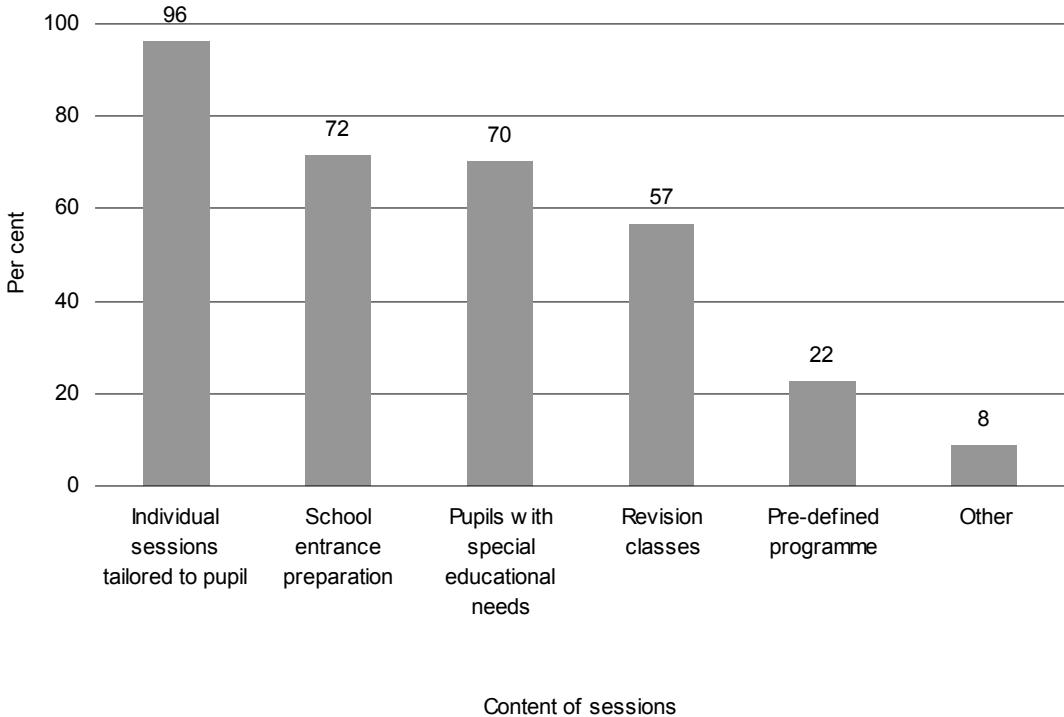
that parents and students could provide adequate information regarding academic achievement, tutors did feel that they may miss out on information regarding behavioural difficulties or other issues affecting a student’s attainment in the classroom.

The content and delivery of sessions

Agency managers in the survey were asked to describe the content of tuition provided by their agency and were allowed to select as many options as applied. Almost all agencies offered tuition tailored to students’ needs and circumstances (this strand is described in more detail from the tutor’s perspective below). The majority also provided preparation for school entrance (72%) and tutorials for students with SEN (70%), while more than half had revision classes (Figure 3.18). Less than a quarter of surveyed agencies said that they had pre-defined tutorials¹³. Additionally, a number of agencies mentioned other types of content on offer such as: tutorials for looked after children or young offenders, preparations for job interviews/assessment centres or helping parents to assist children with homework. This implies that, similarly to what individual tutors reported (see below), agencies were very flexible and open to students’ needs in terms of tuition content.

Figure 3.18 Content of agency tutorial sessions

Base: All agencies (N=130)



In the qualitative interviews tutors differed in their descriptions of their approach to tuition sessions. Tutors using structured approaches favoured a similar format for sessions with each student based on particular types of activities and exercises used each week. Tutors who were also full-time teachers planned and approached their private tuition in a similar way to their classroom work through the use of lesson plans that they would use in school. Other tutors described an approach that was designed to suit the learning style of the individual student. The aim was to engage the particular individual, for example using kinaesthetic methods and resources for younger students and students with SEN. Some felt that the

¹³ Of those agencies that used pre-defined tutorials, 17 were small, four were medium and 8 were large.

learning style, structure and format should be adaptable to change each week depending on the topic and needs and interests of the student.

Regardless of the approach of the tutor to the structure of the session, homework tended to be used by all tutors. It was seen to be an important supporting tool, providing the opportunity to practice what had been covered within a session and used interactively in the sessions to explore the student's understanding and progress.

Tutors also differed in their approach to deciding what content would be covered within each session, and this depended on both the requirements of the tuition and the approach taken by the tutor. Where students were working towards a particular exam, tutors described a need for content to be more structured and determined by the tutor to ensure that the entire curriculum could be covered. It was felt this was less important if the tuition was focused on supporting ongoing class work, as there was more emphasis on improving general understanding and knowledge. In such sessions there was more flexibility for input by the student about the content covered.

Other tutors felt that there was always a need for flexibility of content. They emphasised the role of the student in telling them either before or during the sessions what they would like to work on, or by talking through their class exercise book for that week. A more individualised approach tended to imply greater synchronicity with the student's classroom work, as students discussed what they were struggling with in school that week, and sessions directly supported the work within school. This approach tended to be the domain of tutors who also worked as classroom teachers. They felt it was easier to provide such flexibility because of their up-to-date knowledge of the school curriculum.

Tutors used a range of tools to support tuition though textbooks were a key resource. Past /practice papers, model answers / exam papers, internet based activities and exercises, kinaesthetic materials (e.g. activity books and games), and visual resources (e.g. diagrams and charts) were also employed.

The monitoring of student progress

All the tutors took steps to monitor the progress of their students and four different methods were reported: structured assessments; ongoing assessment tools; monitoring school assessment; and feedback from the student.

For structured assessments, tutors used formal written tests which were based on either textbooks or exam questions at certain intervals in the tuition to measure the progress of the students. There was also the use of ongoing assessment tools, which comprised short verbal assessments, homework and diagnostic tests. Tutors also kept records of the content covered in tuition sessions, and written notes of their observations of the student's progress around different topics. Students were also asked to keep notebooks each week of their work so both the tutor and student could look at progress week to week.

Progress was also monitored by the tutor looking at the impact of the tuition on school assessment and attainment. This included monitoring the student's ongoing assessment at school (e.g. class work and homework), practice assessment results and final assessment marks (e.g. examination and coursework). Tutors also asked for feedback about progress at school and asked the student for feedback about how well the sessions were working and how much they felt they had learnt and improved. This information was then used by tutors to change or adapt their approach to tuition sessions to meet the needs of the student.

Tutors provided feedback to parents regarding their child's progress through informal discussions, either at the end of sessions or over the telephone. Where tutors used more formal monitoring assessment tools, this was reflected in feedback to parents via a written report or an arranged meeting between the tutor and parents. In some cases feedback would involve discussing a lack of progress or asking the parent to ensure that the student was completing homework set by the tutor. Tutors also described having to manage the expectations of parents where their aspirations did not match the tutor's assessment of the student's needs and ability.

In general, there was little evidence of communication with either the school or agency regarding a student's progress although tutors recognised a number of potential benefits of extending the links between private tuition sessions and class work including sharing information about students' strengths and weaknesses in particular subjects, greater continuity between approaches used in school and in private tuition sessions, a better understanding of students' overall progress in a subject and better support for students with SEN. However, tutors also suggested challenges and disadvantages to increased contact between classroom teachers and private tutors. It was perceived that teachers would not want to work collaboratively with private tutors because private tuition would be seen negatively as a judgement of the quality of the teacher's teaching. Tutors also felt that it would be difficult to organise practically, as they would need to know when a teacher was available and would need to work around teachers' heavy workloads. Other tutors argued that it was not necessarily important to have contact with schools, as private tuition was essentially a relationship between tutors and students, and they had access to an indirect dialogue through students and parents who would feed back information about progress at school. It was also felt that their role was to supplement the work of the classroom teacher and provide an alternative approach to learning that could aid comprehension.

'I think what the pupil is looking for when they're doing private tuition is a different approach. They're looking for something different. If they're getting some more of the same but at home, they're not going to want it....But they need to feel that they're getting something different, a new approach.'

Outcomes from private tuition

Tutors defined a successful outcome from private tuition in different ways depending on the needs and aims of the individual student, but this was broadly based on some measure of progress for the student. Some measured progress through final examination and assessment results or a marked improvement in predicted grades. Others defined success by the student's own assessment of their progress and confidence in a subject, or by the extent to which they felt they had been able to re-engage someone in a subject with which they had struggled previously.

Successful outcomes from private tuition were felt to be determined by a number of specific factors. These were:

- **Time:** It was important to have enough time to make an impact on the learning and knowledge of a student. It was felt that it was necessary to work with a student for at least six months to a year to make a marked difference, so that the tutor had an opportunity to improve a student's learning and understanding of a subject.
- **The private tuition environment:** The one-to-one environment was seen as better suited to developing a student's understanding because it provided the tutor with the opportunity to concentrate solely on the student and ensure they achieved to the best of their ability through ongoing assessment and observation. This in turn was felt to motivate the student to engage with the subject.

- **The nature of private tuition sessions:** The one-to-one dynamic allowed a personal approach customised for that individual, so that sessions could be adapted to the student's learning style and engage them in a way that was interesting for them, for example, by making sessions interactive or relating topics to other things of interest in the student's life. Tutors could also pace sessions to suit the student's rate of progress.
- **The approach of the tutor:** Tutors felt that it was important that they were friendly, personable, and patient so that students trusted their tuition and felt confident to discuss the extent to which they understood a topic.
- **The student's commitment and engagement:** It was critical for the student themselves to be committed to the tuition and to be focused and willing to learn. In general, tutors found students to be motivated and this motivation increased as they saw themselves learning and improving in the sessions. Students who were not committed either missed appointments or were not engaged with the sessions which then limited the impact of the sessions and led to little progress. The impact of the session could also be limited by competing interests in a student's life, for example sporting/social activities and part-time jobs.
- **The role of parents:** Tutors felt it was important for parents to be supportive of private tuition and have expectations in line with the needs and ability of that student. If parents had higher expectations than the ability of the student or pushed the student into tuition, tutors felt that students could become disengaged with the process, which again acted as a barrier to their making good progress.

3.5 Costs

Key Findings

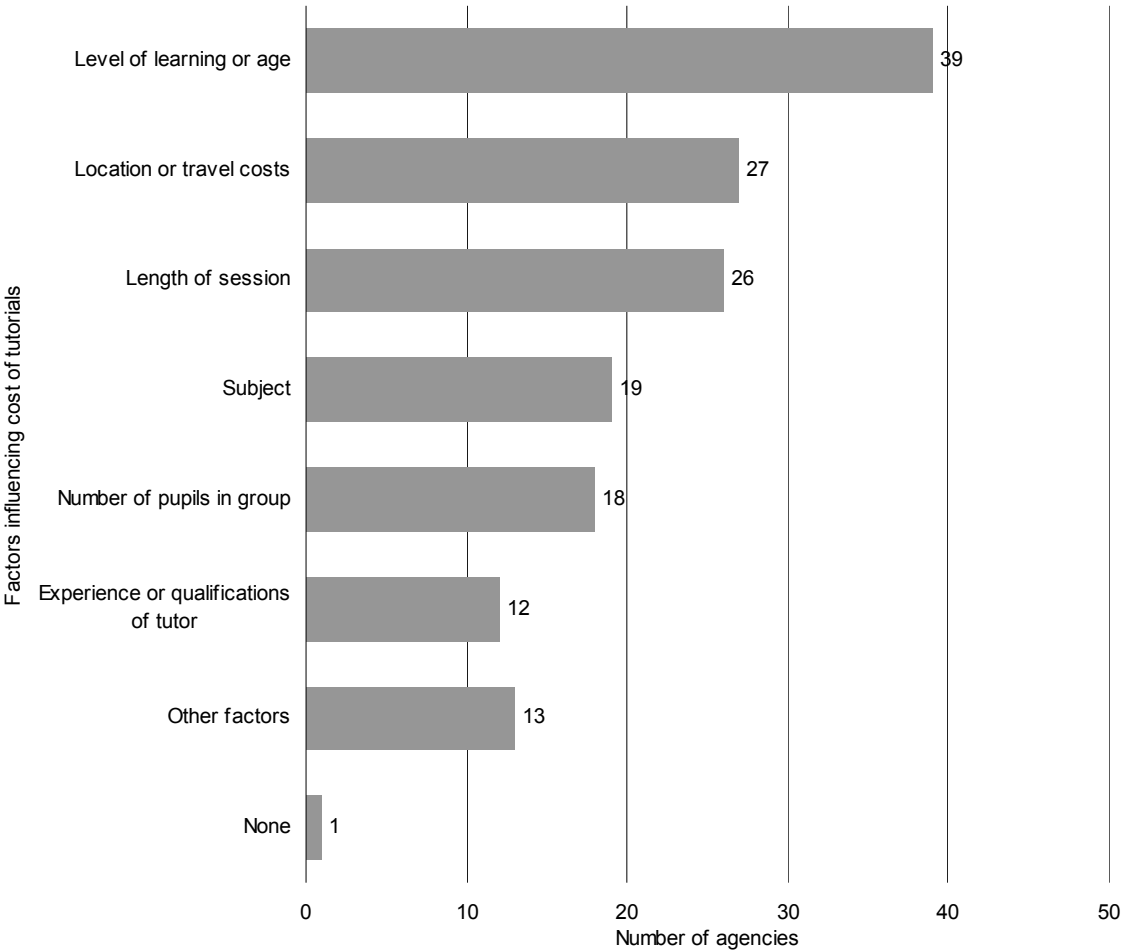
- The average (median) cost of a one hour tutorial was £24 but the hourly costs ranged from £1 to £60.
- Most (62%) of agencies set a fixed price for tutorials. For the remainder, the cost depended on a number of factors, including the level of learning, location or travel costs and length of session. The number of students in the group also affected the cost.
- Three key factors influenced the price of tutorials where set by individual tutors: local demand and market tuition rates; the Key Stage of the student; and, associated travel costs. Tutors offered discounted rates for multiple sessions, group sessions, and for friends and family.
- Median costs were similar for English and maths and rose slightly with level of learning.
- Median costs were highest in agencies located in London and the South East. Small agencies charged slightly higher median prices than large agencies. Costs were also related to the qualification requirements of tutors within agencies.

Factors influencing cost

Sixty two per cent of agencies had a fixed cost for tutorials, but for the remaining 38% the cost depended on a number of factors (Figure 3.19). The main factor influencing cost was the level of learning or age of the student (39 agencies) followed by the location of the tutorial or travel costs (27 agencies) and the length of session (26 agencies). Of lesser importance were subject, number of students in the group and the qualifications or experience of the tutor.

Figure 3.19 Factors influencing cost of agency tutorials

Base: Agencies for which cost is variable (N=49)



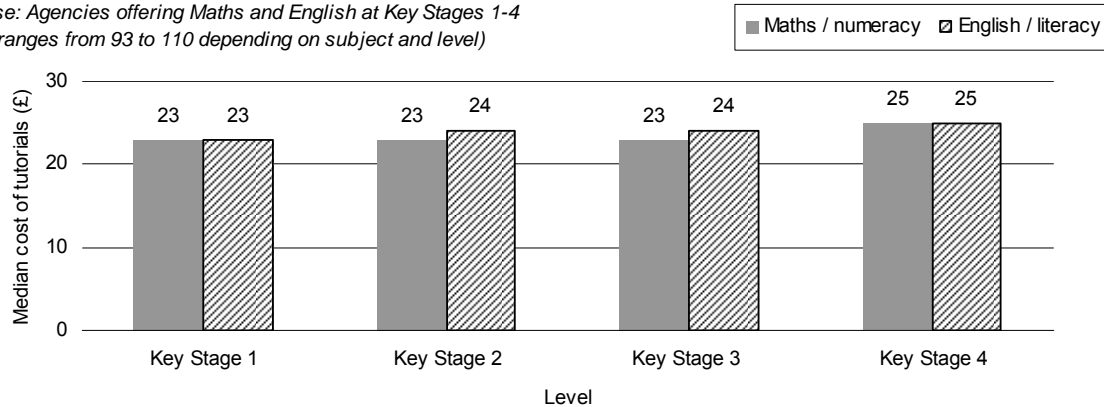
Cost by subject and level

The overall median cost of a one hour tutorial for agencies in the survey was £24¹⁴. The hourly costs ranged from £1 to £60 with six agencies reporting typical costs of less than £10. The reason for the lost cost of tutorials in some agencies is unclear. One possible explanation is what one agency manager described as a ‘Robin Hood’ approach where parents who were unable to pay the full cost were charged a nominal amount and effectively subsidised by other parents. However, there was no evidence that this was a common practice among agencies. By reporting median (rather than mean) average costs in this section, the findings are not skewed by the small number of agencies that reported charging very low fees.

Average costs were similar for English and mathematics but rose slightly with Key Stage from £23 at Key Stage 1 to £25 at Key Stage 4 (Figure 3.20).

Figure 3.20 Average (median) cost of tutorials by Key Stage level

*Base: Agencies offering Maths and English at Key Stages 1-4
(N ranges from 93 to 110 depending on subject and level)*

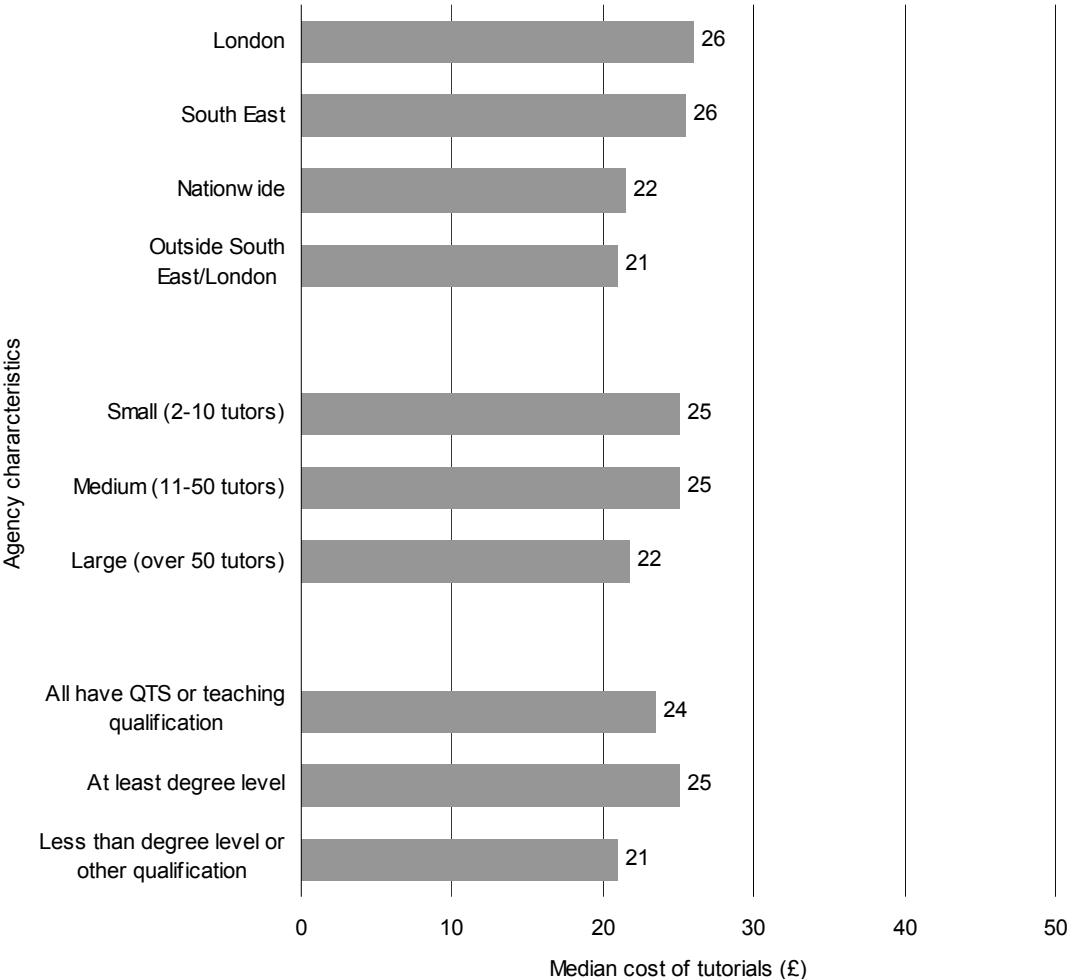


¹⁴ This cost was based on the assumption that travel costs were included and the tutor was qualified. The figure is similar to the average cost of tuition found in the survey of parents and carers: £21.19 for maths / numeracy and £23.92 for English / literacy (Peters, Carpenter, Edwards, and Coleman, 2009).

Other factors associated with cost were geographical location, size of agency and the qualification requirements of tutors imposed by agencies (Figure 3.21). As would be expected, the median cost of tutorials was highest in agencies located in London and the South East (£26) and lowest in the rest of the country (£21) and for nationwide agencies (£22). Costs were negatively associated with the size of agency such that agencies with the smallest number of active tutors charged higher prices (£25) than those with 50+ tutors (£22). Finally, costs were highest among agencies that had tutors with qualified teacher status (£24) and degree level qualifications (£25) and lowest among agencies where tutors had qualifications lower than degree level (£21).

Figure 3.21 Average (median) cost of tutorials by region, size of agency and qualifications¹⁵

Base: Responding agencies (base varies, see footnote)



¹⁵ Base: Region: 119 (London:28, South East: 34, Nationwide: 15, outside South East/London: 42); Size: 117 (Small: 48, Medium: 35, Large: 34); Qualifications: 115 (All have QTS/teaching qualification: 50, At least degree level: 49, Less than degree level/other qualification:16).

Cost of sessions set by tutors

This section explores the experiences of tutors within the qualitative component: specifically, the role of different parties in setting the cost of private tuition sessions and the extent to which cost was negotiated at an individual level between the tutor and client.

The role of private tuition agencies in setting costs appeared to vary with some agencies setting price guidelines by either subject or Key Stage level and this provided a tutor with a price range within which the cost of a session could be privately negotiated with the client. In these circumstances, tutors tended to pay commission to the agency. The commission charged by agencies took two forms: a one off annual fee or a fee per private tuition session which was either a fixed amount or a percentage of the cost of that session. In both cases, where tutors had the freedom to decide the price per session they tended to pass the cost of commission on to the student/parent directly. Tutors had mixed views regarding the rates of commission charged but some were unhappy that they had to pass on the price of commission to clients and felt this created a barrier to accessing private tuition for students from lower socio-economic groups. Other agencies played no role in setting the overall tuition fee and the tutor independently set the cost of tuition. Tutors who had used agencies in the past or had registered but had not accessed students via an agency also reported using agency guidelines to help them set a price for tuition sessions arranged privately.

Where tutors sourced business independently, three main factors were used to set the cost of tuition. These were local demand and tuition market rates, the Key Stage of the student, and the cost of travel to the location of tuition. Some tutors developed a fixed rate for all subjects and levels, whilst others had variable rates based on the subject taught, Key Stage level, travel and distance.

Tutors looked at the local market rates and availability of tutors for their subject when setting costs to ensure they were in line with other tutors. They also had perceptions of the current demand for private tuition in a particular subject and adjusted their rates accordingly. For example, maths was seen in particular as a subject that tutors could charge more for because of the value that it held as a core subject and a subject required for further study. Tutors also mentioned raising costs in line with the Key Stage they were teaching as it was felt that if they were teaching at a higher Key Stage level they could charge more due to the level and depth of knowledge required by the tutor. The distance tutors had to travel was also a consideration when setting prices. Some tutors charged additional travel/petrol costs, either per mile or by adding an approximate amount.

Whilst some tutors described negotiation as infrequent or as something they never entered in to, others were prepared to negotiate their rates on a case-by-case basis. Rates might be reduced where multiple sessions were booked, or for group or paired sessions. Longer sessions tended to be 'better value' than shorter sessions - for example, tutors described reducing the hourly rate if a session was two hours long instead of one hour. Some parents asked for reduced costs due to their own financial circumstances and tutors who agreed to lower costs did so because they felt they had a responsibility to help a student who was in need of extra tuition. Tutors also reduced costs due to their own individual perceptions of a student's means or because of the nature of their relationship with students and their families. Costs were lowered for students who were perceived to be from lower socio-economic groups where the tutor felt they might not be able to afford the standard private tuition rate.

'I will do it for £25 just because I feel they can't afford it. So I do feel a bit bad about these people. It's only the well-off who can get this tuition. They can get it more easily. I know some parents I know they have about three tutors. Some people have them for every subject so parents are forking out about £100 a week. Not everyone can afford that.'

Tutors also discounted rates for relatives and friends. Some tutors raised the price of tuition each year in line with increases in the cost of living, but these increased rates were not necessarily passed on to current or longstanding students because tutors had established a relationship and felt unable to ask for more money.

3.6 Summary

This chapter presented the characteristics of the private tuition market from the perspective of agencies (through telephone interviews) and individual tutors (through face-to-face depth interviews).

While agencies varied greatly in size, the majority of agencies were small-scale with 41% operating with 10 or fewer active tutors. Most agencies were regionally-based and were heavily concentrated in London and the South East, although most regions were represented in the survey. Fourteen of the agencies in the survey were classified as nationwide. Size and region were associated with a number of agency characteristics such as the qualification requirements of tutors, methods recruiting pupils and tutors and costs.

Across agencies of all sizes, word of mouth was the primary means by which agencies sourced business from pupils and recruited new tutors. However, agency websites, tutor directories and general directories on the internet also played an important role in agency advertising.

The importance of networks and flexibility to the private tuition market was evident through the survey and accounts of tutors. Over one-third of agencies passed work to tutors not registered with the agency when they could not take on the work. A small proportion of agency managers also managed other agencies and some agencies were known by different names.

The tutor qualification requirements imposed by the agencies in the survey were fairly high. Two-fifths of agencies reported that all their tutors were qualified teachers and a similar proportion set a minimum requirement of a degree-level qualification for tutors. On average, smaller regional agencies reported higher levels of qualifications among tutors than larger or nationwide agencies. The experience required of tutors by agencies tended to mirror the qualification requirements so that the agencies with the highest qualification requirements also tended to have experienced tutors.

Private tuition occupied different spaces in the lives of private tutors, but tutors mostly worked part-time and were self-employed. Some of the individual tutors obtained work through agencies, others directly from pupils and others operated by both methods.

Four-fifths of agencies reported that all of their tutors had CRB checks and slightly fewer required references and interviews for new tutors. These security checks were less relevant for the minority of agencies that did not recruit new tutors. These agencies typically comprised a small number of business partners or tutors working closely together. The most frequently cited measure of tutor quality assessment was formal feedback from parents and pupils.

Most agencies offered tuition across a range of subjects among which maths and English were the most frequently cited. Tuition was offered across all Key Stage levels, peaking slightly at Key Stage 2, the age at which private tuition plays an important role in the preparation for school entrance. Tuition was mostly delivered via one-to-one tuition although many agencies also offered tuition in groups. The importance of individualised tuition in this market emerged from the findings. Almost all the agencies offered individualised tuition tailored to the needs of the pupil (as opposed to pre-defined programmes of work) and tutors spoke of their preferences for one-to-one over group tuition. Other factors identified by tutors as underpinning successful outcomes from tuition included allowing sufficient time, the tuition environment, the qualities of the tutor, pupil commitment and engagement and parent support.

Typical costs for tuition varied widely, but the median cost for a one-hour tutorial was £24 (this cost assumed inclusive travel costs and the tutor who was a qualified teacher). The majority of agencies set a fixed price for tutorials. Agencies were involved to a varying extent in setting the level of fees. In many cases, the fee was negotiated between the tutor and parents. For the remainder, the cost depended on a number of factors, including the level of learning, location or travel costs and length of session. The number of pupils in the group also affected the cost. Median costs varied by a number of factors. Fees were similar for English and maths and rose slightly with level of learning. Fees were highest in agencies located in London and the South East and in small rather than large agencies. Fees were also related to the qualification requirements of tutors within agencies.

4 Conclusions

The aims of this research were to map and analyse the market of private tuition in England, providing both a national profile of providers and detailed information about the nature of private tuition transactions. The different components of the research together built a detailed picture of the diversity and complexity of the private tuition market. This chapter draws together the findings from Chapters 2 and 3.

Summary of key findings

Agency characteristics and sourcing business

Five forms of agency business practice were identified, as follows.

- **Traditional agencies:** maintained a selected bank of registered tutors and allocated work in response to requests from prospective clients.
- **Notice board:** agency maintained a website notice board for individual tutor advertisements with contact details allowing clients to negotiate directly with the tutors.
- **Mediated notice board:** agency maintained a list of registered tutors, from which clients selected but no individual tutor contact details were provided, so contact with the tutor occurred solely through the agency.
- **Individual / small agencies:** individual tutors or informal professional networks of tutors that allowed work to be shared out or passed along.
- **Educational centre:** tuition took place at a designated location, often solely dedicated to providing tuition.

Web searches identified 504 private tuition agencies in England, of which 223 had a working website, and 130 participated in the telephone survey.

The size of agencies varied hugely in terms of the number of tutors, number of students, amount of tuition offered and the number of offices or branches in England. Larger agencies claimed to have nationwide coverage (14% of those surveyed), while smaller agencies covered only a region or local area (86%). Most agencies were small - 41% had 10 or fewer tutors active during the last academic year.

The availability of private tuition was unevenly distributed across England, being more common in London and the South East and in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham, but less available in the North. Regional agencies in the survey covered most regions of the country but were concentrated in London (32%) and the South East (25%).

Overall, word of mouth was the most popular means by which agencies recruited students (58%). This was followed by recruitment through the agency website (42%), Yellow Pages (41%) and adverts in local newspapers (40%). Larger agencies used a wider range of methods and smaller agencies focused more on word of mouth. Individual tutors sourced business via multiple means: online notice-boards; directory listings; leafleting; advertising in local press and shop windows; word of mouth; and private tuition agencies.

Agencies recruited tutors primarily by word of mouth (50%), an agency website (33%) and adverts in local newspapers (32%).

Agencies were busier in spring and autumn months and quieter in winter and summer. Some agencies worked in collaboration with other agencies, with 37% passing work to tutors not registered with the agency when they could not take on the work.

Tutor characteristics

In the survey, fewer than half the agencies (43%) reported that all their tutors were qualified teachers and a further 40% of agencies required tutors to hold a degree. On average, smaller regional agencies reported higher levels of qualifications among tutors than larger or nationwide agencies.

The extent of experience held by tutors in agencies mirrored to some extent their qualifications. Most of the agencies with the more highly qualified tutors also required tutors to have some teaching experience. Conversely, most of the agencies with the less well qualified tutors also did not require tutors to have prior experience of teaching or tutoring.

Most tutors working in agencies worked part-time (79%) and were self-employed (84%).

Security checks were considered important by agencies and tutors themselves. Most agencies (79%) reported that all their tutors had Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. Most agencies also required all tutors to submit references (75%) and to be interviewed (73%). Of the remaining agencies, many were among those that did not routinely recruit new tutors. Information about security checks was often omitted from websites, leaving the onus on clients to obtain this information from the agency or from individual tutors.

Individual tutors prioritised providing personal safety assurances to parents and students. References were reportedly considered less critical than personal recommendation and continued reflection on individual student-tutor relationships.

The main forms of quality assurance were formal feedback from parents (reported by 79% of agencies) and students (64%). Agencies reported a wide range of quality assurance measures. Tutors did not routinely refer to their own performance and development but offered parents the opportunity to view tuition sessions as quality assurance.

Arrangements for private tuition and delivery of sessions

Many agencies covered most or all subjects in the school curriculum, while a significant number specialized in English or mathematics or both. Almost all the agencies surveyed offered tuition in maths (97%) and English (93%).

The extent of agency provision for tutoring was highest at Key Stages 2 and 4, suggesting that much private tutoring is in preparation for secondary school entrance and examinations. In the survey, 72% of agencies offered preparation for school entrance.

One-to-one tuition was the main mode of tuition delivery among most (78%) agencies. In addition, group tuition was offered by over half the agencies (55%) and paired tuition was offered by 40% of agencies. One-to-one tuition was felt to offer the best environment for private tuition among individual tutors.

Tutors considered the following before arranging to provide private tuition services: the individual circumstances and needs of the student; requirements for the subject and Key Stage; and the location, timing, and cost of sessions.

Agency managers reported that tutorials usually took place at the home of the student (68%). Other locations cited by agency managers included the tutor's home (52%), at a centre (40%) or school (25%). From the viewpoint of tutors, the advantages of conducting tutorials in the home of the student were that they felt more able to offer assurances of safety and it was easier to give regular feedback to the parents following tuition sessions. When tutorials took place in the home of the tutor, the dedicated environment for tuition sessions was thought to impact positively on students' motivation and commitment.

Tutorials typically lasted one hour (66%).

Almost all agencies (96%) offered individualised tuition tailored to the needs of the student. A minority of agencies (22%) offered a pre-defined programme of tuition. Individual tutors emphasised a flexible approach to tuition sessions based on the specific needs of the student.

Individual tutors attributed successful outcomes from tutorials to the following factors: sufficient time; the tuition environment; the one-to-one dynamic; the qualities of the tutor; student commitment and engagement; and parent support.

Costs

The average (median) cost of a one hour tutorial was £24 but the hourly costs ranged from £1 to £60. (This cost was based on the assumption that travel costs were included and the tutor was a qualified teacher.)

Most agencies (62%) set a fixed price for tutorials. For the remainder, the cost depended on a number of factors, including the level of learning, location or travel costs and length of session. The number of students in the group also affected the cost.

Individual tutors set the cost of tuition according to local demand and market tuition rates, the Key Stage of the student, and travel costs. Tutors offered discounted rates for multiple sessions, group sessions, and for friends and family.

Median costs were similar for English and maths and rose slightly with level of learning. Median costs were highest in agencies located in London and the South East and lower in agencies that were nationwide or located in regions outside the South East. Small agencies charged slightly higher median prices than large agencies. Costs were also related to the qualification requirements of tutors within agencies.

Some agencies provided a price range within which tutors negotiated fees with their clients and in some cases discounts were offered for two-to-one or group tutoring.

Comparison of survey and website findings

To a large extent, the survey findings concurred with those from the website analysis. The main areas of agreement were as follows:

- The variation in size but predominance of smaller agencies in terms of agency numbers.
- The concentration of agencies in London and the South East.
- The qualification levels of tutors within agencies. In both cases, a little over 40% of agencies reported that all or most of their tutors had teaching qualifications.

- Most agencies offered tuition in maths and English.
- One-to-one tuition was the dominant mode but most agencies also offered group and / or paired tuition.
- The average cost of a one hour tutorial was approximately £24 in the survey and between £22.90 and £24.50 in the website analysis depending on subject and level.

For some topics, comparisons between the survey and website findings were constrained because of limited information published on the websites. For example, 85 out of 223 agencies (38%) mentioned requiring CRB checks on their websites compared to 103 out of 130 agencies (79%) in the survey, but it is not clear whether the agencies that did not mention CRB checks on the websites did not require them or simply omitted the information.

Another difference was that survey sample included a smaller proportion of agencies offering tuition outside the South East. For example, according to the websites, 20% of agencies offered tuition in the North West compared to 7% in the survey. However, the regional figures in the survey did not include the 18 agencies that claimed to be nationwide.

Extent of coverage

In response to the research presented in this report, it is important to consider how representative the quantitative findings might be of all private tuition provision in England¹⁶. Underpinning this are the issues of coverage and the proportion of the market covered by agencies of different sizes.

In the construction of the database, the aim was to include all agencies with a 'web presence', either in the form of an agency website or a directory listing. While it is possible that some agencies (particularly small agencies) were excluded from the database as a result of not advertising via the internet, it is also the case that some of the agencies included are no longer trading. The private tuition market was found to consist of some long-standing agencies alongside considerable flux and turn-over among providers. As such, the report represents a 'snap-shot' of the market at a particular point in time, but nevertheless focuses on characteristics that are likely to be fairly stable over the short-term at least such as the range in size and type of providers, tutor qualifications and experience, costs and the decisions concerning the nature of private tuition transactions.

The findings have consistently shown a large variation in the size of agencies. While a substantial proportion of agencies had 10 or fewer active tutors, a handful of agencies employed hundreds or thousands of tutors. Although these large agencies, often operating as franchises across the country, comprised a small proportion of all agencies, they nevertheless occupied an important position in the market in terms of the numbers of tutors they employed and the numbers of students tutored. The analysis in this report is presented at the level of the agency but the position of the large agencies in the market needs to be borne in mind when considering the characteristics of private tuition from the level of the student.

The high level of agreement between the findings of the website analysis (Chapter 2) and agency survey (Chapter 3) and the stratification by region in the sampling for the agency survey suggest that the profile of agency characteristics in this report is fairly representative of all agencies, even though it was not possible to stratify the sample by size of agency.

¹⁶ The qualitative in-depth interviews with tutors were not intended to be representative of tutors in general, but to provide a detailed insight into the decisions and circumstances underpinning private tuition transactions.

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Appendix A Database parameters

Basic Information

Contact details

In a number of cases the website address provided was found to be broken or an unused domain. A 'website working' tickbox was therefore added to the database to allow non-working sites to be filtered out during analysis.

Field	Picklist
Name of Agency	
Name of Manager	
Website address	
Website working	[Yes / No]
Email	
Postal address	
Phone number1	
Phone number 2	
Notes	

Area covered by agency

Initially it was hoped that agency tuition coverage could be coded using a series of markers, indicating varying geographical areas, down to the level of county. It became apparent, however, that not all agencies would fit into such a discrete schematic and so agencies were instead coded by counties and area covered, using 3 picklists and a notes field. Following data collection, the records were additionally coded into regional categories for use during analysis.

Field	Picklist
Region	Nationwide North South Greater London North & Greater London South & Greater London North, South & Greater London Unclear Not Stated
Area 1	[Counties & Areas]
Area 2	[Counties & Areas]
Area 3	[Counties & Areas]
Notes	

Size of Agency

Numbers of tutors or clients were not often reported by agencies and where found could only generally been coded as broad figures. Figures were estimated and recorded, where possible for non-recruiting agencies.

Field	Picklist
Tutors registered	Exact Broad
Exact figure	
Broad figure	
Approx number of clients	
Notes	

Tutor Contact Details

This field was used to indicate the level of tutor contact details available. Centres were coded as 'Other' and noted 'centre' in the notes field.

Field	Picklist
Tutor Details Available	Tutor contact details available Contact through Agency - No contact details provided Individual Tutor - Contact details provided No Tutor Details Other
Tutor Email	[Yes / No]
Tutor Address	[Yes / No]
Tutor Telephone	[Yes / No]
Varies By Tutor	[Yes / No]
Notes	

Agency Tutoring Provision

Agency Style / Specialisms

Virtually all agencies stated that they provided tuition 'tailored to the needs of the client' and were thus coded as Bespoke.

Agencies using set programmes of tuition were coded as Programmed and details noted. After School Support and SEN were indicated when specifically stated by the agency, and details noted where appropriate.

Field	Picklist
Bespoke	[Yes / No]
Programmed	[Yes / No]
Programmed details	
Revision courses	[Yes / No]
After school support	[Yes / No]
SEN	[Yes / No]
SEN details	
Unspecified	[Yes / No]
Notes	

Age Groups/ levels

In order to assist with the calculations for analysis, all sites stating that they provided tuition at 'all levels' were coded as All Compulsory Education, as well as Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4. While 11+ tuition would involve specific exam preparation, a level of standard tutoring could be included, and so 11+ tutoring was also coded as Key Stage 2.

Field	Picklist
All Compulsory Education	[Yes / No]
KS1	[Yes / No]
KS2	[Yes / No]
KS3	[Yes / No]
KS4	[Yes / No]
KS5	[Yes / No]
7/8+	[Yes / No]
11+	[Yes / No]
13+	[Yes / No]
Undergraduate	[Yes / No]
Adult	[Yes / No]
Unspecified	[Yes / No]
Notes	

Subjects

Records coded as 'All Subjects' were also coded for each individual subject, to assist with the analysis calculations.

Although Arts was included as a subject, it was not specifically mentioned as a tutored subject by any agency. All subjects has therefore been taken to mean English, Maths, Science, Humanities and Languages.

Field	Picklist
All subjects	[Yes / No]
Maths	[Yes / No]
English	[Yes / No]
Science	[Yes / No]
Humanities	[Yes / No]
Languages	[Yes / No]
Arts	[Yes / No]
Study Skills	[Yes / No]
Exam Preparation	[Yes / No]
Unspecified	
Notes	

Mode of Tutoring

The predominate tutoring practice of the agency was recorded. In agencies, such as noticeboard agencies, where tutoring practice was determined by the individual tutor, this was indicated.

Field	Picklist
Mode of tutoring	Predominantly one-to-one Predominantly group Equal amounts of both (one-to-one and group) Online Determined by tutor Not stated
If group, specify number	
Notes	

Location for tutoring

The predominate location for tutoring, as stipulated by the agency was recorded. In agencies, such as noticeboard agencies, where the location was determined by the individual tutor, this was indicated.

Field	Picklist
Location of tutoring	The home of the tutee The home of the tutor Either the home of the tutor or the home of the tutee Centres Determined by the tutor Other Not stated
If other, specify	
Notes	

Tutor Recruitment

Tutor Employment Status

Most tutors are self employed, with only those working at educational centres directly employed by the agency. Whether the agency selected tutors for registration, however, was recorded.

Smallscale, non-recruiting agencies were coded as Individual Tutor.

Field	Picklist
Employment Status	Tutor directly employed by Agency / Centre Tutor self employed - No Agency selection Tutor self employed - Selected by Agency Individual Tutor Unclear
Notes	

Training provided by agency

Training was indicated and detailed when specified by the agency

Field	Picklist
Training Provided	No Yes Not stated
Specify training	
Notes	

Experience required

Agencies were often vague concerning the experience criteria they required for tutor registration. Experience was coded therefore, using a sliding scale of qualified statements and criteria.

'Experienced' - was used indicate that the current tutors in an individual or small scale agency with no stated recruitment criteria, had stated that they were experienced.

'Listing' indicates agency is a Local Authority listing with no set recruitment criteria

Field	Picklist
Experience required to register	Must be 'very experienced' Must be experienced Some experience required No experience required No requirement - Anyone can register as a tutor Experienced Not stated Listing
Details	
Notes	

CRB and references

Agencies were often vague concerning the security checks they required for tutor registration. CRB was coded therefore, using a sliding scale of qualified statements and criteria.

Field	Picklist
CRB Checks	Yes Some tutors have CRB checks Agency recommends students to ask the tutors before tuition begin No Not stated
Reference	References required to register References provided by tutors for each new tutee Not Stated No
Interview	Yes No Not Stated
Notes	

Tutor qualifications required

The level of educational qualifications required for registration was indicated, with provision also made for agencies that specified a degree in one, or the main, subject to be tutored.

Teaching qualifications were coded separately using the following criteria:

Yes - Teaching qualifications needed to register with the agency.

Teaching qualifications generally required - agencies that emphasised a preference for teaching qualifications. Included statements such as 'most tutors are qualified'.

Degree or teaching qualification required - agencies that requiring either a degree or teaching qualification

Range of qualifications - agencies that required different criteria for different tutoring roles

Not Stated / Unclear - unable to discern information from website

No - no teaching qualifications required to register with the agency.

Where a teaching qualification was a specified requirement, details were recorded using a picklist and notes field.

Field	Picklist
Degree in the subject to be tutored	[Yes/No]
Higher degree	[Yes/No]
Degree	[Yes/No]
Undergraduate	[Yes/No]
A level (or equivalent)	[Yes/No]
No qualifications required	[Yes/No]
Anyone can register as a tutor	[Yes/No]
Not stated	[Yes/No]
Notes	
Teaching qualification required	Yes Teaching qualifications generally required Degree or teaching qualification Range of qualifications Not Stated / Unclear No
Specific qualification required	BEd QTS (BA) QTS (GTP) QTS (unspecified) Teaching qual overseas Not Specified Other
Specified / Notes	

Tuition Fees & Costs

Fees per hour

Depending on agency policy, either the tutor or the agency determined the tuition fees. Whilst some agencies provided a set price list, others gave only a price range guide, leaving the final cost to be determined by factors such as local demand, travel and length of contract. Depending on the style of agency, prices could also be open to an unknown element of negotiation between the agency, tutor and client. The Price Information field was used to indicate these factors.

Agency prices were usually listed for tuition in the tutor's home, with travel costs listed as a more negotiable extra. Prices recorded in the database are, therefore, for tuition in the tutor's home, with travel costs information provided in the notes area. Some agencies, provided an inclusive price, or factor in travel into their price recommendations. This was noted and taken into account during analysis.

Fee information was recorded as an hourly rate to allow cross comparison. Where agency sessions were not one hour in length, hourly prices were calculate, if possible, or the price fields left blank and the information recorded in the Notes field instead.

Field	Picklist
Price Information	Agency determines price - not stated Agency determines price - price range provided Agency determines price - set pricelist provided Price determined by individual tutor Price determined by tutor - Agency recommends price range Not stated
Standard 1 hour session	Yes No Not Stated
session length, if not 1 hour	
Lowest hourly rate	
Highest hourly rate	
Hourly rate - GCSE Maths	
Hourly rate - GCSE English	
Hourly rate - KS3 Maths	
Hourly rate - KS3 English	
Hourly rate - KS2 Maths	
Hourly rate - KS2 English	
Does price vary by location?	Yes No Not stated
Location specify	

Travel expenses included	Yes No Not stated
Travel specify	
Registration fee	Yes No Not stated
Registration specify	
Agency allows group tutoring to lower price	Yes No Not stated
Notes	

Any Other Details

Where necessary, other useful information concerning the agency or the data was recorded.

Appendix B Database search methodology

Search Engines

An initial search was conducted through the Google UK search engine (www.google.co.uk) using pairs of keywords in order to minimise the number of false hits. Included in these these terms were the area categories used by the National Database. Examples:

“private tuition”
“home tutoring”
“Essex tutor”

Despite the search engine’s focus on UK websites, some searches still returned high numbers of USA sites. It was thus found useful to prefix some searches with “UK”. The returns for searches were checked until it appeared that most valid hits had been exhausted; generally a depth of 20 to 30 pages. Search attempts for some terms, however, such as “SATS” and “11+” were found to return too many false hits and had to be abandoned.

The keyword searches were repeated using two meta search engines:

Metacrawler (www.metacrawler.com)

Zapmeta (www.zapmeta.com).

These sites search and collate the returns from a number of search engines, including Google, Yahoo, MSN, Ask Jeeves, About, Altavista and AOL. Beyond the breadth of the search that these sites provide, they also employ different systems and weightings to order their results, thereby creating unique listings from the same set of search terms.

Searches using the established keyword search terms were also made in

Yahoo Directory (<http://dir.yahoo.com>)

Open Directory Project (www.dmoz.org).

Unlike the most commonly used search engines, which create their databases through the automated analysis of webpage text, these search directories manually organise and compile websites within a schema of hierarchical search terms.

Online Business Directories

Local and UK Business directories were reviewed, but often provided little more than a name and contact address, and included non-educational tutoring, such as music or driving, within their ‘tutoring’ listings. The agencies from two UK business directories, Accessplace (www.accessplace.com) and Bizwiki (www.bizwiki.co.uk) were recorded, where it seemed appropriate. Due to these concerns for the reliability of the data and also the possibility of contravening the site’s Terms and Conditions it was decided not to search through the larger listings provided by the online Yellow Pages (www.yell.com).

The 020 London business directory (www.020.co.uk), however, provided brief descriptions and website links within its listings under ‘Tutors & Tuition’. This site was subsequently trawled systematically for results.

Specialist Websites

Using the data collected from the searches it was possible to pinpoint specialist websites that provided listings of tutoring agencies.

All4Kids (www.all4kids.com)

Schoolzone (www.schoolzone.co.uk)

The Home Tutors Directory (www.hometutorsdirectory.co.uk)

10ticks (www.10ticks.co.uk)

The Timway Home College Directory (www.timwayhomecollege.co.uk).

Local Areas Database

From the National Database it was possible to identify a number of websites providing searchable lists of tutors, with contact and tutoring details. Searches were made for tutors either living within, or stating a willingness to travel to the selected local areas, using either county, town or central postcodes as geographical guides. Distances and coverages were checked using Google Earth. Where necessary, subject criteria was given as maths and English for Key Stage 1 up to A Level. Given the greater ease of travel within the Birmingham area, however, the search for Edgbaston was expanded to include tutors within the general South Birmingham area. These tutors were distinctly flagged in the database.

www.Aplustutors.co.uk

www.10ticks.co.uk

<http://www.hometutorsdirectory.co.uk/>

<http://www.tutors4me.co.uk/>

www.tutorinuk.com

www.timwayhomecollege.co.uk

www.tutors-direct.co.uk

www.examsolutions.co.uk

www.elevenplusexams.co.uk

www.localprivatetuition.co.uk

Further sites were checked although they provided more limited data:

www.kedalearning.co.uk - Only provides a name, email and town

www.firsttutors.co.uk - Detailed tutoring information, but no contact details beyond the distance from a given postcode.

A check was also made through the Personal Tutors website (www.personal-tutors.co.uk), which is one of the UK's most long standing and largest tutoring websites. Its listing provides, however, only a self edited description of the services provided, with no name or contact details, only a rough geographical location and distance from a given postcode. Whilst it was able to often suggest the level of tutoring within a given area, therefore, it provided few confirmed records for the database.

A search was also made through the Tutoring forum Tutor Watch (www.tutorwatch.co.uk), but with disappointing results. Likewise, the business listings sites Accessplace (www.accessplace.co.uk), Bizwiki (www.bizwiki.co.uk) and UK Classifieds (www.ukclassifieds.co.uk) provided no hits for the selected areas. Other local directories and sites were identified through Google searches and checked, often with few results.

Finally a search was made in the online Yellow Pages (www.yell.com), using the keyword "tutor" and local area. As described for the National Agencies Database, whilst some of the returned hits gave a short description of the services provided, most were simply a name and contact details. These were added to the database if they were gauged, on this limited information, to be appropriate.

Appendix C Questionnaire for Survey of Agencies

Modules Overview

Module	Description
A. Introduction and agency details	Name of agency Location and geographical coverage of agency. Mode of tuition. Number of tutors. Screen out on-line only and sole trader agencies.
B. Subjects and level	Subject areas covered by tutors in the agency. Level of study. Content of tuition: set curriculum/programme, personalised tuition, revision classes, exam prep, after school.
C. Mode and location	Location of tutoring. Standard length of session.
D. Tutors	Number of tutors actively tutoring. Number of students. Recruitment methods for tutors. Qualifications and experience required for tutors. Security checks. Quality assurance.
E. Costs	Cost of tuition fixed or variable. If fixed, what is the rate per hour / per session. If variable, how is price determined. Typical cost of one hour tuition in English/Maths at KS1, 2, 3 and 4.
F. Business development	How business is sourced / where agency advertises. Seasonal variation in demand. Role and name of the manager / representative interviewed. Check contact details of agency. Links to other agencies.

Notes on questionnaire format

This document lists the questions for the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) questionnaire for the Private Tuition study.

The questionnaire is divided into discrete modules, for example “Subjects and level”.

Question names

Questions are identified by names consisting of up to 8 characters (e.g. Chkadd) which appear immediately above the question text.

Eligibility (routing)

The eligibility (or routing) for questions is indicated in *{italicised brackets}* immediately above the question name and is expressed in terms of other question names. In some parts of the questionnaire the eligibility is expressed in writing to ensure clarity. Where no eligibility rule is given, it should be assumed that it is the same as for the last eligibility rule shown in the questionnaire.

Textfills

A number of questions use textfills, where the question text depends on answers to previous questions or to sampling information, e.g. **{textfill: name of agency}**.

Question text and answer categories (pre-coded, string, open and numeric)

The question text appears after the name of the question.

This is then followed by a list of answer categories, which will be read out by the telephone interviewer unless instructed otherwise. Questions where more than one answer can be coded by the interviewer will be labelled ‘CODE ALL THAT APPLY’.

Questions without pre-coded lists are labelled as ‘STRING [No]’ (which will allow the interviewer to enter the answer the respondent gives using a pre-determined character limit indicated in [square brackets]) or ‘OPEN’ (which will allow the interviewer to record what the respondent says in full without any restriction on the number of characters).

Where an answer is to be given in numbers (e.g. an amount of money), a range will be given (e.g. 1..100).

Interviewer instructions

At some questions interviewers will be given additional instructions on screen. These instructions will appear between the question text and answer categories in CAPITALS and will not be read to respondents.

MODULE A: Introduction and agency details

{Ask all}

Intr

Good morning/afternoon. My name is from the National Centre for Social Research. We recently sent a letter to the manager of your agency about a study of private tuition that we are carrying out on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Please could I speak to the manager?

IF ASKED: The interview should take about 20 minutes.

IF MANAGER NOT AVAILABLE, REARRANGE APPOINTMENT OR SPEAK TO ANOTHER SUITABLE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE AGENCY.

IF ASKED FOR MORE DETAIL, PLEASE REFER TO SCRIPT PROVIDED.

{Ask all}

ChkNam

First, can I check. Is ^QSample.Agency the correct name of the agency?

Yes

No

{If Chknam=No}

Newnam

PLEASE COLLECT CORRECT NAME OF AGENCY

{Ask all}

Area

Does your agency provide private tuition across the whole of England or just in particular local areas?

Whole of England

Local areas

{Area=local areas}

Locar

Which particular local areas do you cover?

INTERVIEWER: PROMPT WHICH COUNTIES OR REGIONS?

OPEN

{Ask all}

Office

How many offices or branches does your agency have in England?

1...100

{Ask all}

Mode

Which modes of tutoring are offered by your agency

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

One-to-one tuition

Tutoring pairs

Group tuition

On-line tutoring?

Other

{Mode=4 ONLY}

Clos

Thank you very much for your time but for the purpose of this study we are interested in speaking to agencies that provide face to face tutoring

INTERVIEWER: CHECK THAT AGENCY ONLY OFFERS ON-LINE TUITION. THANK THE RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE THE INTERVIEW AND CODE OUT AS OC720.

{If Mode=other}

Othmod

Which other modes of tutoring are offered by your agency?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

{If Mode=more than one response}

Mainmod

Which is the main mode of tuition offered by your agency?

LIST RESPONSES TO 'MODE' ABOVE

{Ask all}

Tutnum

Approximately how many tutors are currently registered with your agency. Please only include tutors who work with pupils aged 5-16?

INTERVIEWER: IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE/BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY.

IF DK, ASK "COULD YOU GIVE AN ESTIMATE?"

1..10000, DK

{Tutnum=DK}

Tutrange

Could you say approximately how many tutors for this age range are currently registered with your agency? Is it...

INTERVIEWER READ OUT..."

1

2-10

11-25

26-50

51-100

101-500

more than 500?

{Tutnum=1 or Tutrange=1}

Clos2

Thank you very much for your time but for the purpose of this study we are interested in speaking to agencies that have more than one tutor.

CHECK THAT AGENCY ONLY HAS ONE TUTOR. THANK THE RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE THE INTERVIEW AND CODE OUT AS OC700.

Module B: Subjects and Level

{Ask all}

Bintr

I am now going to ask you some questions about subjects and levels provided by the agency.

Press 1 and enter.

{Ask all}

Subj

What subjects are tutored by your agency?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY. 10 is an exclusive code.

Maths / numeracy

English/literacy

Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology)

Humanities (Geography, History, Religious Education)

Languages (French, German etc)

Arts (Music, Drama, Art)

Study skills

English as a second language

Physical Education/sport

Unable to specify

Other

{Ask all}

Lev

What level of study does your agency provide tuition for?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Key Stage 1 (age 5-7, years 1-2)

Key Stage 2 (age 7-11, years 3, 4, 5, 6)

Key Stage 3 (age 11-14, years 7, 8, 9)

Key Stage 4 (age 14-16, years 10-11)

Key Stage 5 (age 16-18, years 12-13)

Beyond age 18

Other

[If Subj=English only, then Englev is computed from Lev and not asked.]

{If subj=2 and another subject}

Englev

Can I just check, for what level of study does your agency offer tuition in English or literacy?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Key Stage 1 (age 5-7, years 1-2)

Key Stage 2 (age 7-11, years 3, 4, 5, 6)

Key Stage 3 (age 11-14, years 7, 8, 9)

Key Stage 4 (age 14-16, years 10-11)

Key Stage 5 (age 16-18, years 12-13)

Beyond age 18

Other

[If Subj=Maths only, then Mathlev is computed from Lev and not asked.]

{If subj=1 and another subject}

Mathlev

Can I just check, for what level of study does your agency offer tuition in Mathematics or numeracy?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Key Stage 1 (age 5-7, years 1-2)
Key Stage 2 (age 7-11, years 3, 4, 5, 6)
Key Stage 3 (age 11-14, years 7, 8, 9)
Key Stage 4 (age 14-16, years 10-11)
Key Stage 5 (age 16-18, years 12-13)
Beyond age 18
Other

{Ask all}

Prog

How would you describe the content of tuition offered by your agency? Do you offer...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT AND WAIT AFTER EACH CODE. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Individualised sessions of work tailored to the needs of the pupil

A pre-defined programme of work

Revision classes

Preparation for school entrance

Tutoring for pupils with special educational needs

Anything else?

{If Prog=other}

Othprog

How else would you describe the content of tuition offered by your agency?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

Module C: Mode and Location

{Ask all}

Cintro

For the following questions about tutorials we are interested in pupils aged 5-16. Please respond with this age group in mind.

Press 1 and enter.

{Ask All}

TypSess

What is the typical length of tutorial session offered by your agency?

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT

Less than 30 minutes

More than 30 minutes, less than 1 hour

1 hour

More than 1 hour, less than 2 hours

2 hours

More than 2 hours

7. No typical length / it varies

{Mode=more than one response, not including on-line}

LenDep

And does the length of tutorial sessions increase according to the number of pupils in the tutorial?

Yes

No

{Ask all}

Locstu

Do tutorial sessions take place at any of the following places...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

At the pupil's home

2. At the tutor's home

3. At a centre or agency offices

4. At school/ after-school club

5. Any other place?

{If Locstu=other}

Othloc

Where do tutorial sessions take place?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

{Ask all}

Wholoc

Who decides where tutorial sessions take place (for pupils aged 5-16, that is Key Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4)?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY. IT VARIES IS AN EXCLUSIVE CODE.

The pupil or parent/guardian

The tutor

Agency policy

Joint decision by negotiation

It varies

Other

Module D: Tutors

{Ask all}

Dintro

I am now going to ask you some questions about tutors. Please answer the following questions as they apply to pupils aged 5-16.

Press 1 and enter.

{Ask all}

Actnum

Approximately how many tutors from your agency have actively tutored pupils aged 5-16 during the last academic year?

IF DK, ASK COULD YOU GIVE AN ESTIMATE.

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE/BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY.

1..10000, DK

{Actnum=DK}

Active

Could you say whether it's...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT...

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE/BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY.

1

11-25

26-50

51-100

101-500

more than 500?

{Ask all}

Hrsnum

Approximately how many hours of tuition are given by your agency for 5-16 year olds in a typical week?

IF DK, ASK COULD YOU GIVE AN ESTIMATE.

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE/BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY."

1..10000

{Hrsnum=DK}

HrsTut

Could you say whether it's...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT...

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE/BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY."

1-10

11-25

26-50

51-100

101-500

More than 500?

Varies (SPONTANEOUS ONLY)

{Ask all}

Affil

Do you ever pass on work to other tutors not registered with your agency when you cannot take on the work?

Yes

No

{Ask All}

ModWrk

Could you tell me whether most of the tutors in your agency work as a tutor full-time, most work part-time or is there an even split between full-time and part-time tutors? By full-time, we mean at least 35 hours per week.

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT.

Most work full-time

Most work part-time

Even split between full-time and part-time

{Ask all}

Kidnum

Approximately how many pupils are currently being tutored through your agency?

IF DK, ASK COULD YOU GIVE AN ESTIMATE.

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE / BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY."

1..50000, DK

{ Kidnum=DK}

Kidrange

Could you say approximately how many school age pupils are currently being tutored through your agency. Is it...

READ OUT

IF AGENCY HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE / BRANCH, ANSWER FOR THE WHOLE AGENCY IN ENGLAND ONLY.

Could you say approximately how many pupils aged 5-16, that is Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, are currently being tutored through your agency?

1-10

11-25

26-50

51-100

101-500

More than 500?

{Ask all}

Recruit

What recruitment methods are used by your agency to attract tutors?

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

IF ASKED: WHERE DOES YOUR AGENCY ADVERTISE FOR TUTORS?

Adverts in schools

Adverts in local newspapers

Adverts in national newspapers

Agency website

Internet directories

Leaflet posting

Posters/cards in public places

Word of mouth

Yellow Pages

Speculative applications

Recommendation by a current tutor / employee
Recruitment agency
Tutor director
Other (please specify)
None of the above

{If Recruit=other}

Othrec

What other methods do you use to recruit tutors to your agency?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

{Ask all}

QualQTS

Do all, some or none of the tutors at your agency have Qualified Teacher Status?

IF ASKED, QTS IS THE ACCREDITATION REQUIRED TO TEACH IN MAINTAINED AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND."

all

some

none

{QualQTS=some or none}

Qualtch

Do all, some or none of the tutors at your agency have teaching qualifications other than QTS?

all

some

none

{Qualtch=1 or 2}

QualUK

Are all, some or none of these teaching qualifications from the UK?

all

some

none

{Qualtch=2 or 3}

Qualoth

What qualification level are tutors at your agency required to have. Is it...

PRIORITY CODE ONE ONLY. READ OUT AND WAIT AFTER EACH RESPONSE.

a degree in subject taught

a degree in any subject

A level or equivalent

Other?

None of the above (Do not read out)

{Ask all}

Exp

Are tutors required to have any teaching experience prior to tutoring at your agency?

Yes

No

It depends

{If Exp=yes or 3}

Whatexp

Please describe the teaching experience required.

INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR AMOUNT OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE, WHETHER IN SCHOOLS (PRIMARY OR SECONDARY ETC., IN ENGLAND OR ELSEWHERE) OR OTHER SETTINGS

OPEN

{Exp=yes}

Tutexp

Could I just check, are tutors required to have experience of tutoring?

Yes

No

Sometimes/it depends

{Ask all}

Permit

Are tutors at your agency permitted to work for other private tuition agencies at the same time?

Yes

No

{Ask all}

Teach

Approximately what percentage of tutors in your agency also teach in schools?

0....100

{Ask all}

CRB

Does your agency require tutors to have CRB disclosures?

Yes

No

{CRB=yes}

CRBnum

Is that all tutors or just some?

All

Some

{CRB=yes}

CRBCh

And are these CRB disclosures checked by your agency?

Yes

No

Sometimes / depends

{Ask all}

Ref

Does your agency require new tutors to submit references?

Yes

No

{Ref=yes}

Refnum

Is that all tutors or just some?

All

Some

{Ref=yes}

Refch

And are these references checked by your agency?

Yes

No

Sometimes / depends

{Ask all}

Inte

Does your agency interview tutors as part of the recruitment process?

Yes

No

{Int=yes}

Intnum

Is that all tutors or just some?

All

Some

{Ask all}

QA

Are any of the following quality assurance measures in place for tutors at your agency...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT.

Induction training

Ongoing training provided or funded by your agency

Observation of tutorials

Formal feedback from pupils

Formal feedback from parents or guardians

Other quality assurance measure?

None of the above

{If QA=other}

OthQA

What other quality assurance measures are in place for tutors at your agency?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

{Ask all}

Statu

What is the employment status of tutors at your agency?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Employed based on permanent contract

Employed based on temporary contract

Self-employed?

Other (Please specify)

{Statu=other}

OthSta

What is other type of employment of tutors at your agency?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

{Ask all}

Assign

Do new pupils and parents contact tutors from your agency directly or does the agency assign tutors to pupils?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Pupils contact tutors directly

Agency assigns tutors to pupils

Other method

{Assign=other}

Assoth

How do new clients get in touch with tutors?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

Module E: Costs

{Ask all}

Eintro

I am now going to ask you some questions about the costs of tutoring. Please continue to answer the questions as they apply to pupils aged 5 to 16 years.

Press 1 and enter.

{Ask all}

Fix

Does {textfill: name of agency} have a fixed price of tuition session?

INTERVIEWER: IF IT DEPENDS ON NUMBER OF PUPILS IN GROUP, ASK COST FOR 1 TO 1 TUTORIAL.

IF COST DEPENDS ON LENGTH OF SESSION, ASK COST FOR 60 MINUTE TUTORIAL.

Yes

No

{Fix=yes}

Fixcost

What is the fixed price per session?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN £GBP

£1.... 500

{Fix=yes}

Fixsess

What is the length of this session?

INTERVIEWER: CODE IN MINUTES.

10...500

{Fix=no}

Costint

We'd like to find out what determines the cost of a tuition session at your agency.

Press 1 and enter.

{Fix=no}

CostDet

Which of the following, if any, affect the cost of a tuition session...

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Subject

Level of learning or age

Number of pupils in the tuition session group

Location of tuition or travel costs

Length of session

Experience or qualifications of the tutor

Other factors?

None of the above

{CostDet=other}

Othcost

What other factors influence the cost of tuition session?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

OPEN

ROUTE 1 - COST DEPENDS ON SUBJECT AND LEVEL

{Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2, and Subj=1 or 2}

CostIntr1

We would like to find out the typical cost of tuition sessions at different levels at your agency.

INTERVIEWER: IF COST DEPENDS ON OTHER FACTORS, ASSUME IT IS A 1 TO 1 SESSION, TUTOR TRAVELS TO PUPIL'S HOME AND IS A QUALIFIED TEACHER

Press 1 and enter.

{Englev=1, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Eng1Exc

How much would 1 hour of English tuition at Key Stage 1 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 1 IS AGES 5-7, YEARS 1 and 2. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=2 and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Eng2Exc

How much would 1 hour of English tuition at Key Stage 2 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 2 IS AGES 7-11, YEARS 3, 4, 5 and 6. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=3 and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Eng3Exc

How much would 1 hour of English tuition at Key Stage 3 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 3 IS AGES 11-14, YEARS 7, 8 and 9. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=4, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Eng4Exc

How much would 1 hour of English tuition at Key Stage 4 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 4 IS AGES 14-16 (GCSE), YEARS 10-11. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Mathlev=1, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Mat1Exc

How much would 1 hour of Maths tuition at Key Stage 1 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 1 IS AGES 5-7, YEARS 1 and 2. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Mathlev=2, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Mat2Exc

How much would 1 hour of Maths tuition at Key Stage 2 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 2 IS AGES 7-11, YEARS 3, 4, 5 and 6. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Mathlev=3, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Mat3Exc

How much would 1 hour of Maths tuition at Key Stage 3 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 3 IS AGES 11-14, YEARS 7, 8 and 9. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Mathlev=4, and Fix=2 or DK, and CostDet=1 and 2}

Mat4Exc

How much would 1 hour of Maths tuition at Key Stage 4 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 4 IS AGES 14-16 (GCSE), YEARS 10-11. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

ROUTE 2 - COST DEPENDS ON SUBJECT BUT NOT LEVEL

{Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet=1 and #2, and Subj=1 or 2}

CostIntr2

We would like to find out the typical cost of tuition sessions at your agency.

INTERVIEWER: IF COST DEPENDS ON OTHER FACTORS, ASSUME IT IS A 1 TO 1 SESSION, TUTOR TRAVELS TO PUPIL'S HOME AND IS A QUALIFIED TEACHER

Press 1 and enter.

{Subj=2, and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet=1 and #2}

EngCost

WRITE IN £GBP.

How much would 1 hour of English tuition cost?

£1...500

{Subj=1, and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet=1 and #2}

MatCost

WRITE IN £GBP.

How much would 1 hour of Maths tuition cost?

£1...500

ROUTE 3 - COST DEPENDS ON LEVEL BUT NOT SUBJECT

{Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet=2 and #1, and Subj=1 or 2}

CostIntr3

We would like to find out the typical cost of tuition sessions at different levels at your agency.

INTERVIEWER: IF COST DEPENDS ON OTHER FACTORS, ASSUME IT IS A 1 TO 1 SESSION, TUTOR TRAVELS TO PUPIL'S HOME AND IS A QUALIFIED TEACHER

Press 1 and enter.

{Englev=1 or Mathlev=1, and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet = 2 and #1}

CLev1

How much would 1 hour of English or Maths tuition at Key Stage 1 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 1 IS AGES 5-7, YEARS 1 and 2. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=2 or Mathlev=2, and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet = 2 and #1}

CLev2

How much would 1 hour of English or Maths tuition at Key Stage 2 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 2 IS AGES 7-11, YEARS 3, 4, 5 and 6. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=3 or Mathlev=3 and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet = 2 and ≠1}

CLev3

How much would 1 hour of English or Maths tuition at Key Stage 3 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 3 IS AGES 11-14, YEARS 7, 8 and 9. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

{Englev=4 or Mathlev=4, and Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet = 2 and ≠1}

CLev4

How much would 1 hour of English or Maths tuition at Key Stage 4 cost?

INTERVIEWER: IF ASKED, KEY STAGE 4 IS AGES 14-16 (GCSE), YEARS 10-11. WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

ROUTE 4 – COST DETERMINED BY FACTORS OTHER THAN SUBJECT AND LEVEL

{Fix=2 or DK, and Costdet≠ 1 or 2, and Subj=1 or 2}

CostIntr4

You mentioned that the cost of tuition at your agency does not depend on subject or level taught. How much would a typical 1 hour session of English or Maths tuition cost?

WRITE IN £GBP.

£1...500

Module F: Business development

{Ask all}

Fintro

Now we come to some final questions about your agency.

Press 1 and enter.

{Ask all}

Busad

What recruitment methods are used by your agency to attract potential pupils...

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

IF ASKED: WHERE DOES YOUR AGENCY ADVERTISE FOR PUPILS

Adverts in schools

Adverts in local newspapers

Adverts in national newspapers

Agency website

Internet directories

Leaflet posting

Posters / cards in public places

Word of mouth

Yellow Pages

Other (please specify)

None of the above

{Busad=other}

Othbus

Which other methods does your agency use to source its business?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM

{Ask all}

Seas

Does your agency experience seasonal variation in demand for tutoring?

Yes

No

Not sure / don't know

{Seas=Yes}

Busy

Which are the busiest months of the year?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

{Ask all}

Long

Could you say how long your agency has been in business?

STRING

Contact

Before we finish, I'd like to check we have the right contact details for your agency.

Press 1 and enter.

Nam

Please could I take your name?

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE RECORD FULL NAME IF ASKED, FOR SENDING FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

STRING[250]

Role

And can I check - are you the manager of ^ANam?

yes

no

Chkadd

Is the address of your agency ...READ OUT...

DISPLAY

yes

no

{Chkadd=no}

Newadd

PLEASE COLLECT CORRECT ADDRESS OF AGENCY"

STRING[250]

{Chkadd=no}

ConAdd

INTERVIEWER: DOUBLE CHECK ADDRESS.

Othag

Sometimes, agencies have more than one name. Is ^AName known by any other name or names?

yes

no

Othnam

What are the other names of ^AName?

PLEASE COLLECT OTHER NAMES OF AGENCY

STRING[250]

{Role=yes}

More

Do you manage any agencies other than ^AName?

yes

no

{More=yes}

Agnam

What is the name of the other agency or agencies that you manage?

PLEASE COLLECT NAMES OF OTHER AGENCIES THAT RESPONDENT RUNS.

OPEN

{Ask all}

Recon

If the organisations carrying out this study have any further questions, we may like to contact some agencies again in the future. Would you be willing to be re-contacted either by the National Centre for Social Research or the Institute of Education? Again, all your answers will be treated in strictest confidence.

yes

no

Thank

That is the end of the interview. Thank you very much for taking part in this survey.

Appendix D Advance letter for agency survey

Dear (Title Surname) or (Sir / Madam),

Research into Private Tuition in England

As part of the Government's drive to improve pupil attainment, from 2009 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind. To inform this work, the DCSF has commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Institute of Education (IoE) to investigate the market of private tuition providers in England. The primary aim of the study is to find out more about the types of education services offered to pupils aged 5-16 by private tuition agencies in England. As part of this study, we would like to ask for your help by taking part in a short telephone interview, lasting approximately 20 minutes.

The interview will cover issues such as the subjects and levels covered by the agency, the number of tutors and the cost of tuition. More detail about the interview topics is provided on the reverse of this letter.

An interviewer from NatCen will contact your agency by telephone in September or October to arrange a convenient time for an interview. We would like to speak to either the agency manager or another suitable agency employee who is able to answer the questions. We would be grateful if, prior to the interview, you could prepare any information that may not be immediately to hand such as the number of tutors and pupils.

Participation in the study is voluntary and your answers will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The findings will be reported without reference to you or anyone in your agency.

As a thank you for taking part, a summary of findings on the characteristics of private tuition in England will be sent to agencies that take part in the study, following publication of the report.

We do hope that you will agree to take part in this study. Your help is much appreciated. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me on 020 7549 8580.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Tanner
Project Manager

The following topics will be discussed during the interview:

- The geographical coverage of the agency
- Subject areas and subject levels offered
- Content of tuition, e.g., individualized sessions, exam prep
- Mode of tuition, e.g., one-to-one, group, on-line tutorials
- Where tutoring takes place
- Number of tutors currently registered with agency
- Number of tutors actively tutoring in the past month
- Number of pupils currently tutored through agency
- Qualification and experience requirements for tutors
- Quality assurance procedures
- Cost of tutorials and factors that influence the cost
- Advertising methods for recruiting tutors and pupils

Appendix E Follow-up letter for agency survey

Dear (Title Surname) or (Sir / Madam),

Research into Private Tuition in England

We wrote to you in September to ask for your help with this study that we are carrying out for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). As you may recall, we asked you to consider taking part in a short telephone interview, lasting approximately 20 minutes.

Our interviewers have had difficulty in reaching you by telephone and we would be grateful if you could let us know a suitable telephone number and arrange a time for interview. The final day for interviews is Friday 24th October, so we would be most grateful if you could get in touch as soon as possible so that we can include your agency. Please contact Emily Tanner on 0207 549 8580 e.tanner@natcen.ac.uk or Ola Turczuk on 020 7549 9572 o.turczuk@natcen.ac.uk. If you think your agency is not eligible to take part in this survey, it would be helpful if you could inform us of this.

We are very keen to include as many as possible of our sampled private tuition agencies in the research so that it is properly representative of different types of agencies and different areas. A summary of findings on the characteristics of private tuition in England will be sent to agencies that take part in the study, following publication of the report.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Tanner
Project Manager

Appendix F Advance letter A for qualitative interviews

Dear [Click here and type recipient name]

Private Tuition in England

I am writing to ask for your help regarding important research with private tutors that is being undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). We have obtained your contact details from publicity and marketing materials within your local area.

As you may already know, as part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the DCSF will be introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind. There has previously been little research into the private tuition market so, to inform this work, the DCSF has commissioned NatCen, an independent social research institute, and the Institute of Education (IoE) to explore the market of private tuition providers in England. The primary aims of the study are to understand: how tuition providers find clients; how children's tuition needs are assessed; and, the nature and content of private tuition sessions, including their frequency, length, cost and location.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Researchers will be talking to private tutors via individual in-depth interviews. These will last approximately one-and-a-half hours and will take place at a time and location convenient for individual tutors. Everyone who takes part in an interview will receive £30 as a thank you for giving up their time and sharing their thoughts and views. Everything discussed will be treated in the strictest confidence and it will not be possible to identify any individual in the research report.

One of our researchers may try to contact you shortly to tell you more about the research study and invite your participation. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 7549 9574 or at n.day@natcen.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Day
Researcher
Qualitative Research Unit, NatCen

Appendix G Advance letter B and contact details form for qualitative interviews

Dear [Click here and type recipient name]

Private Tuition in England

I am writing to ask for your help regarding important research with private tutors that is being undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). We have obtained your contact details from publicity and marketing materials within your local area.

As you may already know, as part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the DCSF will be introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind. There has previously been little research into the private tuition market so, to inform this work, the DCSF has commissioned NatCen, an independent social research institute, and the Institute of Education (IoE) to explore the market of private tuition providers in England. The primary aims of the study are to understand: how tuition providers find clients; how children's tuition needs are assessed; and, the nature and content of private tuition sessions, including their frequency, length, cost and location.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Researchers will be talking to private tutors via individual in-depth interviews. These will last approximately one-and-a-half hours and will take place at a time and location convenient for individual tutors. Everyone who takes part in an interview will receive £30 as a thank you for giving up their time and sharing their thoughts and views. Everything discussed will be treated in the strictest confidence and it will not be possible to identify any individual in the research report.

If you are interested in participating in this research and would like to hear more about it, please contact me by telephone on 020 7549 9574 or by email at n.day@natcen.ac.uk. [For those contacted by letter only: Alternatively, please complete the enclosed contact details form and send it to us in the freepost envelope provided.]

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Day
Researcher
Qualitative Research Unit, NatCen

Private Tuition in England

If you would be interested in taking part or in hearing more about this study, please let us have your contact details and we'll get in touch.

Your full name:

Your full address, including postcode:

Your telephone number, including full code:

Please tick when we can use this number:

morning

afternoon

evening

Or, if you prefer, your email address:

Thank you very much!

Please return the form, in the pre-paid envelope, to:
Naomi Day, NatCen, 35 Northampton Square, London EC1V 0AX

If you would like any more information about the study before sending us the form, please contact Naomi Day at NatCen on 020 7549 9574 or at n.day@natcen.ac.uk.

Appendix H Advance letter C for qualitative interviews

Dear [Click here and type recipient name]

Private Tuition in England

As part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) will be introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind. There has previously been little research into the private tuition market so, to inform this work, the DCSF has commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Institute of Education (IoE) to explore the market of private tuition providers in England. The primary aims of the study are to understand: how tuition providers find clients; how children's tuition needs are assessed; and, the nature and content of private tuition sessions, including their frequency, length, cost and location.

I am writing to you to ask for your assistance with the identification of private tutors to invite to participate in this study. In order to comply with Data Protection legislation, it will be necessary for tutors registered with your agency to first consent to their contact details to be passed to us at NatCen (in order for us then to seek consent for interview). This would involve you sending letters to a number of private tutors on NatCen's behalf to provide information about the study (this letter would be provided by us). Tutors who *do not* wish for their contact details to be passed on to NatCen and are not interested in taking part would have the opportunity to opt-out of the research by contacting your agency within a specified time frame. After this time period, you will be able to pass the contact details of tutors who have not opted-out to NatCen and we will contact them directly to invite their participation in the study.

I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that information gathered during the research will remain confidential and it will not be possible to identify individuals or tuition agencies that participate in the final written report. All data will be handled and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

We very much hope you will be able to help us with this study. A member of the research team will contact you shortly to discuss the research further. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 7549 9574 or at n.day@natcen.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Day
Researcher
Qualitative Research Unit, NatCen

Appendix I Advance letter D for qualitative interviews

Dear [Click here and type recipient name]

Private Tuition in England

I am writing to ask for your help regarding important research with private tutors that is being undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

As part of the Government's drive to improve progression and attainment for all pupils, from 2009 the DCSF will be introducing a national programme of individual tuition for pupils who are falling behind. There has previously been little research into the private tuition market so, to inform this work, the DCSF has commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Institute of Education (IoE) to explore the market of private tuition providers in England. The primary aims of the study are to understand: how tuition providers find clients; how children's tuition needs are assessed; and, the nature and content of private tuition sessions, including their frequency, length, cost and location.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Researchers will be talking to private tutors via individual in-depth interviews. These will last approximately one-and-a-half hours and will take place at a time and location convenient for individual tutors. Everyone who takes part in an interview will receive £30 as a thank you for giving up their time and sharing their thoughts and views. Everything discussed will be treated in the strictest confidence and it will not be possible to identify any individual or tuition agency in the research report.

We hope that you will decide to take part in this study. If, however, you do not want a researcher to contact you, please either write to **[agency contact name]** at **[agency address]** or telephone **[him / her]** on **[agency contact number]** leaving your name before **[date]**. If we have not heard from you by then, we will provide the research organisation with your contact details and one of their research team may contact you to discuss your participation in the study.

If you have any queries or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact **[agency contact name]** on **[agency contact number]**.

Yours sincerely,

[agency contact name]

Objectives

The objectives for this element of the study are to gather more detailed information about the nature of private tuition transactions, specifically to understand:

- how tuition providers find clients;
- how private tutors assess children's tuition needs;
- the nature of private tuition sessions, including their frequency, length, cost and location;
- the content of private tuition sessions.

1. Introduction to NatCen and study

Aim: *to introduce the research, clarify the content of the interview, and explain confidentiality.*

- Overview of private tuition study, including aims and objectives and overview of different components
- Introduction to researcher, NatCen, and involvement with study
- Explain recording, length (about 1.5 hours) and nature of discussion, outputs / reporting and data storage issues
- Explain confidentiality and anonymity
- Explain that they may withdraw at any time from interview as whole, and do not have to answer any questions they would prefer not to
- Check whether they have any questions
- Check that they are happy to continue

2. Background

Aim: *to clarify respondent's background in and experience of private tuition, and establish their current tutoring activities.*

- Length of time as a private tutor
- How became a private tutor, reasons for
- Professional background and/or qualifications
 - Probe for subject area qualifications, teaching qualifications, other specialisms e.g. special educational needs (SEN)
- Current private tuition activities
 - working pattern e.g. full-time or part-time private tutor, any other employment
 - whether associated with any agency, which, for how long

- modes of tuition undertaken e.g. one-to-one, pairs, groups, on-line
- types of students taught
- subjects taught
- at what levels / ages
- workload - current number of clients/hours of tutoring per week
- Geographical area within which respondent tutors e.g. towns / areas included/not included and reasons for, clients furthest and nearest tutor's home / agency
- Historical private tuition activities
 - any change in focus of tuition/types of tuition activities undertaken, reasons for
- Local private tuition context
 - Area characteristics e.g. profile of children at school age; level of area deprivation; number, size, types of schools in area, any particular educational needs within the area
 - Local demand for and take-up of private tuition, reasons for

3. Accessing clients / students

Aim: to explore how individual tutors access students/clients, including promotion activities and rationale for registering with private tuition agencies.

- How currently access students. *Probe: reasons for using/not using each; relative use of / proportion of clients that come from each; importance of each for accessing clients; pros and cons of using different methods:*
 - Private tuition agency
 - Promotional activities undertaken individually e.g. print advertising, leafleting, yellow pages, website, etc.
 - Word-of-mouth - which networks involved e.g. students, parents, schools, other private tutors
 - Use of professional or other networks
 - Other
- Most and least fruitful avenues for accessing clients/what works well and less well, reasons for. *Probe for any differences by type of student, tutoring need, subject, level, etc.*
- Differences in types of students accessed via different avenues, reasons for
- Perceived gaps in types of clients reached via current methods for accessing students, reasons for, implications of

4. Making arrangements for private tuition sessions

Aim: to explore how private tutors make arrangements for delivering tuition, including gaining an understanding of how they make assessments of students' needs.

- How decide whether to provide private tuition services
 - subjects requested
 - level of study / attainment and need
 - age of student
 - demand for services
 - other criteria (e.g. special educational needs, student location/geographic area)
- How are individual students' needs initially assessed - role of tutor, student, parents, school teachers, agency (*where relevant*) in assessment
- How arrangements for private tuition sessions are made, with/by whom, level of flexibility that exists for arrangements
 - timing
 - location
 - frequency and number of sessions
 - mode of tuition (e.g. one-to-one, paired, etc)
- Agreeing cost of tuition - factors influencing cost of private tuition sessions
 - *probe for variation by:* location of delivery; subject taught; age of child; level of tutoring; mode of tuition; length of sessions; number of sessions
 - extent to which cost negotiated, between whom e.g. tutor, parents, student, agency (*where relevant*), or fixed
 - average cost of tuition session by age of child and subject / level taught (i.e. KS2/3/4) / number of children within a session / tutor group (*probe for Maths and English*)
- Other arrangements
 - nature of any agreement/contract with parents / students - content, format (e.g. verbal, written)
 - nature of any safety/quality assurances to parents (e.g. CRB check, references) *Probe for frequency of parental enquiry about CRB status*

5. Delivering private tuition

Aim: to explore private tutors' approaches to and experiences of delivering private tuition, including the content of private tuition sessions and factors that influence content.

Content of private tuition sessions

- Ask tutor to describe a 'typical' tuition session for two of his/her current or recent students
- Ask that the tutor chooses students who differ in terms of the subject studied / their level of achievement / their age / their specific learning needs

Probe for:

- How content decided
- Who involved in deciding content e.g. student, tutor, school, parent, agency
- Factors affecting content e.g. Key Stage/level, student needs
- Flexibility of content and factors influencing this
- Style of tuition and factors influencing style
- How is student progress monitored (e.g. level of attainment), who involved in monitoring e.g. school, parents, student, tutor, agency
- Current arrangements for measuring / assessing quality of provision
- Arrangements for feedback on private tuition sessions between tutor and parents, student, school
- Current arrangements for communication with student's school / teachers
- Perceptions of current integration of private tuition with classroom tuition, scope for improving this, barriers and facilitators, benefits and disadvantages
- Barriers / facilitators to successful outcomes of private tuition

6. Concluding thoughts

Aim: to gather private tutors' final thoughts on their approaches to and experiences of private tuition.

- Perceptions of key challenges facing private tutors now and in the future (e.g. level of demand for private tuition, other market conditions, type / level of tuition requested, other)
- Feelings about private tuition and future plans as a tutor
- Any further, final thoughts

Thank and end

Appendix K Analytic Framework for qualitative interviews

To include in generic column (repeated on each chart):

- interview serial number (i.e. MA01, etc.)
- routes for accessing students (i.e. agency / independent / both)
- subjects tutored (i.e. Maths / English / other)
- Key Stage (i.e. KS2 / KS3 / KS4)
- qualifications (i.e. QTS / other / none)
-

1	Background and accessing students	Details
1.1	Overview private tuition experience	<i>Length of time as tutor, qualifications, reasons for becoming a tutor</i>
1.2	Current private tuition activities	<i>Description of current private tuition work: working patterns, numbers of tutors/hours taught each week, subjects taught, Key Stages and ages of students, factors determining nature of current work.</i>
1.3	Local private tuition context	<i>Area within which the respondent tutors, area characteristics, local demand and take up of private tuition, reasons for.</i>
1.4	Accessing students	<i>Details of how they access students e.g. via private tuition agency, promotional activities, word of mouth, other professional/networks. Extent to which use each.</i>
1.5	Advantages / disadvantages of access via private tuition agency	<i>Details of pros/cons, relative importance of this route, any differences in types of students accessed this way, any perceived gaps in the types of students accessed.</i>
1.6	Advantages / disadvantages of access via other methods (promotional activities; word of mouth; networks)	<i>For each: details of pros/cons, relative importance of this route, any differences in types of students accessed this way, any perceived gaps in the types of students accessed.</i>
1.7	Other	

2	Making arrangements for private tuition sessions	<i>Details</i>
2.1	Factors affecting the decision to provide private tuition services	<i>Factors involved in decision to provide tuition services (e.g. subject, level of attainment, age of student, demand for services, other criteria). Relative importance of each.</i>
2.2	Assessing student needs	<i>Description of how needs are initially assessed, including the role of each of: tutor, student, parent, school, agency.</i>
2.3	Arrangements for private tuition sessions	<i>How arrangements are made and with whom, level of flexibility (e.g. timing, location, frequency/no. of sessions, mode of tuition), nature of any agreements with parents (e.g. verbal/written agreement)</i>
2.4	The cost of tuition	<i>What factors influence the cost of private tuition sessions, extent to which price is negotiated, any role played by an agency, details of typical costs and any variations (e.g. by subject, location, Key Stage)</i>
2.5	Quality assurance/safety	<i>Nature of any safety assurances (e.g. CRB checks), quality assurances (e.g. references), how often requested by parents/students/agency. How tutor quality is measured/monitored. Nature of any training for tutors.</i>
2.6	Other	

3	Delivering private tuition	<i>Details</i>
3.1	Content of private tuition sessions	<i>Nature of content and style of tuition, factors affecting this and level of flexibility involved. Nature of any materials and how used. (NB: note any differences by type of student e.g. age, Key Stage, etc.</i>
3.2	Monitoring student progress	<i>How student progress is monitored, who involved (NB: note any differences by type of student e.g. age, Key Stage, etc.). Any arrangements for feedback between tutor-parent-student-school. Level of integration with classroom work, scope for enhancing this, perceived related benefits.</i>
3.3	Barriers/facilitators to successful outcomes of private tuition	<i>What is perceived as a successful outcome, barriers/facilitators to success (e.g. the nature of the tuition, the needs/circumstances of students, role of tutor, style of tuition).</i>
3.4	Key challenges for private tutors/future plans	<i>Details of key challenges tutors face currently and in the future. Future plans for private tuition and reasons for.</i>
3.5	Other	

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