

Student Demographics Report

Introduction

A questionnaire, aiming to explore the demographics of our student (tutee) population at CTI, was sent out in the summer of 2020 with 359 students responding. Our tutees are all of secondary school age (11-18 years old) and were all receiving, or awaiting to receive, age appropriate academic tutoring.

We collected this data as part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion to ensure we are reaching those students disadvantaged by the pandemic or otherwise. This report intends to summarise these findings and highlight if we are reaching the students who are most in need of our tutoring.

NB: Any question left blank where most others were answered were categorised as “Prefer not to say”.

Gender and Ethnicity

The CTI student population is predominantly female, making up just over 79% of those who responded to the questionnaire (see Fig.1) with approximately 17% being male. We are currently investigating this gender imbalance.

Data concerning the proportion of ethnicities within CTI, as shown in Figure 2, clearly demonstrates a fairly diverse student population. For example, 54% of our students (the largest proportion) were identified as people of colour compared to the National Average of 80.5% identifying as white British. However, we are not complacent and understand the commitment that is needed to continue to diversify our CTI community. We are striving to ensure we are helping those most disadvantaged by Coronavirus.

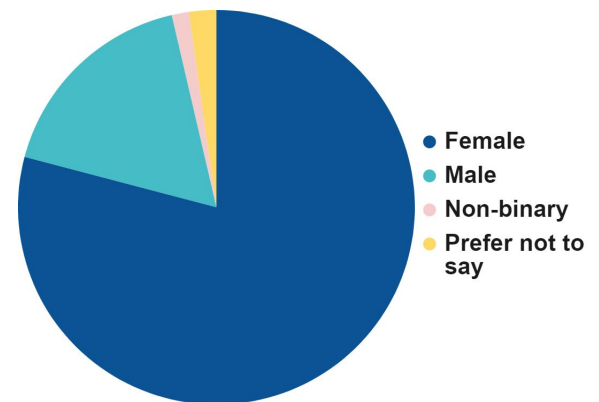


Figure 1: Proportion of genders within the CTI student population.

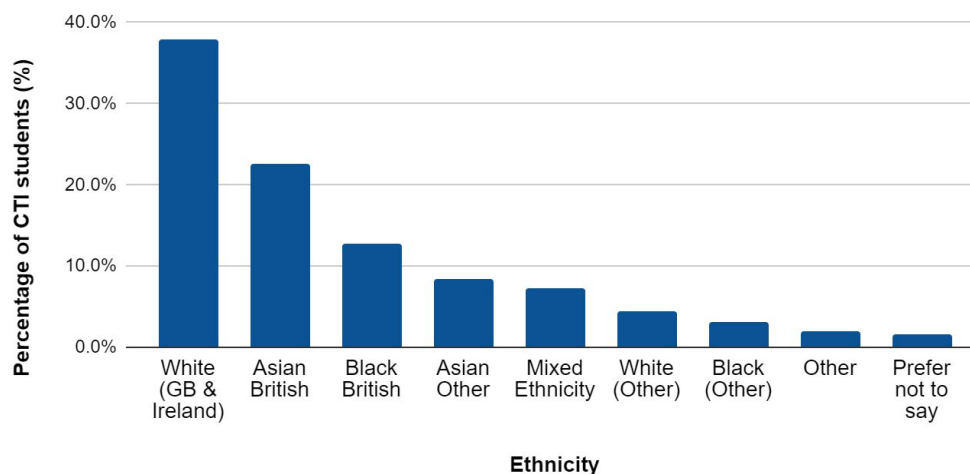


Figure 2: CTI student ethnicity demographics represented as a percentage of the total tutee population.

Below (Figure 3) is a map highlighting the different countries our CTI students or their families have come from. This is likely to be a significant underestimate as many students chose to not specify countries and only mentioned continents/geographical areas. However, it did not feel appropriate to highlight whole continents as this would be an overestimation, and more importantly a misrepresentation, of the ethnic demographic of our students. However, it is included to show the already widespread impact of CTI.



Figure 3: Highlighted map of specific nationalities within the CTI student population. The continents or general geographical regions mentioned (e.g. Europe, Africa, Caribbean) are not highlighted to avoid misrepresentation. Made using: <https://mapchart.net/world.html> .

Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD)

Our data showed that 6.1% of students identified as having either a disability or specific learning difficulty. 45.5% of students were identified as having a specific learning difficulty, making up almost half of the group. The other reported disabilities, indicating to a disadvantage in education, are listed below in figure 4.

Type of disability	Percentage of students with a known disability
Specific learning difficulty	45.5%
Autistic spectrum disorder or Asperger's syndrome	18.2%
Long standing illnesses (i.e. diabetes, epilepsy and heart conditions)	9.1%
Other	9.1%
Prefer not to say	9.1%
Deaf or serious hearing impairment	4.5%
Two or more of the above	4.5%

Figure 4: Table demonstrating the different disabilities present in the CTI student population data. The Specific learning difficulties mentioned include dyslexia and dyspraxia, which we have grouped here for ease of breakdown. Long standing illnesses mentioned include diabetes, epilepsy and heart conditions.

Free School Meals

The data collected showed that 23.7% of students were either receiving or had received free school meals at some point. This value is higher than the national average of free school meal eligibility (at 17.3%) (1). However, this was as expected, because we would hope to be helping those most disadvantaged and therefore would expect a higher proportion. However, while it can be seen as a key marker for disadvantage, it is important to remember that disadvantage is incredibly multi-faceted and is often not determined by one factor only.

Educational background

School type

One particular worry we had was whether our tutoring was reaching those in need of it most, rather than those pupils at very well-performing or private schools. This was of even greater importance following the Government's handling of results in favouring the aforementioned school types.

However, the most common school type among our students, at 45.4%, was schools other than an Academy, Grammar or Independent (i.e. Comprehensive schools). Additionally, Independent schools made up the smallest proportion at only 3.6% of students (see Fig 5). It is important to note that while academies made up 35.4% of our total CTI student population, they are generally non-selective and make up just over $\frac{1}{3}$ of the schools with an "inadequate" OFSTED rating.

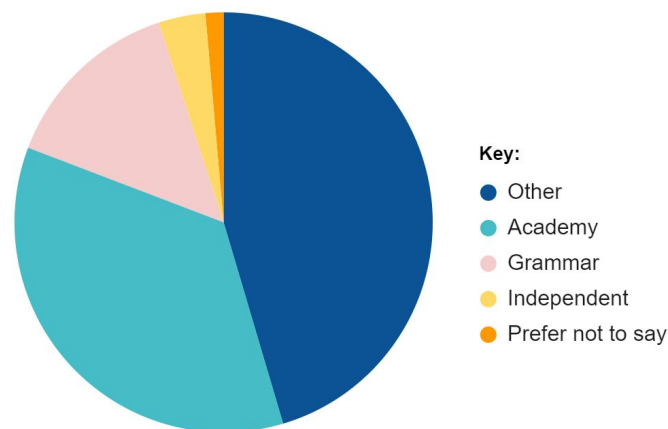


Figure 5: Pie chart representing the proportion of students at different school types within CTI. The category "Other" indicates schools not of the other categories and therefore more likely to be disadvantaged most significantly by Coronavirus e.g. state funded comprehensive schools.

Private tuition

We found that 13.4% of our students felt they had the means to afford private tutoring with 60.7% stating they could not. The rest of the population stated that either they were unsure or preferred not to say.

Only 10% were receiving private tuition outside of their CTI tutoring in a range of subjects. The most common subjects were: Maths, English, Science and Languages. Although, the majority of tutees (89.1%) were not receiving any private tutoring outside of CTI.

Challenges impacting education

Many students reported some level of difficulty in their education, putting them at a disadvantage. These included: health, financial, social, academic and family reasons. Specifically, health reasons mentioned were mental health, being a carer and parental health.

One of the most common difficulties were attributed to academic reasons such as poor teaching, English being their second language and low OFSTED ratings. A key impact which was mentioned by students, which is directly related to the Coronavirus pandemic, is the lack of online lessons. As a result of this, those students (including those who received inadequate online teaching or did not have the access to this teaching) would have largely missed out on required content. Thus, putting them at a disadvantage to their peers. It is also important to note that this problem has not been solved with the re-opening of schools across the country. Many educational studies have shown that this learning loss will actually be compounded, as students that were unable to or did not receive lessons online will fall further behind their peer group as teaching moves on without consolidation of learning from this time.

Predominantly those students that reported financial difficulties stated they were from low socioeconomic background and/or had to have a part time job. Some students expressed that bullying at school and disruptive neighbours had, in some way, had an impact on their education (social reasons).

Additionally, those who reported family reasons outside of the financial listed reasons included: being from a single parent household, having divorced parents, having a large family or having both parents working.

Finally, mental health was mentioned frequently as putting individuals at an educational disadvantage. However, it was not reported as frequently under the disability question, potentially due to age or lack of knowledge that it can be classed as a disability. Therefore, in further data collection, this will be made more clear.

Reasons behind signing up for CTI

Many cited the pandemic as their main reason but answers varied for this question. One of the most common reasons was that CTI had been recommended to them by a variety of people such as friends, teachers and universities (including access schemes and firm choices). Many also stated a big appeal was that the initiative is free.

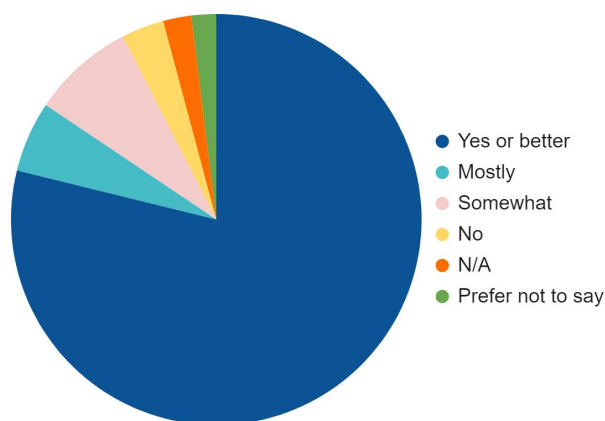
Conscientiousness played a large part in many students signing up, for example, not wanting to fall behind or wanting to achieve better grades. However, others claimed they did so due to not having any or inadequate online lessons with many not feeling comfortable contacting their teachers or not receiving responses.

Additionally, tutees generally liked the idea that university students were primarily the ones offering the tutoring (with the exception of some teachers and graduates), as they can give an insight into university.

Experience of CTI

78.8% of students said their experience of CTI was as good as or had even exceeded their expectations. Many expressed how they were surprised at the level quality of tutoring and professionalism from a free service run by university students. Additionally, only very small percentages of students had views less positive than this, see Fig 6. Furthermore, only 3.3% of students said that CTI had not met their expectations.

However, there were mixed feelings regarding the tutoring platform used (Bramble) with some individuals finding it hard to use with others reporting the exact opposite. Lastly, some students experienced better quality tutoring, with regard to experience and effort, from some tutors more than others. Additionally, it was voiced that some students hadn't had replies from tutors. However, it is unclear if this was followed up or if there was a reply after the data was collected.



Overall, as shown by Figure 6, the experience of CTI had been mostly positive.

Figure 6: Pie chart representing how students' experiences of CTI compared to their initial expectations. N/A refers to the students answering not yet having a full experience to be able to comment.

Ease with tutors

Students filling out the questionnaire were asked if they felt the gender, race or background of their tutor made a difference to how they felt with them. The majority said this did not matter, while many were unsure.

A few students made the point that the background of a student may make a difference for example, a German native, speaking German. Some commented that they would have preferred to be matched with a tutor of the same gender, denoting that the gender of their tutor did make a difference. Additionally,

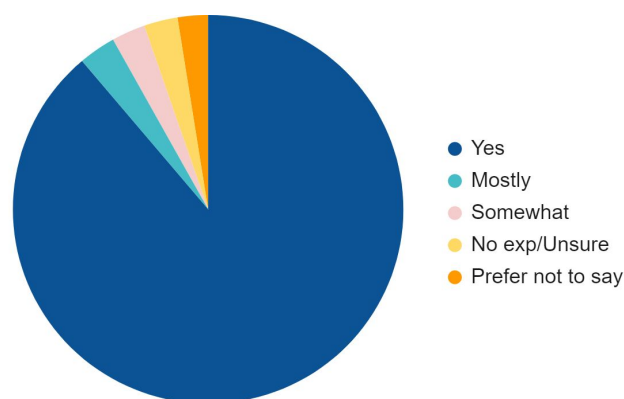


Figure 7: Pie chart representing to what extent students felt at ease with their tutors. No exp/unsure refers to the student feeling like they did not yet have adequate experience to comment.

presence of a language barrier was mentioned as making tutoring more difficult. Others expressed worries about being discriminated against due to their race. However at CTI, any form of discrimination is not tolerated under any circumstances and will be taken seriously. It is our highest priority to ensure that all members of our community feel safe and should never feel discriminated against when using our service.

Students also thought it would have been easier to get along with someone that is similar to themselves but that this would not affect tutoring overall.

Despite worries about these factors potentially having an impact on tutoring, 88.6% of students said they felt at ease with their tutors, with <1% expressing that they did not feel at ease (see Fig 7).

Further comments

From the further comments section, students gave multiple suggestions including changing the platform (Bramble) to another, providing training to tutors to ensure a standard is met, and potentially having more experienced tutors. Additionally, many said that CTI needed greater advertising, which we have now addressed. Some also indicated that there should be more subjects on offer and for there to be greater consideration of those with other school systems (e.g. the Scottish system).

Additionally from the data we collected, there were many questions about CTI for example how long the initiative would last for, if students in different countries can receive tutoring or if they can meet their tutors properly.

Overall, there was an overwhelming expression of gratitude from students for CTI and many expressed how much they have enjoyed tutoring.

Conclusion

The data collected from this questionnaire indicates we are reaching the right audience and helping those most disadvantaged. It suggests that there are few, if any, students within our population cheating the system and having tuition where they could afford it otherwise or are not disadvantaged.

We were happy to see that our student population is fairly diverse. However, we understand the importance and necessity of continuing to diversify our CTI population. We are passionate and committed to ensure our CTI community is entirely representative.

Overall, the opinion of CTI has been incredibly positive, with many of the students thanking us for being there in the midst of mass disruption to education and all other areas of life. Despite

this, we know that we can always improve. Thus, we will continue to ensure that we are reaching those students whose education is most affected by factors outside of their control.