Design Thinking

Research objectives and interview/survey design

There will be two main categories of user for my application: clients (i.e. the looked-after children) and tutors (i.e. undergraduate students). I have created surveys for each. These were designed such that the questions could be used for interviews instead but were created as Google Forms surveys suspecting that – in the case of clients at least, for obvious safeguarding reasons – speaking directly to prospective users might be difficult.

During my time as an undergraduate, I have never agreed to be interviewed for somebody else’s work but have completed plenty of surveys for people conducting research projects. Therefore, I suspected I was more likely to solicit responses from students if I sent them surveys than if I immediately asked whether they were open to interviews. The tutor survey asks respondents to leave an email address if they are willing to be interviewed.

Following a discussion with a lecturer, I decided to create a third survey. This is designed to find out how staff in children’s homes feel about their children’s education. Staff will have opinions which may be informative and since I am sending surveys to staff for distribution to children, I may as well try to survey the staff too.

The surveys include several open-ended questions intended to solicit anecdotes, which should give some insight into how respondents think and feel about the topics of homework, help available, academic performance of LAC and safeguarding measures that might be implemented in my application.

Before writing survey/interview questions, it was necessary to consider exactly what information I hoped to collect. I wrote some general research questions for each group, which are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Clients | Tutors |
| 1. How do they feel about their experiences of formal education, generally? 2. How do they feel about homework, generally? 3. What do they consider particularly difficult about school? 4. If they could do anything at all to improve their education, what would they do? | 1. Are they prepared to allocate some of their time to helping kids with homework? 2. What obstacles might prevent them from doing so? 3. What would motivate them to give some time for tutoring/mentoring? |

Links to surveys

The survey for children is [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ziqkeJzr0XEJm7cDhjAM_RRk4Qxv5ASIx9NHg7z1cTM/edit).

The survey for undergraduates (prospective tutors) is [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1D9qK7uuCnU0Ua6MwhP4l8vwfcrMkMjQVEbQiLuOb-Bg/edit).

The survey for staff responsible for looking after children is [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XD39jyo4e0N2DLw5fatDZLqMUiPnOuSIP2eKFtkhj9E/edit).

These links should all open the surveys in edit mode, so that the marker can see all sections and questions: depending on answers in the first section of each, a respondent may be skipped to the end because their responses are unlikely to be informative for me. Obviously when I have sent surveys to people, I have used a different link where the survey is not accessed in edit mode.

Empathy maps

I had to completely fictionalise everything from here because predictably - and as has happened previously when trying to research user needs - I have completely failed to have any contact with stakeholders.

Empathy Map (Client)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Say**  The other kids seem to understand but I don’t.  When I try hard I still do badly, so why even bother?  Nobody cares how I do at school.  After I leave school, I will never use any of what I learnt here again anyway.  How is an application going to make any difference to me? | **Think**  Why is this person trying to do this?  Loads of people do badly at school but end up alright, does it really matter?  They’re only trying to make this website to make themselves feel/look better, it’s not really about us kids. |
| **Do**  Try to figure things out from YouTube videos and internet forums.  Plagiarise other children’s’ homework.  Stop listening during lessons.  Put the absolute minimum effort into homework.  Look at existing online tuition applications and services for comparison with my proposal. | **Feel**  Frustration, apathy, exclusion, shame, isolation, anger, disappointment, indifference, distrust of those looking to help. |

Empathy map (tutor)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Say**  I don’t really have time to spare for this.  What’s my incentive/motivation to participate?  What about safeguarding, would I have to be DBS checked?  How will the tuition actually be delivered?  Who is paying me and how?  Do I get some kind of qualification or something I can put on my CV? | **Think**  I’m already stressed enough with my university workload, don’t need any additional stress!  They shouldn’t let just any student become a tutor, what about safeguarding? |
| **Do**  Socialising, partying.  Video games.  Visiting museums and art galleries.  Student union societies.  Sports and other hobbies.  Casual dating.  Looking at existing tuition applications and services for comparison with my proposed service. | **Feel**  Stressed, anxious, imposter syndrome, deprived of what little free time they have. |

Customer journey map (child/client)

Table

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Customer journey map (tutor)

Table

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Point of view statement (client)

Sam, a fifteen-year-old boy beginning year eleven of secondary school, needs to access affordable catch-up tuition because he will sit his GCSE exams in a few months, he has struggled throughout school to keep up with his peers academically and he wants to do an apprenticeship which requires him to have five GCSEs.

Point of view statement (tutor)

Tanya, a twenty-year-old in her second year of undergraduate studies, needs a way to financially supplement her student loans, flexibly and at her convenience, because she has too much coursework to have time for a traditional job and the standard of living afforded to her by maintenance loans leaves much to be desired.

How might we..?

1. How might we ensure safeguarding whilst digitally facilitating private tuition of vulnerable children, without making it so onerous to register as a tutor that nobody bothers?
2. How might we motivate children to ask for help with their homework if they are frustrated and disillusioned with formal education?
3. How might we reframe doing well at school as cool and desirable?
4. How might we persuade local authority Virtual School Heads to allocate funding to my service, which can be used to pay tutors?
5. How might we persuade schools themselves to allocate some Pupil Premium grant funding to private tuition for looked-after pupils?
6. How else might we motivate students to participate as tutors, besides financial payment?

Mind map

Diagram

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Storyboards (child user)

Diagram

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Storyboard (tutor)

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