

# Launch of SOPHIA Aims to Drive Regulation in £2 Billion Private Tuition Sector

The private tutor market will be getting a boost with the launch of Sophia, a mobile application that provides students of all ages with tutors that have not only been meticulously security and experienced checked, but are required to fulfil a paid-for Safeguarding Awareness course to ensure both students and tutors are protected.

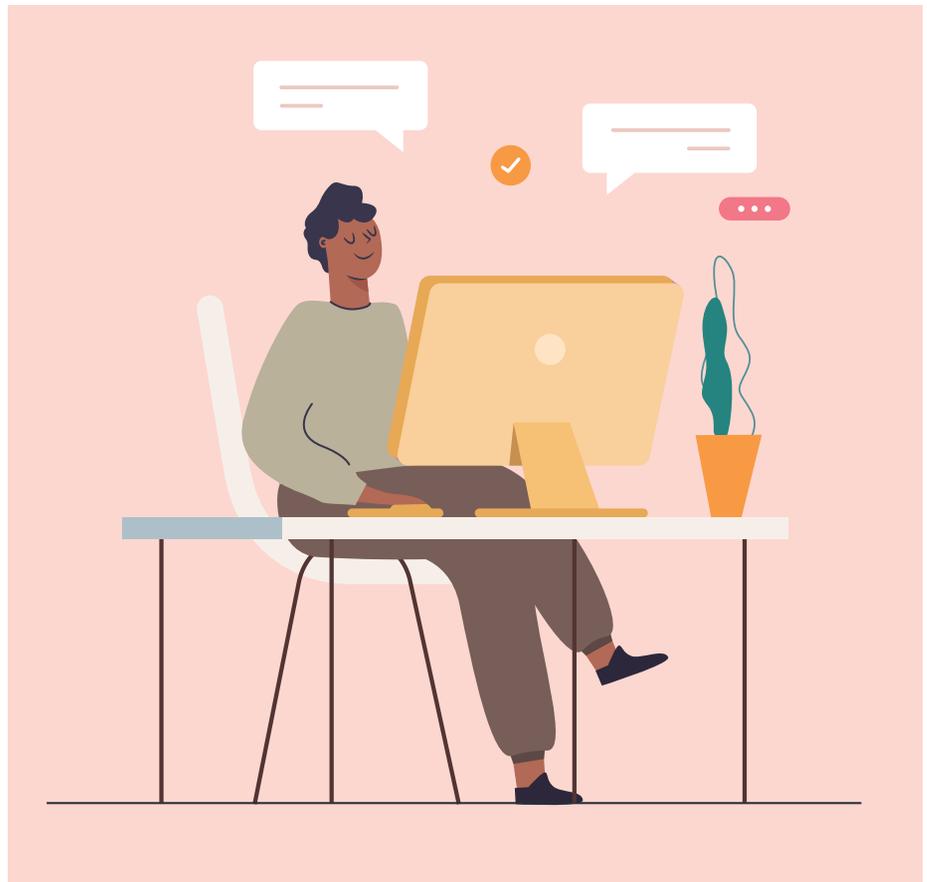
Sophia fills the gap for a mobile solution that provides secure, flexible face-to-face, on-demand private education. Through the app, users will have highly qualified tutors on tap, who will come to your home, office or public space, and who have been subject to an in-depth school-level vetting process. What's more, in a UK first; all sessions booked on the platform are covered by Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance, provided free by Sophia. The private tuition market has been growing over the last few years and now over a quarter of secondary school children have supplementary private education support. Current spend in the UK on private tuition is sitting at £2 billion, with the global market looking to grow to £176 billion by 2026. In London alone, 41% of students have had some form of tutoring.

However, unlike classroom teachers, private tutors do not need to be DBS checked, which means that many families are welcoming tutors into their homes without any knowledge of their background or qualifications.

Sophia is a simple to use application that provides a number of useful features, which accurately match tutor to student, depending on subject, suitability and location. Users of the app can:

- Choose a tutor based on location, time and subject, and can search by name of tutor if required
- Access private tuition for students from primary school through to university and adult education level
- Book months in advance or on the day, depending on availability
- Provide reviews and ratings on tutors
- Receive and deliver automatic feedback, as tutors are instructed to provide an update after every session.

This enables students to progress and



appreciate improvements in their studies. The team behind Sophia has 50+ years' teaching experience between them and developed the app with the knowledge that there is a huge gap in the market for the tuition market to adopt the same rigorous checks that any educational establishment would demand before putting students with tutors.

Founder of Sophia, Melissa McBride is a mum of three and has worked for many years in the education system as a head teacher, education director and advisor. She comments:

"There are now over 360,000 children in the UK receiving private tuition and shockingly, even though they are working with children, these tutors do not need to provide a background check. As a mum and ex-teacher, I appreciate the value extra tuition can give your child, but I would like to be reassured that I am not putting my child at any risk."

Melissa adds:

"Regulation in the private tuition sector is backed by organisations, like The Tutors Association, and we believe our application will be welcomed by the industry, parents and students alike."

To reassure parents and students, Sophia carries out a comprehensive assessment of all of its tutors before they are approved and registered on the app. This includes interviews and verification of references, qualifications, ID and address. Tutors are subject to both enhanced DBS, national Police and overseas checks (if so required) and obliged to complete a Safeguarding Awareness course, which is paid for by Sophia. All tutors are also obliged to sign a Code of Ethics.

Cost of tuition is per hour and there are three levels of tuition depending on the qualification, background and experience of the tutor. Sophia will initially be available in London, with expansion across the UK forecast as more new tutors are enlisted.