

# Deconstructing critical thinking skills provision

The normative and the transformative

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# Aims and objectives

- Deconstruct current CT provision in UK HE focusing on
  - What is available
  - How CT is managed in the EAP classroom
  - What lessons have been learned
  - To what extent student needs are catered for
  - How do we move forward





OUR PRELIMINARY RESULTS



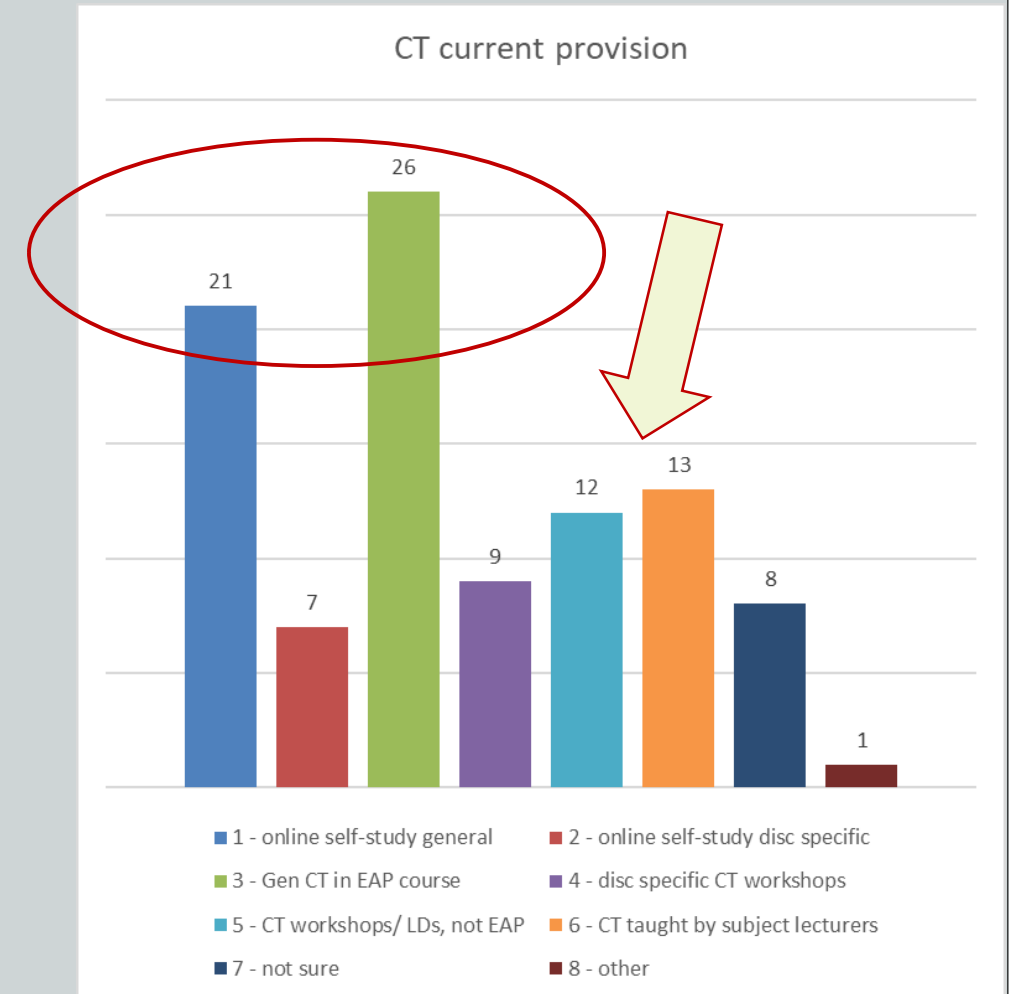
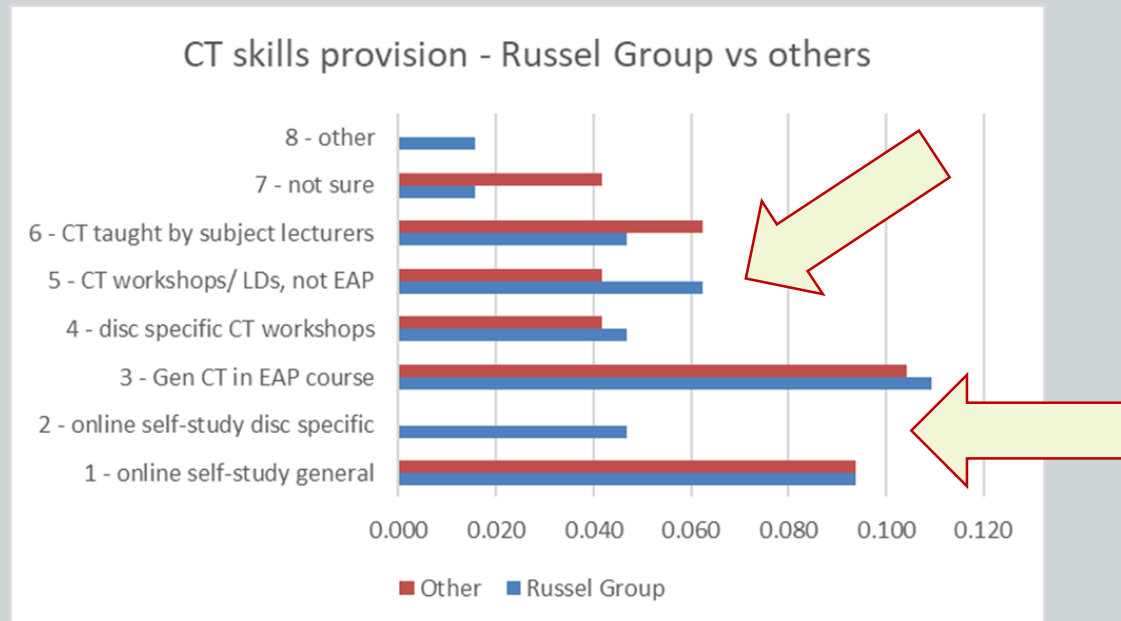
PHASE 1 – DISCUSSION OF  
CURRENT PROVISION AND  
CHALLENGES WE FACE



PHASE 2 – THINKING OUTSIDE THE  
BOX: NEW DIRECTIONS

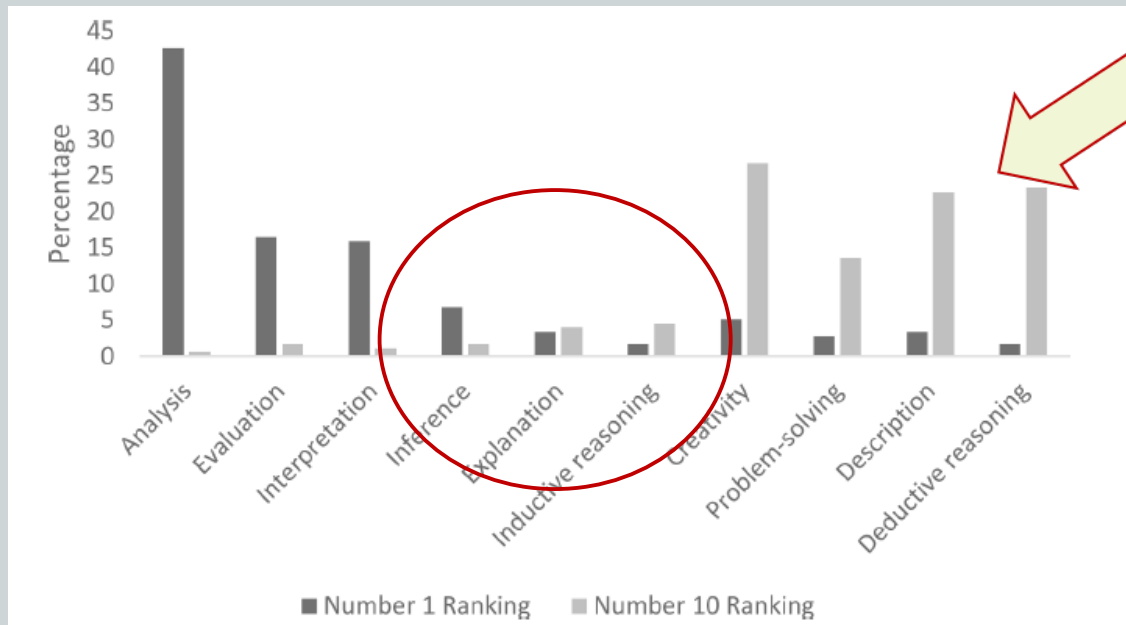
# CT skills current provision

- Small sample – 30 EAP practitioners
- At least 11 different universities – 8 from Russel group, 12 other universities, 10 no reply

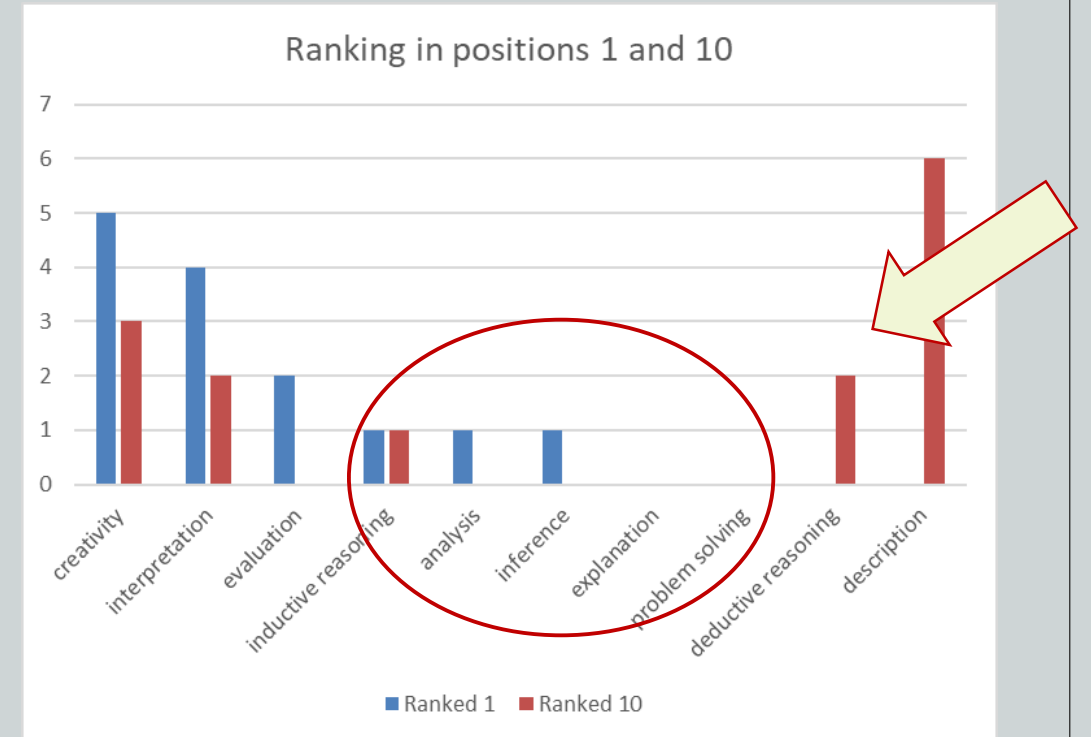


# CT skills ranking

- Subject instructors – little overlap in the ranking of CT skills in positions 1 and 10
- explanation, inference, and inductive reasoning - neither most nor least important



(Bellaera et al, 2021)



- EAP instructors – some overlap in the ranking of CT skills in position 1 but not in position 10
- explanation, inference, analysis, problem solving and inductive reasoning - neither most nor least important

# CT skills ranking: comments

'I do not think it is one thing but something that is context dependent [culture of the discipline] & what you are trying to achieve'

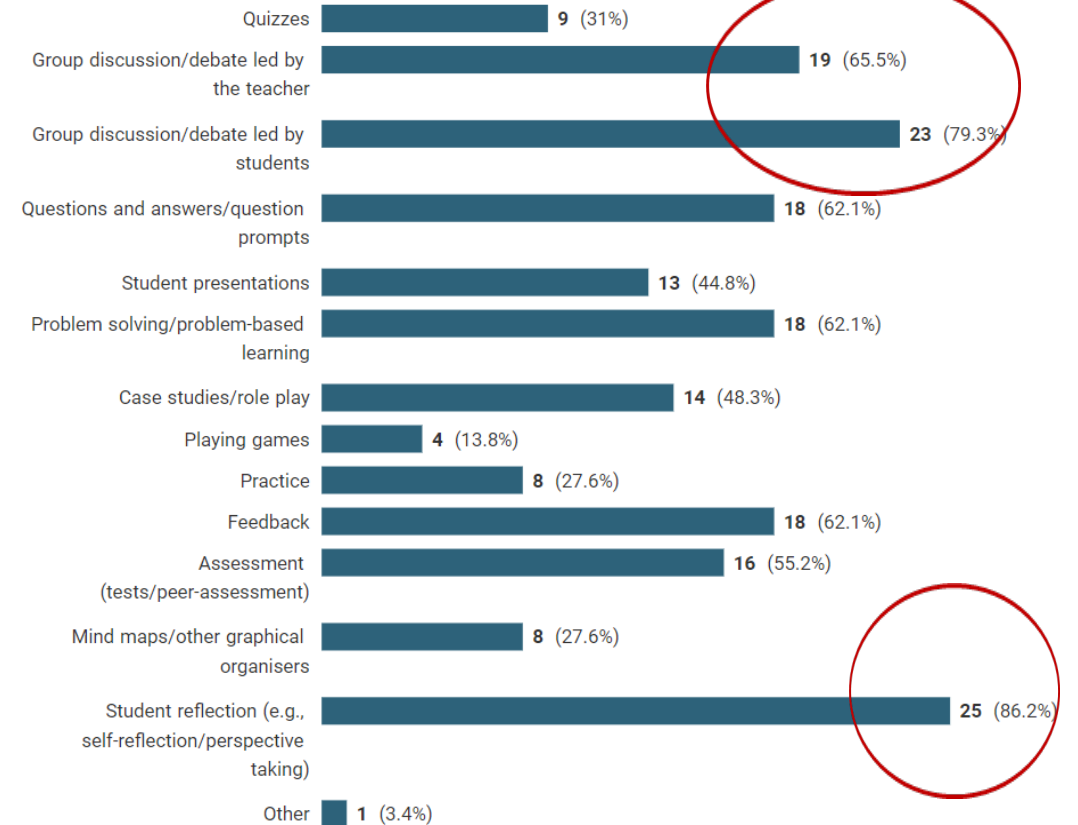
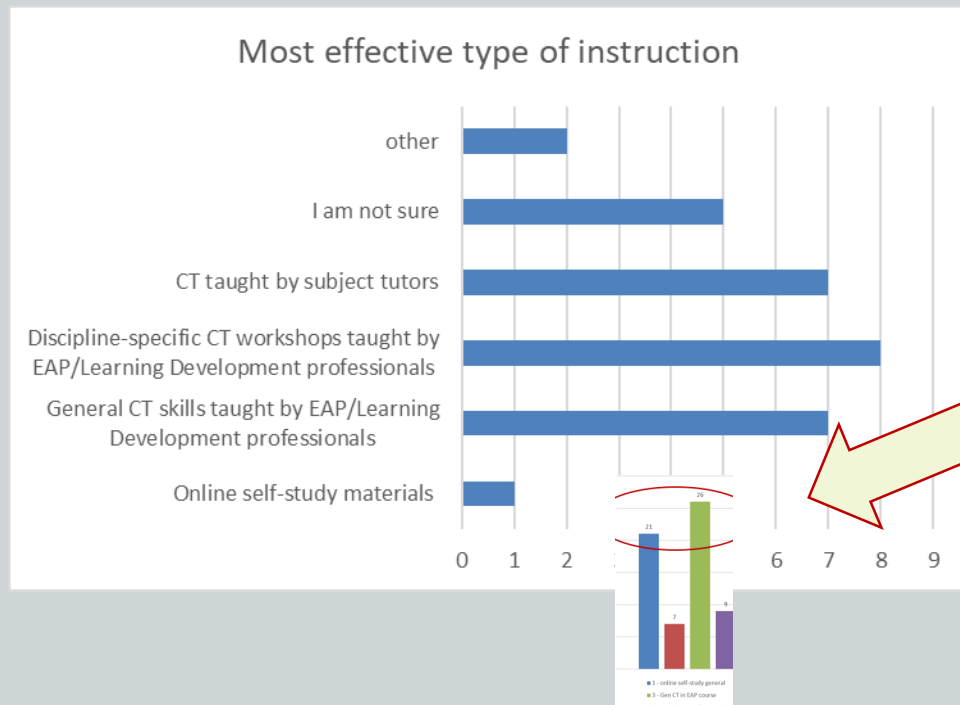
'Different aspects in the above are more/less important depending on level of study (UG, PG, PGR...)'

'I believe all the above skills are important. I personally wouldn't rank them as they are interconnected.'



# Teaching practices

- CT skills taught and practiced in class
- Online self-study low compared to second highest in current provision



## Teaching techniques used to teach CT skills

- Discussions, debates and reflections most popular



# What students think



- Consistent definitions of CT by both tutors and students – similar understandings (Lloyd and Bahr, 2010)
- Different perspectives: students focus on the product while academics focus on the process (Lloyd and Bahr, 2010)
- Students struggled to understand the concept of CT and its importance and believe that deep learning is required (Fakunle, Allison and Fordyce, 2012)
- A positive or negative event i.e. course feedback may trigger CT skills development (Fakunle, Allison and Fordyce, 2012)
- CT was connected to innovative thinking, independent thinking, and a questioning attitude - more strongly associated with dispositions than skills and abilities (Lucas, 2019)
- Challenges: lacking background knowledge and differences in educational systems (Lucas, 2019)





# Phase 1

- In 3 mins, introduce yourself and describe what your institution's provision is regarding Critical Thinking Skills
- To what extent is this provision effective? What are the major issues you are facing both in terms of approach and practice? Write your ideas on post-it notes and stick them on the chart!
- You have 12 mins to do so!

Effective practices and approaches	Challenges
	

# Phase 1

- Take 2 mins and write on a post-it note the ONE thing you would like to discard most
- **Bin it!**
- Feedback 😊



# Phase 2

- Discuss new ideas, innovative practices, new directions, approaches and pedagogies, areas for further research.
- Write your ideas on post-it notes and stick them on the chart!
- You have 15 mins to do so!
- Feedback – go round and check! Which idea(s) would you further pursue?

**Tell us on Mentimeter!** 😊



# References

- Bellaera, L., Weinstein-Jones, Y., Ilie, S. and Baker, S.T., 2021. Critical thinking in practice: The priorities and practices of instructors teaching in higher education. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 41, p. 100856.
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- Lucas, K.J., 2019. Chinese Graduate Student Understandings and Struggles with Critical Thinking: A Narrative-Case Study. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(1), p. 5.