MKTG2510 – Assignment 2 Briefing
Market Research Report (A2)
Weight: 40%, Due Date: Friday 26 May, 14:00 AEST

In this assignment you will analyse the survey data about students' attitudes, preferences and demographics in the context of their experience at university when commencing online learnings during the Covid-19 pandemic. **Students were found via a convenience sample, taken in classes at UQ and QUT.** You should consider yourself/your team to be acting as a research consultant providing advice and insights about current student experiences to decision makers interested in the tertiary education market.

Your client is a new private university looking to enter the tertiary education market.

Key Sections

The general structure and data analysis you undertake should comprise the following:

1. Introduction
2. Data Analysis
   a. Sample description
   b. Segmentation
   c. Market Structure Analysis
   d. Learning Design Preference Modelling
3. Recommendations
4. Conclusions

Further details on what is expected in each of these broad areas is described below (on the next page).

1. The **introduction** section introduces the market research report, placing emphasis on the broad context and highlighting the specific domain of interest (in this case, the study of student experiences and preferences in tertiary education). In this section, you should discuss the overall importance of understanding the dynamics of student experiences and preferences in order to *motivate the need to conduct research*. Consider this section the "selling" part of the report.

2. The **data analysis** section reports the results of your analysis of the data. The data analysis section should begin with:

(a) **Sample Description**: This should include descriptive statistics about the student sample and consider how representative these are of **_the_** general "population of interest". The population of interest is for you to determine based on your positioning of the research report. For example, it may be new high school graduates in the South East Queensland region, current students (i.e. tending towards developing retention strategies), new prospective international students, mature age students, etc. (you may consider conducting some further simple desk research on what the broader characteristics of students in the Australian market are).

The minimal variables you should include in this section are *gender, enrolment status, international/domestic status* and two wordclouds constructed from the qualitative text data. Further demographic information is available in the data which you are free to choose to include or not dependent on your judgement of what is important depending your own positioning of the research report.

(b) **Segmentation**: You should split the sample into subsets for comparative analysis based on some schema of market segmentation. The schema options available include basic demographic segmentation (e.g. flexible and externally enrolled students, males and females, etc.) and a psychographic segmentation based on using a *K-means* cluster analysis of the attitudinal rating scale data. Both options have the potential to lead to meaningful insights for your client, although the latter approach will certainly be more challenging to execute. The minimum expectation in this section is that you make a comparison using a statistical test (a chi-square or Z-test) of the differences between two or more groups on at least one variable of interest. For example, does the average mean best-worst score for one of the universities differ between international and domestic students? Or, does the proportion of students who use a laptop to study online differ between males and females? It is up to you/your team to decide how to segment the data, and which variables/specific methods you use to compare between groups.

(c) **Market Structure Analysis**: You should analyse the best-worst data using arithmetic methods. This includes calculating the scale of best score, implied market shares and producing a means-variance preference map. In your interpretations of this analysis you should report what the differences in choice probabilities are for one focal university relative to its competitors at the aggregate level, as well discuss which (if any) universities are close direct competitors (i.e. where brand switching is a possible threat). It is not necessary to conduct this analysis at the segment level, although you may extend this analysis in that direction if you wish.

(d) **Learning Design Preference Modelling**: The discrete choice experiment included in the student survey generates a choice model of students' preferences for the different features/attributes of university offerings which affect experience. You should provide your interpretation of the model in your research report, noting which features of the university offerings are statistically significant and how these might align (or misalign) with current offerings available in the market.

3. The **recommendations** section should provide a concise list of the key insights you have drawn from the data. Try to generate a list of at least 3 key insights which inform at least 3 key recommendations (you may use dot points). Think about some of the potential costs associated with your recommendations and whether or not they may be feasible for the client in the short, medium or long term. Ideally, at least one of your recommendations should be something that is immediately actionable, and some should take on a more of a long-term outlook.

4. Provide a **conclusion** to the report which re-states what the original motivations were in conducting this research to re-affirm to your client why this research was necessary to conduct. As current students, you are encouraged to reflect in this section upon whether the results of your analysis reflect *your/your team*'s experience(s). Your experience(s) may differ from the average experience inferred from the results of analysing the aggregated—or even the segmented—data. This is to be expected given students are not one homogenous group. Further, if you feel there are some variables or data that describe your own experiences of university education (especially before/during/after the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic) that were not captured by the survey, you might list those as part of suggestions for future research.

Market Research Report writing guidelines:
The report is worth **40%** of your score in MKTG2510. The Market Research Report (A2) Assignment Template on BlackBoard provides a visual example of what we expect in terms of the look and feel of the report. There will be no penalty for differing from the template.

Overall, the report will be between 16-26 pages. The report will be a minimum of 3500 words and a maximum of 6000 words (not including references or tables/figures).

Below is an **example** outline with suggested page ranges. These are not prescriptive; they are just there to give you a general outline of how pages may be split across the report.

Table of Contents

Referencing
Please use a consistency referencing style (e.g., APA or Harvard) whenever providing sources for any facts you claim, or when use someone else's idea to support an argument. There is no minimum required number of references or specific sources you must use other than that they be considered credible and reliable.

How to submit
Nominate one member from your group to submit the assignment using the assignment submission link available on BlackBoard. **Ensure your group is correctly registered on BlackBoard before the end of week 9 (group registrations will open in week 8)**.

If you are unsure about your group membership, contact mktg2510@business.uq.edu.au well in advance of the submission date. **Delays in submission due to a failure to confirm your group membership will not be accepted as a reason for late submission!** Upon submission, all members of your group will receive a submission receipt. If you are unsure about the submission status of your group assignment, or believe your assignment has been submitted, but have not received a confirmation receipt, contact mktg2510@business.uq.edu.au.

The report is due on **Friday 26th May at 14:00 (2pm) AEST (Australian Eastern Standard Time)**.